Dancing Through Film Musicals: Narratives in Motion

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Abstract

The beautiful and exciting art form of dance has been around for centuries; dance is symbolic and therefore an important communicative device. The purpose of this study was to discover if and how dance communicates vital plot and character information nonverbally. The example analyzed was the film Singin' in the Rain.

Singin' in the Rain is a famous filmed musical from the 1950s. The film has received much praise and attention, and the dance sequences, in particular, have been intriguing audiences since the film's release. This thesis examined the six dance sequences in the film to determine if the dancing is an integral, powerful, and significant communicative addition to the film.

Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm was used in conjunction with Seymour Chatman's concept of kernels and satellites to determine if the dances communicated significantly to the film's viewers. The Narrative Paradigm, though loosely framed, provided the concepts of coherence and fidelity. These concepts helped determine if the dances made sense and if they told relatable stories. Chatman's concept of kernels and satellites determined how important these dance sequences were to the film. All dances analyzed, except one, were determined to be kernels, and thus they told vital parts of the story or enhanced the film's characters.

Key words: Dance, nonverbal communication, musicals, Singin' in the Rain, Narrative Paradigm, kernels, satellites

Chapter I: Introduction

As a child, I had a great interest in dance. When I was old enough, my parents enrolled me into my first ballet and tap class. I continued dancing ballet, tap, and jazz through high school, and performed in such local productions as The Nutcracker, Coppélia, Snow White, and other famous variations and studio recitals. While attending Salisbury University, I minored in dance and learned about dance production, teaching, and the history of dance. I also continued actual dance classes there and was exposed to other styles of dance, such as modern, improv, flamenco, and African dance. In addition, I was a member of the Salisbury University Dance Company, was a student choreographer twice, and choreographed and performed for my church. While in college, I taught ballet, tap, and jazz to 6-12-year-olds for one of the local studios. As a graduate student, I looked for opportunities to practice my art and stay involved in the dance world. I took ballet classes at the Virginia School of the Arts and volunteered there twice a week to assist with the school's public relations and other pre-production responsibilities. Obviously, my interest in dance runs long and deep.

Dance is a form of art, yet for some individuals it is merely an occupation. To most, however, it speaks a language that can be heard only through movement. It is with that in mind that dancers communicate thoughts, ideas, perspectives, and emotions to their audiences and to each other.

Studying this form of communication is significant. Although there have been numerous studies of dance in different contexts, there has been little research on dance as a primary form of communication in the filmed musicals. My goal in this thesis was to examine dance as another aspect of nonverbal communication. Since dance is in a visual

form, filmed examples are an excellent means to observe the connection that art form has with communication.

In the following pages, I examine the film Singin' in the Rain (1952) to investigate the interpersonal communication between the characters in the dances. I use Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm and Seymour Chatman's concept of kernels and satellites to examine the six dance sequences in the film and argue that dance functions as a nonverbal language and that this medium of communication can be used to continue the plots of filmed musical plays, further describe the characters in the film musicals, and express their relationships. I argue that the musical, Singin' in the Rain, possesses all five presuppositions that Fisher defines in his Narrative Paradigm to claim that dance is a strong medium of communication and can be used effectively to communicate integral aspects of the film. I also used Seymour Chatman's concepts of kernels and satellites to tie the dances with the Narrative Paradigm. Dance is discussed as containing symbols that communicate important ideas and the characters are discussed as "narrative beings" who dance out their story for the audience.

Background of the Film

Since this thesis examines the dances in Singin' in the Rain and how imperative they are to the film's plot sequence, it is beneficial to include a short synopsis of the film for better understanding. The film takes place in the 1920s during the silent film era. Gene Kelly plays Don Lockwood, a silent film star for Monumental Pictures. Although he implies that he had formal training, he actually is a vaudeville performer who accidentally got a part in a movie which catapulted him to stardom. His career and also that of his co-star, Lina Lamont, is threatened with the invention of "talkies" or films

with sound. Lina has no talent. Silent film acting is the extent of her ability. Don, on the other hand, is actually prepared for the transition with his dancing and singing background. He and Lina make a talking picture called The Dueling Cavalier, but after it is previewed, the studio discovers that their film is a flop. Don fears his acting days are numbered; however, his good friend Cosmo Brown and Don's real-life love interest and unknown actress, Kathy Seldon, help Don change the film into a musical which is entitled The Dancing Cavalier. The musical becomes a success and moves Don from silent film star to a film musical star. It also launches Kathy's career. Of course, the film includes Lina's inability to perform and how that is in direct opposition to Don, Cosmo, and Kathy. Furthermore, because of her lack of talent, Lina becomes the film's villain. The film deals with the ability to change while remaining true to oneself.

In the introduction to the screenplay of Singin' in the Rain, Betty Comden and Adolph Green provide information on how the musical came to be. They discuss the song choices, the general idea of what the plot would be about and who they would cast to star in it. This document provides firsthand background information. Comden and Green gave their point of view for the published screenplay of Singin' in the Rain in 1972. The two writers were given the task of writing a story using only the songs by their own boss, Arthur Freed, and composer Nacio Herb Brown. The final product would be called Singin' in the Rain. They perused many stacks of Freed-Brown songs wondering which ones to pick for the story. As they played them, Comden and Green actually said they got excited in spite of themselves. "Many of them were famous songs, standards, bristling with vitality and part of the nations' collective unconscious – "Broadway Melody," "Broadway Rhythm," "You Are My Lucky Star," "Fit as a Fiddle," "You Were Meant

For Me," and the title song itself, an irresistible ode to optimism which no one can possibly sing without acting out the line "There's a smile on my face" (Comden and Green 4). It was at this point that Comden and Green began to put a storyline together. The majority of the Freed-Brown songs had been written for early musicals between 1929 and 1931, the era that silent films were giving way to sound films. They decided to set the story somewhere in that time period instead of making the film contemporary (4). They based part of the film on a famous actor, John Gilbert, who failed to transition into sound. However, the leading man for this film would actually make a successful transition. Furthermore, he would have had a song-and-dance background in vaudeville before he became a silent film star. Comden and Green thought this would give the story credibility. Therefore, Gene Kelly was their top pick for leading man, since he would suit the part better than the other choice, Howard Keel (5).

The film musical is one of the most entertaining genres in film. The songs and dances make such films memorable. Most people can identify a song from a particular musical; however, the dances in musicals are sometimes overlooked as means to communicate. General audiences may take for granted the talent that went into creating something that is supposed to speak meaning to them. They see the film as entertainment or a means to display talent. In the beginning of filmmaking and early musicals, melodramatic movement such as walking, prize fighting, and dance were the highlights of films. The action sequences were pure entertainment as seen in Anna Pavlova's Solo Dances in 1924 (Delamater 13). However, as new technology allowed for sound to be included in the filmmaking process, dance became more and more in demand. The talkies soon replaced the silent film and many actors and actresses from silent film were

replaced, if they could not keep up with the new acting requirements. Jerome Delamater, in Dance in the Hollywood Musical, says that the musical became more spectacular with "chorus girls going through fundamental dance movements in elaborate arrangements using extraordinary technical stage facilities" (16). These dances can be viewed in many of Busby Berkley's films. At the same time, musical comedies also began to emerge and grow. Delamater notes that, "Musical comedies had developed to a sophisticated point where dance was being used as an integral part of the entire show" (16).

Dance began to grow as a form of communication shortly after the integration of sound in films. Irmgard Bartenieff and Forrestine Pauley, in Dance – An Art in Academe, advocated for the study of dance as a form of communication. They asserted in 1970 that media takes up too much of the public's time and there is a need to go back and look at the arts because it is that area which is crumbling. In their opinion, dancing changed since the "recent history of dance began with a revolt against formalism, against aestheticism, against the view of dance as entertainment and distraction" (23). They go on to say that revolutionaries changed dance into an expressionistic art that described reactions to conflicts and problems in today's world (23). Dance appears to be a process of sharing stories and feelings with audiences. It expresses concerns about society or it might express ridicule of society's downfalls.

In the case of musicals, audiences may see people in ridicule. Dance is sometimes used to further explicate the ridiculousness of a character or characters in the film. It may display their separation from those characters in the film by who can dance and who cannot. In some musicals, such as Singin' in the Rain, dance is used as a tool to show the absurd actions of Lina Lamont in addition to her speech. Peter N. Chumo observes:

> Conversely, we see entrapment in the one character who lacks any sort of musical talent, Lina Lamont. She cannot talk properly, let alone sing, and, more importantly, her movements, far from those of a dancer, are static poses. While the other characters communicate with their bodies, that is, find an ideal discourse through dance, all Lina can do is rely on her studio contract and publicity stories she has planted in the newspapers to try to stop Kathy's career and guarantee that Kathy will continue dubbing Lina's voice . . . so Lina, another silent-screen star whom time is passing by, tries to create her own reality but relies on legal jargon and publicity columns, "genres" whose veracity we question, especially in a musical that celebrates physical movement as the highest form of communication. (52)

In essence, dance could be used as a metaphor for a much larger idea or it could be used to describe the characters involved in the musical.

Numerous musicals use dance to speak for the characters. Such examples include Oklahoma! (1955), On the Town (1949), West Side Story (1961), Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954), and White Christmas (1954). Although he has been described as too structured, Fred Astaire, a great dancer and performer, paved the way for Gene Kelly to experiment with dance in the musical. Kelly revolutionized the musical business. He did not separate the actor from the dancer. Instead, he made it seem that the actor would naturally dance to express what he or she might be feeling. Therefore, Singin' in the Rain stands out as an example of all that is incorporated into the dances: the ridicule, the metaphor, and the emotions.

Rationale

The six dance sequences from Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly's, Singin' in the Rain, compose a unique mosaic of visual and kinetic rhetoric, worthy of critical examination. This thesis examines the six selections in Singin' in the Rain for criticism, making particular reference to three points, which are the criteria for my research. This work is significant in terms of: historical context and affects, its purpose and results, and rhetorical implications.

