

Poetry and Participation: Scripting a Meaningful Research Text With Rape Crisis Workers

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methodology; rape
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poetry

Abstract: This article explores issues of representation and the development of participatory practices in the context of researching women's experiences of training to be rape crisis counselors. In moving between context and methods, research generated poetry, participants' responses and preferences, and discussion of textual presences, the layered text format invites the reader to develop a sense of how the reflective practitioner may negotiate, and constantly renegotiate, the unstable nature of what it means to represent both *self/ves* and Others within participatory qualitative research.

Table of Contents

- [1. Layers](#)
- [2. Context and Methods / Textual Presences](#)
- [3. Poem](#)
- [4. Context and Methods](#)
- [5. Context and Methods / Responses and Preferences](#)
- [6. Context and Methods](#)
- [7. Responses and Preferences](#)
- [8. Poem](#)
- [9. Responses and Preferences](#)
- [10. Context and Methods](#)
- [11. Responses and Preferences](#)
- [12. Textual Presences](#)
- [13. Context and Methods](#)
- [14. Poem](#)
- [15. Context and Methods / Textual Presences](#)
- [16. Responses and Preferences / Textual Presences](#)
- [17. Poem](#)
- [18. Responses and Preferences](#)
- [19. Textual Presences](#)
- [20. Context and Methods](#)
- [21. Poem](#)
- [22. Textual Presences](#)
- [23. Responses and Preferences](#)
- [24. Context and Methods](#)
- [25. Layers](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[References](#)

[Author](#)

[Citation](#)

1. Layers

This article uses a layered text (RAMBO RONAI, 1995; RATH, 2009) to investigate issues of representation and the development of participatory practices in the context of researching women's experiences of training to be rape crisis counselors. The acts of layering reject the game of the researcher as author creating a stable textual self through which to view stable research participants as Others. The layered format seeks to question taken-for-granted-meanings and invite the reader into the text to fill the empty spaces that are deliberately left for her/him to construct her/his own interpretation. The scripting of this layered text knows (and shows) that textual effects cannot be stripped away to expose a core, a kernel, a true thrust, as there is none to reveal. Meaning is dispersed throughout the text, through the inseparable interplay of content-meaning. The layered text is intended to provide readers with an unstable sense of how the researcher as author may negotiate, and constantly renegotiate, what it means to represent both *self/ves* and Others. [1]

The article moves between four different layers (inevitably at times the messiness of the text: calls for layers to be merged):

- Context and methods: This layer provides background regarding the rape crisis context and the methods used during the research. In it I discuss the use of poetry and outline the reasons why women within the rape crisis movement are amenable to the creation of poetry-like sequences as part of a research process.
- Poems: This layer consists of poems crafted from interview materials, including one poem (entitled "Birth Pangs") created by a research participant. The context and methods layer includes an explanation of the interviews and of the process by which interview transcripts were shaped to form these poems.
- Responses and preferences: This layer uses (and discusses research participants' preference for) verbatim quotes generated during the research process. It includes interview transcripts, a letter from a participant and illustrations in the form of cartoons drawn by a participant.
- Textual presences: This layer explores research's crisis of representation and the implications of the death (and possible rebirth) of the author for participatory research practices. [2]

This layered approach to research brings to light the multiple locations of readers. I agree with Christina HUGHES (2002, p.411) that researchers need to develop practices that recognize our audiences as "multiply located and subjectively-in-

process." Each textual layer must contain substantive content; yet content is recognized as unstable—always mobile, always provisional. The layered structure provokes ways to write, think and read that are supplements to analytical reason. The layers' associative links, inter-textual elements and textual juxtapositions work in ways that are concerned with creating, generating and preserving knowledge rather than with the mere ordering of the already known. This layered account is an invitation to readers to participate actively in constructing meanings and assigning values. At times, the layered text may appear rather like a conventional "work in progress" before its eventual synthesis. Yet, this is not a text wherein each step precedes the next in a simple trajectory that leads to the final work. Such texts are:

"not a work awaiting a better, more perfect stage of realization. Inevitably, a work is always a form of tangible closure. But closures need not close off; they can be doors opening onto other closures and functioning as ongoing passages to an elsewhere (-within-here)" (TRINH, 1991, p.15). [3]

