

Professional Ethics and Personal Values: Intersections and Decisions in Dance Education

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Article:

Since I began my involvement with the Making a Difference in Dance project, I have done a lot of thinking about ethics and politics. In the past month or so, I have been doing even more thinking about it, ever since the results of my country's presidential election were announced, revealing that the unexpected #1 issue for voters polled as they were exiting from voting was "moral values." Just as voters connect their moral values with their political choices, I don't think we can separate our thinking about ethics and politics in dance from our thinking about it in other parts of our lives. This brings up inevitable conflicts when our moral values differ from those of our colleagues and students.

My own country is deeply divided in terms of both political choices and moral values. From news reports, it appears that 80% of the voters citing "moral values" as the #1 issue made a political choice different from mine. It has been widely reported that, for many if not most of these voters, moral values have to do with the regulation of sexual activity, including whether or not everyone should have all of the legal rights that heterosexuals do. Questions about the legality of abortion and stem cell research also fell under the "moral values" umbrella for these voters; interestingly, issues of war, civil rights, capital punishment, poverty, and the availability of health care did not.

When we get beyond the boundaries of our own countries, there are also differences, ones of which we may be less aware. While I was working on my chapter for the anthology, on teaching ethical decision making in dance education, I was pleased to receive insightful comments from Eeva Anttila. Many of them pointed out differences between Finland and the U.S. in terms of what is considered normal and even legal.

During dialogue with my colleagues in this MADD project, I have bumped into other distinctions which have raised further questions. Is there any difference between the moral and the ethical, between the ethical and the political? We all face political/ethical/moral choices in our lives in dance. In a postmodern world, are any decisions necessarily the "right" ones? If so, how do we know what they are? How much of ethical decision making is, or should be rational, and how much should be intuitive, based on body-level feelings of which we are especially fond in dance? I admit that I don't have firm answers to these questions, but they compose the terrain of this presentation.

A consultation with dictionary.com affirmed what I thought about the common usage of these key words in English. This source indicated that *ethics* and *morals* may be used synonymously. That has been the case in most of the literature I have reviewed during this project, although the words *right* and *wrong* are used more often in referring to ethical behavior, and *good* and *bad* are more frequently used to describe moral behavior; the word *virtuous* also appears in relation to living a moral life. The one definition of ethics that appears distinctive is its meaning as "the rules or standards governing the

conduct of a person or the members of a profession.” The one definition of *morals* that is distinctive is its meaning as “rules or habits of conduct, especially of sexual conduct.”

This seems to be the primary meaning referred to by voters whose choice was based upon “moral values.” Although most definitions of the *political* made mention of political parties and governments, one meaning is particularly relevant to this conference, in its connection to “views about social relationships involving authority or power.”

Charles Rudder reveals the common ground of all three of these words in a 1999 publication focusing on what he called “practical morality” in education, or “determining what is the right and best thing to do” (p. 42). He identified two subheadings of this “practical morality,” namely ethics and politics, writing that

problems pertaining to morality are taken as ethical when they are individual and political when they are collective ... Practical political and ethical problems arise in circumstances where the morality, justice, or reasonableness of individual conduct and collective activity are disputed. (pp. 42-44)

The differentiation, then, between the political, the moral, and the ethical seems fuzzy indeed, and depends a great deal on just who is doing the defining. Perhaps definitions of these terms are less important than questions like these: Should we be teaching any virtues or values as we teach dance and as we teach people how to teach dance? If so, whose values or virtues shall we teach?

My guess is that this group gathered here could readily agree on at least some ethical/moral/political values we share in teaching dance. I find it interesting to look at lists of values and virtues proposed by individuals outside our field to stimulate our thinking. As part of my engagement in other projects, I recently discovered the work of Dr. Martin Seligman, whose credentials include serving as Fox Leadership Professor of Psychology at University of Pennsylvania, and as president of A.P.A., the American Psychological Association. He is recognized internationally as a leader in the field of Positive Psychology, which is the scientific study of positive emotion. In a 2002 book, Seligman described a three-year, well-funded study of “basic writings of all the major religious and philosophical traditions” (p. 132) by a distinguished panel of scientists, looking for which virtues cut across all of them. The panel ultimately identified six virtues. Seligman notes that there are multiple ways to achieve each virtue, which he refers to as strengths of character. The six virtues and the accompanying strengths of character are as follows:

