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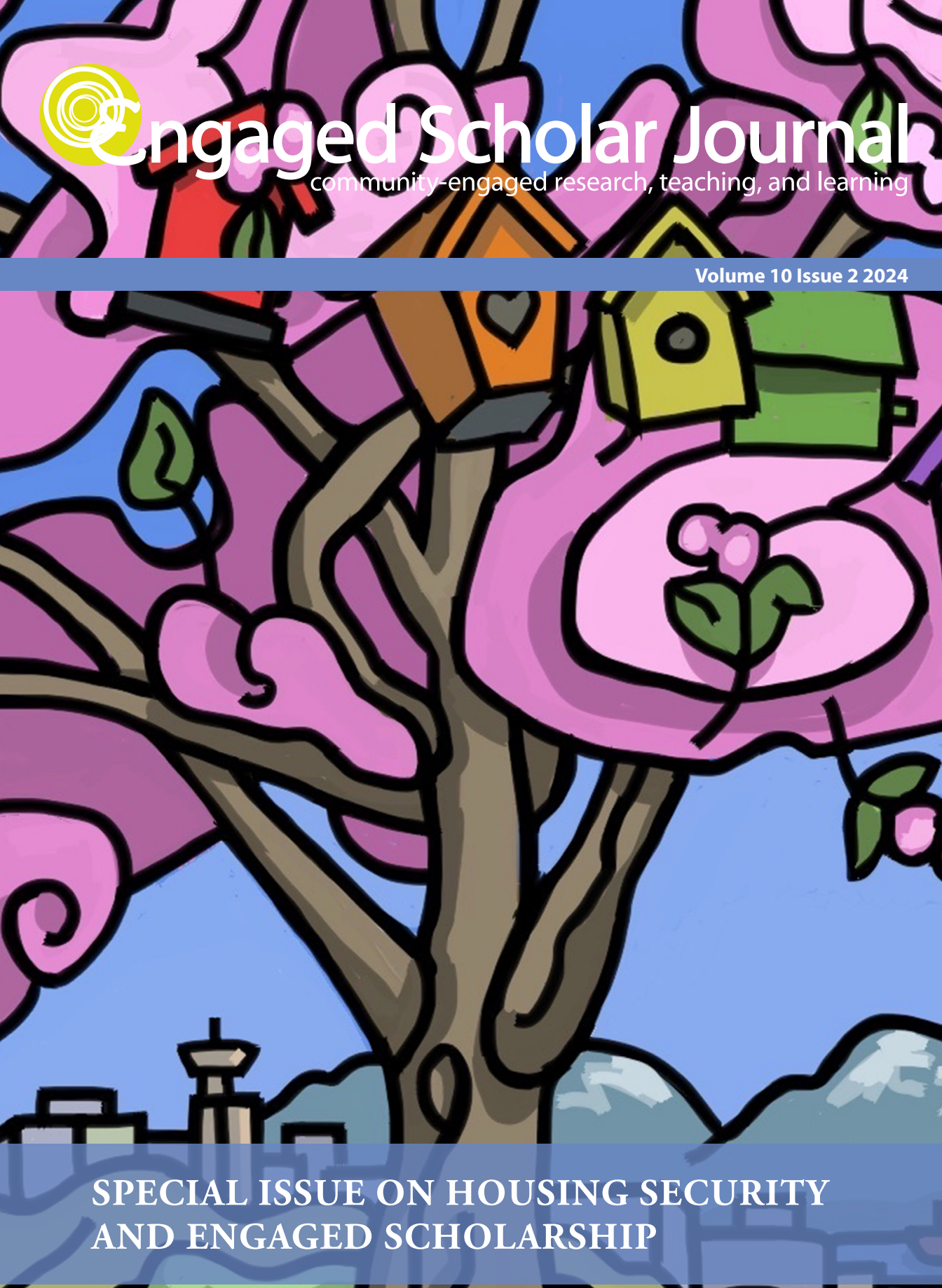

SPECIAL ISSUE ON HOUSING SECURITY AND ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

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Special Issue on Engaged Scholarship and Housing Security

Volume 10, Issue 2, 2024

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ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AND HOUSING SECURITY

Isobel M. Findlay and Lori Bradford

Isobel M. Findlay

Lori Bradford

Housing security is the availability of and access to stable, safe, affordable, and adequate housing without experiencing barriers, including gender, race, caste, ethnicity, ability, or sexual orientation among many more (Cox et al., 2017; Findlay et al., 2013). Although housing security has been an issue long in the making in Canada with decades of disinvestment in affordable rental stock in favour of home ownership and market solutions (Careless, 2020; Hulchanski & Shapcott, 2004; Hulchanski et al., 2009; Olauson et al., 2023; Sutter, 2016), the housing crisis was both exacerbated and exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Kunzekweguta et al., 2022). The pandemic redoubled insecurities and vulnerabilities, "amplify[ying] the suffering of being homeless" and having "nowhere to go" (Doll et al. 2022, pp. 11-12).

Even though *housing as a human right critical to human development* is recognized in Canada under the 2019 National Housing Strategy Act (NHSA), the correlation between income and housing insecurity puts those in lower income brackets at the highest health, well-being, safety, and financial risk. Low-income earners typically bear the added burdens of systemic discrimination, which creates significant barriers to receiving the support they need, while exacerbating their vulnerability to exploitation by those who would profit from putting at risk the security and safety of the most vulnerable. Despite the NHSA pledge to act on the best evidence, the Auditor General of Canada (2022) reports that "Infrastructure Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation did not know whether their efforts improved housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness or chronic homelessness and for other vulnerable groups" (p. 5). While scholars are growing the evidence, including the list of barriers to optimal outcomes, data on those barriers and other factors shaping our understanding of housing security, people actually experiencing housing insecurity remain the experts in knowing who is housing insecure, what will support their housing security, and how we should be moving forward together to enhance housing security nationwide. The usual

research methods, like case studies, interviews, focus groups, mind mapping, research-creation, surveys and questionnaires are evolving to be more inclusive of community-based research activities (Mitchell et al., 2016; Quilgars et al., 2009).

