

Master's Thesis

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Dancing Together

Behavior and Context in the Scandinavian Folk Dance
and Music Community



Telemark University College

Faculty of Art, Folk Culture and Teacher Education

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"How can we know the dancer from the dance?"

- Among School Children, W.B. Yeats 1928

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Abstract

In this master's thesis I look at social interaction between dancers, musicians, and peripheral actors at social dance events, particularly in the Scandinavian folk dance community (both in the United States and Scandinavia). Through analysis of filmed material and personal experience, I identify a number of behavior roles and look at how these can be grouped together to understand how certain behaviors and influence consequent behaviors. Based on interviews with community members I determine a number of other factors that influence this interaction and explore how this influence is effected. In the final chapter I suggest a number of ways that the tools developed in thesis can be used to analyze social interaction at a social dance event, regardless of genre.

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Preface

This project marks a point on the timeline of my life as a dancer and musician in the Scandinavian folk dance tradition. Dance and music were always an important part of my upbringing. I grew up listening to romantic stories of my grandparents meeting at a Sons of Norway dance and my parents meeting while dancing on New Year's Eve. By the time I started in high school I had also begun to play dance music. As an adult I dedicated most of my free time to various activities within the Scandinavian dance, eventually leading to my choice to move to Norway and study folk music formally.

In this thesis I draw greatly on my own past experiences and contacts in these circles, while at the same time attempting to peek over these walls and understand how a shared history and experience does not equal an identical history or experience. While I share the love of Scandinavian folk dance and music with the informants and dance participants in this study, my history and experience is different. I grew up in Seattle, I am Jewish, I am well educated and I am a woman. I now live in Norway and, in addition to my studies, own and manage a coffee shop that hosts the weekly student pub. Everything I do is filtered through the lens of my experience and identity. However, I suggest that the questions and discussions in this thesis are applicable to not only Scandinavian folk dance and music events, but also other forms of traditional dance and music, and possibly even to popular forms of dance and music.

I would like to express a deep gratitude for the support, encouragement, and sage advice I have received from my advisors, Mats Johansson and Per Åsmund Omholt. They gently nudged me forward when I faltered and time and again sent thoughtful comments that drove me further into the subject matter and inspired my own reflection. I would also like to thank my mother, Janet Andersen, for her insistence on passion, perfection and precision in the written work and her encouragement to follow my dreams. I would like to thank my love, David Rönnlund, who while simultaneously working on his master's thesis, has listened to my orations, shared my struggles, and been a source of laughter throughout the entire process. I extend heartfelt thanks to all of the informants who gave of their ideas and their time, the dancers in Seattle who gave permission to include the film material and Bob Olson who recorded the film material, sent it to me, and gave me permission to use it. Thank you all!



Image 1 Midsummer Dance, Anders Zorn, 1903

1 Introduction

This thesis looks at social interaction in the context of a social dance event. I will discuss how a variety of factors influence the interaction including a sense of community, place, and various preconceptions. I attempt to look at interaction and potential influences on this interaction from several angles, allowing theoretical and practical discussions to overlap and interact to give a more complete picture of how meaning is created at a social dance event. I hope that the tools I develop will allow others to evaluate the role interaction plays in their social dance communities and shine a light on the important factors and central values of these communities.

I began this project with the aim of studying the interaction between musicians and dancers in a social Scandinavian-dance setting. Perhaps naively, at the very least idealistically, I assumed that dancers and musicians have a magical bond, where feelings and meaning flow wordlessly between the actors. Quickly, I realized that while this type of intense connection does exist, it is certainly not a given that any of the actors will experience it during a given evening. Additionally, the individuals dancing and playing are more likely than not to have different interpretations of a given moment, and while one dancing couple might feel a sense of elation, it is conceivable that no one else in the room feels the same. With these realizations in mind, this project evolved from studying the emotion of the interaction between dancers and musicians, to looking at a slightly larger picture, that of the entire social dance event.

I view interaction at a social dance event as a communication of identity and values, and a meaning creating process. I find it useful to imagine this interaction as a conversation. It is a conversation between the participants in the moment, negotiating what happens next; the dancers and musicians take turns 'speaking' and listening. It is also a conversation of values where individuals and communities to whom they belong 'discuss' with their actions (but also perhaps with words) what is important.

In the course of this project I review film material, interview community members, and participate in social dance events. I attempt to understand the behaviors of others based on my experiences as a dancer and musician. I visualize myself in the situations shown on

film and recall the experiences I have had at social dance events during the course of this research. I try to lose my own preconceptions and identify with the interview respondents to allow different points of view to come to light. The discussions that follow are my observations, reflections on, and re-considerations of the experience of participating in a social dance event as informed by the films, interview, and experiences I have had during this time.

1.1 Research Questions

The primary goal of this paper is to discuss the interaction between participants at a social dance event and a number of factors that influence that interaction. I have focused my attention on what I consider to be the three main groups of actors in attendance at a social dance event, that is the dancers, the musicians, and what I call the 'peripheral actors'.

What are some of the factors that influence this interaction and how does that influence manifest? I look at conceptual factors like tradition and authenticity and discuss how various understandings of these concepts influence the approach an individual or community has toward the social dance event as a whole and thus the effect on interaction between individuals. I take a similar look at more concrete factors like physical place and use of alcohol. The concrete and conceptual factors combine to create the unique context of a given social dance event. By investigating the effect of a number of factors on the interaction we may be more equipped to understand how many factors combined have resulted in a given social dance event.

How do the actors and communities reconcile the competing interests of individual expression and the set of values and conventions imposed by the community? While I assert that communities attract individuals with similar goals and values, I also explore how the nature of the social dance event creates the feeling of community.

1.2 Concepts

1.2.1 Social Dance Events

In this thesis I focus on social dance events where engaging in Scandinavian folk dance and music is the stated purpose of the participants. While the actors at a social dance event likely have a clear idea of what a social dance event is, it seems helpful to include here a presentation of the types of social dance events I have looked at in this thesis.

The Skandia Folkdance Society event that is included on DVD (Lynnwood films) provides the primary source of material for the analysis done in chapter 4. On the films we see this dance community in the setting it most frequently inhabits. The dancers are mostly regular participants, with some visitors for nearby British Columbia, Canada. On this particular evening there are two bands (Seattle Skandia Spelmannslag and Weatherproof) providing the music for dancing. One of the peripheral actors is providing services as sound engineer. In the basement (off camera) is another room where people often gather to talk, snack, and have a glass of water; this is also where many change from outside shoes to dance shoes and where the musicians warm-up and tune. These events are alcohol free. The event lasts for two and a half hours and people come and go as they please throughout the evening. On the film one can see people dancing and playing, but also sitting, talking, working on dance steps, and watching the rest of the activity. There are a number of mixers (dances where the couples exchange partner as part of the pattern) and some pressure to join the group, especially if the numbers of dancers are uneven. The musicians frequently engage in verbal exchange with the other participants. This describes specifically the night of December 21, 2012, but also the general idea of a social dance event that members of this dance community have.

I also attended several other dances during as part of my research for this thesis. Specifically, the evening dances at Springdans NW 2012 outside of Seattle, a village party in Ål on October 20, 2012, and the evening dances at the International Winter Festival in Rauland, 2013. I have also taken part in spontaneous dancing within the student community. Here I will comment on differences and similarities between these events based on the event on the Lynnwood films to show the variation within the greater Scandinavian folk dance community.

At Springdans NW many of the same people are in attendance as at the dance event shown on the Lynnwood films. The focus of the weekend is on learning dances from respected Scandinavian teachers (in this case Olav Sem, Rønnaug Larsen, and Ottar Kåsa), so dancers and musicians from a broader North American folk dance community are in attendance. Alcohol is available for sale. The location is different, but many of the participants have been to this annual event year after year and are familiar with their surroundings. There tends to be more variation in the music, largely because there concentration of musicians is higher and they have the opportunity to play in constellations that are often challenged by cross-continental distances.

The most striking difference between the Seattle based events and the village party in Ål was the multi-generational population. The age limit for the evening was 15 years old; I would suggest that there were people in all generations from age 15 up to over 80. Alcohol was also available at this event and it was much more central than in the two previously mentioned events. At Springdans NW the sale of alcohol took place upstairs, whereas in Ål soda, beer, and hot dogs were sold from a corner of the dance floor. Toradertrio provided the music for the entire night, with volunteers playing music in the breaks (a variety of Hardanger fiddle, fiddle duet, and more two row accordion). Here I suggest that, while I was not familiar with the location or the population, they were perhaps more closely acquainted with each other, especially in their daily lives than the participants of the previously described dance events.

The evening dances at the International Winter Festival 2013 were attended by faculty, students, and former students from the Telemark University College, local people interested in dance and music, primarily musicians but also dancers from other places in Norway, and as the name implies international musicians and dancers. This is a relatively unique combination of participants. The skill level (with relation to Scandinavian folk dance and music) varies widely, as does the familiarity with the other participants and the setting. In addition, as the dance event is located in a festival, there are other events competing for attention; there seems to be a core group of dedicated dancers, but many individuals join in for a dance or two and then continue to another part of the festival.

The student community in Rauland is very tight-knit. Due to the small student population, most social activity is organized with the whole population in mind. Since one two main departments within the school is Folk Music, it is often natural to play instruments in social situations. And when some students choose to play, others choose to dance. This happens at birthday parties, dinner gatherings, the weekly student pub night, and other similar festive occasions. Some of these occasions are more natural settings for dance events than others and the desire to play and dance can often overcome what may seem like impossible circumstances to the outside observer. Here the musicians are skilled, while the skill level of the dancers varies, but enthusiasm tends to be high regardless of the involvement of alcohol.

As shown in these examples, a given community will likely have certain norms associated with their dance events that vary somewhat between communities; these cover who plays, in what order they play, the types of music presented, how people greet one another, etc. The unifying factor is the assumed goal of dancing to the music provided for enjoyment. In contrast to work, a dance event can be seen as play for the majority of the participants. Some essential roles, like the musicians, have duties and responsibilities that are potentially more demanding and resemble or are work. Other potential work-like responsibilities include ticket sales, set-up, cleaning, and sale/organization of refreshments.

1.2.2 Actors and Interaction

It is important to make clear that the object of this study is the actors and their interaction. That is, I am looking at the musicians, dancers, and what I call peripheral actors at a dance, and how the context including not only music, dance, and other activities, but also pre-conceptions, community, atmosphere, and other factors have an influence on the interaction. This study does not look at staged performances (professional or otherwise) or regular rehearsals of a social group; at a social dance the peripheral actors are generally not in attendance to be entertained by watching others dance. Those not dancing are likely members of the group who are there to participate and, while not dancing, represent a group of potential dancers (or musicians).

I define dancers and musicians as individuals who are actively dancing or providing music (instrumentalists and singers) for dancing; this includes between dances/tunes when they may be preparing the next tune or waiting for the music to start to continue dancing.

'Peripheral actors' is intended to designate all other individuals present at the dance event.

During the course of a social dance event, individuals frequently change roles and some may even find themselves in all three categories at the end of the evening.

The reasoning for my inclusion of peripheral actors is three-fold. First, the peripheral actors are often dancers at rest and there is a great deal of exchange between these two groups. Second, the activities of the peripheral actors contribute to the 'background noise' of the overall event, framing and possibly distracting from other types of interaction. Third, the peripheral actors interact with both the musicians and the dancers, making a description of a dance evening incomplete without them. I would also like to make note that some peripheral actors have special functions, (e.g. sound engineer, cashier, master of ceremonies).

When asking 'who are the actors?' I look at the roles the individual plays within the confines of the social dance event. I assume that anyone is welcome to join the event, and I do not investigate the daily-life identities of the individuals that do come.

I choose to use the terms 'actors' and 'interaction' because I feel these terms convey the presence and flexibility that I am interested in describing. Interaction can be understood as "face-to-face encounters." (Kendon, 1990) In *Musicking*, musicologist Christopher Small uses the term 'relationship' in many of the places I use 'interaction.' (Small, 1998) While both terms refer to the connection between people, things, feelings, and concepts, 'interaction' implies reciprocity; not only does A affect B, but B affects A.

In the preface to *Encounters*, influential sociologist Erving Goffman makes a rough division in the category interaction to distinguish between *focused interaction* and *unfocused interaction*. Focused interaction implies a shared focus, where unfocused interaction takes into account the modifications in individuals' behavior that occur on account of a shared space. (1972) In this study I consider both types of interaction, often using *communication* synonymously with *focused interaction*.

1.2.3 Dance Community

A community is built of individuals, but it is greater than its population, it has a history and values. The individuals contribute to and guide the community, enriching it with their opinions and lending their skills to the development of new modes of expression. Dorothea Hast writes

"Community can be viewed as a group of people who live in an area and who go dancing together regularly, it can be a group of people who have no relationship other than meeting at dances... part of a noncorporate national movement or network in which participants know of each other's existence through travel, recordings, touring callers and bands, dance camps, and newsletters, but are not bound together by any one national organization."
(1993)

I would add that community is also international with regard to Scandinavian social dance, in the same way that Hast refers to the national here; participants in Norway, Sweden, the United States, and many other countries are aware of each other's existence as it relates to Scandinavian folk dance and are bound together by activities that demonstrate this interest. Community is a group of people, more or less familiar with one another, with a similar interest. The term community represents the collective values and will of the individuals, shaped by history, but existing in the present. It is in these senses of the term that I use 'community' throughout the thesis.

1.2.4 Folk Music and Folk Dance

This phrase is used frequently in this thesis to refer to what the actors at a social dance event are doing. It is important to understand that 'folk music and folk dance' refer to a multitude of expressions. Ruth Anne Moen discusses at great length the weight of a definition of folk music and by extension folk dance. She carefully analyzes three common definitions of folk music and their practical and cultural-political implications. She concludes that the strict application of one definition facilitates exclusion of things that are in practice accepted by parts or all of the folk music community. (Moen, 1990)

For the participants at a social dance event a precise definition is perhaps unnecessary. In practice, the actors at a social dance event define folk dance and folk music with their

expectations and actions. However, individual and community judgments regarding the boundaries between what is and is not 'folk dance' or 'folk music' have a fundamental influence on how the actors interact. Understanding of these terms affects how an individual makes choices regarding what event to attend and how they behave once they arrive. Kamilla Langen's master's thesis explores in detail how two regional groups interpret the terms folk music and folk dance and how this interpretation affects their creative actions and creates a hierarchy of sorts within the Norwegian folk dance community. (Langen, 2010) While Langen focuses on the sometimes-striking differences between these two regional understandings, I look at how individual interpretations influence community values, and vice-versa, within any given social dance event. Her paper shows that while the discourse of what is and is not folk music is concentrated in academia, individuals in everyday life can produce a personal definition when pressed. These personal definitions are the background for their experiences and interactions when folk music and dance are the main activity.

It is important to note that the 'folk dance community' is not uniform. It is a sub-culture with multiple under-groups, local and regional organizations, and individuals, each with their own goals and definitions of folk dance. These individuals and smaller groups make up the greater folk dance community and define its breadth and depth with their diverse yet overlapping interests and specializations. Jan Petter Blom, referring to linguistic dialects in Norway, discusses how "small differences are ascribed great meaning" in the delineation between cultural groups. (Blom, 1989) It is this kind of dialect variation that is found in the folk-dance community with national organizations (like FolkOrg and Noregs Ungdomslag) representing the most inclusive agendas and regional and local groups creating or representing their own identities based on their traditions, shared history, and preferences.

In the interview phase of this project I do not give a specific definition for folk music or dance (although I do make a suggestion below), instead allowing the respondents to determine this for themselves; this leaves the reader with the task of understanding that there are most certainly different interpretations of these terms within the body of the paper. Rather than finding this problematic, I suggest the reader embrace the diversity of definitions as a tool to allow for freedom of expression and prevent one camp from dominating the discussion.