1. Wisdom and knowledge (curiosity, love of learning, critical thinking/open-mindedness, ingenuity or “street smarts,” social/personal/emotional intelligence, perspective)
2. Courage (bravery, perseverance, integrity/honesty)
3. Love and humanity (kindness and generosity, loving/allowing oneself to be loved)
4. Justice (citizenship/loyalty, fairness, leadership)
5. Temperance (self-control, discretion/prudence, humility/modesty)
6. Transcendence (appreciation of beauty/excellence, gratitude, spirituality, forgiveness/mercy)

I don’t know Seligman’s political persuasion, but I decided I needed to try to better understand the views of the religious right in my country, those who consider themselves the “moral majority” and whose views have been treated in a pretty condescending way by many of my peers who consider themselves more “enlightened.” I do not wish to be disrespectful of others just because they hold views different from mine; many of these “others” are my students or their parents. So I also read *The Book of Virtues* by William Bennett. For those who have not heard of William Bennett, I quote from an article by Joshua Green in a June 2003 issue of *Washington Monthly*:

No person can be more rightly credited with making morality and personal responsibility an integral part of the political debate than William J. Bennett. For more than 20 years, as a writer, speaker, government official, and political operative, Bennett has been a commanding general in the culture wars. As Ronald Reagan's chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, he was the scourge of academic permissiveness. Later, as Reagan's secretary of education, he excoriated schools and students for failing to set and meet high standards. As drug czar under George H.W. Bush, he applied a get-tough approach to drug use, arguing that individuals have a moral responsibility to own up to their addiction. Upon leaving public office, Bennett wrote *The Book of Virtues*, a compendium of parables snatched up by millions of parents and teachers across the political spectrum. Bennett's crusading ideals have been adopted by politicians of both parties, and implemented in such programs as character education classes in public schools—a testament to his impact. (p. 1)

Bennett identified 10 virtues:

1. Self-discipline
2. Compassion
3. Responsibility
4. Friendship
5. Work
6. Courage
7. Perseverance
8. Honesty
9. Loyalty
10. Faith

On the surface, these lists are very similar. However, Seligman's elaboration of the six virtues to enumerate 24 strengths of character allows a greater number of positive qualities to be included. If Bennett were to do this, perhaps I could find evidence of values which are important to me and were named by Seligman, but seem to be totally missing from his list, such as justice, wisdom, critical thinking/open-mindedness, humility, appreciation of beauty, and forgiveness/mercy. But these missing values seem to me to offer some understanding of Bennett's politics.

The source of the virtues in Bennett's book is not completely clear, but he draws on stories and poetry from "human history and literature" (p. 13), especially those from Western civilization. This literature, along with his commentary, makes up *The Book of Virtues*. I will happily read some of them to my grandson one day, poetry like Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken," to start a conversation about courage, and Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech as an example of perseverance. I will not, however, read any child this poem, one of several like it which are supposed to teach the virtue of self discipline:

There was a little girl
And she had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead.
When she was good
She was very, very good,
And when she was bad she was horrid.

One day she went upstairs,
When her parents, unawares,
In the kitchen were occupied with meals,
And she stood upon her bed

In her little trundle-bed,
And then began hooraying with her heels.

Her mother heard the noise,
And she thought it was the boys
A-playing at a combat in the attic;
But when she climbed the stair,
And found Jemima there,
She took and she did spank her most emphatic. (pp. 29-30)¹

There is also a difference between Bennett and Seligman in terms of how they propose we should teach virtues. Bennett emphasizes what he calls moral training. He says the most powerful tool is the example we set for children, a statement with which I agree, but that “there is also the need for moral literacy”(p. 11); this is the reason for the literature in his book, which includes the poem above.

In contrast, Seligman writes that “building strength and virtue is not about learning, training, or conditioning, but about *discovery, creation, and ownership*” (p. 136). In other words, he cautions that we should not use propaganda-style techniques to inculcate character traits, but rather help students to discover their own path.