In this special issue on Engaged Scholarship and Housing Security, we share the insights of emergent approaches, digital tools, advocate-scholars, and community champions doing the hard work. We recognize, support, and highlight research and researchers of all types who are using engaged scholarship, community-based approaches, and/or community-driven and managed research and activities around housing security, including those using diverse and multiple ways of knowing about housing security.

The article "Toward the Right to Housing in Canada: Lived Experience, Research and Promising Practices in Deep Engagement" importantly addresses the meaningful engagement of lived expertise in housing research consistent with the NHSA's promotion of lived expertise and participatory processes. The ambitious goals of the NHSA require that "those in greatest need," including those with lived experience of housing precarity, homelessness, and housing rights violations, contribute to research, help shape policy, and further the operationalizing of housing as a human right. The article draws on a project where the team (with and without lived expertise) probe how lived experts engage in housing research on housing precarity in Canada, while reviewing close to 300 articles in the literature through an intersectional lens. They are mindful too of the colonial history and the need for Indigenous-led and controlled research that may not choose knowledge mobilization in traditional academic fora. They also call for "deep engagement" defined "as meaningful, non-hierarchical engagement geared towards transformative action, informed by the strengths and unmet needs of communities."

The next article uses community-engaged arts-based methods to shed light on housing insecurity in rural areas and overlapping rural-urban spaces. If homelessness is less visible in those settings, it is no less part of the broader crisis of housing insecurity and homelessness demanding policy and other action. The article complicates and complements official narratives constructed by such means as point-in-time counts, those notoriously undercounting instruments that conceal as much as they reveal in the efforts to quantify the issue for policy intervention. In the process they may well reinforce "a deficit-based understanding of demographic groups more likely to experience homelessness" and thus entrench individualized rather than systemic or structural understandings of homelessness. By contrast, the authors highlight twelve storytellers, including three members of the research team, and eight examples of digital storytelling inspired by the Re•Vision Centre for Art and Social Justice at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Theirs is a participant-led process of engaged scholarship that can uniquely challenge power relations and render visible the particular "intersections of individual circumstance and structural factors" that demand policy change. The digital storytelling documents the resilience and skill of those navigating homelessness. Their stories reveal how social assistance policy, rural motels and racism, and anti-immigration and misogyny fuel poverty and illegal evictions which reproduce homelessness, isolate the vulnerable, and render their experiences invisible.

If community proved important in the previous essay in confounding taken-for-granted views of homelessness, "Community of One: Social Support Networks and Low-income

Tenants Living in Market-rental Housing" presents another perspective on the meaning of community for those struggling with housing insecurity. Based on 21 interviews with tenants and housing providers in a community-engaged project, the essay explores the social support networks of low-income renters living in market housing while in receipt of rent subsidies and housing worker assistance. It is especially important to understand the experiences of low-income renters in the context of the housing and affordability crises and of policy and other investments in the private market and subsidies as the solution. Among the most marginalized, low-income renters are often forced by intense poverty to make hard choices between rent and food, medication, or utilities. Those pressures are also felt disproportionately by those facing intersecting oppressive systems, such as Indigenous people, racialized groups, women, seniors, and people living with disabilities. The tenants in the study proved to have few social supports and even avoided social networks that had been harmful to their housing security. They often preferred their own company. Nevertheless, they did seek and receive formal social support (both material and emotional) from the non-profit sector in areas such as harm reduction, youth and women's centres as well as assistance from housing workers. The findings have clear implications for investments in the non-profit sector—and for research comparing market renters with those in public, co-operative non-profit housing or exploring the experiences of different sub-populations.

An intersectional approach to housing security is the focus of the final essay, "Intersectionality in Housing Research: Early Reflections from a CBPR Partnership." The essay discusses preliminary findings from a larger project designed to implement "intersectional praxis across the life cycle of community-based participatory research (CBPR)." These preliminary learnings come from a "Co-Learning Workshop" involving both academic and community partners which highlights three key challenges or "promising puzzles" in co-defining and integrating intersectionality into housing research to illuminate "the multi-scaled complexities" of housing security as "both specifically experienced and institutionally produced" and to persuade policy and programme personnel of the value of the approach in disclosing "the specific contexts in which structural housing inequities take root." The overall aim is through "reciprocal community-driven partnerships and the direct participation of the people affected throughout the life cycle of the partnership" to produce "more relevant, inclusive, and sustained housing outcomes for multiply-marginalized populations" in urban and rural settings. They aim to demonstrate the potential of the intersectional approach to build community capacity, to further housing as a human right, and to fill gaps in knowledge and understanding created by data collection methods and results that take too little account of "equity-seeking groups who face intersecting barriers—e.g., LGBTQ2S+ youth and newcomer women."

The Reports from the Field features two reports. The first has a strong call to action: "'Less Talk, More Builds': The Mixed-Income Residential Tower Model of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation." In the context of the urgent need for more affordable housing stock and government failure to deliver despite investments in policy and program incentives, the authors describe the potential of a scalable model that needs to be better known and understood: the mixed-income residential tower of the University of Winnipeg

Community Renewal Corporation (UWRC), a non-profit foundation that since 2005 has worked in partnership with community organizations to become Winnipeg's leading social real estate developer. While the role of universities in student housing provision has had some attention (including whether or not the reliance on international students to balance budgets contributes to the housing crisis), less known is this mixed-income, mixed-use residential model developed off-campus.

