

## **Dance Research Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is a Dance Scholar?**

Dance scholars are those professionals who reflect upon, interpret, study and write about dance. Dance scholars are historians anthropologists, critics, archivists, educators, librarians, reconstructors, choreographers, and even performers. What dance scholars all have in common is a belief in both the intrinsic and extrinsic value of dance in all its forms. Dance scholars may study the works of one choreographer and write about the work, placing it in an historical, aesthetic, social or political context. Some toil to preserve archival materials: notes, videos and films, letters, etc. from prominent artists. And many reflect upon educational practices, attempting to refine the process or demonstrate the value of dance education for learning.

### **2. What is the difference between a dancer and a dance scholar?**

Sometimes, dancers are also dance scholars; many of CORD's members study and write about dance and are also active performers and choreographers. The scholar has a deep and broad understanding of the field and of the larger culture in which it occurs. Scholars can also be practitioners who bring a thoughtful consideration and reflective writing to their practice.

### **3. How many dance scholars are there in the United States?**

CORD's membership is international: we have over 450 U.S. members and 150 internationally. Not all dance scholars belong to CORD, but we wish they did! There is so much more we can do, working together, to deepen and enrich our field and to bring awareness of all that we do to the scholarly community.

### **4. How does one become a dance scholar?**

Most dance scholars are graduates of a university and many have PhD's in dance or in a related field. But there are many dance scholars who are simply experts in a particular form or style who act as primary sources, writing about their own understanding of a particular area. Most dance scholars teach in universities, but some are independent scholars and are not connected with an institution at all. A few are connected with museums or libraries.

### **5. Where can one receive an advanced degree in dance?**

There are four PhD. programs in dance in the U.S. at this time: University of California at Riverside, Temple University, Texas Women's University and Ohio State University. There are also EdD and MFA programs at several institutions. All of these degrees are considered terminal degrees in the field. One can also receive a terminal degree in a related field, such as performance studies or theatre studies. In some cases, a combination of advanced, but not terminal, degrees can be considered the equivalent of a terminal degree, but we can't recommend this as a route to advancement in the field!

### **6. I need help with a research topic. Can you help me?**

Please send your question to us via email to [ashanti@cordance.org](mailto:ashanti@cordance.org). We will let you know how we can be of assistance to you.