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RESEARCH NOTE

Embracing Aporia: Exploring Arts-Based Methods, Pain, "Playfulness," and Improvisation in Research on Gender and Social Violence

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This article explores the role of play and playfulness—as both methodological and analytical tools—in research on social violence. While play may seem antithetical to both discussions on methods and to studying social violence, we found that actually paying attention to such elements was in fact very productive. This article draws on a series of participatory workshops that engaged theater, dance, and comedy, which were held in Sierra Leone in 2021 that explored various social dimensions of sexual and gender-based violence in rural communities. The "fun" components that are so frequently dismissed in favor of more flat and binary research helped us better understand the complex, and often painful, emotions of women in these communities. We pay particular attention to how singing, which was not originally part of the research plan, became critical to engaging these women on discussions of social violence. We argue that researchers should be more aware and open to the prospects that "play," "fun," and improvisation have to offer in research processes, and how such components can themselves be absolutely critical to how we conduct and analyze research, as well as engage with participants, even in relation to sensitive subject matter.

Le présent article s'intéresse au rôle du jeu et de la gaieté, à la fois en tant qu'outils méthodologiques et analytiques, dans la recherche sur la violence sociale. Alors que le jeu peut paraître antithétique par rapport aux discussions sur les méthodes et l'étude de la violence sociale, nous avons observé qu'il était finalement très productif de s'y intéresser. Cet article se fonde sur une série d'ateliers participatifs impliquant le théâtre, la danse et l'humour, qui se sont déroulés en Sierra Leone en 2021. Ils traitaient de plusieurs dimensions sociales de la violence sexuelle et fondée sur le genre au sein des communautés rurales. Les composantes « amusantes », si souvent balayées en faveur de recherches plus monotones et binaires, nous ont permis de mieux comprendre les émotions complexes, et souvent douloureuses, des femmes de ces communautés. Nous nous sommes notamment attardés sur la façon dont le chant, qui ne faisait initialement pas partie du programme de recherche, s'est révélé essentiel pour entrer en communication avec ces femmes au sujet des violences sociales. Nous soutenons que les chercheurs devraient être plus conscients des possibilités offertes par le « jeu », l'« amusement » et l'improvisation dans le cadre des procédés de recherche, et ouverts à celles-ci. Ces composantes peuvent en fait se révéler tout à fait essentielles dans la conduite et l'analyse de recherches, mais aussi pour s'adresser aux participants, même quand il s'agit de sujets sensibles.

Este artículo analiza el papel del juego y la capacidad para jugar como herramientas metodológicas y analíticas en la investigación sobre la violencia social. Si bien el juego puede parecer antitético en el marco tanto de las discusiones sobre los métodos como del estudio de la violencia social, hemos descubierto que prestar atención a estos elementos es, de hecho, muy productivo. Este artículo se basa en una serie de talleres participativos que se celebraron en Sierra Leona en 2021, en los que se utilizó el teatro, la danza y la comedia y en los que se exploraron diversas dimensiones sociales de la violencia sexual y de género en las comunidades rurales. Los componentes «divertidos», que tan frecuentemente se descartan en favor de una investigación más plana y binaria, nos ayudaron a comprender mejor las complejas, y a menudo dolorosas, emociones de las mujeres de estas comunidades. Prestamos especial atención a cómo el canto, que en un principio no formaba parte del plan de investigación, se convirtió en algo fundamental para involucrar a estas mujeres en los debates sobre la violencia social. Sostenemos que los investigadores deberían ser más conscientes y estar más abiertos a las perspectivas que ofrecen el «juego», la «diversión» y la improvisación en los procesos de investigación, y cómo estos componentes pueden ser en sí mismos absolutamente críticos para la forma en que realizamos y analizamos la investigación, así como para relacionarnos con los participantes, incluso en relación con temas delicados.

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"We live with pain, we live with joy."
(Female workshop participant,
Sierra Leone, July 2021)

Introduction

Conventional research methods and fieldwork preparation for the study of social violence are anything but playful. Research methods focus on scientific objectivity and rigor, which often require the coding and quantification of subject matter that does not lend itself to such methods. If research requires fieldwork, Global North researchers undertake rigorous ethical reviews, risk assessments, and insurance checklists, often evaluated by individuals who have little (if any) direct knowledge of the contexts and terrains of the research site. There is also the matter of project governance, namely record keeping, reporting, and substantial logistical coordination. At best, the technical nature of social science research can be antithetical to the messiness of violence, and at worst an active barrier to the realities and urgencies of the problems it seeks to understand. The dryness of research bureaucracy is frequently reflected in the methods used to research violence in contexts that are deadly serious.