First, the dance sequences are significant in terms of their historical context. Throughout history, dance has played a significant part in most cultures. When cultural dances are performed, the performers are communicating their emotions through a war dance or a celebratory dance after a victory. Dancing has passed through generations and different dance forms have developed: ballet, tap, modern, etc. Peter Wollen remarks on the dance forms in his book Singin' in the Rain: as the Broadway musicals grew in popularity, the style of dance changed becoming an American style all its own (Wollen 13). As time has passed, the film musicals have declined in popularity, but recently there has been a resurgence of the genre. For example: Chicago (2002), Moulin Rouge! (2001), Newsies (1992), Rent (2005), and Phantom of the Opera (2004) are all recently released successful film musicals. Singin' in the Rain has made its permanent mark on film musical history: it has been used in a recent car commercial to make an impact on the viewing audience (youtube.com).[1] Another commercial from General Electric about better use of electricity uses the same song while an elephant performs some of the same dance moves.

[1] See the commercial at: http://www.youtube.com/watch.php?v=JNvZwPpTPew.

Gene Kelly managed to obtain complete control over the filming. He was therefore granted creative freedom in directing. It was Singin' in the Rain that allowed Kelly to successfully experiment with the camera; specifically, he made ten shots[2] with a dissolve in less than five minutes for the dance scene of the same title as the film. Throughout the whole sequence, the camera adjusts to Kelly's performance (Wollen 18). This particular scene according to Wollen is "an outstanding example of the use of transitions for the dramatic integration of song and dance numbers into the narrative of the film" (28). This easily allowed the dances to come across as natural as simply speaking and without making significant shifts in the film. This type of filming is historically significant because it was a devised style that matched the "kinetic energy of the camera with that of his body" (25).

Second, the dance sequences are significant in terms of their purpose and results. There are several ways in which the film is significant on this point: it has seen more than one re-release, been spoofed and referenced in numerous other works, has received attention from critical contemporaries, and evoked extensive commentary by viewers.

The film was re-released on its fortieth anniversary and again on its fiftieth anniversary. Max Scheinin[3] comments that once the movie is over, you should leave it on to watch the interviews that were included in this 50th anniversary edition. Besides the re-releases, the film has been referred to and spoofed in a number of movies such as

[2] Each shot begins with either a particular line in the song or a break in the singing. Wollen goes into detail on how each shot is distinctively unique from the other ones (Wollen, Peter, Singin' in the Rain. London: BFI Publishing, 1992, 14 & 18).

[3] Max Scheinin's critique can be found along with seven others on http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045152/newsgroupreviews.

Clockwork Orange (1971), The Producers (2005), and the yet to be released FoodFight! (2007). [4]

A brief perusal of the Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB.com) reveals that Singin' in the Rain has been recognized for its greatness. IMDB, which lists awards and nominations various films have received, notes that it has received nominations for best supporting actress, best directorial achievement, and won best motion picture and best actor in a comedy in addition to other awards. Eight critics on this Web site have given it excellent reviews as the greatest film of all time (Frank Maloney, Max Scheinin, Brian Koller, Dragan Antulov, Lars Lindahl, Rose 'Bams' Cooper, Steve Rhodes, John Ulmer). [5] Lindhal, for example, observes:

> Very rarely does a movie have it all. It's almost impossible to find a film (or anything for that matter) that contains a perfect mixture of whatever elements it attempts to combine. Whenever one of these gems is released, word of mouth travels quickly and you've got yourself a classic. The perfect film must attract all types seeking all styles of film genre; Singin' in the Rain is the perfect film. With the best choreography I have ever seen, the most pleasant songs I've ever heard in a movie, a sweet romance that is simple and believable, a pair of laugh-'til-you-can't-see-straight performers, a flawless plot structure, an amazingly creative set design, bright colorful photography, the unmatchable wit and charm of a consummate Hollywood hero, and a bearably brief (but not too brief) running time, Singin' in the Rain is the ideal model for a complete picture.

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[4] A full list of films that reference or spoof Singin' in the Rain can be found at http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045152/movieconnections.

[5] All of these critiques can be found at http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045152/newsgroupreviews.

It's not missing anything, because it has everything. (Lindahl IMDB)

This is the shared sentiment among the other critics on this site. They all hold that this film has much to offer and furthermore believe that the dancing is integral to the film. The viewer commentary is just as intriguing. On IMDB, there are nine pages offering many postings and responses related to the movie. A few specifically address the dancing in Singin' in the Rain.

The final reason for studying this particular film rests on the idea that it has rhetorical significance. I believe that this particular film can be analyzed by using a variety of approaches including narrative criticism and metaphorical criticism. The film musical is one of the most entertaining genres in film. The songs and dances make them memorable; most people can identify a song from a particular musical. The dances in musicals are sometimes used as a medium to communicate. Obviously, the directors and writers of Singin' in the Rain realized that idea and chose to include other dance numbers throughout the film and not just for the musical within the musical. The dancing in this film and in others is a form of nonverbal communication. The film is a classic and is therefore a powerful example of how dance is used rhetorically to express human emotions and feelings.

Through narrative analysis, examination of this work can add to rhetorical theory. Walter Fisher wrote in "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument," "reasoning does not need to be bound to argumentative prose or be expressed in clear-cut inferential or implicative structures: Reasoning may be discovered in all sorts of symbolic action – nondiscursive as well as discursive" (5). The six song and dance scenes from SITR are examples of this nondiscursive communication.

In addition, the dance numbers are what Seymour Chatman in his book Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film terms "kernels" and not "satellites." In other words, the dances are complete and necessary pieces to the film and not additional segments. The dances stand in place of verbal dialogue. I propose that the dance sequences in Singin' in the Rain are kernels and are therefore essential to the story, unlike Steven Cohan, Reinventing Film Studies, who claims that the dances are supplemental and do not advance the plot very much (56). Chatman, on the other hand says, "the distinction between the major hinge events and the minor supplementary ones in a narrative is a psychological reality that anyone can prove to himself. He can see how easily consensus is reached about which are the kernels and which the satellites of a given story" (55-56). The dance sequences in this thesis are examined for their "logic of hierarchy" between kernels and satellites.

My analysis argues that the dancing sequences are critical to the story. Without them there would be confusion about how the characters react and behave toward the events happening in their lives. They sing what they want to say, but they dance how they feel. How else does the audience know Don Lockwood is happy and in love without watching "Singin' in the Rain?" Or how will the audience understand what the Dancing Cavalier will be about if not literally shown? Cosmo's dance, for example, represents cheering up a friend. Peter N. Chumo states in "Dance, Flexibility, and the Renewal of Genre in 'Singin' in the Rain'" that the dance sequences are "breaking out of the normal social conventions through song and dance" (49). Rose "Bams" Cooper remarks that the characters experience change as anyone in reality would. "Beneath the fluffy love story and the Any Excuse To Sing And Dance of your standard movie musical, lies lessons on

(mis)perceptions and adaptability to change" (IMDB). These characters are "narrative beings"[6] clearly exemplifying Walter Fisher's concept of the *homo narran* and through their dancing the audience can interpret the stories the dancers tell (6). The dance sequences should be treated as major events in the film. The audience, according to Fisher, has the capability to decide what makes sense and fortunately, Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen choreographed Singin' in the Rain in such a way that the untrained audience can understand its meanings. "If silent film is a first language of the movies and sound a second, then dance can be seen as a third as it combines movement with music, and, in its most dramatic moments, does not rely on words" (Chumo 42-43).

Emotions are a part of the narrative coherence and fidelity. Emotions are needed to make the story fluid, believable and necessary to be a great story. Keith Oatley in his article "Emotions and the Story Worlds of Fiction," wrote: "emotions are to fiction as truth is to science" (39). Fiction makes a connection with its audience the way that nonfiction cannot. Fiction touches people in a specific and special way. "The principle difference between nonfiction and fiction is that in nonfiction the emphasis will be on empirical truth. Fiction, although it is not necessarily empirically untrue, places the emphasis on two other kinds of truth: coherence truths or interactions among the many elements of a story, and personal truths that relate to concerns of specific readers, and that may also be universal" (Oatley 40). This suggests that film fiction and specifically dance in film has an effect on the emotions of its audience. Also, since Singin' in the Rain is on video and DVD, audiences can watch it again and again to experience the emotions that the film gives. "This effect [emotions], therefore, gives fiction the

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[6] This term is used in Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm. Fisher, Walter, Narration as a Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987.

possibility of allowing us to relive, or in other ways, to experience, emotions while at the same time reflecting on it" (Oatley 64).

According to several writers who have analyzed Singin' in the Rain, this film carries many metaphors and multiple meanings in its dances, which indicates that metaphorical criticism might also be helpful in analyzing the work. Some of these metaphors include paralleling the fictional Dancing Cavalier with the actual events taking place or the change of careers the silent film stars, specifically Don Lockwood, were having to make. Such ideas should be studied further.

Of course, there are other criteria for selection that may apply to the film in question; however, the three that I have presented here argue strongly that the dance sequences from Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly's Singin' in the Rain compose a work worthy of attention by the rhetorical critic. Next, it is critical to dive into the literature building up to and surrounding the film.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Dance as Communication

Dance has developed over many years as a means to communicate. Obviously, it is not verbal. Dance utilizes mime to "speak" the "words." In The Language of Dance, Mary Wigman refers to dance as a living language. Dance speaks in "images and allegories of man's innermost emotions and need for communication . . . dance asks for direct communication without any detours" (10). She says body movement does not make the dance, but is the emotion that completes it. Wigman also refers to "gesture language," writing that movement gives meaning and significance. She goes on to say that dance can only be understood when it respects and keeps meaning to the "natural movement-language of man" (10). Though people can make personal interpretations about the gestures, dancers also have the obligation to attempt to make universal meaning out of their movements (10).

Although scholarly work is building in the area of dance and communication, many authors argue for the need of continued study. For example, Judith Lynne Hanna, in her book To Dance is Human A Theory of Nonverbal Communication, argues that dance takes on symbols to communicate. She says this capacity is a part of the human ability to code and decode symbols in order to communicate.

> A symbol may have a patent meaning, while its latent meaning may be contained in a constellation of symbols. One symbol may have different or condensed meanings; it may be continuously reinterpreted or it may have different meanings at different phases in performance, while metaphoric equations can operate in two directions at once. Humans also can combine

> media in the dance. They often interweave music, song, and movement, extend or otherwise sculpt the body through costuming and accoutrements. (61)

She also says that body language is a basic culturally-based means of expression. Insightfully, she writes that dance can relay information to the dancer and to the viewer.