The model is currently being replicated in Winnipeg's downtown core where close to half the units are affordable rental reserved for "marginalized residents" (low-income immigrants and refugees, Indigenous persons, persons living with disabilities, and others facing multiple, intersectional barriers) in a project that is committed to a four-pillar framework of "multi-dimensional sustainability." While building new units is but one means (Less Talk, More Builds) of addressing the current housing supply and insecurity crisis, it is the one means (with numbers and dollar value) favoured by politicians with an eye to electoral cycles. The report usefully and importantly links this initiative to engaged scholarship and how academics might adapt this model to their locations, deepening NGO and other partnerships to help develop government policies to accelerate scaled replication, assessing the efficacy of different financing mechanisms (mortgages, loans, subsidies, etc.), studying the dynamics of mixed-income groups that choose to live together, and understanding the opportunities and challenges to be navigated by a non-profit entity of a university or college that builds and manages off-campus social housing.

The second report, "Survival and Resistance: A Zine Study with Young Women and Femmes Experiencing Housing Injustice in Canadian Cities," explores housing injustice as a public health issue among young women and femmes between the ages of 18 and 24 (expressing femininity but recognizing diverse gender expressions) in urban settings. This is a group whose lived experience is rarely captured in part because they tend not to use shelters and are more likely to be found among the so-called hidden homeless. Drawing on social constructionism in an arts-based inquiry, the authors aim to answer this research question: "what are the survival and resistance strategies that young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice use to support their wellness and engage with life?" They use reflexive thematic analysis of zine contributions centring the young women's voices and problematizing understandings of both youth ("developmental period" or "structural framing" around which "institutions are built") and resistance as highly contextual to identify five themes: affective and psychological resistance, survival strategies, what good living means to participants, their experience of "organized abandonment" or selective investment/disinvestment, and the importance of human connection and care. The zine contributions fill in some important gaps in understanding of housing injustice among young women and femmes with valuable policy, research, and other implications.

The Exchange highlights a conversation among four academics in nursing, medicine, engineering, and social sciences involved in an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral group researching ways to improve the built environment in rural, remote, and reserve communities. Through their dialogue, key themes and reflection emerge, highlighting the reciprocal nature of engaged scholarship and its imperative for addressing societal challenges.

The participants define their practices of engaged scholarship as collaborative endeavours characterized by adaptability, reciprocity, informality, and responsiveness to community needs. They emphasize the importance of a community-gifted term, "ReconciliACTION", wherein research transcends campus environments to catalyze joint commitment to actions in communities, fostering more equitable partnerships. Insights are shared on the challenges of balancing academic goals with community priorities, navigating institutional memory, and promoting interdisciplinarity among engineers; natural, health and social scientists; humanists; and artists. Strategies that they promote to enhance engaged scholarship include addressing language accessibility, advocating for institutional support, and leveraging platforms like policy briefs, graphical art, and peer-reviewed journals to disseminate knowledge and facilitate collective learning. The exchange underscores the transformative potential of engaged scholarship to prioritize researcher humility, campus friendships, research accessibility, and sustained community engagement.

The special issue concludes with reviews of two important new books, *The Tenant Class* by Ricardo Tranjan sheds light on the reproduction of an inequitable housing market, offering both critique of the naturalizing processes that would rationalize the status quo and recommending solutions, not technical but political, and sharing histories of tenant organizing to that end. Andrew Crosby's *Resisting Eviction: Domicide and the Financialization of Rental Housing* has much in common with Tranjan's book not least in its powerful critique of the housing system and the construction of the housing crisis. Crosby's is a compelling tale of the destruction of rental units by financialized landlords in Ottawa's Heron Gate, the eviction of tenants, the organizing of tenants, and a human rights lawsuit that could have a real impact on housing rights in Canada.

About the Authors

Lori Bradford is an associate professor at the College of Engineering and is also a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair (CRC) in including Social and Cultural Sciences in Engineering Design. She is also the editor-in-chief of the Engaged Scholar Journal. Her current research areas are interdisciplinary social sciences, engaged scholarship, social and cultural impact assessment, water empathy and policy, and community-driven co-design. Email: lori.bradford@usask.ca

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Laura Pin
Bruno de Oliveira
Ted Jackson

Issue Statistics

A. Authors and Submissions

Authors and Co-Authors	
University-based	25
Non-university-based partners	1
Total	**26**

Article Submissions	
Original proposals for peer and editor review	11
Articles submitted for editor review	2
Articles submitted for peer review	7
Peer-reviewed articles accepted for publication	4
Editor-reviewed articles accepted for publication	2
Book reviews submitted for editor review	2
Book reviews accepted for publication	2

Geographic Distribution (Corresponding Authors Only)	
Atlantic Canada	
Cape Breton University	1

Eastern Canada	
Carleton University	1
McGill University	1
Wilfrid Laurier University	1
University of Toronto	1
Western Canada	
Athabasca University	1
University of Alberta	1
University of Saskatchewan	3
University of Victoria	1
Total	**11**

B. Peer-Reviewers and Peer-Reviewing

Peer Reviewers	
Total invitations to peer review	35
Number of peer reviewers who accepted invitations	11

Geographic Distribution (Peer Reviewers)	
Atlantic Canada	
Cape Breton University	2
Eastern Canada	
Carleton University	1
McGill University	1
Western Canada	
University of Manitoba	1
University of Saskatchewan	3
University of Winnipeg	1
University of Victoria	2
Total	**11**