1.2.5 Tradition and authenticity

I view both tradition and authenticity as relative concepts, defined and used differently depending on the situation. Individual definitions of these concepts are rarely discussed at a social dance event and yet they have an important role in shaping the values of a community and the interaction that is in focus in this thesis.

Tradition can be defined in a number of ways, referring to the process of handing down knowledge or the set of knowledge that is handed down. Polanyi writes of tradition as (practical knowledge of) a skill or craft handed down orally over several (3 or more) generations. (Rolf, 1991) Objects may be considered traditional simply because they are old or come from a pre-industrial society. Tradition can be described as a line backward in history to connect the present form of expression with the past. If "'tradition' and 'traditional' define the boundary between folk culture and other cultural expressions," (Eriksen & Selberg, 2006) this must also include folk music and folk dance. Blom's three point model shows how folk-music and folk-dance norms are identified, changed, and confirmed based on their traditional value, their ability to convey identity (he refers to ethnic, local, or national identity), and are controlled by individuals or groups within the community that share these values (Aksdal & Nyhus, 1993, p. 14). In this model the reciprocal relationship between the individual and tradition is clear, even without specifically defining tradition. Traditional norms are handed down (between individuals or generations) then the individual internalizes these norms and incorporates them in their own expression, continuing the cycle. This process can result in strict copying or free interpretation; regardless, it is the result of this process that influences how individuals at a social dance event perceive each other and interact.

Authenticity is a value that is important to the folk dance and music community because it is synonymous with truth and 'realness', yet it is employed with great variation depending on the object of authentication. Allan Moore presents a way of understanding authenticity and authentication based on the perceived sincerity of the artist's representation or performance and introduces his concepts of first, second, and third person authenticity to identify whose situation the artist is presenting for validation. Sometimes authenticity manifests in the sense of 'older is better,' or *folkloric authenticity*. (Weisethaunet, 2010) At

other times authenticity is evoked by an individual representing a group or being validated by the group, (See 'third person authenticity' in Moore, 2002).

One individual's honest representation of a dance or tune may be considered wrong or false by others, creating a tension between Moore's *first person authenticity* (or *authenticity as self-expression*) and *folkloric authenticity*. (Weisethaunet) This tension is one of the essential functions of the 'control' aspect of Blom's model presented above. Should the community accept a given representation of a tune or dance it is confirmed as a part of the canon. However, the rejection of a performance by the community does not make the experience any less real for the performer (see *body authenticity* and *experiencing authenticity* in Weisethaunet).

Authenticity and tradition are not only influences on the interaction at a social dance event; negotiation of these concepts is also an important result of this interaction. Individuals form their own opinions, based on experiences in the folk dance and music community and elsewhere; the interaction at a social dance event is influenced by how the individuals perceive (consciously or not) authenticity and tradition. New experiences continue to add to previous experiences, and over time individual definitions slowly change and coincide, becoming community values.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 2 gives a brief summary of the history of folk dance and music in Norway and to a lesser extent Sweden and the United States (particularly Seattle, WA). This chapter includes both historical perspective and present-day description of some of the folk dance communities to help orient the reader in the world of Scandinavian dance and music.

In Chapter 3 I present the analytical framework for this thesis. Context Analysis, Performance Studies, and a theoretical exploration of communication between dance and music form the background for the following analysis and discussions. I also present the material and methods used for analysis, and tools for visualizing the interaction at a social dance event.

I synthesize the visual data from the films in Chapter 4 into generalized occasions of interaction based on the models presented in Chapter 2. In Chapter 5, I take a closer look at the themes raised by the interview respondents and discuss the relationship of these themes to the interaction between dancers and musicians.

My concluding remarks and thoughts for further research are found in Chapter 6.



Image 2 Dans i Gopsmorstuga, Anders Zorn, 1906

2 The Arena

2.1 Historical Background

The earliest written work describing folk dances from Sweden take the form of descriptions of village life from the late 1500's. In Norway, this type of documentation dates back as far as the early 1700's. Priests and aristocrats, both domestic and international visitors, took an interest in writing about the pure, innocent, farmers' culture, particularly the details of special occasions like a wedding. (Bakka, Biskop, & Christensen, 2007) These collections can be the starting point for research that is interested in the historical context of folk music and dance. During the mid- to late-nineteenth century Norway underwent a period of nation building characterized by national romanticism. In both Norway and Sweden the cultural events of the rural people were seen as the unadulterated icons of the nation. (Sørensen & Hemstad, 1998) Also during this period, rural societies begin to collect and publish local history, including descriptions of folk dance, folk music, and the use of both. The publication of local history (*bygdebøker*) continues today.

When descriptions of village life or local history focus on dance and music, they often include observations about the feeling in the room or give insight to how people at that time interacted. We see an example of this in the following citation about Myllarguten playing at the market in Kongsberg:

"...The rival [Myllarguten] began again with a springar and this time with growing energy. Soon the younger members of the audience felt moved by the cheerful chaos; they got a feeling during the whirling triplets, like they were swinging the most beautiful girls in a ring; they felt the desire to dance in their bodies and began to involuntarily bob their heads and snap happily with their fingers." (Monrad in Berge, Groven, & Myhren, 1998)

It is this type of observation and reflection, made by today's musicians and dancers, which make up the content of the interview responses on which this study is based. I am more interested in the discussion that follows as it relates to the present-day situation. However, to a researcher more interested in historical context, the same questions I put to today's folk

dance and music community could be asked of the historical sources with the possibility for a similar discussion and analysis.

Ingar Ranheim discusses public opinion of folk dance in Norway (Valdres) at the start of the 20th century in light of nation building and discipline. He explains that the movement to form a national identity included many Freethinkers, who rejected belief in tradition and dogma in favor of reason, while also embracing discipline in the form of temperance. This led to a division between the 'sinful' village dances (*bygdedanser*) that were associated with alcohol and tradition, and more modern or constructed song dances and dance 'games' that were considered acceptable because they were national (as opposed to local), not associated with alcohol, and logical (as opposed to romantic). (Ranheim, 1994) While the divisions surrounding acceptable dance forms have blurred over the past hundred years, there remain strong advocates of temperance throughout the folk dance community.

Within the canon, or accepted repertoire, of Scandinavian folk dances, there is an established range of movements that are considered to be a part of the dance (see Fanitullen (Aksdal & Nyhus, 1993), Norske folkedanser (Semb, 1991), etc.). Without discussing the specifics of what these movements are, I put forth that they are both culturally recognizable and flexible. If we are able to recognize folk dance (and folk music), then Norwegian art historian Harry Fett's analysis of three 'art wills' in folk art can be applied; he divides folk art into three categories: archaic, style bound, and style breaking. (Tin, 2003) Acceptable variation in folk dances happens over time as the community confirms, accepts, and rejects new and old patterns of movement into the canon.

2.2 The Contemporary Situation

In Norway and Sweden today, individuals who participate in social dance events are average citizens with jobs in all sectors of the economy. While some may be specially trained as dancers or musicians, the majority of the folk dance and music community are individuals who are especially interested in these activities but have little formal training. While the future of folk dance and music is often discussed in terms of something that needs to be protected and saved, in actuality it appears that there is great activity within the

community at a national level. While some local organizations do seem to be losing membership, folk music and dance in general do not seem to be in danger.

Today, folk dance and music events and education are primarily arranged and supported by a network of dedicated folk dance and music organizations, government, and (increasingly) in institutions. The major national organizations in Norway, having changed names and reorganized multiple times during their existence, are Noregs Ungdomslag and FolkOrg (The Norwegian Traditional Music and Dance Association); both parent organizations support numerous local groups generating a broad spectrum of courses, competitions, and social dance opportunities. The Norwegian government supports the project of folk music and dance through financial support (primarily distributed by Arts Council Norway) and cultural education for school children. At present, it is possible to study folk music or folk dance at one high school (Vinstra vgs), one folk high school (Manger folkehøgskule), and four institutions of higher education (Telemark University College - Rauland, Ole Bull Academy, Norwegian Academy of Music, Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

Scandinavian folk dancing (and the accompanying folk music) in the United States is the combined result of immigrant populations maintaining in their cultural activities and the popularity of folk dance in general starting in the 1960's. Regions of the United States with large Scandinavian immigrant populations (including descendants) are more likely to have active heritage organizations, including activities relating to folk music and dance. In Seattle, separate local organizations focus specifically on learning and performing Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Danish dances and music. Additionally Skandia Folkdance Society, founded by Gordon Ekvall Tracie, organizes dance classes, jam sessions, special events, and regular social dance events with the goal of preserving and teaching the "traditional dance culture and music of the Nordic lands." (Skandia Folkdance Society, 2013) Skandia serves as a social forum for the (often overlapping) membership of the nationally focused performance groups and purely social dancers.

Most of the active members of Skandia Folkdance Society are over 50 years old, and the gender balance tends to be somewhat skewed toward more women. Efforts to attract younger generations and families with children have been made in recent years with some success. Barneleikarringen of Greater Seattle provides a forum for teaching children to

dance, but most leave the dance community in their teenage years, occasionally finding their way back later in life. Lilla Spelmannslag, now in its third iteration, teaches Scandinavian folk music (primarily on fiddle) to children and youth up to age 18. In Seattle, most of the musicians are also competent dancers and a majority of the dancers have some musical experience, although they may or may not play for dancing.

The event recorded on the included DVD is, based on my experience as a member of this organization, typical of the third Friday dances organized by Skandia Folkdance Society at the Cedar Valley Grange every third Friday for the past three decades. The third Friday dance has a theoretical emphasis on *gammaldans* or *runddans* music (waltz, schottische, polka, etc.) and mixers (dances with regular partner changes), while *bygdedanser* (dances with regional specification from Scandinavia) are also played and danced. According to my previous research related to this community, these individuals join Skandia Folkdance Society and attend its events because they find it enjoyable to participate in traditional activities and they get a feeling of friendship and community from their association with this group. (Hamberg, 2011)



Image 3 From 'Song-, Spel-, og Danshelg i Suldal' 2008 Photo: David Rönnlund

3 Analytical Framework

3.1 Context Analysis

Context analysis is an inter-disciplinary tool for interpreting interactive behavior. Drawing on "ideas from interpersonal psychiatry, anthropology, information theory, cybernetics, and structural linguistics," (Kendon, 1990, p. 16) context analysis has evolved as a method identify patterns and structure in human interaction. Similar work studying spoken words is called conversation analysis. Context analysis does not discount the importance of speech, but seeks to identify the patterns of behavior, including speech, that are present in human interaction.

A social dance event is a type of *encounter*, or perhaps a set of encounters, where the focus is on the playing music and dancing. (Goffman, 1972) All interaction at the event has some degree of influence on the interaction between the musicians and dancers. Given that all behavior has meaning, although not an intrinsic meaning (Kendon, 1990, p. 15), I am looking for occasions of behavior that can be conceived as interaction between participants at a social dance event; without attempting to interpret the meaning of a behavior itself, I look to see how a given behavior influences following behaviors. This is one of the ways that I find a social dance to imitate a conversation.

Conversations, a unique type of human behavior, have been shown by researchers like Kendon and Goffman to follow general (culturally defined) rules. When looking at musicians and dancers (and peripheral actors) at a social dance event as a conversation, I assume that musicians intend to play dance music to the best of their ability and dancers intend to dance when they find the music appropriate for dancing. In this way, I am assuming that all parties are obeying the Cooperation Principle, first theorized by philosopher H.P. Grice:

"Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged."

By assuming the role of dancer or musician, an individual enters into a situation where there are certain established social patterns that guide the interaction. Breaking these patterns implies that the individual is either unaware of the rules, or that they are intending to leave the dancer/musician relationship.

For interaction to occur between dancers and musicians, they must share a space. Interactive behavior does not necessarily imply interaction or potential communication. Depending on the relative location of the individuals and the behavior in question, there may or may not be an occasion of interaction. For example, if a dance couple on the far side of the room from the musicians choose to sit down, the musicians may be too far away to notice and interact with that couple's action; were the dancers to sit down directly in front of the musicians, the likelihood increases that their action is observed and generates a response.

3.2 Communicating with Dance and Music

Our evolution as social animals allows us to assess the intentions, moods, and relationships of the individuals with which we come into contact (Cacioppo, 2008). As soon as we enter a recreational dance situation we consciously or not begin to make this kind of assessment. We bring with us our own anticipations about the musicians and the floor and the people we will meet during the evening. All of this can contribute to (or detract from) creating a positive feeling over the course of the event.

For two (or more) people to engage in successful communication, they must be able to understand each other (Berkaak & Frønes, 2005). It is the case with musicians and dancers that, while many of them consider themselves to be either a musician or a dancer, nearly all of the individuals I interviewed are capable of assuming the other role (musicians are able to dance and dancers can play an instrument, sing, or are very familiar with the musical traditions). Even if an individual does not explicitly 'speak' the languages of the musician or dancer, they are able to understand the meanings that are conveyed.

Dance and music are arguably inseparable when looked at as a shared experience where all actors and actions are connected. (Small, 1998) However, dancing and playing require different skills and encompass different behaviors. How do individuals communicate and interact when 'speaking' with different (though related) behavioral languages or dialects? In this section I look at how dance and music communicate and create meaning as a foundation for further investigation of interaction at social dance events.

Judith Lynne Hanna provides us with the following definition of dance:

Dance is human behavior composed, from the dancer's perspective, of purposeful, intentionally rhythmical, and culturally patterned sequences of nonverbal body movements other than ordinary motor activities, the motion having inherent and aesthetic value.(Hanna, 1979, p. 56)

In her discussion of dance, Hanna states "communication occurs through symbols." These symbols or signs make up the behaviors that can be considered the occasions of behavior related to the action dance in Figure 3. According to Hanna, intentionally rhythmical, nonverbal, non-ordinary motor activities require this (cultural) coding in order to become dance. That is, the behavior requires some kind of meaning in order to be considered dance. What kind of meaning is built into the interaction of social dance and what do the participants derive from social dancing? In Chapter 4 I look at the behaviors exhibited at a social dance and suggest that the actors are exchanging meaning with these behaviors. I hope to show in the discussion below that the meaning lies in the overall experience of the event; dancing, playing, socializing, and all interaction between individuals creates lasting meaning for those involved.

Music, it seems, is more difficult to define. Alan P. Merriam discusses at length the necessity of understanding the musical concepts of a culture prior to engaging in ethnomusicological study. (1964) However, within a community there is general agreement about these concepts - the division between music and non-music, who can make music, the economy of music making, etc. Once there is agreement about musical concepts, one can begin to look at musical behavior; Merriam divides musical behavior into four types "physical behavior, verbal behavior about music sound, social behavior both on the part of those who produce music and those who listen and respond to it, and learning behavior." This study is primary concerned with social and verbal behavior,

recognizing that they do not exist in a vacuum and the musicians must engage in physical behavior to create music, learning behavior to acquire relevant cultural and technical knowledge. While Merriam's discussion of social behavior focuses on the role of the musician in society at large, I explore the social behavior of the musician (and dancer) within the sub-culture of a social dance event.

Hanna continues to discuss the potential for dance to influence social interaction. She suggests that this may be because dance is like an interactive multimedia presentation, sending messages that are received and interpreted by multiple senses. Any performance of a dance reflects the response of other dancers, the audience, etc. in the ongoing performance. As a dance is performed, the dancers create a spectrum of sensory output from the sound of feet on the floor and smell of working bodies, to the colors of moving clothing and the image of moving bodies. She also raises the importance of dance's language-like properties as shown in Figure 1. Hanna's original table featured language and dance; I have added the column for music.

