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Going Beyond the Demonstrable Range in Educational Scholarship: Exploring the Intersections of Poetry and Research

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Keywords

Poetry, Poetic Form, Writing Craft, Arts-Based Research, Experimental Research, Expressive Research, Qualitative Research, Demonstrable Range

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Going Beyond the Demonstrable Range in Educational Scholarship: Exploring the Intersections of Poetry and Research

by
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Abstract

This essay reflects on experimental writing that incorporates poetry into research. The author supports the move toward research writing that breaks the constraints of traditional academic writing, but raises the concern that such writing must not casually adopt the form and name of poetry without studying the craft. Along these lines, she suggests that in order for work that introduces poetry into research to be done effectively, researchers must study the craft of writing poetry as critically as they study the craft of writing research. Finally, the author suggests that instead of attempting to map poetry onto research, researchers may be better served by borrowing from the poetic to more accurately define the goals, quality, and purpose of experimental writing. In this way, researchers may learn from poetry to further enhance their own critical art.

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Introduction

As a scholar of the relationship between poetry and educational concerns, I have found myself at a crossroads of communication. After four years of formal study within the field of education, I am beginning to think that the practice of writing poetry engenders a means by which to understand and make sense of the world that cannot be articulated through traditional research practice or venues. More specifically, I am concerned that traditional research practice and venues demand particular forms of articulation that do little to capture and communicate the significance of the poetic process. At the same time, as I delve deeper into studying the poetic process (for the time being, I mean the process of authoring poems), I am more convinced that crafting through poetic language results in a richly textured, insightful, and complex means by which to make sense of the world and that the educational community will greatly benefit from scholarship that brings this to light.

Traditional educational research methods (both qualitative and quantitative, and combinations of the two) limit an educator's ability to fully capture and communicate nuances of understanding such as those achieved through the process of writing poetry. (For the purposes of this essay, I will focus specifically on a study of the poetic process as my example, though I suspect that the needs of such a study are not unique, particularly to those who study art education.) The

problem, as I can best formulate it, is a double one of articulation and demonstration. Traditional research is limiting in its narrow scope of articulation and its formal demands for demonstration.

For the most part, the paradigm of research articulated through a formal essay or report and primarily characterized by discursive language stands as the *modus operandi* of the day. Such forms of articulation serves to demonstrate the researcher's methods as she works toward her claims. These may, and usually do, include some discussion of others' research, her methodological design and intentions, the nature of the data that she collected, and the means by which she went about making sense of that data. When all these pieces fall into place, she will come to some conclusion about the issues that peaked her curiosity or concern in the first place. Without these formal pieces however, she risks her credibility and authority with any conclusion she may wish to put forward. More simply put, in order to make assertions in academia, a scholar must somehow be able to make a demonstration of whatever it is that she wishes to assert. This demonstration is generally founded upon a logical conclusion derived from the acceptable research methods of her field.

For instance, if an educator wishes to assert that the majority of students in a high school are scoring below average on a statewide exam, it would be expected that she demonstrate this claim by presenting the test scores of the students in the high school as well as the test scores of students across the state. It would be inappropriate for her to assert that these students were scoring below average without the presentation of such data. This example represents an instance in which primarily quantitative data would serve as demonstrable evidence to support conclusions. It is entirely possible that the researcher suspected that the students in this class were not doing well on tests because she observed that whenever the teacher gave out the tests, the students slumped low in their seats, stared out the window, furrowed their brows, or stormed out of the room. In this instance, the demonstrable evidence would be qualitative, based upon observations of the classroom itself. Such observations might serve as support if the researcher wished to claim that the students seemed to dislike taking tests.

Historically, the acceptable research methods of a field are entirely appropriate for a variety of scholarly inquiries, and serve the crucial task of validating forms of information that complement these methods. However, it does not take a great deal of insight to notice that not all kinds of scholarly inquiries are made through these methods. One need only take a look at the major education journals of the day, for example, to observe that discussions of emotional education, expressive development, and arts education generally are in the minority. Granted, society at large does not appear to be clamoring for all children to learn how to play the piano or sketch with sensitivity - but appearances may be deceiving. We are at a time of heightened awareness of major challenges. The challenge of local and global relationships and the overwhelming evidence of violence in our children and depression in our adults itemize just a few. And yet education, the field that seeks to aid people in their goals to become prosperous members of society, continuously sidesteps or marginalizes discussions about the need to cultivate emotional and personal awareness, complexity, courage, and other less tangible but essential qualities of personal fortitude and well-being. Instead of working toward the development of the internal life, we focus on the external measures of education - test scores, accountability, and standards. This essay suggests that it is time to treat these generally avoided issues as needful of their own particular kind of critical attention and scholarship, and that continued efforts to address them

with scholarly tools that befit problems of a different nature will result in their continued marginalization and misunderstanding.