Layered texts encourage readers to loosen the boundaries of their expectations. They prompt understandings that reject being caught up in "the cacophony of findings and absolutes, confounds and protocols, Truth and validity" (MacKENZIE, 2008). Readers are requested to play with the paradoxes of the text and to conceive of the layers as non-linear. That is to say, the form rejects a linear relationship's proportionality. In a linear relationship the magnitudes of cause and effect generally correspond; small causes give rise to small effects, large causes to large effects. Whereas, a non-linear relationship denotes an incongruity between cause and effect; a small cause can give rise to a large effect. [4]

2. Context and Methods / Textual Presences

I agree with Laurel RICHARDSON (1990, p.38) that "writing strategies are not just literary or scientific choices: they are moral decisions." I want to craft an authentic text in which all parties recognize themselves, and perceive their-own-stories of rape crisis pedagogy (ironically noting that this provides the most powerful warrant for my account). Although the connections between text and lived experience remain obscure, I do wish to generate stories that speak to the logic and cultures of these women. I am aware of my ethical responsibilities. I am held in dynamic tension between the postmodernist impulse to interrogate the author and challenge distinctions between fact and fiction, and the feminist impulse to use participative research to "give voice" to those who have been silenced. I acknowledge the common researcher strategy of using quotations in the textual construction of authenticity (GOLDHILL, 1993; ATKINSON, 1990). Rather than leave cracks through which "the illusion of the authentic kept on leaking here and there" (TRINH, 1992, p.172), the text is structured to call attention to these leakages. As TRINH writes: "Factual authenticity relies heavily on the Other's words and testimony. To authenticate a work, it becomes therefore most important to prove or make evident how this Other has participated in the making of his/her own image" (1991, pp.66-67). [5]

Hence, authenticity becomes a textual accomplishment appealing to a "reality" through conforming to the established rules concerning what "the real" looks like. [6]

3. Poem

It was challenging lots and lots of things

I couldn't hack it

I had to stop

I just felt like—

I had nothing

Nothing I could get hold of

Nothing I could rely on

It was good

I didn't think it was

I didn't think it was good

It wasn't how I wanted it to be

I couldn't see where it was going

or what we were doing

or what we were achieving

I couldn't get a grip on it.

Which was its virtue [7]

4. Context and Methods

This participative, qualitative study took place in a rape crisis center in central England and focused on the ways in which women make sense of their volunteer training in the contexts of rape crisis work and within their lives more broadly. All women who had attended rape crisis initial volunteer training at the center during the previous two years were invited to take part in a series of in-depth, unstructured, recorded, individual interviews (each of the eight women who took part in this portion of the project was interviewed at least twice). All existing members of the rape crisis collective contributed to group sessions and/or provided individual input in verbal or written form, this included women

I remain suspicious of "context" as it implies a bounded entity that exists in some objective time and place, and can therefore be entered and exited. To provide context is not to magically compress the research project, to say all that can be said, to capture some essential meaningful quality. In writing of "context and method" I seek to acknowledge the dangers of the prescriptive stipulation of context with its essentialist connotations of a drive to reduce ambiguity. To formalize context is to delimit in advance, to permit attention only to that which is included. Context places constraints that stipulate the form that a subject can take within that delineated space. I also follow Patti LATHER's (1991) strategy of resisting

who worked as rape crisis counselor trainers. I adopted a variety of approaches to "find out" about the rape crisis center and the stories told about its initial volunteer counselor training. These included: the individual interviews during which women spoke of their recollections of rape crisis training; working as a rape crisis volunteer counselor and training course facilitator (both of which were part of my ongoing commitment to the center before, during and after the research); undertaking group interviews with volunteers; reviewing rape crisis documents including statement of principles, minutes of meetings, recruitment information, publicity and training materials; being interviewed by a research participant; sharing and discussing poems and other research texts as they were produced; taking part in ongoing discussions with participants, researchers, my friends, and family members; writing and reading collaboratively with research participants.

the desire to reinstate a notion of a subject's transparency via the inclusion of copious identifying information such as the class, race, age, sexual orientation, etc, of participants. Context, is indeed "a con" of the text. This context called rape crisis and this context of the research project and methods are inscriptive. They do not equate to a temporal, spatial or social unity. Yet, I cannot refuse context, for we all need "somewhere" from which to write, but in foregrounding that it is problematic I am acknowledging the particular danger of something one cannot not use. [8]

