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Abstract

Vocative texts are expressive poetic text s that strive to show rather than tell, that communicate felt knowledge, and that appeal to the senses. They are increasingly used by researchers to present qualitative findings, but little has been written about how to create such texts. To this end, excerpts from an inquiry into the experience and meaning of music listening in the context of chronic illness (Nicol, 2002) are presented and used to illustrate five elements associated with vocative texts (van Manen, 1997). Further student examples of vocative writing are also provided. The intent is to make a pragmatic contribution to the growing literature on writing and qualitative inquiry, and to stimulate interest in experimenting with different ways of writing.

Keywords
Vocative Text, Expressive Writing, and Qualitative Research

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Vocative texts are expressive poetic texts that strive to show rather than tell, that communicate felt knowledge, and that appeal to the senses. They are increasingly used by researchers to present qualitative findings, but little has been written about how to create such texts. To this end, excerpts from an inquiry into the experience and meaning of music listening in the context of chronic illness (Nicol, 2002) are presented and used to illustrate five elements associated with vocative texts (van Manen, 1997). Further student examples of vocative writing are also provided. The intent is to make a pragmatic contribution to the growing literature on writing and qualitative inquiry, and to stimulate interest in experimenting with different ways of writing. Key Words: Vocative Text, Expressive Writing, and Qualitative Research

Introduction

Qualitative inquiry suggests alternative ways for investigating phenomenon as well as for communicating and disseminating results. The customary use of a formal designative writing style to convey research findings is considered a convention rather than an imperative. By attending to research's aesthetic dimensions, researchers acknowledge language as more than just a medium for communicating information (Schwandt, 2001). Instead, evocation is a goal (Ellis & Bochner, 2006; van Manen, 2002) and language offers possibilities for bridging art and science (Ellis & Bochner), for appreciating multiple ways of knowing (Ellis, 1999), for evoking life as it is lived (van Manen, 1997), and not least of all, for providing an engaging, enjoyable read (Gilgun, 2005). In the last 10 years, attention has increasingly focused on the subject of writing and qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) most recent *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, for example, included several chapters on the use of artistic texts (Brady, 2005; Hartnett & Engels, 2005; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Stewart, 2005) and the second edition of Schwandt's *Qualitative Inquiry: A Dictionary of Terms*, added a new entry on "writing strategies" (p. 279) to reflect the "literary turn in the social sciences" (p. 279) and "belief that science, like literature, is an activity situated in language" (p. 280). However, although some research texts do include an index entry on writing style as a consideration in qualitative research (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004), many do not (e.g., Camic, Rhodes, & Yardley, 2003; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; McCleod, 2003; Patton, 2002). Even fewer authors give explicit directions for evocative, expressive writing, that is, writing with "… a level of participation that is neither impersonal nor only personal" (Todres, 1998, p. 126), and that evokes both thought and imagination (Locke, Silverman, & Spirduso, 2004). Some exceptions include Janesick's (1998, 2004) "stretching exercises" for

personal development on one's role of researcher, and Richardson and St. Pierre's suggestions for using writing as a way of knowing.

For the purposes of this article, the rationale for vocative texts is accepted, and readers wishing for further information are directed to the aforementioned references. My focus is to make an accessible, pragmatic contribution to the extant literature by suggesting ways to explore more artistic ways of writing. Following a selective summary of experiences that locate and inform my understandings, elements associated with vocative texts (van Manen, 1997) are defined and illustrated with excerpts from a doctoral hermeneutic-phenomenological study of women's experiences of listening to music and living with chronic illness (Nicol, 2002). In order to maintain confidentiality and privacy, all research participant names are pseudonyms and identifying details have been altered. Further examples of vocative texts are shared, drawn from student writing that was prompted, in part, by exposure to the doctoral research excerpts. I hope readers will be similarly inspired, while also keeping in mind that, as with much qualitative inquiry, writing also arises in "creating one's path, not in following a path" (Heidegger as cited in van Manen, 2006, p. 720).

