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A brief history of somatic practices and dance: *historical development of the field of somatic education and its relationship to dance*[1]

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Abstract

This article outlines the historical development of somatic movement practices especially as they relate to dance, dancers, and dance education organizations. It begins with historical events, cultural trends, and individual occurrences that led up to the emergence of the 'classic' somatic methods at the turn of the twentieth century (Alexander to Trager). It then defines 'somatic movement education and therapy,' and the growth of three generations of somatic movement programmes. Interview data reveals how a second generation included a large proportion of dancers and speaks to how the 'bodymind thinking' of dance professionals continues to shape the training and development of somatic education, as well as 'dance somatics'. Finally it raises the question of the marginalizing of both dance and somatic education, and points to combining forces with their shared characteristics to alter this location in western culture. Another finding seeks to assess the potency and placement of 'somatic dance' in a global schema.[2]

Keywords

somatics
somatic movement
bodymind
SME&T
somatic education
somatic movement therapy

Preface

This article is based on three methods of inquiry: lived experience in the overlapping fields of dance and somatic education since 1976; personal communiqués (live, by telecommunications, and by email) using a structured interview; and supplemental literature review. Wherever possible the founder of a somatic discipline, or seminal figure in the academic promotion of 'dance somatics', was interviewed.[3] I trained directly with Irmgard Bartenieff and Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen in the 1970s and then went on to teach in their certification faculties for ten years prior to creating my own Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy Training in 1990. I continue to teach on all three faculties and have also since interacted with hundreds of diverse somatic experts at conferences, in classes and on organizational boards. I am appreciative of each colleague who was willing to provide an interview and/or critical review of sections of this paper. Along with the data gathered, many of the statements in this article are made through my personal phenomenological perception of stories told within the oral tradition of 'somatics'.

1. This article draws on structured interviews, personal educational experiences, and review of literature in published and unpublished manuscripts, as well as Internet entries.
2. This second theme will be developed in a subsequent paper; Part 2. Part 2 questions the acknowledgement of cultural roots within the pedagogical process of somatic education and asserts that the voice of

dance professionals, especially women, within the field completes a holistic paradigm by encouraging emotional expression, which in some instances also elicits activism.

3. If necessary a director of a school or a close relative or colleague was sought out.

4. 'The Self that Moves' was the title of a college course that I took in 1974 with Bartenieff trained movement analysts Tara Stepenberg and Diana Levy. It used the tools of Laban Movement Analysis for personal inquiry.

5. Additionally, James Spira PhD worked in 1988 to bring the field together under the title of Movement Therapy and began the antecedent of the current professional association – IMTA, which became ISMETA.

Introduction

The field of 'somatics' is barely a field. If necessarily seen as one, I liken it to a field of wildflowers with unique species randomly popping up across wide expanses. How did individual experiences of, and with, the living body become a field? Illnesses, physical limitations, and exposure to unfamiliar physical and/or spiritual practices through travel and transmigrations, led numerous men and women, separately but in a common period of time, to discover the potency of listening deeply to the body. Pain and new views of human behavior combined with a love of movement and curiosity about the physical body to create the independent formation of various systems of bodily inquiry in Europe, the United States and Australia. The positive outcomes of these investigations gave credence to the process of finding answers to bodily needs and communicative desires through internal bodily awareness. Somatic pioneers discovered that by being engaged in attentive dialogue with one's bodily self we, as humans, can learn newly, become pain free, move more easily, do our life work more efficiently, and perform with greater vitality and expressiveness.

The historical time period moving out of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century was ripe for a quantum change in our relationships with our bodies. There was a need to break free of Victorian strictures and also to embody the optimism the Victorian era offered. The possibility of experiencing the body newly came with such diverse movements as 'free love' and 'gymnastik'. Within the twentieth century, as rationalism was influenced by existentialism and phenomenology, a gradual shift towards theoretical support for experiential learning and sensory research occurred in parts of the academic and scholarly culture. These shifts were catapulted by the theories of Dewey, Merleau-Ponty, and Whitehead.

Somatic inquiry was buoyed by this growth of existentialism and phenomenology as well as through dance and expressionism. These developments were moved into diverse frontiers by the groundbreaking work of Freud, Jung and Reich in psychology, Delsartes, Laban and Dalcroze in cultural studies (art, architecture, crystallography, dance and music), Heinrich Jacoby and John Dewey in education, and Edmond Jacobson in medical research. From the unique experiences of exploratory individuals across the globe, fresh approaches to bodily care and education emerged. However, it took the outside view of scholars, some fifty years later, to name this phenomenon as the single field of *somatic education*. Thomas Hanna (1985), supported by Don Hanlon Johnson (2004) and Seymour Kleinman (2004),[5] saw the common features in the 'methods' of Gerda and FM Alexander, Feldenkrais, Gindler, Laban, Mensendieck, Middendorf, Mézières, Rolf, Todd, and Trager (and their protégés Bartenieff, Rosen, Selver, Speads, and Sweigard). Each person and their newly formed 'discipline' had people take time to breath, feel and 'listen to the body,' often by beginning with conscious relaxation on the floor or lying down on a table. From this gravity-reduced state, each person was guided to pay attention to bodily sensations emerging from within and move slowly and gently in order to gain deeper awareness of 'the self that moves'.[4] Students were directed to find ease, support, and pleasure while moving – all the while paying attention to

proprioceptive signals. Participants were also invited to experience increased responsiveness as they received skilled touch and/or verbal input as 'fresh stimuli' from a somatic educator or therapist.

The transmigration of people and ideas from the east to the western part of the globe also shaped the development of somatic practices, by fostering exposure to the philosophies and practices of mind-body practices such as the eastern martial arts and yoga. For instance, during this era Joseph Pilates developed a system of exercise ('Contrology') with focus on the coordination of breath that was derived from yoga (India), and George Gurdjieff developed movement activities for greater spiritual development grounded in Eastern philosophy (Allison 1999). Among the somatic pioneers, Ida Rolf cites yoga as an influence (Johnson 1995), Irmgard Bartenieff studied Chi Kung, and Moshe Feldenkrais was a black belt in Judo (Eddy 2002b).

In what could be attributed to Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, or likened to the 'hundredth monkey' parable, isolated individuals and institutions in distant places independently began to recognize this work as an important and effective area of inquiry. What emerged from these profoundly creative and investigative somatic pioneers, especially as they taught their practices to psychologists (e.g. Fromm, Perls, Watts), educators (Dewey, Myers), and scholars (Fraleigh, Hanna, Johnson), became a canon inclusive of exercises, philosophies, methods, and systems of inquiry. By delving into personal bodily experiences, new meanings about being human and potentialities for health and life were codified into educational programmes in diverse parts of the world. As an exchange deepened across disciplines, somatic inquiry also found entry into some research methodologies such as: action research; ethnographic study; frequency counts in movement observation; phenomenology; pilot studies for quantitative research; and qualitative case study.