Let me take as a detailed example the following true to life research problem: How does one concerned with making an assertion about what is involved in the nature of the poetic process effectively go about doing so? Such an assertion is the fundamental concern of my scholarship at this time. I have chosen to pursue this line of scholarship in an effort to gain some insight into a process that requires of its participants a deep reliance on emotional awareness, creative insight, self-expression and, perhaps, a pursuit of certain truths that are difficult or impossible to articulate through standard communications. In investigating this process, I am pursuing a means by which to understand the cultivation and acquisition (the education) of abilities that constitute the kind of education that most students receive incidentally or accidentally, if at all.

I have surmised that the way to get at the heart of the poetic process is to speak with individuals who have made it their life's work to partake in it - namely, poets. I have therefore designed research that aims to speak with poets on many different levels about the work that they do, how they make sense of it, and what their impressions are of how I make sense of their observations. In this way, we are engaged in a reciprocal discussion. Initially, before beginning the fieldwork, I feared that these discussions would never reach the essence of the poetic process, as I suspected that much of the hard work of writing poems is being conducted out of 'demonstrable range', or on a level of consciousness that neither I nor the poets would be able to understand. I am beginning to find, however, that the problem is not so much that I have no access to an understanding of the processes poets describe to me. Rather, I am concerned that I may be unable to formulate this understanding into the traditional language of research. Herein lies the previously mentioned problem of articulation.

In the case of the study in which I am engaged, it appears to be impossible to separate poetic language and form from an understanding of the phenomena. Consider briefly two excerpts from *The Paris Review Interviews*, in which (among other things) poets were asked to speak about their creative processes. These descriptions of the poets' work are very similar (although more cursory) to the responses I have begun to gather through my own interviews. Marianne Moore had this to say about how she came to shape her poems:

Spontaneous initial originality - say, impetus - seems difficult to reproduce consciously later. As Stravinsky said about pitch, 'If I transpose it for some reason, I am in danger of losing the freshness of first contact and will have difficulty in recapturing its attractiveness' (Moore in Plimpton, [1989](#), p. 89)

Moore suggests two things: 1) that the poem involves spontaneous creation, and 2) that such creation cannot be reproduced in the conscious mind after it has occurred. Here she has made sense of what she does when she composes but she has not specified what it is that is involved in spontaneous creation and, in fact, tells the interviewer that this creative process is not easily articulated by the conscious mind. Instead, she offers a metaphor between the work of poetry and the work of a composer. In this way, she does not offer us a direct, analytic parallel to her work, but 'explains' it nevertheless, by drawing upon a tool of language.

Allen Ginsberg, in the same anthology, spoke of his work with meter and suggested that it was akin to:

someone working with his physiological movements and *arriving* at a pattern....Nobody's got any objection to even iambic pentameter if it comes from a source deeper than the mind - that is to say, if it comes from the breathing and the belly and the lungs (Ginsberg in Plimpton, [1989](#), p. 191)

Here, again, the poet refers to the crafting process of a poem as due in part to a spontaneous occurrence - arising from a place "deeper than the mind." Ginsberg adds to this an idea of meter arising "from the breathing and the belly and the lungs." The poets I have spoken with also express an understanding of poetry as emerging from a place that is not easy to access by the conscious mind and, as in the Ginsberg example, also incorporate poetic language into our discussions. To the researcher hoping for a means by which to articulate the work of poetry in discursive language, these responses are frustrating. At the same time, I find myself responding to such data, already replete with responses that are elusive, poetic, and extraordinarily detailed, with the conviction that I am indeed getting a means by which to make sense of the poetic process - and that that means is a poetic one.

When I began this research project, several respected individuals assured me that I was on a path to frustration. Poets, like many other artists, they argued, will not explain what they do, either because they do not want to or they cannot. I think such warnings are entirely appropriate if one is looking for an explanation that falls within the most common paradigms of educational research. Indeed, I believe that poets who do not 'explain' what they do are maintaining the integrity of their understanding of their craft. Poems are not intended for explanation because explanation involves a restatement that requires a move away from poetic language - and thus away from the poem. What is missing is not an understanding of the poem or the process of its creation, but an understanding of the more traditional, analytic sort.

