Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning

Canadian — Multidisciplinary — Peer-Reviewed — Open Access

ENGAGED SCHOLAR JOURNAL:
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND LEARNING

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Essays

Identifying Barriers faced by Ottawa Somali Youth in Accessing Post-secondary and Vocational Opportunities: An Example of Community-Based Participatory Research

Adje van de Sande, Tara McWhinney, Katherine Occhiuto, Jennifer Colpitts, Ismail Hagi-Aden, Ahmed Hussein, Zoey Feder

ABSTRACT   In 2016, with funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Seed Grant program, the Somali Centre for Family Services of Ottawa (SCFS) invited the Centre for Studies on Poverty and Social Citizenship (CSPSC) at Carleton University to carry out a needs assessment focusing on the barriers faced by Somali youth in accessing post-secondary education and employment training opportunities. The main objective of the needs assessment was to address social and economic exclusion locally by inviting Somali youth (ages 19-30) from the Ottawa area to participate in focus groups to discuss the barriers they have faced in accessing post-secondary education and employment training programs, and to invite their views on the supports needed to address these barriers. The CSPSC and the SCFS agreed that the research would involve a participatory action research approach where members of the Somali and Muslim Community would participate on an advisory committee, and where youth from the Somali Community would be directly involved in all phases of the research. Five themes were identified during the analysis: Barriers to accessing post-secondary education; Barriers to accessing job placements and training programs; Barriers to securing employment; A need for a Somali-focused employment resource centre; A need for Somali youth mentors.

KEYWORDS   participatory action research; employment training; racialized youth; Somali youth; immigrant youth employment

Within Canada, over 80% of the Somali population is under 30 years of age (Naji, 2012). However, many first and second generation Somali-Canadian youth continue to experience difficulties with integration and social inclusion. Representing an ethnic and a religious minority, the Somali population has become a highly racialized group within Ottawa. The Somali community continues to face alarmingly high rates of poverty, unemployment, and youth crime (Kenny, 2007). In 2011, the unemployment rate for Somali youth 15-24 years of age who were participating in the labour force was 33.4%, compared to a 16.6% unemployment rate for labour force participants across Canada of the same age (Statistics Canada, 2011). This highly restrictive access to the labour market makes Somali youth more economically vulnerable, which can further perpetuate cycles of poverty, and exacerbate physical and mental

health issues as well as high-risk behaviours.

In 2016, with funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Seed Grant program, the Somali Centre for Family Services of Ottawa (SCFS) invited the Centre for Studies on Poverty and Social Citizenship (CSPSC) to carry out a needs assessment focusing on the barriers faced by Somali youth in accessing post-secondary education and employment training and opportunities. In carrying out this research, the Centre's main objective was to address social and economic exclusion locally, by inviting Somali youth (aged 19-30) from the Ottawa area to participate in focus groups to discuss the barriers they have faced in accessing post-secondary education and employment training programs, and to invite their views on the supports needed to address these barriers. The SCFS and the CSPSC agreed that the research would involve a participatory action research (PAR) approach where members of the Somali and Muslim Community would participate on an advisory committee, and where youth from the Somali Community would be directly involved in all phases of the research.

The research process was consistent with the Dudley Model of PAR as explained below (Dudley, 2010). The data collection and analysis were carried out by the research team, which included the principal investigator from CSPSC, three graduate students from Carleton University, and two youth leaders from the Somali community. The research team ran four focus groups to collect input from Somali youth regarding their own experiences in seeking out vocational training and enrolling in college and university programs. Both male and female Somali youth participated in the focus groups, with the research team running three male focus groups and one female focus group. Consistent with the Dudley Model of PAR, the SCFS planned to share the results of this research with all stakeholder groups as the precursor to a larger program design and delivery project for Somali youth.

Background

Somali youth in Canada face multiple barriers to education and employment opportunities (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, 2016). Limited access to securing employment increases economic vulnerability, which can fuel high-risk behaviours, exacerbate physical and mental health issues, and perpetuate cycles of poverty (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2008). Such high stakes warrant an examination of the barriers Somali youth in Canada face in accessing the labour market, and, by extension, higher education.

A review of the literature reveals a limited availability of research focusing on immigrant (first and second generation) youth experiences in accessing higher education in Canada (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Ferede, 2010). Within the literature available, a recurring theme is lack of access to information on post-secondary education and employment training programs in high schools and community centres in Canadian cities (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Baum & Flores, 2011; Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010). Caidi, Allard, and Quirke (2010) refer to this lack of access as "information poverty" (p. 503). Compounding this issue is the fact that many Somali youths' parents immigrated to Canada during the 1980s and 1990s, and did not attend post-secondary schools in Canada (OCASI, 2016). This limits their knowledge of Canada's often complicated social systems, and reduces their ability to support and navigate their children

through such systems (Baum & Flores, 2011). Subsequently youth turn to their friends and peer group(s) to obtain information about employment opportunities and education programs (Caidi, Allard, & Quirke 2010). To overcome this information barrier, Anisef and Kilbride (2008) suggest providing youth with opportunities to be mentored. According to their study, youth commented that having a mentor who could discuss the differences between post-secondary programs or the processes for applying to these programs could critically increase their access to information.

Available literature strikingly points to the lack of support racialized youth experience from their guidance counsellors at school (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; City of Ottawa & City for All Women Initiative, 2016); with implications that these counsellors, along with teachers and administrators, participate in systemic discrimination and racism (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014; OCASI, 2016; Shakya et al., 2010). While there are reports of discrimination and racism for both sexes, males report higher incidents of discrimination, bullying, and physical violence (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; City of Ottawa & CAWI, 2016; OCASI, 2016). Additionally, Somali males often report being directly or indirectly discouraged by teachers from aspiring to higher education (City of Ottawa & CAWI, 2016).

While barriers to immigrant youth accessing education have been identified, there are also a number of suggestions available to increase accessibility to post-secondary education. Anisef and Kilbride's (2008) study speaks to increasing the number of teachers from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. This same study also emphasises the importance of providing information about education and employment opportunities at the secondary education level, as a means to prepare youth to transition into post-secondary education and to foster spaces where youth can voice their concerns. Additionally, providing opportunities for youth to participate in co-op, practicum, and/or internships can work to build social networks, and provide opportunities to build the skills necessary to succeed in the classroom and within the labour market (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014).

Research focusing on Somali youth's employment success is similarly sparse compared to the existing research on their educational attainment (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Block & Galabuzi, 2011; Caidi, Allard, & Quirke 2010; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014). However, available literature shares a theme concerning racism and discrimination (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Block & Galabuzi, 2011). When visible minorities find employment, they face what Block and Galabuzi (2011) deem a "persistent colour code that blocks them from the best paying jobs" (p. 3). This experience of discrimination contributes to the income gap by creating barriers for visible minorities in obtaining well-paying and secure jobs (Block & Galabuzi, 2011). The literature also points to a lack of social connections as an ongoing barrier to obtaining employment (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014). While those with established roots in Canada may rely on connections to get their feet in the door, first and second generation immigrant families may not have the same established roots in their community or the job market (OCASI, 2016). Of note is how government employment programs are not the all-encompassing solution. Anisef (as cited in Anisef & Kilbride, 2008) notes how such programs can inadvertently label youth participants as "at-

risk", making these youths less attractive to employers.

There has been a number of suggestions made to potentially increase immigrant youth employment rates. Similar to the suggestions made within the literature concerning post-secondary education, mentorship was a common theme in relation to reducing employment barriers (Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014; Anisef & Kilbride, 2008). Providing a mentor who can share information on how and where to find employment, and the skills necessary to succeed in the workforce, can increase immigrant youths success by providing support and information (Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014). Furthermore, having a mentor from one's own culture, who can relate to the culture clash that many youth report experiencing, can be beneficial (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014; OCASI, 2016). This research also suggests how co-ops or practicum opportunities bear great potential for employment success (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014). Through such opportunities, youth can connect with their community and employers without the attachment of an "at-risk" label (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014). Flexibility within employment opportunities is also recommended, so programs can better respond to the needs, concerns, and experiences of immigrant youth populations. Anisef and Kilbride (2008) advocate for culturally-specific programs to be established and led by professionals of the same racial, ethnic, or cultural background as the youth, providing spaces where culturally sensitive topics can be discussed. Also suggested, as a mechanism to reduce barriers, is the idea of providing a central hub youth can visit to obtain information on employment opportunities and to learn about the job market (Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014; Anisef & Kilbride, 2008).

As has been stated, there is a lack of literature exploring the needs of immigrant youth in obtaining employment and post-secondary education in Canada. The study conducted by Anisef and Kilbride (2008) specifically explored these experiences, and as such our literature review leaned heavily on their results. However, because their study did not specifically explore the experiences of Somali youth, we cannot assume that the needs identified in their study will be reflective of the experiences of Somali youth in Ottawa.

Methodology

The entire research project was conducted using the Dudley Model of PAR (Dudley, 2010) where each stage of the research process and decision making included the involvement of a Research Advisory Committee with representatives from the Somali and Muslim community and two Somali youth. The ultimate objective of the research was to create the necessary resources and/or programs to support Somali youth to both access and succeed in post-secondary programs and employment paths; a PAR design was chosen to inform changes, transformations, and/or the creation of youth-directed services that could sustain better outcomes. This was motivated by the understanding that with greater input and investment from the community, the more likely service implementations are to succeed. The Research Advisory Committee met several times from October 2016 to February 2017 to discuss the aims and design of the research and to seek and secure research funding. The Research

Advisory Committee decided to conduct a participatory needs assessment to gain new insight into the real, rather than perceived experiences of Somali youth within the Ottawa region. In addition to the Principal Investigator, two female PhD students and one female Masters student associated with Carleton University were hired for the participatory needs assessment. Following the Dudley Model of PAR, the research team also included two male Somali youth, both of whom had undergraduate degrees, and one of whom was also a Masters student.

Focus groups were chosen for the needs assessment, as this method allows for the collection of large amounts of data in a short period of time and would provide information on the motives, attitudes, and opinions of Somali youth (Carey, 2013). The focus group data collection took place over the course of two weeks. Once ethics clearance was provided by the university's research ethics board, the team ran four focus groups to collect input from Somali youth. Each group ranged from six to ten participants, with 32 individuals participating overall. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 30, and the study was conducted in English. Both women and men participated in the data collection, with the research team running three focus groups for men and one for women. The two PhD students had extensive experience in running focus groups, and one of the Somali youth also had experience with focus group moderation. The research team met to discuss facilitation techniques, and those with experience provided modelling for the other research assistants. The selection of participants was carried out by the two team members of Somali background. Using a snowball sampling technique, these individuals recruited their friends, as well as members of Somali youth groups in the Ottawa area. Each of the three focus groups for male youth was facilitated by one female research assistant and one male Somali research assistant. The focus group for female youth was facilitated by two female research assistants from the university. The female youth participants expressed a preference for having only female facilitators, and therefore there was no community researcher as a facilitator for this group (as the two Somali youth on the research team were male).

The focus group narratives were analyzed using a General Inductive Approach (Thomas, 2006) using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software program. The two PhD students and one of the Somali youth research assistants were familiar with NVivo and had used it previously on research projects. Further training on NVivo was available to all research assistants at Carleton University, and was attended by the two Somali research assistants and one of the PhD students. The two Somali research assistants and two of the university research assistants each transcribed one of the four focus groups. The research assistants who transcribed the focus groups also provided a preliminary coding of the data. Employing the General Inductive Approach, this preliminary work was based on a careful reading of each line of text to identify and code several common themes and subthemes that related to the research topic. Some selections of text were coded multiple times, and non-relevant text was not coded. The transcription and data analysis of each focus group was shared between all five research assistants. These separate analysis results were then further refined at a meeting of the entire research team. A general consensus was formed as to the merging and organizing of codes into major themes and subthemes. After this meeting one of the PhD research

assistants merged the separate coding results in NVivo and selected text highlights for the research report based on the agreed thematic results.

Findings and Discussion
Barriers to Accessing Post-Secondary Education
As stated in Anisef and Kilbride's (2008) research, a specific barrier to employment and socioeconomic advancements was lack of education. However, at the time of the focus groups, most of our research participants were attending or had attended post-secondary education programs, mostly within universities. The general consensus emerging from this project was that post-secondary education is highly valued in the Somali community, so youth are often encouraged or pressured by parents to attend:

> I know specifically post-secondary education is something we're all pushed towards. So if a mother sees you, [and] you're not going to a post-secondary education, then what are you doing with your life? You kind of failed them – that's taught as well.

> …Especially with Somali parents who have immigrated here, there is a big influence on children coming to university; the main goal isn't to find a program they like, but they put pressure on them instead to just get into university. So a lot of Somali youth feel pressure to just get into university instead of finding out what they like and, you know, which program would be best for them. So I think that also kind of affects Somali youth.

The first quote demonstrates the pressures youth can feel in regard to attending university, by connecting a lack of post-secondary education with a failure to meet their parents' expectations. As explained in the second quote, when youth are pressured to attend university they may choose a program without a good understanding of what career path they want. One participant expresses below how the choices youth make regarding education are decisions they will have to live with their whole lives:

> I think my goal, mostly, is [to] finish school. Well, finish school in a program [that] I like [because] […] our parents, […] they have opinion[s] about our future, they say, 'Oh, you should do this', [and], 'Oh, you should do that'. But at the same time, you want to do what you want to do. […] When you look back, when you look forward, like, 30 years and you're in your job… it's not their job, it's your job. So I just want to do something that I want.

Another recurring theme within the focus groups was the lack of knowledge among Somali immigrant and refugee populations concerning post-secondary education. As pointed out by Baum and Flores (2011), many of their parents have not attended post-secondary school in

Canada, and are therefore limited in supporting their children in navigating the educational system. Participants highlighted the need for increased knowledge of existing education and training programs to make informed choices on how to work towards obtaining a meaningful career. The following two quotes express how participants feel theirs parents and elders don't understand the education system in Canada:

> I think it has more to do with the fact that there is not much guidance from guys, especially the older men in our community because they are not really familiar with this type of system, especially with the background they come from, they don't understand the schooling system very well. And also kids these days are growing up [and] they don't really have someone to point them in the right direction when it comes to their school.

> Yeah, especially, I feel like for me, my parents, they were refugees. They didn't go to post-secondary. I'm the oldest, so I was just thrown into this whole new world not knowing exactly what I was getting myself into.

As demonstrated in these statements, most of the youth in this study feel their parents are unable to help them navigate the education system, due to their lack of experience with formal education—and yet, these youth felt strongly pressured to pursue post-secondary programs. They expressed the need for more guidance on deciding whether to attend post-secondary programs, as well as finding programs and classes that lead to meaningful employment.

The focus on university within the Somali community may also stem from the greater availability of supports for these types of programs. For example, there were few focus group participants studying in the trades:

> In our community, it is never really an option. It's post-secondary education or bust there is no real—I guess parents are more open now to trade: there is really good money in it. [But] there isn't enough training or support for trade stuff.

While we can see that choosing the trades is increasingly being accepted as a good career choice by Somali parents and youth, the availability and lack of knowledge regarding trade programs and financial supports for these programs affect youths' choice in attending. Financial supports and knowledge on accessing vocational programs are essential if this is to be an option for Somali youth. As highlighted by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (2016), those with established roots in Canada can rely on connections to get their feet in the door; youth of first generation immigrant families may not have the same established roots in the community or job sector. Of note, this limited access to trade programs was also discussed heavily by the project's Advisory Committee. Advisory Committee members pointed out that in order to attend trade schools in Ottawa, an individual often needs to have

an apprenticeship arranged with an employer before they can be accepted into a program. This creates a huge barrier to Somali youth, who as immigrants have limited networks to find and secure apprenticeships.

Another common theme was that Somali youth focus too much on specific types of post-secondary programs:

> Speaking about culture, there's this thing in our community—education is good. We focus on specific programs. What I'm trying to get at is—I met a brother who did water waste management. He went to Algonquin. You don't see a lot of Somalis doing that; a very essential program. People need that, right? But we keep on going to the same programs. We have to open our focus.

This focus group participant discussed how, once one community member is successful in a program, others tend to follow in the hopes of obtaining a successful career. For this participant, this type of cycle narrows the educational and employment possibilities for Somali youth, discouraging individuals from carving out new and alternative paths for themselves. In another focus group, the tendency to follow in others' footsteps was viewed as a positive outcome, and participants discussed how seeing a community member thrive in a specific educational program motivates youth and encourages parents to broaden their views.

Many participants in the focus groups discussed how post-secondary programs should focus on job readiness, so that what is taught in school translates to the workplace. Youth in this study experienced a disconnection between education programs and the skills/knowledge employers are looking for:

> For university programs, what they do is, a lot of times, they teach you material that doesn't really translate to your workplace…like, you don't have the necessary skills in order to work for certain jobs. And, most of the time, what they are looking for is a student who has experience in the field. So [if] you don't have that, it kinds of puts you at a disadvantage, unless you are a co-op student and [have] been in the situation where you've been working in the field.

> Most of the time, when you are trying to apply for jobs, you need certain skills and especially when you are a student, all you have done is really [study] and gain knowledge. But you don't have any practical skills.

For research participants, the goal in pursuing education was to graduate and obtain meaningful, well-compensated employment. Yet, as the quotes above demonstrate, most of the participants with experience in post-secondary education did not feel they are/were being well equipped beyond their educational credentials to compete for employment within their chosen fields.

Somali youth also face unique challenges when trying to obtain employment. Consistent

with those issues mentioned earlier (regarding support in choosing an educational program), youth in the Somali community feel they do not have the same supports as their peers in transitioning into employment. Their counterparts often receive greater guidance from their parents, who have been through Ontario's post-secondary education system and have long-established careers:

> For the Somali youth, it's a tough battle because the other kids in the education system, their parents are here for three to four generations. Their parents give them the first job — from how to fill out a resume. Our situation — other families from other countries — it's starting from the ground up. They don't have someone to show them how to make a resume, how to find your first job; everything is learning on the fly as you go.

After completing post-secondary education, some of the youth in this study indicated an interest in entrepreneurial programs. Some of these participants indicated that they themselves developed a real interest in entrepreneurship, while others suggested it was popular for Somali youth to decide to participate in entrepreneurial training programs because of the resources that are uniquely available to these program participants:

> My goal is to build up some stability, like what he said. Trying to own some companies of my own…working on a few ideas at the moment. Like he said, I do not believe in formal education; there are other ways to attain your goals besides university.

> He was talking about different government grants that are given in Ottawa for just entrepreneurship itself. There's a ridiculous amount of grants you can do, it's crazy—especially between 18 to 29. If you have a business idea or something, you can go [to] Invest Ottawa. Talk to them; they definitely give you some research. They tell you this is what you need to do—different stages of your business. If you get in as a portfolio company, you get access to an earmark fund which is $20 000.

