STUDIES IN SOCIAL JUSTICE
Volume 17, Issue 2, 222-240, 2023

Dance as Revolution: Exploring Prisoner Agency Through Arts-based Methods

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ABSTRACT *Carceral spaces such as prisons are designed to restrict freedoms and keep inhabitants confined and under surveillance through various mechanisms. As a result, prisons are spaces where movement is restricted through confinement, while prisoners' ability to move is conflated with freedom. We aim to move beyond this dichotomy and consider a complex rethinking of the body in criminological theory and practice through dance in carceral space. In doing so, we explore under what conditions movement represents agentic practices. Understanding these nuances requires an interrogation of prisoner agency, including prisoners' subtle maneuverability of power dynamics within the prison. We explore these dynamics using feminist and arts-based methods, specifically dance workshops delivered to twenty participants incarcerated in a Canadian provincial women's prison. We find that movement and expression in prison may create moments of agentic freedom for incarcerated women under certain conditions. We argue that more nuanced understandings of incarcerated women's agency can be found in their daily negotiations of time and space, and movement can provide numerous meanings. Our findings suggest arts-based approaches within prison environments create opportunities for women to express their identity and sexuality through movement in ways otherwise not permitted in prison. For many incarcerated women in this study, this sense of freedom may be associated with the ability to focus and take care of themselves while confined.*

KEYWORDS incarceration; women; arts-based methods; agency; feminism

Introduction

There are few places where the body is under more control than in a prison environment. Prisons are institutions in which the repetitive nature of prison

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ISSN: 1911-4788

life and the physical structure itself are intended to watch, control, and limit the movements of its prisoners (Shantz & Frigon, 2010). In this vein, a prisoner's ability to make choices and move with little to no restrictions might be conflated as a form of freedom. For example, to dance while in prison is to be momentarily free. However, Schuller (2018) argues that we must not default to the romanticism of movement as a form of freedom. In this paper, we aim to think beyond dichotomous terms of stasis as confinement and movement as freedom, and we explore how dance creates moments of agentic freedom for incarcerated women. To a further extent, we wish to explore how women in prison are able to express agency and freedom.

Moreover, considering different corporeal practices and histories, women prisoners may experience the effects of confinement on their bodies differently than incarcerated men (Comack, 2018; Hannah-Moffat & Shaw, 2000). Further, incarcerated women may not share the view that movement equates to freedom and stasis as confinement. To move beyond this dichotomy, we look to Frigon's (2014) and Frigon and Shantz's (2014) work, which calls for a complex rethinking of the body in criminological theory and practice. For Frigon (2014), dance can provide a medium to explore gendered bodily practices and movement in carceral space. In line with this thinking, we theorize beyond dichotomous terms of stasis as confinement and movement as freedom by exploring how dance can create agentic practices. Using Schuller's (2018) and Foucault's (1995) ideas of the prison as a space of disciplinary power, we situate this paper in theoretical and empirical work that focuses on the female prisoner's body. We explore these dynamics using feminist and arts-based methods. We expand on these theoretical understandings of prisoner agency and embodiment through the example of a dance workshop delivered in a women's provincial prison by one of the authors, Amy Sheppard. Throughout, we engage with the work of others, such as Frigon and Shantz (2014), to address institutional carceral power and its manifestations in the body as precursors of rupture. That is, how prisoners become aware of the impact of the prison on their bodies and movement.

We discuss the current study following a brief overview of pertinent literature and theoretical underpinnings, including how Sheppard created and offered the dance workshop. We then explore the workshop's findings, including feelings of liberation and freedom associated with dance in a confined environment. We argue that arts-based methods in prison can provide opportunities for self-expression and agency through activities otherwise restricted in carceral space. Finally, we discuss the resulting analysis and focus on connections between dance participant experiences and theoretical understandings of movement.

Women in Prison

Prisons are gendered institutions in that they sort and divide those who enter based on a sexed binary (men/women), ignoring that gender is a fluid construct (Jenness & Fenstermaker, 2014). It is essential to draw attention to the implications of how this binary is enacted within the prison context. For example, a lower female population in the corrections system ensures that women lose out on programming dollars when allocated per capita (Hannah-Moffat & Shaw, 2000). Van Wormer (2010) argues that rehabilitation provided to women is lacking and is often inappropriately modified from programming in men's prisons. Likewise, Sheehan et al. (2007) state that prison programming does not address women's needs holistically. Incarcerated women need relational programming that addresses questions of mental health, substance use and family relationships, and the barriers to reintegration, including poor employment histories and opportunities, housing, and rebuilding family relationships (Sheehan et al., 2007). Incarcerated women require meaningful programming that addresses their lived realities. Such programming must acknowledge that women have different paths to crime and different coping skills, relationships and outside responsibilities that impact prison experience (Covington, 2011).

