

Spring 5-18-2019

# Deconstructing Embodied White Supremacy Through Dance Movement Therapy Community Engagement Project

Jessica White

Lesley University, [jessripley@gmail.com](mailto:jessripley@gmail.com)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive\\_theses](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_theses)

Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

White, Jessica, "Deconstructing Embodied White Supremacy Through Dance Movement Therapy Community Engagement Project" (2019). *Expressive Therapies Capstone Theses*. 174.

[https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive\\_theses/174](https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_theses/174)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences (GSASS) at DigitalCommons@Lesley. It has been accepted for inclusion in Expressive Therapies Capstone Theses by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Lesley. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@lesley.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@lesley.edu).

Deconstructing Embodied White Supremacy Through Dance Movement Therapy

Community Engagement Project

Capstone Thesis

Lesley University

April 15, 2019

Jess White

Dance Movement Therapy

Kelvin Ramirez, PhD, ATR-BC, LCAT

### Abstract

Transforming institutional racism and personal prejudice is a heated topic in the counseling profession and broadly in society. An imperative cultural and individual step to be taken towards addressing racism is making white supremacy visible in order to dismantle it. Part of that step is separating whiteness from supremacy and creating an ethical, humanist, and compassionate model of whiteness. This capstone thesis was a community engagement project focused on arts as therapeutic social action. The author explored oppression and dominance through body and movement with white women who are engaged in anti-racism. Group activities included observing how white supremacy and implicit bias are communicated non-verbally and creating a body movement repertoire for how a white ally moves. The author engaged in further movement exploration alone, including envisioning and practicing interjecting white ally body language into moments of interaction with people of color or other people with less perceived status or institutional power. Moving with the material revealed both verbal and nonverbal insights into whiteness, racial identity, and concrete ways to transform and increase self-awareness of implicit body processes that affect interaction with others.

Deconstructing Embodied White Supremacy Through Dance Movement Therapy  
Community Engagement Project

**Introduction**

White supremacy is a “political-economic social system of domination” (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 145). It is a set of institutionalized and cultural values, rooted in current and historical structures of dominance such as slavery, that promotes the superiority of white people and white culture over others and provides unearned privileges to white people. Whiteness is the meaning invested by white supremacy, which defines “whites as the norm or standard for human, and people of color as a deviation from that norm” (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 148). Another way of saying this is that white people’s bodies and cultural practices are “unmarked,” while people of color’s bodies and culture are “marked.” For example, in ballroom dance, white dance styles originating from Europe have no ethnic or racial name, while dance styles considered to be from Latinx cultures are called Latin dance (Bosse, 2007). This leaves whiteness – and white supremacy – invisible and thus insidious, easier to ignore or deny. Confronting it and advocating for change transgresses centuries of established norms and self-protective thoughts and actions. “White-body supremacy is part of the operating system of America. It is in the air you and I breathe and the water you and I drink” (Menakem, 2017, p. xix).

Making white supremacy visible and dismantling it begins in individual bodies and interactions. Menakem (2017) in *My Grandmother’s Hands* explained the impact of racism on white and black bodies and the possibilities for change.

For white Americans, then, the most important task in dissolving white-body supremacy involves separating whiteness from supremacy . . . . Whiteness can mean taking responsibility.

White activists can deliberately reclaim whiteness. They can first call it out as the sleight of hand and the swindle it has always been. Then they can publicly redefine it as something caring, open, and grown up (Menakem, 2017, p. 271).

Separating whiteness from supremacy and creating an ethical, humanist, and compassionate model of whiteness was the prime motivation for this capstone thesis. The questions asked by the thesis are as follows:

How are white women's bodies and movement informed by white supremacy, implicit bias, and internalized sexism? Can the body and movement habits of white supremacy be transformed or interrupted? Does working with dominance and oppression on a body level allow for a deeper understanding of intersecting identities, how dominance is maintained, and how to interrupt oppression to be an effective ally? Is it possible to increase self-awareness, empowerment, and understanding, and to decolonize and deconstruct the white self? Can this be done by using movement and dance to explore racial identity and whiteness, internalized sexism, and implicit bias?

This capstone thesis explored oppression and dominance through body and movement with white women who are engaged in anti-racism. The themes that emerged are pelvis and spine, relationship to others, and negative and positive attributes of whiteness. Group activities included observing how white supremacy and implicit bias is communicated non-verbally and creating body and movement repertoire for how a white ally moves. The author engaged in further movement exploration alone, including envisioning and practicing interjecting white ally body language into moments of interaction with people of color or other people with less perceived status or institutional power.

The matters of whiteness and implicit bias are extremely important, both for white therapists and for any other white people who wish to be ethical, culturally humble, and egalitarian in their interactions with others. Implicit bias has proven to be one of the more intractable facets of human behavior (Payne, Vuletich, & Lundberg, 2017). In interactions between white people and people of color implicit bias serves to maintain white supremacist patriarchy. Before looking at implicit bias, however, one must first look at racial identity, not only subconscious cultural messages about whiteness but also how those manifest. Race, racism, racial power and prejudice are all fundamentally about bodies. The bodies of people of color have been enslaved, beaten, lynched, exploited, exoticized, shot, raped, forcefully sterilized, demeaned, and dehumanized by people with white bodies for centuries (DiAngelo, 2012; Gottschild, 1998; Menakem, 2017). This work therefore must be done at the site of power and oppression: the body. Both domination and oppression are communicated through bodies, felt through bodies (Caldwell & Johnson, 2012; Cantrick, Anderson, Leighton, & Warning, 2018; Johnson, 2015), and can only be transformed through bodies. Thus, expressing the embodied tensions of whiteness provides a direct, explicit, conscious experience of being white. One can explore explicitly communicating whiteness, communicating dominance, and play with how to transform nonverbal communication of dominance into nonverbal communication of compassion and understanding.

Part of transforming institutional racism involves making whiteness visible (Case, 2012), not only in culture and language and institutions, but also in bodies and in movement. Whiteness is a quality of bodies, minds, and hearts (Menakem, 2017). Working with whiteness through the modality of dance movement therapy enables physiological change that results in behavioral change (Gray, 2017). Implicit bias reactions are founded in physiological or neurological

responses to a specific person or situation (Gray & Porges, 2017). Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) and somatic techniques such as body awareness practices, meditative movement practices, and other practices that facilitate interoception can help an individual to identify the internal thoughts and sensations that signal a physiological reaction to a situation (Johnson, 2015; Gray & Porges, 2017). Dance Movement Therapy, as a body- and movement-based psychotherapeutic modality, can be used in multiple ways to shift an individual's physiology in any moment (Gray, 2017). This allows opportunities to pause, interrupt a response to an implicit bias, and act from a place of compassion. It becomes possible to create space for new neural pathways to form, foundations for new physiological habits or possibilities (Gray, 2017).