As the statements above indicate, not all the Somali youth in this study preferred formal education. Entrepreneurial programs are perceived as providing an alternate path to employment. Several participants expressed an interest in learning more about what was involved in starting one's own business. Although not discussed by study participants, a preference for entrepreneurial programs could potentially be associated with a lack of hope in obtaining meaningful employment within the current labour market.

Barriers to Accessing Job Placements and Training Programs
Many of the Somali youth in this study have taken part in job placement programs such as

the federal government's Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) and the Youth Services Bureau's (YSB) Youth Job Connection program. FSWEP provides youth with work experience in the federal public service, while Youth Job Connection offers workplace training and a short-term job placement. Other programs the youth in this study have accessed, such as Youth Futures and services at the YMCA, provide assistance with job searching and admission to post-secondary education. Although study participants appreciated such support as assistance with resume writing and the chance to acquire summer employment, many expressed a need to have more job placement opportunities that specifically align with their chosen career path:

> If you are hired for the summer, the majority of the funding goes to community-oriented organizations that hire individuals for community-oriented jobs. But, if you are in engineering and you are working at some community-oriented organization for the summer, what benefit is that to you? You [get] a job, you [get] paid and [you get] a bit of experience, but [you get] nothing towards what you want to do in life.

While participants shared a general sentiment of appreciation for community work, they also expressed how these opportunities are not equipping them with the skills they really need to obtain jobs in the private market. One participant raised concern over the stigmatization faced by youth involved in job placement programs geared towards low-income youth. This echoes the concerns of Anisef (as cited in Anisef & Kilbride, 2008), that some of these programs inadvertently label youth as "at-risk" and makes them less desirable job candidates. The following statement reflects the sentiments mentioned earlier, about feeling that summer employment does not truly aid youth beyond providing them with short-term employment:

> If I want to work for a bank, but I get summer employment working at [a community agency], what good is that to me? […] It is a double-edged sword. You come from a low-income neighbourhood, and it is right there on your resume. You live in a low-income neighbourhood and the only employment you ever had was summer-funded programs […]. It is like the city's way of shutting people up. You know what this is? What we are doing? We are throwing money at these organizations and they are going to hire your kids for the summer. What benefit does that do?

In this quote, the participant points out how employers benefit from public funding for youth employment by obtaining low-cost labour, but questions the actual long-term benefits for the youth within these programs. Some participants discussed the possibility of an employment program that would let Somali youth choose exactly where they wanted to work (including within the private sector). One participant with experience in such a program briefly expressed that it was a positive experience for them.

As with education, the youth in these focus groups want job training to provide skills related to their field of study or chosen career path:

> Training should include the skills and experience employers want.

> Um, sometimes I feel like, ah, if you have no experience at all, and all they do is offer you trainings, then […] trainings aren't going to fill up your resume, unfortunately, you know? So maybe if they offered experience…

In the second quote above, a participant explains how popular one-day, short-term training programs are not helpful in providing the skills needed to secure employment. Without the experience employers are looking for, youth have a hard time accessing employment in their field, even with post-secondary education.

Participants expressed limited opportunities for Somali youth to connect with employers or other professionals from private corporations. As one participant discusses, the private sector was seemingly the hardest to succeed in:

> There are different barriers in different sectors. There are fewer barriers in the federal government—just by seeing how many Somali Canadians [are] working there. But you will rarely ever see a Somali person in a Fortune 500 company or [in] any sort of private [corporation]. It is like a gentlemen's club that we are not invited to.

The federal public service has been easier for Somali youth to access as the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) provides a federal public service placement program. The federal government also notably has employment equity policies in place. By contrast, participants expressed feeling that positions within the private sector were significantly more difficult to obtain without specific job skills or, more importantly, networking and connections.

The question of when exactly job placement and training programs should be available came up in several of the focus groups. Placement programs, like the Youth Job Connection, are mainly accessed by youth when they are in high school, and those who are in post-secondary education tend to be more familiar with FSWEP. One focus group suggested that information on the FSWEP program be made more available to high school students, so that they could access the program earlier in their post-secondary education. Another focus group discussed how job placement programs should be available to those who have finished school and are looking to kick-start lifetime careers:

> Also, maybe, they already finished school, [are] finishing, like, post-secondary education, or any other—like, even college… the ones who are in school, […] [or] finished program[s]—doesn't matter. As long as you are not high school, you know…you are actually looking for a career job, you know, to establish life,

you know, or maybe get married or something, you know, like that.

The consensus within this study is that job placement programs are readily available for those in school rather than for those who are job searching after completing post-secondary education:

> When I am looking for an internship, it is a lot easier to find a co-op than it is to find a full-time job, right? So when people have graduated—[…] I can get more experience than them just because I am a student, because I am going back to school, while they can't get any internships or find a job. A lot of people looking for jobs are not in school, and then they can't get anywhere with any of these programs because they are not in school.

Co-op programs and internships are often available within post-secondary education programs. Therefore, students have a much easier time accessing these types of opportunities than those that have completed their education. However, participants also indicated problems with internships and co-op programs that coincided with post-secondary studies. Some participants had difficulty acquiring a placement while being a student. Others could not afford to work unpaid and attend school at the same time, and sometimes, fitting the placement into a busy school and work schedule was just not feasible.

Barriers to Securing Employment

Anisef & Kilbride (2008) found that males reported higher incidents of discrimination, bullying, and physical violence. Barriers to employment were raised by the male youth in this study specifically regarding discrimination and criminal records:

> What is going on in the media with the Somali youth and the violence puts a negative image on all Somalis, so everybody […] will have the pre-notion that, "Ok, these people come from this type of background", instead of actually giving us a chance.

> There are so many times a young kid is labeled something, and then, because of that label, they sort of adopt that kind of behaviour and that track throughout [their life]. If you're, like, a youth and you incurred a criminal record on one of the many dumb, stupid things that could happen — as a youth, if you do something. And then you incurred a criminal record and then that stays with you… and then suddenly all of those opportunities have narrowed like this…

Participants in our sample expressed that discrimination and labeling of Somali youth within Ottawa creates serious obstacles to employment and opportunities, and the youth who actually incur a criminal record will have an even harder time finding employment in the future.

A Need for a Somali-focused Employment Resource Centre
When considering what types of supports could help to alleviate some of the issues raised regarding education and job training programs, the youth in this study overwhelmingly favoured the creation of an educational/employment centre or resource program to run within a pre-established service centre. Providing a central location where youth could visit to obtain information on employment opportunities and learn about the job market was one of the recommendations mentioned in the report by the Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance (2014). Some participants wanted this resource program/centre to be specifically for Somali youth. Others felt that making it specifically for Somali youth would only further stigmatize this population. Currently, Somali youth find it difficult to know what programs are available to them:

> With all of these employment, um, services—they're not interconnected. Like, do they know what the others [are] offering, so that they can move effectively? And are they sending people to each other? If they're not, then everybody's doing something in their own silo; nobody's letting each other know.

The quote above described a shared consensus that employment programs are fragmented, and that it is difficult to know what is available across Ottawa. Youth expressed frustrations that centres do not communicate information about one another to service users. The youth in this study also indicated that they are not being informed about available opportunities in a timely manner:

> Yeah, I think for me, it was um—like, I heard about FSWEP, like, when I was in high school. But the only reason I heard about it was because, like, I knew a girl. I just happened to know her and was like — she graduated and she got a job through FSWEP, so she told me to apply in my first year. And now I'm in third year and I finally got it, you know?

> They're not good at getting the word out, at all. They have deadlines, [and] nobody knows about the deadlines until it's too late.

> But the problem is, like, right now, these kids don't have, um—they're not told when the deadline is. So they don't even know when to sign up.

> I found out—that's the thing—I really don't think that there's a way to find out about these things. I found out through somebody, who found out through somebody…

The youth expressed that a single place to access thorough information regarding education, training and employment opportunities, including important deadlines, would be helpful. This

type of support would help Somali youth to better prepare and plan for the future:

> If you're about to go into university [and] don't know what to take, you can come here and we'll give you guidance; if you're looking for a job and just graduated, come here and we can set up your resume. We can hook you up with our network of people. I can guide you [and] probably take you to the right direction.

The participants also expressed a desire to have this centre or resource program run by workers from the Somali community, or by those who have an understanding of their culture and experience:

> …Yeah, counsellors that understand where we come from and the problems that we deal with. Because most people, most of the older generation, don't really come from [the] type of mind-set we come from. They only think traditionally, and how they did it back in the day. So it would be good to have people who understand us now, and understand this day and age.

> And I think that the community centre idea—parents will push their kids to these centres if they know it is being run by, for example, the Somali Centre, where they know the guy who is running it. My parents are more willing to send me towards a program that is run by Somalis because they know the people running it.

All the youth in our study wanted those who work in the centre/resource program to have an understanding of their culture and the unique experiences contemporary Somali youth face. As the second quote above indicates, youth feel that their parents would be more likely to encourage them to seek assistance from a centre/resource program if it were to be specifically for Somali youth and run by Somalis. There was some debate as to whether the staff should be youth as well (under 30 years old), but most indicated that age did not matter as long as the staff are able to relate to Somali youth. There were also conflicting views within the focus groups regarding where such a resource centre/program should be located or housed. Some preferred to have it within a post-secondary institution, while others felt if should be placed within the Somali community.

A Need for Somali Youth Mentors
Another strong theme within the study was the great need for Somali youth to have mentors who can help to guide them through education and employment decisions:

> If we had more mentors out there, especially these older students who are graduated coming back, you know, trying to help the youth and explaining the

process of how to choose which courses to go into, and what programs, and how to go about finding jobs…

This participant states the need to find individuals who can both relate to Somali youth, and who have knowledge of the education system and job searching in Canada. Mentors were also proposed by Anisef & Kilbride (2008), who suggested that having a mentor available may help guide immigrant youth in seeking out education. The current lack of mentors within the Somali community was a subject heavily discussed in all four of the focus groups. Focus group participants expressed the importance of having mentors and professional connections that can relate culturally:

So, the thing is, like, if who you're working with doesn't get you, they don't get your boundaries, like, I can't even blame him…because he doesn't understand me, he doesn't understand my culture. He doesn't understand my race, he doesn't understand my—he doesn't understand at all, and he [maybe] doesn't want to […] understand.

Some participants talked about experiences within existing youth programs involving personal support workers who were unable to culturally relate to Somali youth. Many participants felt the need for mentors from within their community, who would be available to support education and career choices both before and after post-secondary education. When discussing mentors, the importance of connections and networking came up as well:

Networking is not what we think it is. It's not me sitting down with someone for a coffee and picking their brain asking them what they want to do. There are real barriers that we face in the Somali community. There aren't many people, older people in higher positions who can facilitate not only conversations, but opportunities. It is fine to have a blueprint of what you want to do in life, but if you have constant barriers and do not [have] real resources to attain those things, you are not going anywhere.

Because I think it's all about connection– when you get down to the nitty gritty of applying for positions. It's about who you know, you know? And, um, if you don't know anybody, what are you going to do?

As these participants indicate, finding employment is often aided by knowing someone in a specific field or company, who can vouch for you and connect you to other professionals. Mentors are desired not only to discuss educational and employment goals, but ideally to connect Somali youth to industries and organizations of interest.

Conclusion

This research project supports and expands upon the findings of previous research among first and second generation immigrant youth in Canada. That previous research found a narrowing of employment and training opportunities due to a lack of knowledge of the Canadian education system and training programs (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Baum & Flores, 2011; Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010), a scarcity of connections and networks for job-seeking (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014), discrimination (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Block & Galabuzi, 2011), and issues with current job placement programs (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008). Many of our youth participants expressed how their family members and community members have a general lack of experience with post-secondary education and training programs in Canada. The job placement programs most of these youths have experienced did not provide them with skills related to their chosen careers. Many expressed the desire for more opportunities in the private sector. Discriminatory hiring practices and labelling of Somali youth as "at-risk" were also identified by many within the focus groups as barriers to employment and training opportunities. This consistency of findings across immigrant and refugee research indicates the possibility of applying research findings from immigrant and refugee youth populations, such as Anisef and Kilbride's study to issues facing Somali youth seeking education and employment opportunities.

One notable difference between the literature and this Somali youth-focused research project was the high rate of interest and participation in post-secondary education by the youth who participated in our focus groups. Anisef and Kilbride (2008) found a lack of education among immigrant youth, and Shakya et al. (2010) noted that post-secondary education was not a priority for immigrant youth. The high ratio of university-educated participants in this study could be attributed to the snowball recruitment method employed or may reflect a tendency among Somali youth to favour university education. These results may also reflect how many of the research participants were familiar with the Somali Centre for Family Services, and therefore well connected to community supports. Future participatory research approaches with Somali youth should also carefully consider the research recruitment methods, and seek ways to include youth who may be less connected to existing community supports. Even though many of the research participants were familiar with post-secondary education, there was still a consensus among research participants that first generation Somali youth needed more knowledge of educational and training opportunities and choices.

With respect to limitations of the study, as stated above, the selection of the participants was carried out by two Somali youth researchers. Because they used a snowball sampling technique, the participants selected for the study tended to be those they were connected to through their community involvement or education. As a result, the youth engaged in the project tended to be highly educated and actively involved within their community. The research team felt these participants were not fully representative of the Somali youth in Ottawa, many of whom live in poverty and have had poor experiences at school and work. In future studies, it would be useful to look for ways to recruit a more diverse group of participants.

Nevertheless, the findings of this research project align with the recommendations from

previous research on immigrant youth and refugee populations (Anisef & Kilbride, 2008; Greater Toronto Civic Action Alliance, 2014; OCASI, 2016). Our youth participants expressed a need for mentors to assist with education and employment choices through providing guidance, resources, and networking connections. Participants did not all agree on whether the mentor needed to be from the Somali community.

Consistency between this research project and those outlined in the literature review highlights the need for the implementation of research recommendations to provide employment and education resources for immigrant youth, as common issues persist. The recommendations of this research project to address these concerns include:

1. The creation of a Somali-focused employment and post-secondary education resource program.
2. The development of a mentorship program for Somali youth.
3. Ensuring the staff person in the resource program could offer private sector liaison.
4. Offering subsidized placement opportunities for Somali youth to design their own placements.

Applying a PAR approach, the Research Advisory Committee has continued efforts to promote the research findings, and to seek funding to follow through on the recommendations. The results of this research project were presented at a special event held at the Somali Centre for Family Services that included the Executive Director of Somali Center for Family Services of Ottawa, members of the Advisory Committee, the research team, a member of Provincial Parliament, and representatives of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The has already acted on recommendation 2 — the development of a mentorship program for Somali youth — through obtaining funding to develop a mentorship program to help Somali youth navigate the post-secondary, and the CSPSC has been invited to evaluate this new program.

In a press release, the Executive Director of the SCFS, Abdirizak Karod, stated, "Thanks to financial support by Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and the support from the government of Ontario, now the Research Report gives us the opportunity to use this evidence-based information to engage our youth for better employment and trades training, while also endeavouring to secure the resources needed to make this undertaking a success". In the same press release, Hon. Member of the Provincial Parliament John Fraser stated, "Research like this empowers organizations such as the Somali Centre for Family Services to better understand social and economic exclusions faced by a specific group in our society and provides governments with data to better address these exclusions" (CSPSC, 2017).

In our effort to identify the barriers faced by Somali youth in accessing post-secondary education and employment, we believed that only a participatory action approach (Dudley, 2010) would provide the Somali community with information that was useful and culturally relevant. While the Principal Investigator and the graduate students contributed the research knowledge and experience needed to carry out the study, the research team was fully committed

to the idea that the control and ownership of the study belonged to the Somali community. In this respect, we believe our study was largely successful.

About the Authors

Jennifer Colpitts has an MSW and is working as a counsellor with people suffering from PTSD. She worked as a Research Assistant on two research projects, one with Shepherds of Good Hope and a second with the Somali Centre for Family Services.

Zoey Feder holds a BSW and is working as the administrative assistant for the Centre for Studies on Poverty and social Citizenship. She has experience in working with non-profit organizations dedicated to the eradication of poverty.

Ismail Hagi-Aden holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a specialization in Entrepreneurship. He is working on his next business by merging his passions for business and personal development.

Ahmed Hussein has a BA in International Development and Globalization and an MA in Public and International Affairs. Currently, he is a desk officer with Global Affairs Canada. Ahmed's goal is to enable the potential of youth and to support their journey in becoming successful professionals, leaders, and global shapers.

Katherine Occhiuto is a doctoral candidate with Carleton's School of Social Work, a mental health counsellor at a community resource centre, and a research assistant with the Centre for Poverty and Social Citizenship, the SIM Social Work Research Lab, and YouthREX.

Tara McWhinney is a doctoral student with the School of Social Work at Carleton University. She works with the Centre for Studies of Poverty and Social Citizenship and has a keen interest in community-based participatory research.

Adje van de Sande (*corresponding author*) is an associate professor at the School of Social Work at Carleton University and Chair of the *Centre for Studies on Poverty and Social Citizenship*. He is the principal author of *Research for Social Justice: A Community-Based Participatory Approach,* published in 2017. Email: AdjeVanDeSande@cunet.carleton.ca

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Integrating Delphi Consensus Consultation and Community-Based Participatory Research

Melinda J. Suto, Sara Lapsley, Anusha Balram, Steven J. Barnes, Sharon Hou, Dragos C. Ragazan, Jehannine Austin, Mike Scott, Lesley Berk, Erin E. Michalak

ABSTRACT   Delphi consensus consultation methods and community-based participatory research (CBPR) are distinct approaches that have traditionally been employed separately. This paper explores the integration of Delphi methods with CBPR in a research project that sought to identify effective self-management strategies for bipolar disorder (BD). We introduce our Canadian-based network which specializes in CBPR in BD, and outline the key principles of CBPR approaches. Delphi consensus consultation methods are described and we present the five phases of our Delphi consensus consultation project, conducted within a CBPR framework. Examples of how each project phase incorporated the principles of CBPR are provided, as are personal reflections of community members involved in the project, and broader reflections on challenges commonly encountered in CBPR projects.

