

A Boy Who Quilts:
Quilting Queer Self Portraits: An Arts-Based Heuristic Inquiry

by

Zoë K. Chaytors

A Thesis submitted to the Winnipeg Holistic Expressive Arts Therapy Institute

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY DIPLOMA

© Zoë K. Chaytors, February, 2024



Research Thesis Approval Form

Student Number: 359

Student Name: Zoë K. Chayters

Program: Expressive Arts Therapy Diploma

Research Thesis Title: A Boy Who Quilts: Quilting Queer Self Portraits. An Arts-Based Heuristic Inquiry

Approval

We have read this Research Thesis and agree that it meets the academic standards for the Expressive Arts Therapy Diploma.

Advisor: Terri Robertson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terri Robertson".

Signature:

Date: 5 February, 2024

Second Reader: Conly Basham

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Conly Basham".

Signature:

Date: 2/09/24

Acknowledgments

F. Thank you for being a place where I can come out over and over again.

Love always, Jude.

Abstract

This research is the result of a desire to explore queer identities and coming out processes through creative arts, particularly the somatic experience of quilting. Queer identities and the ‘coming out’ process have been well researched across a number of disciplines - queer studies, feminist research, and art therapy - however research remains in its infancy in expressive or creative arts therapies. The basis for this research was founded in a desire to engage in a deeper and more embodied exploration of queerness both for myself and offer Expressive Arts Therapists with a nuanced understanding of how queer identities can be explored with and through non-normative creative practices. This research sits at the intersection of queer research methodologies and heuristic arts-based research. Initially, it was meant to explore how quilting could be a creative practice for individuals to develop a sense of their queer identity both internally and externally. Throughout the research process a discovery was made about the use of quilting as a way to somatically and creatively process the ‘coming out’ experience.

Key words: queer methodologies, gender studies, queer identities, coming out, gender, quilting, fiber arts, expressive arts therapy

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	1
Abstract	2
Quilting as a Queer Self-Portrait.....	6
Locating Self in Research	6
A note on Language.....	6
Literature Review	8
Quilting	9
What Makes a Quilt?	9
Quilting in Marginalized Spaces	9
Quilts as Self-Portraits	11
Limitations of Quilting.....	12
Queer Identities	12
Sex.....	13
Gender	13
Sexual Orientation	14
Queering Identities	14
Coming Out	15
The Use of Expressive Arts in Self-Exploration	16
Expressive Arts Therapy Continuum	16
Multimodal Process	18
Research Methodology	19

Queer Methodology.....	19
Heuristic Inquiry	20
Initial Engagement	20
Immersion	21
Incubation	21
Illumination	21
Explication	21
Creative Synthesis	22
Data Collection	22
Self as Subject	23
Initial Engagement	23
Immersion	24
Incubation	25
Illumination	26
Explication	27
Making my Pattern.....	28
Creative Synthesis	38
References	40

List of Figures

Figure 1. Cut Squares 2.....	29
Figure 2. Cut Squares	29
Figure 3. Boxed in by Blue.....	30
Figure 4. Shades of Blue-Boy.....	31
Figure 5. Bees	31
Figure 6. Hand Stitched	32
Figure 7. Unfinished Quilted Body Map	32
Figure 8. Left at the altar, undone.....	33
Figure 9. First Cutsvv.....	34
Figure 10. Half a map	34
Figure 11. Flower Boy.....	35
Figure 12. Boys in Blue	35
Figure 13. Finished Fine Lines	36
Figure 14. The Renovation	37
Figure 15. Stars over a beaver dam	38
Figure 16. Body map, finished for now	38

Quilting a Queer Self Portrait

For many queer people, the lived experience of queerness is negotiated throughout their lives. Our experiences of personal identities are somatic ones. Queerness lives in our bodies, our families, our communities and our cultures. Alexander Leon (as cited on CBC Radio, 2020) said that

Queer people don't grow up as ourselves, we grow up playing a version of ourselves that sacrifices authenticity to minimise humiliation and prejudice. The massive task of our adult lives is to unpick which parts of ourselves are truly us and which parts we've created to protect us.

Many 2SLGBTQIA+ adults undertake the task of “unpicking” through therapy, art, and connection to the queer community. As a “late bloomer” in the queer community, my exploration of queerness, sexuality, and gender only began through substantial time processing via expressive arts therapies. As I navigated my own experiences of queerness, particularly through quilting, I was able to engage in my own unpicking. The hope is that this research will provide insight and connection to queer therapists and other members of the queer community to engage with their coming out through creative practice.

***Locat-ing* Self in Research**

There is a gentle irony in having to locate myself in my research when, by intentional design, this study was the result of a deep desire to find/locate myself in my body, my family, and my community. By all accounts, I should have arrived at my queerness with minimal disruption. I have a queer sibling, who came out long before I did. I had queer role models, friends, colleagues, and teachers. For years, I showed up as an ally in queer spaces; allowing myself to be adjacent to my own truth. Through a particular set of intersections and privileges, I

was able to ‘pass’ in queer spaces and directly avoid experiences of direct homophobia and transphobia. In undertaking heuristic research with a lens of queer methodologies¹ I arrive at this work with lived experience of queerness that is deeply impacted by intersections of race, class, and ability. I am a light-skinned, mixed race queer person who has class, educational, and familial privilege.

Like some 40% of sexual minority populations that experience suicidal ideation or attempts (Lui et al., 2023), my youth and young adult years were characterized by mental illness and addictions. By my mid-twenties, the numbness and disconnection had become unbearable. Through a combination of personal therapy, creative and somatic practices, and deep love from my queer chosen family I began to explore my own queer identities. In Spring of 2021, I registered for a queer learn to quilt class. It was the first time I had ever publicly identified as queer, happily. This was the beginning.

I come at this research with a body knowing about my own queerness but a deep ambiguity and uncertainty about its truth, expression, or acceptance. What would I tell readers about queerness, gender, sexuality – about this piece of who I am - before I ever learned to create and quilt my stories? How can I locate myself for others, when I cannot find myself for me? Ultimately, locating myself in this research is to be understood as a continual process of *-ing*: *arriv-ing*, *locat-ing*, and *find-ing*.