For white women in particular, this is a significant question because white women generally experience an intersection of racial privilege and gender oppression (Case, 2012; Fine, Stewart, & Zucker, 2000). This gives them a unique lens into both situations and thus potentially a different kind of opening towards individual and structural change than white men. Working with the embodied experience of both oppression and entitlement opens up possibilities for learning and understanding. For white women engaged in anti-racism or white racial identity work, bringing in the body could be a powerful adjunct. Given the already existing vulnerability of marginalized folks, the words of current political figures condoning abusive and exploitive behavior on the part of white people towards others, and the increasingly heterogeneous, and stratified, society we live in, any and all push towards ethical, human connections with all people is ever more imperative.

### **Literature Review**

This capstone thesis was structured as a community engagement project. The author chose this option for several reasons. The author is part of a community of white people, and

especially white women, who are striving towards looking at their own racial biases. Many of these white women are also drawn to dance as an expressive and community building practice. The author wanted to explore ways that dance and movement could be integrated into anti-racist education for white people and thought it likely that several women from this community would be willing to engage in the exploration as well. The author's philosophy as a Dance Movement Therapist-in-training is one of recognizing the client's own authority and creating person-, relationship-, and community-centered therapeutic alliances. Thus, the author felt that it was most ethical to engage the community in creating the thesis, rather than imposing a pre-conceived structure. The author is also interested in Dance Movement Therapy as social and political action for future career directions and felt that this thesis could be an opportunity to explore DMT as social action on a personally and professionally meaningful topic.

### **Movement and Identity**

Using movement to investigate whiteness, implicit bias, and the intersection of gender oppression with whiteness is a recent development in the realm of anti-oppression education and critical race theory. However, there are a number of qualitative studies of how people conceive of whiteness as well as more recent arts-based research on using movement to understand and process racial and/or gender identity. Thomas (2015) engaged in a community based participatory research (CBPR) project with middle school girls. Thomas (2015) integrated dance and movement with the concept of narrative identity to facilitate the girls' investigation of race and gender, and oppression, as a group. As is often the case with arts-based CBPR, the content and shape of the research and the group shifted over the course of the ten weekly meetings, based on the contributions of the participants. The research culminated in a performance that the girls

presented to the school. The audience of classmates reported feeling inspired and curious after the performance.

Rot (2018), on the other hand, used a Dance Movement Therapy modality to study the experience of a white Dance Movement Therapist. The study found that the intensive use of dance and movement to study race resulted in accelerated progression through the steps of white racial identity development (Helms, as cited in Rot, 2018). Rot (2018) had an experience of coming to terms with whiteness and an increased sense of confidence about building ethical therapeutic relationships with clients from marginalized populations based on the researcher's stronger sense of racial identity.

As is often the case with Dance Movement Therapy, these studies focused on empowerment of the dancing individual, whether client or therapist, or both, in addition to comprehending and processing significant identities. Many therapy modalities have as their end goal some form of empowerment of the client, and DMT is no different. The use of embodiment in DMT is unique among counseling and psychotherapies and can provide both a concrete and abstract container for processing and healing. In addition, the fundamental physiological shifts in an individual that can happen during a DMT session allow for emotional and mental shifts that can influence one's perspective (Gray, 2017). The author of this capstone thesis, a white woman, chose DMT as the modality for this project because of the possibility of physiological shift that can be experienced as or result in empowerment. Empowering white women in addition to understanding their identities and how they communicate those through movement can give them strength to deconstruct their identities and move through their own process of racial identity development outside of the workshop environment.

Other researchers have had similar ideas: Gordon-Giles & Zidan (2009) incorporated dance and movement into an educational program focused on empowering Arab and Israeli women. The hypothesis of the researchers was that empowering both Arab and Israeli women would decrease their prejudice and hostility toward each other. The outcome of the study showed that the intervention increased liberal attitudes toward women's societal roles. Due to population and time constraints, the study was not able to examine whether the intervention or the increase in liberal attitudes affected prejudicial beliefs toward Arab women held by Israeli women, or toward Israeli women held by Arab women.

Leseho & Maxwell (2010) also studied women's empowerment through dance and movement. Their qualitative study interviewed women globally about their personal experiences using dance as a healing and coping strategy. Although the study participants were primarily found by advertising at dance events and thus were already biased toward dance, the study does show that some women have found dance to be an essential source of transformation, personal power, and spiritual connection.

### **Whiteness and Racial Identity**

The facets of whiteness and critical whiteness studies most relevant to this project are how whiteness is embodied and communicated by bodies and white racial identity development. The literature on how whiteness is embodied, particularly in gross movements such as those involved in dance and sports, is fairly paltry. The author of this capstone thesis found very few qualitative or quantitative studies on how whiteness may be expressed through movement, and on general movement qualities that might be defined as white. This is partially due to the invisibility of whiteness, which leads to white racial qualities being unmarked (Bosse, 2007). Much literature contrasted the racial markers that are used to describe the movement of people of

color, i.e. Latin or African American, in order to highlight descriptors that are culturally considered unmarked but in fact describe whiteness (Bosse, 2007; Holmes, 2014). This parallels the way in which white culture will use racial markers of other cultures as a way to define what white culture is and is not, without explicitly claiming any particular qualities or cultural affectations as white (Bosse, 2007).

In Bosse's (2007) ethnographic study of ballroom dance, the researcher examined white racial markers in codified dance, as compared to Latin or other racial markers. Although white dance does not have a racial name – it is typically called “modern” or “smooth” – it can be distinguished from other racial or ethnic dances. Qualities such as how the body is held, how the moves are executed, how the partners relate to one another during partner dance, and where tension is held or released in the body during a dance all have distinct attributes in white dancing styles. Participants in the study frequently distinguished white from Latin dancing by describing white dances as elegant and Latin dances as sexy. A significant element in how dominant white culture defines elegance and sexiness is how the pelvis moves during the dance. Bosse (2007) argued that the description of Latin dance as sexy is one imposed by white cultures in the often subconscious process of creating white racial identity and does not emerge from within Latinx cultures.