Defining the Field: Coining 'Somatics' and 'Somatic Movement Education & Therapy'

In the 1970s Hanna coined the term 'somatics' to describe and unify these processes under one rubric. Philosophers and scholars in the late twentieth century helped to forge the new field of Somatic Education. Mangione (1993) describes how the global communication explosion, and the cultural shifts of the 1970s, spurred a veritable boom in 'somatics'. In 2004, I identified that there are three branches of the somatic world – *somatic psychology, somatic bodywork*, and *somatic movement* (Eddy 2004). I contend that dance professionals have especially driven the development of *somatic movement* and the field of Somatic Movement Education and Therapy (SME&T). SME&T involves 'listening to the body' and responding to these sensations by consciously altering movement habits and movement choices. In large part, this article addresses the development of recognized training programmes in somatic movement[6] and the role of a second generation of somatic pioneers, who were predominantly dancers, in this evolution.

Professional practitioners of somatic movement disciplines use a variety of skills and tools, including diverse qualities of touch, empathic verbal exchange, and both subtle and complex movement experiences. This

6. The International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association reviews and approves training programmes and registers individuals that meet a list of professional criteria including a minimum study time of 500 hours. www.ISMETA.org

triune process helps a person discover the natural movement or flow of life activity within the body. If a student or client is uncomfortable with any of these modalities the practitioner will adjust the tools being used, as somatic work is, by definition, a creative interplay. The goal of the somatic movement professional is to heighten both sensory and motor awareness to facilitate a student-client's own self-organization, self-healing, or self-knowing. Movement includes the subtler movements of the breath, the voice, the face, and the postural muscles, as well as any large movement task, event, or expression. Somatic lessons often use touch to amplify sensory experience through the skin, the body's largest organ, and therefore more quickly awaken awareness. Touch is a primary tool, however it is only a tool and is it not always used in every somatic movement session or class.

While many of the individual somatic movement disciplines (most notably the ones that have been in existence for at least fifty years) have their own standards and scope of practice, one professional association, 'The International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association' (ISMETA), worked to shape the commonalties of somatic movement disciplines. They provided a definition of the type and range of work that is engaged in by a somatic movement professional, and a 'scope of practice' for the field of SME&T. The original scope of practice for somatic movement educators and therapists, as defined by the International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association, stated:

> The professional field of somatic movement education and therapy spans holistic education and complementary and alternative medicine. The field contains distinct disciplines each with its own educational and/or therapeutic emphases, principles, methods, and techniques.
>
> Practices of somatic movement education and therapy encompass postural and movement evaluation, communication and guidance through touch and words, experiential anatomy and imagery, and the patterning of new movement choices – also referred to as movement patterning, movement re-education or movement re-patterning. These practices are applied to everyday and specialized activities for persons in all stages of health and development. Continued practice of specific movements at home or work, with conscious awareness, is also often suggested.
>
> The purpose of somatic movement education and therapy is to enhance human processes of psychophysical awareness and functioning through movement learning. Practices provide the learning conditions to:
>
> - Focus on the body both as an objective physical process and as a subjective process of lived consciousness;
> - Refine perceptual, kinesthetic, proprioceptive, and interoceptive sensitivity that supports homeostasis and self regulation;
> - Recognize habitual patterns of perceptual, postural and movement interaction with one's environment;
> - Improve movement coordination that supports structural, functional and expressive integration;
> - Experience an embodied sense of vitality and extended capacities for living.
>
> (ISMETA 2003)

ISMETA has also developed a more detailed 'Operational Definition' of movement patterning – the use of touch to enhance movement performance is a primary tool of somatic work. The operational definition is as follows:

> A movement educator or therapist will place his/her hands on specific areas of the student's/client's [clothed] body in order to enhance movement performance. By applying focus through the hands, and combining still and moving touch, the educator/therapist defines the part/s of that area, articulates the connection of those parts, and guides the person's body movement through an efficient or more expressive pathway. With hands-on movement re-patterning, the educator or therapist can:
>
> - **guide** the student/client in initiating and practicing improved movement coordination;
> - **activate and direct** the attention of the student/client throughout the entire learning process;
> - **identify and define** the student/client's habitual patterns of perceptual, postural and movement interaction.
>
> This learning process helps the student/client:
>
> - **refine and focus** proprioceptive and kinesthetic attention;
> - **recognize** his/her habitual patterns of perceptual, postural and movement interaction with his/her environment;
> - **develop** improved movement coordination and perceptual movement integration.
>
> (ISMETA 2003)

Dance educators and choreographers may have stumbled upon these types of interventions in the process of teaching movement. Martha Myers (Eddy interview 2003b) was seminal in cross-fertilizing somatics within 'the dance world' by sponsoring body therapy workshops at the 'American Dance Festival' once it was at Duke University. She also pioneered the advent of 'the science and somatics of dance' by inviting doctors and researchers from Duke University to join dancers in exploring movement on the floor to learn about their bodies. Her seminal work continues to fuel the liveliness of somatic education within the dance science community (e.g., at International Dance Science and Medicine Association conferences) as well as in the professional dance community (American Dance Festival Archives 1980–1996).

This paper focuses on the development and interplay of the '*somatic movement* movement' with the field of dance. In her treatise on 'Somatics,' Mangione also sees the historical connection between the birth of modern dance and the development of somatic theories and practices.

> Modern dance was a revolution in the field of dance. Beginning around the turn of the century, this new exploration of expressive and earthy dance was a response to the airy, stylized ballet that was dance at the time. Somatics and the modern dance movement are linked. Both movements were born

> of the same time and possibly for many of the same reasons. They are both body-based forms that value the whole human being. The two fields also share some of the same personalities, pioneers of the modern dance movement such as those in the following listing have contributed to the field of somatics. While not all of these individuals may not strictly be considered somatics pioneers, their influence is significant.
>
> (Mangione's 1993: 27)

She lists: Francois Delsarte (1811–1871), Emile Jacques-Dalcroze (1865–1950), Rudolf Laban (1879–1958), Isadora Duncan (1878–1927), and Mary Wigman (1886–1973). These artists helped to set the stage for the emergence of somatic movement as a vital force in our current world. They shaped the culture in which the primary somatic pioneers were working. As dancers they were breaking rules; as people they were reintroducing non-Cartesian models. Add to this list the genius of Margaret H'Doubler (1889–1982), for her amalgam of open-ended dance explorations on the floor coupled with the study of the biological sciences, which became requisite studies within the first university dance department at the University of Wisconsin (Ross 2000, Eddy interview 2003c). And with all of this burgeoning growth I will make a case, later in this paper, for how dance and 'somatics' remain on the fringes of academic inquiry, perhaps precisely because they are of the body, and include elements that are ineffable.