Comparison of Design Features of Language, Music, and Dance (X = shared features with Language, D = shared features with Dance)			
	Language	Music	Dance
Direction reception	X	X	X
Interchangeability	X	X	X
Arbitrariness	X	X	X
Discreteness	X	X	X
Displacement	X	X	X
Productivity	X	X	X
Duality	X	X	X
Cultural Transmission	X	X	X
Ambiguity	X	X	X
Affectivity	X	X	X
Range of sizes of potential communicating participants	X	X	X
Channel	Vocal/auditory channels predominate	X	Motor/visual/kinesthetic channels predominate
Time and space	Temporal dimension	X	Time and space dimensions
Feedback	Speaker can hear self	X	Dancer cannot see self
Involvement	Total involvement in communication act is not necessary	D	Fuller involvement required in dance
Minimal units	Minimal units of phoneme and morpheme agreed upon by linguists	X	Lack of agreement about minimal units
Complex logical structures	Greater ease in communication	D	Greater difficulty in communication
Syntax	Detailed syntax governing sequences exists for many languages	D	Syntax exists for few dances

Figure 1 Comparison of Design Features of Language, Music, and Dance

The top part of Figure 1 shows characteristics or design features shared by language, music, and dance. These design features rely on the same cognitive and creative skills for producing and interpreting all three types of expression. The seven characteristics in the lower part of the chart are employed differently by dance and language in the way that they create and distribute messages and in the study of these expressions. In the center column I have added music, indicating design features that music and dance express similarly to each other but differently from language, and design features that music uses in a more language-like fashion than dance. Based on these similarities, I suggest that it is appropriate to compare the interaction between dancers and musicians to a conversation, granted that the individuals involved are able to 'speak' the same 'language'. That is, just like language, music and dance are not able to communicate universally, the actors necessarily interpret the exchanged meanings based on past experience and cultural values; individuals with shared or similar past experiences will communicate more successfully regardless of the form of expression (language, dance, or music).

"The vast majority of signs in music and dance are icons and indices." (Turino, 2008)
Since the interpretation of these types of signs depends on previous experience, communication based on them can be imprecise for individuals with different experiences. This becomes less risky at a social dance event where the chance of individuals having shared past experiences with regard to music and dance is increased. The individuals at a social dance event communicate via dance and music a variety of things (mood, relative skill, prowess, knowledge of cultural/traditional dance rules, etc.) to the rest of the population. Other participants are familiar with this 'language' and capable of interpreting and responding to dance communication. This knowledge and interpretative ability is one of the foundational pillars of interaction at a social dance event.

Dancers and musicians communicate on different levels, in different ways, but the quality of their interaction is dependent on their ability to send and receive clear signals. Most of the dancers and musicians I interviewed focused their responses on how communication can lead to good experience, although a few offered some insight into what happens when communication breaks down.

3.3 Performance Studies

Performance studies are a field of academic research that assumes anything can be and everything is performance depending on how you treat it. It is a relatively young field of research that allows itself a broad definition and borrows heavily from other academic traditions. The object of study is considered as an actor in the cultural landscape, as opposed to a product of it. (Schechner, 2006)

When taken from a performance studies point of view, one can study social dance as the performance of culture and identity. This is in contrast to studying a staged performance of the same dances, which are also performances of culture and identity; even if the players are the same, the setting and context are different. In a social dance setting the individuals are simultaneously performing themselves as members of a community and performing the community. The emotions and behaviors that they exhibit are portions of their identities or the identities they choose to assume.

Variations between local organizations' norms allow for different types of dances and music to fill the hours at their respective social dance events; participation in any event allows the individual to demonstrate that they belong to the community by performing behavior that is expected by the community. Individuals know, or learn from experience, what will be offered at any given event, allowing them to form reasonable expectations about how to behave in a given situation and choose which community or event they wish to join.

Social dancing itself is a constructed phenomenon. A dancer at a social dance event is not only performing 'the dancer,' they are performing 'social dancing.' Performing 'dancing' involves the physical act of dancing, knowledge of the music, and the demonstration of skill. Performing 'social dancing,' the dancer contributes to and represents the values and norms of the community. The correlation of a given musical expression (genre, melody, etc.) with a given dance expression is rooted in the traditions or the history of a community. The maintenance of this constructed correlation is dependent on regular iterations of the music-dance pair and not a natural state. Dancers who challenge this

pairing disrupt the accepted perception of 'social dancing' and may risk their standing in the community.

But the dancers (this line of reasoning could easily have started with the musicians) neither construct nor perform social dancing alone. The musicians and peripheral actors also contribute to the performance in the sense that they are all taking part in the social dance experience. Social dance is thus similar to (or an example of) Christopher Small's *musicking*, which he describes as "an activity in which all those present are involved and for whose nature and quality, success or failure, everyone present bears some responsibility." (1998)

With these thoughts in mind, one can begin to understand how to look at the behavior exhibited by participants at a social dance. They use dance and music and other behaviors to communicate personal and communal values and emotions. These performances demonstrate how this particular group exists and interacts at this point in time. It helps us to understand how their expressions act as a conversation, constructing the present reality as a composite of performed past experiences and values.

3.4 Material and Methods

This section contains reflections on how I developed my methods and how proceeded to use them for analysis.

3.4.1 Films

3.4.1.1 Collection

In April 2012, I visited Seattle and attended Springdances NW (an annual weekend workshop with social dancing in the evenings). During the social dance events, I tested my theories of camera placement and the technical capacity of the cameras. I used a Canon PowerShot SX50 HS and an iPhone. While the iPhone was discreet, it proved to be unsuitable due to memory capacity. The major drawback of the Canon is its maximum clip length of 20 minutes. I placed the Canon at several different angles on a tripod throughout

the two evenings, attempting to capture both musicians and dancers within the frame; this information was used to determine optimal placement of video equipment in future recordings. In addition to testing the cameras, I participated fully in the activities of these events as a member of the community.

The next social dance event I attended was in October 2012, in Ål, Hallingdal at a village party with Toradertrio. As an outsider in that community, I was attempting to be as unobtrusive as possible with my filming. I experimented filming with the Canon either hand-held or hanging from my neck. This perspective provided additional information for optimal cameral placement. I also set aside the camera for portions of the evening and took part as a dancer. While these films are not included as appendix material because I did not obtain permission to publish them, participating as a dancer and observer was important for the development of this project.

In early December 2012 I made an appeal to members of Skandia Folkdance Society, asking if any of them had films of entire dance evening or would consider filming for me. Bob Olson very kindly responded with an offer to film the next dance. Based on my previous attempts, I gave him the following specific instructions regarding camera placement:

"What I need is a recording of a entire dance evening, from a stationary position. Ideally the camera should capture both the musicians and the dancers. I have found that this is most easily done from a relatively high point (above head-level), across the floor from the musicians."

And:

"I want to see as much of the action as possible - everything that the musicians, dancers, and other people do (or don't do) is potentially interesting. So, capture what you can of that, prioritizing the dancers and musicians."

Later he sent me links to the December 21, 2012 dance on YouTube, divided into five parts; these are the Lynnwood films. He positioned the camera as requested and captured as much of the action as possible. After analyzing these films, I requested permission to include them in from the participants at the dance and Bob Olson.

I have also filmed using a professional grade video camera, borrowed from the Council for Folk Music and Folk Dance, filmed at the International Winter Festival in Rauland, 2013. On this recording, I followed the advice I had given Bob Olson regarding camera placement. Here, the camera was placed on one side of the dance floor, so the dancers moved toward the camera and the musician was semi-facing the camera. Due to the larger number of unknown participants on this film, it is not included as an appendix, as their permission was not obtained for filming.

3.4.1.2 Analysis

My first attempt at analysis of the film material was based on interaction analysis presented by Adam Kendon in *Conducting Interaction*. (Kendon, 1990) I started by dividing the video of the village party in Ål into half-second frames, which I then planned to scour for changes in behavior from one frame to the next. I rather quickly determined that this was both non-efficient time-wise (manually inserting breaks in the film) and was not giving me the type of information related to behavior and interaction between musicians, dancers and peripheral actors that I desired.

Still inspired by the various methods employed by Kendon, but employing them more loosely, I then developed a form for transcribing the behaviors I observed. I determined that the fields on the form should be Time, Dancers, Musicians, Interaction, and Peripheral Actors. While the behaviors were transcribed on hand-written forms, the layout looked like this:

Peripheral Actors	Time	Musicians	Interaction	Dancers
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As I watched the Lynnwood films, I focused on one group at a time, noting on the page the timestamp on the film and any behaviors in addition to dancing or playing. I began by

watching the dancers, as they are in the foreground and it is easier to focus on them. Once finished with the dancers I began again, this time focusing my attention on the musicians. Since the peripheral actors are largely off-screen for duration of these films, I did not watch the films with a special focus on transcribing their actions.

I was not evaluating the dancers' skill in executing the movements, nor the musicians' abilities to play, simply noting their behavior to analyze interaction. For each behavior I observed, I made a note on the form indicating the time stamp and character of the behavior. When focusing on the dancers, I observed behaviors that were directed toward other dancers, toward the musicians, and toward the peripheral actors. Dancer to dancer behaviors were noted in the column 'dancer', dancer to musician behaviors noted in the column 'interaction', and dancer peripheral actor behavior noted in the column 'peripheral actors' indicating that it was the dancer's behavior. I followed the same logic when transcribing the behaviors of the musicians. I recorded their behaviors when they appeared on screen, and when they could be heard talking.

Having viewed the films several times, I then read through the transcription to get a sense for how the transcribed behaviors, by experiences taking part in similar dances, and my memory of watching the films compared. In instances where I felt the transcription was lacking in detail, I returned to the films to determine if I had overlooked behaviors. This resulted in either confirming that there was little detail on the film at that point, or the addition of detail.

In an attempt to find when and where to look for interaction between musicians and dancers, I initially created a list of potential interactive behaviors. Following the process of transcribing, I attempted to further systematize the transcribed behaviors. Using a system of color-coding, I grouped together similar behaviors from the films based on their apparent function. Based on these observations, I developed the list into a table of behaviors (Figure 1).

To further understand the interaction occurring between the individuals, I grouped the behaviors into sets or "occasions of interaction." (Kendon, 1990) In Figure 2 I show the abstracted occasions of interaction that were generated from the table above. The primary

divisions are Activity, Attention, and Evaluation. Activity refers to groups of behaviors that relate to the main action of a dance event, primarily dancing and playing. Attention refers to behaviors that indicate an individual is giving attention or has an interest in another point in the room. Grouping behaviors into occasions of interaction may occur in multiple directions on this model; I look at them both under the primary divisions and along the arrowed lines. I find that Evaluation and Coordination act as lubricating behaviors, occupying a place between Activity and Attention, but also between nodes on each side of the model. In Chapter 4, I elaborate on the connection between Figure 2 and Figure 3. I also examine more closely the occasions of interaction I call Initiation, End Greeting, and Evaluation with examples from the Lynnwood films.

Dancers	Musicians	Peripheral actors
Dancing (in a way that suits the rhythm of the music)	Playing (dance) music	Engaged in other activity (sitting, standing, eating, drinking, filming, sleeping, etc.)
Embellishing the dance beyond the basic pattern (special moves, cheers)	Embellishing the music beyond the basic pattern	Moving with the music
Talking while dancing	Talking while playing	
Speaking to musicians/peripheral actors	Speaking to dancers/peripheral actors	Talking to dancers/musicians
Speaking to other dancers	Speaking with other musicians	Talking with other peripheral actors
Entering dance floor	Entering stage or playing area	Joining the periphery
Leaving	Leaving	Preparing to become a dancer/musician
Inviting a peripheral actor to dance		
Watching the musicians	Watching the dancers	Watching musicians/dancers
Watching the peripheral actors	Watching the peripheral actors	Watching the peripheral actors
Starting to dance	Starting to play	
Stopping dancing	Stopping playing	
Clapping/Cheering	Acknowledging applause	
Watching Dancers	Watching musicians	
		Engaged in administrative activity (selling tickets, cleaning, sound, etc.)

Figure 2 Table of behaviors

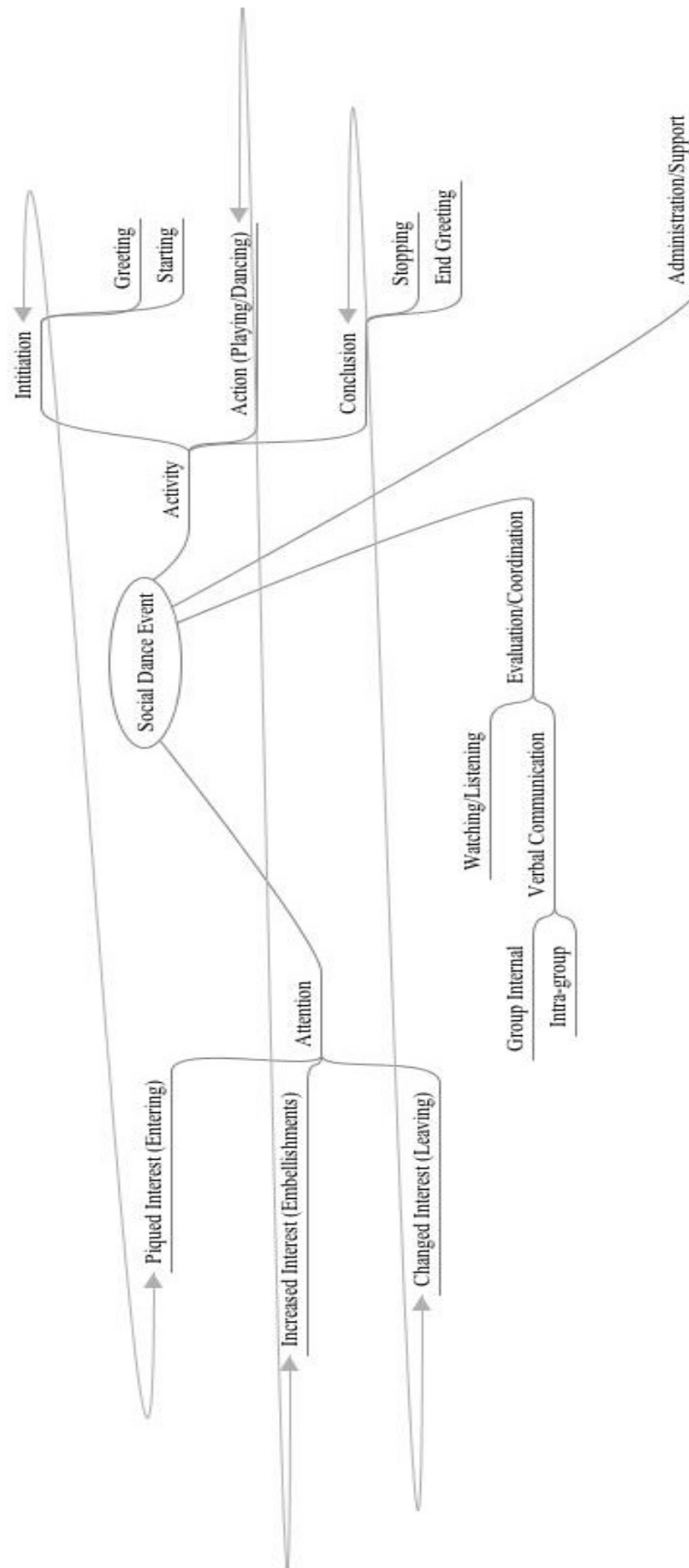


Figure 3 Occasions of Interaction

3.4.2 Interviews

3.4.2.1 Collection

I have conducted a number of interviews and gathered written responses to the same questions to gain a broader perspective of the communities' motivations, intentions, and experiences with social dance and playing for social dance than my own life-long experiences can inform on their own.