Holmes (2014) examined Pilates from a racial and cultural lens and highlights the ways in which Pilates is a highly racialized movement exercise form. Pilates is historically associated with ballet, which is also a significantly racialized dance form, though it is unmarked culturally in a way similar to white forms of ballroom dance. Holmes (2014) also argued that Pilates, in fact, reinforces stereotypically white ways of moving, particularly in the pelvis and spine; movement patterns which specifically communicate dominance. In general, the pelvis is held still

and the spine vertical, which is a strong contrast to other cultures where pelvic and spinal mobility is prioritized.

The Europeanist aesthetic denigrates movements of the hips, which implies that the converse, stable or stationary hips, is preferable. The hips become an important component of understanding the embodiments of racial stereotypes, but also of revealing how these stereotypes are related to issues of power and domination of one body type over another. (Holmes, 2014, p. 62)

This relates to the aforementioned study of ballroom dance, where the description of “sexy” Latin dance implies movement of the hips and “elegant” unmarked white dance implies stable hips and spine with head held high.

Both Bosse (2007) and Holmes (2014) illustrated stereotypical white movement patterns that reinforce dominance as seen in codified movement forms. These movement patterns could be extrapolated to everyday movement as well. Menakem (2017) didn’t directly address the body language used to communicate dominance, but the text laid out a broad description of the ways in which white settlers, and the people of Europe prior to colonization of the Americas, brutalized and traumatized each other in the name of power and dominance and control. The stiff spine and hips that now characterize white body language – dominance hidden in plain sight as “elegance” and “gracefulness” – evolved along with ballet, a dance form that emerged entirely from the courts of the nobility in Western Europe and had very little relationship to the folk dances of those regions, outside of coopting and reforming folk dances to ballet styles (Gottschild, 1998). The concept of whiteness emerged historically as a way for those nobility of Western Europe, transplanted in colonized areas of the world, to maintain their supremacy and hegemony by allying themselves with people on the basis of skin color and heritage over class or

gender or other distinctions against people with different ethnic heritage (Menakem, 2017; Gottschild, 1998). In that process, the body language of the most powerful people of Western Europe was embodied and subsequently owned by all white people.

Johnson (2015) primarily studied the somatic and non-verbal effects of oppression on bodies, although not specifically the ways that dominance and supremacy are communicated non-verbally. Johnson's (2015) conceptual framework for the ways in which bodies are impacted by oppression was formulated for working with oppressed bodies to unlearn oppression, however, the framework could be modified to apply to dominant bodies. For white women, who experience both oppression and dominance, such a model may be particularly useful. The foundational points of the framework are as follows:

- We learn oppression implicitly and relationally, through everyday experiences of social and political life.
- Our experiences shape (and are shaped by) multiple and intersecting social identities.
- Our bodies are a primary locus of these intersecting social identities.
- We learn about social systems through interpersonal nonverbal interactions.
- The nonverbal component of social interaction is one of the most powerful, ubiquitous, and insidious means of social control.
- Oppressive social relations are characterized by asymmetrical nonverbal interactions across a range of behavioral categories.
- Trauma is mediated through the body and manifests in embodied experiences of post-traumatic stress symptoms.
- Oppression is traumatic. (Johnson, 2015, p. 86)

The first six points of this framework can easily be applied to bodies that have learned how to be dominant in social relationships. Johnson's (2015) work involves making the nonverbal experience of oppression conscious and explicit and using that knowledge to deconstruct embodied oppression. In the same way, embodied white dominance and supremacy can be made explicit and deconstructed.

There are a number of myths inherent in white supremacist culture that reinforce the need for dominating behaviors. These are often subconscious cultural messages that link concepts of whiteness and dominance behaviors. One of the most significant myths is laid out by Menakem (2017). This cultural myth tells white people that black bodies are strong and indestructible, while white bodies are weak and easily damaged, particularly by black bodies. Because of this embodied vulnerability of white bodies, black bodies must be subjugated by white social power, otherwise white bodies risk destruction (Menakem, 2017, p. 98). Menakem (2017) argued that this message is a way for white supremacist culture to reinforce a primal fear response to the unknown, or to perceived threats, whether real or not (p. 99). Although the fear response is a biological, physiological process common to all humans and other animals, it has been manipulated and cultivated, used to create a system of hierarchical dominance and power in service to white men. White people do not need to dominate black people, or other people of color, in order to be safe. Yet, even now, there are alt-right white supremacist organizations that play on this fear, as do prominent political figures (Black, 2018).

Rarely does conscious white racial identity acknowledge this and other myths of fragility. However, many white people who pursue anti-racist work and education come to some understanding of the myriad ways that racism is inherent in their lives. Many researchers cited Helms's theory of white racial identity developed in the 1990's as a way to understand how

white people might shift from a lack of awareness of race and racism to working to end racism over a period of time (Case, 2012; Malott, Paone, Schaeffe, Cates, & Haezlip, 2015; Rot, 2018). Malott et al. (2015) performed a qualitative study of white people engaged in anti-racist action, both to understand how they conceptualized whiteness and to expand Helms's theory.

The primary question guiding Malott et al.'s (2015) study was: "what are the actual, lived tenets of an antiracist white identity?" (p. 334). The researchers interviewed ten people who they identified as being publicly anti-racist about their experiences and understanding of white racial identity. There were several main themes that emerged from the interview process, including "(a) whiteness as oppressive, (b) reconstructing white identity, (c) antiracism as essential to a positive self-concept, (d) WRID [white racial identity development] as ongoing and nonlinear" (Malott et al., 2015, p. 336). Many participants, despite their identity as anti-racist white people engaged in anti-racist action, felt an unresolvable tension between being white and working to eliminate white privilege. This was marked by difficulties with creating and maintaining relationships with people of color and the fact that living in a way that did not accrue or rely on white privilege seemed fundamentally impossible, despite Helms' (as cited in Malott et al., 2015) assertion that it could be possible. This was due to the analysis the participants espoused that all systems are founded in oppression and racial prejudice.

Todd & Abrams (2011) faced head-on the tensions inherent in being white while working to end racism in their study of ways to introduce whiteness studies and racial identity development to white counseling students. They used the term *white dialectics* to describe the tensions inherent in white racial identity development. The researchers theorized that white people often may inhabit many or opposing viewpoints at the same time and that the tension between these viewpoints adds to the difficulty and confusion many white people experience

when the subject of racism arises. The study was informed by grounded theory and involved conducting two rounds of interviews of white undergraduate students at a Midwestern university. Numerous dialectics were apparent in the coding of the interviews; the researchers focused on those related to a critical understanding of power. These included points such as self-concept: as white or not white and places in between; structural inequality: society has an even playing field or has an uneven playing field; and color blindness: color blind or color conscious (Todd & Abrams, 2011, p. 368). The researchers found that many participants would, in fact, express different positions along these and other spectrums during the course of the interviews. Todd and Abrams concluded that a mature white racial identity would be able to navigate the tension of ambiguity and discomfort of having privilege while simultaneously working to eliminate that privilege.