One may dismiss Moore's and Ginsberg's understandings as speculative, and in a very real way they are. There is no way for Ginsberg to demonstrate that meter begins in the belly and the lungs. Speculation, in some way, is an act of making sense when there is nothing tangible to make sense of. In many ways, this echoes of a Kantian notion of the sublime, wherein the sublime is the experience of the mind going beyond the evidence of the world and continuing to make sense as it does so. Indeed, Kant believed that poetry was an instance of the sublime (Kant, [1790/1951](#)). The works of Susanne Langer, Nelson Goodman, and Michael Polanyi also speak to the discrepancies between what can be known and what can be said (Goodman, [1978](#); Langer, [1967](#); Polanyi, [1966](#)). And Elliot Eisner has written extensively on the potential of artistic form to capture and express meanings of great significance to researchers and educators that may otherwise be overlooked through less aesthetic forms. His 1981, 1996, and 1998 works are highlights of this work (Eisner, [1981](#), [1996](#), [1998](#)).

Along these lines, it should be underscored that in the quotations from both of these poets (as is the case for the interviews I have conducted), the poet claims that she has a very clear, familiar sense of what it means to pull together a poem, yet it is a sense that does not respond well to demonstration, at least not as would be articulated through traditional research. Moore and

Ginsberg speak, instead, to a deeply subjective relationship to their craft, one that is highly functional, but unique to the individual poet. These excerpts are not unusual in the body of literature that represents poets reflecting on their craft. Even less unusual are such personal descriptions articulated in a highly poetic manner. It seems, then, that poetry may be the means by which to understand poetry - it appears that one cannot understand the details of an arguably pre-linguistic, highly emotional, intellectual, and unusual means by which to make sense of the world without using language that is creatively and insightfully manipulated. Nor does it seem that the insights revealed through the use of such language will depend upon demonstration in the traditional sense. What will be demonstrated is the individual poet's understanding of what she cannot see or objectify, but knows through language and a sense of her actions that are outside of the demonstrable range.

In Search of Alternative Research

In order to navigate such data, I have begun to explore alternatives to traditional research, and have found two related discussions that are sympathetic to such issues. One such discussion involves an idea of arts-based research; the other encourages a move away from an emphasis on assertions of 'objective' knowledge or truth toward an emphasis on research that enhances meaning by making more salient the human experience. Although these discussions are intertwined, I will treat them separately and focus more specifically on that arts-based research that incorporates poetry in this essay. While I am enthusiastically in support of an expanded notion of research that values meaning as well as certainty, I am concerned about some aspects of the methods proposed to realize such research through poetry.

Within the discussion of arts-based research, the incorporation of language arts has been, until recently, heavily focused on the use of narrative (Barone, [2001](#); Clandinin & Connelly, [1987](#); Polkinghorne, [1988](#); Tierney & Lincoln, [1997](#); Witherell & Noddings, [1991](#)). The use of narrative, while related to my research concerns, does not map satisfactorily enough onto my specific concerns about the poetic process. It is a disservice to such work to provide a summary of the detailed and thoughtful arguments that support it, but one such summary might argue that narrative is a powerful tool in that it makes issues of concern to social scientists infinitely more salient by expressing more effectively the effects they have on the human condition.

Yet while narrative and poetry both rely on creative writing to achieve their particular effects, I wish to maintain that there is a distinction between the two of significance to researchers. This distinction is not hard and fast, and indeed there are many overlaps, but in general one might safely argue that the poem is oftentimes distinct from the narrative, at least as far as Western literature is concerned. It would be dangerous and unwise to go into the distinctions between poetry and narrative in this essay, but I would at least like to make the case for acknowledging the difference between story and poetic form and language. Although a story may contain poetic language, this is not usually its primary medium of expression. Conversely, one also finds that it is not primarily through story that the poem generally conveys meaning. Rather, one might argue, it is through poetic form and language that the poem conveys meaning. Therefore, if one is to propose that poetry be incorporated into an expanding notion of research, one must consider how poetic form and language may be relevant to social science research.