Initially I selected a number of well-respected Norwegian dancers and musicians that I know personally to contact and interview. I chose people who have an established, respected role in their respective communities and who could be considered experts in the sense that they have been active dancers or musicians for many years and possess a considerable knowledge about their folk dance and folk music community and about their own personal interactions at social dance events. Some of these individuals are also professionals, that is they make a living from their music and dance; in the interviews I have attempted to hold the focus on the social dance event and when necessary allow the respondent to draw comparisons to competition or professional experiences.

After conducting the initial interviews I found them respondents to be somewhat skewed toward male dancers. I then asked an additional three female informants to afford a better gender balance to the pool of respondents. I also seized the opportunity to interview one visiting musician with an illustrious career about his thoughts on playing for dancers. I have had numerous conversations, both casual and more formal, with other students at the Institute for Folk Culture at the Telemark University College who provide music for dancing or dance socially.

Of the initial eight people I sent my questions to, I conducted telephone interviews with four and received a written response from one. This prompted me to seek out additional informants, resulting in a total of nine informants - four women and five men. While all of the musicians also dance socially and the dancers either play or have a strong appreciation for music, I consider the population to consist of three individuals who are equally dancers and musicians, three who are primarily dancers, and three who are primarily musicians.

The nationalities of the respondents are two Swedes, six Norwegians, and one American. Biographical information about the individual informants is available in the Appendix.

The questions I sent and asked in interviews were:

1. Why do you play/dance? When you're playing or dancing at a social dance, do you have any goals or expectations around what is happening and when?
2. What do you think about when you start to play/dance? What gets you going? What are you thinking about in the moment that you start playing/dancing?
3. Can you tell about a time you experienced especially good contact between the dancers and musicians? What made it good? How did it feel?
4. Where is the best place to play/dance? Can you describe the ideal dancehall/place to play or dance from your experiences? There might be something special about the physical room or something less concrete, like who is present or the mood at a good party that contributes to the ideal dancehall/place to play or dance.
5. What about the other people in the room - how do they influence the experience that the musician and the dancers have together?
6. I like to think about a social dance as a conversation between everyone who is present. Do you have any thoughts about that?
7. Any other thoughts about the relationship between musicians and dancers?

The interviews conducted were relatively short and focused. Most of the respondents had received my questions in advance and were able to respond without prodding. Several found the questions to be difficult and didn't know how to answer, indicating either a difficulty using language to describe their thoughts and feelings surrounding these questions or simply a lack of reflection.

3.4.2.2 Analysis

I analyze the interview responses in two phases. First the main topics are extracted, and then they are examined as they relate to social interaction and the concepts and analytical tools presented in the introduction and earlier in this chapter. This section describes how I extracted the main topics, loosely based on the phenomenological-hermeneutic method employed by Linda Hoel in her PhD work with Norwegian police officers. (Hoel, 2011) After first transcribing the interviews as precisely as possible, I translated them into English, emphasizing preserving the intended meaning of the speaker. I then attempted to divide the interviews into units of meaning, marking divisions where the speaker changed topics or emphasis. A unit of meaning could be as short as a phrase or as long as several sentences, so long as the subject matter had the same focus and feeling.

For each unit of meaning, I created a summary statement. I did this by trying to put myself in the position of the speaker, to hear their voice in my head, and understand the essence of the original statement. This is by nature a subjective method, and relies on my personal background, having experienced many different types of situations as a dancer, musician, and spectator in my life. Before moving on to the next unit of meaning, I made an initial assessment of the main thought in each unit of meaning. Finally, I assigned each unit of meaning to an overarching category or theme. (I interject here that in Chapter 5, I primarily present the informants' original statements, not my summaries, allowing the reader to approach and interpret each statement on its own merit.)

At this point I controlled the themes accordance with the original unit of meaning. Some units of meaning appeared to have two main thoughts, or to apply equally to two themes. These were duplicated in my database, with one entry for each. At this time I also eliminated some themes that had only a few associated units of meaning and reassigned them to another theme and re-evaluated my theme assignment. For example the following unit of of meaning was originally assigned to the theme 'tradition' like this:

Unit of meaning	Summary	Main Thought	Theme
I think that when you are going to play for dancing you should clearly let the dancers influence your music. If not then it isn't tradition because in the old days it was such an obvious thing that the dancers influenced the music.	For the experience to be traditional, the dancers should influence your music.	To share a positive experience	Tradition

This main thought was reassigned to the theme 'creative expression' with a note that the original theme was 'tradition'. Occasionally, I found that my original unit of meaning divisions were too narrow, and several times concatenated a previously severed meaning.

Unsurprisingly, the themes in these responses largely reflect the topics I inquired about in my questions. Community, contact, creative expression, and communication, were the

most frequent themes discussed, with performance and atmosphere filling out the rest of the conversations. In the chapter titled Understanding Social Dance Behavior, these themes are indicated as the sub-chapters, forming the framework for discussion.

3.5 Visualizing interaction

While the model in Figure 3 effectively shows the occasions of interaction and thus relationships between behaviors, it does not show how the behavior of any given individual influences the rest of the participants at a social dance event nor does it allow for other factors to be taken into account. I felt that a graphical representation of the latter two points was necessary to help orient the reader in the social dance event situations discussed in Chapter 5.

Figures 4-6 attempt to describe how all of the individuals at a dance are contributing in some way to the overall event and allows for the themes raised in the interviews to effect the interaction at a given point in time. These illustrations are not precise representations of interaction, but a tool to understand how individuals (and groups) could interact and a way to visually interpret the mechanics of interaction. The red, blue, and yellow fields represent the primary groups of participants (dancers, musicians, and peripheral actors). The black dot represents the individual from whose point of view we are seeing the moment of interaction. The white field represents the potential for themes like Community, Atmosphere, and Performance to affect the interaction. To gain greater understanding of each theme, it can be helpful to place oneself in one (or more) of these 'spheres of influence' and imagine how the specific theme could influence one's reaction to other participants.

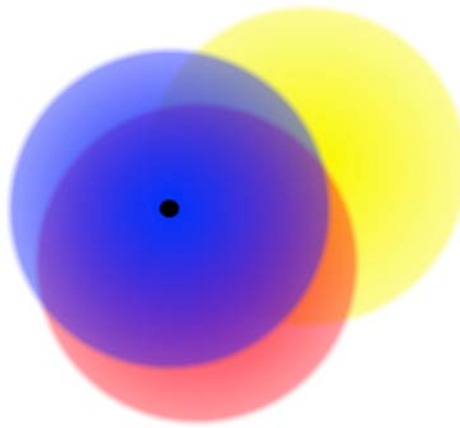


Figure 4 Spheres of Influence - Musician's point of view

Figure 4 shows an instant of interaction from the point of view of a musician (the blue circle). The dancers (red circle) at this moment have a great deal of contact with the musician(s) indicated by their overlapping. Some of the dancers may be far away, thus not communicating with the musician from the musician's point of view, indicated by the red area that does not overlap the blue area. The musician(s) are also interacting with the peripheral actors (yellow circle) to a high degree. The overlap between the red and yellow circles indicates the musician's (blue circle) perception of the dancers' and peripheral actor's interaction; here, the musician is depicted as being quite aware of this interaction.

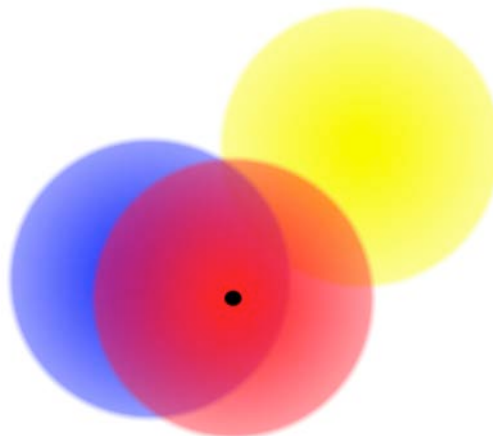


Figure 5 Spheres of Influence - Dancer's point of view

From a dancer's point of view, Figure 5 shows a moment where the dancer is experiencing a high degree of interaction with the musician(s) and a low degree of interaction with the peripheral actors.

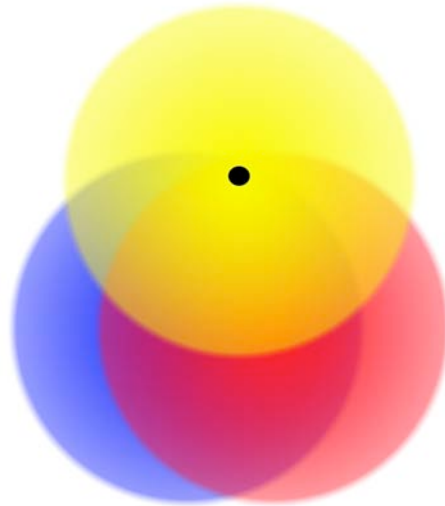


Figure 6 Spheres of Influence - Peripheral Actor's Point of View

Finally, Figure 6 shows a moment of interaction from the point of view of a peripheral actor. The peripheral actor experiences a medium degree of interaction with the dancers and musicians, whom s/he perceives to have a great deal of interaction.

Having introduced the analytical framework and tools, the following two chapters examine social interaction at social dance events. Chapter 4 develops the function of Figure 3. First by more thoroughly investigating the occasions of interaction and suggesting ways to arrange them for analysis, then by looking at three specific types of interaction shown on the Lynnwood films. Chapter 5 is an exploration of how the various themes that arose from the interview process influence social interaction.

4 Watching Social Dance Behavior

Here I attempt to identify and investigate the interactive qualities of some specific occasions of interaction. This is by no means an exhaustive list of behaviors found at a social dance event, rather an attempt to apply this type of questioning to some of the most common behaviors I observed on film. This section is based largely on the five Lynnwood films taken at the Skandia Folkdance Society Dance December 21, 2012. (These films are included in this thesis with permission of those depicted and Bob Olson, who filmed the evening for me.) In some instances I will also use other experiences and recordings to aid the discussion.

In chapter 3, Figures 2 and 3, I presented a list of behaviors and suggested a model for grouping these behaviors into occasions of interaction. I begin by presenting how behaviors from Figure 1 can be placed in Figure 2. Then I discuss some ways of organizing the occasions of interaction from Figure 2. Later in this chapter I look specifically at a few occasions of interaction with examples from the films.

4.1 Occasions of Interaction

I have roughly divided the occasions of interaction (groups of behavior) shown in Figure 2 into three main categories Activity, Attention, and Evaluation/Coordination. The fourth main category (Administration/Support) is of a different character than the other three in that primarily peripheral actors exhibit these behaviors and administration and support activities in a community often take place outside the confines of the social dance event. However the argument could be made to include as those behaviors that do occur at a social dance event within the scope of Activity.

The category Activity encompasses the behaviors of the three groups of actors as they relate to performing the roles associated with those groups. The sub-category Initiation refers to the act of beginning to play a tune or move to the music in the fashion of a dancer. Initiation includes peripheral actors greeting one another before the start of a conversation, musicians organizing the start of a tune, and dance partners orienting themselves

physically to each other and the other couples on the floor. The sub-category Action encompasses the behaviors of dancing and playing as well as other actions individuals may be involved with (actively listening to the music or watching the dancers, having a conversation not related to the dance event, eating, drinking, standing, sitting). In the sub-category Conclusion, I include behaviors that signal the end of the present action like slowing the music or a change in the dance pattern. On the Lynnwood film we see examples of Conclusion behaviors when the lead musician raises one foot (part 5 at 19 min 18 sec) or signals with their head (part 2 at 13 min, 35 sec) to end the tune. Later in this chapter I look specifically at what I call the End Greeting, which is an intricate occasion of behavior that is primarily in the Conclusion sub-category.

Occasions of behavior in the Attention category indicate degree of interest and changing interest. Piqued Interest is the sub-category of entering a new situation. Arriving at a social dance, walking onto the dance floor or stage (playing area), and moving into the sphere of the peripheral actors are all behaviors of Piqued Interest. We see an example of this on the film part 3 at 4 minutes when several of the Peripheral Actors move onto the dance floor; a few moments later one couple (left side of the screen) Initiates dancing. Once individuals are engaged in an Action, they may indicate Increased Interest or Appreciation by adding embellishments to the main action (cheering, special moves, musical variation). Behaviors that indicate Changed Interest show an individual moving from one action to another, be it leaving the dance floor or playing area or the dance event itself or asking an adjacent individual to the dance floor. I consider this a change in interest (not a conclusion of interest) because it appears unlikely that an individual engaged in activity will suddenly and completely lose interest in that activity. I suggest with the label Changed Interest that something else has become more interesting and draws an actors' attention and behaviors in a new direction.

The third category, Evaluation/Coordination, can act as a bridge between Attention and Activity, but that is not necessarily the case. When individuals watch or listen to the other actors, they may be doing so to gauge the situation in the room in order to find an appropriate place to join in the dancing or make an announcement. Alternatively, they may simply be enjoying the music and dancing, which is more in the realm of Attention behaviors. Taken out of context it could be impossible to tell the difference between these behaviors. A clear example of Coordination is shown on part 5 of the film at 25 min 40 sec

in the upper left corner; the couple furthest in the corner has come out of a turning sequence as is coordinating with both the music and the couple that passes in front of them, so they can rejoin the dance. Just as Verbal Communication may be talking about something completely unrelated and thus an Action in itself, actors at a social dance event also use Verbal Communication to ask someone to dance, spread information about upcoming events, and introduce what happens next.

These occasions of interaction can be grouped together in a few different ways. I have presented them grouped together in the categories of Activity, Attention, and Evaluation/Coordination. Within the categories one can understand that interaction occurs as interacting individuals move between the sub-categories - a dancing couple orients themselves with the music, then dances to the music, concluding by stopping and performing the End Greeting. A fiddler enters the stage/playing area indicating an interest in playing for the dancers, while playing she lifts the bow off the strings as one of the dancers does a cartwheel, after playing for an hour she leaves the stage to engage in some other type of activity.

This organization is perhaps more useful at some points of the evening than others. At other moments it may be more interesting to consider looking between the main categories. How do the support behaviors of the sound engineer affect the dancers? If he adjusts the volume or instrumental mix do their behaviors change and how? We can look at how Piqued Interest often gives way to Initiation, followed by Action and perhaps Increased Interest, then some kind of Conclusion behavior leading to a natural place for a Changed Interest to be expressed. All of this is facilitated by behaviors of Evaluation/Coordination allowing the individuals to know when to step onto an active dance floor, slow the music, or follow the music as it changes in tempo. I would also like to add that while these scenarios logically start with the beginning and end with the conclusion, interaction is a continuum and much of the interesting behavior occurs in the transition between Conclusion and Initiation, or as a Changed Interest becomes expressed as the Initiation of a new activity.

4.2 Initiation

What behaviors are associated with starting a tune? How does the execution of 'starting a tune' influence the behavior of 'starting a dance' and vice versa?

On the film from the Dec 21, 2012 dance we see two bands providing music for dancing, Seattle Skandia Spelmanslag and Weatherproof). The two bands had different approaches as to how to convey to the dancers and peripheral actors what was coming next. The leader of the Spelmanslag had chosen not to hang a set list on the wall (which is a common practice) and instead announce using the microphone what was coming next before each tune. Weatherproof had placed their set list on the traditional places on the wall for dancers and peripheral actors to read and use during the night; they only announced mixers and tunes that were newly composed and therefore of special interest. The Spelmanslag used the following behaviors to indicate that they would be starting a new tune: leader announcing the tune, leader orienting the other musicians to the tempo and melody by playing a part of the tune and/or showing with her body, and occasionally playing an introduction for the dancers. Weatherproof coordinated the starting of tunes within the group using verbal (counting), physical (body movement), and musical (playing introductions) behaviors. (Note that while I am discussing Initiation, occasions of behavior that could be classified as Evaluation/Coordination also play an important role.)

