Call for Case Studies: Dance in US Popular Culture

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We are seeking 1500-word Case Studies authored by a range of scholars, from independent to emeritus to graduate students, to be included in a forthcoming anthology under contract with Routledge, tentatively titled Dance in US Popular Culture. The project stimulates critical thinking around the personal terrain of our bodies and considers a wide array of popular dance practices in relation to categories of race and gender. By drawing on material relevant and accessible to readers, the book focuses on how negotiating identity might inform dismantling systems of oppression.

Case Studies about popular dance in relation to gender and/or race attend to a single example, supported by movement description and a theoretical concept (or other applicable framework). Case Studies can pursue additional facets of identity, such as: class, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, religion, age, citizenship, etc. The editor seeks submissions from a variety of disciplines, including but not limited to: dance studies, history, gender studies, African American studies, anthropology, ethnography, performance studies, and media studies. Case Studies considering BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ experiences are especially welcome.

Submit completed Case Studies of 1500 words by September 20, 2021 to Jen Atkins at danceinpopculture@gmail.com. You may submit multiple Case Studies. Include your name, email address, and Case Study title on a separate page. Do not include your name or email address on any pages of the Case Study itself. Anticipated Publication is late 2022. Please direct queries to Jen Atkins at danceinpopculture@gmail.com.

We offer the following provocations for Case Study authors:
- **Locating Popular Dance**: Where are pervasive, influential dance practices in popular culture? Where might we find novel examples of dance in popular culture? How do we think of everyday movement as popular dance?
- **Describing Popular Dance**: What are innovative ways to describe popular dance/s? How can we articulate, in accessible and engaging language, the relationship between popular dance, identity formation, and how we view others?
- **Race and Ethnicity in Popular Dance**: How are bodies racialized in popular dance and popular culture? In what ways have racialized choreographies crafted narratives of agency, empowerment, and/or critical push back within and around thinking about popular culture?
- **Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in Popular Dance**: How are male or female bodies choreographed in popular culture? In what ways are notions of femininity or masculinity created, performed, and circulated via popular dance? How do bodies negotiate gender identity in popular culture through dance?
- **The Gaze and Agency in Popular Dance**: How do popular dance choreographies grapple with the relationship between the gaze and agency in an art often meant to be looked at? What are the complexities of spectatorship in popular dance? How can we think through objectivity and subjectivity when considering the gaze, agency, and dance in popular culture?
- **Intersectionality in Popular Dance**: How do we understand intersectional experiences through popular dance? How do performers assign meaning to their own identity, despite stereotypes or power paradigms they encounter?
- **Mass Media Circulations of Popular Dance (tv, film, social media)**: How does mass media affect the ways we consume and understand popular dance? How does the mediation of popular dance affect our understanding of attribution and ownership? How do ideas about race and gender circulate and shift as a result of popular dance in mass media?
- **Close-Up on Popular Dances**: What are innovative ways of understanding popular dance by zooming-in on a form’s physical movements? How can we understand identity by looking at the ways that a specific body part or a particular dance move is choreographed in popular culture?
- **Political Movements in/through Popular Dance**: How does popular dance challenge systems of oppression? In what ways does popular dance influence political movements? How are popular dances choreographies of protest?
- **Americanness in Popular Dance**: How do notions of “Americanness” circulate via the body in US popular culture? What constitutes “American” in American popular dance? What’s at stake and who is left out of “American” in US popular
dance?

Some examples of popular culture include (but are not limited to): club dancing, movies/film, tv shows, commercials, music (including songs, videos, concerts, and lyrics), social media, comic books, magazines, memes, video games, sports, popular leisure (roller skating, playgrounds, games, etc.), festivals and parades, news, fashion, graffiti and street art, and slang.

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