Essays

Toward the Right to Housing in Canada: Lived Experience, Research and Promising Practices in Deep Engagement

Jayne Malenfant, Jes Annan, Laura Pin, Leah Levac, Amanda Buchnea

Abstract Canada's 2019 Housing Strategy Act (NHSA) lays the groundwork for important advances in ensuring the right to housing for all. Two key approaches outlined in the NHSA for communities in greatest need are conducting research and providing participatory ways for those communities to shape housing rights responses. This article presents insights from a project that explored how people with lived experience of housing need and homelessness engage in research on housing precarity in Canada. We review the literature on housing precarity that features people with lived experience as research participants, applying an intersectional framework and acknowledging the settler colonial context of Canada. And, as a research team who has members with lived experiences of housing precarity, we emphasize the importance of meaningfully incorporating people's lived experiences, seeing deep engagement as a way to advance housing rights by harnessing lived knowledges.

KeyWords Lived experience; right to housing; engagement; homelessness

Canada's National Housing Strategy Act and the Need for Deep Engagement

Canada's 2019 National Housing Strategy Act (NHSA) (S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 313) is an important step toward recognizing the human right to housing across the country. Two integral aspects of the NHSA are to "focus on improving housing outcomes for persons in greatest need" (S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 313, 5 (2) (c)) and "provide for participatory processes to ensure the ongoing inclusion and engagement of civil society, stakeholders, vulnerable groups and persons with lived experience of housing need, as well as those with lived experience of homelessness" (S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 313, 5 (2) (d)). Likewise, the principles of the National Housing Strategy (NHS) include prioritizing groups with distinct housing needs: women and children (including those fleeing violence), seniors, young adults, Indigenous Peoples, people with disabilities, people dealing with mental health and substance use issues, veterans, people who identify as LGBTQ2S+, racialized groups, recent immigrants (especially refugees), and people experiencing homelessness (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2018). The NHS also recognizes that people with lived experiences (PwLE) of housing need and homelessness are important research and policy actors whose knowledge is critical for realizing housing as a human right.

As authors, we echo this sentiment and, in response, we conducted a literature review exploring questions of lived experience engagement in housing-focused research in Canada. This work was undertaken by a team of researchers, almost half of whom have lived experience of housing precarity themselves, and our analysis is based on nearly 300 research articles that included the knowledge of PwLE. This research revealed two shortcomings: the lack of a framework prioritizing deep, ongoing engagement with PwLE and the lack of engagement strategies involving the most marginalized groups (who tend to be overrepresented in the experience of housing rights violations). This includes a lack of engagement strategies that focus on Indigenous-specific housing needs and self-determination in realizing housing as a right.

In this article, we explore the why (and how) of deep engagement with PwLE of homelessness in housing research and emphasize the need to develop a better understanding of the ways that PwLE can shape the right to housing in Canada. In our analysis, we maintain that advancing the right to housing requires an intersectional and justice-oriented approach that allows for access to housing to be explored with respect to systemic barriers and discriminations that relate to social locations such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, and physical ability (Crenshaw, 1989; Nelson, 2020). The lived experience (LE) of people who experience multiple forms of marginalization must be not only acknowledged but also prioritized in housing-related research and sustainable, community-oriented, and reciprocal engagement–or what we conceptualize as deep engagement–must become an integral tool for homelessness researchers who hope to impact policy, planning, and practice (Frederick et al., 2018). Overall, engaging with PwLE is essential for conducting effective and just housing-related research, particularly research that aims to address and shift policies. By centring the perspectives of those most affected, illuminating systemic inequities, ensuring accountability, and identifying gaps in current research, policy, and practice, researchers (with and without LE) can develop more effective and inclusive solutions to the complex issue of unmet housing needs.

Defining Engagement: Existing Definitions and Deep Engagement of PwLE

An assessment of what engagement (deep or otherwise) of PwLE in research looks like, and to what extent the recent NHSA has advanced such engagement, is difficult. Neither the NHSA nor literature on LE research participation outline standard characteristics of engagement. Research projects may reference engagement or participatory methods without explaining what these entail or reflecting on their effectiveness. And while some researchers are beginning to reflect on the challenges of maintaining engagement with PwLE (for example, Andrews & Heerde, 2021), there is a significant gap in the evaluation of PwLE engagement. When LE engagement is discussed, it is often homogenized and lacks information about the diversity and intersectional experiences represented, which can erase the multiple knowledges PwLE bring to this work.

We recognize there are many barriers preventing researchers from highlighting the labour and knowledge contributions of PwLE, including narrow standards within many academic journals and rigid knowledge hierarchies in the academy. As a result, researchers' engagement with PwLE may not always be included in the resulting literature, suggesting there is more

engagement happening than evident in this review. We are also aware that research prioritizing the knowledges of PwLE can be shared through non-academic channels and thus is not captured in academic literature. Nevertheless, we think documenting deep engagement with PwLE in housing-related research is an important contribution to literature on housing, homelessness, and community engaged scholarship, asserting the urgent need to ensure deep engagement is part of the literature on homelessness in Canada, including academic knowledge mobilization.

We also highlight the importance–and current dearth–of PwLE participation in assessing the effectiveness of engagement in research projects. We wish to advocate for the transparent and ongoing use of deep engagement strategies by, and in partnership with, PwLE. Effective evaluations of engagement must consider how meaningful the strategies are for PwLE, not simply from the perspective of those undertaking the engagement. While currently rare or absent in homelessness-related research, PwLE's contribution to evaluating engagement approaches can provide invaluable knowledge for building more equitable modes of deep engagement across projects and disciplines.