Case (2012) performed a qualitative study of white women engaged in anti-racism action and conversation, in the interest of understanding how they conceptualize both whiteness and anti-racism and the intersection of the two. The researcher observed discussion groups at two universities and performed interviews with individual members. Many of the participants reported tensions and ambiguity similar to that in the Todd and Abrams (2011) study. In addition, however, as a group of only white women, “all of the women interviewed acknowledged that being a woman and experiencing gender oppression provides them an avenue for understanding that most White anti-racist men do not possess” (Case, 2012, p. 86). A number of participants also noted that they felt more able to talk about racism with other women, while talking with white men was more difficult. There also was acknowledgement of other white women engaging in subtle racist behaviors. Case also addressed the reality that white people deconstructing racism can be problematic since it is often invisible to them. Finally, Case (2012)

concluded that “it may be useful to conceptualize white anti-racism as a personal striving rather than a goal with a definitive ending because unraveling one’s racism never stops” (p. 91).

### **Intersection of Gender**

Although the main topic of this thesis is race, it is both impossible and irresponsible to ignore the intersection of gender. The initial impetus to work with a community of specifically white women, rather than people of any gender, was guided by a sense that, as alluded to in the previous paragraph, the experience of gender oppression may make white women more open to and capable of examining white supremacy and ways that it is expressed in their bodies. This may be the case, especially with women and girls who identify as feminist (Fine et al., 2000). However, it is often just as likely that white women will align with white supremacy and espouse values that serve to maintain white privilege, such as the concepts of universal shared experiences and of equal opportunity (Fine et al., 2000, p. 68). In this way, white women embody the tension and ambiguity of being white with more or less awareness in the United States today. This tension can be seen in the general voting direction of white women in the last presidential election (Rogers, 2016). Case (2012) addressed this circumstance aptly: “For white women, socialization not only encourages being competitive with other women for the attention of men, but also involves disowning power and privilege while aligning with powerful white men” (p. 81).

For these reasons, any work with white women, even those who claim anti-racist work as part of their role in life, must also address the ways that oppression is experienced and held in the body. White women may experience both dominating others and being dominated in the same moment or hour. Gordon-Giles & Zidan (2009) hypothesized that empowering women, through movement and education, would lead to a decrease in prejudice and antagonism between Israeli

and Palestinian women. While they were unable to fully test their hypothesis, the thought behind it is sound and worth pursuing. A movement-based, process-oriented, and educational experience that integrates the self-investigatory and empowerment focus of Dance Movement Therapy with a felt-sense of both oppression and domination, similar to Johnson's (2015) somatic framework for unlearning oppression, could be a particularly poignant way for white women to understand their own whiteness, how they communicate dominance, and how to shift their body habits of dominance. Such a curriculum may also provide an opportunity for white women to examine and deconstruct their internalized sexism that contributes to their experiences of oppression.

Studies such as the one performed by Scheffers et al. (2017) show how the most extreme experiences of patriarchal oppression can affect a woman's relationship to her body. Many women experience less extreme, but over time cumulatively damaging, instances of patriarchal oppression. In the Scheffers et al. (2017) study the vast majority of participants were sexually abused as children. Childhood sexual abuse of girls is a significant symptom and marker of a patriarchal system that relies upon the disempowerment, disassociation, and oppression of women in order to maintain the power and control of men (Wolf, 2013). Scheffers et al. (2017) found that women with childhood trauma from sexual abuse had significantly less body awareness and body satisfaction, and a more negative body attitude, as compared to a healthy control sample. All of these factors of body experience can contribute to a woman's sense of empowerment or disempowerment. This is a basic principle of Dance Movement Therapy (Gray & Porges, 2017).

### **Implicit Bias**

A significant factor driving the non-verbal communication of dominance by white people towards people of color is that of implicit bias. The polyvagal theory of nervous system structure

and function offers a body-based perspective on the process of implicit bias as experienced by individual nervous systems. Neuroception, a core concept of polyvagal theory, is an implicit, non-verbal, non-conscious, physiological process by which the body registers and responds to real or perceived danger or safety (Gray & Porges, 2017). Another significant concept related to polyvagal theory that is relevant to the experience of implicit bias is that of the social engagement system. This is a complex system of muscles and nerves that control, among other things, facial expressions and vocal tone. These are the tools our bodies use to communicate our physiological state to each other (Gray & Porges, 2017). We can also use these tools to calm others. Voice tone, facial expression, a familiar and “safe face” all are critical in self-regulation and co-regulation of our nervous system arousal (Gray & Porges, 2017). When an individual registers danger, often an implicit, unconscious process, their voice tone, facial expressions, posture and more will be affected such that they will engage in defensive or aggressive behaviors toward another, rather than connective or openly engaged behaviors. When this model is applied to the interactions of white people, taught culturally to fear and denigrate black people, with black people and other people of color, it is possible to see how a well-inculcated cultural message of danger and fear and inferiority leads to nonverbal behavior on the part of white people to create and maintain safety by sending an implicit message of dominance and superiority to people of color.

Meadors and Murray (2014) attempted an initial study into measuring nonverbal indicators of bias toward black people. They based their premise on previous studies showing that racial bias is influenced more by nonverbal behavior than verbal and that implicit racial bias is transmitted nonverbally between individuals in a form of social influencing (Castelli & Tomelleri, as cited in Meadors & Murray, 2014). The researchers examined facial expression and

gesture, though not vocal tone, in study subjects asked to describe either a white or a black criminal. The study did not examine direct interaction, only speaking about an imagined criminal based on an ambiguous television segment. The researchers hypothesized that subjects speaking about a white criminal would show more anxiety because the idea of a white criminal is counter to expected stereotypes. The most significant findings of the study were that women's nonverbal behavior more accurately reflected their affect than men's nonverbal behavior. There was a marginally significant increase in behavior signifying anxiety when describing a white criminal. The main conclusion of the article was that more research needs to be done in this area.