> Dance may support or refute linguistic, paralinguistic, and other forms of communication. Its presentation may be through an interpersonal dialogue or a monologue in the presence of others. The power of dance lies in its cognitive-sensori-motor and aesthetic capability to create moods and a sense of situation for performer and spectator alike. (65)

John Blacking in "Movement and Meaning: Dance in Social Anthropological Perspective" writes that "we should recognise that there are coherent, structured languages of dance" (93). He argues that dance is another means of expression or communication. Blacking says, "When people talk about 'being danced' or claim that their movements are directed by internal or external 'forces,' they are obviously not describing unconscious states; nor are they necessarily reporting altered states of consciousness. They are trying to describe a non-verbal mode of discourse, whose logic and forms can be precisely expressed and understood, but not always clearly articulated in words" (93).

According to Larry Lavender in his book Dancers Talking Dance: Critical Evaluation in the Choreography Class, dance should be viewed as communication (42). Lavender discusses David Best's concept of communication. Best says that there are two types of communication: linguistic and perceptual. Linguistic communication or "lingcom" is common for dance in the nonverbal sense. "Some movements do

communicate in the lingcom sense – that is, a person can understand exactly what another intends to communicate through movements" (43). However, with perceptual communication or "percom," it is quite possible to decode a different message than was intended by the receiver. So, lingcom is one way that dances can communicate. Lavender says that it is a mistake to say that all movement communicates. To communicate requires two things: the dancer intends to perform certain movements and not improvisation and the choreographer intends to communicate something to the audience (43).

Lavender also comments on the ambiguity of the choreographers' intention. He says it might refer to the artist's interpretation of his or her work or to the "plan an artist has in mind while composing a work" (40). Also, there is a difference between the goal and the reason why the artist is doing a particular work. Apparently, audiences make the assumption that dancers have a particular purpose when they are performing. This could be arousing emotions or sharing a meaning. Furthermore, he explains that students should not be encouraged to be concerned all the time about the choreographer's intentions. The piece will change as it is being developed and will not have the same intention as it did at the beginning. Being concerned with the artist's intentions trickles down to the audience. It "causes the viewers to try to detect the artist's ideas even while they are watching the work. As a result, the viewers' own immediate experience of the work's visible features and qualities may be sacrificed to the presumed past intentions of the artist" (41). This poses a great concern for the piece. The viewer might miss the whole point of the real intention behind the work. All pieces take on more than one meaning and therefore an

audience might miss out on those other meanings. If there is a misunderstanding of intentions, poor communication will occur (42).

Audiences can decide if they are being communicated to by the dance and the dancers. This is made clear through Fishers' concepts of coherence and fidelity. Viewers judge whether or not they believe in the narrative being told to them. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the dancer to "be" the character he or she is portraying. Dancers have to be that "author" Fisher refers to in order to make a message. In Languages and Non-Languages of Dance Albert A. Johnstone comments that "The dancer must be identical with the character in the dance narrative, since the one individual on the stage during the dance is both the dancer and the character (171). Moving from the dancer being the character, Johnstone also talks about narrative-to-world symbolism and movement-to-narrative symbolism. Narrative-to-world means the dancer's character is an actual historical figure. He says that only a small number of dances can reenact a historical event. Rather, a dance will probably fall into the category of a sociohistorical narrative. This is where the dancer plays a character from a particular historical time period, social class, or situation (174). Johnstone goes on to discuss movement-to-narrative symbolism. He says that movement is highly informative: "It may reveal the mover's feelings and intentions and, indeed, his or her beliefs, character, and personality" (175). Although Johnstone says that dance is not a language, he does make a telling point. A "soaring leap is not indicative of a soaring leap – it is a soaring leap. If narrative dance contained a comprehensive indicative language with movements playing a role analogous to that of words, then it would require a vastly expanded system of indicators to symbolize each of the various narrative events: the leaps, huddlings, and so on" (175-176).

Each step cannot be taken literally. It is the meaning behind a collected grouping of steps or movement that makes the language. “Movement might be a language in which certain aspects of the tale are told, but it is not a language in which the whole tale is told” (175). Johnstone suggests gesture language instead:

> Consider, for instance, a mimed mopping of the brow, or a look of puzzlement thrown to a third party in the context of everyday life. In view of their conventional nature, both qualify as instances of gesture language, but they share a further interesting feature: they are strongly imitative of behavior appropriate to the actual situation. The person who pretends to mop his or her brow is feeling hot, and the person throwing a puzzled look is actually puzzled. Both are communicating actual feelings by imitating the relevant appropriate behavior. (176)

It is in the gestures and in the combined movement that a language emerges. Essentially, it is up to the viewers to make sense of the communication taking place before their eyes. Viewers must decode the symbols and the gestures to understand.

Dance communication is very culture-related. Judith Lynne Hanna, in her article “The Mentality and Matter of Dance,” defines culture as shared values, beliefs, and norms that are learned through communication. Members use their perceptions to make judgments about how to act and think and interpret what they see. Culture in turn affects dance as it determines what is acceptable in that particular culture: “culture shapes the contextual pattern of dance, that is, the cumulative set of rules or range of permissible gestures, locomotion, and posture with different body parts in time and space and with energy as well as the associated meaning” (43). Nonverbal communication is culture

specific, and therefore dance is also culture specific. For example, she adds that totalitarian governments have a strong say in the arts because dance can express flaws, illegal behavior, and mishandling of affairs in government and society. Because of their shared cultural meanings, dancers and audience members have the ability to make connections and understand dance better: "Effective communication, it should be noted, depends upon the shared knowledge of dancer and audience and the interplay between skillful dance expression and sensitive perception" (43). Hanna goes on to say that dance is like poetry. It has multiple layers of meaning which relate back to Larry Lavender's interpretation of intentions, which will be discussed later. There may be more than one interpretation and perhaps a whole different interpretation from what the choreographer had in mind. So, the layers of meaning are culturally-based, but some are even universally-based. In the next section, I discuss the culturally-based phenomenon known as the musical.

History of the Musical

William D. Romanowski, in Pop Culture Wars: Religion and the Role of Entertainment in American Life, discusses the movement of dance throughout history particularly in American culture. The burlesque shows combined song, dance, and comedy. However, these were thought to be immoral and so a movement to "clean up" the shows began. From the late 1880s to the 1920s, Vaudeville became the "cleaned up" version and was appropriate for women and children to attend:

> Vaudeville attracted larger audiences than all the other forms of entertainment at the time combined, including the legitimate theater . . . Vaudeville entrepreneurs Tony Pastor and Benjamin Franklin Keith and partner Edward F.

> Albee recognized the profitability of providing theatrical entertainment that would appeal to people of all classes, and especially the respectable middle class who were led into theaters by the morality plays. These businessmen tailored the variety show to the tastes and practices of the urban and suburban family audience. (108)

Future movie and Broadway stars often listed their vaudeville experiences on their resumes. Performers sang and acted and did variety acts but most importantly vaudeville became the training ground for many dancers.

When dance made it to the musical, the filmmakers were in a frenzy to include dance and make musicals. According to Ethan Mordden in his book The Hollywood Musical, "Dance was sudden, strange, and necessary in 1929. In the scramble to shoot and release musicals, Broadway choreographers were brought in for the kicklines and hoofing that added nothing to character or action. Dance was extra" (Mordden 109). This was evident in the films starring Eleanor Powell. Her dancing simply entertained and did not contribute anything in particular to the story. Mordden goes on to say that "Powell, too, sang, joked, and plotted, but by focusing on her dances as the special things in her films, she eliminated the need for dance as expression of person or story" (110).

Fred Astaire, on the other hand, "created the dance musical, collaborating with first-rate directors, scenarists, composers, and lyricists – and Ginger Rogers – at RKO throughout the 1930s" (Mordden 111). John Mueller wrote in his article, "Fred Astaire and the Integrated Musical," that Fred Astaire made the first attempts to make his dances in the musicals integral to the plot. Mueller offers two specific musicals, The Gay Divorcee (1934) and The Band Wagon (1953), in which he says Astaire did use dance to

advance the plot and to show the interpersonal connections made by the dancers during the dances (Mueller 31-36). In addition, Mueller offers two points of view from critics about Astaire's dance integration. One view is that his dances were adornments and were not integrated. The other view is, although he strived to integrate in the 1930s, the "'fully integrated musical' – 'a unity of expression' where 'a story is told through song and dance, not despite them' – had to wait until the 1940s and early 1950s for the arrival of Gene Kelly and the emergence of the big MGM musical" (31).

As the film musical moved into the 1940s and 1950s, dance became more complex in films. Musicals were highly successful and motivated the studios to produce more films. The dances required better performers and better directors. Delamater writes,

> The dance directors of the thirties were often untrained dancers and just idea men; they also staged all musical numbers and not just the dance routines, frequently contributing more to the efficiency of a production than to the use of dance: with a separate dance director the various parts of a film could be prepared simultaneously, thus freeing the assigned director for the narrative elements or even for other projects. (94)

The dance style also shifted. Because of Fred Astaire's mixture of dance and narrative, other dance interests developed. Dance styles were combined blurring distinctions between the various types of dance. "In addition to the introduction of ballet, there was a new emphasis on the breaking down of dance barriers: distinctions among ballet, modern, tap, ethnic, and gymnastic varieties were disappearing" (Delamater 95). Dancers received a well-rounded education in dance. They had the ability to mix and match their styles to the choreography. "New figures arriving in Hollywood in the early forties would accept

certain elements of earlier musicals, reject others, and, most importantly, contribute their own material to films which would become a wholly new tradition – the dance musical" (95).

Jane Feuer describes the changes of dance in musicals in her book The Hollywood Musical. She writes that in the 1930s musicals, tap dancing, and ballroom dancing "reflected sub-cultures or European dance forms rather than the folk roots of the dominant American culture" (Feuer 7). Fred Astaire did folk-type dancing, but he and his famous partner, Ginger Rogers, were still too "European." However, when Eugene Loring, Agnes de Mille, and Jerome Robbins came onto the scene, they "frequently dispensed with the unnatural classical line of ballet to introduce a more natural and spontaneous dance style based on American folk stance and gesture" (8). What came out of this shift in dance was a style of dance that became close to acting and natural body rhythms (Feuer 8).