The women were encouraged to talk about their experiences of the volunteer training in relation to events at, and away from, the rape crisis center. I began each initial individual interview with a request to tell re-collections of the rape crisis training course within a life story narrative. Thereafter, I trusted participants to speak about rape crisis volunteering in ways that were meaningful to them. I did not "pull them back" to the rape crisis experience as I defined it. This method of interviewing was influenced by the work of Catherine Kohler RIESSMAN (1993) who suggests that to enable women to tell extended accounts, researchers need to approach a topic that is of abiding interest to the participant and then be prepared to listen attentively and question collaboratively. [9]

When I asked women to tell me of their experiences, these past moments are rescued not as spectacles for nostalgic contemplation but as "tools for opening up the present" (ULMER, 1989, p.112). Here qualitative data does not represent phenomena to be explained, but a "toolbox" to help provoke expanded thought. One approach was to use interview transcripts to generate poems. In crafting the poems I used the words as transcribed, in the same order, with no additions, with no extra repetitions and with the emphasis as heard on the tape recordings. The transcripts, themes and poems were shared with participants for further discussion. As part of the collaborative process, I was interviewed by a member of the rape crisis center about my experiences of training to be a counselor and of conducting the research. She scripted poems from the interview transcript

using the same approach I adopted of retaining order and emphasis. The poems were shared with participants in the same way as those of all women. [10]

5. Context and Methods / Responses and Preferences

We did not pretend that the research interview was a private conversation upon which the tape recorder eavesdrops: "research relationships are in some senses public, which creates inescapable tensions if we seek to regard them as purely private ones" (RIBBENS, 1989, p.579). This crowdedness invites not just the multiple selves of the participant and researcher, but also the multiplicity of any potential audiences. Here is how one woman responded to my query about who she perceives her audience to be when being interviewed:

Jean And who's your audience now?
Gina Oooo you could get a T.V. show (in mock Northeast England accent).
Jean (Laughs).
Gina Errmm. Who's my audience? That's hard isn't it? Cos it's not known. And I like to approach things with an audience in mind. Which is why I'm not comfortable with this—perhaps.
 Cos I can't tailor it. Cos I don't know who the audience is, the eventual audience. You're an audience but you're interim aren't you? So, it's untidy. [11]

6. Context and Methods

A range of researchers have used poetry to represent qualitative research materials because of poetry's qualities of not shying away from either ambiguity or indeterminacy, and because of poetry's cultural associations with communicating "the emotional" (see Monica PRENDERGAST [2009] for a review of the use of poetry in social science qualitative research practices). Within postmodern and liberatory discourses the use of poetry has been important in unsettling expectations of what constitutes acceptable "academic knowledge." It foregrounds not only its own constructedness but also the dominant role of the prose trope in constituting knowledge: "When we read or hear poetry, we are continually nudged into recognizing that the text has been constructed. But all texts are constructed—prose ones, too; therefore, poetry helps problematize reliability, validity, and 'truth'" (RICHARDSON, 1994, p.522). [12]

7. Responses and Preferences



Illustration 1: The gypsy creams [13]

8. Poem

And you did feel, not on trial exactly
I'm sure that it wasn't true
but I felt that
not that you were being judged
not that what you were saying was being watched
you said things
you felt that the person was going
"Tsk, well fancy her thinking that. I'll have to change her view on that before the
end"
You went away thinking. "God knows what they thought of what I said."
cos you didn't get anything
—you didn't get any response—
whenever you said "is that right or wrong?"
"there is no right or wrong"
which I know there isn't,
but it's not a good answer when you're worrying
about what you're thinking or saying or feeling. [14]

9. Responses and Preferences

Many of the reservations that women expressed were not "to do" with the poetry but rather related to the expectations that they had with regard to academic research:

"Before I even opened your file, it is useful to note that I had certain expectations about the poetry—based partly on you and partly on the assumptions for requirements of [research] work, i.e., what I am about to read will be obscure, abstruse, fragmented, not easily understood unless thought about very hard.