A Note on Language

I use the term *queer* throughout this research in a reclaimed fashion and in reference to my own identity. Queer can, and is often used, as a positive term that is being reclaimed by a

¹ Queer methodologies can counter normative research practices, ideas or concepts that are taken for granted or the outcome of cisgender, heteronormative bodies of research. Queer methodologies allow for researchers to shift from objective observers into active subjects or participants in their studies. (Browne & Nash, 2016).

number of people in the community, particularly in the 21st century but this is after a lengthy history of it being used as a pejorative slur (Government of Canada, 2022; Peters, 2005; Worthen, 2023). I acknowledge that there is complexity and nuance about the term queer for older generations of LGBTQ+ folks who experienced the term queer as a discriminatory term that contributes to our oppression. With the advent of queer studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s during the AIDS crisis and in a number of academic disciplines, queer began to be used as a reclaimed term (Nash, 2016). It is now particularly popular among millennials as a way of self-identifying. I also engage with the term queer as a radical and disruptive way to think about and engage with colonial systems and social norms. “To queer is to seek to trouble, undo, or unfix categories” (Peters, 2005, p.102). In my writing and life, queer is an identity and a verb. Queer is working in a positive feedback loop. The more queer I feel - *identity*, the more actively I seek to queer - *verb* -the spaces and systems I am in.

I also acknowledge that it is nearly impossible to isolate a single intersection or identity and yet for this research I will attempt to do so, solely for myself. Know that queer folks who have multiple marginalized identities will understand their queerness through that reality.

Literature Review

In this section, I attempt to draw together the threads of this research and answer the question why quilting? Of all the modalities available, what is it about quilting that allows for an entry point into explorations of gender and sexuality. Quilting holds a rather tenuous and ambiguous place as either therapeutic, queer, or an expressive art and yet, it is all of these things. The following literature review will contextualize a number of aspects of this self study: quilting, queer identities, and creative arts therapies. Quilting is an art and their makers are artists (Knauer, 2019). When quilting is pulled out of the political – though important, not what this

research endeavors to explore – and into the personal we can understand quilting as a therapeutic process for the maker to explore self and identity (Knauer, 2019; Stalp 2007).

Quilting

What makes a quilt?

A quilt occupies a unique space of being both practical and sentimental (Stalp, 2007). Quilting as a creative arts therapy has two major components: the mechanical or technical skill of creating a quilt and the somatic and psychological experience of quilting. Typically and culturally, we understand quilts to be three layered fabric blankets with a top, middle, and back (Stalp, 2007). The quilt top is usually associated with the creative, or artistic, aspect of quilting; intricate patchwork designs, appliqué, or blocks are meticulously planned and sewn by quilters. The middle, or batting layer, provides warmth and comfort; it goes unseen by anyone but the quilter. The bottom layer is usually quite simple and serves to bind and hold the quilt together. The act of quilting itself refers to the careful placement of stitches, either by hand or machine, through all three layers of fabric to complete it (Knauer, 2019; Stalp, 2007).

Quilting is much more complex and nuanced than the mechanics of how a quilt comes together or what qualifies as a quilt. The process of quilting itself is full of symbolic and metaphorical meaning. Modern day quilts are patchwork designs made by cutting large pieces of fabric into smaller ones, rearranging the fabric, and then sewing it back together into a large piece again (Knauer, 2019). The specific way in which fabric is pulled apart and then comes back together is unique to its maker. In the 21st century, there are few practical reasons to quilt for much cheaper, less time consuming blankets are available through mass production, but this loses the emotional and sentimental properties that make a quilt a quilt.

Quilting in Marginalized Spaces

Quilts are also layered with personal and political meaning both in historical and contemporary settings. Stalp (2007) wrote:

Quilts are complicated cultural objects, embedded with many meanings for many people. They can inspire confusion and potentially bad judgment; celebration and joy in quilts made for newborn babies, weddings, and wedding anniversaries; excitement and fascination at newly found quilts in the case with the Gee's Bend quilts of rural Alabama; anger and sorrow in the quilt panels made for the AIDS quilt, and the like. (p.4)

Quilting is made accessible to me through a passing on, or passing down, of creative and radical narratives from gender marginalized, queer, and racialized ancestors. Quilting has long been central to the ways in which marginalized groups tell their stories, maintain archives, capture moments of despair and joy, and gather in community. The gendered nature of quilting has placed it in some feminist research circles as a site for political and activist interpretation and story (Robertson, 2014; Stalp 2007; Wiltzing, 2009). Historically, quilting has been understood as women's work; an art and craft or feminine pastime. More recent research reveals the subversive, radical and resistive nature of quilts. During the suffragette, temperance, and anti-slavery movements, women were often quilting not only to display their political views, but also to legitimize their ability to meet publicly and speak about political matters (Knauer, 2019; Robertson, 2014). There is a strong precedent for this, particularly in black communities like the Gee's Bend Quilters in Alabama. Robertson (2014), notes that quilt making, in African American communities, was used for income generation, political organization, storytelling, and advocacy. Perhaps the most well known and largest quilt to come from a marginalized community is the NAMES quilt; a quilting project which honors the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, particularly those

who died during the AIDS crisis (Knauer, 2019; Roberston, 2014; Stalp 2007). The NAMES quilt continues to grow and receive new blocks to be added; contributions are made by queer folks and people alongside in allyship alike. Some blocks commemorate the grief of losing a loved one while others celebrate the joy of being queer; all are telling a story about the people who made them and the people they loved.

Quilts as Self Portraits

Our associations and stories about quilts carry a richness and depth that spans families, chosen families, generations, and communities. The most common response people had when they learned that I was researching quilting was to tell me a story about themselves and their identity through a story about a quilt. I saw pictures, heard stories, and was given books, fabric, and quilts. Everyone has a story about quilting, whether they are the quilter themselves or not. The complex nature of how a quilt comes together speaks volumes about our inner lives and who we are. The capacity for therapeutic identity work that quilting can provide by way of self portraiture or storytelling is found in its ability to reflect pieces of ourselves back to us.