KEYWORDS   Delphi consensus consultation, community-based participatory research, bipolar disorder, self-management

Bipolar disorder (BD) is a condition characterized by pronounced variability in mood, activity, and energy levels, with mood episodes ranging from periods of clinical depression through to mild elation ('hypomania'), or extreme elation and/or irritability ('mania') (Goodwin & Redfield-Jamison, 2007). These extremes of mood can have a negative effect on activities of daily living such as employment, education, relationships, and on other domains that contribute to quality of life (QoL) (Michalak, Yatham, Kolesar, & Lam, 2006; Rosa et al., 2010). As robust epidemiological studies indicate a 1-2% lifetime prevalence, around 500,000 Canadians live with the condition (Merikangas et al., 2007) correlates, and treatment patterns of bipolar spectrum disorder in the US population. DESIGN: Direct interviews. SETTING: Households in the continental United States. PARTICIPANTS: A nationally representative sample of 9282 English-speaking adults (aged >or=18 years. Bipolar disorder research has burgeoned over the past two decades with much of it conducted in the biomedical realm, examining the biological causes and consequences of the condition and pharmacological treatment approaches. Although pharmacology is typically the bedrock of treatment in BD, pharmacological interventions alone are usually insufficient to ensure optimal health and QoL; psychosocial treatments and factors also impact patient outcomes (Chatterton et

al., 2017)and conventional meta-analyses provided limited comparisons between therapies. AimsTo combine evidence for the efficacy of psychosocial interventions used as adjunctive treatment of bipolar disorder in adults, using network meta-analysis (NMA. Our Canadian network has been advancing research into psychosocial factors in BD, particularly in self-care or 'self-management' approaches to the condition. In this paper, we describe a project which synergistically combined two traditionally distinct research approaches—community-based participatory research (CBPR) and Delphi consensus consultation—in order to build knowledge on effective self-management strategies for BD.

Introduction to CREST.BD

The Collaborative REsearch Team to study psychosocial issues in Bipolar Disorder (CREST.BD), established in 2007, is a multidisciplinary network committed to creating and sharing knowledge that advances research into the psychosocial facets of BD (Michalak et al., 2012; Michalak et al., 2015). CREST.BD specializes in the application of CBPR in BD research and knowledge exchange. The values articulated in CREST.BD's strategic vision are particularly relevant to CBPR and include: *wellness and resilience,* which is evident in our strengths-oriented approach; *equity*, which directs us to conduct research to address the social injustices seen from the often inequitable access to healthcare services by marginalized groups; and *diversity,* which manifests as our search for different opinions, and respect for various types of expertise (Michalak et al., 2016a). Furthermore, CREST.BD defines evidence and expertise broadly, and thus regards the contributions of peer-reviewed scientific findings, the views of people with lived experience of BD, and clinical expertise as all equally credible and necessary to advance knowledge about BD (Sackett, Straus, Richardson, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 2000).

Defining CBPR

CBPR first arose from the movements led by educator-activist Paulo Freire that sought to emancipate and empower illiterate and marginalized Brazilian communities (Freire, 1972). It is an action-oriented research approach underpinned by critical social theories, which question the taken-for-granted assumptions about what is truly normal and what is instead socially constructed. CBPR involves the co-construction of knowledge through the open dialogue between various partners in order to raise awareness and to think critically about a given issue (i.e., conscientization). Attention is also paid to the relations between stakeholders, and efforts are made to reduce inequalities and power asymmetries, and to resolve other identified issues. Beginning in the late 1990s, North American health researchers further advanced the concept of CBPR by outlining eight key principles to guide the broader research community in using CBPR as an agent of social action and change (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). These principles, as first presented by Israel et al. (1998), are listed below and four are highlighted for their particular relevance to the study described in this paper:

1. **Recognizes community as a unit of identity**
2. **Builds on strengths and resources within the community**

3. **Facilitates collaborative partnership in all phases of the research**
4. Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners
5. **Promotes a co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities**
6. Involves a cyclical and iterative process
7. Addresses health from both positive and ecological perspectives
8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners. (pp. 178-180)

The first principle recognizes that *community* extends beyond given geographical boundaries and includes people who share particular identities or social roles and therefore, who may experience similar experiences or fates associated with such (Israel, Eng, Schulz, Parker, & Satcher, 2005; Viswanathan et al., 2004). The BD community is diverse and includes multiple stakeholders. This inclusivity attracts multiple voices, with varied perspectives, which are essential for the creation of collaborative and authentic *partnerships*; another noteworthy CBPR principle. These effective partnerships in turn: a) demonstrate communication that is both transparent and open to external information, b) foster decision-making that addresses power imbalances between groups and/or individuals, and c) establish a willingness to negotiate project goals. One way to redistribute power is to conceptualize, and to work with community partners as co-researchers instead of as 'subjects' of research. Historically, it was rare to design and conduct BD research that used a CBPR approach, wherein people with lived experience of the condition engage as co-creators of knowledge. Notably, CREST.BD has incorporated this innovation into multiple projects, described fully elsewhere (Michalak, et al., 2015). This change positions co-researchers as people with considerable agency who are then expected to be involved in the decisions that affect their communities. The traditional power imbalance between academia and the community is further disrupted as the community gives input on what is important to study, identifying who should be involved, and determining relevant knowledge exchange strategies.

Another CBPR principle is to acknowledge the *strengths and resources* of each partner and to further develop these over time (Israel et al., 2005). For example, non-profit mental health partners excel in networking, service provision, and advocacy, whereas academic partners have research skills and experience, dedicated time for research, and different funding opportunities. Finally, CBPR cultivates the practice of *co-learning*, and increases the capacity of all research partners. This principle is enacted by sharing diverse skills and resources, and by the expectation that knowledge does develop through an understanding of each other's perspectives and experiences. For example, CREST.BD initiated a Community Advisory Group (CAG) in 2009 to receive guidance and input for then current and future research directions. The CAG includes people with lived experience of BD, mental health community and/or consumer organization representatives and healthcare providers. This advisory group exemplifies CBPR principles as it sustains a partnership wherein members can draw on each other's skills and share resources, and also build capacity in the broader BD community by optimizing networking opportunities, and providing a mechanism for co-learning. Among

the specific objectives of the CAG are to: 1) be a resource for CREST.BD by facilitating the planning, implementation, evaluation, and distribution of research and knowledge exchange and, 2) identify barriers to the network's research and knowledge exchange initiatives, and help problem-solve related solutions.

Substantial and sustained community engagement is essential for CBPR and includes: the identification of specific health issue(s) or concern(s); the development of comprehensive action plans consisting of research question(s), goal(s), and method(s) (e.g., data collection and analyses); and the dissemination of findings (Schneider, 2012). Ideally, community partners are involved in each phase of the research process; however, this involvement can vary with each project, and with the available resources and time that partners have. This level of community engagement reflects working *with* communities instead of merely locating research opportunities within communities of interest.

It is common for CBPR to incorporate diverse methods (e.g., flexible use of quantitative, qualitative, arts-based, and mixed-method designs) to meet study objectives. However, one opportunity that has been under-explored and exploited is the combination of CBPR with the Delphi consensus consultation method, described below.

Overview of the Delphi Consensus Consultation Method
In ancient Greece, people would consult the Delphi oracle to gain information about future events so they could have an advantage when making difficult, albeit important decisions (Ilieva, 2013). The RAND Corporation created the Delphi technique in the 1950s for the purpose of forecasting and developing prediction ability to apply in various arenas e.g., social and political. Early developers rejected the customary use of in-person consensus meetings, with their potential of unwanted persuasion and influence between participants (Gordon & Helmer 1964). Instead, panels of experts completed written questionnaires (called "sequential individual interrogations") and researchers incorporated participants' rationales from earlier responses into subsequent questions (Gordon & Helmer, 1964, p. 5). Further development of Delphis aimed for 'stability in responses' over consensus and the use of data to inform policy and decision-making (Linstone & Turoff, 2011). The Delphi consensus consultation method has evolved into a highly useful and structured approach to address complex problems (Davidson, 2013). It is particularly effective when there is scant scientific evidence available to guide problem-solving, or when existing evidence needs to be clarified, improved or translated into everyday practice (Minas & Jorm, 2010; Vázquez-Ramos, Leahy, & Estrada Hernández, 2007).

Rowe and Wright's (1999) Delphi systematic review concluded by recognizing the ongoing development and application of this technique. Recent innovations have included a hybrid Delphi that utilizes the best features of other approaches e.g., focus groups, classic Delphis, nominal group techniques (Landeta, Barrutia & Lertxundi, 2011). Scholars working from the epistemological position that underpins the participatory paradigm have developed and used Delphi methods in ways that put their principles into practice (Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Their 'change-oriented' Delphi offered an incisive examination of this compatibility with six common

features of participatory studies that are well-aligned with those described in this paper. One example of another Delphi innovation was Totikidis' (2010) use of a nominal group technique, which had participants generating ideas for an intervention to improve community health and rank-ordering these for future implementation. Fletcher and Marchildon's (2014) two-round 'modified Delphi' used interviews and then questionnaires derived from inductive analysis for the purpose of program evaluation at a health systems level. These examples highlight some of the Delphi approaches that have been used within a participatory paradigm, however, the integration of CBPR as articulated in this paper and Delphi consensus consultation approaches has seldom been explored specifically within mental health research.

At the core of the Delphi consensus consultation method is a number of experts who contribute their independent views and ratings in an iterative process (e.g., survey rounds) insofar as substantial consensus can be achieved (Amos & Pearse, 2008; Jorm, 2015; Powell, 2003). Although there are many types of Delphi approaches to select from, we chose the method used by Jorm (2015), the steps of which are summarized here. The first step is the formulation of the research question(s). Literature reviews, and other sources of information, for example, from focus group discussions or from meetings with researchers tend to facilitate this step (Amos & Pearse, 2008; Vernon, 2009). Step two involves the selection of the expert panel, which Jorm (2015) encourages to be based on Suroweiki's (2004) four guidelines of diversity, anonymity, autonomy, and aggregation. Experts are clearly defined and may include professionals, persons with lived experience of the given issue(s), and other related stakeholders. Step three determines the panel size, which requires recognition that larger panels may indeed reduce the overall influence of an individual and therefore increase the stability of opinions. Step four uses academic and grey literature to help develop the surveys. Step five involves providing panelists with any additional information that may assist with their responses (e.g., survey objectives, instructions). Steps six and seven include survey administration, and analysis of responses so feedback could be provided to panelists for any subsequent survey rounds. For example, panelists may receive the percentage of the group's agreement on particular survey items that did not quite reach the required level of consensus, and in comparison, with their own ratings (Berk, Jorm, Kelly, Dodd, & Berk, 2011). This then allows panelists to change or maintain their ratings on these items anonymously (Donohoe, Stellefson, & Tennant, 2012). The final step involves reporting the Delphi survey results, where a variety of methods may be used.

The use of online surveys makes accessing large and diverse international samples feasible given this medium is both cost and time efficient (Donohoe et al., 2012). Furthermore, participants can rate survey items in private and when convenient; hence encouraging a freer expression of opinions. A strength of the Delphi method is in its flexible application to many areas of research, including health, and more recently, in BD (Berk et al., 2011; Nair, Aggarwal, & Khanna, 2011; Vernon, 2009). There is also clear compatibility between the Delphi methods and CBPR approaches. For example, both value various types of expertise (e.g., lived experience, clinical, and academic expertise).

A CBPR and Delphi Community Consultation Study on Bipolar Disorder Self-Management Strategies

The research question that this CBPR-Delphi consensus consultation study addressed was: What self-management strategies (SMSs) do both people with BD and BD healthcare providers deem most effective for: 1) maintaining balance in mood, and 2) stopping progression into hypomania and mania? Here we offer a brief overview of the study in order to provide a context for the subsequent examination of the Delphi team and working relationships within it. A full report of the primary study findings appears in Michalak et al. (2016b). The inclusion criteria for participants with lived experience of BD were: 19 years and older; an ability to communicate in English; and a self-reported diagnosis of BD1, BD1 or NOS. For the healthcare provider participants the inclusion criteria were: 19 years and older; an ability to communicate in English; and self-reported work with individuals with BD. If participants fit both inclusion criteria (n=3), they selected their panel. In Round 1, 101 participants with BD and 52 healthcare providers completed a 493-item survey using a Likert-type rating scale. In Round 2, 83 (82%) and 43 (83%) participants, respectively, completed a similar survey with 155 items.

It was found that both panels of experts, people with BD and healthcare providers, generally agree on the same categories of SMSs to maintain balance and to limit the onset of hypomania and mania. To best maintain balance, both panels identified strategies that relate to medication and stress management, and that ensure adequate sleep, rest and exercise as key. Similarly, both panels found strategies that recognize early-warning symptoms, and that promote sleep, rest, and medication management to be effective in the prevention of elevated mood states. Analysis of the study data yielded by exploratory factor analysis pointed to some underlying factors that may connect preferred SMSs. In regard to maintaining a balanced mood, factors of calming oneself, medical management, maintaining hope, and physical activity were key. For stopping the progression into hypomania and mania, strategies connected by factors of planning ahead, intervening early, and decreasing the use of stimulants were apparent.

Delphi Consensus Consultation Team and Working Relationships

The Delphi research team was comprised of two peer researchers (i.e., people with lived experience of BD who were not academics), four undergraduate student volunteers, two research coordinators, a knowledge translation specialist, and four academic researchers. The diversity of the team, and its inclusive research tasks encouraged putting CBPR principles into practice. The following description presents the five core Delphi project phases, and provides examples of how the eight aforementioned CBPR principles were enacted during these phases.

Phase one involved the re-analysis of a qualitative research dataset (see Suto, Murray, Hale, Amari, & Michalak, 2010), which included transcripts from interviews and focus groups in order to extract candidate SMSs. Peer researcher Lapsley completed this analysis, with academic team members providing ongoing mentorship. Also, during this phase, peer researcher Scott produced a project definition of self-management – which can encompass a wide range of plans, activities or routines, such as monitoring mood, education, optimizing diet, exercise and

sleep, pursuing creative activities, or engaging in meditation and relaxation activities – which was refined by group consensus. The definition (Michalak et al., 2016b) reads:

> Bipolar disorder (BD) self-management refers to the plans and/or routines that a person with BD uses to promote health and QoL. Healthcare professionals can provide information about BD self-management strategies and support for their application. Family, friends and caregivers can also be involved in developing strategies and supporting the person in using them. However, outside of hospital settings, it is typically the person with BD who chooses their approach to self-management and enacts and tailors their own strategies. Most strategies, regardless of whether they originate solely with the person with BD or are developed in collaboration with others, can be considered self-management strategies). (p. 81)

Phase one benefitted from the second CBPR principle of building on the community's existing strengths and resources, including the lived experience and expertise of the team's peer researchers. The frequent collaborative team meetings, ongoing peer researcher support and guidance, and the overall spirit of collegiality reflected the fifth CBPR principle of promoting co-learning and capacity building. The academic researchers learned about the Delphi methods in tandem with the other team members, and encouraged shared decision-making within the group to foster a dynamic and inclusive learning environment. The team's definition and selection of SMSs echoed the seventh CBPR principle, in recognizing the importance of the local relevance of bipolar self-management, and understanding that there are multiple predictors of health and well-being.

In phase two, the peer researchers reviewed and evaluated grey literature sources to identify additional potential self-management strategies. This activity required intensive combing of websites and other online resources, such as podcasts, blogs, and reports. Throughout this process, two academic researchers provided mentoring and guidance to the peer researchers, as did a research coordinator, who also examined the peer-reviewed literature. Throughout these activities, there were frequent team meetings, where decentralized decision-making was encouraged, reflecting the third CBPR principle of collaborative partnerships and shared power processes.

In phase three, all the previously identified and aggregated SMSs were subjected to content analysis that accommodates inductive and deductive approaches for qualitative and quantitative data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Our process involved assigning each SMS into categories, using some from a previous study (e.g., connecting with others) and naming others through consensus. Next, we reduced the number of strategies by eliminating duplicates (3598) or unintelligible text (111). Then we clarified some of the wording to create understandable, actionable items for the survey. This process produced 493 SMSs to be selected for the development of the online surveys, which were to be disseminated to the two expert panels: people with lived experience of BD, and BD healthcare providers. During this stage, the entire team spent several months organizing the candidate SMSs. These tasks required all team

members to voice their different perspectives, and accordingly these discussions strengthened analysis and decision-making. As the Delphi method was new to all team members, these synergistic and collective dialogues exemplified the fifth CBPR principle of co-learning and capacity building. Overall, the work in phase three was an iterative cyclical process, as per the sixth CBPR principle.

In phase four, the panel experts were recruited and the Delphi consensus consultation was launched as a two-round online survey. Potential participants were recruited through an electronic invitation and accompanying consent form that was sent to a mailing list of approximately 500 people (350 individuals who are on the CRESTBD email list, and 150 individuals who were selected by the co-researchers from their academic and professional networks). These recruitment materials were circulated to prominent mental health and research organizations as well. Researchers also developed and circulated two recruitment videos on the CREST.BD YouTube channel. These strategies offered the best chance of recruiting people with lived experience of BD and BD healthcare providers who could form the panel experts. The community advisory group was critical for boosting numbers of participants after the initial recruitment strategy occurred, and recommended strategies such as shareable presentations and video outputs that each member could further distribute to their networks. These strategies were then co-developed with people with lived experience to provide the broader community with an introduction to the survey, the rationale for it, and reflections on its expected impact. Blogs written in plain language by peer and academic researchers and webinars delivered by project academics and peer researchers intensified recruitment efforts and kept the larger BD community abreast of the project's progress. Overall, these efforts were consistent with the CBPR paradigm and relied on the strengths of partners with lived experience to recruit experts (i.e., second principle), to disseminate knowledge (i.e., eighth principle), and based on the dynamic dialogue with the BD community (i.e., sixth principle), to refine the survey as needed.

Participants used Likert-type scales to rate the perceived helpfulness of each of the 493 SMSs for maintaining a balanced mood and for stopping the onset of hypomania/mania. In regard to the survey design, a subset of the research team contributed to the initial draft of the survey items and peer researchers, in particular offered feedback so future revisions could be more clear and user-friendly, especially for people with lived experience. The decision to include both people with lived experience and healthcare providers established diversity in expert opinion, and therefore met existing Delphi guidelines (Jorm, 2015) and recognized the broader BD community as a unit of identity – the first CBPR principle. In turn, the team enacted the second CBPR principle of building on the strengths and resources of the community as it relied on the BD community's knowledge of self-management, and on the peer researchers' capacities to assist with the survey design.

In phase five, the academic researchers used exploratory factor analysis to identify the underlying factors that link effective SMSs, and the team as whole participated in knowledge translation activities to disseminate the top-rated SMSs to the broader BD community. In addition to traditional academic outputs, such as peer-reviewed publications, the top-rated

SMSs identified were included on the CREST.BD 'Bipolar Wellness Centre' (www.bdwellness.com), an online resource where the community can access evidence-based tools and tailored information to learn more about BD and self-management to improve health and QoL. A balance between knowledge generation and action for benefit (i.e., the fourth CBPR principle) was therefore met. Given that people with lived experience were also essential for disseminating study progress and findings to the community (e.g., co-authorship of academic publications, blogging, social media posts), this phase was congruent with the eighth CBPR principle of involving partners in knowledge exchange.