Another look at implicit bias, from the perspective of large groups of people, keeping in mind the concept of social influence, was articulated by Payne, Vuletich, and Lundberg (2017). They argued that implicit bias measures, such as the Harvard Implicit Association Test, are more accurate when the results are placed in large geographical groups. That in fact, implicit bias is almost entirely a matter of social influence on unconscious processes and is not reliably an accurate measure of each individual's conscious beliefs. They supported this thesis by showing several different ways of mapping data results of implicit bias studies geographically (Payne, et al., 2017). This argument is a significant adjunct to the discussion of polyvagal theory and how an implicit nervous system response to perceived, or socially/culturally trained ideas of danger can lead to subtle facial expressions and voice tone that unconsciously communicate defensiveness or aggression (Gray & Porges, 2017). In addition, this addresses the prevalence of liberal white people who cannot see or feel their own nonverbal, implicit communications of bias that are in stark contrast to their stated beliefs and values (DiAngelo, 2012).

### **Dance Movement Therapy and Social Justice**

The final, and in many ways, most important tenet and interest that influenced this thesis is the long-term and important work of integrating social justice into the field of Dance Movement Therapy, and using DMT to actively promote and create social justice, both in the professional field of counseling and therapy and in the greater society of the United States and beyond. Cantrick, Anderson, Leighton, & Warning (2018) articulate a call to fulfill the need for an honest look at the field of DMT and deepening examinations of personal bias, professional bias, and professional training in interrupting nonverbal communication of dominance. As a modality that works directly with bodily expression and nonverbal communication of psyche, DMT is uniquely positioned to address the power dynamics of racial hierarchies as we embody them socially. Both white and black bodies carry their own historical, social, and intergenerational traumas that directly affect the ways we relate to each other (Menakem, 2017). DMT can and must offer an opening and pathway toward healing these traumas.

Caldwell and Johnson (2012), in their article that addressed social justice in DMT research, pointed out that the act of observing a body moving, when a member of a dominant social group observes a marginalized person, can in itself be an act of domination. The marginalized person may modify the way they move in response to unconscious communications of oppression or may move in ways that the observer interprets incorrectly due to their status and position blinding them. Caldwell and Johnson (2012) point out that the experience of embodiment to those who are marginalized and alienated from dominant society can be one of liberation and empowerment. It is imperative that Dance Movement Therapists do all they can to foster and support an experience of embodiment that is authentic to the individual, including examining deeply ingrained implicit biases. Dance Movement Therapy can be used in a similar way to support the self-examination, education, and growth of other people interested in

cultivating a truly ethical, just, and humane society. Other healing practitioners working with body and mind are addressing this need as well. Practitioners have been articulating and offering constructive ways to work with the body and mind to create change and work to end oppression. Both Menakem (2017) and Johnson (2015), who work in the field of somatic psychology, have offered concrete body-based interventions for examining and transforming oppression and dominance. It is time for DMT to bring accumulated years of wisdom and knowledge to the literature and methodology addressing the healing and transformation of power dynamics, differentials, and institutional oppression held in our bodies. This thesis is one such contribution from the perspective of Dance Movement Therapy.

### **Methods**

The purpose of this inquiry was to generate ideas and activities for a possible educational model applicable to white women, to examine and bring to conscious awareness the nonverbal and movement manifestations of white supremacy, to envision and enact a new, non-supremacist whiteness, and to use mindfulness and movement interventions to interrupt implicit bias responses during interaction. There are five primary assumptions underlying the study.

First, it is possible and necessary, from a humanist and ethical perspective, to create a white racial identity that actively resists supremacist messages from the dominant culture. Second, white supremacy and implicit bias are initially and most powerfully communicated nonverbally, both between members of the majority group and from members of the dominant group to those of the oppressed group. Third, implicit bias is an unconscious social communication that is initiated by a physiological response to perceived threat, which is often created by social and cultural messaging about a target group that serves to maintain white dominance. Additionally, white women straddle the line of oppressor and oppressed, which

positions them uniquely to understand and empathize with other oppressed peoples, while having a degree of power and privilege within the white supremacist system that may enable them to help to raise up other oppressed peoples and work for the liberation of all. Finally, implicit bias as an unconscious physiological response can be interrupted and counteracted with dedicated practice of mindfulness and movement interventions.

For this capstone thesis, the author gathered a small temporary community of white women together for one four-hour session in which the group talked and moved about whiteness. The author also held two solo movement sessions after the group session to process and further the author's thinking and moving about the subject. The community engagement session worked primarily with the topic of whiteness. The author worked more with implicit bias and the intersection of gender in the solo movement sessions. The author journaled about all movement sessions and created videos of one of the solo movement sessions.

The small temporary community was drawn from within a larger community of acquainted white women who were familiar with expressive movement or mindfulness and were interested in and engaged in anti-racism work personally and professionally. The author found participants through sending several emails to prospective participants. The initial email simply asked if individuals would like to participate in the thesis project, with a brief explanation of what was involved. The second email was sent after respondents replied with a yes or no and contained a more thorough explanation of the purpose of the thesis and the movement session that they would attend. At that time, the author identified a location and time for the event. The time was primarily based on the availability of participants. The location was a dance/massage/therapy studio. The author taped up three large sheets of paper on the wall with the steps of white racial identity development created by Helms (as cited in Malott et al., 2015),

and quotes about white cultural relationships to the pelvis by Holmes (2014), Studd and Cox (2013), and Hackney (2002).

Seven prospective participants returned emails confirming that they would participate; at the time of the movement session, five arrived. The other two had forgotten. The five participants self-identified as white and active in or interested in anti-racist action. Four of the five participants identified as cis-gender women, and one identified as non-binary. This person engaged with the project knowing that it was oriented towards women and felt comfortable with the use of language and inhabiting a gendered temporary space that was specific to women. All participants were residents of Portland, OR. All were in the age range between 30 and 50. The author was familiar with all of them; one was an acquaintance, one was the author's cousin, the rest were friends in close community. All participants knew at least one other participant in addition to the author.

Once all the participants had arrived, the session began with moving together to music. The author selected an upbeat, rhythmic song, and the group moved in a circle, mirroring each other's movements. The author used a "pass the leadership" activity to facilitate taking risks while connecting through rhythmic entrainment.

After the warm up, the group sat down and introduced themselves. The author asked the participants to share a personal fact, some information about their background in anti-racist action and work, and their intention for engaging in this workshop. The author shared some of the assumptions and questions that were informing the thesis work. The facilitation style was leading from within the circle, sharing process and expecting collaboration, participation, and contribution. This is both the author's personal style and the philosophical orientation of community based participatory research (Thomas, 2015).