Our Approach: A Literature Review of PwLE of Homelessness and Core Housing Needs in Canada

This article draws on the work of a team made up of researchers with and without LE from locations across Canada. We undertook a secondary analysis of publicly available research and reports from Canada where PwLE of homelessness and/or core housing need were involved. Our goals were to better understand not only the level of lived experience engagement research projects were employing but also what they could contribute to improving the implementation of the NHSA. We undertook the work in response to a request from Canada's National Housing Council (NHC). Initially, the work was intended to engage with PwLE of housing precarity and homelessness to explore the impact of the NHSA on their housing experiences, identifying recommendations for its reform. However, after initial discussions with the NHC, we decided that a review of existing literature was more appropriate because of limited time and available resources[1], as well as ongoing pandemic-related challenges. Additionally, our approach avoided the trap of over-researching and the associated risk of re-traumatizing historically marginalized groups. Further, reviewing existing literature allowed us to amplify recommendations and insights from research already done in collaboration with (though only rarely led by) PwLE. Finally, our baseline definition of engagement was the inclusion of PwLE beyond the role of research participants.

The analysis presented in this paper is based on the dataset of literature we developed for the NHC and updated in 2023. Our search strategy ensured a comprehensive but not exhaustive review of Canadian studies focused on the housing-related experiences of PwLE. We searched several databases, including JSTOR, EBSCO, Scholars Portal, Sociological Abstracts, Scopus, Public Health Database, and Web of Science. We also used Google and Google Scholar to identify additional academic articles and community literature (for a literature review that

1 Emerging best practices for engaging PwLE consistently highlight the need to take time to build strong relationships of trust and reciprocity (for example, see Lived Experience Advisory Council [LEAC], 2016).

includes gray and community literature, see Levac et al., 2022). Further, we searched individual journals with particular relevance to the topic, including the Radical Housing Journal, Journal of Poverty, and International Indigenous Policy Journal. One team member did a limited French-language search to include the work of francophone scholars and communities.

We conducted searches using the terms 'Canada' and 'housing and homelessness' or their derivatives (i.e., hous*, homeless*). We also used a combination of secondary search terms aimed at uncovering research with and about the experiences of commonly marginalized groups, including 'youth,' 'families,' 'women,' 'queer,' 'LGBTQ*,' 'newcomer,' 'refugee,' 'Black,' 'racialized,' 'Indigenous,' 'disab*,' and others. We ran our searches for terms appearing anywhere in the article and limited them to articles appearing since 2000. We also searched a small number of well-known housing-related websites and research repositories including the Homeless Hub, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network.

We designed our search strategy with several considerations in mind. First, as noted earlier, we faced considerable time constraints, which meant that while we largely coordinated our search efforts, individual team members also relied on their previous training to adapt their searching techniques as they went. Second, our team's institutional distribution meant that each member had access to slightly different databases and journals. These considerations informed our decision to search a broad set of journals and databases, with some variability in combinations of search terms, and without complete consistency. We also searched a limited number of websites and community repositories. When we began repeatedly turning up the same articles, we determined that our collective efforts had led to a sufficiently comprehensive review for the purposes of this research. Our updated search in 2023 was conducted by only one team member but replicated the approach described above. For inclusion in our review, articles and reports had to engage PwLE at least as research subjects, be in English (except for the targeted search for French literature noted above), be published since 2000, and be explicitly about housing. In other words, if the focus of the research was mental health and some of the findings spoke to housing-related challenges, the article was excluded. The choice to focus on literature about housing was driven by the mandate of the National Housing Council to understand experiences of housing need and homelessness.

Our final dataset includes 283 documents, including primary academic research, secondary analyses of data gathered with PwLE, and research undertaken by community organizations. Our research for the NHC also included community housing and homelessness plans, but we excluded these from this analysis because they rarely distinguish between engaging with PwLE and community members more generally (for an exception, see Bernas et al., 2019). Of these, we identified 49 as engaging with PwLE beyond their role as research subjects. We grouped these documents into four categories: LE authorship, LE participation throughout the project, LE participation through follow-up interviews and member-checking, and LE participation in recruitment and data collection. We do not suggest that each of these categories constitutes deep engagement, only that they engage PwLE beyond their role as research subjects. We also recognize that these forms of engagement may not always represent a desire to value lived

knowledge and may be utilitarian in nature (e.g., primarily intended to increase recruitment). While our research engages with the quality of lived engagement (and, in particular, the need for PwLE to be involved in reflecting on, shaping, and evaluating the effectiveness of engagement), we do not wish to suggest a hierarchy of lived engagement. For example, community-based and participatory methods are often seen as the pinnacle of lived experience engagement, but emerging critiques suggest that these methods have limitations (Nelson, 2020). Instead, we present a continuum of engagement strategies, both to foster a clearer understanding of what types of engagement of PwLE are currently happening in research spaces and to highlight how engagement may be meaningful across methods and approaches.

As mentioned above, our findings are also dependent on the amount of information shared by researchers in the literature. For example, few studies describe the role of PwLE in establishing the overarching research question, securing funding, undertaking analysis, or shaping the team structure. We also recognize that some literature may not outline all the engagement strategies and efforts used in a given project, which may relate to how knowledge mobilization is expected to take place within academic institutions, even as the importance of research that foregrounds community knowledge is increasingly recognized (Yarbrough, 2020). However, for our purposes, if details about deeper forms of engagement were absent, we could not classify the articles or reports as having engaged with PwLE beyond research subjects. While understanding the limitations caused by access to funding and requirements regarding authorship (which highlights the need for research funders to play an integral role in the engagement of PwLE), we maintain that it is researchers' responsibility to ensure that the labour and roles of PwLE are made visible, even while navigating academic publishing constraints. Instead of confining PwLE to the role of advisor, consultant, or participant, researchers should consider co-authorship and commit to transparency and visibility of diverse labour in their publications.