Is the answer, then, to a question of how best to explore the poetic process one that involves the use of poetic language? It seems that this is a move in the right direction. Yet this is a move that at once gives me great hope, in that it promises an expansion of the restrictive boundaries imposed by traditional qualitative research, and great anxiety, in that those of us who choose, as educational researchers or scholars of related fields, to enter into this new creative territory must consider the weight that is involved in the complexity and integrity of working with such a tool. Indeed, my research *problem* appears to be my *research* problem. I am moved to conduct research because I am concerned that we have a grossly under-articulated sense of the value of the poetic process. It appears, however, that in order to articulate this value, I must turn to language that comes closer to the poetic than it does to the discursive. This could be an extraordinarily powerful tool in educational and related scholarship, yet I am concerned that without understanding the means by which poetry is created, we will continue to underestimate and misuse it just as we commend its apparent ability to move us forward.

Considering the Work of Art in Research

Among those interested in arts-based educational research, several courageous researchers have begun to use non-traditional language (or what can be grossly summarized as literary language) in their scholarship. One of the most notable of these scholars is Laurel Richardson, a sociologist who has written extensively on the use of poetry in sociological research (Richardson, [1994](#), [1996](#), [1997](#), [1999](#), [2000](#)). In 1995, Michael Schwalbe responded to Richardson's scholarship specifically as a way of criticizing the idea of placing poetry within sociological research more generally. His arguments are numerous, but two in particular demand further attention. The first of these is that poetry threatens the rules of sociological research craft. Schwalbe claims that sociologists have "the responsibility to make ourselves understood to work by rules of our craft; to make known and explain the rules of our craft" and that poetry makes it difficult to abide by such rules (Schwalbe, [1995](#), p. 397). To this concern over rules, I would respond that rules for the craft of research should not be followed simply because they exist, but because they provide some useful and crucial structure to the goals of important research. If sociological poetry helps researchers to pursue the goals of their research, then such pursuits should be managed with integrity and care. Poetry yields particular effects, and creates meaning of a particular kind that do *not* adhere to the standard rules of research. But as long as poetry is not thought to be adhering to the standard rules of research, it will not violate them, and it may indeed complement them in important ways. Perhaps Schwalbe's argument would be better stated if it were to claim that poetry, presented as traditional research, may be difficult to understand, but poetry, presented as poetry (or poetic work), can be quite easily understood in the way that poetry has been understood and embraced by individuals seeking insight and understanding from it for as long as the written word has existed.

Despite my disagreement over Schwalbe's misgivings about the capability of poetry to offer relevant insights and scholarship, he makes a second argument which goes virtually unnoticed in ensuing rebuttals (Denzin, [1996](#); DeVault, [1996](#); Richardson, [1996](#); St. Pierre, [1996](#)) and which can no longer stand to be ignored. This is an argument about craft. "If we do not know how to discipline ourselves as poets," Schwalbe asks, "how much can the exercise [of writing poetry] benefit us?" (Schwalbe, [1995](#), p. 401). Indeed, there is little in the discussion of research that incorporates creative writing of the skills required to master this writing and the scholarship such

work itself may require in order to be executed effectively. Although a few acknowledge that this should be an issue of concern (Banks & Banks, [1998](#); Krizek, [1998](#); Scriven, [1988](#)), they do little to propose how such an issue might be overcome.

We must remember that it is not only a conceptual incorporation of previously distinct scholarship that is being proposed and conducted in the qualitative research; it is also an incorporation that demands attention to a different sort of form and writing. The skill of writing narrative and poetry, no matter how talented the individual to begin with, involves hard work that takes years of practice to perfect. Creative writing is a powerful tool that is at once immediately accessible and infinitely complex. If we choose to incorporate it into scholarship, we must be careful to know the skills involved in creating such writing. Furthermore, we must be careful to not simply bend it to our uses, ignoring the possibility that it has a place, first and foremost, of its own, exclusive of how we may perceive it from without. This place is not unrelated to the concerns of researchers, but it is distinct. Although a few scholars have written on the goals of evaluating experimental writing, thus implying a concern for how this writing is composed, they do little to acknowledge the history and present of craft in poetry or narrative (Clough, [2000b](#); Richardson, [2000](#)). Furthermore, criteria for evaluation are not the same as ideas about craft, though the two should align. It seems that evaluation can be done most effectively when ideas about craft have been explored, implemented, and disclosed. Fortunately, some of these guidelines for evaluation, in particular those outlined in Peter Woods' discussion of expressive writing in *Successful Writing for Qualitative Researchers*, do express concern for quality in aesthetics, and this is certainly a step in the right direction (Woods, [1999](#), pp. 78-79). However, when scholars wish to work with poetry specifically, just as with any other specified form, they must pay attention to the work that has gone into cultivating this form beforehand. Without such attention, the discussion becomes one of the state of new writing, and it continues to bypass the rich and complex history from which much of this experimental writing borrows its form and name.