The next task in the workshop was creating community guidelines. The group brainstormed guidelines together, with the author scribing them onto a large sheet of newsprint that was then hung on the wall for all to see at any time. The author emphasized confidentiality, asking that all participants agree to not use specific information shared by others in the room outside of the time and space set aside for the workshop. In addition, the author provided an overview of the white racial identity development model that was hung on the wall. It provided a container for the work of the session. Although the model developed by Helms (as cited in Malott et al., 2015) may not be as nuanced or as complete as it could be (Malott et al., 2015), it offers a digestible and understandable guiding structure.

After creating the guidelines, the group had twenty minutes to write in their journals about whiteness, specifically what qualities came to mind when thinking about how they move as white people or how whiteness feels in the body. The group was then asked to share some of their writing as the group made a list together. In the process of listing, the group engaged in a discussion about what it means to be in a white body. The group refined the larger list into four qualities or concepts that they wanted to explore with movement.

After this discussion, the group engaged in three movement activities. The first was walking around the room, trying on each quality consecutively with variations in speed, and noticing how each felt in the body. Then the group chose partners and took turns witnessing each other embody the concepts for five minutes per mover. After each person moved, the pairs had a few minutes to debrief. The group then gathered again to talk as a group and share experiences and insights. The group asked for more time to move and for opportunities to explore interaction. The author gave the group another five to ten minutes to move as they wished.

The next section of the workshop was again a discussion of qualities or themes. It was not preceded by solo journaling time, by the request of the participants. The author chose to frame the inquiry as: if the participants could define whiteness themselves, how would they define it. The definition could be derived from an internal sense of values, ethics, and desires, including those of anti-oppression. The movement exercise that followed was different from the previous experiences, also by request of the participants. They were given about 15 minutes to move freely, while the author read aloud the list of themes as movement prompts.

The closing movement activity again took place in a circle, and this time each participant took a turn dancing in the center of the circle while embodying their definition of whiteness. The participants were encouraged to make eye contact while embodying and moving in the circle. The group took ten minutes to process verbally the last experience and wrap up the time together.

The author journaled after this experience. The author reached out several weeks later to invite participants to join one or two more similar movement sessions, around the themes of implicit bias and internalized sexism. However, one participant replied stating that they did not feel comfortable coming to another session because one of the other participants had violated the confidentiality agreement. This experience prompted the author to take more time to move alone, journal, and reach out for academic and research support. Thus, the author did not hold any more movement sessions with participants but held two solo one-hour sessions in a dance studio that the author often rents for solo daytime dance rehearsals. During these sessions, the author alternated between talking while moving and journaling. The author did not use music but did film several small sections of movement during the first solo session. The author used this time to process the violation of the group agreements, to consolidate and clarify the intent of the

thesis, to process internalized sexism, and to explore ways to interrupt an implicit bias response. The author also evaluated the group experience and articulated what went well and what might be better done differently. The author then felt prepared to hold another movement session with participants, and reached out again, but this time many people did not reply and those who did were unavailable.

### **Results**

The location used for the group session had been used by the author for previous movement workshops. The studio was a comfortable size and was outfitted to provide a sense of cozy warmth. The warm atmosphere was an important part of the author's trauma-informed approach, which took into consideration the potential for traumatic stress to be experienced by participants during the movement session. Applying a trauma-informed lens enabled the author to track participants' level of engagement and dissociation. Given the emotionally challenging nature of the work, the author deemed this a necessary therapeutic tool.

Indeed, the "pass the leadership" warm up at the beginning of the session seemed to bring up an underlying discomfort among the participants associated with taking risks. However, at the conclusion of the warm up, there was a clearer sense of cohesion and grounding among the group members. The change in grounding and cohesion was apparent in body language cues such as deeper breaths coming from the belly, increased eye contact among group members, and a relaxation of muscle tone in arms and shoulders. This experience set a precedent for the group that risking vulnerability would lead to more connection intra- and interpersonally.

The process of creating community continued with introductions. The author noted that asking participants to share their anti-racism education and background led to some verbal and body language of comparison and competition, with the implied end goal being heavily educated

and engaged in anti-racism work. Among the cues of comparison and discomfort that were noted were shifts into closed or retreating posture, increased self-touch or fidgeting, decreased eye contact and lowered voice tone, and verbal phrases of apology such as, “I haven’t done \_\_\_\_\_, but ...” Although the information the participants provided was useful to the author, the fact that it led to subtle competition that may have subverted the process of community building decreased its importance.

When describing the facilitation philosophy of leading from within the circle, the author asked for willingness and openness from the participants. For the author, enacting social justice and anti-oppression principles while facilitating is an ethical obligation. The participants seemed willing to engage in the community process actively. One participant challenged language commonly used when discussing anti-oppression and white supremacy, stating that the meanings degrade when used repeatedly. This question was later addressed by embodying the verbal language and thus reinvesting meaning in it.

Creating the community guidelines led to taking a step deeper into the topic. The activity resulted in rich conversation about how it feels to look at uncomfortable aspects of the self and to be witnessed by others in that process. All participants engaged and contributed. The creation of the guidelines provoked a sense of confrontation or destabilization, as evidenced by increased non-verbal cues of discomfort such as repeated shifts of torso and limbs, as the participants began to conceptualize the expansive and weighted task that the group was gathered to work on. The author responded to the group by introducing the white racial identity development model as a stabilizing concept for the process being engaged.

Participants engaged in the discussion about qualities of whiteness with emotion and some were visibly challenged. Voice tones were at times raised or strident. The general level of

muscle tension increased and breathing became shallower. Though the participants were not asked where their concepts of whiteness originated, the author hypothesized that the primary influence was internalized messages about whiteness both from dominant culture and from critical race and whiteness studies that have influenced anti-racism education. Each participant shared both general themes, related to cultural stereotypes, and specific images that were reflective of their personal experience. The qualities listed were: order, rigid, brittle, self-consciously caring what other people think, stuckness, stiff, pretty, repetitive, entitlement, dominance, power, hiding from impact, unaware of impact, getting caught in a lie, repression, lockjaw, not connected to earth, tight ass, and mind-body separation. This list was narrowed down to four primary concepts for movement exploration: rigidity, entitlement, fragmentation/disconnection, and fragility/fear. These four themes moved the group from the conceptual realm into the personal realm.

In the context of this movement session that addressed the embodied manifestation of white supremacy, the majority of the qualities listed were interpreted by the group as problematic, or part of the perpetuation of white supremacy. Group members posed difficult questions, such as “What did our ancestors do that was healthy?” The author proposed that the only way to be a truly effective ally is to accept that one is white and act from that knowledge and acceptance of the fact of one’s whiteness (Rot, 2018; Menakem, 2017; Cantrick et al., 2018; DiAngelo, 2012). The author developed the group movement session as a step toward accepting whiteness. During this discussion the group also talked about the pelvis, both as a site of dominance and white supremacy, and also a massively significant site of oppression for women. Due to time constraints and because this movement session was primarily created with the

intention to work with whiteness, the group was not able to tackle the intersection of gender at the level of complexity it required.