Considered the father of European modern dance, Rudolf von Laban (1879–1954) was born in what is today Bratislava, Slovakia. He developed a system of movement exploration that epitomized freedom of expression through the human body. Even though Laban did not experience a bodily injury or physical limitation, he did feel confined by the pressures of his father to enter the military and, in his adulthood, by the constraints of working under the rules of Hitler and the exigencies of the world war. Laban spent many of his late adolescent years in Eastern Europe where he was exposed to eastern forms of movement – folk dances, military exercises and martial arts, as well as those that originated in Asia. Laban went on to study dance, and to create dances and schools of dance that valued personal expression. He also developed a system of movement notation called 'LabanNotation'. Laban had been working first as the choreographer and then as movement director for the Third Reich's State Opera in Berlin before he came under house arrest for not conforming to Hitler's mold. He defected to Paris during the International Dance Competition and lived there until he moved to England with the help of his former student, choreographer of the Green Table, Kurt Jooss. In England he established the 'Art of Movement Center'. During World War II, he was called upon to analyze movement in industry. The components of movement that he defined became the basis for 'Laban Movement Analysis' (LMA) and numerous other forms of movement analysis.[7] This LMA system has since been applied to physical education, dance education, and somatic education.

Laban was teacher to Mary Wigman as well as Kurt Jooss, and a peer of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (Bachmann 1993).[8] While he lived in Paris, he was influenced by the teachings of the already deceased Delsartes

7. Movement Pattern Analysis; Movement Signature Analysis; Action Profiling; Kestenberg Movement Profile.

8. Laban had three children with Suzanne Perrotet, one of Dalcroze's foremost teachers.

(Hodgson 2001). He was also aware of Isadora Duncan, another great founder of expressive movement and modern dance. Duncan brought her dance style from America to Europe while Martha Graham stayed strongly identified with American dance. Graham did, however, come to perform at Dartington Hall while Laban lived in England. The early 1900s was a rich time for artistic breakthroughs. The somatic pioneers spawned a different bodily endeavor applicable in many settings – paying careful attention to bodily sensation. The pioneers developed the use of somatic awareness in movement work such as acting, martial arts, exercise, physical education, physiotherapy, and dance. It is this history of diversity across numerous bodily, creative and scientific professions that engenders the continuing interdisciplinary nature of somatic education. What is worthy of note is that these somatic progenitors were often artists/performers also trained as scientists. Many suffered illnesses or injuries, and others experienced the changing world of the twentieth century through travel and emigration.

Theories and Practices in Europe prior to Somatic Education

The underlying theories and movement practices for numerous somatic systems originated in Germany. Elsa Gindler (1885–1961) and Heinrich Jacoby Gimmler were important movement leaders at the turn of the twentieth century. Gindler and her teacher, Leo Kofler who lived in the United States shared the experience of overcoming tuberculosis. Kolfler led the way by learning to heal from tuberculosis through anatomical study and physical exploration. Two German students traveled to the USA to STUDY with him and then translated his book, which continues to be published in Germany today (Johnson 1995). Gindler learned of Kofler's success and was also able to recover from tuberculosis using Kofler's teachings. She cultivated such an awareness of her breathing that she could actually rest her diseased lung and allow it to HEAL. This discovery led her to develop the somatic work she called *Arbeit am Menschen*/Work on the Whole Person. Her prior movement training was in Gymnastik (Jahn's work), yet she addressed the physical exercises in a new way, with an emphasis on mental concentration while breath, relaxation and tension were explored. Historical influences of Gindler and Jacoby can be traced to other German innovators such as Bess Mensendieck, Ilse Middendorf, and Marion Rosen (Haag 2002). The somatic concept of deep internal reflection was an adaptation of Gymnastik that both Gindler (Johnson 1995: 6) and Dr. Mensendieck used.

Bess Mensendieck, M.D. (1864–1957) was influenced by a combination of medicine, art, and an understanding of Gymnastik. She taught for Dalcroze and studied with Steiner. Her art form was sculpture, an art form with both tactile and visual elements. With this integration, she developed a system of over 200 exercises for executing movement (often in front of a mirror with minimal clothing) to improve habits and functioning. Her work is found in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dance, and osteopathy, especially in Europe (Johnson 1995).

Gindler asked students to focus, concentrate and become aware during movement regimens. She wanted them to be conscious of breathing as well. For example, Gindler states: 'There is the difference between the

breathing that occurs when the lungs and vesicles are open and breathing … through the arbitrary inhalation of air…. If the movement occurs with open [conscious] breathing, the movement becomes alive' (Johnson 1995: 33). Among her students were Carola Speads and Charlotte Selver, who both escaped Germany and brought her work to the United States where 24 they further developed it, each in their own way. The work of Carola Speads and her students (see Elaine Summers below) is an important resource to learn more about breath studies as is the work of Ilse Middendorf.

Ilse Middendorf's primary teacher as a young woman was Dora Menzler, however Middendorf was a student of Gindler's. Middendorf became a teacher of the 'Mastanang Method' and was mentored by Cornelius Veening, who was connected to Heier and thereby to Jung. The methods of Kallmayer and Mensendieck were circulating in Germany at the time so she was aware of their practices. She developed work with natural breath 'The Experience of Breath,' to make room for the essence of a person to unfold and develop.

Life Stories of the Somatic Pioneers: A brief history

Based on common lore, oral tradition, and written treatises such as those edited by Don Hanlon Johnson (1995), I have identified F.M. Alexander, Moshe Feldenkrais, Mabel Todd, Irmgard Bartenieff, Charlotte Selver, Milton Trager, Gerda Alexander, and Ida Rolf as 'the somatic pioneers'. Please see the schematic on page 24 depicting each of them in bold letters. It also attempts to give you information about who they were influenced by and who they have influenced to create somatic movement trainings including the 'second generation'. These somatic dance professionals who founded training programs are also highlighted in bold: Anna Halprin, Nancy Topf, Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Sondra Fraleigh, Emilie Conrad, Joan Skinner, Elaine Summers, and Judith Aston.

The First Generation

Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869–1955) was an actor with laryngitis who began to question deeply the cause of his vocal problems and wondered if they might have something to do with how he was using his vocal apparatus and his body (Alexander 1932). Through intensive periods of personal exploration he found a method for 'changing and controlling reaction', which he then taught in Melbourne and in Sydney. He also returned to performing and teaching in Australia and New Zealand. Next he moved to London, and finally to the United States. While not much is written about how F. M. Alexander may have been influenced by his childhood in Tasmania, or his experiences in New Zealand, these were influences replete with exposure to non-western values and concepts. Learning through global travel or study was notable amongst other somatic movement leaders as well. As with Laban, one can speculate that being an outsider in a new place might intensify one's powers of observation and self-reflection.

Moshe Feldenkrais, Ph.D. (1904–1984) also traveled through and lived in different countries and continents, studied in France, and was pushed to new levels of awareness during World War II. He was born in

Russia and emigrated to Palestine at the age of thirteen, traveling by caravan with his family. Feldenkrais studied engineering and earned his doctorate in physics at the Sorbonne. It was in Paris that he excelled in the martial art of jujitsu. He became one of the first westerners to earn a black belt in Judo (1936), and subsequently taught, following the footsteps of his teacher Professor Kano, the originator of Judo.

Feldenkrais first injured his knee playing soccer, and again while working with anti-submarine research in England during the war. His knee could not be healed, even with the help of surgery. Feldenkrais was motivated to explore his own body to find out what caused his inability to walk. This inward road of exploring the body grew, in part, out of his interest in auto-suggestion, self-imagery and the workings of the unconscious mind. During the process of self-exploration, he incorporated principles from physics, Judo and human development in his two strands – 'Awareness through Movement' and 'Functional Integration'. He developed his methods by working with all kinds of people with a wide range of learning needs, from infants with Cerebral Palsy to leading theatrical and musical performers.

