



Introduction: Approximations and Findings on Ethics, Risk, Safety, and Care in the Fields of Dance Research

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Juan: I'm not sure what we're talking about. What are ethics, risk, and safety in dance research?

Polina: To me, first, they were permissions and consent forms, information sheets, privacy notices, emergency assessments, ethical review boards. I was a very confused undergraduate student. I was planning research in my home country in the framework of a foreign institution that made me look at my home in a way that made it alien, a terrain of risks to be calculated more than anything else. But this is supposed to be professional anthropology. You fill the papers out, you hope they'll fly. To fill them out, you consult a website that gives you a score for terrorist threats in your region of research. Who decides this? Where is this concern coming from? You don't know. It's British procedure, it's there to protect you. You have a template of risks, and then you develop a mitigation strategy for each: what will I do to not get killed, what will I do to ensure I'm not raped? How will I walk into an unfamiliar setting and instantly know how to protect people from reputational harm or distress? How will I bridge distrust? Fieldworkers and participants are separate categories. Is it safe to go to this country?

What if it's my home country? It doesn't matter, there's a website that will decide for you, and then the board will review it. Color code your outlined risks. Turn them from orange to yellow (because only European countries have green risk levels). Red means no-go. Have clear methods that correspond to your research questions; don't burden your interlocutors. Know what the research will look like.

No silliness, it all must be logical. And then when the ethics committee has granted that your research sounds ethical for all parties involved, go. And do whatever it is that will get the research done.

Is this safe?

Juan: It does not sound safe at all.

To me, ethics in research came during my bachelor's in anthropology in Colombia, which, by the way, is colored yellow, orange, and red in a world risk map I recently discovered. Although the discipline in my country still has many ethical considerations to learn, Latin American human sciences have spent quite a long time understanding how to move into more horizontal ways of knowing that can be safer for the researchers and the researched. (A kind of awakening amid postcolonial times.) I was lucky to be warned that I, as a researcher, could be simultaneously the researcher and the researched (as Marita Matar suggests with her contribution). A few years later, some thousands of kilometers away, European professors discouraged me from doing auto-ethnography. (Do you [the professor] really think that looking at ourselves reflexively and scientifically reduces our action to *crying in the corner*?) I first consciously sensed the matter of safety and risk when finding myself in situations of harm in Europe. Who would think this could happen in green-colored

zones? There you are, places don't necessarily need to be red-shaded to present a threat to researchers. It's just a different kind of unsafety. It depends on who you are and where you are walking around, how you imagine the spaces you are in, and how they really are. I traveled to Europe to study a master's program in anthropology of dance. A first-timer being a queer migrant "sudaca." Eurocentered instruction made me obsessed—again—with researching other people and places. (Where was I?)

I was not allowed to do research in my home country, and this was a funding requirement. (I wonder why we don't think more about the commonalities between the researchers and the researched when picking a subject of "interest.")

Why discovering?

We were supposed to be experiencing the excitement of dancing with others while compiling field notes about the in quotations. Unfamiliarity with these spaces resulted in an unsettling feeling of being far away from home. Some places make you feel that you just don't belong, and I think researchers fight against this because we try our hardest to see from the "inside." (But not from inside ourselves!)

I ended up dancing and watching people dance in nightclubs in Berlin: hyper-stimuli. New striking experiences of almost spiritual transcendence and self-discovery accompanied the moments of multicultural, multigender, hypersexual and pluri-chemical pleasure and politics. Sex (I felt I was discovering my flesh for the first time), drugs (the first time), medicines and injections (for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*), boundaries (what do you mean? *Límites?* *Como los de un mapa?*), or panic attacks (the first one in my life). All of this happened while I was "researching."

By the end of my fieldwork, I left the city ill. Although grateful for my “discoveries” and indebted to the transformative moments I lived and the informants who became friends, it came with the price of exceeding myself. I did not ask myself where my body started, the field ended, and vice versa. What was research, and what was daily life? I was always walking on the edges.