Although establishing long-term relationships with the communities of interest is not an explicit CBPR principle, Israel et al. (1998) emphasize the importance and necessity of prolonged engagement and commitment. Throughout the project phases, the team drew upon and nurtured each other's skills and resources. The team's research capacity and knowledge of BD was also fostered; for instance, our student volunteers were trained in basic data analysis, received academic supervision, and participated in team meetings to advance their knowledge of BD and self-management, and gained exposure to CBPR. Capacity building occurred; one research coordinator later joined CREST.BD as a PhD graduate student, and one student volunteer was later appointed as a research assistant, and the team's peer researchers' personal and professional development was fostered. Peer researcher Lapsley reflected on her experiences:

> My subjective experience as a peer researcher encompassed multiple identities. In some ways, identifying as a peer did not have a particular impact; the tasks allotted were the same as other team members who did not have lived experience, and the skills that I gained were invaluable in my role as a 'regular' researcher in other contexts. However, the role of the peer researcher was a privileged identity in that I was able to collaborate with some of the world's experts in BD; an opportunity I might not have had as a typical graduate student. Acting as a peer researcher helped me to acquire knowledge about the condition that I live with, and the sheer number of self-management strategies that the Delphi team gathered was encouraging. Unfortunately, the research process was distressing at times. On internet forums, I observed people living with BD who were demonstrating acute mood states and symptoms such as hypersexuality. It was a stark reminder of how difficult it can be to live with BD, and brought back painful memories of previous episodes. Despite this, the personal connection that I felt with the topic of study made my work as a peer researcher a meaningful and empowering experience.

Peer researcher Scott also explained how his role influenced, and helped him with other aspects of his life:

> Being involved in the CREST.BD Delphi study gave me the opportunity to make a difference. Not only have I had the chance to learn research skills, and pursue my goals of a career in mental health, but I have also been given the tremendous opportunity

to help improve the lives of others. I have been able to take pride and build my self-esteem by giving back to the community. The research we have done has encouraged the development of new approaches for managing mental health, and BD specifically. This is so important. Also, along the way, I have had the opportunity to build my own knowledge of effective coping strategies. This has been an excellent benefit to working on the project. It is unlikely that the discovery of strategies such as the ones we identified would be recognized in a typical biomedical research lab. I see such powerful benefits to combining the CBPR and Delphi methodology. I notice three key advantages to this methodology. First, there is a potential boost to self-esteem for people living with the condition and participating in research. Second, peer researchers and community members that live with the condition have a naturally strong drive to help for causes in their own life, and this opens the doors to productivity in research. Finally, and perhaps most important in this research is that working with people who have the lived condition taps into first-hand insight and experience that can provide keys for developing new strategies for coping and wellness.

Overall, the Delphi project leaders fostered a co-learning environment, whereby team members worked freely and collaboratively without the inherent power asymmetries that are often found given the diverse educational attainments and roles (e.g., student volunteers, persons with lived experience of BD, and academic researchers), and thus the process was consistent with CBPR practices.

Challenges and Solutions to Enacting CBPR

To present our aforementioned study with full integrity and to improve future CBPR endeavors in general, we now elaborate on some of the challenges CREST.BD has encountered in applying CBPR (see also Michalak et al., 2015), and offer some pragmatic solutions. The Delphi team included individuals with lived experience of BD who had the dedicated time, were in stable health and economic circumstances, and had higher education. Significant mood fluctuations may occur for people with BD involved in research, and may impact study timelines. If anticipated and planned for, teams may, however, lessen the risk of this. For instance, ensuring that responsibilities are shared among several peer researchers, having contingency plans if symptoms do manifest, maintaining open dialogue, and providing supportive supervision can all help reduce delays. Given these accommodations, the benefits of tapping into the knowledge and potential of peer researchers should continue to outweigh any periodic interruptions that may occur. The incorporation of peer researchers exemplifies CREST.BD's commitment to integrating CBPR principles with a Delphi study (Michalak et al., 2016a).

Absent from our team were people situated in more marginalized contexts, for example, from lower socioeconomic positions, racialized identities, and/or from rural or remote settings; this limits the complete understanding of self-management and its application, and the ways to tailor and disseminate findings to more diverse populations. Therefore, developing strategies to access and include people who have historically been, or who continue to be excluded, such as Indigenous Peoples, racialized immigrants, and people with multiple health

issues will continue to be a strategic focus in our work.

Funding for CBPR projects tends to come from grants that are generally more accessible to people in academic positions, and thus may exclude, or create barriers for people without formal academic standing. Peer researchers who are without academic affiliations or without research experience need, and deserve, appropriate remuneration for sustained participation. We have found it useful to seek out multiple sources of funding, and when preparing grant applications, to budget well for peer researcher remuneration, travel, childcare costs, etc. Further, the emergent design elements of CBPR (i.e., plans may change as decision-making is shared and as learning occurs), may impede initial project goals.

The process of CBPR as a whole draws attention to some challenges that may surface when adopting the approach. Time or lack thereof, may be an issue given that the capacities and research skills of the community may need to be nurtured and developed. Academic researchers may also be new to CBPR and require mentorship and capacity building. Teams can expect the pace of progress to be varied and may need to adjust timelines accordingly. Effective communication and authentic partnerships will also require extended engagement between partners. It is important for partners to gauge the optimal frequency and mode of involvement in order to maintain continuous, but not onerous, terms of engagement.

Conclusions

As Jorm (2015) summarized, Delphi consensus consultation methods offer an important complement to traditional mental health research methodologies. Here we have described, as of yet, a relatively untapped opportunity; the combination of Delphi consensus consultation methods with CBPR. The complementary integration of these two research methodologies holds potential to meet multiple goals. First, the involvement of key stakeholders in research processes can improve research quality. For example, in our described project, we were able to maximize participant recruitment and retention, and rely on community expertise to nimbly address emergent study issues and concerns. Second, the combination of Delphi consensus consultation methods and CBPR lends itself to improved knowledge exchange. Given that the project's peer researchers produced ongoing process-level outputs (i.e., blogs), which described their experiences and the study, we were able to circumvent the lag in time that is frequently observed when research relies solely on final outputs such as peer-reviewed publications. Third, stakeholder involvement helps build community capacity for engaging in research and in knowledge exchange, which in turn meets a core strategic goal for our CREST.BD network.

In this specific area, future research should investigate, and produce knowledge on effective self-management in partnership with ethnically diverse communities. As noted by Michalak et al. (2012), CBPR methods are best suited to access traditionally hard-to-reach BD populations and other marginalized communities. Indeed, one of the key mandates for CREST.BD is to develop tailored engagement strategies, appropriate and sensitive training and capacity-building exercises, and continuous evaluations to ensure that the barriers that deter marginalized communities from participating in research are addressed. Taken together, the thoughtful integration of Delphi consensus consultation methods with CBPR represents

a promising approach for achieving the final and critical goal of Delphi studies—to transform research findings into real world action.

Acknowledgements

About the Authors

Jehannine Austin is a member of CREST.BD, and the Departments of Psychiatry and Medical Genetics at UBC.

Steven J. Barnes is a member of CREST.BD and the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia.

Anusha Balram is a trainee with CREST.BD and a PhD student at Ryerson University.

Lesley Berk is a member of CREST.BD and works within the IMPACT Strategic Research Centre, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia and the Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Sara Lapsley is a member of CREST.BD and a PhD student at Carleton University.

Sharon Hou is a trainee with CREST.BD and PhD student at the University of Guelph.

Erin E. Michalak *(corresponding author)* is lead of CREST.BD and the Department of Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia. Email: erin.michalak@ubc.ca

Dragos C. Ragazan is currently with the Department of Psychiatry, Lund University and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Region Skåne, Sweden. He was a trainee with CREST.BD at the time of writing of this paper.

Mike Scott was a peer researcher with CREST.BD when this Delphi project was being conducted.

Melinda J. Suto is a member of CREST.BD and the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of British Columbia.

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Teaching and Learning Within Inter-Institutional Spaces: An Example from a Community-Campus Partnership in Teacher Education

Cher Hill, Paula Rosehart, Sue Montabello, Margaret MacDonald, Don Blazevich, Belinda Chi

ABSTRACT   This paper explores the potentiality inherent within a community-campus partnership in the area of inservice teacher education, and the inter-institutional space that has afforded creative and collaborative practices. Through this partnership, we endeavour to find innovative ways to better serve our students and create opportunities for smooth interactions and flow across school and university communities. Unlike other research that explores tensions and/or common ground within community-university partnerships, we seek to understand the potential that is created in the metaphorical space *in-between* institutions. Using dialogic inquiry, the diverse members of our teaching team, including members of the university community and the K-12 school system, as well as graduates of the program, reflected on the unique material, discursive and relational dimensions of our inter-institutional space. We came to see our graduate program as a hybrid place of connections, rhythms, and intersections in which usual institutional practices are ruptured. Together we identified powerful interrelated structural dimensions of our inter-institutionality, which we referred to as *the gathering space, the inquiry space, the transformative space and the empowering space*. These themes and the flow that has been created across and between institutions will be discussed in the following paper.

KEYWORDS   community engagement; community-campus partnership; inter-institutional space; teacher-education, third space

Despite common challenges associated with cross-institutional partnerships, such as fostering relationships, harmonizing differences, and calibrating goals, university-community collaborations can encourage innovation and social change (Mandell & King, 2014; Langan & Morton, 2014). Within the field of education, collaborative school-university partnerships can be viewed as a social practice, whereby the sharing of knowledge is democratic, reciprocal, sustainable, and mutually beneficial (Chan, 2016). In this way school-university partnerships can serve to support educational reform efforts (Borthwick, Stirling, Nauman, & Cook, 2003). As Groundwater-Smith, Mitchell, Mockler, Ponte, and Ronnerman (2013) contend, in order for relationships between the academy and school education to be reciprocal (as opposed to transactional), there is a need to acknowledge that "the boundaries between actors

are of a far more permeable nature than has been hitherto recognised" (p. 2). Thus, within the collaborative partnership there is flow and respect for different yet mutually beneficial types of knowledge, theory, pedagogy and practice shared by practitioners in the field and faculty at the university level. While much research has targeted the tensions inherent within university and school partnerships focused on supporting teacher professional learning (Kersh & Masztal, 1998; Yappa, 1998; Catelli, Costello, & Padovano, 2000; Day & Smethem, 2010), and the importance of working towards common goals (Borthwick, 1994; Whitford, 1996; Hopkins, West, & Ainscow, 1998), our work goes beyond investigating tensions and transactions between institutions to explore the transformative nature (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2013) inherent within the space in between schools and the university.

In this paper, we explore our community-campus collaboration and the potential of our inter-institutional space. Our graduate level, inservice teacher-education program is a shared endeavour between a university and various school districts in which curriculum and pedagogies are co-constructed and artefacts from the different institutions assemble in unique ways. As such, the program resides in a liminal, or what we refer to as an inter-institutional space, resulting in not only creative collaborations, but also intersections and ruptures that enable novel lines of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), and new ways of being and becoming for the community members inhabiting these spaces. In his poem entitled *The Uses of Not*, Lao Tzu[1] illuminates how empty spaces—for example, in between the spokes of a wheel or the walls of a house—form the essence of the thing. It is the potentialities within these in-between spaces that captured our imagination as we explored and theorized our cross-institutional practice.

Context

Simon Fraser University (SFU) endeavours to be the "leading engaged university, defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting edge research, and far-reaching community engagement" (Simon Fraser University, n.d.). This value is actualized within the work of the Field Programs unit, housed within the Faculty of Education at SFU. Established in 1984, Field Programs has been facilitating in-service teacher education, in partnership with school districts and communities, for over 20 years. Our graduate programs, including the Graduate Diploma in Advanced Professional Studies in Education (GDE) and the Masters of Education in Educational Practice (M.Ed. EP) provide opportunity for teachers to engage in sustained reflective inquiry into questions that stem from their own professional practice. The graduate diploma program is unique in that various offerings are developed through community-campus collaborations involving representatives from school districts, communities and the university. For example, our program *Indigenous Education: Education for Reconciliation* was a collaborative endeavour undertaken by the university, a school district, and the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. Our instructional teams embrace academic scholarship, as well as professional knowledge and expertise, and include 'master' teachers seconded from school districts (known as Inservice Faculty Associates), university professors, and practicing K-12

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[1] *The Uses of Not* by Lao Tzu can be found on the blog, "A year of being here: Daily mindfulness poetry by wordsmiths of the here & now," available: http://www.ayearofbeinghere.com

teachers who serve as mentors. In this way, traditional hierarchical epistemological relationships between the university and the community (Van Katwyk & Case, 2016) are disrupted.

Our programs are based on a practitioner-inquiry methodology in which teachers engage in the intentional, disciplined study of their own practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014). In the GDE program, teacher-learners engage in field studies while simultaneously participating in course-work focused on a particular theme, such as *Inclusive Education, Indigenous Education*, or *Exploring Maker Pedagogies*. This curriculum enables teachers to work at the very intersection of theory and practice within their own professional context, catalyzing new ways of thinking, doing, and being for themselves, their students, and their communities. Our pedagogy is based on a mentorship model that facilitates the development of learning-focused relationships. Cohorts typically meet once a week, outside of the university within school settings, to support one another in developing and enhancing critical, creative and reflective practice. Our programs are typically highly impactful, enabling teachers to transform themselves personally and professionally and make powerful shifts in their practice (Hill & MacDonald, 2016).

Within our current roles, some of us are primarily affiliated with the school district (Belinda, Don and Sue), while others are primarily affiliated with the university (Margaret, Paula and Cher). Many of us have held various roles and affiliations over the years and some of us hold multiple positions simultaneously. Belinda and Don are elementary school teachers, alumni of the GDE and M.Ed. EP programs, as well as mentors and instructors in the diploma program. Margaret is an Associate Professor, a former Director of the Field Programs unit, and a former elementary school teacher. Sue is a retired high school principal, a former Faculty Associate, and a long time instructor in the Faculty of Education at SFU. Paula is an Academic Coordinator and an instructor in Field Programs. She was an Inservice Faculty Associate, mentor, and instructor in the GDE, as well as a primary teacher, and is an alumna of the Graduate Diploma program. Finally, Cher is an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice, an Academic Coordinator, and instructor within the Field Programs unit.

Theoretical Framework

As educators, we live and work in structures that can be antithetical to who we are trying to become and how we imagine doing so. Over the years, post-structural philosophers like Derrida (see Captuo, 1977) and Foucault (1977) have helped us understand the connection between social and political systems and our ways of life. Seeking deeper understandings of the challenges and barriers that restrict our creativity can be emancipating, but only if we take the next step in seeing openings as potential ways to get beyond restrictive and constraining structures. Openings like Barad's (2007) discussion of Quantum Field Physics can be deceivingly powerful. There are times that openness like a vacuum or a void has imminent power because of its potential. In its nothingness—it holds every possibility. In our lives we are often eager to fill emptiness and tend to consider a full life as a hallmark or measure of success. In our drive to fill our lives in a satisfying way we often rush past the emptiness and don't take the time to consider these spaces as possibilities, the space between the spokes in

the wheel that are necessary to the whole.

Theoretical conceptions of liminality, including Bhabha's (2004) notion of the *third space* and Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) notion of *thresholds* illuminate the potentiality inherent within in-between spaces. Bhabha (2004) conceptualizes the space between cultures as hybrid, fluid, and ambivalent. Within this third space, "the mirror of representation" (p. 54) is disrupted and cultural knowledge can be "appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew" (p. 55). Similarly, Jackson and Mazzei (2012) conceptualize thresholds as structureless voids in which difference becomes possible:

> In architecture, a threshold is in the middle of things. It exists as a passageway. A threshold has no function or purpose, or meaning until it is connected to other spaces. That is, a threshold does not become a passageway until it is attached to other things different from itself. Thresholds contain both entries and exits; they are both/ and. A single threshold can be not only an entryway, but also an exit; therefore the structure itself is not quite as linear and definitive as one might think. In other terms, thresholds can denote excess, such as having a low threshold for pain. The excess of a threshold is the space in which something else occurs: a response, an effort, an effect. Once you exceed the threshold, something new happens. (p. 6)

In-between spaces are simultaneously hybrid intersectionalities (of both), as well as vacuumous gaps (of neither) where an infinite number of potentialities can be actualized (Bhabha, 2004; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Within the infinite exists a power, excitement, foreboding and movement. Here institutional identities and practices can be disrupted, contested, and re-envisioned.

Inter-institutional spaces are what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) would call smooth spaces, in which movement is heterogeneous, open and fluid (akin to water traversing a flat surface, spreading out in indeterminate directions), as opposed to striated spaces, in which movement is homogeneous, linear and defining (similar to the flow of water channelled within a trench). Within this conceptualization, the striated spaces through time can be thought of as the constraints, regulations or structures that educators reside with and abide by. Within schools and universities we as practitioners come to know them and consider them as we navigate our relationships and practices. Institutional policies, regulations, physical constructs, and other binding pressures have built up to both define us and in theory protect us. In part, this has been the result of the many political and legal requirements, safety concerns and an overall ethos of standardization and 'best practice' constituted under the guise that homogeneity may lead to consistent quality, standard epistemological practices and, in theory, better outcomes.

In progressing toward uniformity and a shared knowing, being and doing within striated layers, flow and movement however, are also limited. Over many years, striation has grown and expanded like a coral reef creating pockets that can both protect but often (intentionally) constrain passage. How can fluidity, movement, growth and creativity within these striations prevail so that teaching, learning and our engagement with the world is not merely facilitated

safely and conducted homogeneously, but is also mutually inspiring, rewarding, generative, creative and emancipating?

Method

In order to better understand our campus-community partnership, we engaged in a dialogic inquiry (Arizona Group, 2006; East, Fitzgerald, & Heston, 2009; Himley, 2000; Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009), in which we met on a regular basis over a period of six months to examine our experiences grounded in our unique long-term perspectives as educators, administrators, and students, and theorized our pedagogies and practices within an intersubjective field (Heron & Reason, 1997). Himley (2000) calls dialogue "human capacity, widely distributed" (p. 199). She says, "When the talk is collective and sustained and respectful, its power is enhanced by the differences among people and by the recognition of multiple perspectives in deciding how to act in the world" (p. 199).