Every quilt is its own story and offers a container for its maker to convey pieces of themselves to the world (Knauer, 2019, Pham, 2023). Exploring personal identity through art is a well-documented practice (Allen, 1995; Knauer, 2019; Millen, 2019; Stalp, 2007; Pham 2023). Quilting is no exception. What quilts show us about the quilter is abstract but manages to convey a sensibility, mood, feeling, or idea (Knauer, 2019). Self-portraits are more than just capturing likeness, they have the ability to convey something about the artists' story, personality and identity and there is a freedom in quilting a self portrait as it is difficult to achieve self-resemblance (Pham, 2023). Quilting as a medium for self-portrait and identity exploration invites a depth of learning and knowing that is achieved through process: choosing fabric, colour,

and design layout are all conveying a story about the maker. Then, if quilting is used as a personal and therapeutic tool it will reflect the quilters story; quilts made for the maker say something specific about who they are. Knauer (2019) says:

Sometimes we intend these expressions to be shared and seen by others, but just as often we make our quilts for ourselves. These quilts serve as reminders to ourselves of who we are and surround us with objects that talk to us; they are more than mute materials. Each quilt is an unmistakable expression of a moment in time, a moment in the makers' life.
(p.36)

Limitations of Quilting

Quilting is a technical craft. It requires some basic know-how, basic machine sewing skills, and access to materials. I acknowledge that for many people - clients of expressive art therapists - this creative practice will exceed what they think is possible for their own skill level or not be feasible given the materials and supplies they have access to in their homes. In my own practice, I have addressed the limitations of quilting by allowing quilting to be a collaborative process. Clients are invited to co-create a quilt with me and have access to all the supplies they need in session. I either teach them the skills required or allow them to direct me through the technical skills while they maintain responsibility for the design, pace, look and feel of the quilt. In a co-collaborative process, I do not comment on their in progress work.

Queer Identities

Socially, culturally, and politically our understanding and acceptance of queer identities have been formed by colonization, white supremacy, patriarchal, and carceral systems. The current matrix of understanding around sex, sexuality, and gender makes specific assumptions and expectations about identity that begins with a sex assigned at birth, which leads to gender,

and then determines sexual orientation. However, more recent research and cultural shifts are changing how people understand the definitions of and links between sex, gender, and sexual orientation.

Sex

As a basic term, sex or sex assigned at birth refers to the primary sexual characteristics identified at birth (Statistics Canada, 2021). Biological sex is commonly, and culturally, categorized as male, female, or intersex (Statistics Canada, 2021) and this categorization is based on chromosomes, internal organs, and external genitalia. Predominantly, this assignment is based on external genitalia. The assignment of a person's biological sex is typically done at birth by a doctor in Western cultures (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Sexual characteristics are culturally linked to specific gender expectations. Infants born with female genitalia are assumed to be girls and infants born with male genitalia are assumed to be boys. However, the assignment of biological sex does not determine nor is it necessarily linked to gender or sexual orientation (The Trevor Project, n.d.).

Gender

There are a multitude of ways that people both experience and identify their gender. Gender identity refers to the ways in which people have an internal sense of gender; this could include some common identities: cisgender, transgender, non-binary, agender, and two-spirit (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Gender is often deeply felt and can exist somewhere on the gender spectrum of man, woman, non-binary, all genders, or no genders (Statistics Canada, 2021). Our internal sense of gender is not linked to our biological sex or our sexual orientation (Statistics Canada, 2021). Our sense of being gendered or gender is an internal experience that is known in

each individual's body. Looking at a person does not give us clues about their felt sense of gender (The Trevor Project, n.d.).

Gender expression is the term that refers to how people present their gender to the world (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Gender expression can be done through clothing, hair, makeup, body language, and voice intonation (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation refers to the different ways and degrees to which people experience romantic, sexual, emotional, and physical attraction toward other people (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Some common sexual orientations include: heterosexuality, homosexuality, asexuality, bisexuality, and pansexuality (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Queer Identities

Queer identities are a complex matrix of ways in which people experience their sex, sexuality, and gender; both internally and externally. The term queer, in reference to personal or community identity, is an umbrella term that refers to many different diverse or non-dominant sexual orientations and genders. Terminology within queer communities is continuously evolving and currently is most often referred to through the shortened acronym 2SLGBTQIA+ which refers to 2-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and any other ways that folks chose to self-identify their sexual orientation and/or gender (Statistics Canada, 2021). Queer as an identity can refer to many ways that people understand themselves: sexual identity, gender identity, queer perspectives, connections to the queer community, and/or a political, confrontational, or activist way of being (Worthen, 2023).

In 1980, queer theorist of color, Adrienne Rich authored "Compulsory Heterosexuality and the Lesbian Existence" which discussed how heterosexuality has been imposed and violently

maintained through a system of patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy. Rich (1980) explains the ways in which compulsory heterosexuality was so insidiously upheld that it appears to be the natural way of thinking about self; we organize ourselves, relationships, families, communities, and societies around heterosexuality without questioning it. Her work was meant to unsettle the ways that women, in particular, think about their existence on a lesbian continuum. The lesbian continuum invites women of all sexual orientations to reinvest their personal and political energy into the bonds of love that can exist between women regardless of romantic or erotic attraction (Rich, 1980).

There is an invitation in more modern queer theory to build off Rich's work and consider the concept of compulsory gender (Cole & Cate, 2008), which is drawing a parallel to many of the same systems that have enforced normative gender standards. A transgender continuum invites a way of thinking where all gender is seen as a performance or an external representation of how we feel inside. So, if all gender is a performance, then there are equally invested allies in butch and femme lesbians who are performing gender without considering transgender identities as deeply tied to sex as a biological function (Cole & Cate, 2008).

Differentiating and understanding sex, sexual orientation, and gender are useful tools not only to deepen the ways in which we can know ourselves but also to further establish political queerness. A further step is to place sex, sexuality, and gender on a continuum that invites a shared connection and investment across queer identities.

Coming Out

In a culture that enforces and assumes cis-normativity and heterosexuality as the default, queer folks are continually faced with the complex decision of making their identities known to other people. Colloquially, 'coming out' refers to the voluntary act of disclosing our sexual

orientation or gender identity to other people (Statistics Canada, 2021). The process of coming out is something to continually negotiate with. In new settings, with new people, queer folks must continually make decisions about who and when to share these pieces of their identity with. Coming out is a deeply individual decision with no right way to do it (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Who and when people choose to come out is dependent on a variety of factors: comfort, time, environment, safety, location, and support available (The Trevor Project, n.d.). Coming out can be a lifelong process for queer folks as they often find themselves in situations where they may choose to assert their queerness again, for example when meeting new people. As such, coming out isn't a one-time event, but rather a continual story that shifts and changes depending on each person's journey and context. It can be further nuanced as queer folks make ongoing or new discoveries about their queer identities.

The Use of Expressive Arts in Self Exploration in

Expressive Arts Therapy Continuum

To better understand quilting and locate it in the field of expressive arts therapies, I draw on the framework of the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC) (Hinz (2008, 2020). The ETC framework acts as a guide for therapists to better understand the theoretical and developmental potential of different media, materials, and methods when working with clients in arts-based therapies (Hinz, 2020). This framework is broken down into four levels of information processing that are typical when experiencing our art-making experience from an embodied place. It can help therapists and clients frame an individual session and an overall therapeutic treatment plan. Hinz (2020) says, "ETC organizes media interactions into a developmental sequence of information processing and image formation from simple to complex" (p.4). Despite the fact that the continuum is organized in a hierarchical design, movement between different

levels or experiences in any of the processing functions are vital parts of experiencing the therapeutic possibilities of expressive therapies.

Initial information is processed at the kinesthetic and/or sensory level. Information that is gathered here is non-verbal and may come in the form of rhythm, touch, or other sensory input (Hinz, 2020; Fidyk et al, 2020). This is the simplest form of information processing. The next level of information processing in the continuum is perceptual and/or affective. Information at the perceptual and affective levels may contain some formal elements of visual representation and have strong emotive qualities found in the imagery (Hinz, 2020; Fidyk et al, 2020).

Art-making at this level may have images or creative outputs that have a more concrete form or are identifiable. The third level of information processing is done at a cognitive and symbolic level. This involves a complex processing experience that may involve meaning-making, intuitive understandings of symbols, and taking cognitive action (Hinz, 2020; Fidyk et al, 2020). The fourth and final level of the expressive therapies continuum is the creative level which sits somewhat outside of the hierarchy. Hinz (2020) notes that it is possible to experience the healing capacity of creative processing at any level or in a combination of levels of the ETC hierarchy.

Within each level of the ETC and in each way of information processing the art-maker can experience what Hinz (2020) and other researchers (Fidyk et al, 2020; Malchiodi, 2020) refer to as emergent and therapeutic or healing functions. The therapeutic function acts as an avenue towards healing or resolution from a previous wound or experience while the emergent function is what often gives way to different or higher levels of information processing (Hinz, 2020).. Both the healing and emergent functions are important aspects of the therapeutic journey.

When applied to quilting there is a deeper understanding to be gained about the therapeutic capacity of quilt-making. Hinz (2020) does note that despite increasing use in

therapeutic spaces, fibre or textile arts may still be considered unconventional materials. Though it may be unconventional, fibre arts can be deliberately and intentionally used to support individual and collective therapeutic experiences; this may be done through the use of guided imagery, creative writing, and storytelling (Collier, 2011 as cited in Hinz, 2020). This is foundational to my research and heuristic study as it positions quilt making as not *just* a visual art, but an expressive arts practice. Quilting can be experienced through each of the different aspects and levels of ETC and like many expressive therapies has both healing and emergent functions.

Multimodal Process

One of the ways in which expressive arts delineates itself from more traditional art therapy is through its engagement in multimodal or intermodal processes. A number of different researchers have offered ways of thinking about a multimodal approach as one that integrates all or a number of different art-making practices into a single session or therapeutic arc (Rogers, 1993; Levine & Levine, 1999 as cited in Malchiodi, 2003, 2007). A multimodal expressive arts process may include a range of creative or artistic practices, in which the client moves between modalities within a session or as part of their overall therapeutic process. In the field of expressive art therapy, Estrella (2020) speaks about the multimodal approach as one that uses multimedia in three different ways: using the art in sequence, simultaneously, or transitioning in between. The multimodal approach also emphasizes the embodied nature of expressive arts therapy. Creative processes or art-making that help clients engage with their body knowing can be accessed at a deeper level by engaging with a multiplicity of art-making practices in a single session (Malchiodi 2020).

The multimodal and intermodal process is mentioned here due to the risk of my heuristic study remaining firmly in the realm of visual art therapy. In the aforementioned research, fibre arts need intentional thought to bring it into the expressive art realm. For the purposes of my research the multimodal process was engaged simultaneously by typically listening to music while designing, sewing, ironing, quilting, and stitching; and transitioning between free writing or journaling before and after quilting sessions.

Research Methodology

Queer Methodology

Queer writers and researchers have, for decades, been exploring what it means *to queer* (v.) academia and academic writing. How can we resist and push back against normative academic standards which are part of the system that upholds white supremacy, colonization, and heteronormativity? Certainly, in undertaking queer, somatic creative research it became part of the process to understand how queer methodologies might be included or layered with heuristic inquiry. “Queer methodologies seek to expand, not only representation for non-normative individuals but also ways for representing them and their complexities and paradoxes,” writes Glasby (2019, p. 39). Her work is centered around an approach to research and queer projects that values ambiguity, failure and lack of adherence to normative academic standards (2019). With her own writing classes, Glasby has designed a research project that is guided by the ethos and rhetoric of many marginalized communities with a particular lens that sees creativity as an imperative to queer writing methodologies. In particular, the following is offered as a guide:

1. Resist mastery
2. Challenge yourself to fail
3. Compose as a composer, not a critic

4. Trust me that play is okay. (Rhodes, 2015 as cited in Glasby, 2019)

These four principles are the larger framework that holds my research, my quilting, and my body. Throughout the process, I re-oriented myself to my knowing and my work by returning to the queer methodology; one which offers marginalized bodies a more expansive, authentic space to explore (Glasby, 2019).

Heuristic Inquiry

Knowing that a queer methodology would be foundational, and frankly inescapable for my research, I began to explore other research methodologies that would support personal inquiry through creative means. What could I learn about queerness - for myself and others - through quilting? How could my lived experience become part of collective knowledge? Could my research prioritize therapeutic benefits for myself and academic purposes as a fringe benefit? Heuristic research, developed by Moustakas, is a process where the researcher maintains a strict inner focus that both answers questions and allows for personal transformation. "Heuristic research describes the process of discovering the human condition within an autobiographical framework" (Potash, 2019, p. 125). Heuristic inquiry follows a six-phase research process which is easily modified to utilize an arts-based approach to research.

Initial Engagement

Initial engagement speaks to the push, pull, or openness to explore our inner world within the context of academic research. Kenny (2012) citing Moustakas (1990), notes that this is when personal experience will be used as a catalyst for inquiry and change with the right conditions. Potash identifies initial engagement as the passionate drive toward research with both personal and social meaning for the researcher.

Immersion

The immersion phase of inquiry asks the researcher to live, fully embodied, into their question. Kenny (2012) writes about this as an invitation to remain with whatever phenomenological experience arises as we are immersed in our questions. Potash writes that it is to “be on intimate terms with the question - to live it and grow in knowledge and understanding of it” (p.28).

Incubation

Researchers enter the incubation phase when they are able to recognize the value of retreating from the intense and focused attention they have been giving to their work (Kenny, 2012). According to Potash (2019), there is an understanding that knowledge is still being gained and expanded upon in the time of retreat.

Illumination

The stepping back in the incubation phase may make space for an ‘aha’ moment or for more clarity to be gained in finding the distance from the question, also known as the illumination phase. It is here that researchers are able to gain new insight as their perception of the experience changes (Kenny, 2012). As new information or knowing is made conscious, a different or more congruent internal framework of understanding is made possible (Potash, 2019).

Explication

The explication phase of heuristic inquiry involves returning to our work and beginning to make meaning out of it. Researchers look at what has arisen from both the process and attempt to understand what it might mean (Kenny, 2012). In this phase, we look at what has been made

more clear or conscious to us, through our art (Potash, 2019). The new internal framework begins to have contact with the outside world.

Creative Synthesis

The creative synthesis phase is tasked with making coherent or congruent what was found. The experiences and knowledge that emerged in the research are brought together (Kenny, 2012). In an arts-based heuristic inquiry, these emergent narratives may take on another creative form (Potash, 2019). Synthesis will offer a response to the question, though not always the expected one.

Data Collection

Collecting data for a self-study founded in queer, heuristic methodologies required some framing or boundary setting around data collection. I used quilting, music, and journaling as my primary way of processing and exploring the questions of *who am I and what does it mean for me to be queer?* I used a combination of self-guided creative time and engaged with guided and specific creative support. In spring 2022, I attended a quilting class called *A Quilt is Something Human* run by Marlee Grace, a queer quilter and artist. This class provided me with structured time for quilting and an opportunity to develop specific quilting skills needed to technically complete a quilt. All of my quilting sessions were founded in Pat Allen's (1995) work "Art is a Way of Knowing." She identifies several helpful aspects that support the art-making process: space, music, materials, time, intention, and attention (1995). I had a dedicated quilting 'studio' or space in my home for the time spent in the immersion phase of research. This space was left intact for the duration of my research as a way to welcome images and make it easier to drop into the process (Allen, 1995). I could come to quilting at any time and with great ease. To enhance

my overall engagement with the space, I created and often cycled between three musical playlists I created, depending on whether I needed relaxation, play, or grounding (Allen, 1995).

Materials required a more technical approach with the inclusion of a sewing machine and common technical quilting materials such as thread, cutting board, rotary cutter, scissors, safety pins, basting tape, iron, and ironing board. Over time, material shopping and collection became their own unique part of a quilting session. Similarly, decisions around which fabrics to use and how to piece them together became part of learning and understanding materials from a technical perspective.

I spoke about my quilts, quilting process and the experience that emerged in my journaling frequently with my own psychotherapist. Our work both pre-dated and post-dated this research. They often encouraged me to look deeper, find meaning and symbols in both my quilts and my experience of quilting.

Self as Subject

Initial Engagement

The primary questions before this research were 1) Who am I? 2) What does it mean to be queer to me? 3) Where does queerness live in my body? The basis for this research was founded in a desire to engage in a deeper and more embodied exploration of queerness both for myself and for the client populations that I am frequently working with. By both chance and design, I have worked primarily serving members of the queer community in both therapeutic and social work settings. Therapeutic work is demanding for both clients and therapists. As I began to do more work with clients around their exploration of sexuality and gender, I noticed a significant increase in my countertransferential responses, this served as the initial cue that there was more for me to learn about myself in service of both self and others. I hoped that by

engaging in this research I could offer insight, and perspective, and develop a shared sense of empathy with clients and other practitioners (Potash, 2019) around the challenge of navigating identity exploration and expression.

This work, though personal, felt compelling and needed in the professional sphere of expressive arts therapies. The literature review revealed a limited number of resources for therapists to work with sexual and gender-diverse clients and in particular from the lived experience of queer therapists. I hope that this research will contribute to a growing sense of understanding for all therapists to work with sexual and gender-diverse clients and offer insight into an underutilized or unconventional creative therapy in quilting (Hinz, 2020).

Immersion

The immersion phase of research lasted for seven months from May 2022 until January 2023. Each quilting session began with intentional framing to help me bridge into and out of a time of deep inner focus. Following the lead from Allen (1995), I would light a candle, start my quilting playlist, and review my creative methodology tenants (Glasby, 2019) and would then remind myself of the questions before me or my intention (Allen, 1995).

I wrote: *Resist Mastery*. I am a beginner quilter. I do not need to be skilled to quilt. There is no aesthetic expectation. I am queer enough to do and write queer research. I do not need to be more queer to do this. *Challenge Yourself to Fail*. It is okay if I do not finish any quilts. It is okay if I don't find the answer to the question. *Compose as a Composer, Not a Critic*. My art, my story, my sexuality, and my gender are for me. There is no standard to meet. *Trust Me That Play is Okay*. I can play with fabric, colour, and design. I can play with myself and other people. I can play with gender. (2022)

Quilting sessions included any combination of design, fabric layout, machine sewing, basting, machine or hand quilting, and binding. Quilting is a time-intensive and often time-sequential creative form with some commonly agreed-upon conventions (Stalp 2012, Knauer 2019, Pham 2023). To ‘finish’ a quilt all of the required steps must be completed in order; for this reason, it was not uncommon for a quilting session to include no sewing. Instead, it was often the case that the creative process was organized around selecting fabric, ironing, cutting, designing, and arranging quilting layouts. I would conclude each quilting session with time for journaling and written reflection or self-witnessing.

During the immersion stage, I was also intensely involved in personal psychotherapy; attending weekly sessions, and leaned extensively into dream journaling and extended periods of solitude in nature to help integrate and make sense of my quilting (and queer) experiences. This also allowed me to notice significant shifts that were happening in my body as a result of embracing an embodied approach to quilting.

Incubation

The walls of my house are covered in quilts. It’s nearly inescapable. My kitchen table hasn’t been used for its true function in months; the sewing machine is always there and the chairs are draped with a combination of finished and unfinished quilts. I trip over the ironing board daily. In January 2023, I wrote: *I need a break; ten months is a long time to be stuck with myself. I am starting to hate quilting as much as I hate nature. It feels like it is never-ending to be with me so intensely and the truth and to have to constantly look at it. Mirrors everywhere. I don’t even know what I am looking at anymore.* I reached the point of needing to retreat and step back from this type of work (Potash, 2019). It is hard to separate yourself from the research and the work when it lives inside your body. I notice I am not the same person anymore. My

relationships are suffering, I am tired all the time, and it is no longer sustainable to work, attend school, be with family, and find out who I am. While I can pack away the unused fabric, pins, ironing board, and iron; the sewing machine stays in its spot on my kitchen table. Each day I grapple with the guilt of not doing enough or being able to quilt anymore and I remind myself that I can stay away from quilting and the truth for as long as I need. There are three instances during incubation where I return to quilting. Each time I am hand quilting, working on the same project. I do none of my usual rituals or post-quilting reflection, I simply let it be part of the fabric of my life and move on.

Illumination

I am at a stalemate. The expectations of academia weigh on me daily. I know I should be well into the illumination stage of my research. Something should be clearer to me. Initially, the time set aside for incubation was intended to be six weeks. Months tick by and I wonder if I have even done the incubation stage or just lived in blissful ignorance. What I expected to find is a self-portrait that answers the question ‘Who am I?’ What emerges in my research is anxiety and ambiguity about coming out. I begin to see a pattern arise that speaks to the distress I feel about endings. Coming out feels like an ending; as though once I do, I will be stuck in this identity and this place for the rest of my life. The cultural expectations about coming out as having ‘arrived’ at a final conclusion about who I am, worry me. I feel frozen and stuck. Like I cannot move forward or commit to this version of myself. What if I get my gender or sexuality wrong? Or more importantly, what if I find a truer version of myself somewhere down the line? Coming out anxieties have always plagued me. And yet still, it does not resonate with me and I cannot write about it. I wonder if all this research and quilting was for not.

It's early fall and I sit in a quiet library in the mountains, all my quilts laid out in front of me with a stack of reflective journals next to them when I find the thread that links this research together with my life. I look closely and a story starts to emerge. There are no answers, only questions: Do I belong here? Can I be fully and completely me here? Can I hold not knowing or ambiguity about who I am? Can I allow myself to always be 'in progress' and unfinished? Can I let others see me? Can I be two things at once? Can I know and not know at the same time? It becomes less of a question about finding myself or knowing myself. Like many others, perhaps I have always known - in my body - what is true. Instead of offering answers, quilting is begging for the vulnerability to be seen as I am: unfinished, messy, bright, connected, warm, a piece of a whole, always finding myself. The anxiety I feel around 'coming out' is reflective of a fear that I might change or that I am more nuanced than a single story.

Explication

August 25, 2023

I don't understand how to be two things at once. Or maybe I don't understand how to be more than one thing at once? How can I want this and that or be this at that? How can two things be true at the same time? I sit on the couch with my legs tucked under me, like always, listening to their dream and think my god I want that too .. how can dread and excitement live in the exact same spot in my belly? How can my cheeks be flushed and a cold shiver runs down my spine?

I wish I was more queer and less queer. I wish it was easier to explain to people that I'm a boy who is sometimes a girl and a girl who is sometimes a boy. I wish I could belong to everyone and no one. I wish there was a very clear script for who I am supposed to be and how I am supposed to move or no pattern at all. I wish

I want to stay separate. Hidden. Out of site. Neutral. Unassuming. And at the same time I feel like screaming. Why can't you see me? Why don't you get it? How are you missing this? I remember a Therapist telling me once that I have eyes that are seeking, roaming, longing for contact but never able to settle. Two things at once.

Making My Pattern

The patterns are the hardest part about quilting, I find. A thousand different colours, designs, fabrics, and ways this could come together. Even harder when I commit to improvisational quilting; no neat and easy pattern for me to follow. No box to contain me or my work. I sit in my studio space. I pull out all the fabric I own. I wander up and down the aisles at FabricLand, everything and nothing looks like it belongs. I could make anything. I could be anything. Ears ringing, I feel overwhelmed. It's like I am frozen. I stare helplessly at the possibilities. Without any map to follow, expectations from other people, or pressure to be anything other than myself I am lost. I don't seem to understand how any of these fabrics or colours will come together in a cohesive and clear piece. I move cut squares back and forth, back and forth. How come I am the only one who doesn't know how to do this?

September 22, 2022

My body is being crushed. My limbs feel heavy. I am so confused. Closed my eyes today as I sat surrounded by all this fabric. I sit for 45 minutes and nothing comes. I want to cry. My arms wouldn't move, I couldn't see a single pattern emerging. Nothing fits. Everything is wrong. I have to do something. I can't wallow in this abyss forever. By themselves, some of the fabric is beautiful. I feel so certain that in the hands of anyone else, they would be able to make something beautiful. I feel so worried that I'll wreck these. How do I start? How do I move? How do I get what I see in my head into this space?



Figure 1. Cut Squares 2

October 15, 2022

CHAOS

NOISE,

UNCLEAR,

OVERWHELMING,

MESSY,

LOUD,

DISASTER!!

I know I am not supposed to judge my art.

This process is not about being technically proficient. All I can see is chaos and mess.



Figure 2. Cut Squares

Someone who doesn't know what they are doing or who they are. It seems too messy, even for me to look at. At least being lost felt familiar, safe. What do I do now with an image that I don't like to see? What message could be hiding in this whirlwind of colour and noise? I am stuck at this stage for a long time. Some sewing done, big squares made small, squares made bigger. I leave the blocks neatly spaced out from one another. Moving them into new arrangements. I seam rip and resew; creating something new from something old. Finding a more true version of how these pieces are meant to colour. My body relaxes, slows down as I hear the gentle hum of the sewing machine.

October 22, 2022

Blue like the ocean.

Blue like the sky.

Blue is for boys.

Blue boxes holding colorful insides.

I like blue.

Stained Glass. Through the looking glass.

Double-sided glass. Glass is a mirror. Do you see



Figure 3. Boxed in by Blue



Figure 4. Shades of Blue-Boy

me? Am I pockets of colour in neatly squared-off edges? Am I more palatable like this? Looking at this is easier to understand. Clean lines, a rhythm, and a pattern I know. This is often what it feels like. A burst of colour, joy, love, excitement and aliveness on the inside. Outside, is neat and tidy. Contained by boxes. This is me.

Sewn Together

Quilting is about creating, building, allowing what is inside of me to come to the outside. When I look at my quilts I can hear the music of the sewing machine.

The gentle hum as I piece together bits of myself. I wonder who I will find if I finish a piece. I wonder if it will matter as much when I love the person that I am when I quilt. I come to my sewing machine often now, in all sorts of states: happy, sad, joyful, full or rage. The rhythmic push and pull of fabric helps me to breathe.

May 24, 2022

Happy Birthday to you.

Happy Birthday to you.

Happy Birthday my little bee

Happy Birthday to you.

Buzz.



Figure 5. Bees



Figure 6. Hand stitched.

June 19, 2023

I sat and hand stitched in the living room with J this evening. I taught them the basics under-over-under-over-under-over. I am so at home here, which surprises me. We make mistakes as we sew, thread getting caught in knots and not pulling through cleanly and I hardly notice. I think I feel scared to sit in both worlds, to have this and to not have this. To know it is fleeting.

October 27, 2023

I don't know what happens when I quilt like this. I started to cry at one point and was in awe with how much I love THIS person. I am so smart, funny, brave, and confident. Everything felt easy tonight. Just like my dreams, he showed up, showed himself, stayed awhile while we stitched us back together again. Surgery for the soul, stitching lost pieces of myself back together again. I am tethered. I want to do a big cream border all around to contain him. It's so soothing to get lost in a quilt. Rhythmic. It feels like my body is being rocked to sleep at times. Gentle swaying, I feel perfectly



Figure 7. Unfinished Quilted Body Map

suspended. Not light or heaving, just .. aware. I know where my body begins and ends. I feel a sense of mastery and control that lets me breathe fully into my belly. I want to laugh.

Raw Edges

October 28, 2022

I need to buy a seam ripper.

There are more unfinished quilts than there are finished ones. Hems left jagged. Held together with safety pins. I am so raw from this work. Hands and fingers are dry, cracked and bleeding. I feel so alive and so on edge. Everything sits at the surface. When I sit to quilt I am both elated and in tears. I watch as pieces slowly start to come together in finished pieces and reckon with the surge of pride and a sense of loss. Joy and uncertainty sit side by side.



Figure 8. Left at the altar, undone.

November 14, 2022

Cut 24 12'x6' pieces for my second 'thesis' quilt this evening. My fingers ache, Benny kept jumping up on the table and I would have to start over again. and again. and again. so frustrating. I'm so angry but I'm not allowed to be. sitting here crying now. I yelled at him and I feel so bad. He's just a baby. I love quilting and it makes my whole body tune in and I can't be lost elsewhere in the world. I hate it when he



Figure 10. Half a map



Figure 9. First Cuts

*privacy,
no space,
no freedom. I don't know why quilting makes me so emotional. I never cry usually.*

These unfinished pieces tell a story about how easy it is to 'know', to start, to begin. And I am overwhelmed by how scary it seems to solidify them. Can I understand them differently? Needles poked through the centre of projects; a placeholder of sorts. Unfinished pieces are small notes that say you can come back here and pick up where you left off. You are allowed to revise yourself. Edit yourself. Change



Figure 11. Flower Boy

yourself. Become more of who you are. Do they say this is still open for revision, changes, additions and subtractions. Do they allow me to be in progress? That is what so much of my being feels like these days. Unfinished and in progress, with more questions than answers.

November 5, 2022

I think I would have liked to be a flower boy at their wedding. Bright blue pants and a floral shirt. Flowers in my hair.

December 3, 2022

Contained and growing. Safe to expand. I am safe here. It's okay if I don't know exactly how or when it will come together. This one feels like me.

An unfinished quilt leaves lots of room to grow. A container that is just strong enough to hold me and give me space to keep expanding. Instead of seeing gaps, spaces or voids, I see space to add and to become bigger.



Figure 12. Boys in Blue

December 28, 2022

Boys all dressed in blue.

I don't know how to be

Blue boy

Boy blue.

Little.

On Display

Coming out means letting myself be seen, letting myself be on display. I am self-conscious. I hold my breath each time someone comes over and walks past one of my quilts hanging on the wall. Each time they walk past a piece of me, available for them to see. I am always waiting for the critique; comments about misshapen edges, crooked lines, and



Figure 13. Finished Fine Lines

uneven stitching, but they never come. Instead, I hear things like “beautiful”, “I love this one!”, “You made this?” Do they know they are talking about me?

March 15, 2023

They came into the house today and said wow, it's beautiful. I could feel my vision blur, my jaw get tight. I don't think they know how hard it is to hear such loving things about myself. I don't think they even know they are talking about me. Or maybe they do. I can hear my therapist in my head imploring me to stay. Tap. Breath. See if you can hold it. See if you can hold being seen

here and now. I wanted to cry. Hard to believe they could SEE me and then follow up with a comment like beautiful.



Figure 14. The Renovation

I touch my quilts each time I walk by them, marveling at their softness. I made these. This is me. They hang on my walls, are draped over the banister, and are tossed messily on the arm of the couch. I am surrounded by pieces of myself. Sometimes I see the flaws, but mostly I see and feel the bigger picture, a snapshot of who I am/who I was in a moment in time. Quilting is an invitation to explore myself through touch. I cannot touch these pieces of myself without also receiving their softness and warmth.

December 15, 2022

I added the border to 'The Renovation' tonight. Cream with white butterflies, all around the outside. SO BEAUTIFUL. I can't stop touching her, unfolding at her, looking at her. I cannot believe that I DID THIS. I did all of it. Picked the fabrics, cut my own squares, laid my own pattern, stitched each one together. If all quilts are a self-portrait, then this is me and I'm really into it. This quilt holds all the stories of the last 4 weeks - daily life, joy, frustration, peace, eating so much pizza and toast, being so tired, being so in love. All these stories ALL MY STORIES stitched together.

Creative Synthesis

Figure 15. Stars over a beaver dam.

moving across the sky. It's like this big sheet moves right and as it does more and more stars are exposed. revealed. seen. I'm where I am supposed to be.

This quilt hangs unassumingly on the wall beside the fireplace. I see the complexity of being more than just two things. I feel the memory coming out again. Of sitting in the dark - safe and scared, restricted and expanded. Two boys on a beaver dam. Sometimes, I see stars. Sometimes, I see tears. There is space for both.

February 28, 2023

Timing is its own neat thing. I haven't thought about quilts or gender much these days. Walked down to the lake last night zigzagging across the snow and ice. Quiet for a long time before I worked up the courage to say that sometimes I'm a boy and my name is Jude. I don't know if I'm numb because I'm cold or scared or excited or happy. I feel like a little kid and an adult all at once. The clouds were



Figure 16. Body Map, finished for now

I see an inner world that is rich, full of color, living, breathing and true. The shape of a person, an identity coming together. The edges are raw still, with space to grow. Finally, the insides and the outside feel like they match.

References

- Allen, P. B. (1995). *Art is a way of knowing: A guide to self-knowledge and spiritual fulfillment through creativity*. Shambhala Publications.
- Browne, K. & Nash, C. J. (2016). Queer methods and methodologies: An introduction. In K. Browne and C. J. Nash (Eds.), *Intersecting queer theories and social science research* (pp. 1-23). Routledge.
- CBC/Radio Canada. (2020, February 7). “queer people don’t grow up as ourselves”: Activist’s viral tweet inspires others searching for identity | CBC Radio. CBCnews.
<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/tapestry/out-of-the-closet-and-down-the-aisle-1.5456305/queer-people-don-t-grow-up-as-ourselves-activist-s-viral-tweet-inspires-others-searching-for-identity-1.5456340>
- Cole, E. R., & Cate, K. L. (2008). Compulsory gender and transgender existence. [WSQ Women’s Studies Quarterly](#) 36(3):279-287. DOI: [10.1353/wsqr.0.0088](https://doi.org/10.1353/wsqr.0.0088)
- Estrella, K. (2023). The integrative process of expressive arts therapy. In C. A. Malchiodi (Ed.), *Handbook of expressive arts therapy* (pp. 81-97). Guilford.
- Fidyk, A., Krahn, M., Balinska-Ourveda, V., Jacobsen, K., & Brooks-Starks, A. (2020). Trauma-sensitive pedagogy & practice newsletter 1. Community engagement with pre-service teachers. *Art|Research International: A Transdisciplinary Journal*, 5(2), 452-460. <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/ari/index.php/ari/article/view/29582/22004>
- Glasby, H. (2019). Making it queer, not clear: Embracing ambivalence and failure as queer methodologies. In W. P. Banks, M. B. Cox, & C. Dadas (Eds.), *Re/orienting writing studies: Queer methods, queer projects* (pp. 24–41). Utah State University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.7330/9781607328186-003>

- Hinz, L. D. (2008). *Expressive therapies continuum: A framework for using art in therapy*. Routledge. DOI: 10.1080/09612020903138351
- Hinz, L. D. (2020). *Expressive therapies continuum: A framework for using art in therapy* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Kenny, C. (2012). *The field of play: A guide for the theory and practice of expressive arts therapy*. Atropos Press.
- Knauer, K. (2019). *Why we quilt: Contemporary makers speak out about the power of art, activism, community, and creativity*. Storey Publishing.
- Liu, L., Batomen, B., Pollock, N. J., Contreras, G., Jackson, B., Pan, S., & Thompson, W. (2023). Suicidality and protective factors among sexual and gender minority youth and adults in Canada: a cross-sectional, population-based study. *BMC public health*, 23(1), 1469. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-16285-4>
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2003). *Handbook of art therapy*. Guilford Press.
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2007). *The art therapy sourcebook* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2020). *Trauma and expressive arts therapy. Brain, body and imagination in the healing process*. Guilford Press.
- Millen, M. (2019). *Exploring gender identity and sexuality through portraiture and mixed media*. In B. McWilliam, B. Harris, D. Trottier, & K. Long (Eds). *Creative Arts Therapies and the LGBTQ Community* (pp 201-216). Jessica Kinglsey.
- Peters, W. (2005). Queer identities: Rupturing identity categories and negotiating meanings of Queer. *Canadian Woman Studies Les Cahiers De La Femme*, 24(2). <https://cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/view/6124>

- Pham, H. K. (2023). A patchwork of selves: Exploring identity through quilt-making. In C. Z. Goering, H. K. Pham, K. Hackett-Hill, & S. French (Eds.), *A primer on arts integration: Strategies, lessons, and collective wisdom of teacher leaders* (pp. 61–68). Information Age Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1108/979-8-88730-276-8-007>
- Potash, J. S. (2019). Heuristic inquiry in arts-based research. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research* (pp. 124–141). Guilford Press.
- Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs*, 5(4), 631–660. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/493756>
- Robertson, K. (2014). Quilts for the twenty-first century: Activism in the expanded field of quilting. In J. Jefferies, H. Clark, & D. Wood Conroy (Eds.), *Handbook of textiles* (pp. 197–210). Bloomsbury.
- Rogers, N. (1993). *The creative connection: Expressive arts as healing*. Science and Behavior Books.
- Stalp, M. C. (2007). *Quilting: The fabric of everyday life*. Berg Publishers.
- Statistics Canada. (2021). *What we heard report. Public consultation on gender and sexual diversity statistical metadata standards*. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/media/1582>
- The Trevor Project. (n.d.). *Understanding sexual orientation and gender identity*. <https://www.thetrevorproject.org>
- Witzling, M. (2009) Quilt Language: towards a poetics of quilting. *Women's History Review*. 18 (4), 619-637. DOI: 10.1080/09612020903138351
- Worthen, M. (2022). Queer identities in the 21st century: Reclamation and stigma. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. 49. 101512. 10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101512