In general the behaviors prior to the action 'dancing' include, the dancers first enter (or remain in) the dance area, physically assume a partner relationship with another dancer, listen to any announcement and the music (even very briefly), and begin to move (dance). The dancers showed a distinct difference in behavior in reaction to the use of dance lists vs. announcing the next tune. While waiting for the next dance to be announced, the dancers would first dwell briefly on the dance floor. As time passes they begin to move off the dance floor and/or talk amongst themselves. Once a tune is announced, they return from the periphery either with a partner or apparently looking for a dance partner. Dancers who have remained on the floor until the announcement was made either assume positions for the upcoming dance or part ways (indicating changed interest). For an illustration, see Lynnwood film part 2 at 17 min 40 sec. When the next dance is displayed on the wall lists, the dancers clear the floor rapidly and form clusters around the lists (they indicate an interest in the list itself). Once they read what is next, they evaluate if they are interested in

the next dance. They may then look around the room for a partner and return to the floor or choose another interest to pursue (e.g. resting). Those who find partners before the music starts, make their way to the floor and stand, sometimes talking amongst themselves, ready to dance, waiting for the musicians to begin. See Lynnwood film part 5 at 8 min 30 sec for an example of this set of behaviors.

Musicians and dancers seem to use the time prior to starting a tune or dance to orient them to the coming action. This orientation seems to begin internally and then become more interactive as the behaviors of Initiation move into behaviors of Action. For example, the dancers do not appear to interpret the behaviors of starting a tune like indicating tempo and rhythm as applying to them; they wait until the music has started to make an assessment of how they should move. The differences in these two groups of musicians Initiation occasions of behavior, seem to thus have little effect on how the dancers initiate dancing. However, it seems to have a greater influence on their Interest related behaviors prior to starting dancing.

Does this behavior on the part of the dancers change when there is a solo musician instead of a group? Would another group of dancers respond differently to the same musicians? Without the opportunity for additional research these questions are largely rhetorical. However, I suggest that there would be differences in behavior, but stop short of conjecture and make no suggestions as to what those differences might be.

4.3 End Greeting

When dancers and musicians conclude the dancing/playing action they exhibit a series of behaviors that I have called the End Greeting occasion of interaction. To assist the discussion of End Greetings I suggest watching Lynnwood film part 1 at 16 min 15 sec and part 3 at 23 min 10 sec; these are two examples of this phenomenon that occurs dozens of time throughout the evening. The musicians signal that they are concluding a tune often by exchanging glances or verbal cues within the group, they then proceed to conclude playing exhibiting behavior that often, but not always involves slowing tempo and looking at the

dancers, ultimately coming to a complete stop in the music. The dancers respond by following the music, also slowing and eventually stopping their movement.

The End Greeting begins as the dancers respond to the conclusion of the music. As they slow down and stop, they couple draws apart for a subtle curtsy/bow or polite nodding of the head. Then there is always clapping; it is not always the case that all of the dancers are clapping and intensity varies, but someone is always clapping. The behavioral response of the musicians varies as they may either look toward the dancers and physically/verbally acknowledge the applause or immediately engage in behaviors that indicate the start of the next tune (or somewhere in between). The End Greeting itself concludes when the dancers and musicians no longer exhibit this type of behavior and begin to move off the dance floor, talk to one another (Group Internal and Intra-Group), and Initiate the next Action.

The behaviors described here were consistent in the recordings from Seattle and occurred at the conclusion of nearly every dance/tune. However, I was uncertain if this description of the End Greeting was consistent with my experiences at other dance events, particularly in Norway. I reviewed recordings from Ål and the Winter Festival in Rauland specifically looking at the End Greeting. I found that, while acknowledging one's dance partner was a frequent occurrence, clapping was much more sporadic at the Winter Festival, than in Seattle or Ål. I also found that when one dancer (often myself on these recordings) begins to clap, others join in. Here I do not mean to suggest somehow that at the Winter Festival dancers are less appreciative of musicians because they clap less, I am only reporting on the frequency of the behavior 'clapping' as it occurs in the End Greeting to illustrate what I suggest are local variations on this occasion of behavior.

4.4 Evaluation/Coordination

The primary behaviors associated with Evaluation/Coordination are, as mentioned above, watching, listening, and talking. Additional behaviors include waiting to enter the dance floor, slowing down to let a couple onto the dance floor, tuning, etc. Here I should point out that dancers employ physical behaviors to coordinate the movement of the couple that have not been included because they are difficult to observe on video. Even more so than the other categories, behaviors in this category require consideration of context in order to

determine the nature of the behavior and even in context it may not be possible to determine.

Looking or watching is a behavior that can be identified on film, but it is difficult to determine out of context if that behavior demonstrates Attention or Evaluation/Coordination. Perhaps this is because it is often a little of both. A musician watching the dancer may first be simply interested in how they are moving. Then something changes and that same gaze is evaluating when it is appropriate to add embellishment or conclude the music. Dancers are constantly evaluating their location in relation to the other people and objects in the room to avoid crashing (see example in section 4.1), but they may also (attempt to) exchange glances with the musician as a type of embellishment. Peripheral actors use watching to express interest in the music/musicians or dance/dancers, to connect with the other groups, and to evaluate and coordinate when and how to change activities.

Listening, like watching, is a behavior with multiple functions in each group of actors. It can be used to coordinate starting and stopping of the music and between the dancers and musicians. It can express interest from peripheral actors and dancers. Some will be listening and evaluating the quality of the music or some perceived noise. Listening is arguably critical to playing in a group. Listening is also a critical complement to talking, regardless of how talking is used.

Talking is often an effective way of conveying all kinds of messages, but what does the behavior 'talking' convey? Everyone at a social dance event probably spends a portion of the evening talking. Talking can be perceived by some as a distraction, indicating the 'wrong' interest (see sections 5.1.1 and 5.3.1), while for others talking is an integral part of the social experience at a social dance event. Without hearing the words of the conversation, we cannot know if the talking is being used to negotiate entering the dance floor, discussing the music, organizing a future event, or is topically unrelated to the social dance event/community; this knowledge would indicate how the actors doing the talking view the talking, but not necessarily those simply observing it.



Image 4 Dance in Rauland, March 2013. Photo: Birgit Vollen

5 Understanding Social Dance Behavior

This chapter is my analysis and discussion of the aggregate responses to the questions I asked, as well as my reflections on these themes.

5.1 Communication and Contact

This section looks at how the interview respondents talk about focused interaction (communication) and unfocused interaction (contact). While communication often refers to specific messages and meanings being exchanged, including perceived challenges and examples of success, contact describes how it feels to share an experience with others.

5.1.1 Communication

As discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.2), dance and music are language-like. Mastery of these interrelated languages is 'learned' over time. Just as a young child has a more restricted vocabulary than an adult, a beginning dancer has not yet developed the skills to reach out to the musician. Both Eva Karlsson and Martha Levenson comment on the lack of response they get from new dancers, who are more focused on learning a dance or moving their feet than giving back to the musicians. This can also be seen in the Lynnwood film (part 2 at 20min) wherein an experienced dancer is helping a new dancer to learn a dance; they are so focused on this task that they are not engaging in communication with the musicians. The musicians interpret this observed behavior based on their own past experience and understanding of the current situation.

At the other end of the spectrum are experienced dancers and musicians who actively communicate with one another while they dance and play. All individuals have their personal ways of showing mutual appreciation. As discussed above, there are numerous behaviors that can indicate varying degrees of Interest - eye contact, a head bobble, slapping the stage, smiling, acrobatic displays, shouts, and clapping to name just a few. Anna Gjendem points out that it is easier to communicate with other dancers and musicians that she is familiar with, in her words, "a musician who you have danced to or

who you have discussed dance and music with before". While these behaviors may not have precise lingual definitions, individuals conversant in these 'languages' are able to interpret and create meaning from these exchanges. Communication can be said to be facilitated by familiarity with the setting and the other participants.

Dancers and musicians are communicating with their behaviors in real time. Musicians are perhaps more often paid for their services than not, but unlike a recording they can and must respond to what the dancers want. The behaviors listed previously in this section are positive indicators of skilled dancers, but a dancer of any skill level is able to communicate an appreciation for the music by rising from their chairs and beginning to dance. And yet, the motivations for starting to dance can be many and the first couple on the floor could easily arrive there as much out of empathy for the fiddler playing to an empty dance floor as desire to dance to the music that is being played.

On the Lynnwood film (part 5 at 19 min. 30 sec.) we see one dancer check the set list and look around to find a partner while moving to the music, she finds a partner and begins dancing after about a minute of searching. There is one other couple on the floor, but they are standing and talking and don't begin to dance until a minute later. One can hear the peripheral actors talking at this point and see two of them leave for the evening. The following tune starts almost identically with respect to the reaction from the dancers and peripheral actors, but this time the floor fills with dancers after about fifteen seconds of music. Why the difference in reaction between these two tunes? The dances are arguably of similar difficulty and familiarity within the community. Perhaps the dancers needed a rest and were refreshed for the second tune. Perhaps they were more inspired by the second tune. It also appears that the musicians have a more introverted (within the music group) focus in the first tune than the second. Does the reaction of the dancers influence the musicians (they look inward for inspiration) or do the musicians influence the dancers by communicating more with one another, excluding the dancers?

Depending on the theoretical model used to describe communication, we can talk about either a type of feedback loop, where all sent messages are coded, sent, decoded, and responded to, or a more interconnected semiotic view where all actors effect the others simultaneously. Ulf-Arne Johannessen describes this process when he says,

"Whoever is playing has to try to do that as well as they can so that those who are dancing can have as good of experiences as possible and when they have a good experience that will of course influence the fiddler and he will continue to play well."

Communication becomes more effective when the individuals involved are active receivers and transmitters of information. Musicians may chose to create a more stimulating experience for themselves and the dancers by playing *with* the music, not just playing the music. The dancers have the opportunity to listen closely to the music while they dance, and respond to the small variations provided. Anna Gjendem says she aims to "dance in the music, with the musician, not just with my partner, but like all of the musicians are dancing with us."

Most communication models include a reference to noise or interference. Between the dancer and the musician there exist several threats, in the form of noise, to successful communication. The distance between the dancers and musician, the chatter of peripheral actors, the emotional and/or physical state of the individual and the physical surroundings were mentioned by interview respondents as potential distractions. The musicians in the study give examples of how they decrease the interference. Karlsson said she prefers sitting on a slightly raised stage and using a microphone; this brings her up to eye-level with the dancers and allows her to play intricate music without overexerting herself. Karlsson adds, "It's more fun to play when I know that all of the details are coming out and can really be heard." Both groups on the Lynnwood films use microphones to reach the dancers and peripheral actors in the back of the room. It is worth mentioning that these participants likely have different ideas of the consummate dance event and the experience participating at such an event; that the Scandinavian dancing community in Seattle has different priorities than the folk dance clubs in major cities in Scandinavia does not strike me as controversial, however it is influential with regard to how and what participants at a dance event are communicating.

Noise occurs in many forms and what one individual finds comforting, another may find distracting. While some dancers, like Olav Sem and Martin Myhr, would prefer that the peripheral actors also direct their attention toward the dancers and musicians and not "disturb" them "unnecessary chatter" (Sem), Karlsson "finds the non-dancers necessary... because they frame the hall." Another type of what could be considered noise between the musician and the dancers is when there is a caller or a leader, determining for the dancers

how they should react to the music. Vegar Vårdal considers this to be both interference and an interesting phenomenon. Vårdal does not elaborate as to why this is interesting, but it is perhaps because communicating through a translator (the leader) is an interesting challenge, different from the more common experience of direct communication between the dancers and musicians.

In describing a recent evening playing for dancing in Gothenburg, Anders Rosén talks about a powerful connection, playing for one specific dancer. He describes the anticipation of meeting this dancer, and the joy of playing for him, even in a room full of other dancers. He says, "Then I followed him with my gaze... that's who I was playing for." In this recollection we can see that even strangers are able to communicate when they are well versed in the codes and signs regularly associated with dancing to live music. And not only that, but occasionally they are able to derive great meaning from the experience.

5.1.2 Contact

Contact can perhaps be understood as the emotional side of communication, both an input and a response. Here the dancers and musicians talk about how in good social dance situations they feel connected to the other people in the room or as Martin Myhr put it "everyone in a room has their role, as long as they are present and you are, no one in a room is uninfluenced by what happens there." Is it this human contact they find desirable, the sensory stimulation of being close to other human beings?

Many said the size of the room influenced this feeling of contact with others, preferring a small room that forces or enhances contact to a larger room. Is this because a smaller room masks the paucity of dancers and peripheral actors? Or is this because a smaller room limits the number of participants, facilitating unfocused interaction between the people who are present? Anders Rosén thinks that, "It is great fun to play for a very small audience, maybe just one or two or so, a very intimate format." This was echoed by more than half of the dancers and musicians I interviewed; they want to be close to the other people and share the energy that such a group creates.

It is just this energy, created by people in close contact that is cited by both musicians and dancers as their creative inspiration and motivation (see also section 5.2). They push one another forward. Ingebjør Sørbøen bases tune selection on the composition and response of the audience, saying, "I usually don't choose all of the tunes I'll be playing before I see what kind of an audience I'll be playing for." She also feels that by connecting with the audience she is pushed to play better, giving them a better experience. Vegar Vårdal refers to the playfulness of dancers in Bergen as something that makes BULE a desirable place to play. He also compares playing for dancing and jamming saying, "I get loads of inspiration from the person who started the tune [in a jam situation], but I also get lots of inspiration from the other people in the room who are dancing." Rosén said that regardless of the situation, and even when playing alone, he always has,

"An image of a choreography. Even if I am imagining or the like, what ever I play, I am keeping an eye on a dance to it [the music] and looking into my head and what it should be and playing with regard to that [image], exactly as if it should be danceable."

He maintains a sense of contact with the dancers even when they are not physically present.

Who feels this connection? Is it reciprocated? Is it solely dependent on the combination of people in the room or do their actions, environment, and personal experiences play a role in determining how strong of a connection, if any, an individual feels to another? Martha Levenson says she thinks about "tempo and styling" when she starts to play, particularly with the Spelmannslag. She later says that playing in way that makes the dancers want to come to the floor is a way to "get that connection with the folks on the floor that we want." Anders Rosén, talking about why he started to play dance music, says that while he loved playing the music it felt "meaningless" without the dancers; it was important to close the circuit from musician to music to dancer to dance to get a complete experience for everyone involved. He continues, saying, "As a fiddler we had to have an idea about the dance. One didn't need to be a master dancer, but we needed to know how the dances went." On the contrary, Ulf-Arne Johannessen does not feel that it's possible to achieve any kind of intense contact between musician and dancer in a social situation. It is not only the 'noise' discussed above, that he refers to, but also the complexity of the situation. When asked if he could tell a story of a particularly good contact between himself and the musician, he replied,

"Hmm, I think, no, I can't, because usually in a social setting I'm not alone on the dance floor and then it's difficult to have contact with the fiddler. At least that is how I experience the music, that is the fiddler doesn't just take into account me, but all of the ten other couples, right... "

5.2 Creative Expression

In the scope of this project, I am interested in when and how dancers and musicians engage this creativity collectively. Do their actions inspire each other? Is there a give and take that occurs? Do they experience 'flow' in the creation of dance or music? Where are the limits and what do they imply? For Vegar Vårdal, it is clear that the dancers influence the musicians saying, "If not then it isn't tradition because in the old days it was such an obvious thing that the dancers influenced the music."