The fact that we are differently positioned and have occupied multiple roles within our community added to the richness of our dialogues. The common world we share is the inter-institutional community, a diverse group of master learners who come together to seek collegiality, renewal, support, and a new pathway forward through the educational landscape. We have found dialogue to be a powerful method of self-study in which new knowledge emerges (Arizona Group, 2006; Tidwell et al., 2009). As noted by a member of the Arizona Group (2006), "I come to know what I know as I say it" (p. 61). We would add that we also came to know what we know by being challenged in our perspectives as we question our assumptions and our values.

Our dialogic practices have been honed over our years as professionals, living and working in spaces like SFU and within the school districts, where dialogue is valued as part of our democratic and intellectual capacity building practices. In this, we were mindful to establish ground rules, such as maintaining confidentiality, asking open and authentic questions, as well as valuing individual experiences, as recommended by Tidwell et al. (2009) in order to facilitate group process, enhance participation, encourage the collaborative development of ideas, and to respect divergent perspectives.

Over six sessions we explicated, explored and refined our collective ideas about our campus-community partnership. Although we set out primarily to study our challenges and felt tensions, we also found smooth openings through dialogue where strategies for working within inter (and intra) institutional constraints to achieve our shared goals, were realized. The potential inherent within our interconnectedness was liminal, a vacuum, an opening. Our group became predominantly focused on the in-between spaces, intersections and gaps that created affordances across our campus-community partnership that were laden with potential for creating flow and movement.

Perhaps we found these spaces out of a sense of survival, knowing that we had been successful in achieving flow and movement and navigating restrictive caverns that we recognized, respected but didn't become enveloped by. Through dialogue about our day to day collaborations and a diffractive wayfaring (see Hill, 2017) related to how we worked

through enabling constraints (Fels & Belliveau, 2008), we addressed the inherent tensions within our institutional practices to arrive at deeper and different understandings of how our collaborations and partnerships, helped us rally against neo-liberal agendas that impinge movement in their call for efficiencies, risk management and standardization. We conveyed our passages and flow against this backdrop as we focused on the aspects of our work that are life-giving and sustaining, generative and creative.

Our discussions helped us understand the power and potential that we had felt within our relationship and focused not on the restrictions that are inevitable within institutions (over time and with increased governance), but the moments where success appeared in the liminal openings that were creative, powerful, and smooth - our moments of flow. We focused primarily on the space we held in common, the space between the university and the K-12 school system. Here we recognized that there are powerful inter-institutional spaces *within* the university and schools, which hold their own tensions and synergies, power and potential. We began with the following initial set of questions:

- What does it mean to be engaged in community to university relationships; to engage in "cross-institutional practices?" What is our lived experience in this regard?
- What are our commonalities? Our points of convergence?
- How does our inter-institutional relationship contribute to the common good? In what ways is our partnership generative?
- What are our inter/institutional tensions? Our points of divergence?
- How have we or how could we address such tensions?
- What barriers, disconnects, affordances, and potentialities do we experience in terms of space, locations, language, assumptions, perceptions, policies, practices, etc?
- What metaphor/image/feeling(s) might capture the nature of our inter-institutional work?

All six meetings, which were typically two hours in duration and included all of the co-authors, were recorded and transcribed (or otherwise documented). We analyzed the transcript of our first meeting for recurring themes and what Tidwell et al. (2009) call "recalibration points" – nodal moments in which ideas crystalize. These key ideas were then explored in subsequent sessions, and further explicated and connected to practice through theory, images, metaphor, narratives, and/or poetry. We collectively theorized the insights that emerged from our iterative process of dialogue and analysis, and wove these understanding into the following rendering, which reflects our shared voice.

Findings

Through our multimodal methods, we theorized the unique material, discursive and relational dimensions of our inter-institutional space. We came to see the space in-between the university and schools as liminal and open: inviting hybridity, connections, and intersecting rhythms, as well as a paradoxical space of incongruencies. It is simultaneously within a university— subject to the institution's governing policies, and *not* within a university—adopting many

K-12 pedagogical practices. It is both in a school, held within the spaces where teachers work, and *not* within a school, bringing teachers together in atypical ways. Cohorts typically meet in school libraries, creating an intermediate space between the students' roles as teachers and as learners. This space is within the school and yet outside the teachers' classrooms, creating a corporeal threshold, a space where we connect the two worlds. In this way, it enables us as teacher-learners to live in-between as we both affirm and question our collective practice and together explore the possibilities of our work in schools. In the words of Noddings (2002), the space became an "intermediate place that prepare[d] us for life in a larger world" (p. 173).

Within our context, working inter-institutionally unsettles and disrupts typical intra-institutional practices and interactions, creating uncertainty, as well openings for new ways of being to co-emerge. As Cher noted, working between the school and the university "pulls people outside of their culture – we come to question our usual practices, and can … identify common tensions – concerns we might not see if we stayed within one institution." As the program brings together teachers from different districts, as well as members of the university community, we as teachers and learners escape our own institutional echo chambers. Through the provocation of other, we see and hear differently and come to deeper understandings of our own cultural contexts. As Bakhtin (1986) contends, "meaning reveals its depths only once it has encountered and come into contact with another" (p. 7). As such, when educators from different institutions come together to share lived experiences, practices that are normalized within specific institutions become evident, and we come to understand that some of our frustrations are not idiosyncratic but rather systemic in nature (Brookfield, 1995).

During our dialogues, we explored how this in-between space enabled a different way of connecting, a different way of engaging, as well as different opportunities for being and becoming in the world. Nodal moments (Tidwell et al., 2009) revealed powerful structural aspects of our inter-institutionality, which we began to refer to as the Gathering Space, the Inquiry Space, the Transformative Space, and the Empowering Space. Although we talk about them as distinct spaces, these thresholds are all inter-related and entangled like a root bridge in which boundaries between distinct roots can be both traced and collapsed—creating a visual in which the roots are simultaneously distinguishable and indistinguishable—and forming a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. These aspects of our pedagogical practice are described in the following section in relation to our inter-institutional context.

The Gathering Space

Within our hybrid space, institutional hierarchies and roles are deconstructed and teachers and learners come together to create networks of support, reciprocal relationships and an interdependent culture. As Don said, "It is a gathering. It is not a coming to receive. It is a coming together with respect, such as when the Nations come together. You trust, drop your guard, knowing that whatever you bring is valued. These are your people, they understand, they can help. There is a lot of trust, a community." When we focus not on our roles, but our relationships, we come to understand the interconnectedness of our work together. The sense of community in the graduate diploma in advanced professional studies in education builds a

structure of belonging (Block, 2009) that strengthens teacher's confidence and agency to ask really big questions, such as, "How do we transcend the institution as we work together to transform our individual and collective practice in schools?"

When we as teachers and learners step away from the institutional space of the school, where we are known through our roles, we also move beyond the expectations or judgement of our colleagues and administration. As Sue noted, "all too often our own voices become lost within the relentless demands and judgements of the institution. Sometimes we are stuck waiting for the organization to give us permission." Being away from the institutional space also means being away from staff meetings, committee meetings, team meetings and parent meetings. These types of meetings all come with agendas, scripts, and sometimes, workplace politics. Moving outside of institutional spaces allows for us as educators to share more openly and speak our minds (and our hearts). As we transcend the institutional threshold, our role shifts. When we come into the inter-institutional space, we arrive as *teacher-learners*. With us, are other like-minded individuals who are bonded by the weekly readings, ponderings about our own educational philosophies and the common experiences we share with our students. The time we spend together as teachers and learners helps us transcend our own institutional cultures, as we move into the inter-institutional space of a safe community without judgment. Within this liminal space, there is mutual respect and understanding. Scholarship here serves as a provocation (Malaguzzi, 1994) that weaves a different set of relationships among teachers and ignites a different sort of conversations than what typically occurs in schools. Scholarship within the gathering space serves as a "third thing" (Palmer, 2009), representing neither the voice of the facilitator, nor the voice of the participant that catalyzes potentialities:

> True community in any context requires a transcendent third thing that holds both me and thee accountable to something beyond ourselves…The subject-centred classroom is characterized by the fact that the third thing has a presence so real, so vivid, so vocal, that it can hold teachers and students alike accountable for what they say and do. (p. 119)

As teachers come together in the GDE program, the cohort gradually becomes a new type of community atypical of most institutions, one that is both professional and collegial. There is a sharing of current professional practice that both encourages and supports us as individuals on our journey toward improving our teaching practice. Rachel Kessler's (2000) conception of the *teaching presence* speaks to the idea of an open heart that "allows a teacher to be trustworthy and to help build trust in the group…to be vulnerable and be willing to care" (p. 8). She continues to remind us that when we know our vulnerability will be both respected and protected, it is then we may become more deeply connected to ourselves and to one another. If we are to be honest in our work as reflective practitioners, it is essential that we open ourselves to others and share the tensions we experience as we explore our practice and not keep silenced what we may consider to be a failure in the attempt to try something new in our classrooms. The supportive words of a trusted colleague may be all we need to sustain

ourselves along the path of growth and self-discovery.

When we question our work together in community with an open heart (Kessler, 2000), we bring together our collective wisdom and understanding. We begin to ask questions that move beyond the individual and are connected to the larger whole. We begin to ask questions that have the potential to transform our work within the broader system. Within the gathering space, we are no longer seeking permission; rather we are coming together as likeminded people with a shared intentionality. Like a pile of twigs that radiate from the centre outwards in different directions, teacher-learners move from the gathering space, back into the world with a grounding that permeates practice. As Belinda noted, "there is a confidence and strength that emerges from those conversations that you take back with you [into your school]".

The instructional practice in Field Programs intentionally shifts the learning and teaching space to move away from the traditional hierarchical structure toward a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Communities of practice are formed when people come together to engage in a process of collective learning around a common practice. As Wheatley (2009) contends:

> As we share our different experiences, we rediscover a sense of unity. We remember we are a part of a greater whole. And as an added joy, we also discover our collective wisdom. We suddenly see how wise we can be together. (p. 32)

Engaging with one another in communities of practice acknowledges the networks and interdependence of relationships that contribute to collective practice. Learning in this way creates a shared space for emerging relationships and meaning making, creating a diverse exchange of experience and learning. Central to this shift is the concept of collectively holding space where "the leader's real work is to help people discover the power of seeing and seeing together" (Scharmer, 2009, p. 132). Holding space consciously facilitates deep reflection and shared sense making with an open mind and heart. At the heart of holding space are conversations that "create a generative social field" that connect individuals to a "deeper sense of their journey and their Self" (Scharmer, 2009, p. 187). This centrality of conversation as a means to know and understand our individual and collective practice relates to David Bohm's (1996) notion of dialogue:

> The picture or image that this suggest is a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the group, out of which may emerge some new understandings. It is something new, which may not have been in the starting point at all. It's something creative. And this shared meaning is the 'glue' or 'cement' that hold people and societies together. (p. 6)

Opening our hearts and minds to the deeper sense of their journey and their Self that Scharmer (2009) speaks of requires a vulnerability. It is only within caring relationships and community that this vulnerability finds voice. Caring means seeing the other in his or her own

terms (Noddings, 1984). Dialogue strengthens and supports Nodding's notion of care. She contends, "When people talk and listen to one another in this way, trying to understand each person in their own terms, they tend to develop caring relationships" (p. 186).

The purpose of dialogue is not to merge the many different views of group members into one but rather the point of dialogue is simply the sharing of the mind (Bohm, 1996), and, from our experience, the heart. In this way, both the individual and the collective are given voice. Holding space for this dialogue where both the heart and mind are opened enables teachers to think and work together within communities of care, deepening their understanding and connecting to their imagination of what is possible, merging together into a collective stream of meaning (Bohm, 1996). Teachers deeply value this space, which is rarely possible within the demands of day-to-day school life. In our experience, holding space in this way returns us to the intentionality of our practice as teachers, helping us remember the calling of our work.

The Inquiry Space

The graduate diploma in advanced professional studies in education program is based on an inquiry methodology in which teachers study their own professional practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014). Within this space, teacher-learners are encouraged to critically reflect, explore and ask questions that are personally/professionally relevant, and to consider multiple lenses when examining the impact their epistemological and ontological leanings have on those they teach. Practitioner inquiry can be both disciplinary-based, which results in "new understandings of existing disciplinary norms and/or the creation of new knowledge" or inter-disciplinary-themed, which results in "fresh understandings of wise practice and classroom intelligent action" (Grimmett, 2014, p. 4). In this way, there is a certain "freshness in the knowledge dealt with; it is either new itself or invested with some novelty of application" (Whitehead, 1929, p. 98). Within our inter-institutional space, teachers work at the very intersection of theory and practice. Scholarship is taken up in powerful ways and dissemination is atypical compared to common practices within the university culture. Here theory is enlivened, animated, as well as contested and reworked, and subsequently shared – often orally via workshops and through mentoring relationships.

Working inter-institutionally, inquiry takes on a different form than when working within striated institutional spaces in which the foci of professional learning is often mandated, and/or the outcomes are predetermined. Within school districts, there is usually a professional development committee that identifies the focus of the school's professional development for the year. This committee is comprised of administrators and teachers who are interested in leading their staff and school into a specific direction. In many ways, having a committee decide the focus each year is beneficial for teachers as they can follow what someone else has planned out for them. It follows a 'script', as teachers are usually given many tools and suggestions as to what they could do in their classrooms on the chosen topic. For example, a professional development committee might suggest that the staff should focus on Self-Regulated Learning. A teacher may take the suggested activity of creating anchor charts with their students. That teacher might execute the lesson in their classroom, create the anchor chart

with their students, tape up the poster on the wall, and then say that they have done it and are ready to move on. As Margaret noted, for some teachers, "the institutional focus allows for people to check things off as 'done', rather than to fully explore what might be, if they were to ask questions deeply related to their own practice." This relates to the role of theory and the value of being guided by and versed in educational theory to deeply understand whether or not the suggested activity or activities are in alignment with the teacher's philosophical outlook and consistent and compatible with the teacher's world view, and are meaningful within the specific context.

The mess and complexity of learning that is not institutionally prescribed often requires that we go 'off script'. This occurs as we allow ourselves to explore, to try new approaches, and to take risks. Trusting our colleagues and embracing the smooth space where we meet in the GDE program, we learn to 'trust the mess' as a part of that journey. Going off-script often feels risky and uncertain; however, it is an allowing. It enables learning to flow like water on a flat surface, dispersing in unanticipated directions, and for practice to advance in unexpected ways. That "mess" of inquiry lives within the school, but can be deconstructed and examined in all its complexity within the space in-between institutions.

Rather than relying on institutional authority, teacher-learners in the GDE program are encouraged to develop their own capacity to evaluate their practice as educators and develop an inner compass that guides complex decision-making. Here, as Belinda would say, expertise is "pushed off on to learners." As Don explained, "Initially teachers are passive, waiting to receive. When they come to understand that they get to guide their learning - it is an awakening."

Critically creative reflection, self-study of practice, self-assessment, non-graded learning, formative feedback, and critical friendships are foundational underpinnings that support teacher-learners' growth. The teachers in the GDE program self-assess their professional growth by continually evaluating themselves against a set of programmatic capacities, holistic ways of knowing, doing, and being (McDiarmid, 2008). These 'dispositions' are seen as potentials for professional learning. For example, one cross-program capacity includes the ability to develop a disposition of inquiry, and critical reflection to understand and develop effective teaching practices. This capacity invites teachers into contemplative examination of their practice and encourages innovation, experimentation, and the exploration of scholarship in order to revise pedagogical approaches. Thus, the embodiment of the capacities as ways of knowing, being, and doing are open, reflexive in nature, and require teachers to self-assess their growth, becoming creative and curious practitioners. This non-graded graduate learning is atypical in the university, where the pressure to maintain rigour within assessment through standardized grading practices has been increasing exponentially.

Rather than being institutionally mandated, inquiry work within our liminal space is invitational. As Block (2009) contends:

> Invitation is not only a step in bringing people together, it is also a fundamental way of being together in community....An invitation is more than just a request to attend: it is a call to create an alternative future, to join in the possibilities of our work together. (p. 172)

Teacher-learners have to be willing to take the journey to learn. Answers are not given; they are discovered by the learners themselves. Students who are willing to take that journey to examine their own practice gain a valuable education with regards to who they are as teachers and learners. The knowledge they gain is knowledge about themselves, along with membership within a community of educators, grounding them in their educational philosophy and their teaching practice.

One of the most distinct features of the graduate diploma program is how teacher-learners are encouraged to examine "the self who teaches" (Palmer, 2007, p. 7) and to reflect deeply on themselves as practitioners. In this way, personal and professional boundaries are often collapsed creating a holistic (Miller, 2007) and often powerful transformative learning experience. Through self-exploration, and co-construction of knowledge and practice, there is an insider way of knowing through inquiry—a dance between subjective and local knowing. In a supportive community (sharing, discussing, reflecting), we once again find strength in who we are (Palmer, 2007), and begin to see potential in allowing ourselves to be vulnerable (Brown, 2012). Within the inter-institutional space, inquiry is situated within the self, inviting more intimate and personal understandings that may not occur within traditional institutional spaces that often demand professionalism (Noddings, 1992).

The Transformative Space

As thresholds give way to undefined indeterminate, smooth spaces, subjectivities and identities shift and new ways of becoming are actualized. Transformations, often surprising and unexpected, commonly occur within the inter-institutional space of our graduate program. In the following narrative, Paula describes her own experience as a student in the graduate diploma in advanced professional studies in education program, which "opened up a world of possibilities for [her] as an educator, a professional, and as a person." Completing the GDE gave Paula the confidence to pursue a Masters degree and a later PhD, as well as seek leadership positions as a teacher-educator. Paula's narrative exemplifies the openings and potentialities inherent within inter-institutional spaces, such as Field Programs:

A Mobius Strip Moment

> Field Programs for me was both personally and professionally transformative. Like the Mobius strip, my 'two sides': inner and outer, personal and professional, student and teacher, artist and educator, became one. The inner-outer connections I made between my values and philosophies as a teacher and my practice became more closely aligned, more seamless. The Graduate Diploma in Education provided a space where I could reflect inwardly on my autobiography as a learner and educator and inquire outwardly to contemplate and examine how these ways of knowing, being, relating and learning were at unity with my practice. It was a sort of homecoming. As T.S. Eliot (1942) extols, "the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and to know the place for the first time" (para. 14). I came to know and acknowledge my creativity, gifts and talents in a novel and unique way, a way which honoured my learning spirit (Battiste, 2013). The powerful, experiential, embodied teaching/learning experiences,

"facilitated learning in which I was able to deeply integrate what I was studying" (Miller, 2010, p. 31). The invitation to learn, explore, and discover through the arts opened up a world of possibilities for me as an educator, a professional, and as a person. As I was developing my knowledge and skills in the arts, I was developing myself, my credo, and my confidence as a learner and an educator. For the first time in a long time, since I was a misunderstood girl at the arts school, I felt capable and successful as a learner. The methods employed in the program, the programmatic philosophy, spoke to me and moved me forward, and allowed me to follow a well-mapped out direction. As a learner, I was given respect and what I would like to call 'freedom within a framework', as though I were laying down a foundation and constructing my practice with my own hands and body (Rosehart, 2013). "I began to reflect critically on my own practice and examine more thoughtfully the powerful role that the arts played in the teaching and learning process. I felt more capable of creating meaningful artistic experiences for my students and developed the ability to integrate authentically the arts into my practice" (Rosehart, 2013, p. xxi).

