

Ethical Issues in the Training & Development of Dance Teachers in the Private Sector

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Private sector dance teaching

Largely unregulated – little to prevent overly authoritarian teaching referred to as 'teaching by terror' (Buckroyd 2003; Geeves 1993)

New style teaching qualifications

- emerged from criticisms of traditional, overly authoritarian teaching practices labelled by Geeves (1993) as 'teaching by terror'
- claim to promote ethical, person-centred teaching practices

Project considered evidence for the widely-voiced claim that dance teaching in the private sector has rejected the traditional, authoritarian methods in favour of ethical teaching practices

Data collection

- Written materials
- 4 semi-structured video interviews with teachers
- An autoethnography
- Some anecdotal/participant observation

- Findings from this qualitative study highlight behaviour from dance's past
- They show little evidence to demonstrate any significant move toward ethical practice in its present

To be able to stand in front of a class, not with arrogance but a calm kind of confidence that you know what you are talking about and that you know how to get someone safely from A to B. Well we didn't do any of that. A lot of it was straight forward humiliation.


Why has the introduction of codes of conduct & practice appeared to have little effect on teaching practice?

Codes of Conduct & Practice

- Some argue dance teaching profession well on its way to ethical practice simply because codes exist
- For codes to assist in moving from 'teaching by terror' to person-centred practice requires more than a code being devised and adopted


For codes to be of value we need to

- Read & discuss them
- Ask questions about them
- Understand them
- Embrace & embody them within practice
- Teach in such a way as to internalise them




We need to recognise

- Codes have limitations McNamee (1995)
- Shelf Codes sitting on the shelf for all the world to see do not impact on practice
- Shelf Codes do not prevent the types of practices that we want to move away from



Codes of the heart

- Only once we have done all of that can we take the codes to our hearts and to the heart of our teaching
- For then we will be better placed to recognise & reinforce ethical teaching behaviour



Who are the codes protecting?

- Codes usually indicate the population they are intended to protect – CDET's code promotes teacher behaviour that facilitates health, wellbeing & development of their students
- Often a second agenda eg a code to protect children might in fact protect adults from possible litigation

Codes in practice

- Two cases within dance teaching relating to moral obligations were considered
- Do dance teachers have a moral obligation to allow students with anorexia to participate in dance classes Botham (2005) IADMS conference proceedings
- Dance teachers and CPD

ethicsdance.co.uk

thank you