Situating Myself

A particular life history led to this present moment in my personal, professional, and academic journey. I read voraciously as a child, wrote poetry during late-adolescence, and have had a lifelong fascination and involvement with music (see Nicol, 2006), which directed me to an early career as a music therapist and to a current research program in music therapy. As a musician and music therapist, I valued and worked creatively with non-verbal aesthetic media, and implicitly accepted felt understandings and unarticulated knowing as valid and meaningful. My subsequent education and work as a counsellor exposed me to the creative process of working verbally with clients, where I noticed how often clients used metaphors to explain themselves, that is, experiencing and understanding one thing in terms of another (Richardson, 2000). Now an assistant professor and counsellor educator, I notice how often students use metaphor to communicate their learning and understanding. For example, one student wrote the following paragraph to introduce her assignment on basic therapeutic communication skills.

> As an emerging counsellor, I feel like a young toddler learning to walk! Or perhaps I feel   more like an older person who knew how to walk, but lost that ability and is now learning to walk all over again. Some of the skills are vaguely familiar to me, but more foundational skills have been lacking. Putting them together feels strangely awkward, bumbling, and filled with mistakes. Yet, at the same time, it feels exhilarating – as if I am taking a step for the first time, but now I have the cognitive ability to be fully aware that I am actually taking a step – unlike a toddler who has taken her first step, but perhaps cannot fully appreciate the magnitude of what she has just accomplished. (B. J. Carter, personal communication, January 28, 2005)

The student spontaneously used metaphor to evocatively and holistically communicate the experience of learning something new yet also familiar.

These personal and professional experiences remained separate from my research endeavors until I began my doctoral studies in 1994. During this time I worked as a research assistant on a participatory action research project that critically re-cast student mothers' experiences of stress and coping with a social rather than individual focus (e.g., see Donnelly & Long, 2003). The Student Mom project transformed my understandings of research by introducing a qualitative paradigm that included new ideas about truth, subjectivity, action, personal knowledge as a source of data, as well as about how to represent knowledge and disseminate findings. Significantly, a poem was created by another student researcher (see Appendix A) based on quotes from transcripts of interviews with the student mothers. This was the first time I encountered this kind of writing in research. I found it powerful because of the lived truths it evoked, the increased credibility lent by using direct quotes, and the respectful honoring of the women's participation in the interviews and contribution of valued time by letting their words speak alone and without interpretation.

At the same time as I worked on this project, I was conducting a qualitative investigation that reflected my professional experiences as a music therapist and counsellor, and personal experiences as a musician as well as a woman living with chronic inflammatory arthritis. As a musician, helper, and researcher, I wondered about the experience and meaning of listening to music, particularly in the lives of women with chronic physical illnesses and the potential benefits in terms of "living well" with illness. The project drew heavily on van Manen's (1990) work, an approach to phenomenology that calls for engagement with both the phenomenological reduction (i.e., investigating and understanding a phenomenon unencumbered by prejudgements, assumptions, or claims) and phenomenological expressive writing (i.e., uncovering and revealing a phenomenon with the vocative use of language; van Manen, 2002). Inspired by the participants' rich interview data, encouraged by my research committee, and motivated by van Manen's ideas, I experimented and discovered a very different way of analyzing and representing the findings about women's experiences with music listening (Nicol, 2002). For example, the dissertation was envisioned as a premiere performance of *A Sonata to Show* (results chapter), framed by a *Prelude* (introduction chapter) and *Postlude* (discussion chapter), and accompanied by *Concert Notes* (literature review) to orient readers, and *Eavesdropping Behind the Scenes* (methodology chapter) to overview the technical matters associated with the creation and launch of the work, as well as a *Programme* (table of contents) and *Synopsis of the Evening's Premiere* (abstract). Further examples of vocative titles and sub-titles are included in Appendix B, which presents the main sections from the table of contents; and Appendix C, which details the headings – based on a musical form, the sonata – that organized the results chapter (i.e., exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda). The rationale for using these artistic evocative strategies was to appeal to readers' aesthetic senses in order to bring the phenomenon into closer focus, and to encourage felt, as well as intellectual, knowing.

Since graduating and assuming an academic university tenure-track position, I continue exploring writing and the research process. As a research supervisor and instructor of a qualitative methods course, I find many students are enthused by the possibilities of writing differently, and they seem to create vocative texts with little

specific instruction other than reading examples from my dissertation, familiarizing themselves with van Manen's (1997) textual elements and permitting themselves to experiment and play with words.

What is a Vocative Text?

A vocative text is thoughtful and suggestive, rather than declarative and final, and aims to show experientially rather than tell rationally (van Manen, 1997). Language is used to encourage knowing through the senses, to prompt knowing that is felt and that has texture (Todres, 1998). An important purpose of such writing is to touch readers, to engage them personally with the text, and to evoke the lived visceral qualities of human experience. Elements associated with vocative texts include concreteness, evocation, intensification, tone, and epiphany (van Manen). By way of example, contrast the following paragraphs. The first excerpt was an early draft meant to introduce the results chapter of the hermeneutic-phenomenological study described earlier.

> This chapter focuses on describing the lived experience and lived meaning of music listening experiences for women with chronic illness. The intent is to engage readers in such a way that they recognize the phenomenon of music listening as one they have had or could imagine having. The purpose of such research is to facilitate deeper understanding and more intentional action.

The writing style is clear, informative, and succinct. Now consider the version that was actually used to introduce the Results chapter.

> In this chapter, I have created a text of sounds and silences that point to and show the lived experience and lived meaning of music listening experiences for women living with chronic illness. My goal is to help you hear the phenomenon in your own life, encourage you to listen, and leave you to continue in the company of its echoes. (Nicol, 2002, p. 95)

Although both excerpts convey the same information, the latter uses a markedly different writing style. The reader is addressed directly, imagery is evoked, and auditory sensations emphasized. Why? What is the value of this kind of writing? In this case, the primary intent was to help readers start orienting to both the content and lived nature of the researched phenomenon.

Elements of a Vocative Text

Vocative texts tend to be characterized by five textual elements: concreteness, evocation, intensification, tone, and epiphany (van Manen, 1997).

Concreteness

Concreteness refers to the use of specific and particular descriptions that place a phenomenon concretely in the lifeworld, and helps readers identify closely with what they are reading. Concreteness prompts readers to appreciate the researched phenomenon in terms of their own lived experiences (van Manen, 1997). One way to convey concreteness is by incorporating direct quotes from interview transcripts. For example, an everyday music experience between co-habitating siblings, one chronically ill and the other not, was described as follows.

> Iris said, "We'll take turns. After we listen to her radio station, we'll listen to mine. So it works out pretty good. I mean we have similar tastes. Sometimes it's funny because we'll choose the same tape. She'll say 'let's play that' and then I'll say 'I was just going to say that too!' So it's pretty good because our lives are close, pretty similar." (Nicol, 2002, p. 133)

This direct quote provided a concrete description that captured behavioral and emotional elements of one type of music listening experience. The experience was described in unelaborated, straightforward language, which can help readers recognize the researched phenomenon in an immediate, accessible fashion.

Evocativeness

Evocativeness involves using words to evoke and vividly reveal the phenomenon. Consequently, an experience and its meanings are "called forth" (van Manen, 1997, p. 353), and readers are moved to engage in introspection and reflection. Evocativeness contrasts sharply with concreteness, whereas concreteness anchors the phenomenon, evocativeness illuminates and evokes lived meanings extending beyond immediate tangible experience. For example, I extended the previous concrete description, of siblings who shared similar musical tastes, by using evocative language to illuminate the lived meanings of this experience given the one sister's lived context of chronic illness. The initial concrete description is repeated below, but includes the next section of evocative elaboration that appeared in the dissertation text.

> Iris said, "We'll take turns. After we listen to her radio station, we'll listen to mine. So it works out pretty good. I mean we have similar tastes. Sometimes it's funny because we'll choose the same tape. She'll say 'let's play that' and then I'll say 'I was just going to say that too!' So it's pretty good because our lives are close, pretty similar." If her sister likes Iris's song when they listen to it, or if they both choose the same song to listen to, Iris is delighted. She offers herself in song and her sister accepts. She knows who she is by the music she likes; she knows who her sister is by the music she likes; and she knows the strength of their relationship by the music they share. Chronic illness has not changed this. (Nicol, 2002, p. 133)

The latter half of the quoted excerpt draws heavily on evocative textual elements that differ from the plain language used by the participant to concretely describe her experiences of listening to music with her sister. Lived meaning was suggested by finding and using words to evoke and vividly reveal the meaningful relational qualities experienced in this interaction between siblings, especially important for Iris given the uncertainty of her chronic illness and interrupted changed relationships accompanying it. Many of the participants described crying while listening to music, which led to the use of a short evocative phrase to reflect the lived nature of the tears. For example, one woman said, "The other evening I had had a very stressful weekend and was depressed. I turned the TV onto "Let's Sing Again." It restored my soul. I had a cry and felt better." (Nicol, 2002, p. 120).

By paying attention to this excerpt and other similar anecdotes described by the women, I realized that the women experienced the tears as positive and restorative, and to just say, the women often cried when listening to music, did not do justice to the tears' significance. The simple statement that the women's bodies "… often released tears while listening to music" (Nicol, 2002, p. 121) seemed much closer to the experience as lived, speaking to the body's spontaneous and involuntary physical releasing of tears. This short, yet evocative, articulation was used to intentionally "call forth" and evoke for readers, the cleansing, releasing, and letting go sensations associated with tears released with music.

Intensifying the Text

Intensifying the text involves maximizing the full poetic value of words by choosing words that kindle sensory knowing, by thoughtfully attending to the arrangement of words, and by developing and using metaphor (van Manen, 1997). For example, when one participant described listening to music until she felt "saturated," the meaning of this experience was elaborated as follows.

> Jean talks of wallowing in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* until she feels absolutely "saturated." Saturate means "to combine with the utmost quantity of another substance" and is derived from "satur," meaning full or satiated. What is it to be saturated until engorged with music? To be fully filled with music? To listen until want is completely absorbed into stasis? The women have no answer. They perceive want and are able to satisfy it, so they do. The body's physical hungering and the music's lure eventually subside, replaced with new hungers for new objects of musical desire. Former loves collect on the CD rack and are returned to with fond nostalgia because unlike human relationships that change, music stays friendly and makes no demands. Music is a constant, steady, and reliable companion. This is valued by the women, particularly given the constant, disruptive, and unpredictable presence of chronic illness. (Nicol, 2002, pp. 128-129)

In this excerpt, the text was intensified with repetition used to fully maximize the poetic value of words. A metaphor, musical in nature, was employed to further intensify the text and explore the possible lived meanings of what it meant to listen to music until saturated.

Another more extensive metaphor was developed and used to offer another way of understanding the women's music listening experiences. Throughout the data collection and analysis phase, I was struck time again by images and sensations of water. I realized that in many ways music was like water. I pushed the metaphor in order to fully explore the parallels between music and water, and offer readers another way in which to understand the music listening phenomenon in terms of another familiar experience.

Recurrent sensations and images of water came to me throughout the inquiry, both as I read and reflected, and as I listened. On different occasions of music listening, I felt "bathed in sound" as if waves washed over me, or "buoyed with sound" as if floating on lapping ocean waves. Other times I felt like the water itself. I was the river current coursing forwards, the swirling, churning whirlpool, or the dropping, weightless rain drops. Water takes on many forms and incorporates many experiences. We surrender with giddy laughter and shouts as a pounding surf picks us up and tosses us around; we become entranced by the steady crunch of the snow under our feet as we hike the long trail home; we stroll carefree along the beach as the water laps coolly at our ankles; we invigorate our body with the blast of a cold shower. A damp trickling stream, a relentless pounding rain, an ethereal morning dew – these are just a few of water's many manifestations and properties.

Some enjoy water in all its states; others are well acquainted with just a few of its manifestations; and others fear or even dislike it. Or perhaps water is not thought of; or not until drought-plagued lands are visited and the changed environment changes what is noticed. Some like the water at a distance and as part of the view; walking, reading, and napping by the water. Some like being right in the water, swimming, diving, and bubbling like water itself. Others stay close, though separate, with canoeing and sailing. If a vessel is strong, boaters feel safe to enjoy and partake in all types of water; but if a vessel suffers damage or has repairs, the water's conditions are observed and experienced with more careful attention.

Some are experts about water; scientists who study its elements for new knowledge, fishers who attend to its rhythms for setting and gathering their nets, or map-makers who plot its journey for directions. But expertise is not necessary for enjoyment or appreciation. Those who are non-experts can still know water well and know its many pleasures.

Like water that remains water despite its many manifestations and properties, so too does music remain music despite its many forms and qualities. Just as surfers, kayakers, and swimmers know different things of

water but share experiences of its sensations, so do rappers, classicists, and jazz aficionados know different things of music but share in its sensations. Just as the women listen to music in multiple ways, so water is experienced in multiple ways; and just as some favor particular ways of listening to music, so others enjoy the water in particular ways. There are unlimited ways of being with water – or music – and so the possibility for unending discoveries and possibilities exists. Increasing experience and knowledge generate a sensitivity and receptiveness that is enacted without the intentional formation of thought. The fisher feels something shift in the air, even though the rain is unseen; the listener feels some rhythm start in her body, even though its source is unheard. (Nicol, 2002, pp. 140-142)

Tone

Tone refers to the way in which readers are addressed. The goal is to instill the text with a tone that speaks to readers in a direct, feeling, and stirring manner (van Manen, 1997). The tone of writing tends to arise from the whole of the text, so it is difficult to extract specific succinct examples. However, some insight might be gleaned by revisiting the direct appeal made to readers in introducing the results, "My goal is to help you hear the phenomenon in your own life, encourage you to listen, and leave you to continue in the company of its echoes" (Nicol, 2002, p. 195). A similar tone, addressing readers directly and personally, was heard again in the final sentence of the results chapter that read, "And if your life has been rich with music, there is assurance that in the hours of illness, music will come and music will offer" (p. 145).

Rhetorical questions can also be used to achieve a desired tone. In an earlier excerpt, for example, three questions were posed about what it meant to listen to music until saturated, "What is it to be saturated until engorged with music? To be fully filled with music? To listen until want is completely absorbed into stasis?" (Nicol, 2002, p. 128). These questions convey a tone intended to include readers in wondering themselves about what this means. What experiences have I had that might suggest an answer to these questions? The right tone encourages readers to dialogue with the text and by extension its author, which fosters a personal reading of findings that may ultimately prompt transformation, that is, an epiphany.

Encouraging the Epiphany

Epiphany, the final textual feature, means creating a text that leaves readers feeling changed by what they read (van Manen, 1997). Again, this is something that exists in the text as a whole and is difficult to extract within a single excerpt. However, the concluding statement of the results chapter hinted at the possibility of a reader's epiphany by communicating what was in fact my own epiphany.

Earlier I wondered about what the women hear, what unsounded sounds play to their ears. I now think that they hear offerings and possibilities. Music sets the stage for an interaction and extends an invitation. The women listen to know what "gift" is there, and decide whether to accept it

or not. Music is sought, perhaps music seeks them – because of their long standing relationship and involvement it is difficult to tease out the beginnings and endings of interactions. What is clear is that the women of this inquiry have lived in the company of music through most of their lives, and in the company of illness for the more recent parts of their lives. Illness has changed their relationship with music by making its presence, invitations, and offerings more audible, and music has changed their relationship with illness by making its dissonant harmonies more sonorous and even permissible. And now they live in the company of music and illness. (Nicol, 2002, pp. 144-145)

As researcher, I was changed over the course of completing the research. The findings were striking and unanticipated. As I had explored and come to see the phenomenon anew, I also invited readers to wonder and travel alongside me with the possibility of experiencing their own epiphany.

Student Examples of Vocative Writing

I have exposed students to the concept of vocative texts and its elements, as illustrated in these dissertation excerpts, through a qualitative research class as well as in the process of supervising their research theses. I am genuinely excited and enthused about this subject matter, so I find that despite some trepidation, many students also become excited and enthused about the possibility of incorporating expressive writing into their research. Once exposed to different writing strategies, informed of the rationale, encouraged to experiment, and given permission to be inspired, several students have taken up the challenge. The results have been innovative and successful.

One student used a metaphor in the first paragraph of her thesis to provide creative and evocative introduction to the study, which was a narrative inquiry of school counsellors' professional development and identity (Woodcock, 2005).

I was the shortest kid in my class during most of elementary school. What began to bother me as I approached puberty was not my height per se, but the fact that I couldn't fit into the grown up clothes and shoes like many of my classmates. I felt stuck in my childishness. At some point, I began to be woken at night with sharp pains in my legs. Neither aspirin nor comfort from my parents helped. A trip to the doctor confirmed that these were growing pains and nothing to be concerned about. My leg pains represented the beginning of a growth spurt: a critical period that was both confusing and exhilarating. While physical growth spurts are now behind me, I wonder whether psychological growth proceeds in the same stop-and-start fashion. There are certainly times when I experience stuckness and others when I can barely keep up with the changes. As I embark on my career in counselling, I am conscious not only of my clients' needs for development, but also my own. What needs to happen for me to grow and develop as a professional and as a person? How will I overcome stuckness in this career? When can I expect to be an expert at

what I do? These are the kinds of questions that led me to this research project. (p. 1)

In addition to presenting the research questions in an engaging creative manner, this opening paragraph also acted as a vocative induction for the reader to start considering the identified phenomenon of professional growth.

Another student used a metaphor at the end of the thesis to conclude and reflect holistically on the experiences of adult women who grew up with verbal abuse (Roth, 2004).

I have been engaged in the active and often agonizing process of interviewing, writing and re-writing and have come to the realization that there is so much left unsaid and remaining to be discovered about the phenomenon of childhood verbal abuse. At times I have struggled with my own recollections and have developed a new awareness and appreciation of the complexity of this issue. Childhood verbal abuse wounds the core of the individual and the outward scars are often imperceptible, but the memory of the verbally abusive behavior remains within the individual forever. There is hope, however, that by writing and talking about this issue, more people will come to realize that this type of abuse must be stopped. Throughout this journey, I reflected on and listened to words, both spoken and unspoken. Communicating with words is something most human beings take for granted. Although words are spoken in different languages, in different tones and inflections, they are found in all parts of the world. As I considered the universality of words, I started thinking about what else is common, widespread, and ordinary. My attention turned to wind and how it has some of the same properties as words. Wind also covers the earth and affects all of life. Like words, wind is an invisible force, unseen and yet pervasive. The effects of wind are manifested in many and varied ways. A soft, gentle breeze on a warm summer day cools and brings refreshing relief. Listening to the wind can be soothing and calming. Gale force winds on a cold, chilling night cuts to the bone and leaves a person running for cover to get out of the frigid blast. Hurricane force winds leave much damage and destruction in their wake. The wind can stir up dirt and debris, or carry seeds of hope and new life. In the autumn, wind rustles the dry, brittle leaves and is a reminder that winter is coming. Words can also be life-giving or a source of devastation and cruelty. Words can breathe life into a person and bring nourishment, comfort and hope or words can be biting, cold and frigid. Although wind blows where it will and can often be catastrophic, it can also be harnessed for good. Scientists have learned that wind power is an innovative way to incorporate a common phenomenon into good use. In a similar manner, human beings can be taught to think before they speak and to use words that will build up rather than tear down. As Proverbs 16:24 states, "Pleasing words are a honeycomb, sweet to the taste and healthful to the body." (pp. 181-182)

This student evoked an image of wind, in all its forms, to help readers fully see and feel the impact of words. This final reflection, a holistic vocative rendering of the findings, was meant to continue reverberating with readers, long after the thesis was put aside.

A third example comes from the thesis of a student who presented findings as a fictional journal authored by Sophie, an imaginary composite character, who was created to give voice to six adolescent girls' experiences of music listening and romance (Siemens, 2006). This textual structure increased participant confidentiality and anonymity as well as conveyed findings vocatively. In the thesis excerpt below, direct interview quotes are identified in bold.

> Dear Diary,
> Here I am, sitting at the computer looking through all the songs I've downloaded. Tomorrow I meet with Gerri. She asked if I would bring along a few of my favorite songs for her to listen to; and then she wants me to talk about what makes them special to me. Weird! Do you think she'll understand? I dunno. It's hard to explain. So many of these songs are personal songs – like the one I'm listening to now. **I listen to it mostly, like, in my room or in my car when I'm by myself. It's a "by myself" song … I don't like to really, I mean I listen to it with my – you know, my mom really likes this song too. We'll sit down and listen to it. But when I'm by myself it's really more of a personal … deep intimate experience with myself rather than just you, listening for pleasure kind of things** … I don't think I could explain this to my parents, **just 'cause they're so out of your element and just don't listen to the same kind of music** … they're like the adult authority figure … **and you don't always, like, let them in on what you're thinking … and something like music is just a little too personal … just 'cause it's opening up so much to somebody**. Listening to music **almost becomes an out-of-body experience. Like, I don't have any sense of time … it's a very personal experience for me … it's what makes you vulnerable and … that's one of the things I love so much about music**. I can listen. I can sing. I can cry. No one is watching me or wondering what I could possibly like about the songs I listen to. No one is looking into my soul. I am here alone, with just one intimate, understanding friend. **It's just me and the music.** (Siemens, 2006, p. 87)

The diary form provided an evocative framework for organizing and representing findings. The diary entries evoked the ambiance of adolescence and helped reveal the phenomenon in text.

A last example involved creating a data poem by reorganizing excerpts from transcripts based on interviews completed with a child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), his parents, and his teachers. The purpose was to convey the story of juxtaposed voices in a school system that ultimately complicated one student's positive experiences with listening to music during seat work in the classroom. The data poem was included in the results chapter of the thesis (Wiebe, 2007), and more recently, was disseminated as a stand-alone publication (Wiebe & Nicol, 2007) in a

special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Music Therapy*. It is included here with permission of the journal.

Juxtaposition: ADHD and Music at School

I try to control it but I can't really
It makes you hyper and it sort of loses your concentration

He's impulsive
Annoying
Unapproachable

We had to sit in desks all day
It was really hard
…just talking and silence

He needs to have a little more maturity

But with music there's sort of like color
Time goes by faster
It's not as boring

It's easier to get work done
It puts more fun into the day

School Rules: No MP3 players

When it was funner I could learn more!

For some kids it does help
Sometimes I think we restrict… or quash some of the productivity of the kids because of those rules

Hard rock…loud music
I can focus with ones that are loud
` Some of them are the beat, some of them is the singing, the words that I like
It kind of pumps me up I guess

I'm not always convinced that they are making the choice to use the kind of music that would help them
They will use the wrong kind of music

…It keeps me from rushing

*If you take music away, it's like taking glasses away from another person, so that now
they can't read, that doesn't help them
Now they can't focus or now they can't stay calm*

I sort of zoned out in the music
The class went by faster

*The music just kinda soothes his mind and just slows him down
His self esteem has never been high*

Sometimes I might be down a bit,
then I'll listen to my music and I'll feel a lot better

Conclusion

As is true in any creative process, vocative texts are created when one manages to trust oneself, to trust the process, and to trust the other; whether that be the students one works with or the readers to whom one writes. Once you are able to create a variety of different texts – ones that speak to the implicit, emotional and ineffable, as well as ones that speak to the logical, analytical, and rational – you can intentionally adopt writing styles that are congruent with the nature of an inquiry, that is fitting the assumptions, purposes, data, methods, and processes used in the research. As noted earlier, the fit might arise from varied motivations: a desire to evoke lived experience (van Manen, 1997), to appreciate and encourage multiple ways of knowing (Ellis, 1999), to bridge art and science (Ellis & Bochner, 2006), or to just provide an enjoyable read (Gilgun, 2005).

Vocative texts also provide a means for disseminating findings to audiences that include not only researchers, but also practitioners and lay community members, for example. Consideration of one's imagined audience does suggest a possible contraindication for the use of vocative texts. Readers have expectations of texts, particularly research texts, and if expectations are disrupted, readers may no longer be willing to read and engage with a text. Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1993) distinguished between readerly and writerly texts, a differentiation that is helpful in elaborating this point. Research texts have conventionally been readerly texts; texts that are focused, provide definitive conclusions, and are "… closely controlled, structured and defined by the principle author of the research" (p. 391). Writerly texts, on the other hand, are "more open, unpredictable and ambiguous" (p. 391). Writerly texts are much like vocative texts. They require receptive readers who are willing to make their own meaning of the writing and its evoked imagery, sensations, and associations. Paradoxically, the new audiences reached by disseminating research findings in a vocative style of writing, might be acquired at the risk of alienating the more traditional academic audience.

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Appendix A

Being a Student Mother

My role as a parent is very important to me,
and my role as a student is also very important to me,
So it's very hard to make choices!
It's important to me to be a good mother but there's more to me than that.
….it's a juggling act – one conflicts with the other.
The student life requires more introspection, more focus,
And the family life is always conflicting with that.
I want to do well; otherwise, what's the point,
But there doesn't seem to be enough room in my head for everything,
Not enough hours in the day, not enough energy, not enough money
I'm not there for my child; I'm letting her down,
"Mommy will play with you later"
I'm not a good student, and I'm not a good parent,
I'm a failure as a human being!
If one part of the system breaks down, the rest goes too.
We've run out of money, but there's no room to negotiate.
I thought I was doing the right thing, but I hear voices saying I'm a drain on society,
What is she doing here? Why doesn't she just go home?

Don't want to give them an excuse to say, oh, she's just a mother.
Survival of the fittest!
How can you go from being an honors student to barely passing?
I AM one of the fittest!
I didn't just wake up stupid one day!
Scholarships go to those who get the marks, who have volunteer experience,
But all the demands, how will we survive, is this still a positive in my life?
I feel like I'm just a big weed, and they're trying to get me out.
My daughter, I don't want her to grow up ignorant, like me.
But I'm sticking in here, I'm NOT giving up,
I was told I had to fight. I'm tired of fighting.
When they look at me and say, YOU made the choice,
I can't sleep, I'm thinking: did I…? How will I …?
I'm thinking to myself: yes, but You have the problem
And my marks are slipping and my child is acting out,
That's just too bad that I couldn't write the exam,
I'm not who I want to be, and who I know I could be,
There's nothing I could do, my child had the flu,
I see no one else who is struggling like me
I was up with her all night
My schedule's ridiculous, my health goes downhill,
And still, I have to fight not to feel responsible, all right
The joy of learning is gone, I can do what I will
I know they expect me to do just as well, even if I just had the night from hell,
If I'm forced to give up, an important part of me will die,
A voice inside me says: you're their mother, it's up to you!
But I have no support, and I don't know how or why
And the university too, demands its due
Maybe they're right, I should stay home and be a mom,
I constantly have to talk myself through my degree,
It's all up to me, I must carry the can.
Something's got to give, and it can't only be ME!

Note. From *The lived experience of student mothers* by E. Dalian (1998). Unpublished Masters thesis. University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Appendix B

Table of Contents from Nicol (2002)

PROGRAMME / **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Note. From *In the company of music and illness: The experience and meaning of music listening for women living with chronic illness* by J. J. Nicol (2002). Unpublished dissertation, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Appendix C

Results Chapter Headings from Nicol (2002)

Note. From *In the company of music and illness: The experience and meaning of music listening for women living with chronic illness* by J. J. Nicol (2002). Unpublished dissertation, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

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