LMAS-223-004 FA19

Music and Society

DJ Cultures and American Social Dance

Monday, 5-6:50pm / 136 Mass Ave, Rm. 404 Tuesday, 6-6:50 / 1108 Boylston 205

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Office Location 7 Haviland 304 Office Hour Tuesday 5pm-6pm

Course Website http://ol.berklee.edu/course/view.php?id=98932

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Course Description

Bringing together dancers, musicians, and a host of participants in real time and shared space, the phenomenon of social dance is a complex interplay of institutions and affiliations, cultural values and social histories. This is especially true in the pluralistic, post-colonial societies that have given rise to some of today's most popular social dance forms: Cuba, Brazil, Jamaica, Colombia, Mexico, and the United States. Beginning with a history of the interaction between European and African forms of social dance across the New World, from the rise of the quadrille to the foxtrot to the sock-hop, this course will examine a number of case studies of "DJ cultures" or social dance movements built around the relatively new experience of dancing together to sound recordings: disco, reggae, cumbia, hip-hop, house, and EDM, to name a few.

Our discussions of specific musical or dance forms will be grounded in the social and cultural contexts in which they become meaningful in practice, including the values expressed by the ways people have danced together as well as how dancing has been policed and represented by different constituencies in specific historical moments. While cultivating an appreciation of the historical contexts for such dance institutions as juke joints, discotheques, dance halls, and raves, students will come to terms with how ideas about race, gender, sexuality, and nationality have informed the development of scenes driven by genres of music and dance that support dynamic forms of co-presence, sociality, and cultural politics.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Outline how social dance has been shaped by as it has shaped various local, national, and transnational social institutions and cultural values.
- Discuss the relationship between dance culture and social power, especially with regard to class hierarchies, racial and national ideologies, and sexual mores.
- Situate the emergence of DJ cultures within the history of popular dance music in the Americas as well as the history of sound reproduction, including the musicality and sociality of DJing.
- Conduct field research as a participant-observer and compose an ethnographic account of a social dance event.
- Write an essay examining a particular dance or form of DJing in historical and cultural context.

Course Materials

Many of our readings will be available via the course website as PDFs and URLs. The following books are available at the bookstore, <u>on reserve</u> at the library, or via various online retailers:

Required:

Malnig, Julie, ed. *Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake: A Social and Popular Dance Reader*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Brewster, Bill and Frank Broughton. *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life: The History of the Disc Jockey*. London: Headline Book Publishing, 1999.

Recommended:

Matos, Michaelangelo. *The Underground Is Massive: How Electronic Dance Music Conquered America*. New York: Dey St., 2015.

Course Requirements

• 20% Weekly Pre-Class Responses & In-Class Participation

Before we meet each week, you will be tasked with reading an article or chapter (or two) and reviewing a playlist of audio/video examples. After you have done so, and *prior to our Monday class meeting*, you will post a brief response on OL, writing up a sentence or two for each of the following three questions:

- 1) What seems confusing, or in need of clarification or elaboration?
- 2) What was the biggest "a-ha" moment / "lightbulb" passage in the piece?
- 3) What demands further discussion and/or debate?

To receive credit for these assignments, they *must* be posted prior to class.

• 15% Dance Ethnography

All students will produce and present a "dance ethnography" (1-2 pages) by attending and participating in a local social dance event, observing how people interact with each other and with the music/DJ, reflection on their own reactions to other dancers and the DJ, and discussing how the dynamics of the event compare to the scenes we've studied. The event should be a DJ/dance event, not a live PA/concert, but the style of music/dance is wide open. The site need not be a commercial venue, but it should not be a friend's house party either: aim for a public or semi-public venue. During the course of the term, each student will give a brief presentation (5 min) of their ethnographic report.

• 15% Discussion & Dance Leadership (Weeks 5 - 14)

Once during the term, each student will take a turn, alongside a classmate, guiding us through one of the secondary readings. Discussion leaders will offer a brief overview of the article they select, highlighting its crucial points and arguments, and will prepare *three discussion questions* for the class to consider together in order to better understand the dance or DJ styles in question. Discussion leaders will also briefly serve as dance instructors, giving the class a brief lesson to help us appreciate some embodied values and enliven our session with some social movement.