And yet play, humor, and enjoyment are widely recognized as essential drivers of human learning, memory, and behavior (Bains et al. 2014). In this article, we look at how playful engagement can offer effective ways of researching and tackling issues of social violence, particularly in the context of gender. What we mean by "playful" is interactive, performance-based research methodologies that engage the audience and produce certain effects, such as curiosity, openness, and enjoyment, which drives a desire for participation and facilitates openness and trust. Arts-based methodologies have the capacity to maximize the iterative process that brings out these experiential states and nuances endemic to violence, and align with co-productive methodological designs that are essential to effective and impactful research (Finley 2005).

The article reflects on the effectiveness and limitations of performing arts methods used in a series of workshops about sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Sierra Leone and South Africa in 2021.[1] Counterintuitively, but also logically, the workshops illustrated how comedy, dance, song, and theatre techniques—all of which are inflected with humor and playfulness—were used to explore various social and political aspects of SGBV, and to open up conversations about a topic that is otherwise sensitive and taboo. It may seem incongruous to run events on SGBV using performing arts and we certainly do not mean to imply that SGBV is fun or funny. Rather, the "incongruous" use of the arts can be a powerful tool for engaging an audience.

In theory, "all research endeavors can be argued to be 'creative'" (Skains 2018, 85). In practice, however, research methods are frequently treated as an afterthought, or a means to an end, rather than as an especially "fun" part of research. We are, however, interested in how playful performance-based methods can reinvigorate the creativity–knowledge axis and break down the "artificial distinction between creative practice and scholarly knowledge [. . .] generally communicated through academic discourse" (Skains 2018). We use "fun," "enjoyable," "playful," and related terms in a general sense, rather than via heavily theorized conceptions. We would emphasize, however, that "fun," "playful," and "enjoyable" activities are emphatically capable of significance and consequence and that such terms should not be automatically perceived as synonyms for inconsequence. While we do not have scope to explore definitions of all these terms, we underline the need for performance-based approaches to be authentic, egalitarian, and inclusive (Martin et al. 2021). We argue that these methods bring out productive ambiguities, contradictions, and nuances that should be recognized and embraced rather than dismissed. Research on (particularly gendered) violence is anything but straightforward, and the methods used to understand such complexities should reflect that, not simply on principle, but in the interests of optimizing research itself. Where conventional research requires neatness, in arts-based research "messing things up" is integral to the process (Campbell and Farrier 2015, 83). This does not mean compromising ethical standards; on the contrary, it seeks to weave the utmost care into the research approach. Ultimately, we argue that arts-based methods simultaneously allow playfulness within research settings while opening up a more candid and holistic understanding of the multiple and complex dimensions of violence. In other words, arts-based methods can be serious and scientific *because* they are playful, rather than play and research having to be mutually exclusive. In the conclusion, we also reflect on the implications of arts-based methods for research on gender as well.

Arts-Based Approaches to Social Violence

Arts-based research approaches position the arts as a primary way of understanding experiences of both researchers and participants. Performative research methods are sensory, kinesthetic, and relational; they engage with shifting, heterogeneous and chaotic experiences, aiming to capture the ephemeral, transitory, and the liminal: that which lies "in-between" (Law and Urray in Roberts 2009, 341). These methods are informed by "a loss, a shift, or a rupture [that] create[s] openings [and] displace[s] meaning" (Springgay et al. in Roberts 2009, 321). Arts-based approaches thus provide alternative ways of thinking about research. Mutuality, relationality, and interdependency are further guiding principles of arts-based research (Keifer-Boyd 2011), which acknowledges that researchers, participants, and research contexts are interrelated and aims at democratizing the research space by engaging with researcher–participant power relations. Arts-based methods also recognize the aporia—those seemingly illogical, irresolvable contradictions and paradoxes—that can arise in experiences of violence.

Use of the arts to tackle social issues takes different but overlapping forms and names, such as Applied Theater (sometimes appended by "for research") and Theater for Development, which builds on the Theater of the Oppressed and its aims to challenge the existing power relations through participant-led social change (Boal 1979). The intended audiences and constituencies of these approaches vary considerably, from charities and local people in rural areas to security forces and government policy makers (Prentki 2015). However, there is a certain amount of commonality in the use of performance spaces. Typically, projects that employ arts-based methodologies will place an emphasis on co-creation and a shared involvement in the artistic process with which to engage audiences physically and emotionally as well as cerebrally.