Like the Mobius strip, I was able to connect my learning spirit (Battiste, 2013) with my teaching spirit. As Leggo (2008) so eloquently reminds us, "There is no need to separate the personal from the professional any more than we can separate the dancer from the dance. The personal and the professional always work together, in tandem, in union, in the way of complementary angles" (p. 5). In this way, the program brought me home to myself.

Professional exploration within our inter-institutional space enables members of our community to share more openly, speak their minds within a safe community where judgment is withheld, and there is mutual respect and understanding, potentially enabling transformation. As exemplified above, within this space we have the opportunity to re-imagine our practices, be ourselves, and explore potentialities. The work we do within our inter-institutional community re-inspires us and gives us strength to grow and transform as individuals. When we name and examine the shared humanity of our work alone and together, the collective conversation has the potential to return us to a place of intentionality remembering why we went into teaching in the first place. There is a path to becoming reconnected to one's self, a way of knowing that becomes grounded in theory, which strengthens and affirms our practice. As Sue observed, "People who have lost their lustre in the work because of institutional demands [are] brought back to this place of intention. They are re-inspired with hopefulness to continue, and find confidence through connections with others." Within these spaces educators are transformed, come back to themselves, or become more grounded, confident, and affirmed in their practice (see Hill & MacDonald, 2016).

The Empowering Space
Our liminal space in-between the university and school districts is akin to what Waldrop (1992) refers to as "a space of interaction – a space of imagination. . . a place where a complex system (people) can be spontaneous, adaptive and alive" (p. 12). The K–12 inservice teachers enter

the program seeking renewal, collegiality, challenge and stimulation, as well as certification. We endeavour in Field Programs to co-construct communities of practice, to create a place where teacher-learners can express their feelings, ideas, questions, traditions, beliefs, and customs, and become empowered as practitioners, and to create a 'brave space' (Arao & Clemens, 2013) where learners can thrive.

The GDE program provides the space, or more specifically, the institutional 'permission' (as sanctioned by the university) to explore one's practice. A feeling of empowerment encourages teachers to focus on what is important to stimulate growth in relation to their own practice. The path of self-directed inquiry, grounded in research, sustained through reflection and sharing is what brings value and commitment to the journey. The ungraded nature of the GDE program further creates space for deeper engagement and work that really matters. Through a recursive, reflective, inquiry cycle, such questions as, "Is this enough. Am I enough?" are often asked. It is where vulnerability strengthens the practitioner. Removing the focus from grades to process is freeing and liberating in pursuing a self-directed path of inquiry as a teacher-practitioner.

The structures of the school where a teacher practitioner is employed may not always align with these same intentions. There are many factors that exist in schools, such as school goals, administration support, district goals, timetabling, resource allocation, and funding which are inherently designed to meet the needs of the school. Institutional constraints that are dictated or expected may stifle, or "throw a cage", as Don would say, over teachers' agency. We have found however, that as teachers become deeply engaged in their inquiry while working alongside colleagues to situate emerging knowledge and beliefs, a sense of ownership, voice, and agency emerges. It is from this place that they begin to challenge the structures of schooling that no longer serve children and move toward changing these structures in their classrooms and beyond. Finding agency to question the system that we are in, through inquiry, conversations, readings, and playful irreverence, opens doors to new possibilities. Creative maladjustment is the art of resisting the demands of the system that are inequitable and unjust while still remaining caring and compassionate (Kohl, 1995). It does not however, stand on its own but is embedded in the process of naming, examining, resisting and transforming (in community) that Maxine Greene (1988) speaks of in her work: "We need to create public spaces in which we can openly appear before one another as who we are – to name, to examine, to resist, to transform and ultimately embrace our world" (p. 115).

The following poem, written by Belinda, entitled *Between*, highlights many of the potentialities for being and becoming inherent within our liminal, hybrid, inter-institutional space, and speaks metaphorically to the empowering and transformative lived experiences we strive to create in Field Programs.

	between	
in here a teacher	I am	in there a learner
in here staff meetings	I attend	in there conversations
in here about rubrics	I learn	in there about my practice
in here emails from colleagues	I read	in there articles that ground me
in here report cards	I write	in there about my learning journey
in here the school goals	I review	in there my goals
in here on the situation at recess	I reflect	in there on my educational philosophy
in here the majority	I follow	in there my heart

Conclusion

The Field Programs unit within the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University is a threshold of sorts between the university and the school districts. Between these institutions resides a liminal, undefined, smooth space in which restrictive and constraining structures can be disrupted and an infinite number of potentialities can be actualized. It is a space characterized by dimensions of relationality, inquiry, transformation and empowerment that

extend rhizomatically outwards, breathing new life into practice. Something extraordinary occurs in this space – institutional roles, scripts and hierarchies are ruptured, collaboration and autonomy are heightened, vulnerability, risk taking, tenacity, and creative maladjustment (Kohl, 1995) are encouraged, and teachers grow into themselves, come back to themselves, and become grounded within themselves, as well as within their learning communities. Despite ongoing inter (and intra) institutional tensions that often consume much energy requiring innovative work-arounds and creative problem solving within our inservice, graduate level teacher-education program, we have come to appreciate the way in which our inter-institutional partnership creates a space that invites a different sort of engagement and inspires teachers to think differently about their practice and to catalyze change within their classrooms and communities. Focusing on the creative forces within our campus-community collaboration has enabled us to look beyond our tensions and common goals to recognize the transformative potentiality inherent within the spaces *in-between*.

About the Authors

Cher Hill (*corresponding author*) is an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice and the Coordinator of the MEd and EdD programs in Educational Practice in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. Her primary areas of expertise include practitioner inquiry, reflective practice, and in-service teacher education. Her current research utilizes new materialist theories to go beyond reflective practice and invite diffraction into the field of professional learning. Email: chill@sfu.ca

Margaret MacDonald is a former Director of Field Programs and an Associate Professor at Simon Fraser University whose research interests include Intergenerational Programs, Pedagogical Documentation, and Curriculum Development in early childhood education. As part of her intergenerational focus she has been working with members of the Sto:lo and Sts'ailes First Nation in British Columbia to document language and cultural revitalization since 2007.

Sue Montabello is a passionate teacher, mentor and community leader. She has worked collaboratively with Simon Fraser University for over 20 years to facilitate teacher education through her various roles including Faculty Associate, Sessional Instructor, and Cohort Facilitator.

Paula Rosehart is the Graduate Diploma in Education, Field Programs, Academic Coordinator, at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada. She holds a PhD,

M.Ed., and a Graduate Diploma in Arts Education from Simon Fraser University. Her research pertains to teacher education and in particular to the somatics/aesthetics of teacher education (Somataphorical Inquiry), teacher-inquiry, arts-based curriculum development, holistic education, and creative, aesthetic re-representation of learning and teaching.

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Campus Food Movements and Community Service-Learning: Mobilizing Partnerships through the Good Food Challenge in Canada

Charles Z. Levkoe, Simon Erlich, Sarah Archibald

ABSTRACT   This paper addresses the growing collaborations among students, faculty and community-practitioners attempting to build healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems within post-secondary institutions and the ensuing implications for food movements. Specifically, we investigate the role of Community Service-Learning (CSL) in fostering food systems change through a case study of Planning for Change: Community Development in Action, a graduate CSL course at the University of Toronto and a partnership with Meal Exchange, a national non-profit organization, to develop the Good Food Challenge on college and university campuses across Canada. Using CSL to support social movements is not uncommon; however, there has been little application of these pedagogical approaches within the field of food systems studies, especially in the area of campus food movements that engage diverse groups in mutually beneficial and transformative projects. Our description of the case study is organized into three categories that focus on key sites of theory, practice and reflection: classroom spaces, community spaces and spaces of engagement. Through reflection on these spaces, we demonstrate the potential of CSL to contribute to a more robust sustainable food movement through vibrant academic and community partnerships. Together, these spaces demonstrate how campus-based collaborations can be strategic levers in shifting towards more healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems.

KEYWORDS   community service-learning; critical praxis; food systems; spaces of engagement; social movements

The corporate, industrial food system has come under immense scrutiny because of the social, economic and ecological problems it contributes to across the globe (Weis, 2007; Akram-Lodhi, 2013). Now, more than ever, responses are needed that can address pressing concerns and determine new and creative ways to develop collaborative solutions that reach across sectors, scales and places. While there is significant scholarly discussion on social movements aimed at transforming the dominant food system (Wittman, Desmarais, & Wiebe, 2010; Goodman, DuPuis, & Goodman, 2012; Levkoe, 2014), it is vital to continue documenting and critically assessing existing and innovative approaches to critical analysis and action. An underreported yet influential area of activity is the collaborations among students, faculty, and community-practitioners building healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems within post-secondary

institutions and the ensuing implications for food movements more broadly (for example, see Rojas, Richer, & Wagner, 2007; Andrée, Kepkiewicz, Levkoe, Brynne, & Kneen, 2014; Levkoe et al., 2016).

This paper investigates the role that Community Service-Learning (CSL) can and does play in fostering food systems change. We examine how CSL can be used as a strategic lever for building healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems that reflect contemporary research and experiences. To explore these opportunities, we draw on Planning for Change: Community Development in Action, a graduate level CSL course at the University of Toronto and a partnership with Meal Exchange, a Canadian non-profit organization, to support the development of the Good Food Challenge on college and university campuses across Canada. Using CSL to support social movements is not new; however, there has been little application of these pedagogical approaches within the field of food systems studies, especially in the area of campus food movements that engage diverse groups in mutually beneficial and transformative projects.

The description and analysis of our case study reflects the experiences of the three authors as project participants: Charles Levkoe, a Planning for Change course instructor, Sarah Archibald, Meal Exchange's Special Programs Coordinator, and Simon Erlich, a University of Toronto graduate student. Our description of the case study is organized into three categories that represent key spaces concurrent with CSL praxis: the classroom, the community, and spaces of engagement. Reflecting on these spaces, we demonstrate the potential of CSL to contribute to more robust food movements through vibrant academic and community partnerships. Together, these spaces express key outcomes as well as our learnings about the successes, and limitations of engaging in this kind of work.

We begin by providing an overview of the context of campus food systems, the campus as a site of movement building, and CSL as a contribution to social change. This will then be followed by a discussion of the three interrelated spaces of CSL—the classroom, the community and spaces of engagement—that introduce our case study. Through our discussion of the three spaces, we present a series of collective reflections alongside a critical analysis of the case study. In doing so, we suggest key lessons for ways that CSL can be a valuable tool for mobilizing around food system change as well as ways these learnings might apply to other CSL partnerships and progressive movements.

Campus Food Systems

Post-secondary institutions' food systems are comprised of a series of interdependent relationships that bring food to the plates of students, staff, faculty and other groups participating in activities on campus. Depending on the specific institution, this can include production, harvesting and procurement of food, processing/preparation, distribution, sales, and the management of food waste. Despite some exceptions, most campuses have become deeply immersed in the corporate, industrial food system underpinned by the dominant economic logic of "pushing product for profit" (Winson, 2013, p. 111). Saddled with the task of feeding a large population that is often isolated from other food sources, many campuses

have settled for providing cheap, energy-dense, nutrient-poor food (Martin & Andrée, 2012). This context provides a host of challenges and subsequent opportunities for critical analysis and action.

In the 2013-2014 academic year, there were over 2,000,000 students enrolled in 135 public colleges and 100 public and private not-for-profit universities across Canada (Statistics Canada, 2015). This represents almost 6% of the country's population. For many students living on campus, purchasing a meal plan is mandatory, and for universities and colleges located outside of an urban core, there are few other options to access food. These meal plans generally range in annual cost from CAD$500 for a limited number of meals to CAD$6,000 for unlimited

Meal Exchange's Good Food Wheel depicts the ways that "Good Food" can impact food systems, including producers, the earth, consumers and communities.

food access (CFS, 2013; University of Guelph Student Financial Services, 2017; University of Toronto Food Services, 2017; University of Victoria Food Services, 2017). Together this captive market contributes CAN$1.148 billion dollars in sales from food services in Canadian educational institutions (fsStrategy, 2016).

The sheer scale, complexity, and logistical requirements of most of these operations have encouraged many post-secondary institutions to outsource the majority of their food services (Green & Asinjo, 2015). In Ontario post-secondary institutions, over 75% of all food sales are subcontracted to large food service corporations, such as Aramark, Sodexo, and Compass Group (Peters, 2015; Mohawk College Sustainability Office, 2017). Food service corporations typically operate on a profit-loss model, and are responsible for ensuring profitability to their shareholders and clients (i.e., campus food services). This model affords significant decision-making control over key areas, including hours of operation, staffing, marketing, menu development, and food purchasing decisions. Glickman et al. (2007) found that "outsourcing has become a widely-accepted practice that provides substantial cost-saving benefits for institutions; this has become particularly important as the growth in funding for higher education has slowed and in some respects declined" (p. 440). According to Martin and Andrée (2012), corporate consolidation "has produced a highly concentrated institutional food sector" (p. 168), where any "new entrants to the sector are at a disadvantage because of the established economies of scale and supply chains, and most importantly, capital". Subcontracted corporations are able to maintain their domination of campus food systems by requiring prospective food service providers to pay for access to campuses (Burley et al., 2016). Once under contract with a corporate food vendor, control remains with the corporation, which results in more centralized supply chains, with food service providers reliant on cash

rebates from large food manufacturers (Martin & Andrée, 2012). This corporate food provision supports the industrial food system, in contrast to most college and university mandates of playing a leadership role in supporting local economies, promoting environmental stewardship, and considering the health and welfare of their campus population and the broader community.

Despite the problematic attributes of the corporate, industrial food system that proliferate on college and university campuses, there are opportunities to reimagine and change the role of food for post-secondary institutions. Many have argued that public universities are in a unique position, and have an obligation, to take a leadership role in creating local and sustainable food supply chains as a way to drive change (Friedmann, 2007; Pothukuchi & Molnar, 2015). Stahlbrand (2016) argues that, "universities must respond to a client group–students–who increasingly demand values beyond price (including fair labour practices, environmental stewardship and animal welfare, among others) in food procurement and university policy generally" (p. 34). Further, Glickman et al. (2007) argue that incentives exist toward moving away from outsourcing food and that by keeping parts of the food system in-house, there is a potential for higher profits as well as greater flexibility and control over food purchasing and labour. Beyond their purchasing power, DeBliek, Strohbehn, Clapp, & Levandowski, (2010) suggest that colleges and universities can also contribute valuable research, analysis and knowledge dissemination about alternative food systems within society more broadly. Initiatives that support localizing campus food systems not only provide a potential for food system change through education and knowledge dissemination, but also demonstrate that campuses represent powerful sites of social movement building.

Building on these kinds of opportunities, Meal Exchange is a Canadian non-profit organization that has been supporting students across Canada developing innovative solutions that address food insecurity and food system sustainability on campuses for over twenty-five years. Most recently, Meal Exchange's Good Food Challenge program has leveraged students, researchers, campus community members and food services, to push post-secondary food systems towards greater sustainability, community impact and social-wellbeing.

The Campus as a Site of Social Movement Building

Post-secondary institutions in North America have long served as spaces for social movement building with a dramatic expression of activism in the late 1960s addressing areas such as free speech, civil rights, and anti-war sentiments (Levitt, 1984; Barnhardt, 2014). While the sociopolitical issues that fuel today's campus activism have shifted, the recognition of campuses as locations of resistance and as drivers of change remains. Pothukuchi and Molnar (2015) argues, "Universities serve functions besides training young people for future employment, helping them develop their potential, and replicating society and culture; they also have roles in transforming society and creating more just arrangements" (p. 342). Doherty, Cawood, and Dooris (2011) adds that post-secondary education students and faculty have a unique opportunity to create change as "they not only have the capacity to make and embed changes to their own practice, but are also in a position to educate and facilitate learning towards global citizenship of the next generation of decision-makers" (p. 223). In short, colleges and

universities are in a unique position to challenge dominant paradigms and to present new alternatives to critical present-day issues. Equipped with an engaged student population, supportive faculty, and a wealth of intellectual and financial resources, they have an opportunity to engage in critical thinking and experimentation with new practices. More recently, Canadian campus activism has focused on concerns regarding rising tuition costs and student debt, divestment from fossil fuel, access and opportunity for immigrant students,

Students use Meal Exchange's Good Food Wheel to discuss food systems on their campuses

and sexual assault on campus (Barnhardt, 2014). Further, post-secondary campuses are held in general high-regard amongst the public and are often looked to for critical perspectives and solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges.

As food systems become an increasing point of contention, campus food movements have gained significant traction. According to Roberta Anderson of the U.S. Food Alliance (quoted in Barlett, 2017), "Colleges and universities are leading the sustainable food movement and have been for a while" (p. 189). Through food, students have been able to address a range of critical and interconnected social, economic, and ecological issues (Burley et al., 2016). Green and Asinjo (2015) agree that college and university campuses are an ideal catalyst for food system transformation for three reasons:

> First, they nurture student engagement, raising questions of ethics and sustainability. Second, they can prioritize research, scholarship, and extension work on alternative food production and consumption. Third, they are central institutions that can impact economies by shifting some of their purchasing to local, fair, or sustainably produced foods" (p. 22).