Work with women in prison must be intersectional and recognize that many incarcerated women are further marginalized based on racial identity. For example, in Canada, Indigenous women are incarcerated at a rate that far exceeds those of non-Indigenous women (Zinger, 2020). Indigenous women have been regarded as "triple deviant" (Yuen, 2011, p. 98) within the mainstream population as they have deviated from mainstream cultural norms of what it means to be a woman and are further marginalized due to race and cultural traditions (Yuen, 2011). In 2020, the Correctional Investigator of Canada released figures indicating that 42% of the women in federal prison are Indigenous while making up just 4% of the general Canadian population (Zinger, 2020). Women of colour are overrepresented in federal prisons within Canada, with nine percent of women in federal custody identifying as Black (Balfour & Comack, 2014).

Women in prison are often young, often poor, under- or unemployed, with little formal education, and their offences usually include high levels of alcohol and drug use (Comack, 2018). Many incarcerated women are parents and often provide care for their dependent children before entering prison (Hannah-Moffat & Shaw, 2000; Zinger, 2017). Problems with family visits further exacerbate relationships that women have with their children; the smaller female prison populations mean that prisons are few. Therefore, families have to travel great distances to see prisoners (Shantz et al., 2009). Additionally, women are more likely to lose housing and are more likely to be single parents with their name on the lease, while male prisoners are more likely to have a partner at home taking care of things (Codd, 2013; Loucks, 2004). While incarcerated men are often poor, underemployed and poorly

educated, incarcerated women have lower education, employment, job skills and experience more poverty and welfare dependence than men (Comack, 2018; Hannah-Moffat & Shaw, 2000).

Incarcerated women experience high rates of mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, substance use, schizophrenia, mood disorders, and personality disorders (Brown et al., 2018; Kilty, 2012; Stanton et al., 2016). Mental health issues can take numerous forms, including the experiences of trauma and substance abuse. Within Canada, 33% of women imprisoned in federal prisons have been diagnosed with PTSD (Derken et al., 2017). While this is significant, we also note that many more women report histories of sexual (68%) and physical abuse (86%) than have been diagnosed with PTSD (Zinger, 2014). Thus, many more women may be suffering due to trauma histories than are formally diagnosed with PTSD. While indeed men in prison also have trauma experiences, trauma itself is a gendered concept, in how symptoms are expressed, in types of trauma suffered and in treatment (Covington & Bloom, 2007; Covington, 2011; Matheson et al., 2015). Often women turn pain from trauma inward and use drugs, alcohol or self-harming behaviours to cope. Some scholars suggest that some practices may also represent attempts to assert agency in carceral contexts (Frigon, 2003; Kilty, 2012). Thus, many incarcerated women undergo forced withdrawal from drug use while in prison. Not only do women experience the pain of detox, but they also have to face issues that drugs have been numbing (Loucks, 2004; Richie, 2001). Women's responses to the pains of imprisonment (and their trauma histories) are often interpreted as pathology, deeming incarcerated women as "disordered and disorderly" (Pollack, 2005, p. 76). Further, they are more likely than men to engage in self-harming behaviours (Chamberlen, 2016).

Women prisoners have been subject to complex, interrelated forms of social disadvantage, resulting in deep exclusion (Gray et al., 2016). Such forms of disadvantage significantly impact the physical and mental health and agency of incarcerated women. Unsurprisingly, these experiences inform how women interact with one another, with correctional staff, and the world around them in custody and upon release as they shape relationships of distrust, self-image, and stigma (Comack, 2018). Nevertheless, incarcerated women's resilience and ability to engage in agentic practices despite social disadvantages experienced serve as a focal point in understanding their use of agency under carceral conditions. In the following section, we explore the prisoner's body as a site for restrictions placed upon them in prison.

Theoretical Context: Prison and the Body

Ways of theorizing about the body have been heavily influenced by Descartes's notion of a mind/body split (Grosz, 1994). Within this split, the mind is privileged over the body, and historically, women have been

associated with the body (Bordo, 2003; Grosz, 1994). Feminist theorists have challenged the idea that the body is somehow "lower," asserting that analysis of the corporeal is essential to understand how disciplinary power enacts on women's bodies (Threadcraft, 2016).