[1] AHRC Scoping Grant (£148,565), "Performing Arts and Social Violence: Innovating Research Approaches to Sexual and Gender-based Violence in the Global South" (December 2020 to December 2021).

At the more creative end of these approaches, there is strong use of playfulness (e.g., in the form of skits and stunts), and a methodological open-mindedness that embraces counterintuition and a certain amount of risk, uncertainty of outcome, and "imperfection." In their work on "researching like an artist," Emilie Flower and Ruth Kelly (2019) argue that engagement in creative processes invites an exchange between researchers and participants, decentralizing the locus of knowledge and power to open up understanding of experiences on an embodied as well as cognitive level. Augusto Boal formed a model of Forum Theater, which repositioned audiences as "spect-actors" who enter the stage and embark in a dialogue with characters in fictionalized scenarios. Boal recognized that this playful and shapeshifting approach to addressing challenging or distressing realities can allow understanding and experience to surface in a manner that more direct, serious approaches may not. In other words, it allowed for serious issues, such as violence, to be explored in far more nuanced ways. Drawing upon our experiences in Sierra Leone, we illustrate what it is about play and playfulness *specifically* that creates capacity for comprehensive research and increases the depth of nuanced insights into perspectives of violence.

To some extent, arts-based methods can help mitigate the hierarchies inherent to research in collaboration between Global North and Global South partners, allowing for the roles within these partnerships to be played with, in a sense. For instance, during discussion of the thematic design of each respective workshop, while the Global North team did specify that they needed to address SGBV, the actual topics and skits were chosen and largely designed (with some theatrical direction from the theater scholar) by the performers and paralegals, based on their own knowledge of what topics were particularly salient. Because we did two workshops in each village as well, the second one was based on themes that emerged in the group discussions. Similarly, discussions following the performances were led by communities. The team did not give prompts or direction but rather facilitated the "hot seating" technique, wherein community members asked questions to the performers who stayed in character. By definition then, this produced comments that the research team could not anticipate or control. As with any research collaboration, arts-based projects are challenging and will involve a certain amount of organization and structure, and we do not claim that arts-based research methods can somehow collapse and avoid hierarchies altogether. Nonetheless, play and performance inform the tone and atmosphere of research collaboration, and can soften some of the formal distinctions between partners. Arts-based methods also require Global North researchers to relinquish some control associated with social science methods, intentionally leaving a certain amount of space open for improvisation, chance, and those "in between" moments that can reveal something unplanned but significant, and that can be shared by Global South and Global North partners as it emerges.

Performing Arts and Social Violence: Innovating Research Approaches to SGBV in Sierra Leone

Our project examined the extent to which performing arts methods (including comedy, theatre, and dance) could be harnessed to understand and address social violence, specifically SGBV. It sought to link the literature with a more practical engagement to assess both the state of the field and how our application of arts methods could contribute to new understandings of it. In this article, we are focusing on activities involving dance and song, as these illustrate our key points regarding methodological benefits of arts-based research and, more specifically, improvisation and ambiguity as research components. In codesigning the workshops, we were interested less in the formal integrity of individual sessions (i.e., a "theater" workshop, a "dance" workshop) directed toward a specific outcome than in drawing attention to certain sensory effects (such as laughter, enjoyment, curiosity) in discussing SGBV. We used the performing arts to open up a discussion, rather than to "intervene" or work in a linear, telic fashion toward an "end." Using the arts to open up conversation proleptically implies that understanding of the situation is already, and necessarily, incomplete. Instead, performances seek to engage the participation, experiences, and knowledge of local people to gain a better and more collaborative understanding of the topics involved.