Well I was wrong, and perhaps because I was wrong, that much more taken aback by the impact the poetry had on me. There were very few pieces where I didn't feel 'oh yesss, that's it ... that's Righhht' ... a little like distilled drops of my own experience and/or my experience of others' experience, bottled ... and hence very potent ... small glasses of Cointreau spring to mind ..." (Letter from "Norma," a research participant). [15]

10. Context and Methods

There are particular reasons why women within the rape crisis movement are amenable to the creation of poetry-like sequences as part of a research process. There is a tradition of creative writing, including poetic writing, by survivors of sexual abuse (e.g. BASS & THORNTON, 1991; MALONE, FARTHING & MARCE, 1996); frequently self-help books for survivors include poems (e.g. WALSH & LIDDY, 1989; BASS & DAVIS, 1990), as do books directed toward counselors and others who help survivors of sexual violence (e.g. McINTEE, 1992). Women who are, or who work with, survivors of sexual violence are used to seeing everyday experiences re-presented in poetic form. Thus, for the research participants, the re-presenting of experience as poetry text is not some retreat into a specialist and excluding discourse. [16]

11. Responses and Preferences

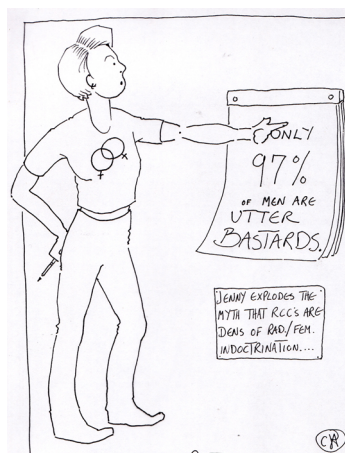


Illustration 2: Only 97% [17]

12. Textual Presences

I am not, as Roland BARTHES announced, supposing that the author is "dead" and do not agree with his assertion that the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author. Although I construct myself here as disagreeing with BARTHES' text, I am aware that there is an uncertainty as to what is meant by "death," as he also writes of a "distancing," of "the Author diminishing like a figurine at the far end of the literary stage" (1977 [1968], p.145). It is important to take into account what Maurice BIRIOTTI (1993) calls the "continuing debate" about the nature of authorship. If I am to produce a text which rejects a poetics of transparency, then in textualizing my self and research participants I must enact this debate about an author who has been unsettled, displaced and re-located (but not erased). I agree with Seán BURKE's (2008, p.29) statement that "A little like Dionysus, or Christ, the author must be dead before he can return. In a sense too, he must continue to be dead though he has returned." I seek to acknowledge my diminished role as a textual scribe. The author can no longer be seen as a transcendental signified being at once both the beginning and the end of the text. I may take responsibility for constructing the text, but I have no abiding authority over its interpretation. [18]

I have developed a view of the author's textual presence as an excess—staged in the text as the author by the author (DERRIDA, 1976). All texts are imbued with authorial presence. There is no need to advocate, as some writers do, "putting back" the author—the author never left. When "I" use "the personal," I am not writing from an individual standpoint or foregrounding the Self. I am not "expressing myself," but I am showing how *myself/ves* necessarily mediate the writing process. So, I script the irony of a researcher who seeks to undo traditional authorial strategies by unmasking their construction, yet who must in places saturate the text with "the author" in order so to do. It is important to emphasize that there is no assumption of an isomorphic relationship between the "I" the author creates in the text and the "I," the individual who writes the text. Clearly to acknowledge the division between the author of the text and the author in the text is not to automatically deny any relation between the two. As Seán BURKE (2008) notes, there is an inevitable commerce between the two subjects even though they cannot be regarded as co-substantial in space and time. [19]

13. Context and Methods

Research generated poetry is an "admitted re-arrangement of found material" (ARNOLD, 1994, p.3). The poetry arises from the qualitative research materials. In crafting poems from the transcriptions of interviews, I do something with data, rather than saying something about it. These poems all use the words as transcribed, in the same order, with no additions, with no extra repetitions and with the emphasis as heard on the tape recordings. This poetic scripting resists the desire for analytic certainty, decentering both the texts of researcher/author and the texts of participants. It foregrounds the negotiation of meaning between researcher and participants, and invites the reader into the text in order to take part in this. I believe that poetry acts to highlight issues around integrating the

researcher into the text whilst simultaneously asking what it means with/in the postmodern to "give voice" to research participants. My position is akin to that adopted by with TRINH:

"[T]he exploration of new complex subjectivities and problematizing of the subject in contemporary theory can be best carried out through poetical language—as long as poetical language is not equated with a mere aestheticizing tool nor practised as a place to consolidate a 'subjective' self. In poetry, the 'I' can never be said to simply personify an individual" (1992, p.121). [20]

14. Poem

I had this very tidy life
I had this very tidy life
And then I shook it all up.
I think about Shiatsu and rape crisis.
one is physical and one is
I'm not sure *what*
those were the two things that I *did*
those kicked in to all the other *changes*.
neither turned out like I'd expected.
I kept holding in very tight
Moving my body around let stuff out
Someone took the cork out
rape crisis was a channel. [21]

15. Context and Methods / Textual Presences

This text as a re-presentation of the participatory research process moves toward creating a dialogic community, what James SCHEURICH (1997, p.66) calls "a shifting carnival of ambiguous complexity, a moving feast of differences interrupting differences." However, this community acknowledges the impossibility of altogether escaping oppressive formations. As Michelle FINE (1994, p.75) argues there is

"no simple binary opposition of Self and Other, nor of texts that inscribe and texts that resist. There is no easy narrative litmus for Othering. Contradictions litter all narrative forms. And all narratives about Others both inscribe and resist othering." [22]

This article refuses to retreat into a powerless inactivity, instead it nudges toward further possibilities. In rejecting a seemingly unmediated recounting of tales and documenting of research events, this article acts to draw attention to the politics of the knowing and being known through a bringing forward of the complexities of

the relationships between the author of and in the text, and the research subjects of and in the text. This unsettled, and unsettling, text uses evocative and layered writing to ask not only how do I structure *myself/ves* into the text, but also, how do I position myself the storyteller of empirically generated materials? The difficulties of which are compounded by the participants' choice to remain anonymous. [23]

16. Responses and Preferences / Textual Presences

Participatory research requires the text to fraternize with forms of representation of author and subject that are easily recognized by research participants. It is not easy to produce a text which is both what the women want and sensitive to the "crisis of representation." TRINH (1991, 1992) argues that it is necessary to resist verbatim quotes as these help the reader to assimilate a narrative as a realist text. However, I found, as have others (e.g. MIENCZAKOWSKI, 1996; LATHER & SMITHIES, 1997), that participants have a preference for a text that adheres to the verbatim accounts gathered during interviews. [24]

Patti LATHER and Chris SMITHIES have written about how they worked collaboratively with women to produce a text that respected their allegiances to post-theory and to the wishes of participants for their book "Troubling the Angels: Women Living with HIV/AIDS." I have followed a similar process in the negotiated use of poetry and the multilineal format (both using the transcribed words of participants) in order to respect the preference for verbatim quotes whilst undercutting the realist text—(and call attention to the complexities of the social structures result in the different "voices" within the text carrying unequal legitimacy). I agree with Ian STRONACH and Maggie MacLURE that negotiation with participants is a key process. One that we need to divest of its bargaining overtones, in order to "think about negotiation as the 'rules' for inciting rather than settling disputes" (1997, p.113). Therefore, whilst negotiation with participants entailed a collaborative effort to build empirically rooted method/theory/writing, it did not include a desire to work toward some consensus text that silenced dissenting "voices." [25]

17. Poem

My Dad

and in his day girls didn't get raped
and there wasn't all the assaults
and there weren't perverts
and there weren't pedophiles
and it just didn't go on you know. [26]