• 30% Written Assignments

Mainly in the second half of the semester, we will work toward our final papers by breaking the work up into small pieces: a proposal, a bibliography, and a thesis statement and outline

• 20% Final Paper (1500 words) & Lightning Presentation

Students will compose an essay situating a particular dance or DJ technique—e.g., the grizzly bear, the Milly Rock, the Melbourne shuffle, or, say, the crab scratch, the tight blend, the rewind—in social, cultural, and historical context with attention to the various motivations and values gathered around it. In the final week of class each student will give a 5 minute "lightning talk" about their topic.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required in all classes, private lessons, instrumental labs, and ensembles, beginning with the first scheduled meeting. Absences must be addressed directly with the course instructor. Class begins promptly on the hour and ends at ten minutes before the hour. Late arrival is both unprofessional and disruptive. You are only allowed two absences without penalty; after that, your final grade will be reduced by half a grade for each absence. If you miss more than six class sessions, you will automatically earn a grade of F in the course.

Berklee recognizes that its students will be presented with professional opportunities, such as job interviews, auditions for professional positions or graduate school, and exceptional performance opportunities (including those sponsored by Berklee). Students hoping to take advantage of such opportunities are not excused from course assignments or deadlines, and are required to discuss the ramifications of any related absences with their course instructors *in advance*.

Devices and Social Media Policy ***

As a gesture of mutual respect and toward increasing individual and collective engagement, I ask that students generally refrain from using electronic devices – laptops, smartphones, tablets – and take a complete break from social media (Facebook, Twitter, texts, emails) during our class meetings. If you need to consult a digital dictionary, conduct a class-related internet search, or if you genuinely use your laptop to take notes, you are welcome to. Note that we will always take a break in the middle of every class in case you need to check your messages, get your social media "fix," or simply stretch your legs.

Academic Honesty

Berklee College of Music insists on academic honesty. Unless the assignment explicitly is a group project, all of the work in this class must be your own. The source of all information in any written assignment must be cited properly, whether it is a quotation, paraphrase, summary, idea, concept, statistic, or picture. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, including parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Plagiarism—not giving proper credit to a source and thereby passing off someone else's material or idea as your own—is a type of intellectual deceit and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Plagiarism may result in a failing grade for the assignment or course, and possible dismissal from the College. It is your responsibility to be aware of and abide by the rules governing plagiarism, fraud, and cheating found in the College Bulletin under the section "Honesty in Academic Work and in Scholarly and Professional Practice." If you have any questions about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, please talk with a reference librarian, ask a teacher, or refer to a writing handbook. Websites that discuss types of plagiarism and how it can be avoided through evaluation and proper documentation of sources include:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalcrit.html

Title IX

Berklee is a diverse community composed of individuals with different life experiences, viewpoints, belief systems, and identities. A welcoming and inclusive culture is essential to maintaining the college's role as a leader in music education and Berklee highly values the dynamic environment that results when students, faculty, administrators, and staff from diverse backgrounds come together to learn, live, and work. The Equity Policy and Process prohibits and addresses sexual misconduct, as well as other forms of discrimination and/or harassment based on legally "protected characteristics" and provisions covered under Title IX of federal law. If you have concerns about a possible violation of the college's Equity Policy, please contact Dr. Christopher Kandus-Fisher at ckandusfisher@berklee.edu. For more information: www.berklee.edu/equity.

Liberal Arts Department Equity Mission Statement

The Liberal Arts Department at Berklee strives to provide a supportive environment for all students, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual identity and orientation, health, ability, social class, and racial, ethnic, religious, national, and personal backgrounds. Our strength is in our differences, and a diverse community promotes equity through the support of and respect for people with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences. We welcome the opportunities to work with and learn from each other.