There are a number of emerging examples of postsecondary institutions adopting sustainability principles within their food systems. Based on a study of campus food services across the United States, Barlett (2017) demonstrates, "[f]rom a general alternative food intentionality, some campuses have moved to comprehensive policies involving lists of desired criteria and websites naming farmers who supply the cafeteria" (p. 189). Campbell, DiPietro, and Remar (2014) show that students are increasingly willing to spend more money to access local and sustainable food products. This is supported by research from Meal Exchange's Campus Food Report Card, which noted that 80% of student respondents felt it was important for their campus to source and provide sustainably-grown foods (Maynard, Lahey, & Abraham, 2018). A study

University students visit an organic, community-based, and humane farm in Ontario, to see the values of the Good Food Challenge in action

from Mohawk College Sustainability Offices (2017) showed that over 85% of students surveyed believed that it was important to serve local food on campuses as a contribution to sustainability initiatives. Studies have also documented numerous examples of students driving alternative food systems, including the establishment of campus farmers markets, gardens, food cooperatives, and food justice initiatives (Berg, Ciotobaru, & Pirri, 2014). Barlett (2011) observes there is also a growing movement amongst post-secondary campuses

towards sustainable food systems as demonstrated by the number of institutions with formal commitments to sustainable food purchasing. At the University of Toronto, a partnership with Local Food Plus in 2006, required corporate food providers to use local and sustainable products for an increasing portion of its 60,000 students' meals (Friedmann, 2007). Since 2007, the Real Food Challenge in the U.S. has been mobilizing students to secure commitments from campus Presidents to include 20% or more "real food" (e.g., food that is healthy, equitable and sustainability) by 2020. As of late 2017, over 40 campuses pledged to shift more than US$60,000,000 in food purchasing towards "real food" (The Real Food Challenge, n.d.) and ten University of California campuses have already met the 20% goal (Thill, 2017). This large-scale national campus mobilization provided the model for Meal Exchange to develop the Good Food Challenge, recognizing how campus procurement provides substantial economic, ecological and social impacts across the country (Porter, 2015). Building on popular momentum for food systems work along with the unique positioning and capacities of colleges and universities, CSL presents an important opportunity to maximize the benefits of campuses as sites of social movement building.

Community Service-Learning and Social Change

CSL involves the interweaving of classroom instruction and community service in an effort to bridge learning around both theory and action (Chambers, 2009). Unlike volunteering or internships, CSL is a pedagogical model where students engage in ongoing critical reflection that connects theoretical learning and community-based experiences (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). This approach demands strong curricular connections, as well as the need to provide mutual benefit to both students and community partners. Butin (2010) identifies CSL as having the potential to be a key form of academic engagement, as well as a tool for building civic responsibility. CSL has its roots in experiential and liberatory education (Freire, 1970; Hayes, 2011) and has been hailed as an engaged pedagogical approach that has the potential to

develop students' skills, critical thinking and self-discovery along with supporting community needs (Knapp, Fisher, & Levesque-Bristol, 2010; Greenwood, 2015).

CSL increasingly connects with, and contributes to a range of social movements (for example, see Corteau, Haynes, & Ryan, 2005; Hayes, 2011). Many scholars have documented ways that CSL can be a democratizing and counterhegemonic practice that challenges unjust power relations, making the university a key site of struggle (Cipolle, 2004; Mitchell, 2008; Porfilio & Hickman, 2011; Cahuas & Levkoe, 2017). Bickford and Reynolds (2002) explain that CSL can "give learners a broader understanding of dissent and will encourage them to envision themselves as actors or agents in political arenas" (p. 30). Hayes (2011) describes this potential as "experiential learning that empowers people to recognize, expose and eradicate the social injustices that structure their lives within a hegemonic social order" (p. 11). While many students come to post-secondary education with idealistic intentions to promote social change, CSL can help facilitate practical and aspirational momentum, ground ideas in real-world issues, and contribute administrative and intellectual support for guidance and viability (Burley et al., 2016).

In this paper, we build on this context to demonstrate ways that CSL can be a valuable and strategic tool for developing meaningful partnerships to impact campus food systems and as a site for broader social movement building. Our analysis of the partnership developed between Planning for Change and Meal Exchange demonstrates the ways that theory attained in the classroom and practice in the community intersect through spaces of engagement. Through an analysis of our case study of the Good Food Challenge in Canada, we argue that it is the interconnection of these three spaces where the greatest impact is made.

Spaces of Analysis: Planning for Change, Meal Exchange, and the Good Food Challenge

The examination of our case study is based on reflections and analysis of our collective experience focusing on three spaces representing the key sites of theory, practice and reflection of CSL: classroom spaces, community spaces, and spaces of engagement. Our reflection involved a process of collaborative autoethnography that included individual self-reflection, as well as inter-subjective analysis of our shared experiences (Chang, Ngunjiri, & Hernandez, 2016). We used this approach to explore our own experiences in relation to each other and to our academic and community-based colleagues, through two conference presentations and sharing drafts of this paper. The information provided in this section is a synthesis of these reflections.

Classroom spaces

The first space describes what happened in the classroom, focusing on the activities that took place primarily within the Planning for Change seminars and the interaction with theory and ideas.

Planning for Change is an eight-month, graduate-level CSL course based in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. The course consists of in-class

seminars, as well as each student being placed—as an individual or as part of a group—within a community-based organization. Work with the community partner occurred as an additional commitment to the course work at approximately five hours per week. Planning for Change has been offered five times since 2011 and has worked with over eighty students and forty different community partners. The participating community partners are primarily non-profit organizations with an explicit mandate that incorporate the course's three core themes: social justice, civic engagement, and community development. Originally established by faculty as a way to engage with community-development initiatives in the City of Toronto, Planning for Change depends on the support of the university's Centre for Community Partnerships and the commitment of the community partners that contribute their valuable time and knowledge to the CSL process. The course's objectives are to enable students to gain practical experience, assist community groups to design and implement projects chosen by the community itself, reflect critically on their education and their role as a student and citizen, and to build longer-term commitments to communities and neighbourhoods throughout Toronto (for other descriptions of Planning for Change see Levkoe, Brail, & Danier, 2014; Levkoe, Friendly, & Danier, 2018.

Theories examining the merits and limitations of CSL, the issues of political economy, social justice, and community development were integrated through the provision of weekly course readings and assignments. This took the form of salient topics related to the political, economic, and social contexts that structure community development, as well as research methods and other skills related to working with community partners. For example, topics included discussing state restructuring and the subsequent growth of the non-profit sector, cultural and racial diversity in the city in relation to students' research and placements, democracy and civil-society engagement, community-based participatory action research, and advocacy in the context of community development. After initial lectures, students engaged in group discussions where they would be given the opportunity to reflect on their projects and experiences in light of the theoretical concepts presented through the readings. This provided reinforcement for the content of the readings while also promoting reflection on how concepts related to their placement experiences. Students enrolled in Planning for Change represented a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, which provided a diversity of expertise and skills for community partners. In the case of Meal Exchange, students came with practical and academic training in public health, geography and community planning.

The structure of the classes also helped to ensure productive work was being carried out in an achievable and equitable way. At the beginning of the course, students, instructors and the community partners developed a Collaboration Agreement to ensure clear expectations, an attainable work plan and a framework for accountability. Further, a timeline was developed to facilitate open communication help ensure that the work was achievable and to provide all partners with a roadmap of expected deadlines. Throughout the eight-months of the course, community partners were invited to attend seminars, give guest lectures, and select course readings and topics. For example, on multiple occasions, representatives from the partner organizations joined the class to provide presentations on key topics and to participate in

discussions. On other occasions, the students met at a particular organization's workplace to participate in tours and engage with community members through films and presentations. This enabled community partners to influence classroom learning as well as offer insight into specific challenges they encountered in their daily work. This process required significant flexibility and willingness to adapt on the part of the course instructors and students.

The classroom space also facilitated sharing campus resources with community partners including access to peer reviewed journals, books, and new research. Having access to the vast university library system at the University of Toronto was of particular value for the Good Food Challenge—the research demanded academic integrity and the accessing of a variety of resources that would have put significant financial stress on a small non-profit organization. The classroom also offered the opportunity for awareness building, support, and constructive criticism for students' projects. This was facilitated via updates provided to classmates throughout the year, informal conversations and reflections that happened both during and after classroom activities, and—most prominently—through presentations given at the course's conclusion. In some instances, these conversations led to suggestions for new ways of thinking about the projects as the students enrolled in Planning for Change had varying degrees of familiarity with the issues. Outside of providing an avenue to receive constructive feedback, sharing information required the students to prepare the research in a way that was accessible to an audience not familiar with the project. These interactions furthered awareness of the Good Food Challenge and its goals to an audience of highly engaged burgeoning academics and professionals. This also helped to mobilize the work of Meal Exchange and its goals of food system change through increased awareness, engagement, and student mobilization.

Community spaces

The description of the community space focuses on practice - the work that took place with Meal Exchange. Through Planning for Change, each graduate student was placed with a community partner after a matching process that assessed their skills and interests in relation to the needs of the organization. This process involved students selecting their top choices (after reviewing project descriptions) and meeting the community partners in-person during the first class. Instructors then conducted one-on-one interviews with each student to discuss why they would be a good fit within the selected placement. The instructors spent time during the summer months building relationships with different organizations to develop the projects and thus, understood what each position required. Many of the partnerships were based on preexisting relationships through the instructors' research and community work. In the case of Meal Exchange, Charles Levkoe had worked with staff in the past and was familiar with the organization's work and approach.

Since 1993, Meal Exchange has worked to mobilize post-secondary students across Canada to build healthier, more equitable and sustainable food systems. Meal Exchange's programs address issues of food insecurity, social justice, and environmental sustainability across the food value chain, starting with the campus food system. With more than 40 universities and

colleges involved in the Meal Exchange network, campuses serve as both the living laboratory for students to run programs, and as a potential model for other public institutions such as hospitals and municipalities. Over 100,000 students are reached by these efforts each year and over 6,000 students volunteer through participating in or running programs and providing valuable research through community-campus partnerships. The common thread throughout Meal Exchange's history has been to engage students' motivation for social change, taking advantage of academic potential and creating viable models of healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems.

Recognizing the purchasing power that campuses have, and the subsequent impacts on other sectors and institutions, Meal Exchange developed the Campus Food Systems project in 2011. The Campus Food Systems project brought together campus administrators, students, faculty, food services, and local organizations to shift procurement toward more local and sustainable food systems. While this project gained localized success on specific campuses, Meal Exchange aspired to develop a program that could be scaled-out to every campus across the country. Looking to the US's Real Food Challenge as a model for national-scale impact, Meal Exchange staff began discussions with their US allies to understand how the campaign was being used to measure and shift US$1 billion of campus food budgets towards pillars of local and community-based, fair, ecologically-sound, and humane food (Real Food Challenge, n.d.). With the strong relationships and networks that Meal Exchange had created, they decided to adapt the Real Food Challenge project to reflect the context of campus food systems in Canada. In doing so, the organization established that it needed to: (i) craft position papers to outline the pillars of student values to develop "Good Food Standards"; and, (ii) review all certifications and agricultural programs in Canada to develop the Good Food Guide of acceptable products. The position papers, needed to reflect the latest research and experiences from all actors across food systems. Recognizing the importance of appropriately adapting the Real Food Challenge program to the Canadian cultural, ecological, and political landscape, dedicated researchers and writers with significant knowledge, skills and capacity were needed. Meal Exchange turned to an existing partnership with Planning for Change to garner support for a series of position papers that would establish the foundation for the Good Food Challenge in Canada.

The primary tasks of the Planning for Change students were to research, develop, and draft a series of position papers building on the four pillars from the US Real Food Challenge: (a) Community-Based Action, advocating for supporting local producers and businesses and creating community connections between consumers and producers; (b) Social Justice, acknowledging and advocating for the improvement of wage gaps and poor working conditions existing within the mainstream food system; (c) Ecologically-Sound Practices, seeking to promote food products that are environmentally sustainable; and, (d) Humane Treatment, acknowledging the often poor treatment of animals raised for food production and advocating for more humane treatment.

To create the four positions papers[1], students needed to understand the organizational context of Meal Exchange and the overall objectives and goals of the Good Food Challenge. Through Planning for Change, students spent time connecting with a wide range of individuals involved in the Meal Exchange network, including other students across Canada, local producers, activists, and members of partner organizations involved in different food systems work. These connections helped provide the information needed to develop a research outline for the position papers within the Canadian context. Meal Exchange staff provided the students with foundational documents, including the original US positions papers and organizational strategy documentation to support the research. Each draft paper consisted of rigorous academic research, which leveraged the graduate-student's research skills, integrated with food movement values, tangible qualifiers for assessing different food products, and connections with existing third-party certifications that align with the qualifiers. The position papers were then reviewed by a group of scholars, community partners, and students with experience relevant to each individual paper. The position papers defined a list of formal criteria that eventually became the Good Food Guide; this in turn became the basis for the Good Food Calculator, a tool used for auditing food procurement dollars on campuses.

Beyond the research being conducted and the advancement of the Good Food Challenge, the community space offered both students and Meal Exchange staff a range of professional development experiences. For example, students gained exposure to the realities of working in the non-profit sector, practical research skills beyond the academy, and built valuable networks with other students, professors, and practitioners in the field. Meal Exchange staff gained practical management experience as they were tasked with supervising students, conducting evaluations, and organizing multiple schedules. In addition, staff was exposed to new academic networks and research methods that played a key role in their ongoing work.

Spaces of engagement

Spaces of engagement are spaces where classroom learnings and community actions intertwine. While internships and volunteer placements are able to offer learning in the community, and traditional post-secondary education courses focus on learning in the classroom, it is through critical praxis that CSL has the power to impact participants and society more broadly.

Spaces of engagement were made possible by the way Planning for Change students integrated theory acquired from in-class lectures, readings, and discussions into their community placements, and vice versa. Students applied their learnings to have more tangible impacts through a process of critical praxis—the intersection where theory and practice opens the possibility for both personal learning and social change (Wakefield, 2007). One salient example of critical praxis took the form of students leveraging their previous classroom knowledge to assess and address concerns about health, equity, and sustainability within food supply chains. This was most evident in the development of positions papers that embodied an intersection of both theory and practice, as the students were able to find and integrate literature they

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[1] Meal Exchange has since worked with a team of students to write two additional papers on pillars of Sustainable Seafood and Food Sovereignty.

had gained exposure to through their current and previous academic training. Each paper combined thorough literature reviews and background research, along with a scan of existing certifications and initiatives to shift the value proposition of campus food systems. Through classroom learning, research, and practice, students were able to support the Good Food Challenge by leveraging their academic experiences.

Another example of critical praxis within the spaces of engagement was students' awareness of the broader context within which Meal Exchange was working. Specifically, course readings addressed issues surrounding the neoliberalization of the non-profit sector (see Trudeau, 2009), which were reinforced through observations of Meal Exchange's dependence on highly competitive grant funding and increasing responsibility towards social justice and ecological sustainability to fill a void left by government cutbacks (Peck & Tickell, 2002). By utilizing weekly reflection assignments and bringing these observations into classroom discussions, the students were better able to contextualize not only the need for non-profits to provide vital social functions, but also the ways they can relieve pressure on developing structural changes. This also enabled the students and Meal Exchange staff to apply these critical ideas to the development and implementation of the Good Food Challenge.

A key component of CSL that shaped spaces of engagement was the use of critical reflection techniques to make sense of the experiences, in relation to the different spaces students moved through during the course. This was done formally through integrating class assignments and community outputs using various tools (both oral and written), and informally through conversations with other students, instructors, and community partners. Instructors provided feedback through one-on-one meetings with students, in-class conversations, e-mails, and through class assignments. Community partners also provided students with regular feedback during placements via weekly meetings, along with written evaluations to instructors.

For the Good Food Challenge, leveraging various forms of feedback became an integral method for the advancement of the position papers. Instructors had specific interest and expertise in the area of sustainable food systems, and were able to provide input, suggest resources, broker connections to other academics or community groups involved in related work, and edit and provide constructive feedback on the position papers. Graduate students were able to use experiences from their academic training to improve the quality of their work and, as a result, were better able to meet the needs of the project.

Overall, Planning for Change played a vital role in the development of the Good Food Challenge in Canada. Beyond the direct contributions from the CSL course, Meal Exchange has continued to engage students in contributing academic knowledge and skills through a variety of means: other CSL courses, independent research projects, summer job programs, and volunteer positions. With the support of the Planning for Change partnership, Meal Exchange established a strong foundation for the project and was able to leverage its expertise in student engagement and multi-stakeholder collaboration to pilot the Good Food Challenge at fourteen campuses across Canada in 2017. Through this pilot, students audited over CA$12,500,000 of campus food procurement budgets and provided a number of recommended shifts in procurement.

Discussion

Course successes

Through the preceding discussion of the three spaces of analysis, we have described the ways CSL has played an important role in the partnership between Planning for Change and Meal Exchange in supporting the development of the Good Food Challenge. This partnership demonstrates how campus-based food movements and community-academic collaborations can act as strategic levers in shifting towards more healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems. In general, we found the expertise students brought to their work contributed valuable knowledge to the direction of the Good Food Challenge, both in respect to the immediate outputs and to the development of new and existing relationships. It was also extremely valuable for the students' personal learning and professional development—they were able to conduct applied research on a topic of interest, find an avenue to use their academic skills in a practical and meaningful way.

These collective reflections point to the importance of Planning for Change, and CSL more broadly, in acting as a broker in relationships between community and academic partners and the private sector. The extension of localized campus action and knowledge to a national network of campuses and social movements allowed the integration of theoretical concepts and practical action to go well beyond the learning taking place in the traditional classroom. These partnerships also facilitated introductions to leading researchers and organizations in each of the Good Food Challenge's position paper topics.

Moreover, this specific CSL experience prepared Meal Exchange staff to engage in effective academic partnerships with other courses and independent student researchers. In turn, this helped ensure realistic expectations of outcomes and more meaningful engagements for students and faculty. In the case of Planning for Change, this was made possible through long-term relationships developed between community and academic partners and their commitments to collaboration. An eight-month course provided a timeframe that enabled a substantial amount of work to be accomplished, and for Meal Exchange staff to work closely with students to identify their skills and interests. Meanwhile, the students were able to become acquainted with the work of the community partner in-depth. Building off the success of Planning for Change, Meal Exchange has continued to work closely with hundreds of students and instructors across Canada to provide feedback on the Good Food Challenge position papers and related materials.

The strength of these relationships is demonstrated through work that is community driven, student-led, academically informed, and tested back in the community. The partnership between Planning for Change and Meal Exchange established the foundation for the Good Food Challenge in Canada. With access to the knowledge and skills of students, faculty, and university resources, the Good Food Challenge has played a key role in significantly increasing the critical analysis of the dominant Canadian food system while demonstrating viable alternatives.

Analysts have argued that building social movements around food systems change

requires multi-sectoral engagement that can benefit immensely from academic and community partnerships (Levkoe, 2014; Andrée et al., 2016). As demonstrated through this case study of Planning for Change, strong relationships were established based on personal connection and shared interests in sustainable food systems predating the course, and will likely continue into the future. Additionally, the commitment of the students, instructors, and Meal Exchange staff went well beyond the eight-month timeframe of the project. This is not always possible or even realistic within the structure of a CSL course. Relationships developed through Planning for Change, were more than a simple coincidence, as all participants put extensive effort into moving the relationships in this direction. For Meal Exchange, the partnership was based on open communication regarding the requirements of the course (in respect to the students' needs), but also allowed organizational staff to take the lead in determining the project's direction. This meant both instructors and students needed to be extremely flexible and open to the realities of the project.