As I stated earlier, politicians on both sides have embraced Bennett’s book about virtues and a movement toward what is called “character education” in U.S. schools. In schools where I supervise teachers, even dance teachers are expected to take part. Some would say that we are *dance* educators, and should leave the teaching of values to parents, Sunday school teachers, and those who claim expertise in character education. I have realized, however, how problematic it can be if those of us on the political left or in the center abdicate the teaching of moral values to fundamentalists of any faith. Further, I don’t think we can avoid teaching values, even if we never mention the word. The concept of the hidden curriculum is relevant here. The hidden curriculum, a term coined by Philip Jackson in 1968, basically refers to everything that students are learning besides what teachers are explicitly teaching. This concept acknowledges that schools and teachers do more than transmit content knowledge; they also teach social norms and values, even though these do not often appear in a published course of study. Even when the explicit curriculum is something as value-neutral as how to do a plie, or the setting is a private studio rather than a school, students may be learning powerful lessons about a work ethic, about what it means to be male or female, about a relationship with their own bodies, and more. Because these lessons are not explicitly stated in the curriculum, they are rarely examined; I think they should be.

In our roles as dance educators, we do not have to make decisions about whether to go to war, whether to authorize stem cell research, or who can marry. These are the kinds of decisions we make as citizens, when we decide whom to support for public office. But as dance educators, we *do* face ethical decisions in deciding how to treat students and their families, our colleagues, and ourselves. What do we use as a basis for making our own decisions, especially when students seek us out for advice about problems they may face in their lives? For those of us who prepare dance educators of the future, how do we teach them to make the best choices when facing ethical dilemmas, especially when recognizing the diversity of moral values which may exist among our students and theirs? How do we know—how does anyone know—the right thing to do? And are they right? Is there more than one right decision in a situation? If so, does it matter which one we choose?

Nancy Freeman (1998) has an answer to some of these questions, writing,

¹ Bennett indicates that the author of the poem is unknown, but it “is sometimes attributed to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow” (p. 29).

In the increasingly pluralistic, multicultural landscape of modern society...decent, well-meaning, conscientious colleagues can disagree about issues of morality and personal conscience. They may take opposing positions in discussions about abortion, the defensibility of the death penalty, or matters of personal behavior as private as birth control, but these differences are unlikely to interfere with their success in the classroom. When they work together, however, and share the same profession, they have an explicit responsibility to embrace the same professional ethics. (p. 31)

In the USA, codes of ethics are often developed by professional organizations, to guide members in making difficult decisions. I am certainly glad that there are codes of ethics for medical providers. So it only makes sense that I would support a Code of Ethics for dance educators, such as the one developed by the USA National Registry for Dance Educators (n.d.; see attachment 1). This is a voluntary association, so that the code of ethics they developed is similarly voluntary, sort of like a guide for good behavior. There is nothing in it with which I disagree, and I am glad it exists; I think our field would be better if more private sector dance educators followed it. My state has a code of ethics for public school teachers (Code of Ethics, 1997; attachment 2), and it is not so voluntary: all teacher educators in my state are expected to make sure that our student teachers are familiar with and abide by the Code when they go into public schools. I admit that, the first time I read the Code, I thought that the guidelines seemed relevant but also obvious. For example, it seemed evident that teachers should do as much as possible to protect students from harmful conditions, and discipline students in a way that is fair and avoids humiliation.

I found out through interaction with my colleagues in Finland that codes of ethics are not so widespread in other countries. Certainly their presence does not make Americans any more ethical than citizens of other countries, and I think it is reasonable to question their value. Gerald Fain (1992) makes a good case for codes of ethics:

When there is no instruction from the profession, the practitioner alone determines what to do. In that case, practitioners use their reasoning, intuition, and/or practical experience with matters of right and wrong....In searching for guidance, the practitioner gains no benefit from the collective experience and knowledge of colleagues. As a result, the basis for determining good practice is invented by each solitary practitioner. (p.3)

Although I don't make a habit of going around reading them, I have not yet encountered any particular code of ethics with which I would disagree, although I can imagine doing so and, as I indicate later, I think they should be questioned as much as any other rules for behavior, and literature that is proposed to teach them. Like the previously mentioned lists of virtues, the problem sometimes may be more with what they do not say than with what they do say, since they are always consensus documents and compromises have to be made in order to reach consensus or gain a majority vote for approval.