18. Responses and Preferences

- Fran There weren't actually very many [poems] that I didn't read and think "oh gosh yes." And then there's what comes before the poems about the assumptions that you make about what you're going to find ... you make assumptions according to the person who you know has made them, cos you've *made* them, rather than *written* them.
- Jean Mmm.
- Fran You also make assumptions according to what they're about and what they're for. Because this isn't just poetry in terms of "I've written a poem about," it's *about and it's for*.
- Jean For what?
- Fran It's a part of [a piece of academic research], whatever else it is and whatever else it might do. But the poetry is dead straightforward.
- Norma Direct.
- Birgit Dead *there*, yes direct. It had a very direct impact.
- Fran I think that's a good word *there*. I hadn't thought of that word but that's very descriptive of how these are *very there*.
- Norma Yes, yes.
- Fran The other thing about them is you ask what's left out. One of the things that strikes me is that these are definite constructions and they're not your own constructions they're constructions you've made out of somebody else's words. So, they are *made*. And in terms of what's taken out it's a bit like errmm when you make a sculpture a three-dimensional thing.
- Jean Yes.
- Fran What it is, is as much to do with the space around it as it has the actual thing itself. And that actually kind of reflects the fact that you know that there are things in there that haven't been chosen by you [and so are not words in the poem] but which are somehow important. So you read between the lines and you can make it up. You could take any of the poems and you could make up dialogue in between the lines.
- Jean Right.
- Fran That would fill it out to make it (pause) more of a dialogue or maybe a long monologue. With all the umms and the errs and all the other things, the general sounds of the nose scratching and the fag lighting and the Crunchie [chocolate] bar gobbling.
- Birgit But that would change the meaning, the original meaning that the person had at the time of saying it wouldn't it?
- Fran Yes. Yes, which is nice.
- Birgit Unless somebody wants to object to it. Unless the original person who spoke these words objects.
- Fran This is say, Joan Smith's words. And then Jean messes around with it. So it's second removed to what she actually said. Then you are doing a third remove by imagining other words back in. But once Jean has got it and bunged it on the page well then it's not Joan Smith's anymore is it?
- Birgit Is it not?
- Fran It's hers, *then* it's Jean's, *then* it's yours.
- Birgit The reader's?

- Fran Yes. That's who it belongs to. It doesn't belong to Joan Smith anymore.
Birgit But what if Joan Smith wants it to continue to belong to her?
Fran It's tough.
Birgit Isn't that robbery?
Fran Well she could take her to court (laughs) and see how far she gets. [27]

19. Textual Presences

The transcript of an interview is not an equivalent of the interview as spoken. "Its naturalness is a masquerade" (DENZIN, 1997, p.42). The interview transcript is a supplement—in the sense of being both an addition and a substitution. For Jacques DERRIDA (1976) *différance*, combining the sense of the English verbs "to differ" and "to defer," allows us to think about writing without presence, but also without absence. *Différance* uncovers presence and absence not as polarities but as confused elements that inhabit each other. Transcribed speech is not simply embalmed. Transcribed speech takes on a hierarchical order and grammar—which are alien to speech. There is always a slippage between the interview act and the interview text. *If* in my attempts to re-present an interview, I acknowledge that there is no stable "reality" to be shown, and that *différance* allows for a writing without presence. *Then* the participatory and collaborative intentions of "negotiated interpretations" serve to prolong interaction rather than to work toward a "more correct" textual interpretation. There is no one interpretative moment—it occurs throughout the research process—including now as you read this text. [28]

20. Context and Methods

As a writer of this text, I am ethically charged to ensure that all participants recognize those aspects that concern them as valid within their own perceptions. That is to say, I wish to respect stories through privileging not their "accuracy," but rather their ability to re-present that which the respondents wish to be told. I am interested in developing ways of accounting for rape crisis volunteering by employing means accrued by "individual women." This writing/reading/scripting of participants' stories is a way to fulfill responsibilities to the women involved without retreating into a patronizing sentimentality. Yet, I realize that in order to do this I may have to risk the "necessary invasions and misuses of telling other people's stories" (LATHER & SMITHIES, 1997, p.xiv). This article inevitably foregrounds the lack of confidence that any researcher must have in telling any story. No single story is/can be told. Here the "unit of analysis" becomes the scene as it is recognized that: "Stories and poems are written in facts, not about facts" (DENZIN, 1997, p.208). [29]

21. Poem

A research participant sculpted this poem from a transcript of an interview with me about the research process.

Birth Pangs

(Was it the women? Was it what went on?)

It brought a lot of stuff up for me.

I wanted to be inside it and make sure things didn't go wrong.

An opportunity to control.

Bit of a power kick really.

I'M ALL KNOTTED UP.

Jean is trying to hang herself.