Like Alexander and Feldenkrais, **Mabel Todd,** author of *The Thinking Body* (1937) and *The Hidden You* (1953), was also interested in improving her health since she had to contend with bodily limitations. She had a paralyzing accident and was told she would not walk again. Unwilling to give up, Todd used thinking processes to heal herself, including how to return to walking, by developing imagery about the anatomically balanced use of the body. She speculated that vocal problems were often due to bad posture and that a psycho-physical or psycho-physiological approach might be of help. With this hypothesis, Todd began to study the mechanics of the skeletal structure, and she applied her discoveries in her studios of 'Natural Posture' in New York and Boston. Personally, her imagery resulted in a walk that was an improvement over her pre-accident gait; professionally she created a system that became central to many movement educators. She joined the faculty of the Department of Physical Education at Teachers College, Columbia University where she taught anatomy, posture, and neuromuscular awareness to physical education and dance professionals. At Teachers College, her work was further developed by her protégé, Lulu Sweigard (1974), author of *Human Movement Potential*.

Born in Germany, in the same year as Feldenkrais, **Gerda Alexander** (1904–1994) also founded a somatic discipline – 'Eutony' (Eutonie), now referred to as Gerda Alexander Eutony (GAE). In GAE, students are invited to sense their muscles, skin, or bones – literally any part of the body and to connect it to their feelings. On a physical level, GAE strives to bring balance to the muscular tone of the body. She taught that tonus changes occur not only with different kinds of effort, but with emotional shifts whether they be deep depression with a low tonus or happiness with a high tonus. This function is referred to as psycho-tonus. "Flexibility in tonus change is also the basis for all artistic creation and experience....What you do not experience in your whole body will remain merely intellectual information without life or spiritual reality". (Bersin in Johnson 1995: 260)

Unlike the other somatic educators cited above, G. Alexander's protégés take a Eurocentric stance, and they make the following explicit statement about her work and its influences: 'The method developed completely from

the western culture area.' Alexander's work reveals a strong European lineage (ASEGA 2003). She was a dance and gymnastic teacher who studied and worked with Jacques Dalcroze; she then integrated her interest in the creative self-discovery of each person's body-mind tonus into a holistic approach used in diverse educational settings. Eutony teaches deep internal awareness that also helps one sense the outer environment fully.[10]

Charlotte Selver helped shape the work of her 'gymnastik' teacher, Elsa Gindler. Charlotte Selver, (1901–2003) was the person, together with her husband Charles Brooks, who gave the work an English name, focusing it more on sensation and consciousness: 'Sensory Awareness'. Selver cites Gindler as her primary teacher, yet she also refers to the importance of learning from other scholars. She had the opportunity to learn in person from various great thinkers from east and west, Suzuki Roshi (Zen master), Suzuki Daishetz (scholar), Korzybski (General Semantics) and Ram Dass (yogi) (Laeng-Gilliatt n.d.). She explored in depth the realms of consciousness, as well as awareness while moving, and taught these processes until she died at the age of 102.

Ida Rolf (1896–1979) was born in New York City. The inspiration for her work springs from exposure to eastern practices, and to great thinkers (Pierre Bernard, Fritz Perls, Sam Fulkerson and Korzybski), as well as the serendipity of being able to work as a woman at Rockefeller Institute. She also had the intent to heal not just the symptoms but also the causes; she saw causes as multiple and related to 'the circular process that do not act in the body but are the body' (Johnson 1995: 174). Her work grew out of the sciences and alternative approaches to healing. She obtained her Ph.D. in biological chemistry. During World War II, she was hired to work at Rockefeller Institute, beginning in the department of chemotherapy. As a scientist investigating the body and health, she was exposed to osteopathy and homeopathy, and she developed an interest in yoga. From yoga she understood that one could work with the body to improve all aspects of the human being, and, for the most part, this was done through lengthening the body to create more space in the joints (Feitis in Johnson 1995: 157). She learned from the Hindu philosophy that 'when morals are built from the body's behavior you get a moral structure and behavior which respect the rights and privileges of other individuals. (Rolf in Johnson 1995: 174)' She wrote *Rolfing: The Integration of Human Structures* in 1977. Dr. Rolf continued to study movement throughout her life including yoga and taking classes in the Alexander Technique; she learned from osteopaths and about homeopathy, and always related the physical body to the energy fields around us, most especially the gravitational pull.

Milton Trager, MD (1909–1997) also lived in the United States and was the founder of Psychophysical Integration. Like F. M. Alexander, he had to deal with physical weakness and illness at the outset of his life. He was born with a congenital spinal deformity. Through steadfast physical application he became an athlete and a dancer. He made his first somatic discoveries at the age of eighteen when he traded roles with his athletic trainer one day and touched him powerfully. The trainer took immediate notice and remarked on the effectiveness of Trager's touch in alleviating his physical discomfort. This was the beginning of the somatic research that led Trager to the development of the Trager Approach to Psychophysical

10. It is interesting to note that GAE was the first somatic discipline to be accepted by the World Health Organization (in 1987) as a type of alternative health care (now referred to as Complementary and Alternative Medicine – CAM). (Chrisman, 1).

Integration. When he was in his mid-forties he chose to go to medical school to become a doctor. He continued to give daily sessions in his unique somatic discipline in addition to maintaining a regular medical practice. As part of his approach, Trager developed a bodywork system as well a system of movement education called Mentastics. Trager's work emphasizes moving "lighter, freer." After 50 years of developing his work, in the mid-1970s, he was invited to the Esalen Institute in Big Sur. His work was received with excitement and spread rapidly, he was know to have a "gift as a healer". He insisted that he was not a healer and that anyone could learn these skills. (Trager Organization n.d.: 1)

Following in the footsteps of her teacher, Rudolf Laban, **Irmgard Bartenieff** (1900–1981) was a dancer who helped to pioneer several new fields – dance therapy, dance anthropology, Laban Movement Analysis, and her own somatic system called 'Bartenieff Fundamentals of Movement'. She was born in Berlin, studied dance and movement analysis with Laban, and performed dance with her husband, Igor Bartenieff. While in Germany, Bartenieff studied 'Bindewebegung Massage', known in the United States as 'Connective Tissue Therapy.' Bartenieff experienced an abrupt dislocation from her home in 1936 when, because her husband Igor was Jewish, she and her husband caught one of the last boats out of Nazi Germany. Upon arrival in the United States, they did not feel welcome in the dance community, which was then dominated by Martha Graham.[11] This lack of work in dance opened another door, and both Igor and Irmgard Bartenieff studied to become physical therapists. In time Irmgard found her way back into the world of dance in New York by teaching dancers, as well as other professionals, the 'Effort/Shape' concepts of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) at the Dance Notation Bureau. She also taught classes in 'correctives' that evolved into the Bartenieff Fundamentals of Movement. Although the term 'corrective' reflected her intent to find correct posture and movement efficiency, Irmgard always taught through improvisational exploration and somatic inquiry, emphasizing attention to breath and developmental processes.