So I think codes of ethics, developed by professionals and subjected to careful critical thinking, can make a useful contribution to individuals seeking to behave ethically in their professional lives, and they can give us some common ground in a diverse society. They don't, of course, tell us what to do in every circumstance we might face. For example, the National Registry Code of Ethics indicates that an ethical dance professional should teach "only those forms of dance in which he/she has received quality professional education and training." I remember the first time I was hired to teach dance in higher education; the job *also* required that I teach a gymnastics course, and I had had almost no exposure to this sport. I couldn't even do a decent cartwheel, and I told my prospective employer, who replied that I surely could figure out something to do. I took the job, and somehow muddled through a semester—being fully honest with my students about my shortcoming, and focusing on dance aspects of floor exercise in which I could share a bit of expertise. I clearly had not received quality professional training in gymnastics. Was I unethical? I am not sure.

Similarly, the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators does not provide guidance for every situation one might face. In fact, there are many situations in which different parts of the code or ethical principles from whatever source, seem to offer conflicting guidance. It is these kinds of dilemmas that I find most difficult in living my professional life. For example, do I choose to protect a well-meaning colleague just beginning her career, or a student I think she is treating unfairly? For another, how much of my energy do I give to my students, and how much do I save for myself and my family?

In the action research study that I present in my chapter of the anthology, I developed a pedagogical process through which I could introduce my students to the state-mandated Code of Ethics, but also help students find their way through the kind of real life ethical dilemmas they would be likely to face as dance educators. Most of the dilemmas I created involved conflicts between different guidelines within the Code.

Embedded in my pedagogy for teaching ethical decision making, including grading criteria for this assignment, was one of my own ethical values: I expected students not just to come up with a reasonable solution for each dilemma, but to question their own thinking which led them to the decision. In other words, I was prioritizing one particular character trait--critical thinking--not mentioned by Bennett but discussed by Seligman as a pathway to wisdom. I also have to subject my own thinking to this kind of problematizing, and I do so in my chapter, asking,

Why did I want [my students] to question decisions which even I agreed were ethically sound? Considering [questions like these] brought me to the realization that I aspired to more than just having my students follow the rules in the Code. While [they] needed...to understand the Code of Ethics to fulfill licensure requirements, I wanted them to go further. I wanted them to think about complexities, not just look for the right answer. I wanted them to look at a situation through the perspectives of all the constituents. I wanted them to deeply question their own thinking, not just to defend it.

For these teacher education students who need to learn to think ethically, isn't this a precarious position? Why do I think questioning oneself, and entertaining the possibility that one might not be right, or the possibility that there might be more than one "right," better than just learning to follow the rules, even when the rules are ethical ones? [Part of the answer is my sense that it is *questions* which propel the learning process. As soon as we are sure we know the answer, all learning stops.

Further,] I realized that I want my students to recognize that sometimes the rules may be wrong, and sometimes the only moral response is to disobey authorities, despite the consequences. Indeed, some students came to this realization during a class discussion, with the recognition that the Code was written by people like themselves, people who had no more direct access to the truth than they did. When a student asked if they could lose their job over disobeying an immoral order, I told them that I hoped each of them could think of some rule or law they would [oppose] so strongly ... that they would rather lose their job than obey.

And yet I recognized that my scenarios were sending "mixed messages" to the students. By [holding] the scenarios up against the Code of Ethics, I was implying that the solution to the problem [must be] to follow the Code. By requiring that they then problematize their decisions, I was implying that following the Code was *not* the answer. Without going any further, students might have perceived that it doesn't matter which solution one chooses, since all are problematic. By not telling students which decisions I would have made (no one asked), and by telling them that there were no clear right answers [to any of the dilemmas], I was perhaps encouraging a relativist position, which I regret. In some ways, I wondered if I could be guilty of teaching students that ethics is little more than an engaging intellectual activity. [Rushworth] Kidder warns that sometimes ... "ethics training ... leaves ethics in the realm of analysis--no conclusions, no resolutions, no ways forward, just a lot of fun talk" (1995, 59-60). (Stinson, 2004, pp. 272-273)

It was only the deep engagement of my students that affirmed for me that they did not see these dilemmas as “just a lot of fun talk.” Rather, they allowed themselves to be “troubled,” and reported phone calls to parents to ask for advice, as well as lengthy discussions with peers not in the class. Most of their written responses to the dilemmas were far longer than expected. One student wrote me later that this assignment was the most important in her entire academic career, for her personal as well as professional life.