Polina: Theft or attack when walking locally,
road traffic accident,
struck by a vehicle while walking,
poor driving standards,
infections; bites; waste; cleanliness; anxiety and stress,
inability to access adequate medical care in case of
emergency,
inability to contact or be contacted in an emergency,
potentially increasing severity of issue,
breaching code of ethics by revealing location via social
media,
rainstorm, cold, snow; slips, trips and falls, power
outages; Risk of robbery, physical or sexual assault;
kidnap; terrorism; social unrest,
physical defects of accommodation; Risk of fire,
risk of robbery, physical or sexual assault,
terrorist incidents,
robbery or physical or sexual assault; kidnap; terrorism;
social unrest.

All individual factors which may require further
consideration (age, disability, physical and mental
health, etc.) should be considered, and any individual
health special considerations.

Control. Control. Control. Control.

Care figured among all of this as a state of being. You were either expected to be in a situation that called for you to "Stop!" or "Alert" or "Caution" or "Care." The responses were evaluated based on the level of harm that may come from a situation. What they meant in practice, I wasn't sure. I settled on a constant state of agitation, like everything I encountered was pricking my skin, like I was gulping down the stories I was hearing and seeing that were too raw for my system. To deal with the intensity, I had to find outlets, usually dance. I remembered to shift gears—alert, alert—when encountering something strange.

The heightened awareness came naturally, it was the anxiety of procedure, of expectation that was paralyzing.

As someone who primarily works within my home country, I have found institutional risk assessments, especially when they come from a Western European/ North American perspective, amusing at best, delusional in practice, and harmful psychologically. Similarly, interlocutors often perceive such institutional frameworks as something that appropriates their agency rather than secures it. That the procedure protects the institution, not them. This is without even starting a discussion on exoticization. What I did find, right there "in the field", is that these guidelines often were in conflict with my cultural sense of ethics, with the behaviors that I have learned to function and protect myself in society. But I am, to a certain extent, "at home." As such, the intertwinement is so personal and the fieldwork fears hit me right in my underbelly because there was no part of me that was not immersed. Russia in 2022 was a place of compartmentalization and instrumentalization, and my effort to do scholarship of

empathy was against my own instincts of protection. The intensity of experience and my desperate attempts to intellectualize it, to make it make sense, conspired into a mess of pain that I am still unraveling. Every time I return to my work and my memories of self from that period, I see a new dimension of the ethics I was balancing on the abyss of intra- and inter-cultural violence, a risk I couldn't put my finger on, a feeling of safety that was fleeting. For a researcher whose instincts for self-preservation and politeness are not aligned with their research locale, what can they do, other than rely on institutional procedure? Whether one engages in autoethnographic performance or ethnochoreology, we all bring ourselves as the point of departure and as a tool to the field because it's all we've got. We think that we can bend ourselves into the direction of research but most of the time we can only follow it. Like in partnered dance.

It was in a dance department that I heard an academic+performer answer questions about her work simply with "I'm interested in..." She was talking about the choices behind a performance she had made. It struck me that that is the only explanation we have for the things we do, including research, and the most truthful one. The wisdom of Tara's words has resonated with me as I've tried to understand why we go to the extremes that we do in our work and care. We may construct arguments about it being necessary, about there being a gap in literature, a lack of understanding, a dearth of materials or approaches. But any motivation starts with the "I'm interested in..."

Juan: The *where* and *why* of my interests was the first door I opened to enter my "field." However, when I was

making my presentation (about a former project about dance's role in today's Lebanon's socioeconomic crisis that could never be realized because of a rejected visa), I knew there was something else. "I was interested" in the politics of dance in contexts of bodily and social urgency. An imaginary field, which I had pictured using Google photos and the accounts from my closest Lebanese friend, was already smelling of risk. (Where is this fear coming from?)