The process discussion after the first two movement activities was poignant and brave. Several group members shared a sense of gaining insight into habitual patterns. In many cases, these habitual patterns were felt to be negative or highlighted their entitlement and modes of dominance. Several of the group members had nonverbal interactions while moving. These interactions seemed to bring up strong emotional responses and internal insights. Many participants expressed discomfort and tension. Additionally, many shared ways that they might apply their insights to their lives.

After moving again, the group discussion about redefining whiteness centered on the profound question of whether it is possible or allowable to have or to create a regenerative, socially responsible sense of whiteness. One participant brought up the philosophy and approach of Body-Mind Centering, a somatic healing and movement modality, which is based on cellular patterns of development that occur in all human bodies. Eventually the participants were ready to create a list of attributes that they thought were beneficial and wanted to embody as white people. The attributes or themes were as follows: spirals, pulse, rhythm, flexibility, openness (to others' humanity and ways of seeing and being in the world), moving toward joy and pleasure, saying yes, following impulse, curiosity, gratitude, softening, fluidity, breath, connection to earth and elements, relationship, embodiment, vulnerability, exploring, relating to space in many ways, touch, celebration, playfulness, humor, feet on ground, respect for the natural world we inhabit, and wildness (connection to ourselves as part of nature). Some of these themes were opposites of the first list and some addressed different aspects of being human.

The movement exploration following the second listing exercise was more varied, more expressive, more active, and participants produced more spontaneous sounds than during the previous movement exercises. The structure of the regenerative movement session was radically different from the supremacist movement session, which makes comparison challenging. However, the structure did echo the empowering and connective orientation of the attributes listed. Given the atmosphere of openness and joy that was reverberating in the room, the author chose to close with an exercise that might help activate and fully embody a redefined, anti-racist whiteness. Although some participants shared that the activity was uncomfortable, it was also valuable to dance their new definition of whiteness. The activity also deepened the relational connection between the participants; by the time the last person was dancing, eye contact had increased, smiles were bigger, and all participants were moving with less tension.

During the author's solo dance sessions after the group session, the author used movement and journaling to process the experience of facilitating the group, the later violation of the group confidentiality agreement, and to further the intent of the thesis. The group experience was, for the author, both empowering and inspiring. The facilitation style enabled the author to learn from and adapt to the participants and their experiences, while offering a unique and trauma-informed environment for the participants to wrestle with whiteness and white supremacy. It was clear that the group together expanded their comprehension and awareness of their embodied experience of being white, including the aspiration to be white without being supremacist. During the session, group members engaged in rich discussions and offered vulnerable insights into their own personal ways of expressing whiteness.

This experience of the session itself made the feedback about a later violation of the confidentiality agreement a shocking revelation. The work of anti-racism and anti-oppression is

about living ethically and with integrity, and to violate such an agreement denies the principles of anti-oppression. The author came to a deeper recognition of each person's capacity for exploiting and oppressing those perceived to be more vulnerable and less powerful, including other-than-human beings. The author sought consultation with other clinicians and experts about ways to decrease the potential for breaches of community agreements, and for ways to manage or offer repair in the event of future confrontations. Based on the feedback from others, the author prepared a confidentiality agreement to be signed before engaging in a workshop and has trained in restorative justice principles. The author also followed up with the participant who felt unsafe returning to the group sessions.

Despite any or all preparation, it is likely that in similar situations, people will experience feeling confronted by their own and other's contributions to systemic oppression. In this circumstance, during the session, the participant shared verbally an understanding they had reached of the ways they communicate entitlement and dominance nonverbally. In an interaction outside of the session, another participant, who was a close friend of the first participant, referenced the insight shared verbally in the session as a reason for why the first participant was morally and ethically tainted, was not doing enough of or the right kind of anti-racist or anti-oppression education, and was not a "good enough person" to be close to the second participant. The first participant felt that there was a deeper interpersonal conflict that the second participant was not acknowledging, and that the second participant had used the vulnerable realization of the first participant to shame them. Given that the insight shared was in the context of engaging with anti-racism education and movement processing, the shaming seemed out of step, in addition to a misuse of material disclosed in a specific setting. The participants engaged in a repair process

between the two of them, without the author, because there were other interpersonal issues they needed to address.

While dancing with the emotional reaction to the violation of the community guidelines, the author clarified the intent and vision of the thesis. A pivotal question that arose was, how does a person who is part of both a dominant population and a target population wield their power and privilege in relation to those seem to or do have less power, i.e. social capital, in such a way that does not oppress, exploit vulnerability, or reinforce norms, but rather with humility and respect, acknowledging difference and honoring each person's internal authority? How does such a person work toward liberation, for themselves and others? The answer that arose in that session was transformation – from power over to power with, internally and externally. Transformation based on ethical, humanist, compassionate values in the service of liberation. Part of that is supporting others in their own transformation, not punishing or shaming. Both internalized punishment and shaming are, in the author's experience, a legacy of patriarchy and a burden of internalized sexism.

In the following solo movement session, the author moved with internalized sexism and implicit bias. Processing internalized sexism involved internal inquiries about restrictions in the author's movement in response to external standards or expectation. This process also located areas of the body that had been affected by sexual assault or harassment and allowed those areas to express themselves. The bodily expressions were at times weighty and forceful, and needed to be opened up carefully and slowly. While exploring ways to interrupt implicit bias, the author imagined a situation that might arouse an implicit bias response and observed both the movement and the internal experience of the response without interfering. The author then drew on the list of qualities that redefine whiteness created by the group, as well as the results of expressing

internalized sexism, to explore alternate, self-constructed, regenerative ways of moving and internally processing in response to a situation that might prompt implicit bias. Both of these inquiries have been on-going practices in the author's life, prior to and since writing the thesis.

### **Discussion**

As is often the case with arts-based research, the thesis was influenced by the process of the thesis itself. The inquiry and process of the thesis changed based on feedback and experience, although the general concept did not change. The group process was one of discovery and insight, and each unique group will have unique insights. This thesis had a very small and specific sample size and may not be easily applicable to a broader population. The general philosophy and concept can likely be adapted to meet the needs of different populations, however, and may provide a general blueprint for further research into using movement in anti-racism education for white people. People without a dance or mindfulness practice background, or who are newly learning about anti-racism and structural oppression would likely have very different needs.