With her scarf—shall we explore this do you think?

I remember thinking that it was that boundaries thing that I felt I needed.

I'd made friends with women before.

It was important that I maintain that boundary.

Boundaries.

I tend to collect people around me.

Stress, stress, stress, yes stress.

It was very messy.

It was obviously odd for them that I suddenly changed.

Suddenly change. Changed my personality.

They liked me.

I felt this tremendous pressure.

Hold it all together.

Hold it all together.

The whole lot took a lot of holding together.

I used to be there and I'm not there anymore I'm thinking different, different.

Who's a survivor who's not a survivor.

Why the fuck should I tell them if I'm a survivor or not.

Why should I discuss anything in front of these people.

How feminist is that then?

How feminist is what? [30]

22. Textual Presences

Personal selves are *required* to haunt research texts. All the more so in the case of participatory research where the lingering presence of multiple people is required. The research text can never fully break free of its representational obligations and thus the author and the research participants are tethered to the text. I *must* place my signature to this document, and in doing so recognize that this is an act in excess of a textual effect. The signature ties "me" to the text, yet simultaneously disrupts "me" as a presence within, or source of, the text. [31]

23. Responses and Preferences



Illustration 3: The author [32]

24. Context and Methods

There is only a series of textual layers each of which must be taken on its own, yet each of which is embedded in what comes both before and after. The text tells stories, and at the same time unravels those stories. [33]

25. Layers

This article has labored to do something with qualitative research data and reflections on the research process, in order to invite readers to investigate issues of representation and the development of participatory practices in the context of researching women's experiences of training to be rape crisis counselors. I have recognized that to do something with is inevitably to say something about. I position myself in relation to Jacques DERRIDA's (1986) practice in "Glas." Where he does something with the texts of and about Jean GENET; he uses them as generative forms for the production of his-own-text. He

does this in order to say something about both literary theory and philosophy—particularly as these texts are placed in the columnar format to facilitate "the element of contagion" (DERRIDA, 1986, p.1) with his deconstruction of HEGEL's texts. There is no preconceived direction within this motion; DERRIDA finds direction by means of writing. His texts constantly enact a double move that places together the seemingly incommensurable: "one probably does not have to choose between two lines of thought. Rather, one has to meditate upon the circularity which makes them pass into one another indefinitely" (DERRIDA, 1982, p.173). His writing is a practice that performs doing something with as always already saying something about:

"The stake of the signature—does the signature take place? where? how? why? for whom?—that will be treated practically, in passing: an indispensable preliminary to the explanation of (for example 'literary') formality with all the muscled judges who interrogate it from apparently extrinsic instances (question about the classified—biographical, historical, economic, political, and so on—subject). As for general textuality, perhaps the *seing* represents the case, the place for (topically and tropically) overlapping the intrinsic and the extrinsic" (DERRIDA, 1986, pp.3-4) [34]

Thus in doing with/saying about I cannot fully escape an epistemological "reading out" that is always already undermined by the recognition that research practices (including the act of reading research texts) are "heavily inscribed with habit and sedimented understandings" (LATHER, 1993, p.674). [35]

Ultimately, none of the textual strategies I have used here erase my final acquiescence to the structures of academic text. Clearly in one sense, my challenge to the conventional academic genre is hollow, in that I am not breaking with the deep structures of the academic *récit*, but rather engaging with them in a more direct manner than is customary. Perhaps, as CIXOUS and CALLE-GRUBER suggest, we need to act *to wound* rather than to break:

"The wound is what I sense. The wound is a strange thing: either I die, or a kind of work takes place, mysterious, that will reassemble the edges of the wound. A marvellous thing also: that will nonetheless leave a trace, even if it hurts us. It is here that I sense things taking place. The wound is also an alteration. Breaking, for me, remained in the domain of a less fleshy material. I see a stick being broken ... of course, one can also break one's bones, but then the sticks of the body repair themselves, and there is no scar ... I like the scar, the story" (1997, p.16). [36]

To wound is to recognize that we must work sometimes with and sometimes against the past. The dynamics of participant research require a careful play between new ideas and traditional formations. I have no choice but to re-enact the old for these are the only forms available. I am engaged with *wounding*, in order to push these forms to the limits of their assumptions. [37]

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