Course issues

Despite these successes, there were also a number of tensions that demanded patience and commitment. We identified three key tensions that arose in the work through Planning for Change.

First, one of the most prominent tensions was the reality that both community and academic partners were working with very limited resources. Instructors were obligated to take on more organizational and logistical supports beyond the typical requirements of a graduate-level course. For a non-profit organization, taking on CSL students is a major investment that, in this context, consisted of many hours of preparation and review each week and more support at certain times by Meal Exchange staff, to ensure that research and student contributions were on track with the organizational vision and timelines. Limited time made it difficult for students to participate in the full culture of the organization, which could have been an important learning for the students but also increased their ability to conduct productive and meaningful work. In many cases, students were not able to see projects through to completion, unless they volunteered their own time after the course finished (and this did happen in many cases). Moreover, it can be challenging to consistently train new students every year to integrate into an organization. Having an ongoing relationship through CSL, however, does create easier and more efficient transition as the community and academic partners become more familiar with the dynamics of the partnership.

Second, a tension emerged from asymmetries in students' understandings of, and commitment to, social justice and how it should be applied. While some students entered Planning for Change with strong backgrounds in community development and a theoretical understanding of intersectionality and oppression, there were many students that had not previously considered these ideas. This lead to differences in student motivations for working with a community partner engaged in social change efforts, and misunderstandings of objectives, goals, and critical theory in relation to the practical work being completed. For example, some students were explicit that they joined Planning for Change looking for

employment skills, and were less interested in the transformative potential of the CSL work.

Third, tensions arose around the radical goals of critical pedagogy, as expressed through the intersection of critical theories discussed in class and the instrumental needs of community partners. In some cases, this led to feelings of dissonance and/or disappointment expressed by the students, feeling their work was limited by the immediate requirements of community partners or funders. For example, students often struggled with how to apply critical perspectives of non-profit organizations while also working with and supporting day-to-day operations. This tension relates directly to the challenge of doing transformative work in a neoliberal environment dependent on strategic alliances and competitive fundraising. In the context of the Good Food Challenge, students faced dissonance between the work they were doing and the more radical goals of critical literature they read throughout their university courses. This tension between radical and reformist approaches is also present in debates about food movements at the global scale (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has explored the value of CSL as a pedagogical tool and its contribution to food system change as exemplified through the relationship between Planning for Change, Meal Exchange, and the Good Food Challenge. CSL is unique for its ability to intertwine classroom learning and community action. The intersection and engagement of these spaces is what enables for critical praxis and, ultimately in our context, the development of campus food movements. This is demonstrated through Meal Exchange's adaption of the US Real Food Challenge, mobilizing faculty and students around sustainable food procurement on Canadian college and university campuses. The work conducted through a collaboration of graduate students, a community partner, and two instructors laid the foundation for the Good Food Challenge to flourish in the Canadian social, ecological, and economic context, alongside support from supply-chain corporations, peer organizations, and funders.

As a result of these collaborations, the Good Food Challenge has been piloted on campuses across Canada and, with the support of new partnerships, continues to grow. Behind the successes of this program are the dedicated efforts of staff, students, campus food service providers, and faculty at each campus supporting the research, evaluation, and auditing of campuses food procurement. The pilot phase auditing work that occurred during the writing of this paper provided insight into the current level of 'good food' purchased at these campuses. It also created a baseline from which campuses can strive to improve their food purchasing to meet the health, equity, and sustainability criteria developed in the position papers. As an outcome of the partnership with the Planning for Change CSL class, the Good Food Challenge is becoming a driving force for shifting food procurement on college and university campuses and for campus food movements more broadly.

As the Good Food Challenge expands, it has become less reliant on one-off CSL partnerships to complete primary tasks and connect actors. However, it is important to highlight the instrumental value CSL has had in building campus food movements. The CSL partnership through Planning for Change helped take advantage of students and instructors with extensive

networks who were presently working on food system issues within academic and non-profit sectors. For example, the instructor was able spread awareness of the Good Food Challenge to colleagues who could then further disseminated awareness to students. These students, in turn, spread awareness about the initiative on their own campuses and, through connections with other students, at other campuses. Faculty members were also able to become involved through reviewing the position papers and providing feedback. Students and faculty together created localized Good Food Challenge initiatives using the model created by CSL students and Meal Exchange (both independently and through course work), contributing to the larger food movement. To date, over 200 individuals have been involved in the creation of the Good Food Challenge standards including students, faculty, elders, farmers, food services members, and partner organizations, all coordinated by Meal Exchange.

CSL as a model for program dissemination and continuation

This model using CSL as a tool of knowledge co-creation and connectivity could be replicated to work with other progressive movements. Issues common across campuses such as rising tuition fees and fossil fuel divestment represent current examples that could be addressed (and indeed, are being implemented already). Key lessons for mobilizing around food system change require acknowledgement of the diverse actors within food systems and their sometimes-contrasting goals. While food service providers are often profit-driven, this doesn't exclude them from a willingness to reimagine their food procurement strategies to more closely meet the demands of their customers (in this case, predominantly students). As such, for change to happen, campus food system actors must first be provided with a platform to begin discussing what campus food system should look like, and then how a consensus can be reached to bring mutual benefits. The Good Food Challenge provides such a platform by integrating the voices of food producers, actors within the food services industry, non-profit organizations, and academics. Further, collaborations among students, faculty, and community practitioners provide an important leverage point for building healthy, equitable, and sustainable food systems within post-secondary institutions—and for food movements more broadly.

Acknowledgements

About the Authors

Sarah Archibald is the past Program, Operations, and Opportunities Manager with Meal Exchange. She learned from the wisdom of food gathers and growers in seven countries and many nations across Turtle Island. She is currently a graduate student at the University of Toronto and continues to work part-time at Meal Exchange.

Simon Erlich is a former graduate student in geography at the University of Toronto. His research evaluates the transformative potential of retail food cooperatives and their contribution to an alternative food system. He has developed an extensive background in food system studies having also undertaken an undergraduate degree in environmental geography.

Charles Z. Levkoe (*corresponding author*) is the Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Food Systems and assistant professor in the Department of Health Sciences at Lakehead University. His community-engaged research uses a food systems lens to better understand the importance of, and connections between social justice, ecological regeneration, regional economies and active democratic engagement. E-mail: clevkoe@lakeheadu.ca

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Book Reviews

Social Work Artfully: Beyond Borders and Boundaries by Christina Sinding and Hazel Barnes (Eds.). Waterloo, ON: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 2015. 254pp. ISBN BN 978-1-77112-122-4

Social Work Artfully: Beyond Borders and Boundaries emerged from a meeting between Dr. Hazel Barnes (from Johannesburg) and Christine Sinding (from Ontario), while at the 2010 African Research Conference. This fruitful initial encounter, along with subsequent conversations, set the stage for the creation of both a series of international workshops and what would become *Social Work Artfully*.

Both Barnes and Sinding are experts in the field of arts in social justice. As a Senior Research Associate in Drama and Performance Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Research Committee Chair for Drama for Life, Dr. Barnes has authored several works on applied theatre for social justice. Christine Sinding is an Associate Professor at McMaster University and the Director of the School of Social Work, researching the intersections between health, social justice, and arts-informed social sciences. These two distinct backgrounds fostered the creation of international collaborative pedagogical book, with contributions from researchers such as Edwell Kaseke, Edmarié Pretorius, Liebe Kellen, Linda Harms Smith, Moltalepule Nathane-Taulela, and Patti McGillicuddy, among others.

Social Work Artfully weaves together chapters from compassionate authors, ranging from counselors and academics, to dramaturges and A/R/Tographers. These individuals' writings discuss conscientious methods to de-colonize and liberate social work practice, with chapters that discuss societal inequities within postcolonial and post-Apartheid South Africa and Canada and providing examples of creative arts-based methods used to empower the oppressed and marginalized. These methods include integrating drama, forum theatre, introspective journaling, poetry, and visual arts, creating safe and imaginative opportunities to express a plurality of voices, and creating community engagement for collective healing. In my opinion, the book as a whole achieves its purpose by offering examples of arts-informed social justice work, and how such work can craft equitable healing spaces.

The opening section of the book maps out the effects of oppressive practices on social work in Canada and South Africa. In the two chapters titled, "Where we've been and what we are up against", contributors Donna Baines and Edwell Kaseke explore how colonialism still bleeds into welfare and healthcare practices. They describe how colonial paradigms seep into the perpetuation of oppression through the denial of suffering of disenfranchised individuals, intergenerational trauma, and intersectional inequalities. Baines further discusses systematic inequalities in Canadian welfare systems, while Kaseke examines how the detrimental colonial history, experiences of Apartheid, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic shaped social work practices in South Africa. Both chapters end with glimmers of hope when Sinding and Barnes propose that psychodrama, sociodrama, and drama therapy can advance social justice commitments in anti-oppressive social work.[1]

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[1] See Jennings, S. (Ed.). (1987). *Dramatherapy: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge Chapman & Hall, and Moreno, J. L. (1947). *The theatre of spontaneity*. New York: Beacon House.

As a Canadian art therapist who has worked north of the South African border in Gaborone, Botswana, as well as in cities across Canada, these introductory chapters were powerful to read, and helped to clarify my experiences working in hospitals and non-government organizations. Through Baines and Kaseke's examples, I began to deeply understand more about the structure of oppression and how social work (and mental health services) can simultaneously support people with diverse needs, while remaining complicit to larger historical systems of oppression.

In the second section, "Art for Conscientization and Re-storying Selves", authors explore the fundamental critical theoretical frameworks of Augusto Boal and Paulo Friere, providing examples of these theories working out in contemporary practice. Chapters in this section describe working with native South Africans and newcomer migrant youth to develop alternative postcolonial and post-Apartheid narratives through meaningful symbolic metaphors. Such arts-based methods include the use of maps and dolls in counseling ("Art towards critical conscientization and social change during social work and human rights education, in the South African post-apartheid and post-colonial context", by Linda Harms Smith & Motlalepule Nathane-Taluela) and performance-based redress to re-story life narratives ("*When we are naked*: An approach to cathartic experience and emotional autonomy within the post-apartheid South African landscape", by Khayelihle Gumede).

Subsequent sections within this volume include "Art for Community and Cultural Healing, Sustainability and Resilience", "Art for Transforming Social Relations", and "Art for Transforming Social Care Practice". Within each section, focus is placed on how creative arts and community engagement, informed by interdisciplinary indigenous, critical-theory, feminist, post-colonial, and aesthetic ontologies and epistemologies, can provide support to diverse populations. For example, in the chapter, "Towards an Indigenous narrative inquiry: The importance of composite, artful representations", Randy Jackson, Corena Debassige, Renée Masching, and Wanda Whitebird present an indigenous research methodology that braids oral history with symbolism to better understand two-spirited indigenous participants' experiences of living with HIV/AIDS. Ann Fudge Schormans's contribution, "Corroding the comforts of social work knowing", expands on her research with adults with special needs, and invites participants to observe, critique, and alter photographs representing those with disabilities in order to challenge ableism in media.

Social Work Artfully: Beyond Borders and Boundaries begins with a very strong introduction and body, but feels unresolved due to a lack of a dedicated conclusion chapter. Rather, the final chapter, "Making meaning of our experiences of bearing witness to suffering", is an A/R/Tographic exploration of the experiences of suffering in the lives of social workers and nurses. The concepts discussed in this essay imply the use of dedicated art therapy approaches, but the authors (Patti McGillicuddy, Nadine Cross, Gail Mitchell, Nancy Davis Halifax, and Carolyn Plummer) miss an opportunity to mention important literature that would have informed their research. For example, acknowledging and interacting with writings such as Catherine Moon's *Studio Art Therapy: Cultivating the Artist Identity within the Art Therapist* (2001) and Cathy Malchiodi's *Medical Art Therapy with Adults* (1999) could have

provided further context to the authors' approach. While evocative and colourful, and with wording that felt hypnotic and fluid, this closing chapter felt unfinished. Perhaps this was the authors' intent.

Social workers, mental health workers, primary care practitioners, and policy-makers within community health could benefit from reading this book. This could be particularly helpful for practitioners who have foundational, cross-cultural, ethics, and/or arts-based counseling and training. I would also recommend this book be read at a post-graduate level in counseling, community psychology, creative arts therapies, and social work training programs—particularly social justice courses informed by qualitative and arts-based research. While this work highlights anti-colonial practices in Canada and South Africa, colonization, intergenerational trauma, genocide, and oppression are not limited to these countries. The literature can expand different countries' pedagogy, praxis, and public policy implementation. The subtitle *Beyond Borders and Boundaries* holds multilayered meanings, as the chapters expand preconceived boundaries of social work and interdisciplinary practices to include more artful, inclusive, evocative, and creative approaches to community healing.

Haley Toll
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Email: hrmtoll@mun.ca

Journeys to Justice: Reflections on Canadian Christian Activism by Joe Gunn. Toronto: Novalis, 2018. 174pp. ISBN 978-2-89688-467-4

In part one of *Journeys to Justice*, Joe Gunn presents ten chapters consisting of an introduction to a particular area of social concern, followed by a univocal, edited, and transcribed interview with a Canadian Christian activist associated with a prominent campaign within that area. The ten interviewees for this section, entitled, "Where We Have Been", were chosen based on a desire to be inclusive. However, Gunn admits he fell short of that ambition in terms of regional and, most significantly, ethnic diversity. The reason he cites for missing the mark in this regard is that during the second half of the twentieth century, most of the relevant groups profiled positively in this book were headquartered in Toronto and lead by white Canadians. Nonetheless, the chapters forming part one are not purely retrospective. The presented selections concentrate on the topic at hand, but also invariably turn to current events as the majority of the interviewees remain active in social and, now also, ecological activism.

Part two of the book, focusing on "Where We are Going", consists of three contributions authored in response to part one. These elements are tied together by Gunn's introduction, taking the form of a letter to two of his adult children. Both of these twins have volunteered for Citizens for Public Justice, headquartered in Ottawa, where Gunn is now Executive Director. In this introductory-styled letter, Gunn lays out the premises that inform his research project. These include the conviction that the stories of Christian activism from the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s are worth re-telling to a new generation, and that there are continuing needs for such faith-inspired service in support of public justice. In support of these premises, for example, Gunn asserts that, "the antidote to poor theology is good theology (not the abandonment of theology)" (p. 10). This is an increasingly important assertion for future generations of community-engaged scholars and activists, who may under-appreciate the transformative potential in faith-inspired activism, not the least because of the many failings of Canadian Christians and their churches in standing for public justice. Perhaps the most pointed example of this failure is the history of churches and Catholic religious orders forming partnerships with the state to enforce colonialist policies, including the cultural genocide manifest in the Indian Residential School system.

In order to demonstrate the healing potential of theologically-sound ecumenical efforts in addressing social challenges, despite the problematic legacy of Canada's Christian communities, Gunn turns to his interviewees. The subject matter of their chapters is focused, although not exclusively, on ecumenical (often styled in the historic coalitions as "inter-church") efforts to change government and corporate policies to better reflect the common good. The first two chapters are concerned with ecumenical activism in regards to displaced persons—specifically, the welcoming of Chilean refugees in the 1970s, and how that paved the way for the private sponsorship of refugees during the latter part of that same decade. This activism, however, was also informed by a realization of the need for structural change. For example, as Bill Janzen emphasizes, private sponsorship can be read as relieving the Canadian government of

its internal human rights duties. Moreover, he continues, "bringing refugees to resettlement countries" can never be a long term solution to the "the problems of the world" (p. 40).

A number of the other chapters in this section focus on economic justice both at home at abroad. Notable here is the description and reflection upon the work of the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Forum which, amongst other programming, drew on biblical concepts to successfully organize some 640,000 churchgoers in petitioning the G8 countries to ease the debts of countries in the global south during the run-up to the new millennium. The work of the forum also touched on other topics featured in this section, including addressing ecological and gender debt, along with the intimate connections amongst overcoming racism, realizing Indigenous rights, and achieving anything approaching public justice. Covering these topics, section one of this book includes discussions of ecumenical cooperation to: end apartheid in South Africa, decrease violence against women in the Canadian North, increase gender equity worldwide, defend Medicare, and support Project North's work to promote Indigenous Rights, while also walking in solidarity with Dene people to block the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline in the 1970s.

Section two begins with an informative unfolding of the increasingly evident reality that ecumenical activity is no longer sufficient for working for public justice from a faith-inspired perspective in Canada. Herein, David Pfrimmer argues for "multifaithism" as a contextual necessity in work such as the "public accompaniment" (p. 145). This is particularly pressing for Canadian churches, having become all too clear during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process in this country. For Pfrimmer, "public multifaithism changes the faith communities themselves just as they come together to change the world" (p. 152).

A comparable transformation in both the mode and focus of faith-inspired activism is carried forward in the fine chapters by Christine Boyle and Leah Watkiss that end the *Journeys to Justice*. Watkiss plainly points out that many of the retrospective stories shared in part one of the volume are not part of the collective memory of her generation of religious adherents in Canada. She problematizes some assumptions underlying these actions as they are recounted in this volume, and calls for a deep solidarity consisting of "doing with", rather than the "doing for" motif which is so prominent in Christian activism. For her part, Christine Boyle speaks poignantly of how what some bemoan as a regrettable loss of status by Canadian churches, in fact represents an opportunity for prophetic community engagement that at its best can benefit from "…ancient stories. Stories that are older than this electoral system, older than this economic system", to co-create a powerful "reframing of what a good life looks like" (p. 155). In the wake of events like the inauguration of Donald Trump, and all the challenges to public justice he represents, her articulation of this reframing coincided exactly with Boyle's final interview to be approved for ordination in the United Church of Canada.

Each of these chapters provides a generally accessible, suitably nuanced, and praxis-informed discussion of public justice in Canada, inclusive of treatments of the tensions and promises active therein that will hold appeal for engaged scholars. This feature is buttressed by the fact that many of the interviewees hold advanced degrees and have read, communicated, and contributed to public scholarship in this country and further afield. These chapters will

also be of interest to younger readers concerned with public justice, as per Gunn's vision when conceiving of his engaged research project. Taken together, these qualities mean that *Journeys to Justice* will be a welcome addition to libraries located at both places of worship and within institutions of higher learning.

Christopher Hrynkow
St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan
Email: chrynkow@stmcollege.ca

Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning is Canada's online, peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary journal committed to profiling best practices in 'engaged scholarship' informed by community-academic partnerships in research, teaching and learning.

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