These pioneering individuals, born near the turn of the 20th century, lived through much adversity and historical change. They discovered ways to cope with diverse stressors by being present and active in their unified body-mind experience. They also used systematic reflection and organizational skills to create tools to share with others, as well as methods by which to teach them, and in this way are still helping new generations to cope with the 21st century.

And there are other somatic movement practitioners, including those who developed their own somatic movement systems, many of whom are students of the progenitors. Indeed there are over 37 different somatic movement certification programmes today. Francoise Mezieres and Marion Rosen are two other important early pioneers. Each of these women were students of the human body and were motivated to explore how to work with touch and movement to heal. Rosen developed a movement system referred to as 'Rosen Movement' (Knaster 1996). Mezieres' work was taught in universities and also influenced her student, Therese Betherat to develop "The Anti-exercise Method". While some dancers have trained to do Mezieres, Trager and Rosen's work, they have yet to have a strong impact in dance curricula. More of their stories will be told in the future no

11. Agnes de Mille would later make a point of stating that Graham was not influenced by Laban in her explorations into self-expression through new approaches to dance (Graham Co Programme notes 1998).

doubt, in large part because of protégés such as Therese Bertherat, Martha Partridge, and Linda Chrisman.

New Generations of Somatic Leaders: Dancers motivated by dance, global exchange and their students

Dance excites people to explore movement expression, deepen creative skills, and investigate the body kinesthetically. More than a dozen more somatic disciplines were born from the exploration of dance and somatic education; numerous somatic founders began their professional lives as dancers. Discovery through internalized and conscious exploration of a physical or emotional challenge, supported at times by exposure to cultures or thinking that values 'diving inward,' is a theme that repeats itself through the generations.

Bartenieff's story demonstrates how experience as a dancer can support somatic investigation and become instantly applicable in dance classes. Like her somatic peers, Bartenieff remained inquisitive throughout her life and continued to study diverse movement forms. She discovered a Chi Kung teacher while in her seventies, and found in this Chinese discipline a key to her own graceful aging; Chi Kung aligned with her Laban-based philosophy of integrating the functional and the expressive in movement, and her principle of finding gradated rotation in movement (Bartenieff 1980: 19). Bartenieff's innovations were embraced within her programme training 'Certified Movement Analysts' replete with dance professionals. It was her students within the CMA programme that encouraged her to name her own work Bartenieff Fundamentals and to create 'Bartenieff Instructor Training.' The work of Elaine Summers (a student of Selver and Speads), Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Emilie Conrad, Sondra Fraleigh, Anna Halprin, Joan Skinner, and the late Nancy Topf all derived in part from their experiences as dancers and was immediately applicable to the dance community. These women have all played pivotal roles as leaders, and bridged the fields of somatic education and dance. On their own and with their students, each has taken bodily inquiry to new levels of human potential – as expressive physical performers and as fully engaged human beings.

Elaine Summers developed 'Kinetic Awareness' when osteoarthritis began to limit her dancing. She sought the help of Charlotte Selver and Carola Speads, who taught her a somatic approach through deep awareness to sensation. Prompted by her great drive, and by a dancer's natural inclination to creatively explore motion, she delved into kinesthetic and kinetic investigation. Through movement and different positions in space, she discovered principles and techniques that helped her continue to dance. She developed techniques and "tests" often using small balls (3–8cm in diameter) as stimuli for movement. Her cues invite slowing down comfortably on the floor with the balls as mobile cushion. The goal is to release each part of the body into gravity more fully, and most importantly, respond to the balls mobility with movement responses. Her instructions highlight that this self-initiated breath and movement activates the nervous system, the blood and the lymph.

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, occupational therapist, Certified Laban Movement Analyst and dancer, founded the system of 'Body-Mind Centering®, (BMC®), in part to be able to understand and explain what it is

she did intuitively with her occupational therapy patients (Eddy 2002b). She felt that she understood the mental-emotional aspect of her holistic work, but at the same time she wanted to give voice to the particular way in which she touched clients (Eddy interview 2001). Like other somatic leaders, she has spent a good deal of her professional life exploring how best to transfer this knowledge to her students. While her training in Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) helps to organize and to confirm some of her discoveries, Bainbridge Cohen cites over forty people in the 'Lineage of BMC – Homage to my teachers' – an appendix in her book *Sensing Feeling and Action* (1993: 158). This lineage includes professionals from the United States, Asia and Europe. Bainbridge Cohen studied yoga in New York, and practiced Aikido and Katsengen-Undo in the USA and in Japan. She also studied with and taught for Erick Hawkins, trained with the Ohio State University dance department while studying occupational therapy, and has collaborated over the years with key players in the 'Contact Improvisation' community (Lisa Nelson, Steve Paxton, Nancy Stark Smith). Indeed as editors of *Contact Quarterly*, Nelson and Stark Smith were first to publish descriptions of Cohen's work (republished with Bainbridge Cohen as author). Cohen's early somatic training began with Barbara Clark, protégé of Todd's and was later deepened with Bartenieff.

Sondra Horton Fraleigh was born in Utah into a Mormon culture, always dancing. As an adult she infused her dance exploration and theories with Zen Buddhism, Butoh, and the work of Feldenkrais. A renowned scholar and author in the field of phenomenology, especially as experienced through dance, she developed 'Shin Somatics' as part of her 'EastWest Somatics'. She cites tutelage under Mary Wigman, Rosen's use of breath to access emotions, Ann Rodiger's Alexander lessons, and Maxine Sheets as strong influences. She is a proponent of effective communication, integrative bodywork and meditation as part of her somatic process (Eddy interview 2003a).

While many somatic leaders were influenced by Asian practices, **Emile Conrad**, founder of Continuum, was exposed to new paths of expression through her Afro-Caribbean dance experiences. Conrad's travels to the Caribbean (Eddy 2002b) were a primary source in the development of the work. As a dancer studying with Katherine Dunham, then through living in Haiti, she (like Cohen), experienced and developed inroads to cellular awareness through movement. Her own experience of oppression within her family fueled her motivation to 'break free' by means of dance and movement (Eddy interview 2002).

Anna Halprin, choreographer, performer, healer, and affirmer of other people's self-healing potential, not only used somatic focus as the basis of her art-making but, together with her daughter Daria Halprin, developed a model of health-supporting exploration that places the Halprin work in the domain of somatic movement education and therapy. Their work is also part of the field called 'Expressive Arts Therapy' or 'Creative Arts Therapy'. Halprin chose to work with emotional expression because of her work with Fritz Perls. However, it was her dance training with Margaret D'Houbler, whom Halprin likes to call 'the mother of somatics', that first supported Halprin's philosophy of holism. D'Houbler asked her always to look for the meaning and expression of movement (Eddy, 2003c). Influenced by the Halprin model, several other

somatic movement programmes choose to integrate expressive arts therapy processes into their training programmes such as those of Daniel Levin, Alice Rudkowski, and Kay Miller.