We presented our initiatives and were asked questions. No caring conversations were present; rather, a discomposing inquiry directed to the non-green-country people in the room: How "safe" is... this country? (Where is this fear coming from?)

Conversations about safety were reduced to triggering geopolitically embodied sensitivities and silently hidden ethnocentrisms.

Topics about ethics, risk, and safety in dance research are challenging to grasp. Whether we try to touch these notions discursively or rationally through logocentric ways of knowing—and feeling—they always depart from inside the skin. Sarah Ahmed (2001) suggests we think through the skin. As bodily experiences, these notions can travel from body to body through word, touch, or gesture. That's why I feel more familiar with the rationale of these terms when performing, for example, contact improvisation. You can feel a risk, look for safety and ethically respect and care for each other's bodies and spaces through the non-verbal, as Sam Wentz and his team of movers show in this issue. Such interactions can be intense, threatening, and dangerous. In dance, research, and dance research, the body might get shaken, struck, and even traumatized.

When it comes to emotions or affects, clarity for me came with time and space, with days and distance, a kind of slowness and amplitude that, nonetheless, sometimes interferes with the urgency of reaction. Are these experiences part of my research? How do I account for the body? The always infuriating but obsessive question of dance/body research: How do I put what I feel and sense into words? While words are often used to rush time and to collapse space, they can also make room and extend seconds to a conversation, as we all do in this issue. What seems explicit to me is that ethics, risk, safety, and care are more evident when I consider them as bodily reactions, always having a material impact on the immediate physical and social surroundings, often working silently but intensely. That's why talking about these topics is about how I experience life with my body, which always happens every second I exist in every inch of the space I occupy.

Juan and Polina: So, we talk about:

→ **Ethics:** the sum of the sensibilities and practices that ensure we carry out our work with the aim of treating everyone involved with dignity—in their cultural-specific interpretation of it—to make knowledge that is accountable and inclusive.

Ethics is a way of understanding how we are relationally woven with the world.

A way to depend on others.

→ **Risk:** the events, situations, relationships, and reactions that may arise in the process of research that challenge the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of the researcher and the community.

A way to feel vertigo.

→ **Safety:** the social and physical environments that allow researchers and participants to feel protected, release tension, and be open to sensitive and aware engagement.

A way to sense home.

and

→ **Care:** a feeling of concern for the well-being of ourselves and others.

A way to design the future.

Polina: What about violence?

Juan: Ethics, risk, and safety are subjects often linked to violence because they might lead to it or mitigate it. Care spreads along the way as protection. Violence is a subject that, although it had been silently present in my life for more than two decades in Colombia (normalized street insecurity, kidnapping, massacres, and corruption), it suddenly seemed to become more harshly omnipresent around me since 2023. An apparent global “order” crumbled: Ukraine, Palestine, Congo, Sudan, Ecuador, El Salvador... Colombia as well... . Violence comes unexpectedly but remains, and as research, thinking, and remembering it let me know how my body learned to survive in ways I thought were typical stable paths of being—or crawling—in the world. Most importantly, violence triggers the heart and squeezes it with tremendous pressure. To this, ecstatic frenzy can release—collective and bodily frenzy, more specifically—when dancing.

Polina: You may forget you exist, you may not recognize your body, you may become so disconnected from your context that you constantly seek refuge elsewhere,

emotional and psychological as well as physical; you may feel you need to lean further into the pain, the grief, the mourning, the misunderstanding. You may stop talking to your family or find an indelible need to speak to them, to make sure they're okay. You will most likely be angry, hurt, scared, overwhelmed, exhausted. It'll come from your body and creep into it, take root if you try to suppress it, it'll somatize like sourdough. This turmoil is seen as an inhibition of the delineated and deliverable research process, a compilation to be worked around and against. This does not bode well especially for researchers who encounter those echoes of violence within themselves because they, too, are the field. As academia slowly becomes more diverse, it encompasses more and more people with backgrounds that used to be on the side of "research," not "researcher." So how do we make sure these people can cope? How can they encounter themselves? For me, working with people, including myself, is exposing yourself to the possibilities and potentialities of "dis":

