and perception. In short, "the body" gathers its own set of interdisciplinary preoccupations that reconstitute lines of training and theorization in necessary ways.

The speakers below have a long history of moving between performance theory and dance studies. Barbara Browning's *Samba: Resistance in Motion* was first published in 1995, while Randy Martin's *Performance as a Political Act: The Embodied Self* came out in 1990. Yet it is perhaps now that we are beginning to see more institutional shifts that have emerged from such work. The focus on somatic training at the newly created M.F.A. in contemporary performance at Naropa is an interesting example. The various practice-based research models in England also theorize and practice through the body as a central text, a key example being the PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance) project at the University of Bristol. Phillip Zarrilli's work, both independently and at the University of Exeter, also provides an important example of embodied methodologies. The recent publication of Zarrilli's *Psychophysical Acting* (2008) provides a fascinating text for any individual theorizing the training of the performer. In the United States we have initiated many of the ways in which an engagement with embodiment necessitates updating performance training, theorizations of performance, and the necessary interactions between the two. Yet I would argue that we are currently falling behind. Hopefully such conversations will be recognized as omnipresent and pressing, and their cross-fertilization will lead to greater institutional recognition and support.

Toward a Decentered Social Kinesthetic

Randy Martin

I want to first do just a little bit of work on that very lush framework that you opened up for us. Obviously there's a long history of the body as an object of study, and an anxiety about it. One could say that one sees a series of breaks or ruptures in which the body is always percolating up. When you think about Nietzsche and you think about modernism, the body seems to stand as a kind of solution to whatever kind of societal problem is posed. But if we were to dwell for a moment on that particular eruption that's named as the 1960s, I think there are two interesting dimensions of the broader conditions that would make us have to bring our attention to what's being referred to here as "the body."

Following a very productive formulation of Fredric Jameson regarding the postmodern (1984), we can conceive of a kind of double movement of decolonization—on the one hand, a kind of decolonization of nature, and we can think about that in geopolitical terms. The Third World clearly is figured as the site of nature, the site of the racialized Other, the site of raw material extraction, the site of something that is virginal that's going to be despoiled. So there are all these kinds of tropes of naturalization, and of course what's happening in the 1960s is that the Third World, which had been treated by colonial powers as silent, is now speaking. As Sartre said (in his preface to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*), the two-thirds of the world that "merely had use" of the word is now giving voice to their world (Fanon 1968). And that voice, I think, occurs as something that is already

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embodied. So those embodiments of course take the form of various kinds of national liberation struggles. One thinks about Algeria, Vietnam, Cuba, as a kind of a global moment in which the body of the nation is being formed against the false promise that "Here you can have this nation, and it's called a colony." It's interesting, too, to think about that shift that occurs when as the United States launches this moment of decolonization—that is to say, we get independence because some guys decide we can have it—the colonized declare that possibility for themselves. And yet of course that launches a kind of ungovernable movement of decolonization, in which the tables are turned and the United States is in that position of saying "Well, we're not sure if we're going to give you your nation or not." And of course that is still occurring as we sit in this room, that particular trajectory of policing the terms under which the national state is possible.

I think what's interesting in thinking about the decolonization of nature is, of course, it also has its inflection in particular social movements, political movements, and aesthetic movements inside the United States. So one thinks about Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and what happens when nature is no longer naturalized, in the sense that nature erupts from a passive scene to an active presence (Carson 1962). It is something that has to be formed, cared for, constructed, attended to, and there is the question of what stewardship means when nature is not simply available as an object of mastery. So much of environmentalism is, I think, that moment of awakening to the presence of a body, something that can't really any longer simply be subordinated as an object.

Then we can say that the other moment of decolonization is a decolonization of the unconscious. It is a decolonization of desire, of the whole promise of Western society that needs are going to be fulfilled through the marketplace, that any desire has its end as a particular kind of commodity to which there is the notorious fetish: "If only I could have this thing, my body, which is lacking, will now be whole." We can say that the spirit of the 1960s is the rejection of that facile relationship of subject and object and of that domain also hitherto silenced, the domain of reproduction, in which identity or representation is no longer naturalized or put in its place. The social movements that emerge from what was hitherto marked as private—feminist movements, civil rights and racial liberation movements, movements for sexual liberation—are located in this domain, again, of the unspoken arena, of domesticity, of social reproduction, of the unconscious, that are now being given voice. These various expressions engender a kind of riot of embodiment, where there can no longer be the presumed singularity or universality of a body that stands in for all available bodies.

So that double eruption—the decolonization of nature and of the unconscious—is then of course legible in all manner of performance practices, for example, in the valorization of the quotidian, of the pedestrian, of something that is available around us already. It doesn't have to be from an elevated institutional source. It augurs what we call a "social kinesthetic," which we see traces of across the world, whether it's contact improvisation, physical theater, hip hop, or capoeira. We could say that all of these body techniques are decentered in the sense that they are no longer inspired by the heavens and enlightenment but by the ground itself, which becomes a source for all manner of bodily practices and intel-

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ligence, and therefore *practice itself* becomes something that must be figured out, worked through, made legible. I think one of the things that interests me is that the body, we could say, *emerges,* and that instigates a breakdown between theory and practice, at least in this particular conjuncture.