Joan Skinner founded 'Skinner Releasing Technique' while serving as Chair of the Dance Department at the University of Washington. Her work with imagination and visualization builds on elements of Mabel Todd's work, which she was exposed to through her first dance teacher during childhood. As a Graham and Cunningham trained dancer, she was compelled to work on her own to find an antidote to 'pulling up,' 'holding on', and 'gripping'. She also had an injury in 1954 that instigated an even deeper self-investigation and led her to study the Alexander Technique and apply her experience to ballet *barre*. As she went on to teach her discoveries, she would use imagery, and the images became so powerful an agent for change that she developed them to the point that they became a signature of her method.

Nancy Topf (1942–1998) also trained with Joan Skinner, along with Marsha Paludan as Joan's assistant, and Mary Fulkerson, Pamela Matt, and John Rolland as classmates. When Skinner left the University of Illinois, Urbana to go to The University of Washington in Seattle, Topf (and most of her colleagues) went on to study with Barbara Clark, who was schooled in the work of Mabel Todd and who came to live in Urbana. While Todd's approach was deeply founded in anatomical imagery, Topf became known for honing in on the importance of the center of the body and the work of the psoas in efficient human expression. Since Topf's untimely death in a Swiss Air flight in 1998, graduates of her programme have joined forces to continue, formalize, and promote the 'Topf Technique'. It became an official member of ISMETA in 1995. This information was gathered through personal communications with her sister, dance educator, Peggy Schwartz (Eddy 2003e).

Others can be included in this roster of somatic leaders with a history in dance. **Judith Aston** (Pare 2001; 2002) reaches out primarily to the health and fitness community, but she too began dancing as a child, and continued to study dance into her college years. At UCLA, Aston studied with Rudolf Laban's daughter, Juana De Laban, and with Valerie Hunt, both schooled in Laban Movement Analysis. She also worked with dance therapist Mary Stack Whitehouse. Each of these mentors encouraged her to find her own answers rather than studying their systems. After incurring spinal injuries after two car accidents in 1966 and 1967, she studied with Ida Rolf. Aston helped expand upon the Mensendieck-based movement programme that Dr. Rolf was offering. Aston's work, together with some contributions from Dorothy Nolte, helped to shape what is now called 'Rolf Movement' but began as 'Movement Analysis.' Judith Aston said:

> Many people took the Movement Analysis course: Bob Prichard, Don Hanlon Johnson, Mark Reese, Tom Myers ... in fact everyone who trained from 1971 to 1977 was required to take that course. Bill Williams, Roger Pierce, Joseph Heller, Annie McCombs Duggan, Heather Wing, Louis Schultz, and many others took my Movement Certification training and in fact took classes for years. I think we were called 'the dancers.' I was

> offended then – now I realize my highest goal is to continue dancing through this life and beyond.
>
> (Pare 2001: 7–8)

Since that time (1977), Aston has integrated her love of dance, fitness and somatic awareness into her own work called 'Aston Patterning.' Similarly Dorothy Nolte, Ph.D. has gone on to develop 'Structural Awareness: Nolte System of Movement Education.' Rolf Movement also continues to grow and be used by diverse dance professionals.

Movement practices designed by Mensendieck, shared by Rolf, and then transformed by Aston and Nolte, illustrate how somatic movement systems have evolved over the generations. The work of Feldenkrais is reframed by the teaching of dancer Anat Banuel. Ilana Rubenfeld combined Alexander, Feldenkrais and Gestalt principles to devise 'Rubenfeld Synergy'. Key ideas are reshaped and added to new ones. The end of the twentieth century saw the burgeoning of dozens of new somatic movement systems. Just from Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen alone, six new systems in four different countries have been born – my own 'Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy Training' (1990), Jacques van Eijden's 'Somatic Coaching' (circa 1996), Suzanne Rivers' 'Global Somatics' (circa 1999), Linda Hartley's 'Institute of Integrative Bodywork and Movement Therapy' (1995), Horst Viral's 'Somatic Movement-Art Training' (2007), and Mark Taylor and Katy Dymoke's 'BodyMind Movement Certification programmes' (2008). So, each programme blends influences from other studies and experiences in the founders' lives. Dynamic Embodiment uses BMC and LMA/BF as key tools. Jacques van Eijden, formerly on the faculty in the dance department of the Amsterdam Theatre school, teaches principles that can be used across disciplines. Linda Hartley has forged a path that includes deep understanding of psychotherapy, while Suzanne Rivers brings her own Native American and intuitive knowledge into her training process. Eric Franklin (a teacher of Ideokinesis) and Susan Klein cite BodyMind Centering as among their influences: both studied Bartenieff Fundamentals as well. Indeed, one of Franklin's books uses a primary Bartenieff concept – Dynamic Alignment – as its title; Franklin's programme is not a full 'Somatic Movement Therapy' or Education certification but rather combines diverse somatic activities with Ideokinesis and dance science to strengthen the dance experience. BodyMind Dancing©, a dance form using principles of Dynamic Embodiment, is another case in point; this training method uses dance to teach somatic concepts that can be used during daily life, while of course training dancers to be more somatically aware while dancing.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the historical emergence of each of these somatic movement disciplines is that they defined, and now share, a theme that there are many possibilities, no one truth, and always the option to make choices if one chooses to take responsibility for one's body and living process. Whether this discovery came primarily from the major historical shifts apparent during this time period, or in response to injuries or illnesses that the medical profession had no answer for, or from having been educated to accept a non-Cartesian point of view, or cross-fertilization of Eastern and Western philosophies, or a combination of these factors, all these progenitors spent long periods, mostly alone, engaged in somatic

research. These journeys of somatic exploration may not in an of themselves be unique but these leaders went on to articulate their processes and often worked with their students to codify a method, or a series of movement explorations, if not a full philosophy of how to be in the world with the physical body.

Many other dancers, and some notable dance somatic scholars, have contributed to the development of somatics as well. They are often contemporary dance professionals rather than founders of training programs. Sylvie Fortin has studied, researched and taught dance somatics in Australia, Canada, France, and the United States. Her dissertation research was a cross-case analysis of the modern dance teaching of somatic movement educators Glenna Batson, Martha Eddy, and Mary Willaford (Fortin and Siedentop 1995).

Dance programmes and somatic psychology degrees have spawned the growth of masters theses and doctoral dissertations on somatic movement topics. A sampling of these programmes include: dance science (University of Oregon; University of Maryland), dance/choreography (State University of New York-Brockport, The Ohio State University), dance education (Temple University, University of Central Lancashire, University of North Carolina-Greensboro), somatic psychology (Naropa, California Institute of Integral Studies, and Santa Barbara Graduate Institute), interdisciplinary and liberal studies (International University of Professional Studies, SUNY-Empire State College).