Dis-connect
 Dis-place
 Dis-engage
 Dis-appoint
 Dis-illusion
 Dis-regard
 Dis-appearance
 Dis-ruption
 Dis-agreement
 Dis-identification
 Dis-traction
 Dis-possession
 Dis-sonance
 Dis-orientation

For yourself as a person, violence or not, all of this is a dis-location. The tension held in those hyphens is the key to both “successful” research and sustained researchers. You bring something else into and onto yourself, engraving it in the flesh and psyche. This changes who you are and the mis/recognition of the self in this new well of meanings is how we know we are understanding, not just observing. Do not interpret the “dis” negatively. In social sciences, a concern for an elusive constrictive objectivity has already been partly reconceptualized as an awareness of place, thus we speak of positionality. A search for dynamism is now underway. When so much of the current intellectual and humanistic work is in peeling away the narratives that have already been attached, the ones that are *there* to obscure complexity—whether this be done through decolonial scholarship, queer theory, or simply looking further into people’s lives than the news and national stereotypes—these processes of “dis”-ing are centered on *here*. Here: in, of, and around the body as one that moves and transforms.

As dancers, we are more aware of our kinesthetics and performativities in our work and life. Working with our bodies makes us more sensitized to feel the unspeakable consciously. Every so regularly, we take this as a matter of our work. Conversations on ethics, risk, and safety in life and research let me see how embodied strategies of navigation, escape or processing need to be reflected upon to build more accountable, responsible, and re-distributed lives where care can put us all around the same pages, looking each other in our eyes, and sensing our multidimensional bodies in the multidimensionality of the social and

physical spaces we inhabit. This issue is a way to do it.

Juan and I, as former classmates, have found ourselves putting together a volume on ethics, risk, and safety because it was the intersection of the paths of our interests. Whosever fieldwork we discussed, we saw ethical dilemmas unfold and, if unaccounted for, they morphed into risk. This symbiotic process at times felt out of control, beyond our grasp of rational because it was firstly emotional and reactive, unhemmed by the frames of “acceptable” methodology. But in compiling this volume and reflecting, we have come to see that ethics, risk, and safety are not abstract. They do not float in midair, lingering along the lines of personal boundaries, and are not codified on paper or in tradition. They are not cancel culture. They start with that very sentence, “I’m interested in...”—personal, contextual, winding, evolving. We invite you to wind along with us and to explore the multiple “re-”s.

Re-connect
 Re-engage
 Re-appearance
 Re-identification
 Re-sonance
 Re-semblance
 Re-claiming
 Re-starting
 Re-evaluating
 Re-loading
 Re-generating
 Re-sult
 Re-solve

Talk About “the Field”

Polina: Hyperconnected, hyperdimensional. How many dimensions? 2D? 3D? Have you ever seen those arcade rides that advertise something ridiculous like 36D or 55D? Well, that’s closer to what field research feels like.

Too much stimuli, and you only have so many tools to capture it all. At the same time, never enough.

When I think about “the field,” I always picture a big field of corn, the kind I see in the Midwest of the US. By the end of the summer, it grows so tall, one can’t see other cars rolling up to the intersection (lots of four-way stop signs). It creates an assumption of aloneness that becomes dangerous. Though this metaphor may seem funny, upon prodding, we may find that our ideas of a field of research are largely constituted by such agrarian metaphors because field research owes its emergence to the colonial era, with tall tales to complete it. We think that as long as we keep the scale manageable—no plantations, only fields—we can ensure a level of fair distribution. On the other hand, there are the lawns, the private representatively unproductive spaces of people’s houses—the other side of colonial power. The monoculture of grass. These metaphors also show an imagination of the field as an empty space that must be “filled” by the researcher’s actions, regulated and authoritative. Social sciences try to keep an eye on both. Even if contemporary research has tried to expand our imagination, in representation we often resort to placarding livelihoods the same way we sell vegetables, under a canopy of advertisements that the produce is certified organic. Think ethnographic and ethnological collections, indigeneity in natural history