We recognize that interrelated issues, including access to education, civic engagement, criminal legal processes, cultural supports, and the arts, are important to shaping housing stability, and research may engage PwLE on a variety of topics that impact them. These issues fell outside the scope of this project but represent points of future inquiry for the research team, as we recognize the importance of engaging PwLE across a range of issues intersecting with homelessness. We also recognize that our choice of journals and databases may not have captured relevant literature across all disciplines. For instance, we did not explicitly seek out articles in education-related databases and journals. While additional searching may uncover further articles, we are confident that the wide range and large number of articles we reviewed provide a comprehensive picture of the extent of deep engagement (or lack thereof) with PwLE in housing-related research.

Realizing the Right to Housing on Stolen Land: Centring the Lived Experiences of Indigenous Communities in Research

A tension we wish to highlight across homelessness research, engagement of diverse PwLE, and housing rights work is that rights within a settler colonial system are built upon the dispossession

and displacement of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis People. Within Canada and globally, Indigenous Peoples have unique rights to self-determination (UNDRIP, 2007), rich knowledge systems, and ongoing experiences with colonialism that demand unique consideration when advancing strategies for achieving the right to housing. Thistle (2017) specifies that "Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews" (p. 6). Leviten-Reid and Parker (2018) argue that to address barriers to accessing housing and housing supports, there must be a shift toward integrating Indigenous knowledges (p. 479). When considering research to advance the right to housing, there is a call for Indigenous knowledges, methodologies, and researchers to lead (National Indigenous Feminist Housing Working Group, 2022). Therefore, we wish to echo the argument that many Indigenous scholars have made: that assuring Indigenous rights or justice is not necessarily dependent on settler colonial legal, policy, and housing systems (Coulthard, 2014; Palmater, 2019). As researchers who have varying identities and relationships to the settler colonial nation state, we recognize that a comprehensive understanding of how to best engage diverse Indigenous communities and knowledges in housing rights research must be led by Indigenous scholars and community members, in ways that may follow or diverge from the deep engagement strategies outlined more broadly for PwLE here. We recognize that Indigenous sovereignty, resistance, and self-determination need not depend on the frameworks of the settler colonial state (Coulthard, 2014) and instead may refuse these engagements in powerful ways (Simpson, 2014). We maintain that Indigenous-led and culturally appropriate research on housing justice is a key element of community engagement around the right to housing in Canada, particularly as the state aims to respond to people most impacted by housing rights violations in Canada, many of whom are Indigenous.

While all Indigenous communities on Turtle Island have some lived experience of settler colonialism and its role in Indigenous Peoples' displacement and disconnection from land (Thistle, 2017), research engagement of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis PwLE in the areas of homelessness must hold special consideration for the inclusion of traditional knowledges, languages, and Indigenous methodologies (Thistle & Smylie, 2020). Indigenous-led research may result in community tables and alternative forms of knowledge mobilization rather than traditional academic outputs. For example, the Indigenization of affordable housing options is emphasized in a report based on a series of Elder and Knowledge Keeper circles conducted by the Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ASCHH) with members of the Kahkewistahaw, Little Black Bear, Kainai, Stoney Nakoda, and Siksika First Nations in Calgary, Alberta. The Elders and Knowledge Keepers involved in these circles emphasized the necessity of housing that offers opportunities for Indigenous tenants to reinforce their culture, identity, and connection to cultural supports such as Elders and ceremony (Williams and Lucas, 2019). These calls are supported by other Indigenous scholars who echo the need for Indigenous-specific models for addressing unmet housing needs (Baspaly et al., 2022) and by non-Indigenous housing researchers who highlight the urgency of centring the knowledges and LE of Indigenous Peoples in both the National Housing Strategy (e.g., Gaetz et al., 2016) and the National Housing Council (Paradis, 2018).

Research led by Indigenous communities should be at the forefront of housing rights policy work and that research within settler-colonial Canada requires additional considerations for honoring lived knowledges, community experiences, and deep engagement in research structures. Further, researchers engaging with Indigenous communities should adhere to the research and data guidelines created by diverse Indigenous communities across Canada. One such guideline is the well-known OCAP principles (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession). OCAP is one of several available sets of principles developed by Indigenous Peoples in Canada to govern research and data collection that involves Indigenous communities, knowledge, and information. OCAP principles emphasize the importance of respecting Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples to steward, control, and govern their own data and information. While Indigenous research principles are developed to specifically address the extractive and predatory research practices of settler-colonial institutions and are thus contextually unique, they reiterate the need for ethical, reciprocal, and transformative research methods for all research involving marginalized or vulnerable communities while highlighting the unique needs and research standards each Indigenous community holds.

A small number of articles we reviewed demonstrated deep engagement and Indigenous leadership. We recognize the small percentage of literature outlining meaningful engagement of PwLE in Indigenous research may stem from multiple sources, including Indigenous control and self-determination of research data, Indigenous researchers opting to refuse Western and settler colonial knowledge mobilization of research (Simpson, 2017), and a strong focus on community-grounded, lived-experience-led, and relational outcomes within Indigenous research methodologies (Lee & Evans, 2021). Again, we understand this limitation as deeply related to academic scholarship's perceived inaccessibility and lack of impact. While the majority of studies on Indigenous homelessness in our review were designed and written by non-Indigenous researchers, some studies did engage with Indigenous individuals and communities.[2] This includes recent literature about how the Housing First approach—in particular, its strategies to address those who use substances—may be indigenized to better meet the distinct needs of Indigenous Peoples (Distasio et al., 2019; Distasio et al., 2018; Firestone et al., 2022). In a study on culturally relevant responses to housing instability among Indigenous Peoples in Winnipeg, Distasio et al. (2019) worked closely with Indigenous Elders, community members, and those with lived or living experience of housing precarity to develop a set of guidelines for service agencies. Distasio et al.'s guidelines describe community-based program creation and governance, long-term trust and relationship building with local Indigenous leaders and community members, and a strengths-based framework as key to creating Housing First programs that are localized and responsive to the needs of Indigenous Peoples.

