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*Pedagogies of/and Performance-As-Research: Mobilizing  
PAR in Pedagogical Contexts*

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When *PARtake* first began, the journal editors intended to create a space that acknowledged the rich intersections of the work of *scholartists*—those of us who use and rely on the intertwined approach of scholarship and creative processes to offer new insights to the field, and who consider performance practices *as* research methods. This dialogic approach is what I call “reciprocal research.” It not only offers a way to highlight the rich exchange and dialogue that occurs between artistic practice, performance, and research, but additionally—and more importantly—it *activates* and *amplifies* this complex, interwoven, dynamic relationship. It is arguably one of the cornerstones of Performance as Research (PAR). *PARtake* aims to gather scholartists of “many and varied” disciplines and from diverse locations to “both initiate new conversations and enlarge more established ones.”<sup>i</sup> Indeed, both of those projects expand in this issue as we explore the ways that pedagogy and pedagogical practices wind their way through, amid, and around the work of PAR and scholartists. Dedicated to “Pedagogies of/and Performance-as-Research,” this issue of *PARtake* asks authors to critically examine and explore the relationship between PAR and pedagogy—the ways diverse pedagogies and pedagogical approaches intersect with, are influenced by, and are utilized in PAR.

As our intrepid *PARtake* co-editors noted in their first editorial for this journal, Performance as Research and its close, often conflated cousins—Practice as Research, Practice-based Research, Artistic Research, and Performance-based Research—originated in “distinct pedagogical environs across the world.”<sup>ii</sup> From its origins, PAR seems to have held a firm place in pedagogical discourse. Despite this origin story and the continued development of PAR, the specific relationship of PAR to pedagogy remains minimally studied or explored in many scholarly publications, particularly in the US. As noted by the oft-cited Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk, PAR methodologies use performance to “challenge the normative frameworks that have traditionally structured academic contributions to knowledge” and offer “alternative frameworks for understanding, communicating, and disseminating knowledge.”<sup>iii</sup> This offers several provocations: Within these “alternative frameworks” of knowledge and research, how does PAR similarly challenge the normative frameworks of teaching and pedagogy? How does PAR impact performance pedagogy—both how we teach performance and how we pedagogically engage with

performance research? How does PAR function as a pedagogical approach? How does one teach PAR? As we work to question and decolonize classrooms as well as curricula, how does PAR pedagogically engage in, support, and complicate that endeavor?

Bruce Barton and others posit that PAR tends to push back against and defy singular definition.<sup>iv</sup> Embracing the fluidity and unfixedness of the PAR paradigm, the title of this issue, “Pedagogies **of/and** Performance-as-Research,” asks authors to examine PAR’s pedagogical plurality—the multiple pedagogies that may constitute and/or emerge from one’s work with PAR. Similarly, the title also attempts to activate this fluidity by connecting the prepositional phrases “of” and “and,” thus encouraging examinations of pedagogies that emerge when teaching PAR in diverse settings, while also investigating what develops when pedagogies are in conversation with PAR. PAR also seems particularly suited to actively assist scholarartists as they engage with necessary conversations surrounding pedagogical decolonization and anti-racist practices. In fact, the International Federation for Theatre Research Performance as Research working group’s 2020 call for proposals features a specific focus on pedagogy, asking participants to consider “questions of decoloniality and pedagogies vis a vis PaR.”<sup>v</sup>

Pedagogy and PAR are performative, dynamic, and evolving practices. Both are also public and thus political, deeply invested in exploring the intersections of knowledge, culture, understanding, and performance. In *Practice as Research in the Arts*, Robin Nelson writes that PAR is “*mobilized* through a discernable pedagogy” (emphasis mine).<sup>vi</sup> It is this pedagogical mobilization, this mode of teaching *with* and *by* the reciprocal research/performance of PAR, that is our focus in this special issue.

In thinking about the ways that PAR enhances, challenges, and complicates pedagogical approaches, several key elements emerge, and these are illuminated by the articles in this issue. First, PAR and pedagogy emphasizes the **collective and collaborative**. While PAR pedagogies are not singular or singularly defined, PAR pedagogies overall are less about the *scholartistteacher* as the sole expert on a topic—what Paulo Freire termed the “banking model” of education—and more about creating an opportunity for co-creating and co-learning through performance, research, and embodied experience. Additionally, PAR’s methodological and epistemological focus on performance as a central articulation

and modality of the work naturally then also extends the embodied, somatic nature of PAR and related pedagogies. Because of this emphasis on the **experiential and embodied**, PAR pedagogies also move away from any single, fixed sense of knowing. As a result, PAR pedagogies **generate questions** and embrace the complexity of lived and performed experiences. Finally, PAR, whether used *as* pedagogy or taught *to* student scholarartists, considers and enacts **interdisciplinarity**, reflecting what Melanie Dreyer-Lude calls “threads” that weave together across various PAR projects.<sup>vii</sup> This interdisciplinarity in relation to pedagogy is distinct and merits specific mention. Much like the PAR methodology itself, the questions and experiential discoveries generated through pedagogy as PAR, and the relationship(s) therein, offer robust avenues through which to explore how performance and pedagogies influence, and are influenced by, other disciplines. Reflecting all of these elements, the authors of the articles included here offer diverse ways one might mobilize learning, research, performance, and knowledge to engage with critical theory, site-responsive interventions, the performance of race, the embodied archive, and more.