So, dance and the art of acting merged and were starting to overlap. Therefore, stories were less likely to be interrupted by song and dance insertions. Dances could stand for something like symbols and could be used to communicate important ideas. Narrative analysis can be used to explain how this happens.

The Narrative

Alasdair MacIntyre and Kenneth Burke are among the scholars who initiated the theory of narrative analysis. These two theorists have laid down the groundwork for Fisher's work on narrative criticism. In MacIntyre's book, After Virtue, he says

> Man is a story-telling animal and the narratives which we live out have both an unpredictable and a partially teleological character. If the narrative of our

> individual and social lives is to continue intelligibly – and either type of narrative may lapse into unintelligibility – it is always both the case that there are constraints on how the story can continue and that within those constraints there are indefinitely many ways that it can continue. (216)

Burke supports this view in his book, Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method:

> Man is viewed as the kind of animal that is distinguished by his prowess in symbolic action. The poetic motive is viewed as symbolic action undertaken in and for itself. Just as, in being an animal that lives by locomotion, man moves not merely for purposes of acquisition or avoidance but also through the sheer delight in being free to move, so in being the typically symbol-using animal he takes a natural delight in the exercising of his powers with symbols. (295)

Narrative analysis has concentrated on advertising, politics, various speeches, reality television series, and transmitted messages but ignored practically all forms of art, specifically dance. A sampling of titles from scholarly essays illustrates this generalization: "The Narrative Paradigm as a Perspective for Improving Ethical Evaluations of Advertisements," "The Use of Narrative Paradigm Theory in Assessing Audience Value Conflict in Image Advertising," "Chiara Lubrich's 1977 Templeton Prize Acceptance Speech: Case Study in the Mystical Narrative," "Narrative as the Philosopher's Stone: How Russell H. Conwell Changed Lead into Diamonds," "Narrative Rationality and 'First Stories': Pedagogical Implications for Children's Televisions" "Testing the Persuasiveness of Evidence: Combining Narrative and Statistical Forms," and "Big Brother: Merging Reality and Fiction: An Application of the Narrative

Paradigm." However, as mentioned earlier, I suggest using narrative analysis to interpret performing art. A film like Singin' in the Rain provides an excellent sample to study.

Narrative in Singin' in the Rain

In order to understand the musical Singin' in the Rain, one must look at the main character or main dancer in the film, Gene Kelly. Jerome Delamater wrote,

> The Kelly characterizations are, most significantly, all of a piece within the individual films. Certainly part of the process of integration as Kelly viewed it was to move easily and naturally from the regular narrative portions of the films into the numbers and back again; that required a dancing persona, though not necessarily a character within the diegesis who is explained to be a dancer. (150)

His characters do not dance for the audience's entertainment; the dances are for further explanation of his characters. "Instead, the impression is given that this person dances naturally, and, as a result, the character in the numbers is the same character as in the rest of the film" (150). Delamater also says that Kelly's character sings and dances to reflect his particular character's emotions (150). In addition, Kelly created meaning "not just through the 'stories' of the numbers but through the very dance steps" (157). Delamater writes, "The song and dance man became integrated into other popular culture figures, giving the impression that everyone is a song and dance person to a degree: sailors and soldiers and baseball players are also capable of singing and dancing" (150).

Now that Gene Kelly's formula for a dancing character has been examined, the musical Singin' in the Rain can be studied. Dance is used on many levels. It shows the contrast of silent film to the "talkie" and the change in Gene Kelly's character. Peter N.

Chumo II, in "Dance, Flexibility, and the Renewal of Genre in 'Singin' in the Rain,'" comments that the innovation in the narrative is the beginning of the musical and the innovation of the film is dance numbers that defy the usual boundaries set for numbers (Chumo 40). Chumo goes on to explain another theme in the musical:

> Thus, the overarching issue of musical ability, especially dance, stands as a metaphor for the larger issue of generic flexibility. Just as dance requires physical flexibility in body movement and spontaneity, so does vital filmmaking require generic flexibility, the ability to move easily among different genres and forms of entertainment. This versatility is linked to the talent to perform very physical dance numbers, notably "Make 'Em Laugh" and "Singin' in the Rain," in which Cosmo and Don, respectively, take on their whole environment and defy all boundaries, whether they be the walls that Cosmo dances up and breaks through or the rain that Don splashes in. (40)

The dance sequences and the actual speaking sections flow together. The audience does not separate the two; at least that was the goal of the filmmaker and the dancers.

The changes and events in Kelly's character, Don Lockwood, became the next dimension in the use of dance. Because of the needed change in the movie the characters are making, Don Lockwood could also become the person he wanted to be:

> Don and we are seeing (at the end of "Broadway Melody") an earlier version of himself, and so we can see how far he has come from vaudeville to Broadway. His transformation is complete in "Broadway Melody," just as Don is changed in Singin' in the Rain into the dance man he is meant to be. Don's film, then, tells the same story we are seeing in the larger film. However, it is

> an idealized version of himself, just as the lies Don told to the gossip columnist at the film's beginning were meant to create an ideal self. Whereas that ideal self, however, was rooted in phony pretensions to high art (Shaw, Moliere, training at a conservatory), this idealized self is rooted in the "truth" of dance. It proves Don's talent, the necessity of his impulse to dance, to become the "dancing" cavalier and shows us the "real" Don Lockwood of the film's beginning. (Chumo 47)

Not only does the viewer see the enormous change in Don Lockwood's career through the use of dance, in the actual number, "Singin' in the Rain," Don Lockwood dances out his emotion of being in love with Kathy. Kelly makes the dance seem just as natural for Don to perform as any person might act if they were feeling the same way. "Don in this dance is celebrating his initiation into musical filmmaking and the solidification of his relationship with Kathy. To sing and dance in the rain means that one can celebrate even in dreary weather" (Chumo, 49). As a result, Don is a symbol maker and he makes use of his ability to tell us these things.

In addition, the dream element shows up in Singin' in the Rain. The dream sequence is also a type of narrative. A few other musicals such as Oklahoma! use the dream sequence as narrative: "For in the musical, the show is the dream and the dream is the show. The Hollywood musical offers itself as the spectator's dream, the spectator's show. Any initial opposition between show and narrative, primary and secondary, dream and reality, is collapsed by the musical's own narrative logic" (Feuer, 71). The audience sees Don Lockwood dreaming through the "Broadway Melody." He remembers himself as a vaudeville actor and dancer and "relives" those moments. Through Cosmos'

explanation, the audience sees what the “Dancing Cavalier” could be (Chumo, 44). Dreams can reiterate the central story and can also expose fantasy-like ideas that the characters wish to communicate to the audience. In the next section, I discuss my method to study the narratives in the dances in this film.

Chapter III: Methodology

In order to study dance as interpersonal communication, I will be implementing a heteromethodology. Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm will be one of the theories used in this thesis, but his paradigm is a loosely framed theory and does not have a checklist or an exact way to determine if a text is narrative. Fisher's method is more of a philosophical approach to looking at texts. Technically, it is inadequate to use when giving a full interpretation of a text, because it does not provide a hands-on means to organize and interpret research. However, I use Fisher's concepts of coherence and fidelity to discover if the dances fit those two aspects. I supplement Fisher's theory with Seymour Chatman's concept of kernels and satellites to fill in the gaps and assist the narrative analysis. See Figure 1 for a brief outlook to my approach.

The Foundation	**Tools to Apply**
Fisher Narrative Paradigm – philosophical approach; two concepts of fidelity and coherence Coherence : Does it make sense to the audience? Fidelity : Can the audience relate the stories? Do they "ring true" with the stories of their lives?	Chatman Kernels – crucial "nodes or hinges" to the story, advance the plot, cannot be left out Satellites – elaborate the kernel, not critical to the narrative, can be left out
Burke Guide for interpreting texts within his theory of dramatism which views language as symbolic action	Pentad Act: action Agent: person performing the act Scene: location Purpose: the reason for the action Agency: the method or way used
Nonverbal Communication Nonverbal communication includes: haptics, kinesics, chronemics, artifacts, paralanguage, space, oculesics, physical appearance. Cognitive Valence Theory (CVT) People will positively or negatively accept nonverbal violations based on their cognitive schemata.	CVT Cognitive Schemata Culture – the type of cultural background one has and what they see as appropriate Personality – the level of attraction one has for another Interpersonal Valence - predisposition Situation – the outside factors affecting the communication State – the particular mood is in Relationship – expectancies about the relationship

Figure 1

Walter Fisher, in Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action, argues that narratives are an effective means of communication:

> In the beginning was the word or, more accurately, the logos. And in beginning, "logos" meant story, reason, rationale, conception, discourse, thought. Thus all forms of human expression and communication – from epic to architecture, from biblical narrative to statuary – came within its purview. At least this was the case until the time of the pre-Socratic philosophers and Plato and Aristotle. As a result of their thinking, logos and mythos, which had been conjoined, were dissociated; logos was transformed from a generic term into a specific one, applying only to philosophical (later technical) discourse. (Fisher 5)

Digging into history, Fisher found that word involved many means of communication. It was not until renowned philosophers decided to separate logos that, according to Fisher, accepting the narrative paradigm will change the way discourse is examined:

> Historically, the most pertinent struggle is the one among proponents of the major forms of discourse over who "owns" logos. I offer the narrative paradigm as a move beyond that struggle. Acceptance of the narrative paradigm shifts the controversy from a focus on who "owns" logos to a focus on what specific instances of discourse, regardless of form, provide the most trustworthy, reliable, and desirable guides to belief and to behavior, and under what conditions. (6)

Philosophers made discourse a mathematical formula. They did not take into account the human being. Fisher quotes Friedrich von Schiller who said in Plastic Art, "Man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays. Aesthetic expression, he maintained, is "the most fruitful of all in respect of knowledge and morality" (Von Schiller in Fisher 12).