Distasio et al. (2018) also identify a major barrier to ending housing inequities for Indigenous people, stating that "mainstream housing models have remained rooted in Western ideals" and "may have intrinsic cultural biases and often do not fully comprehend the worldviews, housing

2 Some Indigenous researchers may not have explicitly positioned themselves; however, there remains a need for non-Indigenous researchers and authors to position themselves, explore the complexities of Indigenous leadership in research, and foster more fulsome representations of Indigenous perspectives in the literature.

needs, and self-determination of urban-based Indigenous peoples" (pp. 4-5). In response to this pressing need, several Indigenous-led, localized housing initiatives that are responsive to their cultural contexts have developed in recent years (for example, as outlined in Bodor et al., 2011; Pauly et al., 2016). Despite settler-academia's exploration of the unique and multifaceted housing requirements of Indigenous communities in Canada, there still exists a pressing need for Indigenous-led and controlled research to address unmet housing needs. This necessitates a broader shift in how settler institutions and sectors, including universities and policymakers, engage with the existing knowledge and recommendations offered by Indigenous communities and the inherent power imbalances stemming from the historical and ongoing consequences of colonization on Indigenous communities.

Intersectional Approaches to Engagement in the Existing Literature: Data Gaps and Selective Engagement

In addition to settler colonial structures, it is important to consider the multiple systemic barriers and rights violations that many communities navigate. In our literature review, many articles spoke to the engagement of specific populations overrepresented amongst those experiencing housing precarity, many of whom are also prioritized by the NHSA as members of "vulnerable groups." While 29 articles engaged distinct communities (e.g., women, families, newcomers, those living rurally, or members of specific linguistic or cultural communities), they often focused on one aspect of an individual's experience rather than understanding intersections of how they navigated housing in Canada. Failing to consider multiple forms of oppression when developing engagement strategies can obscure important aspects that PwLE can help illuminate through their engagement in research: namely, how systems operate to organize housing need within a Canadian context and how solutions may be structured to ensure the housing rights of all. One example of a study that explored the intersections of multiple social and material conditions was Benbow et al.'s 2019 narrative inquiry with 26 women who had histories of homelessness. It aimed to explore the complexities of social exclusion experienced by mothers in Southwestern Ontario, illuminating experiences of discrimination based on class, mental health, motherhood, and ethnicity. These experiences led many of the women to feel as though they had to reach 'rock bottom' to receive access to support, highlighting the experience of being pushed to the periphery due to intersecting nodes of oppression. However, this kind of deep engagement and framing remains less common, and in the absence of an intersectional approach, research can reinforce the idea that individuals' experiences of homelessness occur in a vacuum outside of connected systems and injustice.

A promising first step toward understanding multiple and intersecting experiences of housing need is better accounting for, and disaggregating, LE voices and recommendations in research and reports. This is paramount when filling "data gaps related to the housing needs of Canada's most vulnerable populations" (CMHC, 2018, p. 20). Filling data gaps is a prioritized research commitment for the NHS, but it does not prioritize LE engagement,

often relying instead on point-in-time (PiT) counts[3] or other statistical analyses of census data or housing data from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which is important but insufficient. Combining these data with deep engagement of PwLE may be effective in increasing government and systems accountability to diverse communities. It is also important for researchers—and the service providers and organizations who collect data for research—to adopt a commitment to intersectionality to better understand and disaggregate unique and intersecting communities' housing needs. We suggest that, at minimum, this should include attending to equity-oriented, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and critical disability frameworks that can help to respond to structural power imbalances and prevent and reduce existing bias and discrimination within the homelessness and housing sectors.

On a positive note, the literature we reviewed reports some success among Housing First (HF) program models that were adapted to better support participants from diverse ethno-racial groups, with one study noting "the effectiveness of a HF adaptation, using anti-racist/anti-oppressive practice, in improving housing stability among homeless adults with mental illness from ethno-racial minority groups" (Stergiopoulos et al., 2016, p. 9). PwLE who identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized, refugees, members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities, and/or living with disabilities confront layers of bias and discrimination in their housing and homelessness experiences, and their knowledge may play an important role in leading efforts to address data gaps and biases. At the same time, our analysis shows that, in addition to rarely engaging with PwLE beyond their roles as subjects, existing housing research methods and practices rarely use Indigenous, anti-racist/anti-oppressive, or gendered frameworks. The current landscape of engagement with PwLE is particularly concerning for marginalized groups whose experiences of homelessness are often invisible in the literature and are marked by multiple forms of discrimination, oppression, and systemic violence.