Dance settings have been especially potent for the teaching of 'somatics' inclusive of somatic research methods. These classrooms value experiential learning – learning by doing, being of the body. Since the advent of modern dance, there is a precedent to spend time on the floor, to release and relax with the support of the ground and to build upward from there. Somatic education has been equally potent for dance by helping performers to heal from injuries and enhancing performance. The exchange between somatic education and dance education is particularly important. Within the Limon company, Ann Vachon (Ideokinesis) and Jennifer Scanlon (Alexander Technique) both integrated somatic studies into their teaching. When she was a member of the Trisha Brown company, Eva Karzcag was another seminal teacher of choreography and dance using Alexander principles. Trisha Brown credits long-term study of Alexander Technique and Kinetic Awareness, with Elaine Summers, for alternatives to how to hone her body for dancing (Griffin 2001: 30). For periods, Trisha Brown's company members studied the 'Klein Technique', a dance method that was devised in large part from interaction with Collette Barry, long-term patient of Irmgard Bartenieff's and from Klein's direct Laban/Bartenieff studies. Contemporary dance is marked by Bartenieff's 'Big X floor work' even though many teachers are unaware of its beginnings (Bartenieff 1980: 256). Students of Irmgard Bartenieff such as Susan Klein who ran a dance studio in New York City together with Bartenieff's physical therapy patient Colette Barry (and then later with Barbara Mahler) extended the Bartenieff work to the dance community. Laura Glenn and JoAnna Mendl Shaw continue to do so at Julliard. Janet Kaylo' arrival at the Laban Centre brought Bartenieff's work to the dance community in England. Glenna Batson (1990), Irene Dowd (1981) and Pamela Matt

(1993) are dance scholars who have taught the Ideokinesis work extensively within the context of dance. Jill Green (2002; 2007) and Ellen Saltonstall (1988) have been major proponents of 'Kinetic Awareness'. Feldenkrais has influenced dance pedagogy around the world. Nancy Galeota-Wozny has integrated both Feldenkrais principles and somatic scholarship into dance (Galeota-Wozny 2006) and also has written about Barbara Forbes (former ballet mistress at the Joffrey and faculty at Sarah Lawrence) and Catherine Paine's exploration of Feldenkrais principles with dance (Galeota-Wozny, 2002). Anat Banuel is a dancer and Feldenkrais protégé who has developed her own training programmes. This is just a small sampling of the intersections between dance performers and teachers and somatic practices. Dancers use somatic education to strengthen technical capacity, expand expressiveness, and reduce incidents of injury, as well as for self-development (Eddy 2002a; Eddy 2006).

It is no wonder that dance departments have become academic homes for somatic work. Somatic psychology departments have also been important, but dance programmes are much stronger advocates for using bodily kinesthetic learning processes in the classroom: providing courses that allow enough time for somatic exploration and proper environments for somatic learning (Eddy 2000a). Both types of departments provide classes, and also support publishing, journals themes, and conferences. Key conferences and journals that cross-fertilize dance and somatic education have been sponsored by the Congress on Research in Dance, National Dance Association in the United States, CENIDI DANZA, the National Center for Fine Arts (INBA) and the National School of Dance in Mexico City, Palatine Higher Education Academy, Taipei National University of the Arts, the University of Quebec/Montreal, and Victoria University of Technology in Melbourne, among others. The international visibility of the work is further witnessed through programmes at the University of Haifa, the Paris Conservatory, the Laban Centre, The TheatreSchool in Amsterdam, Western Front in Vancouver, TanzFabrik in Berlin, Moving Arts in Koln, and Universidad Javeriana and Academia Superior de Artes de Bogota, Colombia. The State University of New York has been pivotal in providing academic support for dancers who also want to gain somatic certification while studying at university level. The Laban/Bartenieff training, East/West Somatics, Somatic Dance and Well-being, and Dynamic Embodiment Somatic Movement Therapy Training training programmes have links to graduate level degrees. These have traditionally linked to dance degrees. The DE-SMTT is now linked to a cross-disciplinary degree and to doctoral studies as well.

What remains disturbing to me is how marginalized both somatic education and dance continue to be despite our growing understanding of the influence of the mind on the body, and the body on the mind. Does an affiliation with dance strengthen the position of somatic education? And likewise does the growth of "somatics" help strengthen the position of dance in the academy at all? Certainly dance's position is growing stronger through its visibility on the front page of art sections of daily and weekly papers; instead of the existence of doctoral programmes in dance; the presence of dance scholars in interdisciplinary plenary; and the role of dance

research in diverse conferences. Books such as *The Body Has a Mind of Its Own* (Blakeslee & Blakeslee, 2009) that show how movement and awareness heighten the neural "maps" for body schema, sensory and motor activity, movement planning, and physical anomalies may help to sharpen interest in somatic education. Neuro-science is helping to describe what occurs during somatic processes. However, even while neuroscience is becoming the rage, getting up (or lying down) to learn through movement is still a rare educational experience. Perhaps the growth of scholarship in somatic education, neuroscience, and creativity (as in dance) will boost the investigation of each discipline and their interaction.

Oddly though, the growing body of research on creativity does not adequately address dance. There is a meagerness of kinesthetic experience in education across disciplines, including those subjects that focus on human expression or movement studies – from kinesiology to cultural studies, to physical and occupational therapy, to psychology. Most of these disciplines remain unaware of somatic education as a resource. On the other hand the dance community has heavily cited the work of Howard Gardner for studying the genius of Martha Graham and bringing awareness to 'kinesthetic intelligence' (Gardner 1993). However, Csikszentmihalyi's research has not included studies of dancers for their creativity as much as for the ability to enter into 'the flow' (Csikszentmihalyi 1992). The "Creativity" research that Csikszentmihalyi gives a capital "C" to includes interviews with musicians and visual artists along with scientists, writers, and inventors (Csikszentmihalyi 1996). Two statements in his early treatises may point to why. He strongly contrasts creativity with 'sex, sports, music and religious ecstasy,' pointing out that they are similar in that both give us the feeling of living life to its fullest, even providing us at times with a universal connection, but different because the latter physical experiences are only fleeting (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996:2), in that they don't leave a lasting product for future generations. Perhaps related to this, he does share his awareness that creativity research has had little to say about the more difficult aspects of human experience.

> So we are in the paradoxical situation that novelty is more obvious in domains that are often relatively trivial but easy to measure; whereas in domains that are more essential novelty is very difficult to determine. There can be agreement on whether a new computer game, rock song, or economic formula is actually novel, and therefore creative, [it's] less easy to agree on the novelty of an act of compassion or of an insight into human nature.
>
> (Csikszentmihalyi 1996: 29)

Given that somatic education is perhaps even more elusive than dance, it is no wonder that it too has not had a great deal of research attention.