So we can say that part of what is erupting now is precisely that facile difference between an essential, naturalized, stable body and a purely constructed one. I think that Judith Butler's work and the whole arena of poststructuralism is asking, *What is the body that emerges when one no longer takes for granted the boundary between that which is given in nature and that which is made up in a social or human domain?* And therefore it appears not as something that is fully present—because that would simply translate it back into a stable essence or a social construct—but as something that is unstably bearing upon thought, upon practice, and in that sense unsettling the theory and practice divide. So I'm using poststructuralism in a very ecumenical sense, as saying one can trace this genealogy of a prestructuralist moment where culture and nature are seen as the mirror of one another, to a structuralist moment in which culture and nature are seen as somehow inside a schema of representation, to asking what happens when there starts to be a recognition of the *limits* of that representation—for example, a very specific political one, as when social movements around the world are saying, "Uh-uh, you ain't speaking for me." When the whole question of whether representation itself is an adequate means of political dialogue and discourse, whether rights talk is sufficient or whether there has to be something, again, more on the ground that insists on the presence of difference in our midst, that can't be reassimilated to rules, regulation, rationalization, all the things that had been the hallmark of this kind of emergence of a universalizing societal impulse.

I think given that kind of conjuncture, what's interesting to me is to trace some of the transformations inside these bodily practices, and I might pull out the thread of dance studies, which strikes me as a really interesting one. If one thought about the framing of the last thirty years, it's one in which these kinds of decolonizations aren't left alone. They never are. There isn't any moment of pure freedom where the newly born or the newly free get to have their way. There have been all of these efforts to recolonize or enclose that which was released. We know these accounts of the 1960s movements being reassimilated into various kinds of social welfare state legislation, or of cool punk styles becoming loads of clothing that can be sold on the racks of your local discount shop. That is to say, that kind of recommodification is always available to one portion of those broader social movements.

We might also say that the big transformation we're seeing in capital itself is that capital—this sort of voracious machine of assimilation—no longer thinks of itself simply as an object. It speaks. It's alive. It's interested in bio-power, in biotechnology, in a knowledge economy, in creative industries. Artists are now the poster children for a kind of bait-and-switch of urban development, where you get people in for cheap because they don't really need any health care because they're so flexible, and then you pull the rug out from under them and gentrify the dwellings that they so gorgeously established. There is an interest in the re-enclosure of all that had been left free, and of course this extends to Third

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world intellectual property, whether it's seeds or ritual practices. This kind of move of reincorporation is what we might think of as capital's embodiment, its appearance as if it were something alive.

If we think about the current moment of the financial crisis—there is no theory of this financial crisis. Now that the thing has all gone up in smoke, there is no theory that explains this. Alan Greenspan says, "You know, to be honest, I didn't understand the math that underlay many of these sophisticated financial instruments. [Laughter] And in the end it's just human nature that will then correct itself." He's a fan of Ayn Rand, and that seems to be the way the world goes. [Laughter] So that question now of capital being its own form of embodiment nonetheless makes us have to ask, "What does it *want*?" And part of what it wants is a world of risk.

We in dance know about risk. It's what we're supposed to be doing as we hurl ourselves into the ground, or rip open new horizons, or perch on the precipice of someone's collarbone, that moment before we come crashing to earth. All those embraces of risk which were what augured this opening of dance in the 1980s were also, of course, what the world was asking of us—that we embrace risk—and now we're asked to be strangled by it. What interests me in dance as a social phenomenon is that what's breaking up in that same moment is the body itself, it seems to me, through the promiscuous proliferation of technique. You no longer have that neat kind of alignment between the authorial function of the choreographer and the monogamous relationship of the company, which learns the mother tongue so that it can speak it on the stage, but instead there is this kind of breakup of many different kinds of technical capacities in which you'd say technique has the edge. Operations of the body have the edge over the kind of choreographic cognition that might once have reigned in the domain of dance. And I would like to say, modestly, because nothing I've said, I can appreciate, has been modest up to this point, dance studies was caught up precisely in that refiguring.

The dance studies movement—which included the Barbara Brownings and the Susan Leigh Fosters and the Mark Frankos of the world—involved the insinuation of that embodiment in writing, in the forms of representation, in the questions of *What is a performative text? What does it mean to use dance itself to animate the structure of one's writing? What does it mean to look like the thing in your body of work that is the thing you're looking at?* That kind of refiguring of theory and practice is precisely the break from dance's own Cartesian coordinates of time and space in which time equals dance history and space equals dance ethnology, in which there's sort of a blankness of what appeared in those two domains to ask *How are we generating this world of which we're a part?* I think that's a very exciting turn that we can perhaps think more about.

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