Implicit in this call for craft is the idea that we must recognize that language arts, like education or other fields that involve qualitative research, have their own unique 'scholarship' or insightful affordances and that these are closely tied to the work that goes into the creation of language arts. To employ creative writing without exploring the particular insights one might access through such writing outside of educational scholarship is to do a simultaneous disservice to careful scholarship and skillful writing. Creative writing is not just useful in the service of something else; it has a purpose all its own. This is not to say that one must learn how to write like Nabokov or Frost in order to incorporate creative writing into research. But one must be familiar with the concerns and work that went into what Nabokov and Frost created if one wants to produce scholarly work that draws upon literature. This is not a call for learning how to mimic the writers of a canon. Indeed, some of this writing may be an innovative break from crafts demonstrated in a canon. However, writing that seeks to improve upon the status quo must first know exactly what it surpasses, and how and why a change is called for. This involves a knowledge not just of research, but of creative writing. Creative writing, as we know, does not evolve in a vacuum; when one partakes in such writing, one cannot help but enter into an ongoing, multifaceted conversation.

Many will argue that such demands on researchers are unrealistic. I wish to make it clear that I do not expect qualitative researchers to produce great works of literature and/or poetry. Rather, I wish them to explore and develop their potentials in the crafting of literary work as studiously and with as great a commitment as they have made to the work they have done in their respective fields. This still may be an unrealistic demand. Yet I am reluctant to pull back on this position out of respect for the demands and potential of literary work. In most cases, the new scholarship that involves narrative and poetry is a scholarship that incorporates the literary in the service of social science research. I think that before we move forward, we must consider the language arts and social science on par with one another, and be sure that in the pursuit of one, we do not misuse the other.

A Survey of Research and Poetry

A survey of the work that intersects research and poetry indicates the previously mentioned weighting of research craft over poetic craft. In addition to Laurel Richardson's work, several other scholars have published articles that represent different intersections between poetry and research. In these works, researchers use their own poetic writings in a variety of ways. Patricia Clough and Laurel Richardson have both published pieces that consist primarily of poetry, with very little prosaic or 'explanatory' text (Clough, [2000a](#); Richardson, [1994](#); Travisano, [1996](#)). Other work incorporates field notes, subject interviews, journals, and other data into poetic writing, relying primarily upon discursive prose to discuss the experimental writings (Brearley, [2000](#); Finley, [2000](#); Harris, [1997](#); McCotter, [2001](#)). These researchers have in common a dissatisfaction with the limitations of traditional research writing, and attempt to find a solution to this dissatisfaction through poetry. Yet a review of these works reveals not so much a desire to develop and pursue the craft of poetry, but a view of poetry as a way out of the constraints of traditional research.

Despite my appreciation for such scholarship, which reveals sensitive writing, sincere scholars, and a crucial movement toward redefining writing and scholarship, it seems that if we use poetry to capture any and all needs that are not met through traditional writing, we are treading on dangerous ground. Poetry is not simply a means by which to break from constraint. It should not be used as a catchall for any writing that does not follow the form or flavor of traditional research. It has forms and goals all its own, which can be either superficially or critically adopted. In the interest of more writing that pursues a critical adoption of poetry, it is crucial that we state precisely what it is that we wish to break from when we use experimental writing, and seek to understand how and if poetry is appropriate to meeting these needs.

A closer look at how these scholars are describing their need for and use of poetry may help us to further define these needs, and get a better sense as to whether or not poetry should meet them. The particular pieces I present for consideration might be thought of as representing attempts toward capturing a more complex sense of experience through expressive texts. Suzanne McCotter turns to what she alternately terms poetic representation, poetic construction, and poetry as an attempt to overcome the limitations of traditional academic voice. She cites Richardson's claim that "poetry can re-create embodied speech in a way that standard sociological prose does not" (McCotter, [2002](#), p. 16). In addition to McCotter's work, others have argued that poetry captures more fully the rhythms in speech and conversation (McCoy,