However, there is a developing rigor in the disciplines of dance and somatic education. Judith Lynne Hanna (2008) makes an exhaustive case for the role of dance in education based on research and practice. The tautology that the discipline of dance strengthens the body and soul is an informal acknowledgement of the capacity of dance to train rigorously, developing one's ability to do more. Most dancers have carried two jobs,

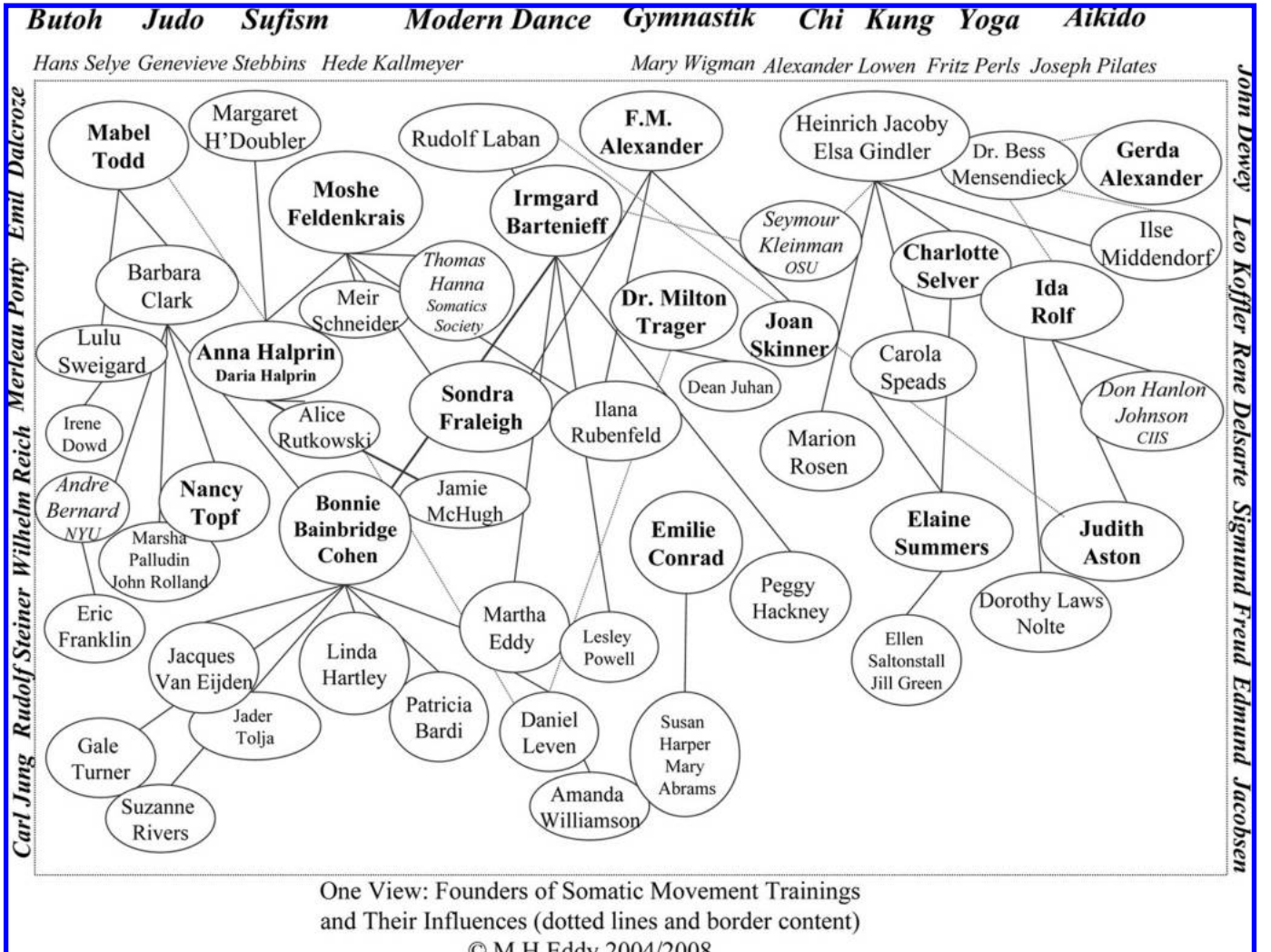
two educational majors, two simultaneous projects, and/or two roles within their organization (performer and fundraiser). Biographies provide accounts of dance increasing discipline, as well as health and vitality (Nagrin 1988). The somatic paradigm supports a hypothesis that awakening the body expands the mind and beckons somatic dance professionals to become strong both of body and mind. Within the contexts of the academy, more somatic research can be shaped with this fortitude.

Both the movement practice itself and marginalization within society has taught the dancer to work hard, to survive. Dance as a profession can be debilitating. If dance is experienced through classes or performances in an authoritarian and demeaning manner, it can be not only physically injurious but diminishing of the soul. Since the 1970s more and more dance professionals are discovering the usefulness of somatic education in softening these deleterious challenges.

The marriage of dance education and somatic education has seen numerous benefits – tips for longevity and the honing of our living instrument, inroads to creative process (Calamoneri and Eddy 2006, Fraleigh 2003; Shapiro 1998), empowerment through self-authority (Green 2007), and increasing communication (Eddy 2000b and 2004; Eddy 2003a; Eddy 2003c; Eddy 2003d). The world of somatic education has secrets to living life more fully – keys to finding and knowing when we are 'in the flow.' Somatic awareness could be used for a step-by-step manual to document that entry into 'the flow'. Indeed choreography, and its documentation, allows for long-lasting expressions of essential insights into human nature. When influenced by somatic inquiry, choreography and dance should well become of increasing interest to academic inquiry, especially as its impact on modern culture becomes more known.

Hopefully these stories about the men and women of the world of somatic movement education and therapy, who have broadened our view of health to include bridges between the medical and the intuitive – the scientific and body wisdom – will invigorate those of you on this quest. It is of interest to me how unique each of them was or is, and that the twentieth was ripe for so many individuals to immerse themselves, independently, in such similar pursuits. This to me is creativity in action. The dawning of the field of somatic education seems to fit well within the parameters of being 'creative': the burgeoning of a novel idea or phenomenon by a person (or persons), in interaction with a culture that also has a field of experts that recognizes, challenges and promotes it (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). That field of experts in both somatic education and in dance may only now be standing fully present. We now have a world culture that ripened within the past 100 years with creative individuals drawn to somatic awareness continuing to be born. The dancer of the twenty-first century is well poised to be creative, deeply conscious, supportive of a creative and aware culture, and contribute generously to somatic scholarship.

Since somatic inquiry and dance share ineffable qualities, our challenge is to add to the canon of research methods and published works that can speak to these more elusive domains. How brilliant and prescient Feldenkrais was when he titled his last book, *The Elusive Obvious* (1989). Human nature, the body, the sensation of living, are so obvious and yet perceived as elusive. Dance and Somatic Education share the gauntlet:



One View: Founders of Somatic Movement Trainings
and Their Influences (dotted lines and border content)
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how to study, awaken, and even canonize the 'elusive obvious,' and bring forth the depth of knowledge that emerges from each field, separately and together, out of the ranks of 'fleeting moments' and into the ranks of Csikszentmihalyi's 'Creative,' with a capital 'C.' Journals that print somatic movement research and discourse, such as these, will play a critical role.

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Aims and Scope

Choreographic Practices operates from the principle that dance embodies ideas and can be productively enlivened when considered as a mode of critical and creative discourse. The journal provides a platform for sharing choreographic practices, inquiry and debate.

Call for Papers

Choreographic Practices is an international, peer-reviewed, bi-annual journal. Contributions are invited that articulate choreography from a diverse range of perspectives. We are especially interested in receiving articles that address research-led movement practices that are interdisciplinary and experimental in nature. Selected issues will also be thematically arranged. *Choreographic Practices* publishes both conventional and alternative modes of writing, including performative and visual essays.