

This volume speaks to the use of poetry in critical qualitative research and practice focused on social justice. In this collection, poetry is a response, a call to action, agitation, and a frame for future social justice work. The authors engage with poetry’s potential for connectivity, political power, and evocation through methodological, theoretical, performative, and empirical work. The poet-researchers consider questions of how poetry and Poetic Inquiry can be a response to political and social events, be used as a pedagogical tool to critique inequitable social structures, and how Poetic Inquiry speaks to our local identities and politics. The authors answer the question: “What spaces can poetry create for dialogue about critical awareness, social justice, and re-visioning of social, cultural, and political worlds?” This volume adds to the growing body of Poetic Inquiry through the demonstration of poetry as political action, response, and reflective practice. We hope this collection inspires you to write and engage with political poetry to realize the power of poetry as political action, response, and reflective practice.

Abigail Cloud is a poet and Senior Lecturer at Bowling Green State University. She is Editor-in-Chief of *Mid-American Review* and faculty advisor to *Prairie Margins*. Her first collection, *Sylph* (Pleiades, 2014), was a Lena-Miles Wever Todd Prize winner. Her research interests include Laban’s effort principles as applied to language and mortality theory.

Sandra L. Faulkner is Professor of Communication and Director of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Bowling Green State University. Her interests include qualitative methodology, poetic inquiry, and the relationships among culture, identities, and sexualities in close relationships. Her poetry appears in places such as *Literary Mama* and *damselfly*. She authored three chapbooks, *Hello Kitty Goes to College* (dancing girl press, 2012), *Knit Four, Make One* (Kattywompus, 2015), and *Postkarten aus Deutschland* (<http://liminalities.net/12-1/postkarten.html>), and a memoir in poetry, *Knit Four, Frog One* (Brill/Sense, 2014). Her latest book is *Poetic Inquiry: Craft, Method, and Practice* (Routledge). She was the recipient of the 2016 Norman K. Denzin Qualitative Research Award.

‘Poetic Inquiry as Social Justice and Political Response’ is both timely and desperately needed. One of the strongest points about the book is the excellent writers contained within—for those of us who use poetry as a methodology, a majority of the names are totally recognizable because they are well-published and understand the power of poetry in representing research. There are a wide variety of topics and approaches which is delicious for the reader—it definitely was for me! Some absolute standouts for me where Sheila Stewart, Anne McCrary Sullivan, Sandra Faulkner and Kimberly Dark. This book will have a massive impact in the field of qualitative inquiry because it exemplifies how poetic inquiry has come out from under the shadows as an alternate form of research (wherein researchers were always apologizing or explaining the method) to a primary, viable way of presenting research. All of the big issues are represented: feminism, resistance, social justice, wellbeing, war, race and identity, ecopoetics, etc. are covered. The depth and breadth of this collection makes for a concise and informed collection!

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POETIC INQUIRY AS SOCIAL JUSTICE AND POLITICAL RESPONSE

Edited by Sandra L. Faulkner, Abigail Cloud

“Poetry is not sloganeering, and when poets directly confront a particular political crisis they need to do so carefully, even warily. They rarely put forward direct solutions to problems. Instead, they offer a kind of understanding that is distinct, as well as useful, by creating a language adequate to the experience of their readers. In this sense, poetry matters because it can waken us to realities that fall into the realm of the political.” (Parini, 2008, p. xiii)

Poetic inquiry can be an active response to social issues, a political commentary, and a call to action. Poetry is political. Thus, writing, performing, and publishing poetry is important political activity. Poetry can help us shape lives in ways that we want to live; we create and tell the stories that we need to advocate for social justice. As Fisher (2009) argued, the “political task” of poetry is “a visionary one, the work of making way for new worlds and words” (p. 984). Poetry confronts social structures to engage audiences and activate poetry’s political potential; poetry engages a “political voice” (Orr, 2008, p. 416). This special issue addresses poetry’s role as a creative art that is vital in the inquiry process and presentation, a method and way to engage in important social issues.

We invite manuscripts, performances, poetry, and other presentations that engage with poetry’s potential for connectivity, political power, and evocation through methodological, theoretical, performance, and empirical work for the *Theoretical Musings* and *In-Action* sections of *Art/Research International*. Artistic pieces need to address the call through an explicit exegesis and/or description of how the work speaks to poetry and poetic inquiry as social justice.

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