Support Services

The Center for Liberal Arts Tutoring (CLAT) offers various tutoring services to the Berklee community. Located in 7 Haviland Street, room 110, CLAT falls under the auspices of the Liberal Arts Department in the Professional Education Division. For more information, please visit https://www.berklee.edu/liberal-arts-tutoring. Additional Student Services include:

- Counseling Services, 54 The Fenway, 617-747-2310
- Academic Advising Center, 939 Boylston Street, 3rd floor, 617-747-6535
- Disability Services, 939 Boylston Street, 2nd Floor, To schedule a session: https://www.berklee.edu/disabilityappointment
- Stan Getz Library and Media Center, 150 Mass Ave

Class Schedule

Topic 1 Introduction & Syllabus Review

Reading: Seyfu Hinds, "A D.J. Could Save Your Life Tonight" [URL]; Russell, "A Rhythmless Nation" [PDF]

Topic 2 Early American Social Dance

Primary Reading: Heckscher, "Afro-Chesapeake Inventions of American Dance" (Malnig ch. 1)

Secondary Reading: Aldrich, "The Civilizing of America's Ballrooms" (Malnig ch. 2); Jamison, "Square Roots" and "Transforming Tradition" [PDF]

Writing Assignment 1: Social Dance Autobiography

Topic 3 The Jook (Juke) Continuum

Reading: Hazzard-Gordon, "Shoddy Confines: The Jook Continuum" (62-119) [PDF]

Topic 4 Cakewalk to Foxtrot to Lindy Hop

Primary Reading: Wald, "The Ragtime Life" and "Everybody's Doin' It" [URL] Secondary Reading: Pugh, "The Cakewalk" [PDF]; Malnig, "Apaches, Tangos, and Other Indecencies" (Malnig ch. 4); George-Graves, "Primitivity and Ragtime Dance" (Malnig ch. 3); Hubbard & Monaghan, "Social Dancing at the Savoy" (Malnig ch. 7)

Topic 5 **Disc Jocks and Sock Hops**

Primary Reading: Brewster & Broughton, "Beginnings (Radio & Clubs)" (ch. 2-3) Secondary Reading: Wall, "Rocking Around the Clock" (Malnig ch. 10); Wald, "Twisting Girls Change the World" [URL]

Topic 6 Disco Revolutions

Primary Reading: Lawrence, "Beyond the Hustle" (ch. 11 in Malnig)
Secondary Reading: Fikentscher, "In the Mix" [PDF]; Brewster & Broughton,
"Disco" and "Disco 2" (ch. 6-7)

Further Reading: Johnson, "The Stonewall Riots Could Only Be Started by Someone Who Was Tired and Black" [URL]; Mao, "The Loft: An Oral History" [URL]; Walters, "Walter Gibson" [URL]; Drake, "An Introduction to Disco Demolition: Riot to Rebirth" [URL]; Shapiro, "Saturday Mass" [URL]

Topic 7 Jamaica: Soundsystems and Dancehalls

Primary Reading: Brewster & Broughton, "Wreck Up a Version" (ch. 5)

Secondary Reading: Hope, "Passa Passa" [PDF]; Putnam, "The Weekly Regge" [PDF];

Fintoni, "Wheel It Up" [URL]; Hancox, "A Love Letter to the Reload" [URL]

Writing Assignment 2: Paper proposal

Topic 8 Hip-hop as Dance Music

Primary Reading: Schloss, "From Rocking to B-Boying" [PDF]

Secondary Reading: Brewster & Broughton, "Hip Hop" & "Hip Hop 2" (ch. 8-9);

Marshall, "Kool Herc" [URL]; Miller, "P-Popping and Bounce Dancing" [PDF];

Dee, "New Orleans' Gender-Bending Rap" [URL]; Driscoll, "Soulja Boy and

Dance Crazes" [URL]; Turner, "Inside Atlanta's Booming Hip-Hop Dance

Scene" [URL]