Yet I recognize that my value of critical thinking, and belief that it should be applied to all knowledge, whether it is a list of virtues, a code of ethics, or even a sacred religious text, is not universal. I have already mentioned that critical thinking did not make Bill Bennett’s list of virtues, and some parents in my country *want* their children to blindly accept all knowledge and guidelines for behavior put forth by parents or church. While some people consider the “word of God” as found in such rules as the Ten Commandments to be ultimate truth, I am one who cautions that whatever words we think of as coming from God were written down by mere mortals, who don’t always get it right. Further, interpretations of codes and texts change over time, as humanity continues to evolve. For example, once upon a time few people questioned whether men should have more rights than women, or whether some men should be able to own others. Holy texts have been used to support slavery and the oppression of women. Even now, ideas of whether people who are older, larger and have more power, such as teachers and parents, should be able to administer physical punishment to children, are not universal, and continue to evolve.

I admit I struggle when my own values—for critical thinking on one hand and tolerance of diversity on the other—come into conflict. It is so much easier to accept and even appreciate the diverse views of others if they also appreciate mine. I continue to ask myself, how tolerant should I be of intolerance?

Still another round of questioning my own thinking was stimulated by my colleague Eeva Anttilla, who rightly questioned my reliance (in my chapter) on cognitive theories about moral development, namely those of Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) and Carol Gilligan (1982). As someone who believes that what we feel on a body level matters in dance, and in other parts of my life, how come? In making professional decisions as dance educators, when one’s gut-level response is different from one’s reasoned response, which voice should we listen to? While I did not explore this in my chapter, I have continued to think about it.

Certainly I think that bodies and feelings matter. One of the most memorable moments for me in the recent political debates in my country was when one national candidate on the side of the “traditional moral values” folks differed from his political party in supporting equal rights for gays and lesbians, noting that it was having a lesbian daughter that made him feel this way. Indeed, the feelings we have for our children—those whose bodies are so intimately connected with our own, may allow us to see the world from a different point of view. It is tempting to trust body-level feelings for such important decisions.

But not all parents are able to accept their children whose bodies, or bodily desires, seem to mark them as “other.” Most of us know tragic stories, often those of our students whose parents have rejected them for reasons that bring tears to our eyes. A gut-level response, like that of these parents, is something we should pay attention to, but I think it is as much of a problem to obediently respond to everything we feel as it is to respond to everything we hear or read. I know that individuals who are strongly opposed to homosexuality, for example, often do so from a gut-level sense of fear or repulsion. Even those of us who are supposedly enlightened liberals, like myself, sometimes get led astray by responses grounded in our reptilian brains. I remember one embarrassing example revealing that I am as implicated as anyone else: I was driving my 13 year old son to our downtown library one evening at dusk, stopped at a stop sign, when a young black man tapped on our window. My immediate response was one of fear. Fortunately, my son recognized one of his friends from school, who happened to be a couple of years older and had gone through a growth spurt since I had last seen him.

Until I recognized him as a friend, however, I was afraid. I don't want to be the kind of person who is afraid of every black man I don't know. Now, I don't think that we can rationalize away all of our fears, or that we should. At the same time, just listening to our bodies, our feelings, is not enough. We need to attend to both our feelings and our rational thinking, and somehow move forward to make the difficult decisions that we face in our lives.

Rushworth Kidder (1995) offers some useful guidance in finding our way through the ethical decisions we must make, using both emotion and reason. He says first we must discriminate between a right vs. wrong decision and a right vs. right one. He proposes several tests to determine whether a choice is wrong, the most obvious being whether or not the case involves legal wrongdoing. (This assumes, of course, that laws are ethical.) Three others involve more body- feeling: the *stench test* (Does it make your stomach turn?), the *front-page test* (How would you feel if what you are about to do showed up tomorrow morning on the front pages of the nation's newspapers?), and the *Mom test* (If I were my mother, would I do this?) (p. 184). Of course, some things that make my stomach turn do not have the same effect on my mother, and other people's mothers get queasy at things which seem quite fine to me, such as the idea of marriage between people of different races or the same sex. Further, I can think of several of my own private activities which are not wrong but I would not especially want publicized in my local newspaper. Nevertheless, these tests seem pretty useful in helping us through some of the most obvious right vs wrong situations teachers might face, such as whether or not to steal a child's lunch money, have sex or share drugs with a student, or lie on a job application.

But what about all of the other situations? A student approaches a teacher with news of an unwanted pregnancy and a request for help, without notifying her parents. We witness a serious infraction by a long-time colleague and friend — perhaps distributing answers on a high-stakes standardized test so her students will make higher scores. Perhaps the colleague is suffering from some personal trauma at the time. How does one decide what to do? Kidder writes that

Right-versus-wrong choices ... are very different from right-versus-right ones. The latter reach inward to our most profound and central values, setting one against the other in ways that will never be resolved simply by pretending that one is "wrong." (1995, p. 17)

He calls such "right vs. right" situations "ethical dilemmas." Making one right choice in an ethical dilemma means that we cannot make another which is equally right and equally important. At the same time, an ethical dilemma may mean choosing between two not-very-good alternatives, such as the ones faced by a woman with an unwanted pregnancy.

Kidder identifies four paradigmatic ethical dilemmas, and the existence of any of the four can be an indicator that one is facing a right vs. right choice. He named the four as conflicts between truth and loyalty, individual and community, short-term and long-term, and justice and mercy. He pointed out that, in resolving such conflicts, sometimes an opportunity is available, a "middle ground between two seemingly implacable alternatives" which he referred to as a "third way" (Kidder 1995, p. 167). I found that my students looked for a way to avoid making a choice between two not very good alternatives, much as I do in my own life.

But sometimes, there is no way around a difficult choice. In such situations, Kidder suggests that we consider three different approaches to moral decision making (1995, p. 154):

1. "Follow your highest sense of principle." It helps to have codes of ethics, which reflect consensus among diverse populations, as well as personal moral codes.
2. "Do what's best for the greatest number of people." In other words, if someone will be hurt regardless of which decision we make, hurt the fewest.

3. “Do what you want others to do to you.” Kidder calls this “care-based thinking,” and thus connects it to Carol Gilligan’s (1982) work, as well as Nell Noddings’ (1984) discussion of an ethic of care. It asks that we put ourselves in the place of others when making ethical decisions. However, care-based thinking is made more complex when we identify multiple “others,” sometimes with conflicting interests.

In teaching my students about the process of ethical decision making, I wanted them to be able to look at the same situation from multiple perspectives and not just go with their first thought or feeling about what to do. I found that some students had a difficult time doing this on their own: like children in Piaget’s egocentric stage of development, some had a hard time imagining any viewpoint other than their own. In the past few weeks, I have used Kidder’s approach in teaching this unit to a new group of students. As I hoped, this framework helped them to recognize that there are different ways one might view the same situation, more so than last semester when I had just given students a general directive to question their own thinking. Ones this term still had a hard time doing more than defending their chosen position, just like all the politicians whose advertisements have barely faded from their television sets since our November election. They want to assure themselves that they are right. As I have indicated, I still wonder if I am right about my desire for students to do something which they find so difficult.

Certainly, one danger to problematizing one’s thinking is that it can lead to paralysis, or the inability to make any decision. Some students have asked me at what point one decides to stop questioning and make a decision. In response, I affirmed that we as teachers do need to make decisions, and we must often do so even when we are not certain that a decision is the right one or the only right one. Rather than stop questioning, however, I prefer to make decisions with the consciousness that I indeed might not be right, that I may think about it more and change my mind, or make a different decision next time. This, of course, is an uncomfortable place to be; certainty feels so much more secure.