Conducted at a time when SGBV has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic around the world, this project highlighted the nuanced ways in which SGBV is an acute, pernicious global epidemic embedded in the subtleties of individual and collective attitudes and behaviors. Two members of the UK team (one of whom is a Sierra Leone expert, while the other is a theater expert) went to Sierra Leone between May and July 2021 and worked alongside a prominent Sierra Leonean gender scholar and two female Sierra Leonean paralegals from the project partner organization, Timap for Justice, as well as local actors and comedians. The team organized six workshops in three communities, holding two workshops in each of the three communities using two separate arts-based methods—namely theater, dance, and comedy—to discuss common issues related to SGBV. The workshops all took place in the local language of Temne, with paralegals and a research assistant helping with translation. They were all designed in partnership with the Sierra Leonean paralegals and the respective performers and participants (comedians, actors, and local people). Three skits were performed at each workshop, followed by "hot seating." Women and men participated in performance part of the workshops together, but separate focus groups were run for women and men in order to maximize open discussion. These took place in rural communities in Northern Sierra Leone. For the theater and comedy workshops, performances were delivered by local actors and comedians, together with staff from Timap for Justice. The dance workshops employed traditional dancers known as *Sampas* who were already in each community.

Each workshop was then followed by focus group discussions around questions related to the topics. The first workshops drew on themes from common issues identified by Timap staff and local actors, while the second workshops drew from the first focus group discussions in each respective community. After the six workshops had been completed, a Co-I and paralegals conducted further interviews based on the themes that emerged to obtain further information about women's experiences of the performing arts methods used, alongside experiences of SGBV. The Sierra Leone workshops confirmed that local norms nuanced the cultural forms deployed in community performances. For example, the *Sampa* dance performances drew singing from the women about painful experiences, which became a focus for reflection in subsequent discussions. Unanticipated and paradoxical in that the songs were both joyful and pained, the singing demonstrated how certain research results that we may not know what to do with—such as ambiguity and contradiction—could actually be productive.

Song and Dance, Pleasure and Pain

Song was not a planned part of the workshops but became an improvised part in all of them, and ultimately became an unexpected but effective methodological mode within the project. Song and dance also differed somewhat from the other two forms used in the project. Whereas actors and Timap staff were employed as performers in the theater and comedy sketches, the Sampa dancers and songs actually *came from* the village in which we were engaging discussion. Notably, too, in all workshops women broke out into song without prompting, usually during the large group discussions. The women sung about the content they had just discussed in the workshop, often embedding humor within it. Thus, song was central to all the performances, as it is to the lives of rural women in Sierra Leone.

Following the singing, a common theme that arose was the sense of pain that women felt in relation to how their husbands treated them. As one woman stated in an interview, "[when my husband does not treat me well] sometimes I will just bear it up as I don't want to share with other people, but deep in my heart when I sit alone, the pain disturbs me" (Interview Manokoh, July 2021). Another example manifested in a woman discussing her cheating husband: "At times we [women] feel pain; we go out looking for him and then come home and lay down, but we wonder where they [husbands] are and cannot sleep" (Group Discussion II 2021).

Admittedly, the team was not entirely sure how well this singing technique would work as a way of discussing pain and violence. This skepticism was shared by the nongovernmental organization (NGO) paralegals: "The singing surprised me . . . I was thinking it would be difficult and would not work." The singing had, however, instilled a sense of authoring and participation in the event. Another NGO worker stated: "The songs were more effective because they [the participants] were the ones who came up with songs . . . Whether pain or happiness, you can communicate easily through song." The paralegal also stated: "I liked the singing because the people are singing about what is affecting them and from there you get the real stories from their lives. It's more painful to ask directly but when singing [the participants] are smiling, laughing. Maybe pain is there, but they are making fun out of it." Singing provides a double voicing for traumatic experiences, acknowledging the pain it has produced but simultaneously making that pain expressible. This double voicing reflects the "simultaneity" of the experience: women enjoying singing *and* (rather than "but") singing about their pain. As one woman stated in an interview, "I do sing when he does bad things to me in order to ease my pain" (Interview Pate Bana Marenk 2021). This is distinct from feeling enjoyment *of* pain or the memory of it. Rather, we hold that this improvised format brought out the socialized intimacy of pain between the women and allowed them to voice it in their own ways. This is vital to understanding SGBV experiences in these communities but would not have emerged if we had stuck to a rigid plan.