museums. "Authenticity." But what are the activities that populate the space of the field, cultivate it? The plowing, the sowing, the fertilizing, the watering, the harvesting. They are done *with* the field, continuously adapted, and creative. Though organic, we have largely come to regard these activities as mechanistic. Similarly, with field research: though we come to look at human activity and creativity, we make our methods measurable, we see our output as rational. How do we move towards the improvisational, the ecological? There are new concepts of the movable field emerging, such as can be contrived in Günel and Watanebe's work on patchwork ethnography (2024). At the same time, when we try to move too widely and reach too openly, our grasp comes back empty; there is an emergent discussion on the need to bind fields (Candea, 2007). We have unbound them to such an extent that we can no longer grow with them, and this poses foremostly a problem not to the metaphor of the field but to the way we move with it.

Juan: It's funny that you mention multidimensions because I try to picture the *field* in my mind similarly. However, I can't see it as a field of corn because I've never been to one. I've seen many coffee plantations in Colombia. Still, they don't quite fit our talk because the terrain is too hilly, and that is already bringing a topographical complexity that, in abstract terms, research lacks to grasp (but should). Complexity is fluidness and flexibility, and research tends not to be happy with this. The field of corn reminds me of a book called "Tales from the Field," which I was recommended to read to guide me through how to write field notes for my dissertation: it shows an exceptionally and oddly perfect grass field. My

mom says you can get lost in a field of corn because you lose the horizon, but not so easily in a coffee plantation because you can always see the specificities of where you are. Complexity somehow gives a feeling of orientation because you have more visible clues to follow, reject, question, and align with. As in the coffee plantation, complexity, at the end of the day, is to understand how those many influences and stimuli are affecting our body and how we, as we go through and take turns here and there (decisions), we are shaping the very space that is in front of us (research), leaving traces in the spaces we have walked over (responsibility and accountability). I think this is a beautiful (at least helpful) way to see research.

Ultimately, every way of being in the world is a way of knowing (Daston & Galison, 2010) that is situated and localized (Haraway, 2016). I need to remind myself that the self of the knower will always be an epistemological matter; knowledge does not exist independently before social interactions, as objective, already existing, and uninvolved (Josephides, 2020). Research does not exist *per se*. Yet, it comes to reality through the very action and moment of our interaction with people, objects, and spaces involving thoughts, feelings, and emotions (Josephides, 2020). As with the plantation metaphor, research (spatial turns looking for orientation) responds to directions of our already-made expectations, the emergence of the present, and our wished knowledge or experiential desires for the future.

Now, is any kind of research experience one of risk? Does dance research require safety for the researchers? And how does ethics facilitate answering these questions? I want these questions to have more weight in building research methodologies. Not aiming

to idealize dance research as emptied of tensions, dangers, or threats. Instead, I question how research navigation can prioritize our sensing bodies and how bodily experiences can be granted more importance in knowledge production and community engagement. I want my awareness of ethics, risk, and safety in dance research to increase every time, because a lack of them puts me at an unsafe risk. It needs to be an always-present filter that spreads along how I engage with my body and with researched others and environments.