I know that I do not have the final truth as to how to teach ethical decision making, and still carry the uncertainty with me as I continue to teach. But I value the uncertainty, the sense that I might not be right. In fact, I mistrust most anyone who is totally sure they are right about almost anything. I am unlike many of my countrymen, who value a leader who takes a stand and follows through on it, no matter what, certain that he has the final truth. I value leaders who are willing to make difficult decisions, but always know that further information may mean another course is preferable, and are willing to change course when it is called for. I value leaders--and educators and researchers--who spend at least as much time listening to and trying to understand divergent viewpoints as they do defending their own, and demonstrate the humility that comes from knowing that there are other points of view which can be held by thoughtful individuals attending to both reason and passion. Such ground is probably too shaky for any politician in my country to stand upon and still get elected, but as an educator and researcher, such shifting terrain seems like a good place to be dancing.

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Attachment 1:

NATIONAL REGISTRY OF DANCE EDUCATORS

A Code of Ethics for the Dance Educator© and Guidelines for the Safe Practice of Teaching Dance© are published for members of the Registry.

Registered Dance Educators voluntarily agree to abide by these documents, and to this end we encourage the dance educator to:

- Teach only those forms of dance in which he/she has received quality professional education and training;
- Accurately represent his/her credentials in education, performance, and teaching experience to the public;
- Utilize current pedagogical knowledge, methodology and techniques known through research and literature and adhere to safe practices in the teaching of dance;
- Practice in environments and under conditions safe for the practice of dance;
- Respect the uniqueness of the individual student offering dance education as a positive experience for age-appropriate learning in a safe environment free from abusive language, intimidation, unhealthy competition or other negative stressors;
- Encourage total development of the student regardless of age, gender, ability or ethnicity;
- Practice professional conduct at all times, conducting all business and professional activities with honesty and integrity, while projecting a professional image in all aspects of practicing dance education
- Actively support the profession of dance education through participation in community, state, and national organizations to promote high standards in practice, research and development of dance education;
- Continue to further their own education by attending specialized conferences in dance education and related topics;
- Actively support professional dance performers and performances in their communities;

- Accept responsibility to one self, one's students and colleagues to maintain personal physical, mental and emotional good health.

National Registry for Dance Educators. (n.d.) Retrieved 11- 11-04 from <http://www.nrde.org/objectivesofnrde.html><http://www.nrde.org/objectivesofnrde.html>.

Attachment 2:

Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators

Developed by the North Carolina Professional Practices Commission in consultation with North Carolina educators. Adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education June 5, 1997

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to define standards of professional conduct.

The responsibility to teach and the freedom to learn, and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all are essential to the achievement of these principles. The professional educator acknowledges the worth and dignity of every person and demonstrates the pursuit of truth and devotion to excellence, acquires knowledge, and nurtures democratic citizenship. The educator exemplifies a commitment to the teaching and learning processes with accountability to the students, maintains professional growth, exercises professional judgment, and personifies integrity. The educator strives to maintain the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents and legal guardians, and the community, and to serve as an appropriate role model.

To uphold these commitments, the educator:

I. Commitment to the Student

- A. Protects students from conditions within the educator's control that circumvent learning or are detrimental to the health and safety of students.
- B. Maintains an appropriate relationship with students in all settings; does not encourage, solicit, or engage in a sexual or romantic relationship with students, nor touch a student in an inappropriate way for personal gratification, with intent to harm, or out of anger.
- C. Evaluates students and assigns grades based upon the students' demonstrated competencies and performance.
- D. Disciplines students justly and fairly and does not deliberately embarrass or humiliate them.
- E. Holds in confidence information learned in professional practice except for professional reasons or in compliance with pertinent regulations or statutes.
- F. Refuses to accept significant gifts, favors, or additional compensation that might influence or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

II. Commitment to the School and School System

- A. Utilizes available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning and to promote learning to the maximum possible extent.
- B. Acknowledges the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions; does not proselytize for personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice.
- C. Signs a contract in good faith and does not abandon contracted professional duties without a substantive reason.

- D. Participates actively in professional decision-making processes and supports the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings.
- E. When acting in an administrative capacity:
 - 1. Acts fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians.
 - 2. Evaluates the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.
 - 3. Protects the rights of others in the educational setting, and does not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law.
 - 4. Recommends persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the LEA, and according to the law.

III. Commitment to the Profession

- A. Provides accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and does not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.
- B. Takes action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and promotes understanding of the principles of professional ethics.
- C. Pursues growth and development in the practice of the profession and uses that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.

Author:

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