Fisher then invokes the insights of Kenneth Burke and what he defines as discourse. Fisher says that Burke "recaptures and reinforms the original sense of logos" because he recognizes the aesthetic characteristics in all human communication" (18). Fisher states that Burke "view[s] rhetoric as the symbolic function of inducement, rather than as a form of discourse" and he "sees rhetoric as an attribute of all symbolic expression and action" (18). However, Fisher does make two distinctions between his theory and Burke's dramatism (see Figure 1). He says that Burke implies that people follow prearranged roles. People are "actors performing roles constrained or determined by scripts provided by existing institutions" (18), whereas, the narrative paradigm says people are storytellers who "read and evaluate the texts of life and literature" and who are "full participants in the making of messages, whether they are agents (authors) or audience members (co-authors)" (18). The second difference is based on the first difference. Burke states that good communication produces "humane, reasonable action." Fisher argues that not all communication is humane and reasonable. Instead, "the narrative paradigm is designed to further it by incorporating the concept of identification to account for how people come to adopt stories and, by adding the concept of narrative rationality, 'logic' intrinsic to the very idea of narrativity" (19). Furthermore, people's

symbolic actions form stories that people judge by the standards of fidelity and coherence (19).

In 1984, Fisher wrote an article in Communication Monographs titled "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument." In this article he describes the "rational world paradigm" and then proposes his narrative paradigm. Both of these views are later discussed in his book which was published in 1987. He posits his paradigm is opposite to the rational world view which includes the belief that:

> (1) humans are rational beings; (2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is argument – clear-cut inferential (implicative) structures; (3) the conduct of argument is ruled by the dictates of situations – legal, scientific, legislative, public, and so on; (4) rationality is determined by subject matter knowledge, argumentative ability, and skill in employing the rules of advocacy in given fields; and (5) the world is a set of logical puzzles which can be resolved through appropriate analysis and application of reason conceived as an argumentative construct. (4)

He proposes the *homo narrans* metaphor to be added to others such as *homo faber*, and *homo sociologicus* to explain his paradigm. As he explains, "each of the root metaphors may be held to be the master metaphor, thereby standing as the ground, while the others are manifest as figures" (Fisher 6). From there the master metaphor is the plot and the others become the subplots: "When any of the other metaphors are asserted in the master metaphor, narration is as it is considered now: a type of human interaction – an activity, an art, a genre, or mode of expression" (6). Fisher says that "reasoning does not need to

be bound to argumentative prose or be expressed in clear-cut inferential or implicative structures: Reasoning may be discovered in all sorts of symbolic action – nondiscursive as well as discursive" (1). Again, symbols are used to describe communication. His paradigm therefore rests on these five presuppositions:

> (1) humans are essentially storytellers; (2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is "good reasons" which vary in form among communication situations, genres, and media; (3) the production and practice of good reasons is ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character along with the kinds of forces identified in the Frentz and Farrell language action paradigm;[7] (4) rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings – their inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives . . ., and (5) the world is a set of stories which must be chosen among to live the good life in a process of continual recreation. (7-8)

He goes on to say that narratives are meaningful to people across communities, cultures, time, and place. They aid people in understanding the actions of others (8). Furthermore, the narrative paradigm suggests that people make rational judgments about the stories that are told to them. In Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action, Fisher says that the rational world view does not allow

[7] Frentz and Farrell's Language Action Paradigm is based on concepts, episodes, and symbolic acts that help to interpret the surface and underlying meanings in communication. The paradigm is discussed in detail in "Language Action Paradigm: A Paradigm for Communication," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62.4 (1976): 333-349.

people to be rational in their judgments. In other words, those who hold to the rational world view see rationality as "learned" and "not innate." Furthermore, the rational world view says that "rationality is the exclusive possession of those who (1) know most about the issue, (2) are cognizant of argumentative procedures and forms and functions, and (3) weigh in systematic and deliberative fashion all arguments heard or seen" (67). However, under Fisher's paradigm "all are seen as possessing equally the logic of narration – a sense of coherence and fidelity" and "all persons are seen as having the capacity to be rational under the narrative paradigm" (68). He also notes in this book that the "paradigm is a ground for resolving the dualisms of modernism: fact-value, intellect-imagination, reason-emotion, and so on." Under the paradigm, people do have the capacity to establish differences and make decisions. "Narratives are moral constructs," they are in accordance with reason; and the "paradigm offers ways of resolving problems of public moral arguments" (68-69). Although implementing coherence and fidelity helps to explicate the communication in the dances, another device is used to fully explain the significance and impact of the dances. This is where Seymour Chatman's kernels and satellites enter.

Seymour Chatman introduced the concept of "kernels and satellites" in his book Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film. First, he suggests that narrative events not only have a logical connection but also have a logic of hierarchy (Chatman 53). This means that some events in a narrative have more importance than others. Major events are kernels and they "advance the plot by raising and satisfying questions" (53). Furthermore, kernels are "nodes or hinges in the structure, branching points which force a movement into one of two (or more) possible paths" (53). Kernels are crucial to a story and cannot be left out or else the story would lose meaning or rather

logic. Satellites, on the other hand, are not critical to the narrative. They can be removed from the story without disrupting the plot. However, kernels call them into existence. "Their function is that of filling in, elaborating, completing the kernel, again because discourse is not equivalent to story. They may precede or follow the kernels, even at a distance" (54). Using this idea, I argue that the dances are kernels. They are necessary and significant to the story and are more than frivolous accessories or satellites.

Fisher's paradigm opens up many new texts for study. Narrative analysis allows for more interpretative approaches and allows anyone to decipher, examine, and judge a text. I argue that the dances are texts open for interpretation and, as I point out, the distinction between a kernel and a satellite is clearly seen when I discuss coherence and fidelity. Therefore, narrative analysis in combination with Chatman's kernels and satellites prove to be quite helpful in studying the dances in Singin' in the Rain.

I also make use of one important theory of nonverbal communication: Cognitive Valence Theory. This theory states that when a nonverbal violation occurs, communicators will either accept the violation positively or respond negatively. If the violation occurs under positive conditions, then the recipient will return the same behavior. One of the dances, "You Were Meant for Me," is an example of how this theory works as viewers watch Don violate Kathy's nonverbal expectations and witness her reaction to the violation.

The next few chapters analyze and discuss: "Make 'Em Laugh," "You Were Meant For Me," "Moses Supposes," "Good Morning," "Singin' in the Rain," and "Broadway Melody." The discussion uncovers each dance sequence's standing in the film whether it is a kernel or satellite. Also, the discussion examines how each dance

compares to the Narrative Paradigm and what interpersonal communication occurs. In addition to the Cognitive Valence concepts discussed above, interpersonal communication in the dances includes acts of persuasion, relationship development, relationship building, and communicating with the audience. The dances are discussed in the order of which they appear in the film.

Chapter IV: Analysis

Interpersonal Persuasion in "Make 'Em Laugh"

One of the most entertaining dances in Singin' in the Rain is the comedic dance performed by Donald O'Connor. O'Connor plays Cosmo Brown, the good friend to Gene Kelly's Don Lockwood character. This dance is a text in a context. The context is Don and Cosmo discussing Don's upcoming film The Dueling Cavalier. This new film is very similar to the films Don and Lina Lamont had previously made, and Cosmo jokingly remarks that the studio could re-release one of the previous films under a new title since they are all the same. Don is distraught. Not only does this comment affect him, but he has been told by Kathy Seldon, a young actress, just a few weeks earlier that he really does not act and that all his films are identical. Don doubts his ability as an actor and Cosmo wants to change Don's point of view. Therefore, Cosmo breaks into song and dance, which is a language that both he and Don understand better than anything else. As part of the context, Don and Cosmo have been two young performers trying to make their way into Hollywood. They were musicians and dancers before Don became a silent film star. Therefore, it is only natural for Cosmo to "speak" to Don in the language that they both understand and will affect Don the most.

According to Chumo, the routine "Make 'Em Laugh" is used to "cheer up" Don Lockwood and to show him the benefits of using comedy (48). Cosmo persuades Don to continue to work as an actor and not to take criticizing comments so seriously. This is seen in the dance as Cosmo lets loose and "goes crazy" in the studio: "The number is a confidence builder extolling the virtue of comic entertainment, and the dance itself is an often violent routine in which Cosmo crashes into a board workers are carrying, dances

into a brick wall, has a fight with a mannequin, runs up two walls, and finally breaks through a paper wall" (49). This text is an example of both an interpersonal interaction between friends and an act of persuasion.

If this sequence is viewed from Fisher's Narrative Paradigm, one can see the rationality in this interpersonal "conversation." As mentioned earlier, Fisher says that his paradigm focuses "on what specific instances or discourse, regardless of form, provide the most trustworthy, reliable, and desirable guides to belief and to behavior" (6). The dance provides a reliable and trustworthy guide to understanding Cosmo's meaning: do not give up, continue to act, entertain the public, and make them laugh. Furthermore, the general audience understands the meaning because "reasoning does not need to be bound to argumentative prose or be expressed in clear-cut inferential or implicative structures" (5). The audience can see the dance and understand its meaning because they, according to Fisher, "are seen as possessing equally the logic of narration – a sense of coherence and fidelity" (68). Cosmo is a song and dance man and an audience would expect him to dance in order to get his point across. He "speaks" coherence and fidelity in the sequence. He attempts to be persuasive as he moves around the studio's sets by performing familiar vaudeville moves. As Cosmo points out, there is more to Don himself than the simple roles he currently plays. He recognized Don's talent long before he was making movies and now he insists through the dance that Don should see his way through the new production and keep seeking new roles. Also, Cosmo says since Don has a vaudeville background, he has more to offer to the public and should be ready to plug in his old and well-polished routines for what may lie ahead. In addition, he almost seems to say that if he can get up from the floor and keep doing difficult moves, then Don can easily keep

acting. Even though this is a persuasive speech, Cosmo is speaking as a friend. He respects Don and wants him to be happy and satisfied with his career and life. This dance shows the deep care and friendship these two have. They listen to one another and support each other through good and bad times.

From Chatman's point of view, this particular dance is a kernel. Had this dance been left out, the audience would only see a sad-faced Don Lockwood who was not convinced by his friend's verbal encouragement. The verbal exchange that took place before the dancing is more of a satellite and is an offshoot of the dance in order to "elaborate and complete the kernel." In other words, the spoken words were priming the actual communication. As a kernel, the dance advances the plot by being the conversation and completing the piece of the plot. Cosmo has successfully persuaded Don to stick with his acting career. Don's uneasy feelings about show business are put to rest and he is now ready to begin filming his next project. The "Make 'Em Laugh" sequence is necessary to fully persuade Don, to advance the plot, and to satisfy the audience's need to see a nonverbal encouragement from Cosmo. Therefore, this sequence is a kernel to show Cosmo's true help.