"Marked bodies" can be seen as both ways of knowing and as objects of social control. Marked bodies record the history of what has happened to them, thus possessing the knowledge of the history of social control. Bodies are marked through violent and nonviolent means, by coercion and consent to demonstrate culturally appropriate and inappropriate existences (Grosz, 1994). Drawing on Foucault, Bordo (2003) asks us to rethink power, not as something one group possessed and used against another. Instead, she encourages us to think about the ways that power is enacted through systems of practices, institutions, and technologies. In this way, Bordo sees the practices of femininity within the body as social control. Female bodies are consumed by the discipline and normalization associated with maintaining femininity. In this method of control, women are increasingly centred on self-modification to adhere to standards of femininity (Bordo, 2003). While, on the one hand, women are encouraged to look inward at the body, we are also encouraged to look outward at others to provide emotional and physical comfort. Women "learn to feed others, not the self, any desires of self-nurturing and self-feeding is greedy and excessive" (Bordo, 2003, p. 171). These concepts of femininity may seem at odds. On the one hand, one should pay attention to one's own body to maintain femininity. On the other hand, one should put all one's energy into caring for others. However, this seeming paradox is a mode of self-regulation and social control. As Wahidin and Tate (2005) explore, such paradoxes continue to be reproduced while women are incarcerated.

Prisons serve as imposing physical structures but are not limited solely to their physical presence; the impacts of prison stretch beyond physical presence. Rather, it is a highly structured, regimented, scheduled, and surveilled site where movement and other freedoms are restricted (Foucault, 1995; Wahidin & Moss, 2004). The body has become an increasingly focused site of study in 21st century (re)theorization (Frigon, 2014). The prisoner's body becomes a marked body subject to "carceral practices which rely on disciplinary routines to regulate physical activities while affecting thoughts and actions" (Shantz & Frigon, 2010, p. 6). Foucault (1995) theorized the productive and malleable subject under the effects of disciplinary power. For Foucault (1995), the prison was a site in which "micro-physics of power" occurred. Power relations are made especially visible when focusing on the body as a center for exerting power and control, and in particular, the body illustrates the power relations in prisons (Robert et al., 2007). Thus, in Foucault's view (1995), the prison body became an instrument to control the mind. Robert et al. (2007) argue that centring the body in prison research brings attention to the bi-directional power relations

and how the body might also become a site of resistance against their status as "subjected bodies" (Foucault, 1995).

Foucault argues that the criminal's body was once the site of punishment in the form of torture or death. This punishment method has since been replaced by prison, but the body remains a central part of the penalty. Punishment is no longer directly on the body, but the body is the punishment subject (Foucault, 1995; Frigon, 2003, 2007; Frigon & Shantz, 2014; Shantz & Frigon, 2010).

Frigon (2003) theorizes that women's bodies in prisons are both *sites of control* and *sites of resistance.* Borrowing from Harold Garfinkel (1956), Frigon has used the descriptor "degradation ceremonies," to describe the strip searches, undressing in front of staff, showers with a disinfectant that begin the process of marking the body as "criminal" (Frigon, 2003, 2007; Shantz & Frigon, 2010). The body is controlled through surveillance, both vertically and laterally. Correctional staff engage in vertical surveillance, which can be static (cameras) and dynamic (staff interactions). Lateral surveillance occurs between prisoners. Prisoners are on constant watch with one another. Such measures become internalized and self-surveillance of one's own body (Foucault, 1995; Shantz & Frigon, 2010). This focus on self is exacerbated by sensory deprivation as there is little colour, smell or touch (Frigon, 2007). These means of marking a body as criminal often occurs on a body that is already seen as "other" due to experiences of abuse, trauma, addiction, and health issues (Frigon, 2007).

While prisoners' bodies are controlled, they also resist. For some prisoners, prison is an opportunity to eat, sleep, feel safe, and receive medical care. Other women resist control over their bodies by exercising their control through regulating food intake, exercising, tattooing, makeup or self-mutilation (Frigon, 2003, 2007). Smith (2006) posits that sexual expression in a prison setting is an act of resistance. Sexual activity is prohibited in prison, and thus, taking pleasure from sex while in prison is transgressive and an agentic expression of one's bodily control. Thus, we see that the prison enacts on the prisoner's body in multiple, and at times conflicting, ways. The body can receive care and safety inside a prison while at the same time the body is controlled, watched, and deprived.