Flow is a term developed by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi to describe complete involvement in a creative activity that poses great challenges and demands great skill. (2004) Vårdal talks about the kind of transcendence one can achieve playing for dancers, admitting getting chills from playing particularly well. He recollects a specific instance playing for dancing at Landskappleiken 1997; there was a certain kind of calm over all of Gjøvik (the kind that comes when everyone is watching an important soccer game), and he improvised a *halling* for the dancers for eight or ten minutes. "I couldn't have done that on stage, people would have thought it was boring, but the dancers loved it." Martin Myhr describes this feeling from the dancers perspective as a kind of "high." And Olav Sem tells a story of being so in tune with the fiddler that it felt they could continue forever ("It was a powerful, entrancing dance, unbelievable"), until "the steam ran out of [the fiddler]" and both of them felt it in the same instant that the moment was over. These are examples of dancers and musicians interacting to reach a state of flow.

The dancers and musicians I interviewed are recognized experts in their respective communities. By experts I mean that they are social dancers and dance musicians who have extensive knowledge and experience in their area of specialty. When they engage in these activities, they do not simply regurgitate learned melodies and movements; they constantly create and recreate new variations. Olav Sem has been known to say to course

participants and observers at social dances, "Watch this dance closely, you will never see it again."

These stories demonstrate how the connection between dancer and musician, described in the previous section, and the creative expression of the individuals involved are difficult to separate from one another, even for the purposes of discussion. I would point out two differentiating factors between these two concepts. First, the contact between individuals can exist prior to, during, and after the musicians and dancers are playing and dancing. Second, peripheral actors can play an important role in the connection individuals feel, while it is less likely that they have an active role in the creative expression of the musicians and dancers.

The musicians are most often tasked with starting the action, or inviting the dancers to interact. As Jens Linell succinctly put it, "My job is to get people to dance." (Kaasin, 2013) It is the musicians' burden to play in such a fashion that the dancers join them on the dance floor. On the other hand, the dancers can request tunes or types of dances or demonstrate that they want to dance by engaging in some other behavior. "If the dance floor is sparse, then I have to also find a way to be excited to play," says Martha Levenson, "a way to engage the dancers." Levenson, Gjendem, and Johannessen all stress the importance of playing in a way that fits the dancers' situational musical preferences in order to generate excitement and interaction; Johannessen says "if the music is bad I don't want to dance."

Vegar Vårdal and Anders Rosén discuss the importance of the dancers' movement in framing their creative work. Rosén credits the dancers with setting the boundaries of what is possible with regard to stretching rhythms and tempo, stating that without the dancers as a reference we risk "destroying the framework of our understanding" creating something that is simply a "strange rhythm or becoming too paralyzed to try." With the dancers present, a fiddler gets immediate feedback if they have stretched a rhythm too far or if they play too quickly or too slowly; dancers have their individual opinions, but on the whole this is a demonstration of the traditional control mechanism in Blom's model. Rosén's comments here point toward an assumption that for interaction between dancers and musicians to occur, the musicians and dancers rely on overlapping frames of reference. Within that overlap there exists a freedom for personal expression that contributes to the creation of meaning. Outside the overlapping area one finds non-sense, in the sense of that

the dancers are not able to interpret the music. And yet, he warns against stagnation, encouraging musicians (and I suggest dancers) to test the boundaries of the overlapping frames, to try new things.

Vårdal, embracing the improvisational aspect of folk music in a modern context, derives satisfaction from challenging the dancers; his understanding of the physical demands of the dance allow him to play freely with the music, awakening awareness in the dancers without disrupting the dance. He says he likes to "play at parties where I challenge the dancers a little and preferably use many improvisational elements." Both of these musicians allow the dancers' expectations to guide how they play, but neither of them feels that this is a hindrance. Instead they embrace the challenge and look for ways to work with the dancers. Respected dance musicians explore and stretch the boundaries of these primarily rhythmic and tempo limitations or one could say guidelines *with* the dancers, together constantly testing new possibilities. As noted above, there is room within the overlapping frames for both dancers and musicians to test the boundaries, creative, physical, and musical, building new experiences to inform expectations in the future.

Anna Gjendem discusses improvisation and variation from a dancer's perspective.

"Anything more than [the basic form], that is what we improvise, it's never the same you know. How long the steps are and where in the beat I step, exactly on one or a little late. When I am aware of it, when you are aware... There are things that vary the entire time, that is variation, but they're not exactly things that you have thought about doing. It just happens... but I want people to be so aware that they think now I'm a little fast or a little slow."

Here she talks about how the dancers can respond to (and I suggest inspire) the musicians' creativity. She differentiates between improvisation, a conscious decision by the dancer to do something different, and perhaps unexpected, and variation, the basic elements in a constant state of change. Taken together, Gjendem's, Rosén's, and Vårdal's comments illustrate how the dancers and musicians have a 'basic form' that they build on simultaneously. This can occasionally result in surprises whether they manage to meet one another precisely or their improvisations lead them in opposite directions.

5.3 Community

This section deals with the respondents' descriptions of their communities. Previously, I attempted to define a folk dance and music community from a theoretical point of view; here we hear from members of the community about some aspects of the community that encourage membership and influence the relationship between music and dance.

Attending a dance can be driven by something as simple as the desire to meet people, either friends or potential partner. Anders Rosén tells us that his desire to play folk music for dancers required him to facilitate the creation of a dancing community. Martin Myhr describes going to a dance as an exciting opportunity to get dressed up and, if one is looking, meet a new partner. Ulf Arne Johannessen is drawn by the unknown - who is there, how is the music, what kind of atmosphere will he find.

Having already discussed where the boundaries of the folk dance and music community are formed, the question here is, 'how does this community influence the interaction between musicians and dancers?' As mentioned above, being able to anticipate the actions of the rest of the people present, allows an individual to choose a course of action that best suits the situation and will give them the greatest pleasure. The norms and expectations of a community are expressed in the performance of the dance and music and in the reaction of the peripheral actors. For example, when a mixer is announced, all of the dancers and peripheral actors immediately move to the floor and form a ring. (Lynnwood film part 2 at 21 min 15 sec).

Do established members of a community have a responsibility to embrace or at least tolerate new members? New dancers on the floor can interfere or distract from the ideal interaction between musicians and dancers since they have internalized neither the behavior nor the rules of the community. At times, the community can nurture the interest by giving new dancers space, encouragement or instruction, and especially dancing with them; new musicians are supported by allowing them to play for dancing and giving constructive feedback as they progress about how to better achieve the feeling the community considers its ideal. At other times, more established members of a community

choose instead to take part in the dance and music activity at the core of the community, focusing on their personal and shared experience.

5.3.1 Cohesion

Here I have gathered some examples to illustrate the importance of group cohesion; that is the informants express having a more rewarding experience when there is agreement about values, attention, and customs. To varying degrees, Olav Sem, Martin Myhr, and Anna Gjendem stress the importance of a shared focus on the dancers and the dance; behaviors that exhibit this kind of focus often fall under the Attention category discussed in Chapter 4. On the one hand, Sem says for the dance to be good everyone in the hall needs to focus on the dancers and the musicians (there shouldn't be any 'noise'). On the other hand, Gjendem, after dancing to a group of musicians who were primarily interested in each other, raised the point that while the dancers were unsatisfied by the musicians' behavior, this was likely because the two groups had different intentions.

Here we can also discuss the how familiarity with the other participants affects the ability of the group to create common goals. Groups of dancers and musicians establish histories together and it is this shared past experience that forms the basis for each groups' norms. One example of cohesion can be seen on the Lynnwood film part 1 at 9 min; the group leader has announced a mixer and the dancers begin to form a circle. When they discover that they are one person short they patiently continue waiting until another dancer steps up to even out the set. I have also observed that the musical cohesion of first year folk music students improves over the course of the year and they tend to provide music that is progressively more satisfying to me as a dancer as the year passes. I suggest that this is not only because these students spend the year practicing alone, but also playing together for dancing in various situations, both learning the rules of the existing community and making their own contributions.

5.3.2 Skill mastery

While the social folk dance communities are often open to all interested individuals (I do not have any examples of exclusive clubs for social Scandinavian folk dancing), one is able to glean more enjoyment out of the experience after one has mastered at least the basic skills involved. I don't mean to imply that an individual needs to be a 'master' to enjoy the music and dance, rather achieving a sense of comfort with a tune or style or type of dance gives the individual confidence to continue. Martha Levenson describes playing for new dancers as a rewarding challenge, saying, "It is really satisfying to watch someone struggle, and then play exactly the tune that works for them, and see their face relax, and eyes light up."

Once individuals have invested the time to learn or even master a skill, they are more likely to engage in that activity. Ingebjør Sørbøen became interested in the Hardanger fiddle at age five, started playing at age seven and now says she "can't let it be." However, as Vegar Vårdal points out, just because an individual has mastered the instrument does not mean they enjoy playing for dancing or are good dance musicians. It is in the best interest of the community to encourage both dancers and musicians to continue to develop their skills and keep them in active use; this helps both to teach and inspire new/younger members as well as maintain the shared goals and expectations that have been developed.

5.3.3 Tradition

As discussed in the introduction, tradition is often a preconception that colors participants' view of the way things should be. In this section I present some of the possible ways perceptions of tradition can influence interaction at a social dance event.

Acknowledging different perspectives and definitions of 'tradition' or convention may be the key to understanding the great variety within one genre, shown by Vegar Vårdal when he details the different types of music he includes under the heading 'Norwegian folk music,' including not only the oldest forms of *bygdedanser*, but also

"Dance band style... and the *torader* group... with Kvarts perhaps as the group that bridges between... *gammaldans* but with more older folk music characteristics. And then I would maybe say that we have the competition thing where they gather to play solo in a hotel room and listen to [a fiddler], stroke his fiddle... And then we have this new thing that has started up now, a very interesting thing, with bands that play folk music... And just before that we have this blend of folk music and a modern style that Patrik and I stand for."

It is convention that holds these arguably different genres together under the larger umbrella of folk music. This variety also underscores the importance of knowing what a specific community's tradition is; to get the most out of participation previous knowledge of what kind of behavior is expected at a social dance event is essential.

Another way tradition influences social interaction is by passing down cultural information during the evening. Olav Sem points out that it is important for the dance community to "train" the musicians so they know what the dancers want. This is part of the transmission of tradition - physically and visually between dancers and orally between the dancers and musicians. It should be recognized that this 'handing down' of cultural knowledge is multidirectional, and does not pass just from the dancers to the musicians, but also from a master fiddler to an apprentice, from expert fiddlers to the dancers and between dancers on the floor, and even up from younger to older generations. Mats Melin, a folk dance researcher whose expertise is the dances of Cape Breton Island, while in Rauland in 2013 described the traditional way of teaching/learning dances: an older or more experienced dancer will physically impart this knowledge while dancing with a less experienced dancer until s/he feels that the newer dancer grasps the essential feeling of the dance. I have experienced this from both sides (as teacher and student) and find that it is equally applicable to Scandinavian dances. This type of transmission of tradition allows the new dancers to feel how they should move to the music without having to think about and analyze it; it creates freedom for variation that feels 'the same' and by building muscle memory, allows the mind to listen to and interact with the musician and makes it possible to enter a state of flow. This process of handing over traditions likely involves intense interaction between the dance partners and often the music, if not the musician.

Within the scope of this paper one can also look at the tradition of the social dance event. That is the rituals, customs, and values associated with the social dance event as opposed to the specific dances and genre of music enacted as part of the event. On the films one can see people changing their shoes, all dancing in one direction, enacting the End Greeting,

talking to friends, etc. Community members reorganize furniture in the dance area, they sweep floors, they write their names on water cups, they bring snacks to share. These behaviors are not directly related to the tradition of Scandinavian dance and music in the sense that they are a part of the movements of a dance or notes of a melody; they are the conventions of the social dance event. These conventions have a direct relation to what individuals expect from any encounter within the framework of the social dance event and thus constantly influence interaction.

5.4 Atmosphere

Place (below), contact, and atmosphere are three related topics that influence the interaction between dancers and musicians. Contact, as described above, is a way of describing the emotional meaning-creating interaction between individuals. Place, which we will come to, discusses the influence that the physical surroundings have on both the atmosphere and the contact between dancers and musicians. What is left to discuss as atmosphere then? I would like to explore atmosphere as the range of emotions and energy inside the walls of the dance hall, not strictly limited to active dancers and musicians, but especially including the peripheral actors and the expectations people bring with them. As Olav Sem put it:

"It has to do with your dance partner, it has to do with the floor, it has to do with the atmosphere. So everything needs to harmonize and fit well together. And then I throw myself onto the dance floor, if I feel like it."

A positive dance atmosphere is dependent on a sense of openness and equality. That is, as Ingebjør Sørbøen puts it, "Village parties are in my eyes there so that everyone can have a good time. Everyone should be welcome." She continues to say that it is unfortunate when a small group of elite performers take over and "the local people feel excluded." Here I think Sørbøen is saying that advanced dancers and musicians are welcome, so long as they take part and contribute to the community as equals. Leaders are welcome and necessary, whether they are professionals, especially talented individuals, or simply passionate but they should encourage the rest of the community, not dominate social events or stifle the interest of amateurs.

Often a given hall or room has multiple purposes and the atmosphere is entirely dependent on the individuals who fill it. The Cedar Valley Grange in Lynnwood is rented out regularly to different groups including the Skandia Folkdance Society. I have only attended events at the Grange for Skandia Folkdance Society's events except for once when we organized a joint workshop with another folk dance organization. The building was precisely the same, many of the actors were the same, but the atmosphere was different. There were new people in attendance; there were new ideas about how the hall should function and safety. For me, it was a very different experience than a regular dance, entirely because of the atmosphere created by the 'unknown' people.

For some it can be the history of a place or a festival that colors the character of a given place. Olav Sem describes dancing in Sangarhuset at Rørosmartnan as "a very special dance experience... Packed like herring in a barrel, but the dance keeps going and the music is fantastic, and there you can experience the great *rush*. It's very powerful." Here it is the room, the atmosphere, the contact with other dancers, and the musicians that contribute to the intensity of the experience. I have always had a special fondness for the Scandinavian dance at the Pacific Northwest Folklife Festival; despite the fact that the acoustics of the room are poor and the dance floor is hard, the combination of dancers of all levels, endless partners, and good music always make me wish the evening could last forever. Rørosmartnan and Folklife are festivals with long histories and are both known in their relative dancing communities as a place where the social dance events play a major role and are of especially high quality. This history feeds the expectations of participants in the present situation and lays the foundation for new positive experiences. While I do not know what Sangarhuset is used for outside of Rørosmartnan, the Seattle Center building that houses the Scandinavian dance is a impersonal and uninviting food court on an average day, in contrast to the vibrant celebration of culture that exists during the Folklife festival.

One major contributor to the atmosphere is the assembled individuals. A group of close friends and acquaintances can create a safe, friendly feeling, full of potential dance partners that encourages dancing. It can also stimulate conversation and stifle the actual dancing. While this does seem to violate the goal of engaging in the dance activity, it may encourage that activity at a later point in the evening. And, as Eva Karlsson says, "it is nice with listeners, too, even if I'm playing for dancing... I think they improve the atmosphere

compared to if there were just dancers who were there mainly to dance." In contrast, Martha Levenson describes a dance floor filled with eager dancers as contributing to the positive energy in the room, and an empty dance floor dragging down the energy. Additionally, in both the United States and in Scandinavian, one can hear talk of a 'dance police,' self-appointed experts that judge the correctness of others' dancing. In instances where individuals take on this role, it can negatively affect the atmosphere by discouraging less skilled (or more creative/improvisatory) dancers to take the floor.