The "Make 'Em Laugh" sequence is also an example of the natural progression from dialogue to dance. Although the general public cannot flip over or jump through walls, the public can observe the link Cosmo makes. The audience does not have to adjust into another mode to watch this particular sequence. Cosmo is a dancer and knowing this, the audience makes the connection that Cosmo would dance to communicate. Furthermore, his dance style would be humorous, entertaining, and silly

because of who his character is. Cosmo is a narrative being giving advice and hope for the future to Don. So, it should make sense to the audience.

"You Were Meant For Me": Relationship Development

The dance scene "You Were Meant For Me" is the elementary introduction to the rest of the dance sequences. Even though "Make 'Em Laugh" was the first sequence to present dance as a means to communicate, it is one of the more detailed dances in this film. "You Were Meant For Me" provides a more simplistic example. If the audience did not understand the first dance, this is their perfect opportunity to learn and grasp the idea of dance as communication before moving on to the other sequences. This particular sequence is easy to understand.

First of all, this piece set the bar on what qualifies for a kernel in this film. The satellite before the dance is a huge red flag noting that an important scene is about to happen. Don is captivated by Kathy. He tries to talk to her outside the studio, but he cannot think of the right words to say to her to express himself. He actually says he would have to have the "proper setting" in order to say what he wants to say. He takes her into an empty studio, turns on the lights, the fog, and the wind before he starts singing. Obviously, he needs to be in the studio and on a dance floor in order to express himself.

The dance begins slowly as the two of them begin to literally walk into the dance. Here, we come to understand that he has romantic feelings towards her. He looks like a schoolboy making his approach; a little unsure but willing to expose his feelings. She, on the other hand, dances shyly at first. Then, she begins to open up and appears to accept his advances as evidenced by her broadening, and more confident movements and

presence. When they begin to perform a little ballroom dancing, we can see that he is whisking her off her feet as he swiftly whisks her around the floor. By the end of the dance, the audience has come to understand that Don and Kathy feel the same about each other and understand one another because they danced. This is a kernel because now they have established a relationship and furthermore a partnership which is necessary to advance the plot of this film. I also argue that the last few lines of the song that Don starts singing to Kathy are a satellite. The scene could have ended with the dance. However, the end of the song further reinforces Don's romantic petition. In that case, the satellite neatly wraps up the kernel.

As mentioned earlier, this particular scene brings out into the open the budding relationship between Don and Kathy. This is a very simple example of an interpersonal communication interaction. He makes a plea for her affection by leading her onto the dance floor. She in turn appears to linger and think about the idea for a moment and then decides to dance into his heart. This may suggest that Peter Andersen's Cognitive Valence Theory is pertinent here. I implement this theory in conjunction with the narrative analysis and the concept of kernels and satellites to expand and highlight the interpersonal communication occurring in this scene. In his article, "Creating Close Relationships through Nonverbal Communication: A Cognitive Valence Approach," Peter Andersen describes his Cognitive Valence Theory[8] as "the only way that relationships grow closer is by two people communicating warmth and immediacy to one another" (454). People either accept a nonverbal violation positively or negatively.

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[8] More details on Cognitive Valence Theory can be found in Peter Andersen's article "Creating Close Relationships through Nonverbal Communication: A Cognitive Valence Approach," The Nonverbal Communication Reader: Classic and Contemporary Readings 2nd ed. Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc., 1999.

Andersen suggests that people will make their decision through cognitive schemata: culture, personality, interpersonal valence, situation, state, and the relationship. If the violation is positive under those circumstances, then the perceiver will reciprocate the behavior (457-460). Don violated Kathy's expectations by pulling her onto the dance floor and trying to dance with her in a couple style. At that moment, she was in a good mood, she was already fond of Don, the timing was right, and one assumes at this point that Kathy wants the relationship to go deeper. Under the positive circumstances (situation, state, interpersonal valence, and relationship), she positively reacted to his advances and reciprocated them.

In terms of the Narrative Paradigm, Kathy and Don dance out a conversation. As mentioned earlier, Kathy expresses reluctance but then seems to say that she will give a relationship with Don a try. The dance then represents them talking back and forth establishing a relationship. Kathy and Don have good reason to understand their dance communication. They both have dance and performance in their backgrounds. Therefore, they understand what each other means through the dance. The audience should also have the good judgment to make sense out of this sequence. In addition, they also know that Kathy and Don are performers and can express themselves in other ways than through words. So, what occurs between them makes sense. There is coherence and fidelity in this dance. The audience is rooting for these two people to become a couple. The audience expects this out of movies and it is delivered to them. They want to see the unknown, sweet actress with the famous, dashing actor. So, the sequence stays true to the characters and to the Hollywood formula of boy meets girl.

In addition, the plot is continued and not simply paused or thrown out of the picture. The relationship between them needed to be established. From here, the audience witnesses them grow closer and also watch them become business partners. After this point, these two will think of ways to fix Don's movie and to get Kathy noticed by movie producers. Without this scene, no relationship could have officially formed.

Expressing Opinions in "Moses Supposes"

This entertaining scene is similar to "Make 'Em Laugh" in that this one is also very physical and humorous. It is in this scene that the audience truly comes to understand the difference between Don and Cosmo's abilities as performers and Lina Lamont's poor excuse as an entertainer. Lina is Monumental Pictures' current leading lady. She is excellent as a silent film star, but as the talkies became the new Hollywood craze the audience witnesses the downfall of her career. She has no talent. She has a horrible speaking voice and cannot dance. These qualities are in direct opposition to Don Lockwood.

The audience learns this through "Moses Supposes." In an interview at the beginning of the film, we learn that Don was an amateur performer trying to make his big break into show business and not the disciplined actor he implies he is. He soon stumbled upon an acting job and his career as a silent film star took off. The audience sees the real Don Lockwood through this dance. The dance itself is technical, humorous, and even rebellious. Chumo analyzes this dance as a statement against authority:

> Don and Cosmo do great violence to the classroom in "Moses Supposes," destroying it as if they were naughty schoolboys. It is a revolution, an overturning of the teacher's authority that matches the spirit of the French

> Revolution, the subject of their eventual film. Revolt and violence, then, bring a kind of renewal as Don and Cosmo show off their abilities and overthrow the diction teacher's authority. The extremes to which Don and Cosmo go as they dance on top of the desk, pile props like a lampshade and a framed picture on the befuddled teacher, and overturn the trash can are foreshadowed by the recitation of the tongue twisters that opens the scene as their verbal agility matches their physical agility. We see that Don and Cosmo have the musical talent that separates them from Lina, who fails miserably in her diction lesson. Interestingly enough, as Robert Stam points out, Singin' in the Rain's "only two new songs are explicitly intertextual: 'Make 'Em Laugh' is a song-and-dance tribute to slapstick, and 'Moses' spoofs the postsound elocutionist craze." They also allow for the creation of antic dance numbers that liberate the performers from the more traditional kinds of numbers usually found in Hollywood musicals (49).

This scene would be in line with Don and Cosmo's characters since they dream of creative freedom in filmmaking. According to the Narrative Paradigm, these two established coherence and fidelity in their "revolutionary" dance. If we refer back to the earlier vignette of their vaudevillian roots, we know that Cosmo and Don are performers: singers, actors, and most importantly dancers. They already have the talent necessary to shift to sound. "Moses Supposes" maintains the type of stars they are destined to be.

As dancers, they are symbol makers. Through their dance they tell the audience a few stories. They demonstrate their lack of respect for authority and experience. They show no mercy to the diction instructor as they pile objects on him and subject him to

their horseplay. Another story that these two tell is their friendship. They are able to pick up on each other's cues to continue in their fun. Don quickly grasps the idea to grab part of the instructor's tie and walk him around in a circle as Cosmo began to do. They are in sync with each other as they dance difficult steps and moves in unison. The audience has the ability to deduce that these two characters are close friends and share a similar dream. The audience also comes to discover that these two friends are there for each other. This is demonstrated throughout the film and specifically through the dance sequences like this one and others. Cosmo "saved" Don from his diction lesson. He also pulled Don out of a career slump in "Make 'Em Laugh." Although it seems that Cosmo is giving all the support to Don with nothing in return, it is important to remember that Don is the main character and Cosmo is the supporting character in this film. It only makes sense that Cosmo is the light-hearted comedian to give the main character all the assistance he needs. The general audience can understand this concept. However, after analyzing this dance, if Cosmo was in need of support or simply a distraction, Don would be there with his dancing shoes on to give it. In essence, "Moses Supposes" once again displays their nonverbal communication skills and also shows their interpersonal relationship.

The emotional factor in this dance is simply lightheartedness. They see the diction training as a waste of time and each would much rather be somewhere other than in the classroom. The audience understands this from the short dialogue that occurs before the dancing begins. Don is reciting tongue twisters with his diction instructor when Cosmo enters the room and begins to mock the instructor. Don quickly picks up the idea and the two continue their mockery through the dance. They clearly communicate to the diction

instructor and the audience that they both can function well without the aid of speaking lessons. These two friends just wanted to have some fun.

This scene is a kernel. At first glance, it is not a strong, solid kernel like "Make 'Em Laugh." However, after further analysis it is found to definitely be a kernel. The dialogue that happened before the dance began served as a satellite to set up the dance. The singing during the dance was rather short and the scene was primarily about the dancing. The dancing seems to foreshadow the events that will happen in the near future where the fictitious film will be about a "young hoofer." Furthermore, it tells the audience that Don's acting career will stretch to include dancing. The future will be loud, fun, and the people will be talented unlike the next scene which begins with a close up shot of a "Quiet" sign and a very untalented Lina attempting to act. This scene serves as a satellite since it is shows a complete difference in talent and style to that of the kernel. "Moses Supposes" suggests that this propriety, poor talent, and "quietness" will be short-lived and a drastic change will sweep through the studio. The future of Monumental Pictures as "Moses Supposes" suggests will change the rules of its filmmaking. The studio will rely on talent and ability rather than contracts and forcing others to fit a particular mold for movies. Also, this film is a kernel because it shows the close bond between Don and Cosmo. The audience knows that the two have been friends since childhood but it is through this dance we see that fame has not affected their friendship and that they are indeed close.