Frigon's (2014) work examines dance and prison, and the undercurrents of her research illustrate how women prisoners retell and reveal their suffering through movement. Such work adds to emerging areas of criminological inquiry, including the study of space and mobility. Thus, understanding movement or stillness as a form of agency under certain conditions within prison environments is of interest. How then might space, movement and agency be considered in carceral spaces such as prison?

Activities and programming in prison aid in developing prosocial activities and cognitive change through dance, theatre, and fine arts initiatives (Frigon & Shantz, 2014; Merrill & Frigon, 2015). However, prisoners' choice to participate might be impacted by their interests or level of comfort in their

body, particularly when trying new activities (Sheppard & Ricciardelli, 2016) and not always related to movement (see Nugent & Loucks, 2011). In this sense, we refrain from conflating the decision to engage in activities or movement with freedom.

Space and Movement in Prison

Prisoners experience prison in several bodily ways (Robert et al., 2007) and may articulate their impressions of such impacts differently. Frigon and Shantz (2014) explore the possibilities of transformational experiences within the body and bring attention to bodily practices and movement as potential moments of awakening. This notion of transformation can help elucidate prisoners' process of awareness of the impact of prison on their bodies and movements.

Movement in prison settings challenges conventional ideas of freedom, resistance and agency. Schuller (2018), for instance, explores freedom and the biopolitical implications of movement. Mobility may be commonly understood as a sign of freedom, while restriction upon freedom could be interpreted as a form of punishment. However, as Schuller (2018) argues, we should not quickly default to this dichotomous distinction because it falls into the divide of biopolitics and romanticism of movement as a form of freedom. Schuller's (2018) argument follows Deleuze's (1992) response to Foucault's disciplinary practices ideas. Deleuze (1992) argues that prisons are amongst other institutions of enclosure (e.g., schools, hospitals, families) in society. For Deleuze (1992), power can control the individual and the masses; he posits that forms of forced movement can constitute examples of control societies.

A similar argument emerges from Yuen and Pedlar's (1999) work. They draw attention to the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) approach to controlling recreation and leisure activity options available within Canadian prisons. In doing so, this maintained level of control results in a limited selection of available activities and only those approved or deemed appropriate by the government. With this in mind, under what conditions is movement connected to individual freedom? We argue that movement as an agentic practice can be many things at once, not simply an act of resistance or freedom. For Foucault (1977/1995), understanding freedom means recognizing that freedom can be both performative and situational. As Ugelvik (2014) points out, this view of freedom results in individuals' self-constituting freedom, in which they make themselves free through their own ethical choices. As Ugelvik (2014) further articulates, this may result in some individuals intentionally choosing the freedom to make criminal choices or engaging in criminal activities with the awareness that doing so may also result in confinement.

Thus, freedom is not a binary concept. Instead, freedom may hold different meanings across different recapitulations of power, space, time and bodies. Yuen (2011) explores the possibility of prison as a site of growth amongst female Indigenous prisoners. Participants described experiences of awakening perceptions and discovering healing and relationship building. Yuen's (2011) findings suggest growth and possibility despite originating from a negative environment. Thus, polychronicity in thinking and approach bring to light dimensions and layers within movement and agency in carceral spaces.

Dance Workshop in Provincial Prison

The workshop was developed based on Amy Sheppard's experiences as a registered social worker delivering therapeutic programming to women living in prison and the community. As such, she has the unique opportunity to speak with currently and formerly incarcerated women. Women in prison speak about how uncomfortable they are in their bodies because they have put on weight while in prison. They also speak about track marks and other impacts that drug use has on their bodies and appearance. Indeed, incarcerated women are not immune to the images and messages from media and society that we all face. However, they have unique bodily experiences of being confined, strip-searched, medicated. At times, women in prison have to ask permission to move, go to the bathroom, or shower. Their bodies often suffer withdrawal from drug use and cigarettes, and they have little choice in what they eat, when they exercise, and what they wear. Many women put on weight while incarcerated, which can be a significant source of discomfort and worry. Given all the issues around body and embodiment she hears from women in prison, Sheppard wanted to help women talk about these concerns.