Women often sang about issues relating to marital problems and co-wives, indicating the ways in which women use song (often in proverbial phrasing) to express and understand these experiences. For example:

> "I'm feeling pain, and my body is aching everywhere'
>
> "If somebody hates you, they have the trouble, not you"
>
> "Just leave the person to God"
>
> "Working on a farm, after harvest, give some to the other wife and leave them to God"
>
> "I'm feeling pain, and my body is aching all everywhere'
>
> "If your husband takes your days and gives to the other wife, leave him to God"

In the group discussions, women stated that although they sing at home when they are in pain, "the pain comes to the surface as we sing" (Focus Group June 2021). However, the women are singing with purpose. For example: "At times we sing the songs to draw the man's attention to something that is happening in the home" (Group Discussion 1, June 2021). These songs were thus a creative means to express dissatisfaction to husbands, neighbors, or other family members. When we inquired why the women sing if it brings pain, several reasons were given. One woman stated, "At times, the pain will drive you to do so many things, sometimes it will make you be very offensive, very aggressive. . .I prefer to sing because singing does not cause harm" (Group Discussion 1, June 2021). For some women, pain was eased by singing: "We forget [our situations] and feel good as we sing" (Group Discussion 2, June 2021). Dynamically, in these responses there is a recurrent and paradoxical sense of the women "leaving" abuse and conflict ("leave him to God") and not engaging with hate ("they have the trouble"), even as women feel continued pain and stuck in certain relationships and contexts. The use of song to express feelings to others then is an effective way of avoiding further pain and abuse: the response of a spouse or co-wife to a song about pain and injustice will be quite different from a face-to-face verbal confrontation between a woman and her husband or with a co-wife.

This experience illustrates how engaging with a seemingly inconsequential "playful" activity can bring out significant emotional and experiential content. By embracing the dual, interrelated nature of play and pain, the performance format did not necessarily denote "fun" or "enjoyment" in all respects. However, this is part of the point. The activity helped the team learn about ways women both mitigate and remember pain, using collective song to generate solidarity (there is a sense of the women themselves forming a "body" that has been damaged and hurt). They recognize what has been done to them, and this helps them continue living (the harm done to the women is both acknowledged and displaced). One woman stated that the singing helps provide a sense of connection in their shared pain: "If you feel pain, you feel bad but [singing] helps to feel good" (Interview, July 2021). Another woman reaffirmed this: "When we sing together, we know that we have all experienced the same thing" (Group Discussion, June 2021). "Knowledge" is thus important here in an almost paradoxical sense: singing about pain subtly signals to other women that they have shared experiences of violence, and women are also fully aware that this is a function of the act of singing together.

Participants commonly pointed out that women were much stronger than men and thus could bear more pain, which ultimately fed a general sense that women had more tolerance for mistreatment than men. Such views and narratives around gender and pain are both an apparent contradiction and an important context for researchers to be aware of and think about as a research question. Methodologically, while the use of song was originally unplanned, and as such an uncertain mode for the NGO partner, in each workshop it led to a similar and productive response

that would have been available through more traditional research methods.

The songs are themselves gendered, describing pain that is particular to the experiences of women. In this way, the songs "belong" to the women. The men do not have the same relationship with songs, as was evident in the discussions and reactions. These observations underline that it is not only the experience of pain and violence that is gendered but also the understanding and expression of those experiences. The songs, and what they reveal, demonstrate the flexibility and responsiveness of an arts-based approach. A workshop based on these songs with a predominately male group would not have the same effect.

How song and dance emerged during these workshops is an example of how performance-based methodologies can be both fun and rigorous. Indeed, we contend that the methods are rigorous *because* they were experienced as enjoyable, which, in turn, incentivized participation. To put it self-evidently, when an event is enjoyable, people are more likely to be at ease and willing to participate. By putting a workshop into play but leaving space for the unexpected and the contradictory to emerge—in this case the songs taken up by the women—the research team set the potential for a research outcome that we did not create and that we could not have predicted. The workshops reframed a practice that already existed, not only allowing researchers to learn about the songs and the experiences they relayed but also offering new perceptions of the songs to the women who sing them, whereby an everyday practice is valued as feminist method, knowledge, and insight (Ahmed 2017). Further, in follow-up interviews that occurred months after the workshops, our team noted that the women had continued singing these songs in communities, meaning that using performing arts for research provided an opportunity for women to capitalize are already existing practices and communicate in a manner they felt comfortable.

Embracing Aporia: Ambiguity, Contradiction, and Incongruity as Modes of Research

The technical and bureaucratic nature of research reflects the "seriousness" with which research on violence should be undertaken. However, engaging in arts-based research methods and employing play serve to both highlight and benefit from the ambiguity and contradiction inherent to social science research, and to experiences of violence. From the Ancient Greeks to Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (influential in performance and magic circles alike), it is well understood that societies cannot flourish without play, performance, and creativity. That power of play can be harnessed in research into areas of seemingly incongruous seriousness, where the manifold versatility and diversity of performing arts can be used to candidly understand and tackle the profound, persistent relationship between violence, enjoyment, improvisation, and pain across time and space.