Different types of dance evenings and locations have different expectations associated with them regarding atmosphere, population, etc.; individuals choose activities based on their expectations of who will be there, what kinds of music will be played, and what type of atmosphere they will meet. Several respondents named Stallet in Stockholm as a great place to play for dancing because of the atmosphere; the people who come to Stallet expect and create a certain type of energy that feeds the desire to play and dance. Other populations were described as being "playful, free, and happy." These visiting musicians find this attitude welcoming and are encouraged to give more of themselves in such environments. Vegar Vårdal noted that Riksscenen in Oslo is still working on developing the atmosphere and that it remains to be seen if they have succeed in building a great place for dancing.

5.4.1 Place

What does a physical place contribute to the interaction between dancers and musicians? How do the floor, walls, and acoustics affect the action? Eva Karlsson says that the hall is extremely important. The building has many ways of influencing the interaction, she says, "It can be the atmosphere in the building, it might be color/form, it might be décor/material, but also temperature and lighting. A barn is often a nice place to play." Different aspects of the building speak to the different individuals present. Decorative elements may recall fond memories, specific color schemes can influence how people feel, and the temperature and lighting affect participants' physical comfort.

As previously discussed (in Contact and Atmosphere), the size of the room is important to many of the respondents. The room's ability to hold together the participants creates the

potential for closer contact and interaction. For some, like Ulf-Arne Johannessen, the old youth halls are best. He says,

"The old youth houses are so unbelievably good because they have the old plank floors with lots of give that is really wonderful, while the newer places are so hard, even if they are wooden floors they're still hard. And I really like soft, soft wooden floors with lots of give."

Here there is a physical effect on the dancers' performance, which has a direct influence on how he communicates with his partner and the musician and what any peripheral actors may observe.

5.4.2 Pleasure

The activities of social dancing are voluntary. While some may participate out of some sense of duty, most do so of their own free will. They find the activity enjoyable, whether or not an external judge would consider them 'good.' The promise of a good time draws people to the event and entices their participation. Eva Karlsson says, "My goals/expectations with playing are just to get the kick, to feel the swing. And to feel that the dancers also get the kick and feel the swing." Olav Sem says, "I seek out those arenas where I think, 'here we're going to have a good time.'" Martha Levenson plays "to enjoy a musical experience with friends" both when just playing and when playing for dancing. And Ulf-Arne Johannessen is drawn to the dance floor "if there is a good fiddler of course, who is playing with a good rhythm."

Perhaps it seems obvious that dancers and musicians find a social dancing pleasant in general, but it is important that each specific dance event is a pleasant experience when evaluating how this feeling affects the interaction. As Eva Karlsson also says "If it doesn't swing, I'd likely choose not to join in." To me, this is indicative of the reality that not every social dance event is as much fun as we might like them to be.

"It depends, in a social context in a certain part of life it can also be to find a partner, quite simply." Here Martin Myhr refers to what can be considered the romantic potential of folk dancing. While the dances nearly always require a dance partner, he seems to be referring to finding a romantic partner, and while the search may not always be pleasant, one can

hope that finding a partner is! The social dance event gives potential romantic partners the opportunity to approach one another, it allows them to interact physically and in a safe situation, and it provides a forum for other acceptable social behavior (e.g. talking, drinking, eating, etc.). Depending on how any romantic interaction manifests, it can create distractions from the general interaction between musicians and dancers (the gathered members of the community may find budding romance particularly fascinating) or the romantic feelings may intensify the connection the dancers feel toward the musician.

5.4.3 Alcohol

The presence or lack of alcohol can have a marked effect on both the atmosphere at a dance event and the execution of dance and music. The presence or lack of alcohol can have a marked effect on both the atmosphere at a dance event and the execution of dance and music. Opinions range from strict prohibition to including alcohol on the list of necessary ingredients for a successful dance event. Regardless of an individual or a community's stance on alcohol and dance, the availability or presence of alcohol most often elicits a reaction and the following comments show some of the observable issues.

None of the respondents in this study spoke explicitly or implicitly about prohibiting alcohol, which can be attributed to one of two factors. First, none of my questions were specifically designed to elicit an alcohol related response. Those who do not feel alcohol should be present at a dance may not have considered it in the light of the questions I had asked. Second, when strategically selecting respondents, alcohol was not a significant factor. General opinions regarding the prohibition of alcohol are well known in the community, as noted in Chapter 2.

The absence of alcohol can be designed to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for a some multigenerational dancing audiences. In these cases, the absence of alcohol supports the status quo of the community. Should uninformed individuals arrive hoping to purchase and/or consume alcohol they may cause a series of reactions. They may simply be disappointed which can itself manifest outwardly in a number of ways, or they can accept the fact that they have arrived at an alcohol-free event and enjoy themselves with all of the other dancers and musicians. If the individual consumes (or attempts to consume) the

beverages they brought to the dance event, this could cause the community to react in a disapproving manner, avoiding or shunning the individual, even demanding that they leave. The presence and use of alcohol where it is not welcome or allowed has an effect on the atmosphere of the event and thus on the interaction between the dancers and musicians and perhaps especially the peripheral actors who may have a role in monitoring the unwelcome behavior directly. Additionally, consumption of alcohol may be illegal based on the location of the event or if the proper permits are not in place.

On the other end of the spectrum are communities that embrace the use of alcohol. Making the point that there is a "different feeling" at events that forbid alcohol, Eva Karlsson says that it is "important that alcohol is available for sale" at an event. Later she goes on to describe peripheral actors as "improving the mood" of the main action when they "sit around tables, drink beer, and either listen to the music or talk to each other." She is describing a relaxed, friendly environment where people with a shared interest in folk music and folk dance freely choose when they will engage in that activity and whether or not they will consume alcohol. An American study from 2012, looking at alcohol and social behavior, reports that "alcohol facilitates bonding during group formation." (Sayette et al.) Initiation and Piqued Interest, as discussed in this paper, together form an occasion of interaction that is similar to group formation.

The Lynnwood films show a dance event and a community that has never included alcohol consumption in its regular social dances. Another sub-group of Skandia Folkdance Society look forward to enjoying an alcoholic beverage or two after dancing or playing, but choose to refrain from drinking while dancing or playing either because they feel it impairs their ability to optimally perform the activity or enjoy the experience. Alcohol is sometimes considered a social lubricant, easing the transition onto the dance floor for many who consider themselves 'non-dancers'. Others, like any number of folk music students, passionate about folk music and dance, embrace debauchery as part of the fun. Based on my experience as an active member of various folk music communities, I have observed the effects of alcohol on the behavior of the individual, impacting communication by decreasing inhibition and attention to social norms (e.g. speaking loudly, interrupting). Mildly intoxicated individuals may retain a high level of motor function, but highly intoxicated individuals tend to have difficulty executing the movements of a dance, playing their instrument, or negotiating the dance floor. Opinions regarding the atmosphere

of a social dance event and the impact of alcohol consumption range widely from positive to negative. These opinions are frequently demonstrated in an individual's choice to participate or associate with a specific dance community.

5.5 Performance

Elsewhere in this paper I have stressed that I am looking at social dance events and not staged performances, so it may seem strange to have a section titled performance. But performance can mean different things and a social dance event is the site of at least two types of performance. Even in the most relaxed social settings individuals make more or less conscious choices about what parts of their identity, their self, they show to the rest of the group; perhaps they suppress religious or political opinions in one setting, where in another they would voice such opinions. This selection and performance of identity affects how participants at a dance event view one another, it affects their behavior, and it affects their interaction. Additionally individuals at a social dance event perform their community, by assuming various roles and conforming to the expectations of the group.

5.5.1 Performance in the conventional sense

A more conventional type of performance occurs when dancers or musicians attempt to impress any of the other participants. This could be playing a particularly challenging tune or putting in extra effort while dancing. Anders Rosén recalls from his youth " you could practice an entire winter on tunes to show off at certain *spelemannsstämmor*... like Ransäterstämman or Korrö. But I don't think it's like that any more." And Ulf-Arne Johannessen tells us, "If there are some clever dancers or someone I want to impress... then I am inspired to make more out of the dance perhaps... if people are sitting and watching." Here performance is understood in the conventional use of the term. When a dancer makes an extra effort to make contact with another dancer or peripheral dancer, it changes his/her relationship with the musician and the rest of the room. Some may put too much emphasis on embellishing the dance and lose contact with the music, while others rely on the connection between the dance and the music to demonstrate their prowess as a dancer.

Musicians may more often see their role in the social dance event as performance or as work. Vegar Vårdal reflects on playing at a festival pub where there was dancing saying, "There was no expectation that we [the musicians] should be enjoying ourselves." In this case, the musicians were playing to fulfill a type of employer-employee contract as opposed to the social contract between members of a community at a social dance event; this is the type of performance that we usually associate with a concert and may not be fully aware of at a social dance. Does the musicians' feeling of obligation to perform versus desire to play influence the resulting music and the degree to which they interact with the other participants?

5.5.2 Gender

When asked at the International Dance Forum (at the Winter Festival in Rauland 2013) what role gender played in Scandinavian couple dancing, neither Anna Gjendem nor I had what I felt were adequate answers to such a basic question. This section is an attempt to respond. Feminist philosopher Judith Butler writes "gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceede [sic]; rather it is an identity tenuously constituted in time - an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts." (1988) Within the scope of this thesis, it is useful to give some focus to the questions of how gender is performed at a social dance event and what influence that performance has on the social interaction.

While watching the Lynnwood films I saw several instances of women dancing with other women, while I did not see two men dancing together in the entirety of this study (men do dance together, however it is rare and did not occur at any of the events I attended as part of this study). There is nothing in the dances themselves that require a certain physiology; skill, musicality, and fitness are important in the performance of a dance, regardless of gender. The social dance community imposes expectations on the individual to give a performance of gender in accordance with the community's values.

The terminology of dance carries with it connotations of gender, whether it is the classic folk dance descriptions 'girl' and 'boy' or the less explicit 'lead' and 'follow.' In ballroom dance the terms 'lead' and 'follow' have been used since at least the 19th century. Their use in folk dance seems to be more modern (perhaps arriving with the introduction of swing to the folk dance repertoire in the mid 20th century). As Richard Powers, dance instructor and researcher at Stanford University, writes the term 'follow,' referring to the female partner, changed from identifying the individual who actively receives and interprets signals from their partner, to implying that the women should be thoughtless and obedient. He continues to say that this negative association is subsiding, and stresses that the term itself is useful. (2013) When we employ the terms 'lead' and 'follow' to designate the roles of the dancers, we hope to open for the possibility that any individual, regardless of physiology, can dance the set of movements ascribed to these roles. Given the history of these terms, however, they also carry gendered implications.

In addition to terminology, clothing and physical style or mannerisms gender coded. For example, many American women seem to prefer dancing in a skirt (or dress). Performance of gender can be enforced and challenged in the way dances are taught either emphasizing diminutive movements for the female partner and bigger, more powerful movements for the males or encouraging both partners to respect each other and play with the dance as they see fit. Is there anything in a dance that demands a certain physiology? If not, then the behaviors of gender in social dance can be looked at as 'constituted' by the community and performed by the individuals. When performing gender affects movement it also affects interaction.

How does a perceived gender influence the dancers' interaction? I find that the way I dance in a given situation has more to do with the skill level of my partner, than the set of movements each of us is executing or their assumed gender. When I am dancing with other women, I will tend to lead if she is a beginner and share the lead (or steal the lead) if I am dancing with another accomplished dancer. When dancing with men, I dance the movements of the follow, and coach or lead beginners, when it seems appropriate; on occasion I take the lead when dancing with men if I feel that it will improve the mutual experience of the dance. This is, of course, my approach and, while I think many agree with me, there are certainly other opinions within the greater folk dance community. I know a homosexual man who chooses not to dance with his romantic partner because they

both prefer to lead. Some men would never dance as a follow and some find it entertaining. I know women who refuse to lead, or claim they are not able to lead, even though they are accomplished dancers who have been dancing for many years. These examples show that there is social belief in the connection between physiology and the sets of movements that constitute dancing 'lead' and 'follow'. An individual's gender identity may or may not influence how they interact with their partner. Depending on the folk dance community in question, expressing an alternative gender identity in the performance of folk dance will likely be met with different degrees of acceptance. When individuals dance in ways other than prescribed by traditional gender norms, the reaction of the community, whether positive, neutral, or negative, will have an effect on how they interact with the rest of the participants at a dance event.

5.6 Control

Control is a part of any community and can refer to all kinds of influence and decision-making. Who decides when the music starts and stops, what the 'right' way to do a dance is, and where the boundaries are between communities? The tension between the conflicting interests may vary from one event to another, to the point that the individuals involved may be either acutely aware of or oblivious to any power play.

5.6.1 Balance of Power

Who is in control of the action at a social event the dancers or musicians? Is anyone? While none of the respondents brought up the balance of power, I find it worthy of discussion here. I have written at length about cooperation, agreement, and submitting to the creative forces at hand, but in reality there is also an element of tension, a struggle for control. All of the individuals involved are members of the modern world, accustomed to independent and even selfish thought.

Is it the musician who is in charge? The musician decides what kind of tune to play, how fast, how long, how loud, etc. On the Lynnwood films, both groups of musicians have set

lists that they follow; it is not possible to determine from the films whether or not the musician made adjustments in the list in reaction to the dancers' behavior. Their actions and decisions direct the action of the dancers and peripheral others. All of the dancers are dependent on the musician for creating music that is danceable. Without the music there is no dance and without dance and music there is no interaction between dancers and musicians. The musicians have artistic freedom to do whatever they want, up to a point. Sometimes that point is what can be called tradition - bounded by what is historically acceptable. I have also talked to musicians who enjoy 'playing with' the dancers, asserting their control by stretching rhythms (as discussed in Creative Expression) just a little bit further than what the dancers expect or are comfortable with.

Alternatively, it can be the dancers' will that puts restraints on the musician and guides the musicians' decision-making. Perhaps the dancers have a preference for a certain type of dance and will come to the floor regardless of what they are doing or how tired they are if the musician plays this type of tune. As Martin Myhr says, "It can also be that that type of music that is being played at that moment, that you have a special desire to dance to that, whether it's springar or waltz... Just when you want to dance a waltz, right, and then a waltz comes up." Perhaps the dancers have a strong opinion regarding a type of dance and prefer to listen to the tune or engage in some other activity while the musicians plays this type of tune. The dancers request dances they prefer and give feedback about tempo and rhythm. Maybe the dancers are slow to move onto the dance floor and when they do, they cause the musicians to extend the current tune as happens on the Lynnwood film part 3 at 2 min 30 sec.

Musicians and dance instructors, like Olav Sem, have been known to chastise dancers for their tendency to talk while dancing, reminding the dancers that they cannot dance to the music if they are not listening to it. They insist that the dancers must pay attention to the music to be able to dance to it. Frequently on the Lynnwood films I observed dancers time exhibiting the behaviors dancing and talking simultaneously, while it also appears that they are in synch with (and thus listening to) the music. This begs the question does the control of the dancer's attention lie with the musicians, providing the music necessary for dancing, or the dancers, having free will to choose whether or not to dance and/or talk at the same time? Arguments can be made for both sides being more in control at different points in time. Perhaps the dancers are engaged in a fascinating conversation, but are reluctant

'waste' a good tune and thus continue the conversation on the dance floor. They could be discussing the music or the steps. I see this as a struggle for the dancers' Attention and Interest. It can also be argued that this dynamic is not about power and that skilled dancers are able to enjoy the music while talking to their dance partner, where dancers learning a new dance do need to give more focus to the music until their movements come naturally.