We begin this issue with explorations of specific courses that utilize PAR techniques, thus offering potential models for others to adapt and utilize in their PAR as/of pedagogy. First, Oona Hatton’s essay “Towards a Model for Teaching PAR in the Undergraduate Classroom” critically reflects on two versions of an Ensemble Performance course. The courses created performances around the theme of incarceration as a way to model a viable, efficacious, and socially-connected pedagogical framework for teaching PAR. Drawing on Robin Nelson’s proposed elements for a “justifiable” PAR practice: making the tacit explicit, principles of composition, and building connections between “know what” and “know that,”<sup>viii</sup> Hatton outlines how a *scholartisteacher* might develop and mobilize those areas toward a pedagogical practice that engages undergraduate students in the PAR process, yet remains expansive and responsive.

Shauna Janssen’s essay, “Theatre Island and Urban Scenographies of Learning: A Performative Paradigm for Transversal Pedagogy,” considers the implications of viewing as well as performing in and with the urban landscape of Teaterøen/Theatre Island, located near Copenhagen, Denmark. Janssen offers a “performative paradigm for transversal pedagogy” which focuses deeply on interdisciplinarity of site-

responsive PAR pedagogies. Via this transversal pedagogy, Janssen encourages students to make connections and ask questions through the lens of scenography and performance, rather than offering solutions. In so doing, Janssen extends our considerations about how PAR pedagogy prompts students to consider not only the performative self, but also performative spaces.

Building on this consideration of location and positionality, Cory LaFevers's "Americans performing Afro-Brazilian *maracatu* and *afoxé*: Navigating Race, Religion, Appropriation, and the Potential of Anti-Racist Pedagogy" investigates the performative nature of (trans)national spatio-racial formations, looking specifically at anti-racist pedagogies offered by a PAR exploration of Afro-Brazilian dance in Austin, TX. Through this case study, LaFevers illuminates the complexity of these transnational spatio-racial responses, and critiques potential anti-racist pedagogies offered by participation in Afro-Brazilian dance troupes.

Megan Nicely rounds out the issue with her essay, "Protean Knowledge: On Researching while Studying with Sherwood Chen." Taking yet another view of PAR pedagogies, Nicely's article explores the embodied archive—specifically what is revealed in both teaching and performing movement from a lineage, while also deviating from that lineage. This article provokes questions about the creation and transmission of a movement-based embodied archive, vis-à-vis Sherwood Chen's teaching of BodyWeather-based training. Nicely untangles the relationship between bodies and language by bringing "sensorial attention" to acts of learning, performing, and archiving performance-based knowledge.

While diverse in approach, location, and focus, these essays share a desire to illuminate the pedagogical implications and connections available to scholartists through and with PAR. In many ways, this work echoes Mark Fleishman's description of PAR as a research—and I would include pedagogical—method that refuses "binaries (body – mind, theory – practice, space – time, subject – object)." <sup>ix</sup> According to Fleishman, PAR carries a "radical openness," and embraces "multiplicities, [with] its unrepresentability, its destabilization of all pretensions to fixity and determination."<sup>x</sup> The articles in this special issue of *PARtake* testify to the complexity and expansiveness regarding PAR of/and pedagogy. I am honored to present these conversations from fellow scholartists and teachers—

conversations that intertwine pedagogy and PAR and demonstrate how these reciprocal practices can mobilize learning and performance spaces.

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<sup>i</sup> William Lewis and Niki Tulk, “Why Performance as Research?” *PARtake: The Journal of Performance as Research* 1.1 (2016): 1.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk, “Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and Family Resemblances,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37(2012): 23.e

<sup>iv</sup> Bruce Barton, “Introduction I: Wherefore PAR?” in *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact*, eds. Annette Arlander, Bruce Barton, Melanie Dryer-Lunde, Ben Spatz (Routledge, 2018).

<sup>v</sup> IFTR PaR Working Group, “Call for Abstracts: 2020 Galway,” <https://www.iftr.org/working-groups/performance-as-research/call-for-abstracts-2020-galway-performance-as-research-working-group>.

<sup>vi</sup> Robin Nelson, “Conceptual Frameworks for PaR and Related Pedagogy: From ‘Hard Facts’ to ‘Liquid Knowing,’” in *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*, ed. Robin Nelson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 48.

<sup>vii</sup> Melanie Dreyer-Lude, “Introduction II: Threads, Linking PAR Practice Across Spectrums,” *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact*. Routledge, 2012.

<sup>viii</sup> Robin Nelson, “Conceptual Frameworks for PaR and Related Pedagogy: From ‘Hard Facts’ to ‘Liquid Knowing,’” in *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*, ed. Robin Nelson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 52.

<sup>ix</sup> Mark Fleishman, “The Difference of Performance as Research.” *Theatre Research International* 37.1 (2012): 32.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid.