

A
Narrative
Inquiry exploring the
therapeutic potential of Rap lyrics in
Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes.

Student: Jasimi Kiran Bangerh

Research Adviser: Rebecca Midwinter

**A dissertation submitted to Metanoia Institute in accordance with the requirements of the
MSc in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes, a programme validated by
Middlesex University, School of Science and Technology. July 2017**

Synopsis

The motivation behind this study is to offer a person-centred, art-based alternative to medication for normal human emotions. The researcher followed a heuristic process and draws parallels with the Hero's Quest mythic structure.

The study socially constructs the story of how Rap might be therapeutic when combined with Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes (CWTP) using a poststructuralist lens. It forms a bricolage of narrative inquiry techniques: autoethnography, interviews with two MC co-researchers and poetic inquiry.

Youth, males, and young, African Caribbean males are represented widely within Hip Hop's audience and performers. Hence, the study investigates whether Therapeutic Hip Hop (or 'THH', a name applied here to practice combining Hip Hop lyrics with CWTP) could improve target groups' motivation to engage in therapeutic interventions, whilst offering a culturally relevant approach.

Interviews were semi-structured and explored therapeutic aspects of Rap. MC's reveal how they used rap to process grief and trauma. These Golden Nuggets of wisdom are presented as Findings. Findings are creatively represented as 'Hip Hop HEALS' three-book manual regarding Rap's therapeutic potential including: 1) an autoethnographic vignette; 2) a 'Guide to Remedy Rhymes' (spoken in the voices of three sage MCs) and 3) a Toolkit of songs for helping professionals to apply in practice.

In a parallel narrative inquiry quest, the researcher-participant (aka 'The KZA'), embarked on an imagined journey into 36 mountain chambers to recover Rap's sacred scriptures: the 'Hip Hop HEALS' books. All three co-researchers manifest in the data-story as the composite-character MCs who authored the scrolls.

Data demonstrates key benefits for THH practitioners and participants might include improved connection with wider societal, local peer and familial groups; the processing of burdensome emotions; opportunities for reflection using the 12-stage structure and Archetypes of The Hero's Quest and Rap as stimulus for therapeutic writing and discussion.

Conclusions are that Rap should be welcomed in CWTP practice. When managed carefully, the potential for improving therapeutic alliance, increasing motivation and empowering participants is huge yet untapped. However, UK research in the field is limited to psychotherapy and psychiatry (Sule and Inkster, 2014; 2015) and music therapy (De Viggiani, *et al.*, 2013; Short, 2014). Hence further research is strongly encouraged.

Keywords: therapeutic writing, expressive writing, Hip Hop, Rap, The Hero's Quest, youth, men, African Caribbean, narrative inquiry, poetic inquiry, heuristic, bricolage, autoethnography.

Acknowledgments

To all Sufferers, I send healing and love.

To all Oppressors, I send light and love.

To Mom, I give thanks for borning me.

To Pam and Dad, I give thanks for re-borning me.

To Rossy and Susan Gearing, I give thanks for love and shelter.

To Wu Tang Clan: it's been 36 long hard years and still flourishin'...

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Middlesex University. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the Middlesex University.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for any other examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed:

Date:

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	6
2. Literature Review	8
3. Methodology & Ethics	13
4. Presentation of Data: Hip Hop HEALS' Guide	24
5. Analysis and Discussion	49
6. Conclusion	58
7. Appendices	59
8. References	84

INTRODUCTION

Hip Hop is:

- a popular, global youth movement
- Rap music is *one* of five elements (with DJing, MCing, graffiti and street knowledge)
- the word ‘Rap’ means ‘rhyming, poetic vocals’
- Rap artists ‘Rap’ over backing music (usually pre-recorded electronically)

The terms ‘Hip Hop’ and ‘Rap’ are applied interchangeably throughout the study.

Rap originated as a youth culture born of struggle. Rose (1993) explains:

Rap music is a black cultural expression that prioritizes black voices from the margins of urban America. Rap music is a form of rhymed storytelling accompanied by highly rhythmic, electronically based music.

(p. 2)

Rap gave voice to disenfranchised populations in the Bronx, USA during the 1970s (Rose, 1993; Tyson, 2002; Allen, 2005). Levy and TaeHyuk Keum (2014) state: ‘[in] post-industrialized Bronx, NY...the birth of Hip-hop was inherently therapeutic’ as a ‘platform for individuals, who needed a voice, to speak back against inequalities they faced’ (pp. 217-8). However, Viega (2012) highlights Hip Hop is rarely connected with healing or therapeutic activity, having been reduced to its negative or ‘Shadow’ elements by hegemonic forces. Perhaps as a consequence, there does not appear to be an existing field of research linking the therapeutic nature of Rap lyrics in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes (which I abbreviate as ‘CWTP’ and use to refer to expressive writing, poetry therapy, bibliotherapy and journal therapy). The closest connection in the UK seems in music therapy (De Viggiani, *et al.*, 2013; Short, 2014; 2015), and psychiatry and psychotherapy (Sule and Inkster, 2014; 2015).

CWTP helped pave the researcher’s road to recovery from a delayed, traumatised grief reaction and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Contrastingly, she experienced some GPs as unhelpful and disinterested in her views on the direction of her own treatment. She felt pressured into taking antidepressants for grief against her will due to fear of side-effects and an unwillingness to risk addiction. Hence, this research study offers a person-centred, art-based alternative using CWTP following the researcher’s belief that everyone deserves tailored mental health options to suit their needs.

Young, African Caribbean males (YACMs) are seven times more likely to be forcibly sectioned or imprisoned upon experiencing mental illness than white counterparts (Griffiths, 2005; 300 Voices Toolkit, 2016). Resultantly, this group faces the highest risk of poor mental health outcomes (300 Voices Toolkit, 2016). As YACMs are highly represented within Rap's discourse, this study intends to discover whether THH might offer an appealing route to therapeutic interventions for this demographic.

Hence, this research aims to explore:

- 1) whether there are therapeutic elements of Rap which could be applied with youth (especially Hard to Reach/Youth at Risk), men and young, African Caribbean men
- 2) the therapeutic potential of combining Rap with CWTP practice (a model referred to here as Therapeutic Hip Hop or 'THH')
- 3) who might benefit from THH?
- 4) if Hip Hop could assist professionals such as counsellors, social workers, teachers and youth workers etc. (referred to as 'practitioners' hereafter) to connect with people on their level
- 5) outcomes for practitioners to appease commissioners and funders

The study socially constructs (Berger and Luckman, 1966) the story of how Rap might be therapeutic when combined with Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes (CWTP) using a poststructuralist lens (Derrida, 2016). It forms a bricolage (Kincheloe, 2004) of narrative inquiry techniques (Etherington, 2004a; 2004b; Kim, 2015): autoethnography (Muncey, 2010), interviews with co-researchers and poetic inquiry (Willis, 2002; Galvin and Prendergast, 2015; Sjollemma and Bilotta, 2016).

A bricoleur qualitative researcher connects multiple methods and critical frameworks to explore intersectionalities between being, truth and voice (Kim, 2015). Thus, the 12-stage structure (12HQ) of The Hero's Quest (Campbell, 1949; Vogler, 2007) provides a hermeneutic basis for interpreting data presented as an autoethnographic vignette and 'The Hip Hop HEALS' Guides', based on co-researcher's experiences of Rap as therapeutic. The latter consists of found poems interpreted from semi-structured interview data using poetic inquiry: an unplanned process. An Analysis and Discussion explores the quest's Golden Nuggets for practical application.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This Literature Review appraises evidence-based research with clear practical application to Therapeutic Hip Hop (THH), and target audiences identified in the initial research proposal: youth (especially Hard to Reach/Youth at Risk), men and young, African Caribbean men (YACMs). Firstly, the field of related research is defined through inclusions and omissions. Next, pertinent facts regarding mental health inequalities faced by UK target groups are outlined. Then, a critique of research related to THH and target audiences is offered, applying a poststructuralist (Derrida, 2016), person-centred (Rogers, 1951) lens. Finally, gaps are identified in the literature pool. First let us define the literature pool.

The Existing Field: Inclusions and Omissions

Hip Hop's application in social work (Tyson, 2002; Allen, 2005; Travis Jnr. & Deepak, 2011), poetry therapy (Furman & Dill, 2012; Levy & TaeHyuk Keum, 2014; Ko, 2014), narrative therapy (Adame & Knudson, 2007) and reflexive practice (Bolton, 2001) were identified as areas for investigation in the research proposal in-line with the person-centred principles underlying the study's aims, though the latter was found to be integrated across practice. Valuable insights were drawn from psychiatry (Hejtmanek (2015), music therapy (Ahmadi & Oosthuizen, 2012; Viega, 2012; Baker, 2015) and Hip Hop and spoken word therapy (Levy, 2012) though space limits their discussion. Due to the extended time-frame of the study, further research was found in relevant fields which is detailed later in the Analysis and Discussion, at the point of discovery. Drumming Therapy and Shaman Therapy were omitted, although of interest. Next, let us consider health inequalities pertinent to the study.

Inequalities in UK Mental Health Service Provision

The UK charity Mental Health Foundation (2015) states:

1. 70 million days are lost from work each year due to mental ill health.
2. The estimated cost of mental health problems are between £70-100 billion each year.
3. Mental health services are overstretched, have long waiting times and in some regions lack specialist services.
4. Common mental health problems include depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

These facts are significant as they suggest current UK mental health service provision is insufficient.

Unfortunately, it appears UK children and young people are being underserved by the healthcare system:

5. Ten percent of youth (aged 5-16) have a clinically diagnosable mental problem yet 70% have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age.
6. Services turn away, on average, nearly a quarter (23%) of children and teenagers referred to them by their GPs, teachers or others.

(Fundamental Facts About Mental Health 2015, 2015)

It is alarming that so many youth are denied support. The cost of *not* helping our youth becomes harrowingly clear when we consider:

7. There were 145 suicides and probable suicides by children and young people under 20 in England between January 2014 and April 2015.
8. The majority of deaths were in males (70%).
9. Over a quarter (28%) had been bereaved—13% by the suicide of a family member or friend.

i. (Suicide by children and young people in England, 2016)

There is also a distinct need for effective suicide intervention and prevention for men considering that:

10. Male rates remain consistently higher than female suicide rates across the UK.

(Samaritans suicide statistics report 2017, 2017)

Further research is required to improve mental health outcomes for young people and men.

Moreover, people of African and Caribbean origin are being racially discriminated against by helping professionals intended to be at their service:

11. Detention rates under the Mental Health Act recorded during 2012 were 2.2 times higher for people of African origin and 4.2 times higher for those of Caribbean origin than the average.
12. In a survey of median hospital admission periods, the median number of days black Caribbean men spent in psychiatric hospital (345) was more than twice those spent by people of white British origin (161).
13. People from black ethnic groups have consistently higher than average rates of detention under sections 37/41 of the Mental Health Act.

(300 Voices Toolkit, 2016)

The information above highlights a deficit in the effectiveness of mental health service provision for these target groups. THH might address the issues outlined. As youth, males, and YACMs are represented widely within Hip Hop's audience and performers, THH may be found to improve motivation to engage in therapeutic interventions whilst offering a culturally relevant approach, once accessed. Now let us look at existing research linking THH with youth, men and YACMs.

THH and Youth

Recent research on the application of lyrics in poetry therapy with youth reveals rapport building, fun and opportunities for reflection on life as therapeutic elements (Ahmadi and Oosthuizen, 2012). This suggests Rap lyrics might offer a tailored intervention for *particular* groups of young people. Viega specifies Rap's autobiographical function as helpful in emotional healing work through its depiction of Othered life:

Hip-Hop offers an expressive channel to voice the needs and share the lived experiences of marginalized, under-served urban communities that are often neglected and forgotten about in mainstream sociopolitical discourse. For many Hip-Hop artists, the violent, misogynistic, and destructive themes that may emerge in the art of Hip-Hop is a reflection of social ills that mainstream media may not properly represent.

(2012, p. 66)

Tyson (2002) and Allen (2005) conducted pioneering social work research using Hip Hop Therapy with Youth at Risk. Allen defines Hip Hop Therapy (HHT):

HHT uses Hip-Hop music and culture to engage youth and address their issues in therapy by encouraging them to reflect on Hip-Hop lyrics as they relate to the youths' own life experiences.

(p. 30)

This seems like a culturally sensitive approach. However, they offer reductionist, positivist views of the therapeutic relationship. Furthermore, their language is mechanical and problem-orientated. For example, Allen (2005) states HHT allows practitioners to identify participants' negative mindsets and 'replace' them with healthy goals (Allen, 2005, p. 30). Allen: 'over-simplifies the processes involved in personal growth,' and her approach is machine-like, in opposition to the humanistic (Rogers, 1951) approach of this study. She situates: 'the therapist/social worker as the agent of change,' putting:

...hegemonic power on the therapist as the catalyst for change. Both research articles place most emphasis on how HHT will benefit 1) the social worker and 2) wider society rather than how it will help the young people themselves.

(Bangerh, 2013, pp. 9-17)

Furthermore, Tyson's experiment could be deemed unethical for only requesting qualitative feedback from one test group which may have also distorted data interpretation. In other empowerment-focussed youth work (Adame & Knudson, 2007; Travis Jnr. & Deepak, 2011; Levy, 2012), 'consumers hold the key to their own recovery' and 'the role of professionals is one of facilitating this recovery' (Schiff, 2004 cited in Adame and Knudson, 2007 p. 199). Levy (2012) offers an appealing person-centered perspective using Hip Hop in therapy to: 'allow the client to feel understood and accepted' (Levy, 2012, p.220). Ko (2014) explains how poetry therapists might use popular music lyrics with adolescent clients to create connection, relaxation and discover coping strategies but omits Rap from his discussion, presenting an opportunity for further research. A focus on Grime might further tailor UK-based CWTP workshops, due to its growing popularity.

THH and Men

Levy and TaeHyuk Keum (2014) state: [in] ‘post-industrialized Bronx, NY...the birth of Hip-hop was inherently therapeutic,’ as a, ‘platform for individuals, who needed a voice, to speak back against inequalities they faced’ (pp. 217-8). They offer Hip Hop lyricism as a tool to encourage men to access therapy (DeCarlo & Hockman, 2003 cited in TaeHyuk Keum, 2014, p. 218). Furman and Dill (2012) highlight inadequate research has been conducted regarding the mechanisms of masculinity that restrict men’s use of poetry therapy. The application of Rap with CWTP might challenge the idea that: ‘Poetry is often viewed as a feminine art form’ (Furman & Dill 2012, p. 102). They extend THH-related research conducted by Travis and Deepak (2011) by focussing on *male* empowerment and personal development but fail to acknowledge the rich plethora of Rap lyrics available to underpin their discussion. Their suggestions for poetry therapy exercises do, however, offer sound guidance. Further investigation to explore their impact with Rap lyrics as stimuli would be beneficial.

THH and YACMs

Research linking THH with UK YACMs is limited, demonstrating the need for further investigation. Hejtmanek (2015) considers Rap’s therapeutic effect with YACMs in US psychiatric custody through critical race theory. Findings highlight connections between mental wellbeing and structural racism. Contrastingly, this study applies poststructuralism to explore how Rap might help improve YACM’s mental health rather than the impact of social inequalities. Australian music therapist Baker (2015) suggests Rap portrays issues affecting marginalised youth but omits racial considerations, despite Rap’s roots in African Caribbean culture. She discusses aspects of music therapy including music production and Rap performance. Though insightful, CWTP elements were missing. Further study regarding writing and discussion of Rap lyrics would increase the accessibility of this research for those interested in applying THH. Furthermore, only clinicians were interviewed regarding the therapeutic experience, demonstrating a need for research centered on participants’ experience. Again, a discussion of UK-related themes and issues pertaining to the target group is needed.

Gaps Identified in Existing Literature

Early literature searches revealed a deficit in CWTP-related research involving therapeutic experiences and Rap lyrics within the UK. Therefore, this study will focus on the UK’s cultural context. Prevalence will be given to UK Hip Hop and Grime (a music genre close to Hip Hop) and lyrics originating in Birmingham, UK; where the researcher intends to base practice. The language of Hip Hop social work and therapy literature was experienced by the researcher as reductionist and mechanised, suggesting the need for more participant-centered, humanistic research (Rogers, 1951). The voices of individual participants were noticeably absent and could be integrated with narrative-focussed methods of data collection. Though the existing field clearly demonstrates Rap’s usefulness as a therapeutic tool, the researcher is curious to discover whether people immersed within its culture, in the UK, have experienced benefits outlined in the Literature Review.

