

Faculty Commons Graduate Student Research Conference

June 9, 2021

Presentation Abstracts

“Embodied Knowledge” Panel

Cuauhtémoc Peranda, Dance (Latinx and Latin American Studies)

Two-Spirit Voguing & Critical Spectatorship

Abstract: While voguing has been popularized for its entertainment through Madonna’s hit single “Vogue,” Jennie Livingston’s *Paris Is Burning*, FX’s hit series *POSE*, and through HBO Max’s streaming television reality competition series *Legendary*, the dance form deserves deeper analysis. Ethnographers Marlon M. Bailey, Cleis Abeni, and madison moore have traced how Black, Latinx, and Indigenous Transgender, and Queer people’s vogue to continue a long-standing history of resistance against the shade of continued fear-based oppression. This paper writes with the embodied experience of voguing as a Latinx Two-Spirit, and what can be seen at a Ball when critically spectating from an Indigenous lens. Looking to a Ball and voguing, from inside the body, and of other voguers with an Indigenous lens provide new insight into the what José Esteban Muñoz identifies as queer utopias in this Black and Brown dance form. Yet, with caution from historian C. Riley Snorton, performance studies scholar E. Patrick Johnson, and choreographer Ni’Ja Whitson, while looking at the Black & Latinx dancing from a non-western lens may yield new insight and build bridges between African and American Indigenous Peoples—the Black and Latinx body has been looked at, probed, and examined too much. To subject Black and Latinx dance to yet another kind of analysis may do more harm. In attendance to this concern, this paper explores the practices of respect and reciprocity that exist in the House Ballroom Scene, to suggest possibilities for further ethical research of the practices of Black and Brown voguers.

Kyrié Owen, Creative Writing (Reclamation and Native American Communities)

Narrative Medicine Through an Indigenous Ideology

Abstract: This presentation challenges Western medicine and the mental health care system in the United States. Studies show that involuntary hospitalizations do more harm than good due to coercive treatment and restrictions that harm oppressed people. Indigenous scholars such as Renda Dionne, Ph.D. (Turtle Mountain Chippewa), and James Fenelon (Standing Rock Sioux) discuss how narrative pathways and medicine are interconnected, creating a solution through a community-centered approach that supports autonomy and accessibility. Using Indigenous practices and methodology combined with storytelling as medicine creates a proactive, collaborative view of healing for both patients and the community.

Dava Hernández, Dance (Latinx and Latin American Studies)

Interstitial Moves: Carpa Dance Performances in the Borderlands

Abstract: "Interstitial Moves: Carpa Dance Performances in the Borderlands" analyzes carpa dance performances and women carpa performers' dancing bodies of the 1930s-40s. Carpas were small, family run-circus/vaudeville shows that toured throughout the U.S. Southwest and on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The project focuses on the women dancers of the carpa while attempting to excavate their presence and hear their voices within the interstitial spaces in archives where carpa evidence remains. This dissertation explores how carpa dancers were making moves to create and recreate themselves as both Mexican and American through hybrid dances and identities while examining how carpa dance performances contributed to shaping the culture and social environment where these shows were performed.

This dissertation also traces the resonances of carpa dance to a genealogy of radical Chicana performance practices throughout history that have enabled its practitioners to create their own identities within ever changing sociopolitical, cultural, and economic landscapes. For example, the work highlights the role of carpa dancing in the development of experimental approaches to folklórico dance in ways that have helped folklórico dancers construct their identities at different moments in history. It investigates how hybrid choreographic choices speak to a long history of Chicana/o/x dancers' creating and recreating their identities through re-adaptations of the folklórico dance form, specifically. This dissertation also theorizes carpa dances as precedents for debates around authenticity and Chicana/o/x embodiment, making space for dancing carpa bodies to be seen and heard while accounting for their contributions to shaping Chicana/o/x dance and culture.