Sheppard connected the idea of dance and body movement to explore body image and embodiment. Feminist theories of embodiment and feminist work regarding women in prison helped contextualize what she witnessed in the prison setting. With these ideas in mind, she created a workshop template based on her experiences in dance class. In addition, she drew on her experience facilitating workshops on body image and other topics involving the body, such as addiction and trauma. Finally, she consulted with a dance teacher and choreographer for guidance on how to structure the workshop and for some ideas on creating movement. The workshop's objective was to facilitate discussion with women in prison about the impacts of prison on the body and share positive embodiment experiences through dance.

Feminist research aims to provide a voice to marginalized groups by challenging structures and ideologies that are oppressive (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007). Centring the voice is particularly important when working with women living in a prison setting, as they may experience oppression on multiple levels. Feminist research practices can create spaces where research

participants can explore these systems of oppression and share their experiences of also asserting agency under oppressive circumstances (Frigon, 2003). Feminist research methods centre women's experiences and allow flexibility to ensure that these experiences are understood. In this sense, it is not the method itself that is feminist; rather, it is the approach to the method (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007). From this feminist base, arts-based research is considered an innovative way to explore women's prison experiences. McNiff (2008) defines arts-based research as:

> The systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involved in their studies. (p. 3)

Using dance as a feminist method can provide insights through the use of the body about body image and embodiment. Arts-based methods can provide new ways to examine problems and attend to gestures and other nonverbal communication (Leavy, 2009). Thus, using dance in a prison system is an innovative way to research within that system.

Following ethics approval at the institution, Sheppard offered two one-day dance workshops at the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women (NLCCW), a provincial prison in Canada. She used her experiences as a dance student and facilitating prison groups to design the dance workshop. Considerations of body image, impacts of the prison on the body, and likely a new experience for many participants informed the workshop design. The facilitator emphasized incorporating movement in a nonthreatening, meaningful and fun way. The workshop began using slow, simple, and familiar movements, incorporating yoga, discussion, music, and videos. Sheppard downloaded music and videos to share with women via a laptop computer and provided movement prompts during the workshop. The workshop then continued with several hours of dance exercises that encouraged movement, creativity, and working collectively.

Twenty incarcerated women participated in the workshop. We have protected their identities through assigned pseudonyms. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 34. For half of the participants, this was their first admission to NLCCW. One participant had taken dance lessons; the rest reported that their only dance experience was for fun. All participants reported having issues with substance use, trauma or an eating disorder, while many reported struggling with all three. More than half reported having received counselling for these issues.

In addition to dance, Sheppard used other arts-based methods as a natural extension for participants' expression. She introduced visual mediums to discuss and explore body image and the impacts of prison on the body. Using large sheets of craft paper, participants drew and wrote about the impacts of prison on the body. These methods created a rich, collaborative piece of art

between the facilitator and the participants. Participants watched videos about dance in prisons, drawing on cultural studies to analyze how media is absorbed and interpreted. Cultural criminology pays close attention to "the *lived experience* of crime, transgression, and social control" (Merrill & Frigon, 2015, p. 302). This work aims to understand how cultural representations of crime and prison impact those living these realities. The experience of dancing within the prison and corporeal impacts on prisoners contribute to this idea for participants. Merrill and Frigon (2015) posit that the "marriage of the artistic and the carceral allows participants to change conceptualizations of the criminal justice system through interpretations of 'movements, emotions, and visceral reactions'" (p. 302). Participants' engagement with videos of other prisoners and prison settings also impacts participants' understanding of and engagement in their own prison life.

We have used narrative analysis to interpret the data generated based on these methods. A narrative analysis does not simply look at what is said but also at "how and why incidents are stories" (Kohler Riessman, 2008, p. 11). Within the context of a mixture of arts-based methods, this is a key element of analysis. How are these stories being told? Are different stories being told through different methods? For example, some stories are easier to interpret through visual, movement-based or spoken methods.

Sheppard collected data in several ways, including participants completing feedback forms following the workshop sessions. As previously discussed, she incorporated data collection into the activities. For example, craft paper unrolled on the floor with markers as a compliment to the discussion around body image the impact of prison on the body. The craft paper exercise provided an alternate outlet for the participants to draw and write in their own words. Sheppard wrote field notes during the workshop, capturing initial impressions such as the feelings on entering the prison, noting who engaged, and sensory information (i.e., the sights, sounds, and smells of the prison). Immediately following the sessions, she journaled reflections of the day, fleshing out the transpired events (Emerson et al., 1995). We have drawn quotes from field notes, feedback forms, and the craft paper (see Figures 1 and 2) used during the workshop throughout this paper.