Later in the study, further research by Short (2014) was discovered utilising Hip Hop in music therapy. It will be discussed chronologically, at the point of discovery.

Research on grief and trauma was initially avoided by the researcher due to its potential to trigger upsetting emotions. However, due to a successful self-care routine, the researcher found reflection on personal grief and trauma actually helped make sense of her experiences and were therefore included in the study.

In summary, this Literature Review suggests that UK mental health service provision is insufficient in addressing the needs of young men, particularly YACMs. Hip Hop could offer an expressive channel for the target group to release emotions and widen routes to therapeutic intervention. In the researcher's own THH research and practice, reductionist, positivist views which mechanise the therapeutic relationship are rejected. Thus, participants of this study will be positioned as experts in their own recovery with unlimited potential for growth. To conclude, the existing research within the perimeters of this Literature Review present the need for further study regarding whether and how Hip Hop could be applied to improve young men's mental health, with a focus on participant experience from within UK culture.

METHODOLOGY & ETHICS

This chapter offers commentary on methodologies and methods with *research ethics* intertwined. Forming an integral part of this work, their discussion is interwoven with pertinent aspects *emboldened in italics*. The study's philosophical approach, research tools, changes in intentions and challenges are explained throughout. Kim (2016) encourages articulation of one's theoretical standpoint using a three-fold system:

Macro-level theory (interpretive paradigm): poststructuralism, social constructivism.

Meso-Level theory (methodological paradigm): narrative inquiry, heuristic inquiry, autoethnography, bricolage.

2. Micro-Level theory (disciplinary paradigm): CWTP, Hero's Quest.

To understand how these ideas developed into the approach here named Therapeutic Hip Hop (THH), let us first outline epistemological and ontological concerns with a discussion of methodologies and methods to assess appropriateness.

Methodology

Epistemology and Ontology

Originally, the study was focussed on stories of self and personal pain, significantly affecting research design. Traditionally, these ideas are not akin to academic research. But they *can* be. Whilst investigating the therapeutic potential of Rap, the question of how, with what benefit and for whom are pertinent questions alongside which aspects of *self* stories to include ethically. The researcher was curious to discover whether Hip Hop lyrics could be used therapeutically within CWTP and if so, *which* aspects might be helpful for people. The Literature Review revealed zero studies linking Rap with CWTP in the UK. So, there does not appear to be any prior knowledge specific to this inquiry and its cultural location upon which to draw. Rap forms a public space in that lyrics are words written for performance. Hence, we could consider them poems for chanting in a shared space. Theoretically, poems and Raps could be utilised interchangeably within CWTP to achieve therapeutic outcomes.

Speedy (2008) addresses the issue of public and personal dimensions of therapeutic space:

Therapeutic encounters, albeit confidential exchanges about apparently 'private' troubles, are only available to us in our contemporary everyday lives as a result of shifts in public and social discourses.

(unpaginated)

The researcher was motivated to *share elements of her own story and wondered whether reticence in revealing vulnerabilities and personally sensitive material* also prevented target groups from seeking therapeutic help, and whether a lack of access to suitable services played a role. Regardless of the cause, it was anticipated they *might* benefit from using THH in dealing with difficult and disruptive experiences as she had, having also suffered as a result of poor mental health service provision.

Potential lines of inquiry regarding how Rap can help are numerous but space limited. The research question was re-examined in deciding upon methodologies and methods. There was no hypothesis to test: it was not clear how or whether Rap was therapeutic. Rather, the personal stories of rappers and rap fans were sought. However, Kim (2016) explains how the epistemology of science has pervaded human behavioural sciences since the 19th century:

In this positivistic epistemology, human conditions that are the focus of research are viewed as value-neutral, fixed, stable, predictable, and generalizable enough that those prescribed solutions can be applied universally to every human condition.

(pp. 3-4)

But every human is unique and their story, different. Therefore, reductionist, quantitative methodologies and structuralist ideology are rejected here. For example, a hypothesis would be inappropriate as people's lived experiences are being investigated. Further, the Literature Review did not reveal whether participants experienced Rap as therapeutic. To find this out, discussion is required with people from within Rap culture, either those working in the therapeutic field or with/from target audiences. This study intends to *discover* if it *could* be and *how*. Thus, engaging in heuristic inquiry, defined by Etherington (2014a) as: 'a process of inquiry leading to discovery', seems apt (p. 111).

Following the heuristic processes outlined below (Hiles, 2001), the researcher engaged in deep self-inquiry and immersed herself in Hip Hop culture:

Summary of Moustakas' Phases of Heuristic Inquiry

1. Initial engagement

The task of the first phase is to discover an intense interest, a passionate concern that calls out to the researcher, one that holds important social meanings and personal, compelling implications. The research question that emerges lingers with the researcher, awaiting the disciplined commitment that will reveal its underlying meanings.

2. Immersion

The research question is lived in waking, sleeping and even dream states. This requires alertness, concentration and self-searching. Virtually anything connected with the question becomes raw material for immersion.

3. Incubation

This involves a retreat from the intense, concentrated focus, allowing the expansion of knowledge to take place at a more subtle level, enabling the inner tacit dimension and intuition to clarify and extend understanding.

4. Illumination

This involves a breakthrough, a process of awakening that occurs naturally when the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition. It involves opening a door to new awareness, a modification of an old understanding, a synthesis of fragmented knowledge, or new discovery.

5. Explication

This involves a full examination of what has been awakened in consciousness. What is required is organization and a comprehensive depiction of the core themes.

6. Creative synthesis

Thoroughly familiar with the data, and following a preparatory phase of solitude and meditation, the researcher puts the components and core themes usually into the form of creative synthesis expressed as a narrative account, a report, a thesis, a poem, story, drawing, painting, etc.

7. Validation of the heuristic inquiry

The question of validity is one of meaning. Does the synthesis present comprehensively, vividly, and accurately the meanings and essences of the experience? Returning again and again to the data to check whether they embrace the necessary and sufficient meanings. Finally, feedback is obtained through participant validation, and receiving responses from others.

(unpaginated)

During the Literature Review phase, a parallel was discovered by the researcher regarding Moustakas' (1990) heuristic stages and the 12-stage Hero's Quest narrative pattern (12HQ). Vogler (2007) summarises a universal narrative structure discovered by Campbell (1949) within world mythologies (1972). Appealingly, he conceptualises the ego's search for identity as a Hero's Quest:

1. Heroes are introduced in the ORDINARY WORLD, where
 2. they receive the CALL TO ADVENTURE.
 3. They are RELUCTANT at first or REFUSE THE CALL, but
 4. are encouraged by a MENTOR to
 5. CROSS THE FIRST THRESHOLD and enter the Special World, where
 6. they encounter TESTS, ALLIES, AND ENEMIES.
 7. They APPROACH THE INMOST CAVE, crossing a second threshold
 8. where they endure the ORDEAL.
 9. They take possession of their REWARD and
 10. are pursued on THE ROAD BACK to the Ordinary World.
 11. They cross the third threshold, experience a RESURRECTION, and are transformed by the experience.
 12. They RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR, a boon...to benefit the Ordinary World.
- (Vogler, 2007, p. 19)

In earlier drafts, this thesis was structured in subheadings according to 12HQ because the researcher *experienced* both, subjectively, as *voyages of discovery*; though the subheadings match Moustakas only in aspects. For example, his stage 1. ‘Initial engagement’ corresponds with 12HQ’s stage 2. ‘Call to Adventure’ towards a research question. Moustakas’ stage 2. ‘Immersion’ links with 12HQ’s stage 5. ‘Crossing the Threshold’ into research. Stage 4. ‘Illumination’ matches 12HQ’s stage 9. ‘Reward’ where a ‘Boon’ of new ideas are gleaned. Due to space constraints, and the ensuing sense of overcomplicating internal subject matter, the 12HQ subheadings were eventually removed.

However, the researcher was compelled to apply Moustakas and 12HQ’s frameworks to explore her journey through life, research and grief and PTSD. It was anticipated that reflection on 12HQ might help others navigate Tests and Trials within *their* lives, whilst simultaneously generating insight and understanding leading to personal growth.

Consequently, 12HQ subheadings continue to be used in the Findings to model how its stages may be applied to help understand human experience, which is discussed in the Methods section with the intention of supporting the reader to apply 12HQ with clients and in personal, reflective practice.

Vogler (2007) offers a useful psychological analysis of character Archetypes in 12HQ which resonates with themes within Rap, as demonstrated in Appendix 7:

The Hero archetype represents the ego’s search for identity and wholeness. In the process of becoming complete, integrated human beings, we are all Heroes facing internal guardians, monsters, and helpers. In the quest to explore our own minds we find teachers, guides, demons, gods, mates, servants, scapegoats, masters, seducers, betrayers, and allies, as aspects of our personalities and characters in our dreams.

(p. 30)

This reflection on experiences and emotions through multiple perspectives resonates with poststructuralism, appealingly. Additionally, Viega (2012) applies Campbell's (1949) Hero's Journey to Hip Hop's cultural development and to 'conceptualize [his] adolescent clients' journ[ies] in therapy...'. He argues adjustment and transformation are key to discovering new strengths and powers within ourselves to handle life's challenges.

Otherness

As a student-researcher in a new field, the researcher felt like she occupied 'Edgelands':

...a transitional area between established and new methods, from which one can concentrate on the process of discovery while retaining a sense of the unknown.

(Rapport et al, 2005 p. 8 cited in Muncey, 2010, p.4)

Feeling Othered as a youth due to differences she experienced around race, genre and musical subcultures increased the appeal of borders, gaps and silences within metanarratives; particularly regarding identity and voice. The Literature Review suggests young people are being underserved by mental health services. Consequently, this thesis offers a space for alternative voices regarding young people's wellbeing to ring clear.

Culturally in the West, we are led to believe that medical professionals know and do what is right for us whereas the researcher's Indian upbringing introduced her to ancient, holistic, healing technologies such as yoga, Ayurveda and meditation where people's individual experience shapes practice. Kim (2016) explains: 'the focus of narrative inquiry is the human experience presented in narratives and stories. Experience is the starting point...' (p. 69). This matches the researcher's motivation to combine Rap with CWTP which is rooted in her personal experience of traumatised grief repression and PTSD. She has blogged about this in a campaign against the medicalisation of grief since 2010 to highlight the healing power of creativity. Resultantly, autoethnography resonates as an:

Autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural.

(Ellis & Bochner, 2000 cited in Muncey, 2010, p. 29)

Muncey (2010) proposes: 'an autoethnographical account should attempt to subvert a dominant discourse'. She explains:

Master narratives derive from tradition, and they typically constrain narratives of personal experience, because they hold the narrator to culturally given standards, to taken-for-granted notions of what is good and what is wrong.

(p. 7)

As an autoethnographical account, the study positions the researcher within the research frame as ‘the epistemological and ontological nexus upon which the research process turns’ (Spry, 2001, p.711 cited in Muncey, 2010, p. 4).

Kincheloe (2004) posits bricolage as a ‘philosophical mode of inquiry’ that explores ‘the nature and effects of the social construction of knowledge, understanding, and human subjectivity’ (p. 9). He explains:

In their move to the margins and transcendence of reductionism, bricoleurs seek to identify what is absent in particular situations—a task ignored by monological, objectivist modes of research. In this context bricoleurs seek to cultivate a higher form of researcher creativity that leads them, like poets, to produce concepts and insights about the social world that previously did not exist. This rigour in the absence can be expressed in numerous ways, including the bricoleur’s ability:

- to imagine things that never were;
- to see the world as it could be;
- to develop alternatives to oppressive existing conditions;
- to discern what is lacking in a way that promotes the will to act;
- to understand that there is far more to the world than what we can see.

(p. 20)

The research proposal states stanzad representation will be used to interpret data (found poetry). The researcher found Malaysian pantoums hugely appealing in her own therapeutic writing practice. They follow a strict poetic structure with repeating lines, acting as containers to chaotic feelings. Pantoums might be considered bricolages as the poet actively constructs meaning through the semantic and structural interplay of lines. Hence, it was decided that pantoums would be created to interpret data and find emerging patterns/contrasts. Likewise, the autoethnographical elements are intended to bricolage data including poems, lyrics and reflexive writing to convey the researcher’s local, cultural and emotional context regarding Hip Hop and THH. An explanation of how Findings resulted in the Presentation of Data chapter comes next.

Narrative Inquiry: Storying the Data Through The Hero’s Quest (12HQ)

The researcher applied 12HQ to structure Findings. This mirrored patterns in her life, research and grief and PTSD experiences. In the data story (created during Moustakas’ Stage 6. ‘Creative Synthesis’), she journeys through 36 mountain chambers as ‘The KZA’ to collect secret scrolls written by imaginary master MCs. They contain ancient wisdom regarding Hip Hop’s healing powers. The story was evoked by a meditation (aligning with Moustakas stage 4. ‘Illumination’), whereby she was drawn back to Wu Tang Clan’s first album: *Wu Tang: Enter the 36th Chamber* (1993). A blog post (Appendix 1) ruminates on this experience.

Real-life trials manifested in the original narrative inquiry data-story as: a Black Mist (depression), a Frozen Wall (emotional repression) and a Cursed Pool (writer’s block). To overcome these blockages, the researcher refrained from forcing the story to unfold and instead, surrendered to heuristic musings involving free-writing and meditation. She began using her Inner Mentor’s voice as a guide:

Seeker, to apply THH in your practice, you must first learn of The Special World of Hip Hop and its people. There are many subtle elements that contribute to the therapeutic aspects of Rap. While you were resting, I gathered Golden Nuggets from the secret scrolls within the ashram: The Book of Rap Pages. Written by our Forebears, they offer Lived Experience stories of Rap's therapeutic nature. We will use them to co-construct a resistance narrative to challenge the healthcare medical-model.

This Inner Mentor provided instructions, support and encouragement during research. Hence, Findings include the voice of a Wise Mentor and Wise Mentee: two (of three) imagined MC composite characters based on co-researchers, discussed more later.

Initially, the researcher created a thesis-quest map matching personal life-events and research processes with 12HQ. She intended to present data in a 36 chamber quest narrative, applying 12HQ over 3 Acts (each containing 3 mini-12HQs). However, this was complicated and massively overextended the word limit. Once she stopped forcing data into 12HQ's structure, it matched fortuitously. Three individual Hip Hop HEALS' Guides (previously 'The Book of Rap Pages') heuristically emerged to form 36 chambers:

Book 1 (B1) 12HQ - conveys the researcher's journey to CWTP: a self-explanatory, autoethnographic vignette omitted from the Analysis and Discussion later due to space.

Book 2 (B2) 12HQ - reveals the Boon of 'The KZA's Quest': Golden Nuggets of co-researchers' (CRs) stories of experience regarding Rap's therapeutic powers.

Book 3 (B3) 12HQ - consists of Rap songs aligned with 12HQ (Appendix 8), for practical application by the reader.

Next is a discussion of qualitative methods. Philosophical matters are interwoven throughout, especially regarding language.

Methods

Research Question

The original research question was: 'How can Hip Hop heal grief and loss? A Narrative Inquiry exploring the therapeutic potential of Rap lyrics in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes.' **Research halted** several times since 2013 due to **personal issues** leading to the researcher's **re-traumatisation**. Consequently, her Research Advisor recommended: 'How can Hip Hop heal grief and loss?' was removed as foci of the study for **ethical reasons** but to remain open should grief and trauma arise in the research, during periods of personal stability. **Affect** was successfully regulated and managed through **self-care**. For example, triggering activities were avoided; a solid self-care routine involving yoga, meditation, journaling, creative activities and art therapy was undertaken. Though 'grief and loss' became subsidiary elements of the research study, the researcher found 12HQ helpful in understanding personal difficulties within her own life-path and hopes the process of applying 12HQ might be insightful for future THH practitioners and participants alike.

Co-researchers & Selection Process

The term co-researchers (abbreviated to CRs, CR1, CR2 or CR3 hereafter) positioned me with participants as equals. Their pre-study Information Sheet constitutes Appendix 2. Originally, adolescents were the intended target group for the study. However, an *ethical committee* needed 18 months to process ethical permissions (Appendix 3-4); unfeasible within the intended two-year research timeframe. Participants were selected on the basis that they worked in music, either with or as the target audiences of the study. Three adult males with an involvement in Rap were chosen. The researcher is a Caucasian female, aged 38.

Diary clashes prevented participation of the third CR. Advice was sought from a Research Advisor regarding *compassionate management* of this. For *ethical reasons*, nothing more is revealed regarding CRs, nor their selection, because disclosures were made during the study that have led to their anonymity being protected. For this reason, only a selection of excerpts from one interview transcript is provided (Appendix 5).

Co-constructed interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow in-depth probing. Surveys would have been inappropriate: the subject matter was sensitive. Furthermore, access to a large enough group of suitable CRs was unavailable.

Meaning was socially constructed with CRs positioned as experts, maintaining the person-centred nature of the inquiry in-line with narrative therapy (Payne, 2006; Combs and Freeman, 1996; 2012; Doan, 2016). Together, CRs discovered ways Rap could be therapeutic. Corresponding with the study's poststructuralist approach, stories previously unacknowledged by UK discourse on Rap, therapy and CWTP were illuminated, especially regarding CRs subjective experience of grief, trauma and attitudes to male emotional expression.

Interview Questions

Interview questions (Appendix 6) arose from the researcher's own experience of therapeutic writing and Rap during the course, reflected in Book 1: an autoethnographic vignette. They are based on those offered by Etherington (2004b) in a discussion of narrative inquiry and were approved by the Research Advisor. *To ensure ease for co-researchers, and appear fully present, only initial interview questions were prepared by the researcher, increasing her anxiety around conducting 'good enough' interviews. A list of questions was studied beforehand to allay nerves and act ethically towards herself. In addition, preparations were made regarding how to handle silences, discomfort or recounts of emotionally charged events.*

Data Collection

Before data collection, co-researchers were informed that they could *pause, post-pone or abandon interviews, at any time*. It was also made clear that *permission* to include their data could be withdrawn up to six weeks before the submission date.

During one CR's interview, *a sensitive disclosure was made* which had surfaced previously. Advice *had already been sought* by the researcher from her Research Advisor and Programme Leader regarding whether this CR's participation should cease but it was felt that this would be **ethically unsound**, as he had already given permission to take part. It was felt essential to make preparations to *act ethically* in case of further disclosure.

However, the disclosure did *affect* the researcher. At the time, she had been going through some other *personal difficulties* and was emotionally sensitive. Consequently, *study was paused and art therapy sought* whilst the turbulence settled. She also found it difficult to maintain *personal boundaries*. She had wanted to provide comfort and care as a friend. But, her new role as researcher meant adaption of nurturing behaviour was needed to ensure *ethical conduct*. Instead, the CR was signalled to help sources. *The researcher discussed her feelings with the Research Advisor* who suggested she behave authentically but to *signal when in 'researcher-mode'* during further contact to ensure *clarity of boundaries* and justify more formal behaviour.

The sensitive nature of the topic required extra *careful attention to personal affect levels* overall. These were monitored carefully. Time and energy were considered as being deposited in a 'personal' bank account which could be withdrawn from (through stirring or troublesome experiences and behaviours) or paid into at anytime (through self-care practice). Tricky content was only dealt with when *high levels of wellbeing were experienced*.

Interpreting the Data: Found Poems

The researcher acknowledges pre-study hunches regarding MC lyric-writing as cathartic. After careful consideration, she realised she was *looking* for evidence of these themes during interview transcript annotation. These musings may contribute to researcher bias in the form of pre-data collection expectations.

Key interview data was arranged as 'found' pantoum poems then annotated to find themes and patterns or contradictions. During the process, the following journal reflections were made:

01.02.16 2nd reading of both interviews

- [be] more conscious of selecting content based on Rap's therapeutic nature as they express it
- [be] aware of my process for selecting more so I do not prize select quotes that fit with my pre-existing notions or the ideas raised in Literature Review
- Muncey's 'Autoethnography' book has helped hugely to position myself as an awareness, set back from the 'chatter' in my own head and what I should use and do and what is actually coming up in the interviews

I am a steward of the knowledge: CR1 and CR2 must be protected and the seed of their words allowed to bloom. I'm a gardener finding the right conditions to grow them. Use these thoughts to help select story elements and interview selections to integrate and represent.

With this fresh mindset, dualities were noted: truth and invention; reality and escape; exclusion and acceptance and buzz from writing and performance.

Key ideas were gleaned on strips of coloured paper to elicit thematic patterns. This did not feel right though congruent with the bricolage method. ***Further issues affecting the researcher's wellbeing arose, resulting in a return to her self-care routine.*** Simultaneously, she immersed herself in Hip Hop culture, frequently dipping back into the pantoum data and original interview transcripts but without looking for patterns, and simply noticing and *discovering* what was there.

Representing the Data: Poetic Inquiry

Poetic inquiry was applied as a mode of representing and interpreting data. Themes were collated from the data as found poems. The poetic form allowed meaning to surface as connections and contrasting pictures emerged from CRs experience. However, poetic inquiry was unknown to the researcher until the Analysis and Discussion stage hence, it is discussed further there.

Presentation of Data

Data findings are conceived as an imagined guide to Hip Hop's healing powers: 'Hip Hop HEALS Guide', which later expanded into three manuals. The voices of three MCs: 1) The KZA & The WZA (two alter-egos of the same MC), 2) MC Mentor and 3) MC Tormenta, channel interview data from found pantoums into further found poems. ***They are composite characters based on co-researchers (anonymised for ethical reasons).*** Poetic inquiry led to the use of opposing voices: a mentor (MC Mentor) and mentee (MC Tormenta), in alignment with 12HQ's Archetypes. It is hoped that this 'Boon' guides practitioners, participants and commissioners towards positive experiences with THH.

Language: Subversion

Hip Hop is full of puns. Instead of 'Foreword', 'Forward' is used to evoke a sense that THH should stimulate forward movement, like that of a Hero on a quest. 'The KZA' is the researcher's alter ego: a play on her nickname 'Kiza' and reminiscent of Wu Tang's RZA and GZA. A further nickname is 'Kiz the Whiz' hence 'The WZA' is a further alter-ego of 'The KZA', mirroring how some MC's have doppelgangers, which is discussed later. 'WZA' also nods towards wisdom or the 'wiser' of the pair. They can be viewed as two sides of the same person in a dialogic relationship with one another, like one's inner devil and angel voices, matching the study's poststructuralist underpinnings. This corresponds with Book 2's representation of the mentor/mentee relationship, who can also be considered two sides of one person. Different fonts were used to represent each character:

Everyday Kiza
Imaginary Wu Tang Clan MC, 'The KZA'
The KZA's wise alter-ego, 'The WZA'
MC Tormenta
MC Mentor

Language: The Mentors

Book 1 combines an autoethnographic account of the researcher's personal journey to CWTP with critical commentary in her 'Everyday Kiz' voice which unexpectedly positioned her as a Mentor-figure. Vogler (2007) explains how a quest's Mentor must have faced the trials of the Hero in order to offer informed wisdom and guidance. By acting as her own Mentor using CWTP, she was empowered to deal with many problems independently, realising she had the tools within herself to overcome personal Trials. This is relevant to CWTP as narrative therapists position *people* as experts in their own lives (Payne, 2006). THH participants could write using Inner Mentor voices to guide themselves, reflexively, through issues. In view of this, the MC mentor/mentee relationship is foregrounded within B2 to relocate therapeutic experiences from the counselling room to the gig venue or bedroom of Rap enthusiasts, like the co-researchers (Muncey, 2010).

B2's composite characters subvert language by using local slang, dialect and the non-capitalisation of 'rap', 'hip hop' and some sentence openers. MC Mentor and MC Tormenta are duly named as they represent ideas pertinent to the roles of the THH facilitator and participant. MC Mentor represents THH practitioners and their experiences whilst MC Tormenta represents participants from the target group. The spelling 'Tormenta' realigns language to correspond with UK MC discourse in a further poststructuralist move away from institutional notions of 'correct' English (Taragonna, 2008, p. 4). It is intended that staging both practitioner and participant's journeys through THH might empower the reader to incorporate 12HQ within practice.

To conclude, in summary: to discover whether Hip Hop lyrics could be used therapeutically with CWTP, CRs stories of experience will be bricolaged. These will be drawn from the researcher's own journey through healing traumatised grief and PTSD using CWTP and interview data from two real-life MCs, interpreted through poetic inquiry using the voices of imagined MCs. 12HQ is applied to present the data-story in the next chapter in-line with heuristic, narrative inquiry. Then, the Analysis of Findings explores pertinent issues raised in both the Literature Review and Presentation of Data to offer practical, evidence-based ideas for THH in the hope of improving mental health service-provision for the target group. Participant voice remains central to the discussion of rap's role in UK therapeutic practice.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Hip Hop HEALS' Guide

Book 1: The KZA's Quest

FORWARD

Seeker,

When petals fall like ashes, do not despair. Hip Hop is here for you. Ready with the truth of you. When you feel sad and blue, stay strong, don't hide it Boo. Use its lyricism not pills and potions. Make a conscious decision to calm Illamind's commotion.

In this Guide, you will find Wisdom and Knowledge foraged from MC Masters past, the everlasting Healers, Fallen Heroes and Dreamers, Hip Hop Speakers of Truth. Use it with the youth that they may blossom and shine with divine light despite lifelong plights through darkness and night to live life fully, in joy's delight.

Blessings and Light from Your Guide,

The Kza

1. The Ordinary INNER World

After losing my older sister Promila (or ‘Pam’ as we called her) to a Road Traffic Accident (RTA) in 2000, I became expert at repression. One doctor called me *‘La Bell Dame Sans Difference’*. I am the youngest of five siblings and she, the penultimate eldest.

When I burst into being, I had already exhausted my mother. She suffered sickness for nine months. So, my siblings and father nurtured both of us. For the first four years of my life, I slept with Pam who became a mother to me; not a strict one, a Glinda-The-Good-Witch-out-of-The-Wizard-of-Oz one. I idolised her and she treated me like a fairy princess. She made me feel like the most magical, special child at the centre of the universe. When she got married and left home, I missed her terribly. When I left home for university, I’d stay with her in my holidays for weeks at a time. She was bursting with life, like an adult teenager. I remember once, leaving the cinema, everyone gawped at us because she was launching M+M’s in the air to catch in her mouth but kept missing. She was in her thirties then but had a zero-fucks-given attitude. She was larger than all the lives in The Land.

2. Call to INNER Adventure

The Late Spring Bank Holiday, 2000, marked a personal rite of passage for me: I was 21 years old and had just completed my degree in English Literature at the University of Cardiff, Wales. Our Summer Graduation Ball had been a spectacularly snazzy, tuxedoed event set in the capital’s castle grounds on the Friday. On Saturday, I travelled two hours with my mates to continue celebrating at a dance music festival called Homelands. That night, my life changed forever.

Waking up on the Sunday, I had a shower, breakfast then checked the time on my pager. It was 1pm. Surprisingly, I had received 14 messages from my family to call home. I had not heard as I was dancing to too loud music.

I rang home. They didn’t tell me everything straight away. I am the ‘baby’ of the family so they tried to protect me. They said Pam was in hospital but was OK. I thought she just had a broken rib or something.

It turned out, she had travelled across the country to deliver her last words to Pops (just in case). He was severely ill in hospital. I knew he was poorly from my Easter trip home but they didn’t tell me he’d drastically worsened because I was about to begin my finals.

My parents *had* told Pam four times not to make the four-hour journey and to *stay home* for the Bank Holiday. But she was determined to see Dad.

Five minutes before leaving the motorway at the final junction, Pam’s car span out of control for no apparent reason.

There were no other vehicles involved.

She ended up in a critical condition in intensive care in a coma, with a punctured lung, her spine broken in four places, paralysed, with lacerations to her skull and severe brain damage. We spent five days watching her slowly die in hospital.

Six hours after Pam's death, I was at work in our family newsagents shop telling concerned customers yes, dad was still in hospital and no, Pam had passed in the night. Try selling 20 Benson and The Sun with that popping in the conversation.

3. Refusal of the INNER Call

Everyone was in shock but we still had to eat and pay the bills. Various circumstances caused my grief to be repressed and delayed for seven years. Eventually, I had a break down.

I read the police report about her freak accident to find answers but discovered more questions. The crash remains unexplained to this day.

Tormented by flashbacks laced with panic attacks, horrific-horror-film nightmares and depression downed with an anxiety chaser, I would see Pam's car in my minds' eye spinning, hitting the central reservation, bouncing off the tarmac four times like the police report said: BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! until it faced the wrong way up a grassy bank on the M5.

Aaaaaaaaall in sloooooooooowwww mooooootioooooon.

The accident replayed repeatedly in my head. And I wasn't even there! It was so upsetting. I was easily triggered by T.V. and film car crash scenes. Doctors failed to properly diagnose and treat my PTSD; and none of the counseling really helped with my emotional repression. So, for years, I experienced severe disruptions to my mental health and relationships.

4. Meeting with the INNER Mentor

The irony of it all is that just before Dad did eventually die, 10 years after Pam, I discovered CWTP. It helped me heal myself by harnessing the power of creative expression.

5. INNER Threshold

One morning, I woke up with the term 'RTA' ringing relentlessly in my head. After a while, I realised that if I changed what the letters stood for, I could make it stop. The poem 'Road Traffic Accident' was born:

Road Traffic Accident

Road Traffic Accident.
Red, Tiny, Angles.
Real Tragic Aftermath.

Re-Trace Actions.
Report To Address:
Reasons This Actualised.

Reek Thorough Anguish.
Raging Tears, Acidic,
Reject This Aggressively.

Reaching To Alcohol
Represses Thoughts Altogether,
Rush Through Ardently!

Roles Thought Again,
Roses Turned Away.
Redemption. Truth. Anger.

Re-born, Treasured Angel
Re-unites The Angered.
Reconciliation: Trouble Atoned.

Rewind The Ages.
Re-Think. Appease.
Reverse The Acrimony.

I discovered a distraction technique. I envisioned the first four lines and was compelled to write down the rest. The poem burst out fully formed. This is how, using CWTP, I began a journey of transformation.

6. INNER WORLD Tests, Allies and Enemies

Eventually, the flashback's diminished. I still get them occasionally. I go back to the hospital in my head, sit there, on the low wall in Worcester Ronkswood car park with my head in my hands, sobbing. I see the nurse that found me crying alone in the dark, take her comforting words then crumple back into myself under the starry sky. And whoosh! I'm back to The Ordinary World again.

CWTP offered profound relief.

7. Approach to the INNER CAVE

The following poem was written entirely unexpectedly in Pam's voice during the first day of my MSc in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes in 2011:

The Car

The car I dreamed of being in
was not a Blue Ford Escort.
The yellow MR2 in my head did
not materialize.
I drove my brand new
Ford Escort
off the forecourt and
immediately
lost a few pounds.
I can feel the pounding of the
steering wheel.
Hard plastic,
glass
in my head.

The car I weaved my
life in,
spun my dreams in,
moved from A to B in,
took me
from here to there.
No.
Where?

I dreamt of my future from there,
drove to spend the last words
I expected to hear from
You.

But instead they were mine.

8. INNER Ordeal

After writing '*The Car*', I stopped thinking about Pam's car. Poems exploded out of me like hot, spitting lava. I was frightened by their emotional power. During MSc workshops, I made sense of this newly-realised tool for self-expression: I was held by a blank page and safe group environment.

9. INNER Reward

Voicing and comprehending repressed thoughts, I processed trauma with my poem-friends. I became more present in my life. I am now free from the flashback prison and not just on day release. Learning how to process unconscious material using CWTP has been a life-line for me.

10. Road Back to OUTER ORDINARY WORLD, Babyloningham, Changed

I was driven to share CWTP's benefits with others. Whilst investigating Hip Hop's healing potential during my thesis-journey, I discovered the Malaysian pantoum: a strict poetic structure with repeating lines. It offered a framework for brief diary reflections and deep rumination on topics such as loss (Appendix 7).

11. INNER City Resurrection

One day, plagued by thesis writer's block, I constructed 'found' pantoums from research articles.

12. Return with INNER Elixir

They offered beautifully concentrated shots of meaning. Below, I creatively synthesised Frisch Hara's first chapter in *Therapeutic Uses of Rap and Hip-Hop* edited by Hadley and Yancey (2016):

triumph of underdog
private subculture
changes in adolescence
adolescent identity

private subculture
rap facilitates maturation
adolescent identity
rap's structure as freedom

rap facilitates maturation
angry voice of a nation
pathway to maturity and health
rap's structure as freedom
rap connects listener through familiar messages they can relate to and connect with

angry voice of a nation
 pathway to maturity and health
 changes in adolescence
 rap connects listener through familiar messages they can relate to and connect
 with
 triumph of underdog

Critical Commentary

This speaks to me of oppression and overcoming forces that disrupt health and wellbeing, overcoming deficiencies in adolescent development and the troubles that come when sufficient support and nurturing forces are unavailable to young people. How do young people (especially those who have mature and developed egos and ego strength) use Rap therapeutically then? Is there a different way they use it?

The pantoum provided a bridge to begin writing and reduced my anxiety about starting.

Hip Hop HEALS' Guide

Book 2: The MC's Quest

Prelude: Petals Fell Like Ashes

In the beginning, the pallid,
white mist
that seeped from the Black Mountain
seemed harmless.
It hung upon the lips of the silent sky, waiting to spread like a
pregnant rumour.
The ashen-grey smoke thickened, wrestling God's bright light from
Heaven.
It grew darker and darker each day.

Clouds bled bright scarlet, stained by the death of the vermillion sun
until, finally,
its blood-red streaks faded like a dying man's dreams. Infinite billows
of thick, night-black smoke plumed high. Sinking,
the fell mist
snaked the city's streets, coiling and cursing.
It grew darker and darker each day.

Eventually, Darkness enshrouded Babylonigham. Trees
choked
on putrid smoke.
Flowers withered and died.
And petals fell like

a s
h
e
s

INTRODUCTION: An MC's Guide to Remedy Rap

I

t

h i

n

k

deprived or oppressed people are
drawn to more accessible forms of music
of Hip Hop music

I think's a big part

out of a struggle

uplifting people

rap come,

it come from the Black areas,

all the people on Social,

ya Council people,

the sufferers

what ya gotta remember about rap,

it's the ghetto element.

I hate to say 'ghetto' nowadays

that's where it come from

they always fight against rap

they always fight against the truth,

and a lot rap—what they used to spit—is the truth

Right? It's the truth. It might be the Black-Side of the

truth and they—white people don't like it

and they can't understand it

but it's the fuckin' truth! That's how it was!

all them gun lyrics what everyone fought against,

that's how it was!

and it still is now

and they're hiding it!

'cos they're not allowed to chat it, really

but like you say, rap man
rap come
real Hip Hop is...
conscious
talking
police oppression
poverty
inequality
corruption
social justice
the amount of shit that happens out there, what goes
 round people don't even know
there must be loads of music written on it
loadsa lyrics come from it an' all
especially from rap
'cos with rap, you haven't just got abuse
you've got
 slavery
 and everything that's come from that
it's only 300 years ago, 400 years ago
you come from Africa, you had a name
you ain't got no name no more
they took you're name and your religion and everything about
you stripped it DOWN
gave you another name
stripped it DOWN
and you don't even know your past
imagine havin' that?
they took you're name and your religion and everything about
you now they're like:
 "Ah, just get over it. You got a chip on your shoulder!"
 they're fuckin' mad!
there's no memorial, there's no Remembrance Day
it's terrible
 what people had to put up with
especially in America
it's terrible man

when you come to rap, and lyrics, is music therapeutic?
it can be therapeutic
now with the explosion of the war
and the fight. What's going on?
you're gonna get some anger with it that's comin' out
there must be a worrrrrld of new lyrics out in America right
now... but are they gonna let them out?
they probably hold 'em back,
the government
but imagine what's being written now?

Anti-police.
Black Lives Matter.
I think they're therapeutic at the moment
if they were to be released—
therapeutic to the whole nation, and countries and people
man if they were to be released—
at the moment, you neeed it!
they probably hold 'em back
but imagine what's being written now?

The WZa

1. The Ordinary INNER World

MC TORMENTA

originally, I was the shyest
and I still am the shyest of the shyest
from that fucking bollocks man
I blocked it all out
you're not supposed to have that shit happen
it was weird you never got no help
that's one of the main things in me, that's the only thing that burns me
I never got no help, never got nuttin' with it
I always think: "Fuckin' 'ell. I was
too young to deal with that shit there."
it was hard
I'm tellin' ya: I got no help
told to get on with it
Mom and Dad
no-one spoke about it at the time
no-one spoke about in the family
you can't speak to your friends
you don't tell anyone about it
you're the only one I've ever told!
not me mates
not the boys
not the men
there's no-one there to let it out to
it was mad
it was mad!
an' ya can't talk about it—it's taboo!
always, fuckin' just had to deal with it...
all different things in my life
originally, I was the shyest
and I still am the shyest of the shyest

MC MENTOR

my role: a mentor
I work with aspiring teenage rappers or MCs
most are tagged
I help them develop and grow
link them with other opportunities
my relationship with rap
it's been a big part of my life
I've always been into music
as a fan, as a listener
as a rapper; as a DJ
my role: a mentor

2. Call to INNER Adventure

MC TORMENTA

when I heard that tune I was like: “Aaaaah! BAD!”
the first time, *EVER*, it’s been mentioned
...in *any* lyric
it went straight to Number 1
‘cos everybody’s feelin’ it!”
it went straight to Number 1
an’ ya like, “OK!”
‘cos 3 quarters have been there
you don’t realise how many people it’s happened to really
when I heard that tune I was like: “Aaaaah! BAD!”

MC MENTOR

there’s a therapeutic thing in just getting those lyrics out
the Tupac tune made him seem *honest* rather than soft
a lot of therapists do tell people to *write* letters an’ that
to get their emotions out
writing lyrics is similar
it’s very hard to sit down and express yourself properly *with someone*
especially over difficult issues
lyrics are just a *way* for the message to flow through to make it
less personal and intense
I don’t think many people were callin’ Tupac soft after he did that
it was powerful enough
there’s a *Company Flow* tune
it’s tellin’ that *personal* story
the *verses* are about a situation where
his *step-dad* was beatin’ on his mom
some people diss the rapper for other reasons
I don’t think anyone wudda dissed him for that song bein’ soft
it’s a *da-aark* and *powerful* song!
an example to show them that you can *talk* about
powerful deep, *personal* things
and make a *reeeaally* good tune
that isn’t soft!
rather than just fittin’ into
the *pigeon-hole*
you *think* is expected of you
show people the *legitimacy* of makin’
honest, genuine, emotional music
there’s a therapeutic thing in just getting those lyrics out

3. Refusal of the INNER Call

MC TORMENTA

fucks you up man
from then, I didn't trust no-one
it was hard
all through secondary, all the way up
they'd say: "Ah, he don't wanna know. He just looks out the window all the time."
the teachers used to say: "He's very clever but all he does is look out the window."
I was the shyest of the shyest, I was shy
the more you hide it...
the worse it is
the more it fucks your shit up
I know about hiding shit, trus' me
with that shit
it's all I ever had to do
"No good, hidin' it."
fucks you up man

MC MENTOR

I never took any medication
all the doctors were like: "Ere y'are, anti-depressants."
I ended up puttin' them down the toilet every time
it's like, that's not gonna fix it!
a lot of people maybe turn to abuse a substance or something like that
I think through performance and creatin' music
that's helped me sort of feel comfortable with myself
music's obviously a more positive way of changing the way you're feelin'
than puttin' a substance into your body
I have abused drugs in the past
now I get kind of, some of the things I was maybe *tryin'* to get
from drugs
outta music
in terms of relaxation, a *buzz*, a *reward*
when you create something good
in terms of *escape* from problems
in the outside world
when you're focused on it
you can get that *escapism*, that *rush* of emotion that can make you feel good
help you experience perhaps a negative emotion in a way where
you can come to terms with it
'cos music *speaks* through emotions
I think *writing* is particularly therapeutic if you're *using it*
to get out emotions that are difficult to feel
I never took any medication

4. Meeting with the INNER Mentor

MC TORMENTA

music was the escape from it
all my friends and their friends was MCin'
we was like: "*Wow, I wouldn't mind being one of them man.*"
it was like superstar business
3-4 years later, you get a chance to hold the mic
one of my friends just pushed me
he went: 'Go on!' because
 he heard me, he heard me
 doing it the one time
he gave me the mic...
I just touched it—and they just went mad
oooooo, that rush, that first night was like: 'Wow!'
that was the rush
I can remember it now
you thought: 'Ah, I like this.'
it was like you been accepted for something
it was like being in a gang
it was wicked
 you chat some lyrics
 you get this acceptance man
 you get this *buzz*, 'cos everyone's lookin' at ya
spittin' on the mic
this shy boy, with ma friends
your escape,
 in all these tunes
spittin' on the mic man, getting' into music
music was the escape from it

MC MENTOR

talk to him about his offending, about his life, where he's going
the *focus* of it all
the other kind of more general youth work is more sort of *sneaked in the back door*
the music, the rapping: it's therapeutic in a lot of ways
I think the *music*, if they do it *the right way*, can be a way for them to
be themselves and to be appreciated for being themselves
massively empowering
when it comes to *identity*: if ya *honest* when ya rhymin'
it can really help you *find your identity*
feel more comfortable with who you are
rather than feelin' the need to portray somethin' else
so you're self-realising, while you're writing
talk to him about his offending, about his life, where he's going

5. INNER Threshold

MC TORMENTA

back to your old self
soon as you put the mic down, you're gone again
it's like there's two of ya
it's like you're a split personality, I'm tellin' ya!
'cos when you hold the mic you do change
it's like there's two of ya
you lock on and go to a zone
'cos when you hold the mic you do change
it's like you're a split personality, I'm tellin' ya!
soon as you put the mic down, you're gone again
back to your old self

MC MENTOR

they're creating a persona
fear of being mocked is probably a big part of that as well
especially with some of 'em—if they're tryin' to be this
big, bad gangster that they're just obviously not
they're more likely to get dissed for *that*
even if they're not believing it themselves, they feel like that's what they
***should* portray when they get on the microphone, which is a shame**
young people
perhaps especially young men
aren't encouraged to talk about their
feelings
in an honest and open way
I think with a lot of 'em it's difficult to be
a child in the environment, especially with the younger ones
14 year olds, and they're not gangsters
but from their lyrics you'd think they're living these
gangster lifestyles that they're just not
maybe it's just
about fitting in and wanting to
be seen as a *bad man*
I mean it's hard for them to be
themselves, and to be *real*
that's what we try and *open* their eyes to
***show* them someone like Tupac**
who they might look up to as a thug or something
show them *he* wrote one of his biggest hits: 'Dear Mama'
an emotional song addressed to his mother!
***open* their eyes to show them Hip Hop is a broader thing**
they're creating a persona

6. INNER WORLD Tests, Allies and Enemies

MC TORMENTA

you can hear in the tunes, 'nuff tunes
what you've gone through in your head that fuckin' scarred you for life
that's what it's for:
tunes of heartache and tunes of hardship
when they was spittin'
anti-government
anti-everything
what everyone's *for*, they was against
the opposite, the opposite!
so when you hear that music you was drawn to it anyway
'cos I always felt fuckin' odd one out anyway,
an opposite
some of my tunes, really, it's all about that
I can draw on that
you get a lot of inspiration from that
you can hear in the tunes, 'nuff tunes
what you've gone through in your head that fuckin' scarred you for life

MC MENTOR

if they did it *right*, an honest, truthful song, I think they'd get *more* respect
even if someone's spittin' about negative things here, that's obviously not what we
want but at least they're not out doin' negative things
sometimes beef rap: there can be an unhelpful element
when it's specifically targettin' another individual
when it becomes like a diss war, back an' forth, track-to-track, attack tracks
I think although that can certainly be *excitin'* and interestin' as a listener,
it's a negative aspect of Hip Hop music: it can lead to real life conflict
Afrika Bambaattaa's vision for Hip Hop as a culture was to be the alternative way
people was tryin' to get status and recognition
goin' further in terms of violence, people dyin' over that
that's what he was seein' on the street through bein' a gang member for years
an' he was like: "You know what? Now let's compete in another way that
people can walk away from afterwards."
it's not about who's more real or who's more gansta
it's about who's more lyrical, more creative
that's a much more positive context in which to be competin'
at least it's an improvement in that way: it's like channeling it out
KRS One said: "Gangstas and pimps and drug dealers: they are part of Hip Hop
not the core of Hip Hop."
when people try and present Hip Hop as being that an' not all the rest of it
that's the problem basically, it's part of the ghetto so it's always gonna be intertwined
if they did it right, an honest, truthful song, I think they'd get more respect

7. Approach to the INNER CAVE

MC TORMENTA

release me

I've definitely had benefit from *writing* lyrics about things I found difficult

like the relationship or *lack* of a relationship with my dad

privately get down on paper some *negative* emotions: the burden

that's not something I've ever *recorded* and performed but you know what?

I've writ' *bars* about that that have kinda helped me move on from things

rather than making *direct* contact with someone

who I didn't really have contact with to sort of,

express resentment

probably wouldn't have helped him

probably wouldn't have helped me

release me

MC MENTOR

I *challenge* it

Grime in this country: it's about beef, crime, *negative things*

so that's what they follow: that's the way they're used to gettin'

respect and recognition and status

that's what they see in the content

whether it's commercial, mainstream Hip Hop or more underground

steer them, get them to look wider

if they've got *any* lyrics at *all*, let them *get it outta* their system

when they've got their *negative* lyrics

which they'll almost certainly have to start with

let them do that but sit back and *listen* to it with them

try an' *challenge* it at that point and get 'em to *reflect* on what they've written

"What do you actually mean by this?"

"Is that really you?"

"Do you go out? Are you portraying fiction?"

"Are you being honest here about these things?"

don't shut 'em down when they come with it

try an' *challenge* but in a very respectful way

give them the *platform* to express themselves...

***challenge* it in a positive way**

steer them into writin' more positively, more honestly

if they *insist* on writing about *crime, ghetto life*

make it *documentary* fashion, rather than *glorified, personal story*

lads struggle with that

they *admit* writing gang stuff is fictional: it's not what they live

they're just *really* uncomfortable writing *truthfully*, their own honest experience

it's *easier*, it feels more comfortable to talk...*crap*, basically

I *challenge* it

8. INNER Ordeal

'Feds' Slick Don

Third time this week that I've been clocked
Third time this week that I've been stopped
Third time this week Feds wanna search
Third time this week Feds have flopped
I was walking on road with my headphones on
Grime, not a techno song
Bag in my hand, Tesco one
Got a new jacket, retro one
Seen two Pigs on the corner
Askin' me what I'm doin' round here
I was like: "What *YOU* doin' round here?"
"I'm walking man, ain't that clear?"
Sergeant Brodie, leave me alone. You don't own me.
Furthermore you don't know me
Just get in your car and drive baldie
What do you want? What have I done?"
It's like they wanna stop me for fun
Wanna stop me 'cos I'm from the slum
Do ya think I'm dumb?
Feds, always on my case
Always tryin' to stop me
Always in my face
Is it 'cos I'm young and I'm an IC3?
Obviously, obv-obviously

MC MENTOR

I've had people write about being *stabbed*, come to terms with past experiences
past traumas
that's an example of how people can come to terms with a difficult event
writing about their sentencin' as well
their offending
their involvement with the justice system
empowerment
to be able to go out into a nightclub
a live audience
performing in a nightclub
perform those lyrics that have been written
not only a good experience: performin' in front of a crowd
a lot more therapeutic
doin' honest lyrics and kinda gettin' up and barin' your soul...
better than just chattin' some nonsense, some made up, fictional stuff
about things not experienced
I've had people write about being *stabbed*, come to terms with past experiences
past traumas

9. INNER Reward

MC TORMENTA

the best part of lyrics
...you just feel a vibe
you just freestyle and freestyle and freestyle
catch one line and *gone*!
they're wicked man, wicked!
catch a vibe
freestyle on any tune, mainly it's about the record
you hear a tune...or someone'll play some beats
and they're *mad* beats and you're like:
"Gimme that one man, gimme that!"
you're just like: "Yeah, I'm gonna freestyle it man, fuck it!"
you catch a vibe
the best part of lyrics, that's the *best* part of lyrics

MC MENTOR

Tupac wrote a song to his mom
I got one of the younger guys I've worked with recently
to write somethin' to his mom as well: a rap
it was a full song: 3 verses and a chorus
it was quite deep, quite personal between him and his mom
moving, emotional
he not only *recorded* it, he *performed* with his mom in the audience
he felt *relief* and *satisfaction* for performin' it an' her seeing
that's a case where *that helped* him in his *relationship* with his mom
I think *he* couldn't 'a' said *summa* that stuff face-to-face to his mom
or maybe he could after she'd seen him perform that
I don't really think of myself as a therapist
I think I have an interest in how people's minds work
but I'm not—I'm certainly not a *psychologist* or anythin'
I guess I approach a lot of this stuff more from an *individual* and a *social* kinda
perspective
you could see how chuffed he was with it
He got a lot of *really* positive feedback from other people over it as well
I know for a fact he's gettin' on better with his mom now
than he was before
I guess, it was kinda
partly saying "*sorry*"
partly saying he loved her
partly saying that *he forgave her* for things
Tupac wrote a song to his mom

10. Road Back to OUTER ORDINARY WORLD, Babylonizingham, Changed MC TORMENTA

they've held rap back from time
they got rid of it and they turned it into this other '*so-called-Hip-Hop*'
they got rid of the baggy pants and the gangster rap
so you ain't got ya Ludicrous and ya Red Manz
the real rap
they put all the idiots in: Kanye West and Jay-Z and all the frauds man
they changed it all up and bought them out and...fucked it up
because they couldn't tek' it no more
they says gansta rap is causin' all the wars in America, with the gangs
the Kripps and the Bloods, all the drive-bys, the shootings
so they got rid of it and they turned it into this other
'*so-called-Hip-Hop*'
what Jaz-Z does and Kanye West and all the
others ...and now what's happenin'?
they got more killings than ever! the police killing more than ever!
so who's the real gangsters? the gang staff or the police?
all gangsta rap was doing at the time was
sayin' what was going on in the world, really
middle class people followin' it, white people takin' it out of proportion
you chat about what happens in your area
'cos they don't read newspapers and no-one really watched the news
so really, you're givin' them the news
I only chat reality man
current state of affairs
you're tellin' 'em what's happening locally
they've held rap back from time

MC MENTOR

in terms of the therapeutic benefit

**I think the personal, *honest* kind of approach is gonna be
the most therapeutic outta all of them**

**as long as it's done *right* and not a case of *draggin' up* issues
*more troublesome to deal with***

**they're not comin' to terms with feelings they're tryin' a *deal* with in *their* lyrics
if they're just talkin' stuff that isn't even real to them**

**if someone's *adopting* lyrical content and tryin' to portray a persona that
really isn't them—I think the**

therapeutic value of that's gonna be less

**although they might still get the *confidence* boost, self-esteem, those kinda benefits
lyrics in rap that are more honest and**

***real about true-to-life experiences*
*could be more helpful***

**they're *likely* to be more therapeutic than stuff that isn't *honest* and real
in terms of the therapeutic benefit**

11. INNER City Resurrection

MC TORMENTA

deal with emotions

when you've got *thoughts* in your head

difficult or troublesome

those can be very powerful and overwhelming things

but they are just thoughts

if you're able to kinda

take them out ya head

whether that's by *writing 'em down* in a *letter* that maybe you don't post

or you *burn* or something like that

or writing it down in lyrics

whether that's by *talking* to someone you can trust

these are all ways of

getting those difficult *thoughts*

out of our heads

without *abusing ourselves*

or actin' out in negative ways

without *abusing ourselves*

or actin' out in negative ways

deal with emotions

MC MENTOR

connecting with other people is very therapeutic

essential for us as humans: our mental and emotional wellbeing

I think performing's a massive thing, I guess not everyone enjoys it

but if you *do* enjoy it, it's a *very* rewarding feeling

hard to put into words

when something that you've written and performed

has connected with the other person

it makes you feel good about yourself

if *you've* written somethin'

that *really connects* with someone

***that is particularly* rewarding...**

you might not know it *when you're actually* performing on stage

although obviously there's therapy to *that part* of it as well

when you're on stage they might vocalise a response to somethin' ya said

it's a two-way thing

***they* can feel the emotion**

in what you've written

they *respond* back with emotion

I think music can be a *really* powerful way

to connect with others

a positive way

connecting with other people is very therapeutic

12. Return with INNER Elixir

MC TORMENTA

it's given me confidence over the years, that's how it's helped me
from bein' that shy lickle boy

it's *satisfying*, it's given me confidence
good to know that it connects with p—

I dunno! Hard to put into words really! Yeah!

yeaaaaah, I think a *massive* thing, as far as therapeutical value of Hip Hop, *is* the
connection

the creative process for Hip Hop can be very much a *collective* thing, together
havin' *positive* connections with people through *music*

connecting and *creating* music

as a *group*

a really powerful thing

for *myself*

some of the strongest, most meaningful connections that I've had with people
over the years

it's *satisfying*, it's given me confidence

it's given me confidence over the years, that's how it's helped me

MC MENTOR

it's therapeutic for *me*

to see that turnaround

makes me feel good in *myself*

when I see people doin' well in their recovery from addiction

to see a young person *stick with* the music

and turn away from the offending

to see him *still* pursuin' his music

gettin' the little bits of recognition that he is and still *passionate* about it, still creatin'

it's a way for him to get *recognition* off his peers for his creative *abilities*

for his *charisma* as a performer

to get that respect in that way, I think that's really helped

to get props in *that way*

rather than for tryin' to be

a bad man or a drug dealer or whatever

I would think that's definitely been a benefit to him you know

he hasn't been in *trouble* with the *authorities* for a long time

I think a *lot of 'em* are

really strugglin' with their *identities* at that age

on a *social* level I think it's been a benefit to 'im how he's focused

that's what it's all about an', yeah

that makes me feel good in *myself*

it's therapeutic for *me* to see that turnaround

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

The following Analysis states the study's philosophical foundations before exploring Book 2's Key Findings (Golden Nuggets) and their relationship with existing research. Next, a Discussion evaluates whether the study met its Aims and Objectives then assesses its strengths and limitations. Implications for practice are raised throughout and summarised to conclude in a proposed 12HQ model.

Analysis

Philosophical Foundations

Poststructuralism and social constructivism underpin the bricolage. Data was triangulated using: CRs' stories of experience; the researcher's heuristic, narrative inquiry thesis-quest; and autoethnographical content generated through her localised lens as a Hip Hop fan. Throughout the study, truth is viewed as local and yet universally accessible through myth (Vogler 2007). Hip Hop's roots in story-telling are recognised as a potential vehicle to disseminate healing wisdom through its song (Frisch Hara, 2012; Viega, 2012). Ontologically, this aligns the study's research methodology and methods with Kincheloe's (2004) notion that:

...bricoleurs examine the nature of human being (subjectivity) and its relation to knowledge production, but also the nature of the object of study.

(p. 13)

These ideas are also analogous, epistemologically, to poststructuralism's 'focus on contextualized meaning making, rather than on universal truths or an all-encompassing reality' (Combs and Freeman, 2012, p. 1036).

Key Findings: 'Golden Nuggets'

Emergent themes from the data can be simply expressed, with the following sub-themes:

- 1) acceptance:** narrating honest life experience; men's emotional expression; multifarious self
- 2) connection:** inner emotions; outer relationships; creative self; truth/identity
- 3) reward:** buzz; escape; self-esteem; status/recognition; desistance from disruptive behaviours

Each theme intersects with the others. Importantly, a study by Secker et. al (2007) reveals 90% of arts and health project workers ranked empowerment-linked 'rewards' such as self-esteem, confidence and personal development as most important for long term health and social benefits. Golden Nuggets are offered here for practitioners to sow in their work and extended through further study. Though MC Mentor and MC Tormenta's experiences are relayed as if they are real people, it is not intended that they are representative of the wider target demographic but offer a snapshot insight into the experiences of *some*. Further research might draw upon a larger participant group to collect wider stories of experience and examine common themes, if any.

1) Connecting with The Societal Tribe

The WZA introduces how Rap offers shared cultural experiences of impoverished, oppressed, black populations in the US:

and a lot rap—what they used to spit—is the truth
Right? It's the truth. It might be the Black-Side of the
truth
and they—white people don't like it
and they can't understand it

This correlates with Literature Review research (LRR) by Frisch Hara who states:

On a societal level, RAP can reflect the community in which it originated, and its major issues. We may not like to hear about violence, trauma, injustice, poverty, oppression, discrimination, and rebellion, but we cannot deny their existence.
(2012, p.19)

Rap provides a channel for voiceless populations to narrate their experiences though MC Mentor relays how 'real rap's' censorship continues:

...and now what's happenin'?
they got more killings than ever! the police killing more than ever!
so who's the real gangsters? the gang staff or the police?
all gangsta rap was doing at the time was
sayin' what was going on in the world, really

This is echoed by Grime artist Slick Don (2016) in 'Feds'. Its lyrics form Book 2's Inner Ordeal (12HQ Stage 8) because police are presented as Threshold Guardians who deny access to living freely. Here, the protagonist vents his frustration upon experiencing racial harassment by those employed to *protect* him.

Later, Mentor MC states:

there's a therapeutic thing in just getting those lyrics out

All of this is echoed by research by Segalo (2006) who describes Rap's function as a community healing tool for disenfranchised, black South Africans:

Rap music has the psychological power to confront issues that people might not have been aware of. In a country that is still in the process of dealing with hurts of the past, Rap music is being used as one of the tools in this process of forgiveness.
(p. 34)

Whilst The WZA's Introduction highlights how subjugated communities experience oppression and loss of voice (Kincheloe, 2004), LRR by Viega (2012) outlines Rap's autobiographical function to express voice. For example, MC Tormenta clearly express relief and uplift on recognising his traumatic experience recounted in lyrics. Thus, Rap could be therapeutic in expressing shared pain (and promoting connection and acceptance) which I consider next alongside connection with personal pain.

2) Connecting with Past Hurts

MC Tormenta expresses the taboo nature of sharing traumatic, emotional experiences as a man. MC Mentor echoes this:

**young people
perhaps especially young men
aren't encouraged to talk about their
feelings
in an honest and open way**

MC Tormenta recounts withdrawal, social exclusion and emotional disruption as consequences, corroborated by wider interview data as the crippling effects of enforced emotional repression:

*I was the shyest of the shyest, I was shy
the more you hide it...
the worse it is
the more it fucks your shit up*

Combs and Freeman (2012) suggest: 'people's identities are defined and constructed through stories' but MC Tormenta's story is denied by his family and male peers. He recounts a lack of support:

*it was weird you never got no help
there's no-one there to let it out to
told to get on with it*

This results in his withdrawal at school:

*all through secondary, all the way up
they'd say: "Ah, he don't wanna know. He just looks out the window
all the time."
the teachers used to say: "He's very clever but all he does is look out
the window."*

An autoethnographical connection appears in LRR when Muncey (2010) describes similar disruptions in motivation and school performance. During a interview the researcher conducted with Slim Kid Tre (2015), she was told:

Sometimes men can't communicate to each other on an emotional level but when you put a mic in somebody's hand the deep stuff starts coming out, difficult stuff that's, y'know, maybe a little bit challenging to talk about man-to-man.

(Appendix 9)

In terms of CWTP, Bolton (2001) offers reflective writing as a 'relatively safe and confidential' means to reflect upon difficult issues. This is corroborated by Furman and Dill (2012) in LRR who discuss hegemonic notions of masculinity as restrictive but offer poetry therapy as an expressive vehicle:

Reading poems with clear emotional content can help a man learn to increasingly identify his feelings and find resonance between the work that is being read and his feelings. This can serve as a springboard to writing exercises and the creation of his own poetry.

(p. 103)

Significantly, MC Mentor describes creating and performing Rap music as a mood-uplifting, relaxing and rewarding alternative to substance abuse:

**you can get that *escapism*, that *rush* of emotion that can make
you feel good
help you experience perhaps a negative emotion in a way
where
you can come to terms with it
'cos music *speaks* through emotions**

The researcher's own use of CWTP to relieve troubling thoughts, recounted in Book 1, is mirrored here and also when MC Mentor states that writing can help process trauma:

**I've had people write about being *stabbed*, come to terms with
past experiences**
past
traumas
**that's an example of how people can come to terms with a
difficult event
writing about their sentencin' as well
their *offending*
their involvement with the justice system**

Hearing our experiences in lyrics might validate them and reduce our sense of isolation. MC Tormenta explains how his schooling suffered after experiencing trauma:

**you can hear in the tunes, 'nuff tunes
what you've gone through in your head that fuckin' scarred you for
life**

Thus, using THH with the target groups to encourage emotional expression might improve social relationships and educational performance. This connects with LRR as Allen (2005) describes how Hip Hop Therapy assists practitioners to address youth issues in therapy, through reflection within a supportive environment. Issues raised by Furman and Dill (2012) regarding men's access to poetry therapy could be addressed through inclusion of Rap lyrics rather than traditional poetry or other genres of lyrics. See B3 for recommended lyrics (Appendix 8).

3) Connecting with The Local Tribe

The data supports existing research detailing Rap's usefulness in constructing identity through honest expression. Benefits include improved relationships and self-concept. MC Mentor compares CWTP's unsent letters to lyricism:

**a lot of therapists do tell people to *write letters an'* that
to get their emotions out
writing lyrics is similar**

His recount of using Tupac's 'Dear Mama' with a young person is self-explanatory and the song is discussed elsewhere, hence its exclusion here. In LLR, Viega (2012) suggests Rap supports adolescents' journey to transformation into adults and therapeutic exploration of lyrics as transformational. MC Mentor recounts allowing mentees to express fake identities in-line with peer expectations then moving them towards more honest lyrical portrayal. Like MC Mentor, Page and Olson-McBride (2012) found Rap promotes therapeutic discussion and suggest Rap's appeal helps improve the therapeutic alliance with Hard to Reach Youth, perhaps useful in creating trust with those who feel Othered as Slick Don expresses through 'Feds' (2016). A goal for future THH practice might be to promote identity construction through recounting and reshaping stories from an empowered position.

4) Archetypes

Bolton (2001) suggests 'reflexivity is making aspects of the self strange' (p. 14) and writing in-role as a way to create distance for critical exploration of one's thoughts and behaviours. Parallels in LRR occur when Viega (2012) proposes transformation is key to activating personal power towards change. MC Tormenta recounts personal transformation through MCing:

**it's given me confidence over the years, that's how it's helped me
from bein' that shy lickle boy**

Another significant finding, which MC Mentor finds rewarding hence therapeutic, is how Rap can help reduce offending (Short, 2014) and substance misuse (DeCarlo & Hockman, 2004):

**it's therapeutic for *me*
to see that turnaround**

**that makes me feel good in *myself*
when I see people doin' well in their recovery from addiction
to see a young person *stick with the music*
and turn away from the offending
to see him *still pursuin' his music***

By considering herself as a range of Archetypes, the researcher used CWTP to support self-identification as emotionally balanced *but just going through a hard time* when depressed and unable to cope with problems (Payne, 2006; Short, 2014). For example:

A real character, like a real person, is not just a single trait but a unique combination of many qualities and drives, some of them conflicting. A well-rounded Hero can be determined, uncertain, charming, forgetful, impatient, and strong in body but weak at heart, all at the same time.

(Vogler, 2007, p. 19)

Interpreting disruptions to her wellbeing through 12HQ's stages and her moods as Archetypes driving behaviour, she negotiated emotional turbulence as metaphoric Thresholds and Trials. A gentle way to introduce the self as multifarious could be through lyrics, images and videos presenting popular Archetypes from films and fairytales, then applying them to UK Rap personalities such as: Klashnekoff (Seeker); Chester P (Wounded Healer); Verb T (Shadow) and Skinny Man (Anti-Hero). With considered planning and careful attunement to individual groups and their needs, a THH facilitator could apply this approach to help people understand *conflicting* aspects themselves.

5) Doppelgangers

A dark version of the Mentor figure, the Evil Twin/Doppelganger archetype represents our Shadow traits such as malevolence, violence and poor choice-making. Usefully, Rappers often present with good and bad Alter Egos. Lyrics presenting 'split personalities' may exemplify a poststructuralist view of the individual as a dynamic range of continually shifting elements, to promote acceptance of all of our many sides as human beings. MC Mentor and MC Tormenta appear to experience the mic, the pen and music as Talismanic; almost providing Portals from The Ordinary World of problems:

it's like there's two of ya
it's like you're a split personality, I'm tellin' ya!
'cos when you hold the mic you do change

they're creating a persona
your escape,
in all these tunes
spittin' on the mic man, getting' into music
music was the—music was the escape from it

This is significant as CWTP supports writing in character to shift perspective. As Rap recurrently deals with autobiographical and emotional concerns of the Rapper, its lyrics could prompt writing and discussion regarding life-events narrated through different versions of ourselves and in the voices of others (Short, 2014). Key benefits include: opening up new dimensions of ourselves to access less dominant, more desirable traits, dormant thoughts and feelings (Hunt, 2000); opening up to perspectives of others (Bolton 2001) and supporting self-care through acceptance of one's many different sides (Vogler, 2007)—all interesting topics for further study.

Discussion

Aims and Objectives

As a bricoleur, the researcher actively excavated ideas pertinent to the research title: 'A Narrative Inquiry exploring the therapeutic potential of Rap lyrics in Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes'. In a rejection of deterministic views of reality (Combs and Freedman, 2012), she applied a Derridian (2016) stance to uncover the hidden stories (Kincheloe, 2004; Muncey, 2010) of MCs. For example, B2 dismantles, unfixes then reconstructs the subjective experiences of co-researchers through a process the researcher discovered was 'poetic inquiry' (Willis, 2002; Galvin and Prendergast, 2015; Sjollem and Bilotta, 2016). This illuminated previously undiscovered stories of how two UK MCs experience Rap as therapeutic which address gaps in the LRR. With space being limited and poetic inquiry an unplanned element, the researcher hopes to further investigate this aspect in the future. Using 12HQ, she did explore the therapeutic potential of lyricism in Rap but intended to make direct links with poetry therapy techniques which is considered a significant omission. Focussing the PD on THH's practical application with youth meant a large quantity of her own creative writing, generated during the heuristic research process, was omitted. These were invaluable in creating awareness of her personal processes and researcher-position though these elements of the study are secondary to the core aims outlined previously.

Implications for Future Practice

Practitioners might use 12HQ to structure a series of THH sessions. In the current climate of austerity and funding cuts it is advised two stages are covered per session, to reduce funding pressures. Evans' (2015) participant-led research classified poetry therapy workshop resources via three emergent themes: Hurt, Heal and Hope corresponding with the traditional tripartite dramatic movement of plays, novels and films. This also matches 12HQ: Act 1 provides a problem (Hurt), Act 2 handles conflict which is dealt with through an ordeal (Heal) and Act 3 brings resolve (Hope). Appendix 8 offers songs for reflection. Participant-led song choice is recommended, perhaps as a collaborative activity (Levy 2012).

Strengths

The research question was well considered. Choosing not to include ‘grief’ and ‘trauma’ in order to regulate personal affect and vicarious trauma response was a responsible choice as a researcher. Heuristic processes were engaged in fully, allowing for unexpected turns upon the research path. A solid self-care routine empowered the researcher to remain open to uncertainty. Reflective writing helped her self-soothe whilst untangling mind-boggling research knots.

Over ambitiousness was reduced by cutting the study’s Aims, namely to address youth mental health inequalities in the UK through THH (particularly for YACMs). On reflection, these were realised as massive and too vast for this study. Data coverage in the Literature Review was originally limited due to the inclusion of bricolaged autoethnographic content. The study’s collaborative, person-centred narrative methodological and philosophical design choices were made to counter derogatory, negative and machine-orientated language found in LRR posing people’s mental health issues as problems to be fixed (Tyson, 2002; Allen, 2005; Levy, 2012).

Ethically, the inclusion of acquaintances as co-researchers was risky. Good communication with the Research Advisor and mindful conduct throughout the study meant problems were largely avoided. In summary, innovations include: the application of 12HQ in structuring the poetic representation of research data; the foregrounding of UK Hip Hop lyricists in Book 3 to address needs of the local target population; Rap as a poststructuralist discourse for promoting self-reflection to understand our relationships with others and ourselves; and Rap as a form of reality-shaping through the social construction of shared experiences in lyricism. Foregrounding subjective experiences of rap as therapeutic from within the UK’s cultural context addresses a significant gap in CWTP research and beyond.

Limitations

Significant omissions from the data include: chanting; call and response; rewarding lyric-writing techniques and therapeutic aspects of Hip Hop besides lyricism. Data in B1 was not analysed directly and B2’s evaluation was hugely restricted by word limitations. The researcher hoped to counter this by prioritising self-explanatory sections of the findings for exclusion, though this restricted opportunities for making connections with and making suggestions for wider research. The study intended to offer a robust, evidence-based tool kit for THH practice but time and space restricted this. Nonetheless, implications for practice are suggested through a song Toolkit (Appendix 8). Expressive writing was not discussed in great depth but having been widely researched already, less prevalent topics such as male access to poetry therapy through Rap were prioritised instead. Researcher bias is acknowledged during the data interpretation process though relayed throughout the Methodology; for example: looking for evidence of themes during interview transcript annotation. These musings may contribute to researcher bias in the form of pre-data collection expectations. However, journaling during the research process brought this to awareness. The richness of the data-story was compromised due to the omission of autoethnographical data including poems, lyrics and

reflexive writing relevant to the researcher's personal and cultural context regarding Hip Hop. However, it is acknowledged that the depth of exploration attempted far exceeds the scope of this study.

Rap's Master MCs should be recognised as wordsmiths capable of casting spells with language. If, as Healers, we re-write our relationship with Rap, we open the door to new experiences within our own practice and for participants. The idea of applying 12HQ, a *structure*, to autoethnographical content may appear contradictory. However, in a rejection of structuralist mean-making through form, Vogler (2007) suggests its stages and Archetypes should be applied to serve the purpose of exploring *individual* narratives. In therapeutic activity, this means empowerment through choice: we direct our stories; we choose which battles to fight; and we choose when to go for Gold or run from Inner Demons. In terms of THH, this means using Rap lyrics to generate awareness with participants regarding the self-stories they narrate for themselves. Rap might not appeal to everyone but it acts as another tool in the kit to engaging youth, young men and YACMs. Future research might explore how Rapper-Mentor figures' lyrics could promote and model help-seeking behaviours. This thesis is intended to form a bridge towards practical implementation that encourages Helpers to apply Therapeutic Hip Hop, a relatively untapped tool, in their own healing work.

CONCLUSION

Healers do not fear darkness. In fact, one might say they are drawn to it. With this in mind, and the current political climate of fear, division and austerity, we must not shirk difference nor exclude that which we do not understand due to our own barriers and inexperience. Rap has both helpful and harmful elements. Carefully chosen material could promote wellbeing by offering moments of connection with peers and the emotional content of Rap's lyricism. Young people's lives might be enhanced using Therapeutic Hip Hop through benefits such as empowerment and reward; peer recognition; creative buzz; improved self-concept and strengthened relationships. In the words of MC Mentor:

you're self-realising, while you're writing

In conclusion, rather than reduce the study to a series of reductionist statements, here, key questions are offered in the hope of stimulating curiosity and further dialogue:

Could the sense that we are somehow alien or abnormal due to our difference be reduced when we hear our stories in Rap songs?

Does being heard, when we share our stories honestly through Rap lyrics, promote self-esteem and confidence to flourish?

Will Rap poetry therapy-style activities support young men to process past hurts and thus empower them to face Trials and Tests in school, and in peer and familial relationships?

Can we allay our own fears regarding Rap's Shadow elements of guns, gangs and violence to reap the benefits associated with THH, outlined in the study?

How does emotional expression and writing using Inner Mentor voices reshape our sense of control over everyday experiences?

Can Rap help us realise our ideal futures and access our Inner Seekers so we continue to learn and grow, despite life's Tests and Trials?

Rap offers a vast body of empowerment-focussed lyricism beyond its Shadows. Findings reveal Rap can provide a fruitful tool for sustainable therapeutic interventions. The researcher hopes to influence and deliver future practice that empower participants to self-realise as integrated wholes; view disruptive personal traits as mere *aspects* of themselves and generate a permanent capacity to draw on Inner Mentors to develop unlimited potential to live full and flourishing lives.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Blog Post

23.04.14 Good Grief Kiz Blog Post: The Final Chamber...

What would you do differently if you knew you only had a year left of life?

Would you do something else today? Make a phone-call? Visit someone?

I've started thinking about this a lot recently. I turned 35 this month and my thoughts have switched into a different awareness-mode. So far, April appears to have been my modifier.

At the start of the month, I began to embark upon a new journey. As my birthday drew closer, I realised that the time to confront one of my biggest fears had finally arrived. But, I made a decision: rather than let the beast defeat me, I would bring a lantern to the mouth of the cave and make light of the darkness.

It's now the final year of my being younger than my older sister, if that makes sense? Promila (or Pam as we called her), was 36 when she died back in 2000. She is supposed to be 15 years my senior but I'm going to catch her up next April as I too, will be turning 36.

This idea has freaked me out for a long time, since she died in fact...I've always wondered what it would be like to be the same age as her. Would she still be my *older* sister? I can't put into words how I feel about this whole thing. I've been blocking it out, dreading it. But now I'm here, at 35, it's cool. I've found a way to make it OK and have made a gear-shift into a new wave-of-thought about the whole thing.

I started wondering what Pam would have done differently in her 35th year, if she'd have known it was going to be her last. And what if I only had a year left? What would I change?

Occasionally, there are times in our lives when things take huge leaps in directions very different to those we expected. The process started for me back in February when I decided to quit my job as an English and Drama teacher. I wanted to have the freedom to choose where I live. And to make that choice, I need to experience different places by staying and working in them! So I will be taking work as a substitute/supply teacher in the places I love and think about where I enjoy being the most.

And then April happened.

Things are taking on new meanings all the time: events, situations and relationships all seem different now that I hear my inner voice constantly asking: 'What would Pam do in this situation/moment? How would she handle this relationship?'

I have privately handled some large issues this month which I chose not to share here. I just experienced them raw instead of writing about them. Seems like sometimes, writing offers a way to sit on a shelf and observe my own life but I was so in-tune and engrossed with the month (rather than *moment*), I didn't want to pull back into reflexive and reflective pondering here, or in my journal. I've lived it first-hand.

Funnily enough though, I did feel the need to write and share on the day I started writing this blog post. It was on Pam's birthday, which falls just 5 days after mine.

It was her *50th* birthday.

Mind-blower!

Turns out, I had an epiphany in the days between my birthday and hers.

I realised something.

Since I actually quit my full-time teaching job a couple of weeks ago (to pursue my dreams), I've been thinking about the processes I need to re-engage in order to continue my dissertation study.

I will be reading this:

Oh my, the things I have to endure!

Wu Tang Clan have been and still are, an influential and life-changing artist collective both in my life and on this journey into exploring the therapeutic potential of Hip Hop. I decided I needed to re-listen to their debut album.

And then it struck me like a lightening bolt.

A couple of years ago I watch Raekwon (RZA) discuss the roots of Wu Tang and the philosophical framework for this game-changing, world-dominating album. I remember him talking about the title 'Enter the Wu Tang (36 Chambers)'.

The album takes its title from a Shaolin Hero's Journey. The warrior must pass through 36 chambers to reach enlightenment, the prize, the goal. Each chamber is filled with an obstacle which he must defeat with his skill and prowess. However, no man can prepare for the 36th chamber for it is different for everyone.

The 36th chamber is filled with one's own nemesis. It is tailored to each competitor in that it is filled with each individual's own greatest fear. Hence, to complete the challenge and win, one must conquer one's own self.

That's where I'm at. This year is my 36th chamber. Catching up with Pam...

...so how did I decide to make it OK?

As I shook myself off from the afore-mentioned lightening bolt, I also heard a roll of thunder...

'LIVE LIFE LIKE IT'S YOUR LAST YEAR!'

So, each day I will live life a little differently. I started on the day after Pam's birthday and will continue for the year. I've already noticed how much more conscious awareness I have as I engage with life's daily journeys.

I've chosen to log my adventures as a micro-blog on Facebook as I want to share this very personal journey with those that know me well enough to be connected with me there.

Already I've noticed another massive shift. During the first few days, I was doing things on a superficial level...wearing different clothes, trying different things, doing things I would normally be afraid of.

But then I quickly realised, it's not about what I do in the physical realm...I started pondering instead what stories I will leave trailing in people's minds behind me.

When I'm gone, how would I like to be remembered?

How can my actions *represent* my sister, Pam, and my father who also left us early.

And so my outlook has changed again...my 36th chamber is no longer about the fear I have about overtaking Pam in years, but about the light I want to cast in this life of my own.

As I chatted to her son about this, we discussed some of her favourite songs and how she had influenced us, musically. I looked them all up on You Tube and this particular one resonated with me. Here's the link: [play it](#) [hyperlink omitted] and read the lyrics at the same time.

Alive-Kiz x

Ultra Nate – Free Lyrics

Where did we go wrong
Where did we lose our faith
My brother is in need
But can he depend on me
Do you think if one of you tried
Maybe you could find
A better friend than any other
If you gave more than you took
Life could be so good
Come on and try
Now's the time

Chorus

Cause you're free
To do what you want to do
You've got to live your life
Do what you want to do

Chant

Do what you want
Do what you want to do

Are we all strangers
Does anyone really care
Deep down were all the same
Trying to hide our pain
You think you can never trust another
Cause they're all out to get ya
We have to live in this world together
If we open up our hearts
Love can finally start
Come on and try
Now's the time

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet [Formatted Amended]

METANOIA INSTITUTE & MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

1. Study title

Can Rap be therapeutic? A Narrative Inquiry exploring the therapeutic potential of lyricism in Rap music for Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes.

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

Aim:

I want to know if there are any therapeutic elements of Rapping and listening to Rap music.

This study aims to explore whether Rap and therapeutic writing combined can offer support to people. I also want to know which people would benefit most.

I want to find out if Hip Hop could help people such as counselors, social workers, teachers and youth workers etc. to connect with people on their level.

Hip Hop is:

- a popular, global youth movement
- Rap music is *one element*
- the word 'Rap' means 'rhyming, poetic vocals'
- Rap artists 'Rap' over backing music (usually pre-recorded electronically)

Therapeutic Writing is:

- creative writing that helps people move forward
- it could be stories, poems, letters or anything a person feels like writing
- rules of grammar and spelling are not important
- the writing might help explore things on someone's mind
- it can help them deal with problems
- it might help them say what needs to be said without the pressure of speaking it aloud to anyone
- it can be private and personal
- it might never be read by anyone else

You do not have to know a lot about Hip Hop or therapeutic writing to take part in this study.

4. Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you have an interest in Hip Hop/Rap. You may also be a performer, in some way. The research study will involve around three participants. This means there may also be two other participants who will take part separately, following the same procedures.

4. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

During this time any transcripts and data will be sent to you for you to edit/alter or delete anything that you do not wish to be included in the final version. This will be sent to you at least 8 weeks before the final submission date to give you time to consider the material and you can withdraw your consent to use material up to 4 weeks before the submission date of ...

To withdraw, you could contact the researcher via email or telephone and say: 'I would like to withdraw from the study. You will not be asked any further questions. Your participation in the study will end there.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will explore how to support people using Rap music and therapeutic writing. I have a particular interest in working with men (as they have higher suicide rates than women). Sometimes, discussions may be about difficult or troublesome feelings and experiences. You may experience distress yourself.

I will ask you to ensure you only participate in any activity you feel comfortable with. If you feel any distress or upset, I want you to tell me so we can decide, together, whether to pause, carry on or to stop altogether.

You may wish to re-arrange another time to talk to the researcher. This is fine. You may wish to withdraw from the research. This is also fine. Your wellbeing is of utmost importance.

I will use the following research methods in the study:

Conversation:

You will talk to the researcher in a relaxed, informal way about your experiences. You may steer the conversation or listen. You might discuss Hip Hop, Rap, song lyrics and writing or a combination of these things. You will give your views and opinions.

Please note that in order to ensure quality assurance and equity this project may be selected for audit by a designated member of the committee. This means that the designated member can request to see signed consent forms. However, if this is the case, your signed consent form will only be accessed by the designated auditor or member of the audit team.

7. What do I have to do?

The study will last a eight months, maybe longer. Your involvement will be mainly at the start.

The conversation may happen face-to-face, over the telephone or via Skype. You will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred in doing so.

Later in the study, you will be asked to look at a transcript of the conversation and other written material that is going to be included in the final study. I will ask you to tell me whether you think it is a true representation of what was said.

When the final thesis draft has been prepared, you will be asked to read the document and whether you give permission for me to use your input.

You will be asked to sign consent forms to say that I am allowed to use your input.

8. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

You may be reminded of distressing experiences. I will ask you to sign a consent form to say that you are willing to seek support or professional help, should you feel any distress at any point.

9. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

I hope that participating in the study will help you. However, this cannot be guaranteed. The information I get from this study may help me to support people experiencing emotional difficulties in the future.

10. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised.

All data will be stored, analysed and reported in compliance with the Data Protection legislation of the relevant country where the study is being conducted. I will store data collected for no longer than 12 months after the end of the study.

11. What will happen to the results of the research study?

This research will be published as part of a postgraduate dissertation. Results are likely to be published in Spring 2016.

You can obtain a copy of the published results from your researcher.

I intend to publish results and discuss the research findings in publications such academic journals, on websites and at conferences in the future with your permission.

You will be asked whether you would like to review such publications in advance, before they are made public. You will not be identified in any report/publication.

12. Who has reviewed the study?

The Metanoia Research Ethics Committee will review this study.

13. Contact for further information

For further information, please contact:

DETAILS OF RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH ADVISOR

[Omitted for confidentiality]

14. Institution name and contact details:

Metanoia Institute
13 North Common Road
Ealing
London
W5 2QB
(020) 8579 2505

CONSENT FORM (Version No: 1)

Participant Identification Number:

Title of Project:

Can Rap be therapeutic? A Narrative Inquiry exploring the therapeutic potential of lyricism in Rap music for Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes.

Name of Researcher: Jasimi Kiran Bangerh

Please initial box

Thank you for showing an interest in taking part in this study.
You will be given a copy of this information sheet and a signed consent form to keep.

Name of participant _____
Date _____
Signature _____
Name of person taking consent _____
(if different from researcher)
Date _____
Signature _____

Appendix 3

Ethical Consent Form

DETAILS OF APPLICANT AND RESEARCH ADVISOR

1.1. Applicant's name: Miss. Jasimi Kiran Bangerh

1.2. Email address: kizthewhiz@hotmail.com

1.3. Telephone number: [omitted for confidentiality]

1.4. Research Advisor(s) name, qualifications and contact details:

BECKY MIDWINTER

Biography

Director of Centre for Personal & Professional Development, Graduate School of Education (GSoE),
University of Bristol (until Oct 2013)

Senior Teaching fellow, GSoE

Co-Director Alpheus Training Ltd

BACP Accredited & UKRCP Registered Independent Counsellor/Psychotherapist

MSc in Counselling

Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Research

Certified Life Coach

Advanced Workplace Mediator

Mobile: [omitted for confidentiality]

Email: [omitted for confidentiality]

1.5. Institution/contact details (if applicable):

Metanoia Institute

13 North Common Road

Ealing

London

W5 2QB

(020) 8579 2505

1.6. Do you have any external funding for this project? Yes/No (please circle)

If yes, please provide brief details including the name of the funding body:

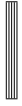
1.7. Project title:

Can Rap be therapeutic? A Narrative Inquiry exploring the therapeutic potential of lyricism in Rap music as Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Note: The items below cover all of those in the A/B categories of Middlesex University

If you have answered 'NO' to any of the questions listed in 1 to 12 above, then please provide further details on a separate page and attach it to this application

















If you have answered 'YES' to any of the questions listed under 12 to 18 above, then please provide further details on a separate page and attach it to this application.

STUDENT DECLARATION

I have read the BACP and the BPS guidelines for ethical practices in research and have discussed this project with my Research Advisor in the context of these guidelines. I confirm that I have also undertaken a risk assessment with my Research Advisor:

Signed: Jasimi Kiran Bangerh

Print name: Jasimi Kiran Bangerh Date: 10/08/15

(Applicant)

RESEARCH ADVISOR DECLARATION

As research advisor for this research study I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that researchers/students under my supervision undertake a risk assessment to ensure that health and safety of themselves, participants and others is not jeopardised during the course of this study.

I confirm that I have seen and signed a risk assessment for this research study and to the best of my knowledge appropriate action has been taken to minimise any identified risks or hazards.

I understand that, where applicable, it is my responsibility to ensure that the study is conducted in a manner that is consistent with the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (see <http://www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm>).

I confirm that I have reviewed all of the information submitted as part of this research ethics application.

- I agree to participate in committee's auditing procedures for research studies if requested.

Signed:.....

Print name..... Date.....

(Research Advisor)

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

This project has been considered by the Metanoia Research Ethics Committee and is now approved.

Signed:.....Print name..... Date.....

(On behalf of the Metanoia Research Ethics Committee)

Please note that the Metanoia Research Committee meets twice during each academic year. Submissions between these meetings are dealt with by chair's action in consultation with one other committee member. All applications are acknowledged in writing and considered at the bi-annual Metanoia Research Committee meeting.

Appendix 4: Additional Ethics Information Page

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Participants will be asked to sign a consent form to say that they are willing to seek support and/or professional help, should they feel any distress at any point.

They will also be signaled towards counseling support and other relevant service providers for health and wellbeing as appropriate.

They will also be given clear guidance as to what will be expected of them, processes and procedures and how to opt out should they no longer wish to participate in the study.

It will be made clear to them that there are other research participants in line who could be asked to take part in the study and that they may withdraw up to four weeks before the submission date, currently expected to be 25th March 2015.

2. [Participant Information omitted to maintain anonymity]

Should participants join the study, I would use the following procedures to ensure that ethical considerations are met:

I would seek ongoing consent, at regular intervals, for participation in the study.

I will clarify role boundaries between us.

I will make clear expectations and procedures associated with the study through the Participant Information Sheet.

I will signal the potentially distressing nature of the research topic and refer them to professional therapeutic support in his locality throughout.

I will find and ensure they know that there are other participants available to take part in the research study.

I will not collect or publish any data that will connect the research to participant identity such as their: name, birthday, contact details or any other identifiable information.

Informed consent forms will be stored securely, away from the data collected.

I will consult with others for advice and guidance as appropriate regarding their vulnerability and suitability to take part e.g. my Research Advisor, Course Leader and Ethics Committee.

Should conversations trigger painful material during the data collection phase (Narrative Inquiry - conversations), I will tell participants that we will stop and signal them towards support and professional help as appropriate. I will remind them that they may withdraw at any time without giving reason and also that participation may continue at a later date, should they chose to continue.

9.I will seek professional therapy throughout the study for myself.

Appendix 5: Extract from Co-Researcher Interview Transcript

CR: But yeah, you know, um, I think, um, you know part of the appeal of um, of Hip Hop as an accessible music form as well you know, at a time when um, you know, yeah, poor or deprived people you know, probably wouldn't have been able to access instruments...

K: Ummmm.

CR: ...you know, it's my understanding [that] there wasn't, you know, much music programmes...

K: Hmmm.

CR: ...in inner city schools, at the time Hip Hop started, but there was record players...

K: Hmmm.

CR: ...and um, yeah, you know, and there was voices...

K: Yeah.

CR: ...so that was the instruments you needed to create Hip Hop...

K: It's accessible, ennit?

CR: ...absolutely.

K: [You] can beat box on the street...

CR: Absolutely.

K: You don't need any equipment. You don't need any plug sockets.

CR: Yeah, yeah. So I think yeah, you know um, yeah, you know, deprived or oppressed people you know are obviously um, *drawn* to more accessible forms of music and yeah, I think, um, you know, I mean yeah, *I* really like sort of you know, um, you know—*conscious* Hip Hop's a bit of er, a label or whatever you know but—yeah, and political Hip Hop, you know, er, that's about uplifting people out of um...

K: Hmmm.

CR: ...a struggle I think's a big part of Hip Hop music, as well, and yeah although a lot of the young people I work with...

K: Yeah.

CR: ...you know, their more concerned with writing about, yeah, everyday struggles...

K: Yep.

CR: ...and er, criminal lifestyles rather than sort of bigger, sort of social protest but yeah...

K: Bigger pictures.

CR: ...I've been trying to steer them, er, and get them to kind of look a bit wider, if I can.

K: So, why do you think that the kind of young people that you work with are focusing on, like, their everyday life and their, you know, criminal activities and experience?

CR: Um, yeah, because that's the way they're used to gettin', um, yeah, respect and recognition and status...

K: Umhmm.

CR: ...in um, yeah, a lot of the time I think that's a big part of it and even when they come across to the music, you know, um...

K: Ummmm.

CR: ...because you know, because that's what they see in the content of a lot of it...

K: Ummm.

CR: ...whether it's you know commercial, mainstream Hip Hop...

K: Ummhmm.

CR: ...or whether it's you know, more underground, Grime...

K: Hmmm.

CR: ...in this country and a lot of the content—it *is*, that's what it's about ya know: it's about beef; it's about crime; it's about, you know, *negative things* so that's what they follow, you know?

K: Yeah, so are they like competing in how far they can get and shock, or..?

CR: We-ell, sometimes or maybe it's just more about fitting in and wanting to be seen as, like, yeah, ya know a *bad man* basically—wanting to have that, erm, you know to—you know...

K: Ummm.

CR: ...I think with a lot of 'em, you know—yeah then, it's difficult to be a child in the environment you know...

K: Oh-kay.

CR: ...especially with the younger ones, you know what I mean, like?

K: Yeah, yeah.

CR: 14 year olds and that, and they're not gangsters but from their lyrics you know, they'd think—you'd think they're living these gangster lifestyles...

K: (*laughing*) Yeah, yeah.

CR: ...that they're just not. I mean it's hard for them...

K: Yep.

CR: ...to be themselves, and to be *real*...

K: Right.

CR: ...and that's what we try and *open* their eyes to that, you know, um. You know, *show* them that like—yeah, you know, um, someone like Tupac who they might look up to as like, you know, a thug or something—show them like, *he* wrote, um, one of his biggest hits was you know, an emotional song addressed to his mother!

K: (*simultaneously*) Mom! Yeah-yeah!

CR: Do you know what I mean? Exactly—showing them that...

K: 'Dear Momma.' Yeah.

CR: ...kinda thing—showing them that Hip Hop is a broader thing, erm.

K: Mmmm.

CR: Yeah! The other lad I'm workin' with really struggles with that. He *admits* when he writes gang stuff that it's fictional, it's not what he lives, um, but, he's just *really* uncomfortable writing, you know, *truthfully his own honest experiences*, and that's, you know that's something [I'm] tryin' to-trying to help him overcome.

K: So, why do you think that he's experiencing difficulty writing about real life?

CR: We—ell, I guess, you know um, yeah, I think, you know, young people and perhaps especially young men...

K: Hmmm.

CR: ...you know um, aren't encouraged to talk about their feelings...

Appendix 6: Interview Questions

NB: the interview preparation materials should explain what is meant by ‘therapeutic’ value?

If I were to use lyrics/songs to exemplify ideas/questions etc., could this still be considered an interview or would it become a case study with participants reflecting on findings? And would this, then, need a new proposal and ethics approval?

Is Rap therapeutic?

Tell me about a time when you experienced rap being therapeutic.

Why do you think that happened?

As an audience member in a live crowd?

As a listener at home?

As a writer of Rap lyrics?

What did you think about that?

Was that something you usually did/experienced?

What kind of sense did you make of the experience?

Why do you think that particular moment came to mind?

Who were you with?

What were you listening to?

How did it affect you?

Did you ask anyone for help?

Was anyone else aware of what was happening?

Where were your friends?

What did your family think?

What was happening in the rest of your/their life at the time?

How old were you/they?

How could you tell it was therapeutic?

What was your sense of what was going on?

How did that affect you/make you think/feel?

How did you cope with that?

What made you decide to use Rap?

What were you intending?

What did you want to happen?

Why did you want to do that?

When did it stop being therapeutic?

My own ideas:

Who is it therapeutic for mainly? The listener at home? The audience at a gig? The MC? The DJ? All or none? A mixture?

When is Rap not therapeutic?

How is Rap therapeutic?

How is an MC able to maximize on Rap's therapeutic aspects? For themselves? For the audience at a live show? For a listener at home?

What could be therapeutic about being in a Rap cipher?

What types of Rap are therapeutic?

Is the writing process for Rap therapeutic?

Is there something about writing 16 bars that is therapeutic?

How does narrating one's experience hold healing or therapeutic value?

Do Raps create a new understanding of emotional events when written down? What about improvised Rap i.e. freestyle?

Is there a difference in the therapeutic value of written / freestyle-led Raps i.e. ones that are written for an audience but that started as writing on paper or an improvised freestyle that was memorized and written then shared with others?

Why is it that young, especially black, men are able to discuss traumatic or taboo subjects and events in Rap, but not face-to-face with peers? What makes it easier?

Can Rap release unconscious material? How?

How could albums like Pharoah Monche's '*PTSD*' be used therapeutically? *perhaps use song lyrics or play the music in the interview? Perhaps have a list of other songs to use interchangeably here in case the interviewee is not aware of this album.

Whether, when, how and for whom can Rap be therapeutic?

Which elements of Rap are therapeutic? I.e. Is it the music of Rap or its lyrics, or a combination that is therapeutic?

Do you write to a beat? If so, why? Does that hold any therapeutic value? If so, why?

Etherington, K. (2004b) *A view of narrative inquiry*. [Powerpoint Presentation]. Available at: http://www.powershow.com/view/3af21b-YTBIM/A_View_of_Narrative_Inquiry_powerpoint_ppt_presentation [Accessed May 2017].

Appendix 7

Link Me Poem (Developed by Combining Three Pantoums)

Link Me

the school building is deserted -
 an empty ship
 it's passengers departed
 to evenings of hot dinners and T.V.

an empty ship
 echoes of people scatter the corridors like ghosts
 to an evening of hot dinners and T.V.
 the people have fled

echoes of people scatter the corridors like ghosts
 seabed sweepers gather morsels of empty crisp packets and fizzy-pop bottles
 the people have fled
 Autumn's tortoise-shell clouds gleam through the empty windows; no body
 sees

seabed sweepers gather morsels of empty crisp packets and fizzy-pop bottles
 it's passengers departed
 Autumn's tortoise-shell clouds gleam through the empty windows; no body
 sees
 the school building is deserted -

today is my father's birthday
 he died before his time
 I have no card
 I have no present

he died before his time
 I wish he were here
 I have no present
 tonight he would blow out candles, tonight we would cut a cake

I wish he were here
 his absence leaves me empty
 tonight he would blow out candles, tonight we would cut a cake
 I miss his smile

his absence leaves me empty
 I have no card
 I miss his smile
 today is my father's birthday

I am my father's daughter
he wrote poems
poems are a gift
he passed to me

he wrote poems
poems at the traffic lights
he passed to me
poems at bedtime

poems at the traffic lights
fires, hopes, passions, dreams
poems at bedtime
I am ablaze with joy

fires, hopes, passions, dreams
poems are a gift
I am ablaze with joy
today is my father's birthday

my mind wanders to the river
the spider's web laden with dewdrops
where ducks hovered on turbid clouds
as ashes showered the air

the spider's web laden with dewdrops
the riverboat chugged
as ashes showered the air
and stars of sunlight danced on the river

the riverboat chugged
my bangles chinked as petals fell like ashes
and stars of sunlight danced on the river
a hand-filled with flowers, a hand-filled with ashes

my bangles chinked as petals fell like ashes
where ducks hovered on turbid clouds
a hand-filled with flowers, a hand filled with ashes
my mind wanders to the river

I am letting go, I let go, I am gone
I am scattered
I am molecules, atoms, DNA
I am dead leaves on the path

I am scattered
cathartic wand
I am dead leaves on the path
by the pen, I am issued

cathartic wand
link me
by the pen, I am issued
I let go and find my Zen

link me
I am molecules, atoms, DNA
I let go and find my Zen
I am letting go, I let go, I am gone

the school building is deserted -
an empty ship
echoes of people scatter the corridors like ghosts
seabed sweepers gather morsels of empty crisp packets and fizzy-pop bottles

today is my father's birthday
he died before his time
I wish he were here
his absence leaves me empty

I am my father's daughter
he wrote poems
poems at the traffic lights
fires, hopes, passions, dreams

my mind wanders to the river
the spider's web laden with dewdrops
the riverboat chugged
my bangles chinked as petals fell like ashes

I am letting go, I let go, I am gone
I am scattered
cathartic wand
link me

Hip Hop HEALS' Guide

Book 3: Rhyme Pages

1. The Ordinary INNER World

MC Tormenta: 'Europe is Lost' Kate Tempest

MC Mentor: 'Ill Manors' Plan B

2. Call to INNER Adventure

MC Tormenta: 'Word of Mouth' Trademark Blud

MC Mentor: 'December - Let the Others Know' Rameson Badbones

3. Refusal of the INNER Call

MC Tormenta: 'Creatures of Habit - The Vices'

MC Mentor: 'Where You Find Me' Verb T

4. Meeting with the INNER Mentor

MC Tormenta: 'Take a Seat' Trademark Blud

MC Mentor: 'Council Estate of Mind' Skinny Man

5. INNER Threshold

MC Tormenta: 'Feds' Slick Don

MC Mentor: 'The City' Chester P

6. INNER WORLD Tests, Allies and Enemies

MC Tormenta: 'The Greatest Story Never Told' Chester P

MC Mentor: 'Bucket List' Trademark Blud

7. Approach to the INNER CAVE

MC Tormenta: 'Truth' Sam Stealth

MC Mentor: 'No Escape' Lewis Parker

8. INNER Ordeal

MC Tormenta: 'Rudeboy (Ft. Doctor) Sigma

MC Mentor: 'June - True Lies, Blue Skies Feat. Mancini' Ramson Badbonez

9. INNER Reward

MC Tormenta: 'Nuke Proof Suit' Jehst

MC Mentor: 'Clarity' The Nextmen

10. Road Back to OUTER ORDINARY WORLD, Babyloningham,

Changed MC Tormenta: 'Unstoppable' Loan feat. Juice Aleem

MC Mentor: 'Don't Drag Me In ft. Mystro' Braintax

11. INNER City Resurrection

MC Tormenta: 'Parrowdice' Klashnekoff

MC Mentor: 'Work' JME

12. Return with INNER Elixir

MC Tormenta: 'Wa Gwan' (Sivey Remix) RTKAL

MC Mentor: 'Be Your Own Hero' Verb T

Appendix 9: Slim Kid Tre Interview 2015

So, why is it a powerful tool to express your life experiences on the mic?

Sometimes men can't communicate to each other on an emotional level but when you put a mic in somebody's hand the deep stuff starts coming out, difficult stuff that's, y'know, maybe a little bit challenging to talk about man-to-man.

So why, why does the mic change that?

Well, first it starts off in your head, then when you're recording it starts off in your own world, your own room or your studio or whatever, so by the time it gets to the actual stage, that's a whole other animal 'cos you got other people there looking at you, judging you for whatever it is that is going on. So, like, I can only speak from a personal level about that and um, I've come to grips with a whole lot of *different parts of myself and um, as to where I'm able to be sincere about something.*

So, if we go back to 'Otha Fish' that was a super, um, a true story, super sincere and I was just like, really going through like this MAJOR heartbreak thing, y'know?

And if you go to 'She Said', that was another true-to-life story and um (laughs), I would just always get in trouble for being me so to speak (chuckles deeply).

So how does exposure of your 'Self' on the mic, er, you know, if you're in that vulnerable mind state, why do it?

Erm, it's just something that's in me like, um, I'm just a creative person and ah, if it's not rhyming it's through painting, art, you know? Or it's something, it's an outlet. It's like when you think about, even like yourself or any of us, there's something that...our passions scream out and the more we like, try to, you know, keep it contained – it doesn't work. It gets hotter.

And you have to just like kinda let it go, and set it free. So I used to like, sit up, um, just 'til the wee hours of the night in my grandmother's house when I was younger, writing. So like, even before – like I used to write for other people and er, it'd be like 3 or 4 in the morning and I'm still up and I gotta go to school in the morning and things like that...

How old were you then?

I was prollly about like 17, 18 or something like that. 17-18.

Had anyone role-modelled that for you?

Naah, it was just something I did.

And it's so funny cos when I was in college you know my teacher, my English teacher? She was like:

"Whoah, you're such an amazing writer!"

And I'm like: "I'm stoopid as shit! I don't know what the hell you're talking about!"

Cos like, I mean what she saw and what I saw was two different things you know like? I'm like: "Really? I'm like OK well if you THINK so."

Yeah, so it ignited a...

So, now it's like I understand what I'm doing. There were so many times where I had no idea what I'm doing...until I became more of, ah, more of, not even more of a man but just more of myself.

Yeah, like, you self-actualise don't you through the words when you get 'em out on the page you start to..

Now I'm completely present.

Yeah, yeah.

So there was also another stage in my, ah, in my life where, like my rhymes were like super abstract and it you know, I couldn't, like...in school, when I was in school I couldn't focus like, if I was taking an actual test it would take me so long to finish that fucking test. Or if I was reading a book, it'd take me so long to get through a paragraph because my mind...like, I'd read something and my imagination would just start going wild.

Right.

So, when I would write rhymes, I'd, I'd be right on point about something and then I'm like: "Oh! Look! A bird!" And then I'm like, writing some other shit. So then all my things became abstract – not because I want to but I just, I couldn't get like, I just had ADD or something, you know?

It's like, erm, unifying all the multiple realms that your mind's operating on. It's a mindfulness.

Yeah and I would go into whatever realm my mind took me to, that's where would go. But NOW, erm, I'm more grounded and I, I can really focus on getting a story where I needed it to go and I'm just, I'm just really proud of myself (laughs deeply).

You should be. You've done some amazing work. Thank you for your time Sir.

Aiiight. Thank you so much.

Blessed. Yeah nice one man.

Alright. Yeah for real.

Cheers

REFERENCES

- Adame, L. & Knudson, R. (2007) Beyond the counter-narrative: Exploring alternative narratives of recovery from the psychiatric survivor movement. *Narrative Inquiry*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233717593_Beyond_the_counter-narrativeExploring_alternative_narratives_of_recovery_from_the_psychiatric_survivor_movement [Accessed: 12 March 2016].
- Ahmadi, M. & Oosthuizen, H. (2012) Naming My Story and Claiming My Self. In: S. Hadley and G. Yancy, eds. *Therapeutic Uses of Rap and Hip-Hop*. London and New York: Routledge. 191-209.
- Allen, N. M. T. (2005) Exploring hip-hop therapy with high-risk youth. *Praxis: Where Reflection and Practice Meet*. Fall. Available at: <http://luc.edu/media/lucedu/socialwork/pdfs/praxis/Volume%205.pdf> [Accessed: February 2016].
- Baker, F. (2015) *Therapeutic songwriting*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bangerh K. (2013) Essay of 4,000 words on a 'specialist' topic related to this module critiquing the concept of writing therapy. This assignment needs to demonstrate your ability to engage with your 'specialist' topic to show a high level of understanding of the possible application and pitfalls of this area of study. You need to relate the topic to how you will work with others and include critical engagement with your own personal experience of the topic. Module 5 Assessment: Creative Writing for Therapeutic Purposes. Metanoia.
- Bangerh, K. (2015) The dreaded writer's block: A literature review of nothing. *Good Grief Kiz*, 30 October 2015. Available at: <http://goodgriefkiz.blogspot.co.uk/2015/10/the-dreaded-writers-block-literature.html> [Accessed: March 2016].
- Berger, P. L. & Luckman, T. (1966) *The social construction of knowledge*. London: Penguin.
- Bolton, G. (2001) *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development*. Los Angeles: Sage publications.
- Campbell, J. (1949) *The hero with a thousand faces*. Cleveland: World.
- Campbell, J. (1972) *Myths to live by*. New York: Viking Press.
- Combs, G. & Freedman, J. (1996) *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities*. New York: Norton. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gene_Combs2/publication/232464179_Narrative_Therapy_The_Social_Construction_of_Prefered_Realities/links/53e8ddf20cf2fb1b9b6420e2/Narrative-Therapy-The-Social-Construction-of-Preferred-Realities.pdf [Accessed: June 2017].
- Combs, G. & Freedman, J. (2012) Narrative, poststructuralism, and social justice. *The Counseling Psychologist*. 40.7.1033-1060. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000012460662> [Accessed: June 2017].
- DeCarlo, A. & Hockman, E. (2004) RAP therapy: a group work intervention method for urban adolescents. *Journal of Social Work with Groups*. 263.45-59. Available at: [Accessed: June 2017].
- Derrida, J. (2016) *Of Grammatology*. Translated by: G. C. Spivak & J. P. Butler. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

De Viggiani, N., Daykin, N., Moriarty, Y. & Pilkington, P. & Superact CIC. Live Music Now South West, Big Lottery Fund (2013) *Musical pathways: an exploratory study of young people in the criminal justice system, engaged with a creative music programme*. University of the West of England, Big Lottery Fund. Available from: <http://eprints.uwe.ac.uk/21914> [Accessed: June 2017].

Doan, R. (2016) Narrative Therapy, Postmodernism, Social Constructionism, and Constructivism: Discussion and Distinctions. *Transactional Analysis Journal*. 2016.27.2.128-133. Available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/sci-hub.cc/doi/pdf/10.1177/036215379702700208> [Accessed: June 2017].

Etherington, K. (undated) *A view of narrative inquiry*. Powerpoint Presentation. http://www.powershow.com/view/3af21b-YTBIM/A_View_of_Narrative_Inquiry_powerpoint_ppt_presentation [Accessed: May 2017].

Etherington, K. (2004a) Heuristic inquiry as a vehicle for growth and development. In *Becoming A Reflexive Researcher: Using Our Selves in Research*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: London.

Etherington, K. (2004b) Heuristic research as a vehicle for personal and professional development. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*. Nov. 2004 4.2.48-63. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247519601_Heuristic_research_as_a_vehicle_for_personal_and_professional_development [Accessed: February 2016].

Evans, S. Y. (2015) *Healing traditions in black women's writing: resources for poetry therapy*. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. 28.3. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08893675.2015.1051286> [Accessed: February 2016].

Frisch Hara, A. (2012) RAP (Requisite, Ally, Protector) and the contemporary adolescent. In: S. Hadley and G. Yancy, eds. *Therapeutic Uses of Rap and Hip-Hop*. London and New York: Routledge. 3-25.

Furman, R. & Dill, L. (2012) Poetry therapy, men and masculinities. *The Arts in psychotherapy*. 39.2.102-106.

Galvin, K.T. & Prendergast, M. (2015) *Poetic inquiry II - seeing, caring, understanding: Using poetry as and for inquiry*. Rotterdam: Sense.

Griffiths, S. (2005) The mental health benefits of arts and creativity for young African and Caribbean men. *Mental Health Review Journal*. 10.2.27-31.

Hejtmanek, K. R. (2015) *Friendship, love and hip hop: An ethnography of African American men in psychiatric custody*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hiles, D. (2001) Heuristic inquiry and transpersonal research [online article]. Available at: [Accessed October 2017]. <http://www.psy.dmu.ac.uk/drhiles/HIpaper.htm>

Hunt, C. (2000) *Therapeutic Dimensions of Autobiography in Creative Writing*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Kim, J. (2015) *Understanding Narrative Inquiry*. Sage.

Kincheloe J. (2004) Introduction: the power of the bricolage: Expanding research methods. *Rigour & Complexity in Educational Research (Conducting Educational Research)*. Columbus: Open University Press.

Ko, D. (2014) Lyrical analysis of popular and original music with adolescents, *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. 27.4, 183-192.

Levy, I. (2012) Hip hop and spoken word therapy with urban youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. 25.4, 219-224.

Levy, I. & TaeHyuk Keum, B. (2014) Hip-hop emotional exploration in men. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08893675.2014.949528> [Accessed: January 2016].

Mental Health Foundation (2015) *Fundamental Facts About Mental Health 2015*. [pdf] London: Mental Health Foundation. Available at: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-15.pdf> [Accessed: May 2017].

Moustakas, C. (1990) *Heuristic Research*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Muncey, T. (2010) Creating autoethnographies. London: Sage. Available at: <http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/creating-autoethnographies/SAGE.xml> [Accessed: March 2016].

Olson-McBride, L. & Page, T. F. (2012) Song to self: Promoting a therapeutic dialogue with high-risk youths through poetry and popular music. *Social Work with Groups*. 35.2.124-137. Available at: 10.1080/01609513.2011.603117 [Accessed: June 2017].

Payne, M. (2006) *Narrative therapy*. London: Sage.

Rogers, C. R. (1951) *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory, with chapters*. Houghton Mifflin.

Rose, T. (1993) *Black noise: rap music and black culture in contemporary America*. 1st ed.

Segalo P. (2006) The psychological power of rap music in the healing of black communities. *Muziki*. 3.1.28-35. Available at: 10.1080/18125980608538781 [Accessed: June 2017].

Short, H. (2013) Say what you say (Eminem): managing verbal boundaries when using rap in music therapy, a qualitative study. In: *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy* 3.1. Available at: <https://openmusiclibrary.org/article/1959/> [Accessed: April 2017].

Short, H. (2014) “No maths, no physics (so I spray my bars with lyrics)”: Rap/music therapy with young men at a young offender institution. *British Journal of Music Therapy*. 28.1.25-35. Available at: 10.1177/135945751402800103 [Accessed: May 2017].

Secker, J., Spandler, H., Hacking, S., Kent, L., & Shenton, J. (2007) Empowerment and arts participation for people with mental health needs. *Journal of Public Mental Health*. 6.4.14-23 <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465729200700024> [Accessed: July 2017].

SBTV. (2016) *Slick Don | Feds [Music Video]*: SBTV. [online video]. 23 June, 2016. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9HIVxL_z5M [Accessed: February 2016].

Sjollema, S. & Bilotta, N. (2016) The raw and the poignant: using community poetry in research. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. 30:1. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2016.1256466> [Accessed: August 2017]

- Speedy, J. (2008) *Narrative Inquiry and Psychotherapy*. Palgrave Macmillan Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1218/2653> [Accessed: June 2017].
- Sule, A. & Inkster, B. (2014) A hip-hop state of mind. *The Lancet. Psychiatry* 1.7.494.
- Sule, A. & Inkster, B. (2015) Kendrick Lamar, street poet of mental health. *The Lancet Psychiatry* 2.6.496-497. Available at: https://www.hiphoppsych.co.uk/pdf/kendrick_lamar_hhp_lancet_psychiatry.pdf [Accessed: June 2017].
- Suicide by children and young people in England (2016). *National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness (NCISH)*. Manchester: University of Manchester, 2016. Available at: http://research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/cmhs/research/centreforsuicideprevention/nci/reports/cyp_report.pdf [Accessed: May 2017].
- Suicide statistics report 2017* (2017) Samaritans. Available at: http://www.samaritans.org/sites/default/files/kcfinder/files/Suicide_statistics_report_2017_Final.pdf [Accessed: May 2017].
- Taragonna M. (2008) Postmodern/poststructuralist therapy. Ed. J.L. Lebow. *Twenty First Century Psychotherapies: Contemporary Approaches to Theory and Practice*. Available at: https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/jaro2012/PST450/um/Tarragona_2008_Postmodern_Therapies.pdf [Accessed: June 2017].
- The Mental Health Foundation (2015) Fundamental Facts About Mental Health 2015. London: Mental Health Foundation. Available at: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/fundamental-facts-15.pdf> [Accessed: May 2017].
- Travis Jr., R., & Deepak, A. (2011) Empowerment in context: Lessons from hip-hop culture for social work practice. *Journal of Ethnic; Cultural Diversity in Social Work*. [Online Article]. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2011.594993> [Accessed: January 2016].
- Tyson, E. (2002) Hip hop therapy: An exploratory study of a rap music intervention with at-risk and delinquent youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 15.3.131-144. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023%2FA%3A1019795911358?LI=true> [Accessed: March 2013].
- Viega, M. (2012) The hero's journey in hip-hop and its applications in music therapy. In: S. Hadley and G. Yancy, eds. *Therapeutic Uses of Rap and Hip-Hop*. London and New York: Routledge. 57-78.
- Vogler C. (2007) *The writer's journey*. 3rd ed. Studio City: Michael Wise Productions.
- Willis, P. (2002) Don't call it poetry. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*. 2.1.1-14.
- Wu Tang Clan (1993) *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* [CD]. 07863 66336-1 Loud Records.
- 300 Voices Toolkit* (2016). Time to Change. Available at: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/Time%20to%20change%20-%20300%20Voices%20Toolkit%20comp.pdf> [Accessed: May 2017].