A Sudden Shift: "Good Morning"

"Good Morning," or the dance of new hope, is one of the most memorial dance sequences in this film. In this scene, there is a change of heart and hope. The three main

characters, Don, Cosmo, and Kathy, have just returned from The Dueling Cavalier premiere. The film premiere did not obtain approval from the audience. In fact, it was considered a flop. These three have stayed up all night thinking, pondering, and wondering what will happen if the movie is released and what they could possibly do to fix the movie before it is released to the theaters. It is in the wee hours of the morning that the idea comes of making the movie into a musical. They decided that they can insert a modern day musical into the 18th century French film. It would change the movie's story and quality completely.

In this dance, the emotion expressed is happiness, triumph, and hope. The three characters are so excited that they break into song and dance to express themselves. The audience can see the stress roll off their backs as they perform. Each one is filled with energy despite being up all night long mulling over the movie's disastrous premiere.

Despite the great excitement of this sequence, its wonderful choreography, and catchy tune, this dance is not an integrated piece. "Good Morning" is simply not a kernel. It resembles the older musicals of the 1930s in that this song and dance scene is thrown into the plot. It does not further the story, describe the characters, and does not explain the relationships between the characters. One could attempt to argue that this sequence is a satellite. However, after reviewing the dialogue that occurs before and after the dance, I do not see how it supports the events taking place. The scene serves no purpose other than it entertains the audience and displays Gene Kelly and Donald O'Conner's talent and exposes Debbie Reynolds' lack of dance experience. The dialogue before the dance and after the dance could easily flow together. The dance does not even enhance the plot and is not necessary. The audience watches them dance through Don's living room and

kitchen. They change styles from tap dance to ballet to cultural styles like the hula and flamenco. There does not appear to be any continuity to their dancing. Furthermore, they do not communicate a story through any of the styles. Nor does the audience get a glimpse into their communication. I argue that there is no communication taking place between them. This dance is simply an example of a song and dance scene for the audience's enjoyment.

However, the only factor that is keeping this song and dance insertion from losing control is the Narrative Paradigm. All three are characterized earlier in the film as dancers and as such they express themselves through movement. In fact, any audience member with dance experience can relate to this scene. Most dancers, if asked, will admit to dancing in their living rooms and kitchens when the mood hits them. In this case, they have not gone out of character but are simply being themselves. Their mood has improved tremendously and they feel like dancing around Don's house. Therefore, this sequence has not lost its coherence or fidelity in the body of the film despite not actually telling a story in the sequence. Unfortunately, this may only be apparent to an audience of dancers. However, the only story they do tell that a general audience would understand is the story of their excitement and the start of a brand new day of possibilities.

It is disappointing to discover "Good Morning" is not an integrated dance. The other dances in this film have proved themselves to be kernels exuding emotion, explaining interpersonal relationships, and sharing significant parts of the story. It would have been interesting to see how Kelly and Donen could have worked this dance sequence into something of more substance and meaning.

"Singin' in the Rain": Emotion, Plot, and Character

The dance sequence of the same name as the film is probably the most well-known and most loved dance ever seen. This particular scene is the one that is most spoofed in other films and commercials. The reason for its enormous mark on film history is its ability to communicate emotion, advance the plot, and showcase character development.

Emotion is the first element noticed in this dance. As viewers, we see Don on cloud nine. He knows that he and Kathy are in love and nothing in the world can bother him, not even a rainstorm. Don jumps in puddles, runs around in the rain, and splashes water all over the place. He is happy, content, and does not care what the world thinks. These emotions are easily identifiable and can be discovered every time the film is watched. As mentioned earlier, Oatley said "This effect [emotions], therefore, gives fiction the possibility of allowing us to relive, or in other ways, to experience, emotions while at the same time reflecting on it" (64). New generations can come away from this scene experiencing a "glorious feeling" themselves and also know that Don is "happy again." These same emotions are what advertisers have tried to infuse in the Volkswagaon car and General Electric commercials. They want potential buyers to feel excited about their product. Since commercials are repeated many times, their target market should get the idea that they will experience an uplifting feeling from using a certain product as Don did when he left Kathy's house. Emotion is strongly sensed in this particular dance and is just one of the reasons why it stands out from the rest of the dance sequences.

In this sequence, the audience observes Gene Kelly magically mix story and dance together. This is an excellent example of the dance fitting into the Narrative Paradigm. Peter Chumo quotes Delamater when describing the integration and plot advancement:

> Since Kelly's numbers were rarely restricted to an on-stage performance, he was able to use space in a broader, more spread-out fashion. Not tied in, furthermore, to an aesthetic of full-figured, single-take dances, he could choreograph with a sense of using the space rather than simply performing within it. In this regard Kelly has said, "What I did in 'Singin' in the Rain'…was to take the whole street and keep the dance moving down the street." (Delamater in Chumo 49-50)

From this we learn that Don is happily strolling down the street. Chumo says, "Don seemingly is able to improvise his movements throughout the sequence, and, in the emotional climax of the number, leaves the sidewalk to dance through the whole street as the camera cranes up to give us a view of a man boldly taking on his whole environment" (50). This dance is not a "stop what you are doing and dance" scene. Don eases into the dance very naturally and gives us the impression that he is completely improvising his movements. Therefore, "Singin' in the Rain" fits nicely into the story and completes a part of the puzzle.

Accordingly, the audience observes Don's persona through the sequence. Don dances because he is happy with his personal life and how he is going to change his professional life as well. Kelly's character is a symbol maker and who creates symbols through the dance. There is coherence and fidelity in this sequence. No one would break

into song and dance with an entire supporting cast after ending a brainstorming session. However, one may feel the urge to dance when going home. One may be bubbling over with such joy that he or she cannot contain him or herself and moving their feet might just be the only outlet. Don Lockwood would be the type of person to dance. We already know that he is a vaudeville trained entertainer so nothing about this scene would contradict his behavior or who he is. The dancing is natural. Don jumps about like a child playing in the puddles and completely stops what he is doing when he runs into a police officer. As in real life, one would stop splashing about when coming face-to-face with a police officer. Therefore, there is truth and a sense of reality in his dance. Essentially, the story that Don tells is that he is more than satisfied with his life and that he feels like dancing down the street as long as the police do not mind. This is the most fluid integration of dance into drama. He makes use of his umbrella, the lamppost, and the rain in order to be as natural as possible in this dance just as if this could be anyone behaving the same way.

In addition to this, we also note that Don Lockwood has grown more as a person by the end of this scene. Viewers see him come out of a career coma and watch him take hold of his acting career. Audiences come to understand through this dance that Don is indeed a multi-talented actor. He steps out of the confines of the studio's demands and begins to see movies in a new light with new possibilities. He communicates to us his free spirit and his creativity as well.

Finally, this dance is a kernel. For one reason, this is the dance that is the same title as the film signifying a major event. Second, when writers Betty Comden and Adolph Green were just beginning to write the script they knew one thing: "there would

have to be some scene where there would be rain, and the leading man would be singin' in it" (Comden and Green, 4). The musical was built around this important scene. It had to tie every part of the film together and give the reason why the film was even titled Singin' in the Rain. It is the pinnacle of the film. From the scene before this sequence, the audience learns that the Don and furthermore Cosmo and Kathy will experience a career rebirth. They plan out their strategy for changing things in the studio and then depart for the night. This scene is the turning point of the film where the audience sees Kathy and Don as a couple and Don as new man.

The dialogue that occurs before the dance starts serves as a satellite to introduce the kernel. He makes the comment to Kathy that he hardly notices the downpour. This leads right into sequence with the song aiding him for as Wollen quotes Kelly, "Unless you're in a ballet, you can't just begin to dance. You have to state your 'thesis' in the song first and then go into the dance" (26). The dialogue gently glided into the dance and likewise the dance glided right back into dialogue. The "Singin' in the Rain" sequence is essential to the entire film. Without it, there would be no glue to hold the film together.

"Broadway Melody": Layers of Meaning and Importance

In the 1930s, ballets were being placed in films. As Wollen writes, "The dream ballet became the favoured form for integrating ballet numbers into stage musicals, both by relating them to the plot situation and psychology of the dreamer and, at the same time, moving out of the diegetic world of the drama into another and totally fantastic realm" (35). He continues to say that in 1943 Agnes de Mille made an amazing breakthrough in the ballet scene in the Broadway production of Oklahoma! As Wollen states, "The war years were the time when both ballet and psychoanalysis made their

greatest impact on Broadway" (35). Hollywood, of course, was not far behind in producing musicals with ballets in them. Gene Kelly apparently liked the idea of incorporating ballet into his films as he included them in An American in Paris and On the Town. When he began filming Singin' in the Rain, Kelly decided to do yet another one which would mix elements from both On the Town and An American in Paris (41).

"Broadway Melody" is sometimes seen as the scene that people would like to skip. It is a long scene that upon first glance appears to interrupt the film's main plot. However, it should not be overlooked. "Broadway Melody" has several layers of significance that should be analyzed. The entire sequence is choreographed even the part when the gangsters flip coins in the air. "Broadway Melody" is significant to the plot.

First, it is important to examine this dance to see if it is a kernel or a satellite. I argue that "Broadway Melody" is indeed a kernel. It is essential to the plot. The audience knows from the "Good Morning" scene that Don and Cosmo want to change the film, The Dueling Cavalier. R.F. Simpson, the studio president, also agrees that a change must be made. Cosmo does some brainstorming and comes up with a new title, The Dancing Cavalier and also the new plotline for the film. Don later explains to R.F. Simpson what the updated film will be and the audience is given the chance to "visualize" the new idea. It is not until the explanation is over that the audience understands why this scene was included in the film. Without it, the general audience would be like Simpson who says, "I can't quite visualize it. I'll have to see it on film first." There is much to grasp in Don's description of the new piece to replace some of the original film. It helps the audience to truly understand what the changes will actually be. Therefore, "Broadway Melody" serves as a pillar upholding the plot.