Attendance at the workshop was voluntary and was not a part of regularly offered official programming. While some women may be motivated to attend programs offered in prison to appear compliant (Pollack, 2005), women participated in the dance workshop for the current project because of their pre-existing relationship with Sheppard. Women were required to sign up for the workshop before it started. A few women were signed up, but they encouraged others to sign up when they learned who was offering the workshop. Sheppard overheard one woman telling another, "Amy is best kind. You should do the dance thing". She interpreted this to mean that the participant knew her and affirmed that she was a person who could be trusted.

Bodies in Movement

A dance workshop offered in prison allowed exploration of carceral space and allowed incarcerated women to experience their bodies in a new and transformative way (Frigon & Shantz, 2014). Below we discuss dance as a form of liberation and freedom while experiencing the confines of prison. Further, we discuss the exploration of freedom allowed within the dance workshop and how sexuality is restricted within prisons.

Dance as Liberation and Freedom

The theme of liberation and connection emerged at several points during the workshops. Participants spoke about their ability to relax and let go as they danced. One woman stated that she felt free and "didn't even realize (she) was in prison." Another participant wrote on her feedback form that she had been having "a hard time mentally, and this group and activities really helped me with naming my thoughts and relieved a lot of built-up stress."

Dance itself can be a revolutionary act while in prison. The act of dancing is generally not allowed except in specific circumstances such as this workshop or playing a dance video game that the prison may have for recreation activities. Women experienced the workshop as an opportunity to move freely, with, as one participant said, a "fuck it" attitude. Participants were aware that we were being watched by cameras and other prisoners not participating in the workshop and correctional staff. While this was awkward initially for some participants, the facilitator named it, discussed how it felt with participants, and the group quickly forgot and kept dancing. Due to security reasons, Sheppard could not block the windows looking into the room where we danced. Instead, the group turned to face the other direction, not to see non-participants and staff watching the workshop. On the other hand, the workshop was an opportunity for some participants to show off their moves to staff and those not participating. The workshop itself imparted power by engaging in an activity that is usually not allowed and exclusive to workshop participants.

The workshop simply allowed women to feel good about themselves. In her work with prisoners at the Washington Corrections Centre for Women, Pat Graney asserts that by encouraging dance participants in prison to believe that they "are someone," they can begin to work towards a greater goal (Berson, 2008). Other research has found that arts-based programming in prison settings contributes to a sense of self-esteem, empowerment, and accomplishment for participants (Brown et al., 2004; Merrill & Frigon, 2015; Nugent & Loucks, 2011). Similarly, we found that much of the feedback from participants in the workshop focussed on these positive feelings of building confidence, finding strength, and accomplishing a goal. A dance program can also be a place to experience joy, pride, trust, and have fun

(Brown et al., 2004; Dunphy, 1999). The prison environment does not easily foster positive feelings. Nevertheless, women stated that they were having fun again and again during the workshop. Figure 1 provides feedback on women's feelings while participating in the dance workshop.

Figure 1. Participants describe how they felt during the dance workshop.

Sexuality and Connection to Freedom

During the workshop, participants were asked when they have danced in the past or styles of dancing they enjoy. Several participants highlighted pole dancing, stripping or dancing for a partner. Sexuality was also heavily emphasized when participants could make up their dance moves. Women "twerked," engaged in hip swivels, dropped to the floor, shook their breasts and bodies, and participants dubbed one move the "sexy walk." The workshop aimed to help women with self-expression, and thus no restrictions were placed on types of dance. Limiting their movements in any way might have been counterproductive to the purpose of the workshop, which was to explore the relationship with the body in prison. Beyond dancing, other women discussed the difficulties in expressing sexual identity in a prison setting during the discussion on body image and the focus group following the workshop. Sexuality and love should be recognized as a critical component of health and well-being in a discussion on bodies (Maeve, 1999).

Sexuality and love are often missing in health and well-being contexts and are notably absent and even forbidden in the carceral context.

In Sheppard's experience working in prison, she has witnessed romantic relationships. As stated in the above model, she has observed that women who identify as gay will often "import" this into the prison setting and seek out relationships. She has also seen several women who did not previously identify as gay enter into relationships. The phenomenon is often termed "gay for the stay" and is often used pejoratively to deny validity to these relationships. During the workshop, a woman who identifies as gay brought this idea up. She acknowledged that some women are "gay for the stay" but stated that "we all need love and affection. Someone who thinks we are special. One of the things we miss in here is a partner to tell you nice things about you." Thus, it would be unnatural for women not to seek romantic partnerships, particularly if they serve a long sentence. As Figure 2 illustrates, women stated that it is hard to be away from a partner who provides physical affection.