The research project described in this article demonstrates the need to find ways of acknowledging aporia—and the spaces it creates—for academic enquiry. In this case, the songs sung by women in Sierra Leone sounded happy and unified but the content of the songs was sad, violent, and expressed profound experiences of pain. This work leaves significant scope for ambiguous and ambivalent understandings that are not straightforward, but that reflect the tension and complexity of the contexts in which SGBV (and violence generally) emerges. To paraphrase Dada surrealist Tristan Tzara, playful arts methods give a space for "yes" and "no" to come together at the same time (Tzara 1922), embracing the contradictions of everyday life and reflecting the fraught and entangled complexities endemic to the experiences of SGBV. Comments, answers, and experiences articulated during the project were fluid and sometimes contradictory or conflictual. For instance, it was common for male participants to say that they enjoyed the event and were against SGBV but that they disagreed with some of the views and experiences expressed about SGBV, or that they engaged more with the interactive drama scenes than with songs. Contradictions are productive and provide an insight, as well as a challenge for future research. In this project, the openness facilitated by the arts-based approach helped male participants to speak candidly, in distinction from the rehearsed, performative responses that can arise in fieldwork, perhaps especially in communities used to such activity.

We argue that making space for ambiguity and improvisation does not represent "unprepared" or necessarily "inconclusive" research but rather allows the researcher to encounter the unknown and the unexpected more fully, which arguably is how research really thrives in any field. Violence-based research should, therefore, be understood as experiential. Performance-based methodologies help researchers to identify and open up ambiguities and paradoxes, rather than dismissing them because they do not convert straightforwardly into quantifiable data. Such methods create circumstances for understanding nuances, and where contradictions can (co-)exist without critically undermining the project. It is, therefore, vital to engage with communities on their own terms and align methods that permit these local cultural sensibilities to emerge.

The methods and findings here could also extend to feminist research methodologies, which are often aimed to investigate gendered power dynamics in order to not just explain but address social justice issues (Ackerly and True 2019). While our research investigated the experiences and agency of women in the context of everyday violence, it also highlights how the experiences within the methodology itself are equally as critical as the information produced by those methods. While much feminist research is rightly concerned with the diagnosis and characterization of gendered oppression to address transformation, arts-based methods provide ways not only of identifying and understanding problems (songs as knowledge, for instance) but also of bringing communities, practitioners, and researchers together in an actual *experience* in the here-and-now. In itself, that experience is highly unlikely to lead to a radical positive transformation. At the same time, the experience, particularly when codesigned and locally driven, opens up improvised conversations and activities (such as pain and singing). Thus, arts-based methods—and our approaches—bring not only "diagnostic" potential (i.e., deepened understanding of a problem) but also an active, participatory, experiential dimension that is surely crucial to meaningful feminist methodology and social justice.

More broadly, "fun" and "playfulness" should not be dismissed in the face of sensitive subjects such as SGBV, but rather be more fully embraced and explored in greater depth. This argument extends to post-fieldwork elements of projects, moving away from the use of flat, binary data as evidence and results, and instead having the intellectual conviction to back the potential of this "sensory," "ludic," "proleptic" approach not only in project methods and design but also in the presentation of evidence, results, and outcomes. This does not and should not mean that academic rigor be sacrificed in favor of play and experience, as they are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, failure to acknowledge sensory and embodied forms of knowledge overlooks the complexity of research topics such as

SGBV, and academic research is not optimally served by reducing experiences of violence into data that fit into charts and graphs. Pushing the arts-based presentation of evidence and results has not been possible within the parameters of this scoping project, but we would extend the foundational propositions of this paper to suggest that post-project research could also benefit from artistic approaches. To borrow from Flower and Kelly (2019), researchers stand to benefit from publishing like an artist. This perhaps calls for a considerable shift in perception regarding the valuing of knowledge and the forms it takes. The performing arts are very well suited to producing the small "somethings," or "apertures of possibility"—often unanticipated by practitioners—that arise in moments of theatrical engagement and the here-and-now experience. Using these methods leads us to more interesting, authentic, and personal discussions and findings. As researchers, we should therefore embrace aporia, in its improvisation and all.

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