[1997](#); Patai, [1988](#); Richardson, [1997](#)). Similarly, Susan Finley uses what she calls "poetic dialogue" to capture conversations between researchers and participants (Finley, [2000](#), p. 433). Laura Brearley includes the poems of individuals going through the challenges of an amalgamation process in an educational institution. She includes poems written by these individuals as well as her own poetic work attempting to recapture her discussions with them (Brearley, [2000](#)). And Jennifer Harris's incorporation of her own journal entries, many of which capture conversations she had with individuals at her research site, expose the emotional difficulty and complexity of her experience in a place of violence, disrespect, and misunderstanding (Harris, [1997](#)). In a similar vein, Richard Travisano draws upon his own experiences to write several poems about relationship, marriage, and divorce (Travisano, [1996](#)).

It is clear that these various forays into experimental, poetic texts enable readers of this scholarship to develop a more complex sense of the researchers' experiences and conversations with subjects. This important work brings to light a better sense of the ways in which individuals articulate their experiences, both personal and otherwise, of phenomena that the researchers are trying to understand. These researchers are attempting to reveal the many layers of experience and understanding that become sterilized or otherwise reduced when translated into more traditional texts. This work encourages my belief that such experimentation should be pursued. However, it does little to quell my concerns about poetry's place in such experimentalism.

Despite these researchers support of the use of poetry, there is no critical discussion in their work about how a complex understanding of poetry, on its own, informs their work and scholarly concerns. It seems reasonable that anyone who wishes to incorporate poetry into their work would first need to study this complexity, and not just name what seems poetic in their own writing poetry. Indeed, I would argue that what these researchers are searching for is not poetry, but something that they perceive poetic form as offering. Perhaps it would be more incisive if researchers pursue the incorporation of poetic text, or poetic form in research pursuits, rather than borrow the name of a literary art with all-consuming demands of its own. I do not deny that the concerns of the poet and the concerns of the researcher overlap, but I maintain that the craft of the former must be studied critically before the art can be executed effectively. There is enough difference to safely make the claim that, in learning to write research, one does not learn to write poetry, and vice versa. Furthermore, I suspect that what these researchers are calling poetry may be much more aptly defined as a kind of expressive writing; its concerns, purpose, and goals are distinct from poetry in important ways. Indeed, one of the most important ways in which this writing is different from poetry is that its primary function is as research.

That said, I would argue that in learning how to become a sensitive, insightful, and critical researcher, one does learn a great deal about emotional expressiveness than could be communicated through research writing. This involves bringing out the art of research into the text. I would argue that this art is, and will be, similar to but distinct from other literary arts, and that it is our job as researchers in support of such expression to work on defining the nature of the craft of experimental research. In this way, we may critically borrow from poetry, but will also work to critically define what it is that is similar and distinct from the craft of poetry. As researchers, when we begin to peel away the constraints of traditional academic writing, we must still strive to make our communications as carefully crafted and critical as possible. In demanding critical work, I do not intend to impose further restrictions. Rather I believe the more

attention we pay to defining our expressive research writing and pursuing its unique craft, the greater our ability to communicate effectively and powerfully through it will be.

Conclusion

It is for these aforementioned reasons that I feel conflicted about the latest developments in qualitative research. On the one hand (particularly as my own scholarship is concerned) I feel that a move away from non-literary language is a long overdue recognition of the ways in which traditional research can seriously handicap the potential of work in the field of education and other social sciences. I have no doubt that some such move must be made. On the other hand, I am concerned that qualitative researchers may not sufficiently acknowledge the involvement needed to work with the forms they propose, and that my wish for scholars who use such forms to be as well versed in their crafting as they are in the conduct of social science research is an unrealistic one. Furthermore, I am more specifically concerned that poetry must be carefully considered as a meaningful expression that will be awkward and ineffective when 'used' in the service of research.

As strongly as I feel, therefore, that qualitative research needs to expand its horizons, I fear that to make a move that incorporates new forms without the recognition, appreciation, and judgment needed to achieve such incorporation would simply set the quality and power of our work back rather than move us forward. As a result, I am inclined to appreciate my convictions about the integrity of research and the integrity of the poetic form rather than immediately adopt an arts-based research model. Unfortunately, while this leaves me with a profound sense of dissatisfaction with current restraints and strongly supportive of experimental developments, I am not sure that we are enacting the most effective solution. I am left, therefore, in the scholar's traditional position - hopeful, committed, and concerned.

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