The above examples are illustrations of musicians and dancers interaction when it concerns control of the action on the dance floor. I find that when the dancers and musicians share control, the result is greater enjoyment for all. Put another way, when the dancers and musicians work together toward the goal of having a good time, they as a group are more successful, than when one group dominates (the musicians play without respect for the dancers' wishes or the dancers are too choosy or demanding). One could also look at this as all of the participants following the Cooperation Principle, mentioned in section 3.1, to ensure successful interaction, in which case it is the collective that has control.

5.6.2 Boundaries (Inside and Outside)

In the community as a whole the question of power is also raised. Who gets to decide where the boundaries are between one group and the next? In a traditional society these questions seem much clearer - members tend to be born in, and the boundaries are defined by the actions of the group. In a special interest group, in which I put communities focused on folk dance, someone, or a sub-set of the whole, is in charge of defining on what they focus their time and resources. Most such organizations have a board of directors who make (at least) financial decisions for the group. Are these the same people whose actions and opinions decide for the rest of the group what is folk dance? What part of a folk dance community assesses new impulses and decides whether or not to embrace them? What happens when there are disagreements?

In Norway in the 1980's there was such derision amongst the members of Landslaget for Spellemenn about the inclusion of 'newer' types of dances and the creation of Landsfestival i Gammaldansmusikk that a new organization was founded (Norsk Folkemusikk og Danselag). Recently, these organizations merged together again to form the all-inclusive FolkOrg. First it was the membership who decided to set up boundaries, creating a special

organization (NFD) when they felt that it was necessary to preserve the older traditions. Later, the leadership of both organizations felt that they could accomplish more for the joint cause of folk music and dance by sharing resources as one organization. The internal boundaries within the folk music community were superseded by the boundaries between what 'is' and 'is not' folk music.

The various social dance organizations have over time developed behavioral conventions that determine what is accepted at their respective dance events (see also section 5.3.3). These conventions also draw boundaries between communities and serve as signals that an individual is a member. Knowing how to ask someone to dance, how many dances is appropriate to do with one partner, how many times to play a tune, what speed to play a tune, is it acceptable to talk while the musicians play, etc. are some examples of variables that can demonstrate the boundaries between organizations. An individual who does not follow these conventions may struggle to find acceptance or respect within their community or demonstrate that they come from another organization. On the Lynnwood films part 3 starting at 26 min 40 sec, we can partially observe a fascinating exchange between a relative newcomer to the community and an off-screen established member of the community. He states that he thinks he can dance what the community considers a 'difficult' dance; she apparently declines causing him to leave. By declining to dance a difficult dance with a beginner, she refers to a code that is likely unknown to him and signifies that she is a member of the community, while he is still learning the rules.

5.6.3 Knowledge

Another type of power is knowledge. How does knowledge about source material influence the balance of power between dancers and musicians? Does the possessor of knowledge gain anything in a social setting from what they know about the source material? There are numerous instances where the dance and the music from a particular region have become separated from one another and lead separate lives, the music may live on, but the dance exists only on film (Polsdans fra Finnskogen) or the dances are recorded in detail on paper and the music is adjusted to fit the description (Reels from Agder). What happens when the old meets the new? Are the dancers able to adjust to the reels played asymmetrically (with seven or nine measures) by a musicians who "knows better" than the

official description? Vegar Vårdal notes that in his experience the dancers choose "MIDI files from a synth-piano" in cases like this so the "melodies [are] played exactly the same way every single time." Here the dancers assume control, while the fiddler maintains his claim to correctness.

Will a reconstructed dance like polsdans from Finnskogen ever be able to claim a full seat at the table of traditional dances or is it forever relegated to the 'made-up' bin? The reconstructed dance and accompanying tunes now live their own lives, so to speak, at social dances in (at least) Norway, Sweden, and the United States. Which version of the dance is correct and who decides? Does the power reside with the researchers who reconstructed the dance from archive recordings or the dancers who use the dance today? And of those dancers, which of them decides? Is there a correct version of any dance that is currently being used for social dancing? Does certification, like that of the Swedish *Polsmärkskommittén* (Polska Medal Committee), convey authority in a social situation?

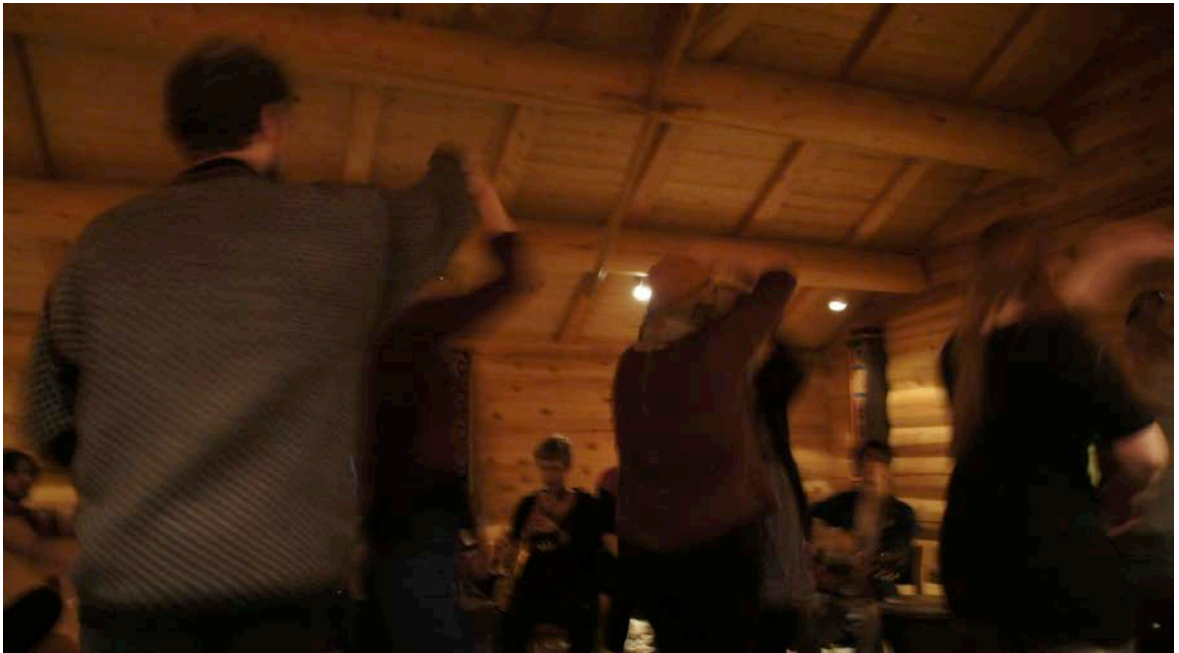


Image 5 Årestoga during the International Winterfestival in Rauland, 2013.

Photo: Runhild Heggem

6 Summary and Discussion

In this thesis I have examined social interaction at a social dance event. I have identified a number of behaviors that are the building blocks of this interaction and suggested some possible ways that these behaviors can be grouped together to analyze social interaction. I have also interviewed active dancers and musicians to determine what topics are important for them and looked at how these themes influence interaction; the themes examined in this thesis were Communication, Contact, Community, Atmosphere, Performance, and Control. The rest of this chapter explores some implications and potential applications of the previous chapters.

The behaviors exhibited on the films and abstracted in Figure 2 show the mechanics of behavior at a social dance evening. Here, the parallels to a conversation become clearer, the actors take turns and they signal that their attention is focused on the actor who is speaking (in this case also dancing or playing) by looking (or listening) in that direction. Within a community the behavioral language is well developed and individuals understand how to respond, just as individuals understand how to interact in a conversation. I explored the components of End Greetings using the occasions of interaction model shown in Figure 2; other groupings of behavior at a social dance event can also be studied using this model (e.g. inviting someone to dance). This model can also be used to understand how individual behaviors influence and cause other behaviors as in the Initiation sequence.

Looking at the results of the film analysis and the interviews within this project I cannot draw any conclusions regarding correlation between what people do and what they say about what they do. However, using the same methods (analysis of film and interviews) and tools (the models provided) with a specific community would allow for this type of further analysis that could prove very interesting. A researcher might be able to identify connections between the observed behaviors and the 'soft' factors (cultural norms, creative expression, mood, etc.) that I have suggested determine not only how the behaviors of interaction are expressed but also why they occur and how they are formed and transformed over time.

The models and themes I have developed can serve as the foundation for further research in the Scandinavian folk dance community, for example, evaluating differences in interactional behaviors when the music is provided by a solo musician versus a group, or different responses to the same musician in different arenas. One could use these methods and models to analyze the difference in response to changes in instrumentation, given the same dance community. One could look at how certain demographic characteristics (age, gender, nationality, political affiliation) influence the interaction. The leaders of an organization may wish to use the themes discussed here to illuminate the core values of the community, to reach out to potential members who share those values, or to identify disconnects between an official mission statement and the actual interests of the members. This kind of value assessment could be used to help an organization allocate funds (for a new dance floor, sound system, music and dance education). Understanding how interaction is successful in a specific social dance situation can help communities and organizations make conscious choices about how to improve the occurrence of successful interaction in that situation. By evaluating the values and behaviors of an admired social dance community, another community could use these tools to strengthen their own social dance events. For example one could ask, 'what are the qualities of the dance in Ål that made that evening so successful and how can I create that kind of environment for social dance in my home community?'

Why does an individual choose to take part in a social dance event of a given community? Perhaps they desire to be a part of something larger, to demonstrate prowess and be respected for their talent, or just to be close to other people. And yet, individuals do not choose just any community and may test out many genres of music and dance before finding one (or more) that fits. People become members of communities that meet their needs and share their values, where they feel they can accept the rules. For some, it is easier to communicate with music and dance, to use these non-verbal languages to pass down traditions and create a sense of community. There is a place in the community for 'stars,' the elite who are exceptionally talented; they serve to inspire others and press the boundaries. However, it seems that talent must be paired with respect for the customs and other individuals of the community, allowing the community to recognize itself in the performance and authenticate the 'star' as its representative.

This thesis underscores the importance of interaction between the musicians and dancers to create a positive social dance experience. What happens when the connection is not made? What happens if the musicians never look at or respond to the dancers? When the dancers cannot fully hear the music? If the musician focuses on one couple, what happens to this connection with the rest of the dancers? Maybe the connections between the musicians and any given dancer are fleeting, small bursts of synchronicity that light up an evening as musicians attempt to engage a room full of potential dancers. Perhaps this elementary human contact is the primary meaning-bearing phenomenon in the meeting between social dancers and musicians.

Some kind of interaction will always take place while musicians play and dancers dance: however when their goals and motivations for action coincide, the action produced is more likely to generate a positive experience for all participants. Just as in a conversation, it is much easier to exchange information between individuals who are both engaged in that conversation and respect the other's contributions, than it is when one individual is directing their focus elsewhere.

Many of the informants expressed a preference for smaller spaces, as discussed in the sub-chapters Contact and Atmosphere. Should this preference for smaller spaces shown by the informants be taken into account when identifying new arenas for social dancing? Perhaps when people are dancing, playing, and socializing in a smaller space, the interaction between them is intensified by this proximity and it facilitates 'physical consensus' wherein people's movements begin to appear similar and also to highlight the exceptional talents of certain individuals. However, it could also be that these smaller spaces have some additional advantage, e.g. sprung wooden floors, that make them desirable and just any small space would not create the same kind of Atmosphere or potential Contact.

At the start of this project I was certain that all of my respondents would be able to offer descriptions of amazing connections made with the other participants while dancing and playing. While surprised to find this not to be the case, the contrast it provides is indeed interesting. What prevented my informants from relating more stories and in greater detail about their experiences? Perhaps this is because it is uncommon to talk about this type of experience and thus more challenging. Perhaps it is because social dance evenings are not filled with 'amazing connections,' but primarily consist of safe, comfortable, dependable

experiences where all the actors play their roles and everyone's expectations are met. How can the various folk dance communities position themselves to attract new members, while still filling the needs of the core members? How much (or little) change does a given social dance arena tolerate before it loses (or redefines) its' identity? I hope that the tools provided in this thesis can help communities ask and evaluate these questions.

While the discussions in this paper refer to Scandinavian and most frequently Norwegian folk music and dance, I feel that they have a potential for much more general application. How different is a situation where a DJ spins for dancers or an orchestra plays waltz music for dancers? What are the occasions of interaction associated with a flash mob and how do the participants act as community? The specifics of place, atmosphere, expectations, behavioral language (of musicians, dancers, and peripheral actors), etc. are different. However, the context surrounding social interaction remains important and can be discussed in terms of the themes raised in this paper. That is the sense of community, potential for communication through creative expression, atmosphere, place, gender, tradition, etc. are relevant for other communities of social dancers. What creates the feeling of community and how does this concept apply in other contexts? Perhaps it is a sense of reciprocity and the rewards of communality. Do different types of social dancing attract different sub-sets of the general population? To what extent do the individuals of a community remodel their behavior so they perform in accordance with the rules of the community?

This thesis provides some tools for investigating the fascinating and numerous questions of social interaction. I encourage others to use these tools to ask the questions that are relevant in their situations. I hope that this work inspires others to reflect on their behaviors and interactions in social dance settings. I hope that this reflection, either at a community level or on a more individual level, helps others to understand not only how this interaction works but also why social dance events are important and what value we as individuals can gain from participation.

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Appendix I - Informants

Martha Levenson is the Director of the Seattle Lilla Spelmanslag, and former Music Director of the Seattle Skandia Spelmanslag (2010 - March 2013). She has studied Scandinavian fiddle playing in the United States and at Malungs Folkhögskola in Sweden. She is also an avid dancer. (Email 27/2/2013)

Eva Karlsson specializes in the music from the border region between Norway and Sweden. She has studied folk music at Telemark University College in Rauland, Norway and at Malungs Folkhögskola. Her skills as a fiddler are well known to dancers in Scandinavia and the United States. Eva is also a dancer. (Email 13/2/2013)

Vegar Vårdal is a professional fiddler, dancer, and educator of folk music and dance. He is an active solo artist, has released several recordings, teaches fiddle and Hardanger fiddle, and teaches extended courses in folk dance in Norway and Sweden. Vårdal has studied music and dance at the Norwegian Academy of Music and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. (Telephone 11/29/2012)

Ingebjør Sørbøen plays Hardanger fiddle. She has studied at the Ole Bull Academy in Voss, Norway and is the director of Ål Spel- og Dansarlag. She has released one solo recording (Fuggel'n 2011) to date. (Facebook 12/3/2012)

Ulf-Arne Johannessen is a professional dancer, a member of the dance troupe FRIKAR, and freelance actor. He has studied music at the University of Oslo and University of Vienna and folk music at the Telemark University College in Rauland. He also plays the two-row accordion. (Telephone 12/6/2012)

Olav Sem is a bearer of both vocal music and dance traditions. He is a judge at local and national competitions (*kappleik*). He also frequently teaches courses in the United States. (Telephone 12/5/2012)

Martin Myhr is also a member of FRIKAR and freelance actor. He is also active teaching folk dancing to local youth. (Telephone 12/4/2012)

Anna Gjendem is a freelance dancer, musician, and archivist. She has studied folk music at the Telemark University College in Rauland and dance at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. She is currently enrolled in the Master's program in Rauland and is the Director of the Folk Music Archive for Møre and Romsdal. (Conversation 9/18/2012)

Anders Rosén is a professional fiddler and produces the folk music label Hurv. He is an important tradition bearer for the music from Western Dalarna, Sweden. (Conversation 12/5/2012)