Frigon's suggestion that dance may be connected to a sense of desire and self-esteem was evident in the discussion on dance and how women moved while dancing (personal communication, June 15, 2016). In discussions around when participants dance, many stated that they usually dance with others or for others' pleasure (i.e., stripping or pole dancing). Many incarcerated women may have experienced their value and self-worth in these terms, as their potential for attracting others or providing sexual gratification for others (Maeve, 1999). It was evident in watching women perform that these sexual movements were their comfort zone. When given a choice to move any way they wanted, participants chose these sexualized movements. A possible explanation for this is that engaging in highly sexualized movements reflects popular culture, music videos, and other popular dancing, emphasizing the sexual. Likely, participants in the workshop had not been exposed to other types of dancing. It is clear that participants could relate to these moves and found pleasure in performing them. We want to be clear that in this discussion around sexualized dance movements we do not intend to present this as a negative. During the workshop, Sheppard also engaged in these sexual dance moves, finding pleasure in sex, sexuality, and the feeling of being desired. We draw attention to dance as a way of embracing sexuality and desire as experienced by both facilitator and participants.

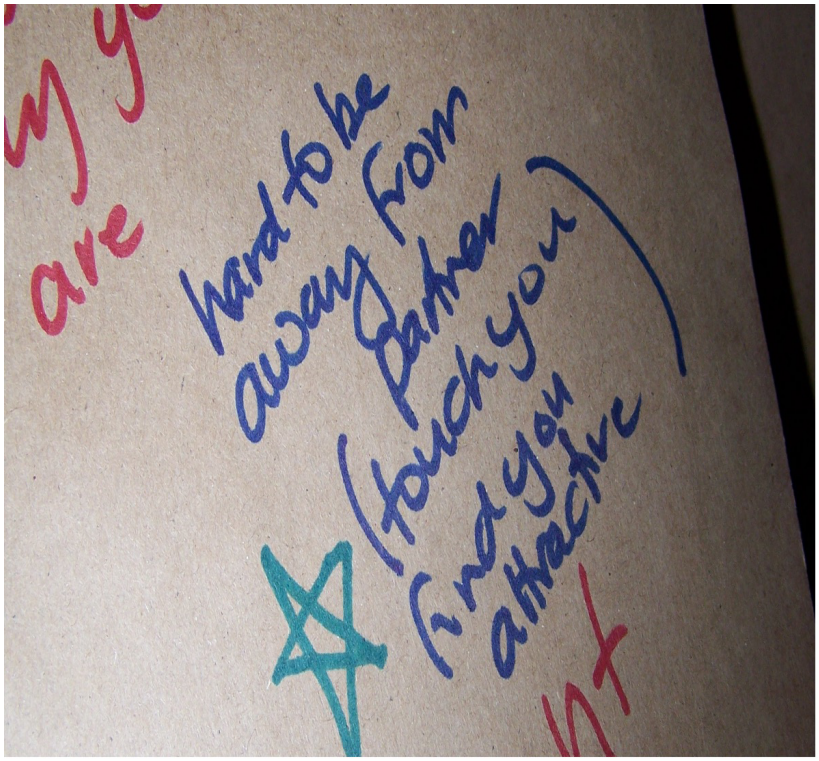

Figure 2. Participants describe connection of dance, sexuality, and challenges of incarceration.

Participating in a kind of "sexy dance" can also be viewed as engaging in the forbidden while in a highly controlled environment. Smith (2006) acknowledges the potential for sexual expression to express freedom and transgression in a prison environment. During the focus group the day after the workshop, participants stated that they had been practicing their moves after the workshop ended, and staff told them to stop because the dancing was deemed too sexy. Thus, given an opportunity to be sexy, during the dance workshop, women took it. This example highlights the restrictions placed on women's movement in prison and informs their choice to participate in a dance workshop as a form of agency.