What does it mean to be a researcher, and how does it relate to our sensible experience, political convictions, or memories? In academia, there is still a strong division between rational-objective knowledge and the affective dimensions of the body (Carlson, 2019). I've been asked to take emotional distance and to see from far away. When we study dance, we study bodies with our bodies, we research embodiedly (Csordas, 2002). How do we separate the affective from the practical when this is the case? (It's always the case. I think this is not possible. Rather, we should consider that affective experience in research is also part of the journey of asking questions and getting answers. A phenomenological take on this idea unravels how the directions or decisions we take when traveling to a new place, interacting with new environments, meeting new people, and engaging in new social relationships strongly influence how our experience is being shaped while constantly influencing those encounters. To this, relationship-focused understandings of life (thus research) are not too easily found in Western scholarship, but rather they are more commonly found in post-colonialist, feminist and indigenous non-Western worldviews (West et al., 2020). Research is fundamentally

an experience of living, a collection of moments of [intense] bodily interaction, grounded in how affects (how the world influences us) and emotions (how we react to it) are generated in our body in relationship with other bodies, objects, and places.

Polina: Where does the field begin and end is a question that we have pondered going into this exploration of an issue. If I sit on a chair while watching a dance class I'm researching, is the chair part of "the field"? Is my bodily contortion and muscular work of sitting on the chair "the field" or "the researcher"? What if the chair, in the vein of Sara Ahmed (2006), was not made for your body, for the way you orient in space, and as such restricts your movement before it even happens? If I know the movements that are being danced in front of me because I have danced them before and know how they feel, does that make me more proximate than other observers? Does the recognition help me see the movements more clearly or does the embodied empathy obscure things from my vision? What separates me from the dancers I am watching? Time? Space? I am also making movements: twitching my leg, turning my head to watch, shuffling in my chair. Must we be making the same movements to be of one group, to be "the field"? No movement looks exactly the same on different bodies or in different moments. So what are dance researchers after then? The knowledge of how to make a movement, join them, and choreograph? Their significance? The experience? There is no one answer; this is a question of perspective. Which is why we have focused on many perspectives: not only various methodologies and disciplines but also different perspectives on the field.

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Strategies Found, Dreams of Care and Support

How to articulate urgent conversations about ethics, risk, safety, and care amid forces of death (Gudynas, 2021) and politics of destruction nowadays impacting researchers, especially those from communities historically and structurally marginalized by Euro- and North American-centered, patriarchal, and capitalistic ways of being? Those who face a near future where “the advantaged enjoy more advantages and the disadvantaged fall further behind” (Anderson et al., 2021). Amid a disorienting contemporary multidimensional and multilayered crisis, this issue is a way to reorient ourselves towards critical and urgent ethical epistemologies and methodologies in research, or as how Arturo Escobar puts it citing the Zapatistas of Chiapas, towards *pluriversal* designs that allow all to live fearlessly within difference and to create a *world where many worlds fit* (Escobar, 2018).

But does each world present its own risks? How can they all be tracked? It is hard to talk about risk because it is linked to fear, and fear, in turn, is not tangible, is not objective (cf. Ahmed, 2004, p. 180). And even though we speak of perspectives and orientations in this issue, in the phenomenological sense and in terms of the field, fear is not simply before us, it cannot be placed; rather, it *envelops the body* (Ahmed, 2004, p. 143, italics added). What we learned from our efforts to be ethically considerate researchers through educational systems and in witnessing our peers is that ethics are often taught through fear. This is true of activism, too (which is full of gruesome imagery as a form of elicitation of response and action from the privileged). The pedagogy of both appears as one of fear because you are instructed to picture the horrors, the ones you have not and often cannot see in the experiences you have. So you can’t locate it. You wait for it, you search for it, for its *not quite present* manifestation (Ahmed, 2004, p. 148, italics in original). But like under any circumstances, we can only keep track of so many things at a time during research. And as we all have things like research questions and agendas, on the execution of which hinges our “value” as researchers, concerns for safety and

risks get pushed back. When you are no longer locating the fears somewhere concretely, they get pushed into the periphery of the mind. They become anxiety because these risky and ethically ambiguous objects are *nowhere* (Heidegger in Ahmed, 2004, p. 148, italics in original) to be seen so they are also *anywhere*. We both come from locales infamous for their necropolitics (e.g., Colombia—Gudynas, 2021; Russia—AGITATSIA, 2022) and know all too well how politics of fear dehumanize and disfigure, creating ruts and ruptures. Thus, it is important to us as persons and researchers in context to imagine and make possible strategies based on care—the only way forward. In the pieces we present in this issue, we show that though risk can and will catch you off guard and ethics may challenge your self-perception, our nuanced corporealities will pick up on them and suggest a course. A course that our contributors chart differently and thus we see it all the more important for the pieces to be in dialogue with one another. This is the reason why we have paired contributions (see Contents). We invite the reader to wade their own journey through the fields, to see the looping paths and reflect on their own.