The satellite to this entire sequence is the verbal descriptions Don and Cosmo give to Simpson about the fictional film. This satellite sets up the sequence to prepare the audience. The description gives the audience the chance to process what they are about to see without giving away too much of the story.

The sequence itself is a story within a story. The Narrative Paradigm reveals the storytelling. First, the sequence is a wonderful explanation of what The Dancing Cavalier will be, so it provides a necessary link in the Singin' in the Rain film, but it also gives the audience another look at Don Lockwood's character. Chumo writes, "The extended 'Broadway Melody' sequence that Don begins to describe to Simpson and Cosmo will be a musical section of The Dancing Cavalier, and, through this number, Don tells the story of his idealized self, his alter ego's adventures in New York" (45). Don, through his dancing, tells the story of his own arrival in the entertainment world as a young dancer. He tries to find work and begins his journey to stardom by performing in burlesque shows, then moving his way up to vaudeville shows, and finally reaching the height of his career dancing on Broadway in a Ziegfield Follies show, the cream of the crop. In the midst of the climb to the top, Don's character meets a woman played by Cyd Charisse. They have a very intense encounter. The audience notices the character's strong, passionate attraction and possible love for that woman. Through the first dance they have together, the audience can see how Don's character is mesmerized by this woman. She is someone he has never seen or met before coming to New York. Although she appears to have fallen for him, she is easily swayed by material wealth and leaves Don alone.

The next time the audience sees them dance together is in the dream or fantasy sequence. Don's character spots her from across the room and everything and everyone in

the room fades. He and Charisse's character are the only ones left. His fantasy dance, the balletic part of this sequence, exposes his wish to reconnect with the girl he lost. The veil in the dance highlights the dancers' movements and also represents the connection they share in this dream ballet. The veil is not only visually enchanting but also appears to weave the two together. Unfortunately, this dream ballet remains a dream as Charisse is escorted off by her gangster boyfriend. However, the emotion that this section evokes is powerful. The audience sees pureness of heart, love, and passion. Once again, this is dreamed up by Don's character so it would be the perfect scenario. When his character is snapped back into reality, the audience can feel the jolt of rejection and the sadness that consumes this man. The audience wants to jump through the screen and fix the situation or at least give him a pat on the back and tell him everything will be fine. Hence, this dream dance evokes much emotion from the audience.

One interesting approach to this dance is to examine it metaphorically. Marilyn Ewing wrote in a recent article for the Journal of Popular Film and Television that "Broadway Melody" contained symbols that represented Hollywood's connections with the mob and syphilis and Kelly's personal past. According to Ewing, the mob had its grip on Hollywood beginning in the 1920s. Many stars got their start in the very clubs owned by mobsters. They socialized with the stars and once the mobsters were accepted into the Hollywood network, they provided drugs and alcohol to the stars, "ran prostitution rings and bookie joints, and extorted large amounts of money from the major studios" (Ewing 19). However, as Ewing says, few films made during that time mentioned the Hollywood-mob connection. Ewing claims that the hoofer's career "is described in the context of the underworld connections. As a terpsichorean Everyman, he represents the

whole entertainment industry and its unsavory affiliation with some of the country's worst criminals" (19).

The argument that syphilis is alluded to in "Broadway Melody" is a large stretch of the mind. Ewing claims there are similarities between "Broadway Melody" and a scene out of Invitation to Dance (1956), "Ring Around the Rosy." According to Ewing, a bracelet representing the disease is passed from one person to another in "Ring Around the Rosy" and like that dance the gangster's coin is passed to his moll then to the hoofer and then to the hatcheck girl. This was said with the idea that Kelly was choreographing Singin' in the Rain and Invitation to Dance around the same time (20). Personally, I see nothing in the dance that would allude to a disease being passed around. However, I do see how Kelly would have used the coin in question to describe his personal experience.

The connection between Gene Kelly's life and this dance scene is the coin-flipping. Back when Gene and his brother Fred were performing, the audience threw coins at him and his brother. Gene considered the action humiliating. According to Ewing, the same incident is "alluded to in Don's autobiographical account of his 'respectable' training as a dancer" (19). Ewing goes on to say that in the ballet the coin is a symbol of the hoofer's rejection and humiliation (19).

Besides telling the story of The Dancing Cavalier, this sequence according to Chumo tells the story of Don's transformation. Chumo says,

> More importantly, Don and we are seeing an earlier version of himself, just as the lies Don told to the gossip columnist at the film's beginning were meant to create an ideal self. Whereas that ideal self, however, was rooted in phony pretensions to high art . . ., this idealized self is rooted in the "truth" of dance. It proves Don's

> talent, the necessity of his impulse to dance, to become the "dancing" cavalier and shows us the "real" Don Lockwood of the film's beginning (47).

This is an example of Don communicating with the audience. He shares his passion which is to dance with those who will watch the fictional film and with those who will be involved in the film process. At the end of the sequence, Don is dancing with an entire ensemble and shouting out "Gotta Dance." He shows off his ability to dance and be the performer he was destined to be.

The Narrative Paradigm therefore allows us to understand and categorize the entire sequence. We come to understand that Don was and is trying to still be a symbol maker by creating stories out of dance. Through this fictional film, he is making a bold statement to Simpson and to his movie fans that he wants to be a song and dance man. He wants his movies from now on to be true to his style. He gives us "good reasons" to believe that his future career in show business should include dancing. We can understand this because he has shown us in other dances that he is a dancer and not the pompous actor from the film's beginning. This is clearly coherent. He also tells us that he is going to use the new invention of sound in films to launch his new acting debut. Don has transformed and we feel as he does that this is an excellent choice. This is where we see the fidelity in this situation. He communicates to us that he will be a happier, fulfilled, and satisfied person and we believe this.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

The dance sequences in Singin' in the Rain are incredibly significant. As mentioned before, the sequences are important in terms of historical context, purpose and results, and rhetorical implications. The film is historically significant due to its use in television commercials 50 years after its release. Also, it is historically significant for the changes made in filming the title dance scene: adjusting the camera to follow and move with Gene Kelly's performance allows for greater integration of dance and narrative. The dance sequences are vital to the film in terms of their purpose and results because of the attention and high acclaim Singin' in the Rain has received over the years. The film has been spoofed in several movies, received awards, and has been favorably reviewed by critics. Finally, this motion picture is rhetorically significant. It can be analyzed using many different methods of interpretation to discover if the dances are successful and powerful media of communication.

With the help of Fisher's Paradigm and Chatman's satellites and kernels as well as theories of interpersonal communication, both the general public and scholars can come to understand dance communication in a deeper way. By comparing the six dance sequences with Fisher and Chatman's concepts, I have been able to determine that five out of the six dances are integral to the plot but, more importantly, that they are examples of powerful interpersonal communication.

It was disappointing to find that one dance, "Good Morning," did not communicate beyond entertainment. Originally, I thought that this dance sequence would have been integrated like the others and would have embodied some type of interpersonal communication integral to the story, but that proved not to be the case. According to my

literature review, communication and full integration appear to be typical of the Kelly/Donen formula. However, I am pleased to discover that the other five dances are integrated and clearly exemplify interpersonal communication integral to the plot. Each dance has coherence and fidelity since each makes sense to the viewer and relates to the viewer's beliefs and experiences. As I have explained, the Narrative Paradigm lacked the framework to completely analyze and interpret the dances. It was necessary to pull other sources and concepts to make any sort of interpretation. With the help of Chatman's kernels and satellites, I was able to show that the dances were more than entertainment. While comparing the dances to Fisher's coherence and fidelity concepts, I could at the same time determine whether each dance was a kernel or satellite. Five sequences proved to be kernels and clearly illustrated that they were indeed necessary to tie the entire film together. In addition, I used Peter Andersen's Cognitive Valence Theory to further explicate the dance "You Were Meant For Me." With the help of this theory, the budding relationship between Kathy and Don made sense in this dance. I noticed nonverbal violations in the dance and felt it pertinent to discuss the violation in relation to the narrative analysis.

As I have proved, dance can be effective and important means of communication in movie musicals. I have shown that there is a distinct difference between entertainment dance and significant, communicative dance. The "Good Morning" dance provides a wonderful example of this difference. Although brilliantly choreographed, it lacked the integration and continuity to make the storyline complete. Also, through my research I have highlighted the fact that Fisher's paradigm is not structured enough to do a thorough

analysis. It is essential to find other tools to do so. I feel this is an exciting avenue in communication and I would like to see more analysis done in this area.

Future Research

From this present research, I question if there are dance sequences in other films that communicate as loudly as the ones in Singin' in the Rain. Future researchers could consider examining other dance musicals. Perhaps, the Gene Kelly musicals are the only ones that aim for meaningful interpersonal communication. A detailed study of Kelly's films would be beneficial. On the other hand, musicals made during and after Kelly's career would be worth investigating. These later musicals might prove to fall under the ideas of the Narrative Paradigm and Chatman's concepts of kernels and satellites. In addition, future researchers could try using another mode of analysis like metaphor or just continue to use narrative. Another option would be to incorporate other aids besides kernels and satellites to explain their interpretation.

However, my research does open up other possibilities in the world of dance and communication. Future researchers could choose to study current musicals on Broadway such as Movin' Out, A Chorus Line, Mamma Mia!, Hairspray, or Chicago. A few of these current shows' entire plots are based on dance. Movin' Out is one of them. This show uses the hit songs of popular artist Billy Joel to tell a story all through dance. A study of this musical using narrative analysis and kernel and satellite concepts would be fascinating. Another option would be to study newly choreographed dances in the professional dance world. New productions are not following the typical "Swan Lake" or "The Nutcracker" stories. They have new stories that are not laid out like the ballet pieces of the past. In essence, there is much to be uncovered in this area.

One last suggestion would be to examine and compare the lyrics in the songs that are used for the dances. I did not touch on this perspective in this thesis, but this avenue might prove to be worthy of research since the words are often connected to the movements in a dance. This might prove to be essential in interpreting dances in filmed and live musicals in the future. To conclude, there are numerous avenues for future analysis in this area. I have just scratched the surface and further study will shed more light on the way dance can be used as an integrated medium of interpersonal communication in film and live productions.

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