Movement and Agency: Prisoner Perspectives

Prisoners have little control over many of their prison choices, for example, food, clothing, or choosing to be alone (Sheppard & Ricciardelli, 2016). Nevertheless, they continue to find ways to experience movement within

these constraints, as evident in their choice to participate in the dance workshop as a space to practice their "sexy dance." Confinement and restrictions define prison spaces and the limited choices available to prisoners to exist within them. The ability to participate in the dance workshops provided, for some participants, the ability to transcend the dualisms between freedom and confinement in carceral space. The participants in this study sought to express themselves and their sexuality through dance by participating in the workshop. Following the workshop, their discussion and feedback forms illustrate that participants recognized that the workshop provided a space to be a little freer in their movement. The idea of finding freedom in dance was reflected in the women's experiences in attempting to continue dancing after the workshop had ended and being told to stop by correctional staff. In this sense, the dance workshop provided a short window of freedom of movement. It illustrated that freedom and movement could be fleeting and available under limited conditions for these women. More broadly, this highlights the possibilities of arts-based methods within carceral spaces and time. In this sense, the implementation of arts-based methods can provide a space of exception to some prison rules, thus providing prisoners with opportunities to engage their agency in differing ways.

Participants closely linked dance and their ability to express themselves as sexual beings. Sexuality, in its various forms, is regularly repressed and controlled in prison and, as such, is another way of enacting control through limiting individuality and intimacy between prisoners. Simultaneously, women may not give much thought to sexual expression and its connection to dancing while "free" in the community; new significance becomes evident in prison. In this sense, participants could inscribe meaning into the activity. In other words, the dance workshop permitted them to not only allow but to turn away from correctional staff and ignore or rebuff their reactions, a type of occurrence usually not permitted. In turn, participants can negotiate a sense of freedom, however fleeting.

For some women, prison might present a period where women can focus on themselves and their health (Maeve, 1999). Indeed, prison provides three structured meals per day, the opportunity to sleep and time away from other stressors such as pimps or domestic violence (Robert et al., 2007). However, while such examples may suggest a sense of freedom associated with focusing and taking care of self while under confinement, the effects of confinement on the prisoner and their body are often complex and long-lasting (Robert et al., 2007; Shantz et al., 2009). Therefore, our discussion is not to romanticize the prison space or time spent there, but rather to offer a glimpse at how these women may identify and enact their individual and differing priorities in custody and the community.

Moreover, for some, prison can be an opportunity to focus on wellness versus survival. In keeping with Kohler Riessman's (2008) work narratives as storytelling, the current research project provides narrative truths about

participants' experiences while in custody. Our findings clarify that prisoner expression and movement are complex and nuanced and must be thought of beyond binary systems of difference. The dance workshop provided for these women a moment of bodily exploration, as Frigon and Shantz's (2014) work suggests, attuned to both their positive and negative bodily experiences in prison. The dance workshop provided a condition in which movement and freedom were interconnected. These conditions were not the case for all, as some women chose not to dance nor participate in the workshop. The use of the dance workshops in prison illustrates the usefulness of arts-based methods in carceral settings such as prisons because of their ability to provide different conditions and moments of self-expression otherwise restricted from prisoners. Therefore, we argue that arts-based methods provide a helpful vehicle for more nuanced understandings of prisoners' experiences, agency, and self-expression.

Conclusion

This research aimed to understand movement as a form of agency and expression and examine how dance enables some incarcerated women to enact such agency. Participants took part in a dance workshop and reflective discussion about their experiences. The findings suggest that under certain conditions, movement can indicate agency and heightened bodily experiences for prisoners as displayed through the dance workshop. Women expressed feeling moments of freedom, relaxation and, indeed, forgetting their incarcerated state for a moment. Further, women may use movement, specifically dance, to express sexuality heavily regulated in prison. Participants' liberation and freedom experiences through the dance workshop illustrated their ability to express their sexuality through dancing when otherwise not permitted. Prisoners' choices to participate in movement may signify their ability and desire to maneuver, if ever so slightly, while inhabiting disciplinary and confined spaces such as the prison. Movement and dance offered a space of resistance for women to engage in activities often banned. Such a space of possibility illustrates that prison is not simply a binary space and instead is helpful to think outside of binary systems focused on difference. That is, prison can be both confining and oppressive while also presenting opportunities to focus on health and well-being in different ways. These themes highlight the participants' ability to practice agency, movement, space, and time within prison and thus illuminate what the polychronicity of movement might also signify. As Frigon and Shantz's (2014) work suggests, exploring movement may elucidate prisoners' perceptions and bodily experiences, both positive and negative, while living in prison and their shared needs for bodily expression. We argue that movement as an agentic practice can hold various meanings and is not simply an act of resistance or freedom. In this sense, understanding freedom means

recognizing that it can be both performative and situational. Such experiences appear to occur despite or perhaps because of biopower's effects on prisoner bodies.

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