Further Reading: Deahl, "Body Positivity, Twerking, and Safe Spaces" [URL]; Crenshaw, "Beyond Racism and Misogyny" [URL]; Gonzalez, "Party Over Here" [URL]; Gach, "What Fortnite's Dance Emotes May Owe to the

Black Artists Who Created Them" [URL]; Cole, "Fortnite's Appropriation Issue" [URL]

Topic 9 Baile Funk / Funk Carioca

Primary Reading: Palombini, "Historiography of Funk Carioca" [PDF] Secondary Reading: Cumming, "Interview with DJ Marlboro" [URL]

Writing Assignment 3: Preliminary Bibliography and Literature Review

Topic 10 Cumbia (Champeta, Sonidera, 3bal)

Primary Reading: Pearl, "Sonideros: The Mobile Soundsystems of Mexico City" [URL] Secondary Reading: Pacini-Hernandez, "Sound Systems, World Beat and Diasporan Identity in Cartagena, Colombia" [PDF]; Ragland, "Mexican DJs and the Transnational Space of Youth Dances in New York and New Jersey" [PDF]; Clayton, "Tribal Guarachero: Mexican Teens and Aztec History" [URL]

Topic 11 Latin Dance: Salsa to Reggaeton

Primary Reading: McMains, "'Hot' Latin Dance" [PDF]

Secondary Reading: McMains, "Dancing Latin/Latin Dancing" (ch. 17 in Malnig);

Fairley, "How to Make Love with Your Clothes On" [PDF]; Viera, "Reggaeton's Leading Ladies" [URL]; Marshall, "Spectacular Copulative Dance Today"

[URL]; Del Valle Schorske, "Dancing Backup" [URL]

Topic 12 House & Techno

Primary Reading: Sommer, "C'mon to My House" (ch. 16 in Malnig)

Secondary Reading: Matos, ch. 1-2; Brewster & Broughton, "Garage," "House," and

"Techno" (ch. 10-12); Arnold, "Ron Hardy at the Music Box" [URL];

Zlatopolsky, "The Roots of Techno: Detroit's Club Scene 1973–1985" [URL];

Beta, "Electronic Warfare" [URL]; Philip, "Ghettotech: An Oral History" [URL];

Stevels, "Jersey Club" [URL]; Lynch, "The Art of DJing: Jeff Mills" [URL]

Writing Assignment 4: Thesis Statement and Paper Outline

From Rave to EDM

Primary Reading: Matos, ch. 3, 4, 7, 16-18

Secondary Reading: Reynolds, "Hardcore Rave" and "How Rave Music Conquered America" [URL]; Parrish, "Embarrassed at Dance Artists' Failure to Support Black Lives Matter" [URL]; Heatwave, "How Dancehall Birthed UK Raving" [URL]; Pearl, "I Woke Up Like This" [URL]; Brewster & Broughton, "Northern Soul" (ch. 4); Sherburne, "Colonel Sanders at the Rave" [URL]

Topic 14 LGBTQ/QTPOC: Sexuality & Safe Space in Contemporary Club

- Primary Reading: Garcia, "An Alternate History of Sexuality in Club Culture" [URL]; Torres, "Latin Night at the Queer Club" [URL]
- Secondary Reading: Williamson, "Queering the Party" [URL]; Pearl, "KUNQ" [URL]; Host, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About 'Ha'" [URL]; rad fag, "Vogue Is Not for You" [URL]; Iadarola, "Reassess How You Think About Voguing" [URL]
- Further Reading: Watson, "One Month After Pulse: DJs Speak on the Reality of Safe Spaces" [URL]; Macharia, "refuge" [URL]; Arbona, "Queer Boriqua Geopolitics and the Pulse Shooting" [URL]; Lawrence, "Life and Death on the Pulse Dance Floor" [URL]; Lynch, "Refugees Welcome" [URL]; Ryce, "Honcho Campout" [URL]; Starling, "The Ha Dance" [URL]

Topic 15 Lightning Presentations (Final Paper Topics)

Final Papers & Dance Ethnography Write-Ups Due

Course Bibliography

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