

QUALITATIVE INQUIRIES IN MUSIC THERAPY:

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This volume includes the next three *re-storying* contributions and three new submissions. In the first of the re-storying contributions, Yadira Albornoz shares her thoughts about how she would write differently today about the topic of her original contribution, “crying in music therapy” which appeared in 2013 in QIMT. It is with her own indigenous voice that Albornoz responds to the re-storying invitation—taking the opportunity as a Western-trained music therapist and Karíña descendent to share and inform about the experience of integrating Indigenous knowledge into her practice in Venezuela. Through re-voicing music therapy in Indigenous conceptual language, it becomes possible to rationally re-describe experiences in indigenous arts-culture commonly made to seem “illogical” by “conventional scientific thinking.” Through six reflections, Albornoz creates a rich vignette which exemplifies diverse ways in which the beliefs, principles, and forms of knowledge of Indigenous cultures are inseparable from processes of spiritual and existential balance attained through music and the arts in therapy.

Laurel Young has contributed the second re-storying to this volume and revisits her 2012 publication which reported her doctoral research which studies client’s experiences of the postlude discussions in Guided Imagery and Music. Young begins her re-storying with a portrayal of the development of the original study and resulting publication in QIMT. In the early stages of her re-storying, she also shares her reflections about the potential implications of such a re-storying process. After a short analysis of publications that refer to her original publication, Young introduces the original study before considering what she might do differently in the study if she should conduct the study now. Through a careful analysis of her personal and professional life experiences in the time since the original study, Young offers insights into some of the methodological adaptations or additions that she would now include, such as a heuristic component, participant checking of interpretation and different forms of sampling. Before concluding, Young also describes how many of these adaptations can be related to changes in methodological rationale for research and the need for training in verbal skills for all music therapists, not only those familiar with the GIM postlude. Young closes by sharing how she remains inspired by the participants’ stories and by the many ways clinical music therapy research can contribute in “useful, authentic and meaningful ways as it continues to evolve over time.”

Michael Zanders has contributed the third re-storying piece for this volume in which he revisits his experiences of carrying out his doctoral research which focused on the metaphors clients use to describe their experiences in BMGIM which was originally published in 2008 in QIMT. Zanders’s re-storying, written in the form of a dramaturgical script in nine scenes, is an immersive reflection on his role as a young PhD student moving through scenes within the classroom, therapy room, and to close “in a serene park, bathed in golden sunlight.” Through the dramaturgical script format, Zanders shares not only the observable, visible aspects of the qualitative study, but also the inner, unspoken thoughts of protagonist and antagonist—their experiences of the research material and of equal importance in this self-ethnographic piece, the experiences of the PhD researcher. At the heart of the re-storying is the enlightened shifting between the development of an understanding of qualitative methodology and the dedication to gaining a deeper insight to clients’ experiences. Working through the significant theme of the disorientating effects of the demands of conventional academic writing, Zanders’s dramaturgical re-storying speaks volumes about the significance not only of the experiences of the storyteller, but also of the significance of the expressive narrative form for the author, so that, as in Zanders’s final scene, “Their voice, filled with newfound clarity and peace, resonates through the air.”

kei slaughter's contribution, "Come as you are: A queersouthernblackpreacherboi finds safe haven through arts-based autoethnography," offers a window into their autoethnographic retrospective exploration of queer adolescence whilst growing up in the Black Church. "Come as you are" provides witness to an individual's creative, spirit-filled, and dedicated immersion to go deeper into seemingly unsurpassable differences from earlier life and look forwards through the domains of "personal protections," "critical arts-based inquiry as social justice," and "queerBlack Church aesthetics." As an autoethnography, slaughter traverses individual experience and societal relevance. As an arts-based autoethnography they provide light upon the power of music, image, and text in research that respects, yet traverses method and convention. As an arts-based autoethnography in music therapy, slaughter's work traverses belief and change in the field which can be informed by their reflection "on what it means to activate the meta-actual Black Church within my being, to embody radical authenticity, and to co-create Trans-denominational portals of possibility and full-being soul aliveness amidst a tumultuous sociopolitical climate of prejudice and discrimination, victimization and violence."

In their contribution to this volume, Victoria Davenport, Bethany Lindeblad, and Candice Bain present a study on the lived experiences of transracially adopted (TRA) music therapists. Their study, a qualitative interview study utilizing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, created the possibility for six participants to discuss with the researchers "how TRA status influences music therapy practice and supervision experiences." The analysis of the interview transcripts was used to identify three overarching domains, 1) harm experienced in childhood, 2) microaggressions, and 3) TRA identity in music therapy. Within these three domains the researchers provide a wide scope of themes and a rich selection of excerpts from the interview transcripts. The study is exemplary in its capacity to meaningfully engage in themes of complex intersectionality such as adoption, trauma, and race. By addressing the lived experiences of this small number of individuals, this contribution highlights the significance of such studies in introducing to the field significant issues that demand attention from all music therapists. As the authors share in their contribution, "One participant simply wished that non-TRA MTs would take the time to listen more to TRA MTs stories and experiences." Thanks to the participants and authors of this contribution, this wish takes an important step closer to being realized.

In her contribution, Candice Bain writes about her study of potentials and barriers to culturally responsive music therapy education in the U.S. through the perspective of music therapy educators. Earlier studies have increasingly demonstrated a need for a greater level of knowledge and expertise for therapists in providing culturally responsive therapy. This study however takes a systems-thinking approach to explore 1) how current music therapy educators define cultural responsiveness, 2) which recommendations they have for cultivating it in music therapy students, and 3) what they perceive as potentials and barriers to cultural responsiveness in music therapy education and practice. The focus group responses provided the basis for the identification of six overarching themes: defining cultural responsiveness, relevance to clinical practice, approaches in education, preparedness, institutional attitudes, and barriers. The detailed level of descriptors and insights regarding the role of possibilities and barriers provide an excellent resource for all entities involved in music therapy education. In her study and collaboration with the focus group participants, Bain has provided a detailed exposition of significant matters of concern which, if seriously taken into action, can provide an alternative to cultural superficiality. These matters of concern are significant foundational values and as Bain concludes, "Above all, there is a need for music therapy to transform into a clinical profession that values cultural responsiveness, and thus social justice, equality, and liberation."

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