Processing experiences of harm in research often lets us see that the boundaries between our bodies and the research spaces we navigate and inhabit are not always well-defined and that the boundaries between the body and research often get dissolved and altered in unexpected directions. We can feel more prepared to experience research as a multidimensional set of relationships by imagining ourselves transiting through different perspectives. A multidimensional field of study requires multidimensional awareness of our ways of being, seeing, and sensing. This is what our contributors show in this issue. They show that answers come from different perspectives: some contributors view the field from inside because they treat their self and its interactions with the world as their object of research; some view it from the midst of it, gaining cultural understanding as they walk through it; some reflect on their experiences from the side, as they gain knowledge from reflecting and re-understanding past experience, and others from above as they

can achieve a broader understanding of research goals when critically expanding their view on their matters. Together, they suggest that there is no singular way of positioning our body in research and that it should never be a single one.

Research ethics, when they came into academic being, were modeled mostly after the experiences of white men based at Western European and North American institutions. These ethical devices also absorbed the assumptions of such a position: that the researcher is in a position of power, that the community must be protected foremostly through anonymity. Neither this thinking nor these practices hold up. For one, as we strive to diversify academia and more space is given to researchers outside of the “West,” to womxn and queer researchers, people of color, people with varied abilities, cultural and disciplinary backgrounds, none of us experience “the field” as the white cis straight expert male researcher did and thus none of us encounter risk the way patriarchal colonialism has identified it and boxed it. And even then, we give little consideration to what the process involves for people, not just for research dynamics. Further, this is true not only for the way risk, ethics, and safety are felt and lived but also the epistemological process. As bodies taught and trained to react and protect—whether it be institutionally as Shannon Woods explores in her piece on active shooter drills or intuitively as Ana Gabriela Hernandez minutely tracks in her essay—we must honor those processes that are already at work in our bodies because ignoring them takes us further away from understanding. This volume’s first function is being a grounds of acknowledgement of what has been pushed out of research discourse.

We witness a particular moment in immediate history while writing these lines: a multimediatic and geopolitically edging world exercising profound pressures on ourselves. We know how extensive and intensive waves of xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia and misogyny, right-wing nationalisms, and, in general, politics of exclusion and death, fueled by capitalism, modern colonialism, and patriarchy are embedded in the different layers of our practice as dance researchers and our existence as human beings. To this, a rising consolidation of

more critical subjectivities and critical ways of collective action are looking to dismantle and transform these structures, such as the ones presented in this issue. These pressures affect the everydayness of our sensual selves, making it almost impossible to blind ourselves to what happens “out there” (although some use this blindness to protect themselves as well). This has propelled us to reach (and render reachable) talks about ethics, risk, and safety for our lives and the futures we can almost taste when having conversations like the one unfolding in this issue of *Conversations*. It was an exciting but challenging opportunity to direct this conversation from and towards concerns and fears that impacted our bodies, informed by experiences and accounts of confusing and dangerous research situations. We are grateful for all the scholarship that has come before ours and shaped our thinking; for the scholarship that is emerging alongside this issue and in whose company we find even greater reason for hope; and for the scholarship that we trust this volume will catalyze and transform us further. What has been most significant about editing this issue is the possibility of facilitating a common ground for critical reflection where different voices could step on to verbalize, denounce, process, and even heal. We hope this set of actions can be replicated every time this issue is read and shared.

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