In addition to clarifying understanding and deepening insight, exploring the thesis topic through movement resulted in an underlying sense of and orientation towards empowerment, transformation, and curiosity, similar to that experienced by Rot (2018), Thomas (2015), Gordon-Giles & Zidan (2009), and Leseho & Maxwell (2010) in their studies of dance and movement with women or girls. Not all of these studies addressed political-cultural identities through dance. It is not clear whether these results are in any way applicable to men or other genders.

More research is needed to look at ways to interrupt implicit bias in addition to the physiological manifestations of a bias response. Further arts-based research on the non-verbal

expression of and internal experience of both dominance and oppression would be useful. When researching in community-based settings, a strong mandate for confidentiality and guidelines for relationship repair in case of possible violation of agreements seem necessary.

Making white supremacy visible in the individual experience through movement and discussion deepened personal and political understandings for the white women who participated in this capstone thesis, including the author. Moving with the material opened the door to both verbal and nonverbal insights into whiteness and internalized sexism. Participants crystallized concrete ways to transform and increase self-awareness of implicit body processes that affect interaction with others. Further study can be done with white women, specifically researching the body and movement experience of oppression and dominance at the same time, rather than each topic separately. Such a study may lead to another type or deeper level of insight due to the complex nature of intersecting identities and nonverbal interaction. It may be possible to create an educational or therapeutic model that can be replicated to increase the acknowledgement of the integrated body/mind in anti-racism education. A long-term qualitative study that follows multiple white women who integrate body and movement processes into their white racial identity development may also be a fertile topic for further study. There is much still to learn about how bodies and movement interact with racism, supremacy, and oppression.

## References

- Bosse, J. (2007). Whiteness and the performance of race in American ballroom dance. *Journal of American Folklore*, 120(475), 19–47. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jaf.2007.0002>
- Black, D. (2018, September 24). *How a rising star of white nationalism broke free from the movement* (T. Gross, Interviewer) [Audio file]. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/programs/fresh-air/2018/09/24/651011229>
- Caldwell, C. & Johnson, R. (2012). Embodying difference: Addressing issues of diversity and social justice in Dance/Movement Therapy research. In R. Cruz & C.F. Berrol (Eds.), *Dance/Movement Therapists in action: A working guide to research options* (pp. 121–140). Springfield, IL: Thomas.
- Cantrick, M., Anderson, T., Leighton, L.B. & Warning, M. (2018). Embodying activism: Reconciling injustice through Dance/Movement Therapy. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 40(2), 191–201. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10465-018-9288-2>
- Case, K. A. (2012). Discovering the privilege of whiteness: White women’s reflections on anti-racist identity and ally behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(1), 78–96. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01737.x>
- DiAngelo, R. (2012). *What does it mean to be white? Developing white racial literacy*. New York, NY: Lang.
- Fine, M., Stewart, A. J., & Zucker, A. N. (2000). White girls and women in the contemporary United States: Supporting or subverting race and gender domination? In C. Squire (Ed.), *Culture in psychology* (pp. 59–72). Philadelphia, PA: Routledge.

- Gordon-Giles, N. & Zidan, W. (2009). Assessing the Beyond Words educational model for empowering women, decreasing prejudice and enhancing empathy. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 31(1), 20–52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10465-009-9069-z>
- Gottschild, B. D. (1998). *Digging the Africanist presence in American performance: dance and other contexts*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Gray, A. E. L. (2017). Polyvagal-informed Dance/Movement Therapy for trauma: A global perspective. *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 39(1), 43–46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10465-017-9254-4>
- Gray, A. E. L. & Porges, S. W. (2017). Polyvagal-informed Dance/Movement Therapy with children who shut down. In C. Malchiodi & D. Crenshaw (Eds.), *What to do when children clam up in psychotherapy* (pp. 102–136). New York, NY: Guilford.
- Hackney, P. (2002). *Making connections*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Holmes, S. W. (2014). The Pilates pelvis: Racial implications of the immobile hips. *Dance Research Journal*, 46(2), 57–72. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S014976771400028X>
- Johnson, R. (2015). Grasping and transforming the embodied experience of oppression. *International Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 14(1), 80–95. Retrieved from <https://www.ibpj.org/issues/articles/Johnson%20-%20Grasping%20and%20Transforming%20the%20Embodied%20Experience%20of%20Oppression.pdf>
- Leseho, J. & Maxwell, L. R. (2010). Coming alive: creative movement as a personal coping strategy on the path to healing and growth. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 38(1), 17–30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03069880903411301>

- Malott, K. M., Paone, T. R., Schaeffle, S., Cates, J., & Haizlip, B. (2015). Expanding white racial identity theory: A qualitative investigation of whites engaged in antiracist action. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 93*, 333–343. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12031>
- Meadors, J. D. & Murray, C. B. (2014). Measuring nonverbal bias through body language responses to stereotypes. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior, 38*(2), 209–229. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10919-013-0172-y>
- Menakem, R. (2017). *My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to healing our hearts and bodies*. Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery.
- Payne, B. K., Vuletich, H. A., & Lundberg, K. B. (2017). The bias of crowds: how implicit bias bridges personal and systemic prejudice. *Psychological Inquiry, 28*(4), 233–248. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2017.1335568>
- Rogers, K. (2016, November 9). White women helped elect Donald Trump. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/01/us/politics/white-women-helped-elect-donald-trump.html>
- Rot, S. C. (2018). Stepping in: My experience of embodied power through the relational-cultural framework. *American Journal of Dance Therapy, 40*(1), 44–67. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10465-018-9273-9>
- Scheffers, M., Hoek, M., Bosscher, R. J., van Duijn, M. A. J., Schoevers, R. A. & van Busschbach, J. T. (2017). Negative body experience in women with early childhood trauma: associations with trauma severity and dissociation. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology, 8*(1), 1–10. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2017.1322892>
- Studd, K., & Cox, L. (2013). *Everybody is a body*. Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear.

Thomas, E. (2015). The dance of cultural identity: Exploring race and gender with adolescent girls. *American Journal of Dance Therapy, 37*, 176–196.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10465-015-9203-z>

Todd, N. R. & Abrams, E. M. (2011). White dialectics: A new framework for theory, research, and practice with white students. *The Counseling Psychologist, 39*(3), 353–395.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000010377665>

Wolf, N. (2013). *Vagina: revised and updated*. New York, NY: Ecco.