Giving Voice to Lived Experiences: The Role of PwLE in Shaping Housing-Related Knowledge

We recognize that deep engagement with PwLE is a difficult undertaking in many existing research spaces, though we believe an understanding of the current engagement landscape can direct our work moving forward–and that academic literature is an important source through which to understand this landscape. As demonstrated through our research, PwLE are rarely involved beyond their capacity as research subjects in academic studies on homelessness, and literature may fail to outline how engagement happens beyond labeling a practice as "participatory." In a large majority (over 80%) of the documents we reviewed, LE was presented through the data collection undertaken by researchers and analyzed without apparent further

3 A note on the role of PiT counts in the landscape of PwLE engagement: while some communities may engage advisory committees that include or are composed entirely of PwLE, the federal standards which guide PiT counts do not include lived experience engagement (Government of Canada, 2023). As these standards guide all PiT counts, the extent to which PwLE are engaged in PiT counts, or in community advisory groups connected to PiT counts, depends heavily on the choice of each individual community.

input or inclusion of PwLE. Altogether, only 49 of 283 included documents engaged with LE in more generative ways.[4]

We do not wish to suggest a complete absence of research with PwLE demonstrating deep engagement. It is true that across the articles we reviewed, details on the processes, aspects, and effectiveness of engagement with PwLE were scarce (for an in-depth summary, see Levac et al., 2022). That said, several articles engaged PwLE throughout the entire cycle of the research project, including Indigenous youth (Brown et al., 2007) and youth/peer researchers (Kidd 2019; Nichols & Braimoh, 2018). Some literature highlighted the potential for training peers or those using homelessness services to work as researchers, facilitators, and writers on a given project (Paradis, 2018). When PwLE are supported to lead the development of research questions, data collection, analysis, and knowledge mobilization (such as in Phipps et al., 2021; Phipps & Masuda, 2018; Schwan et al., 2021), literature was more likely to elaborate on the processes of engagement. A small number of articles discussed participatory processes throughout a project but did not elaborate on how this took place (Forchuk et al., 2022; Fotheringham et al., 2014). A number of articles also highlighted engaging PwLE at specific phases in a given project, including member checking on emergent recommendations and research themes (Benbow et al., 2019; Brais & Maurer, 2021; Nelson et al., 2016; Thulien 2018) and including peer researchers in recruitment and data collection (for example, Abramovich, 2021; Fleming et al., 2019; Grewel, 2021; Hwang et al., 2003; Logan & Murdie, 2014; Somers et al., 2013). Several articles also outlined the development of community or lived experience advisory groups (Leviten-Reid et al., 2020; Sakamoto et al., 2007; Stewart et al., 2010). Authorship by PwLE, however, remains a rarity in the current literature landscape and can be difficult to assess, as authors who engage in critical methodologies and reflexive practice rarely positioned themselves as PwLE of homelessness and/or intersecting issues, particularly in ways that shaped their access, approach, and knowledge of the topic they were studying. The rarity of literature with PwLE as authors[5] reflect a number of potential barriers, including the barriers PwLE face to entering academic spaces (Gupton, 2017), as well as the seeming irrelevance of academic literature in the lives of people actively navigating housing rights violations. While we do not wish to create a hierarchy of engagement and recognize that multiple approaches can constitute deep engagement of different communities, we argue that collaboration, partnership, and fostering the leadership of PwLE throughout the cycle of a project can bolster the community knowledge contributed to a given body of research more effectively than one-off engagements, the absence of relationships of trust, and tokenistic forms of inclusion (Nelson, 2020).

4 A report summarizing additional findings from our original literature search (Levac et al., 2022) cites 51 documents in this category. This included 7 community housing and homelessness plans that are not considered in this article, as well as 10 documents which we downgraded on further inspection for this manuscript. The results of our updated search brought the new total to 49. It is possible that other studies we looked at included people with LE, but that this was not noted in the study or report and thus was not possible to assess.

5 Exceptions that include PwLE as authors are Chapple, 2016; Leblanc, 2021; Malenfant, Watchorn, & Nichols, 2023; Nelson, 2021; Nichols, Malenfant, & Youth Action Research Revolution, 2023; Nichols & Malenfant 2022; Sesula & Kassam, 2014; and Voronka et al., 2014.

Promising Practices: Nothing About Us Without Us

The scarcity of articles involving the engagement of PwLE beyond the role of research subjects demonstrates that barriers remain to deep engagement in research on housing and homelessness in Canada. Although limited, a growing body of literature authored by PwLE offers important insights about how to appropriately centre their knowledge. LE scholar Nelson (2020) outlines the difficulties of structuring and organizing LE knowledge around homelessness in a Canadian context, while maintaining the necessity of doing so if we wish to ensure the right to housing. Literature focusing on building capacity and centring PwLE as knowledge holders offers a promising alternative to the common practices of excluding LE knowledge in research (Nelson, 2020; Yarbrough, 2020). Other LE scholars point out that recognizing the material and social supports PwLE require to fully participate as collaborators can transform knowledge creation spaces by using LE to inform responses to homelessness (Malenfant et al., 2023).

While literature authored by PwLE is relatively uncommon, there is a significant body of literature that focuses on community-driven social change, centred on the ethos of "nothing about us without us" (Jarrett, 2016; Nelson, 2020; Yarbrough, 2020). Nelson outlines the relationships between critical disability justice movements and the emergent movements for housing justice by those with lived experiences of homelessness in Canada (2020). While academic literature on housing and homelessness has limited research related to this area, there are several key documents that researchers and allies can reference to support LE leadership. In 2016, the Lived Experience Advisory Council published "Nothing About Us Without Us: Seven Principles for Leadership & Inclusion of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness." The Council also developed additional tools to facilitate inclusion and leadership, including a "Checklist for Planning Inclusive and Accessible Events" (2016). This document includes a call for the inclusion of PwLE in policy development, research, and all housing-related initiatives, as well as guidance for how organizations can support environments and relationships that are equitable to PwLE.

The launch of the "Seven Principles" was accompanied by calls from LE authors to include lived knowledges in the development of the NHS itself. Reflecting on the overly political creation of the Lived Experience Advisory Council, which was born out of protest during a national homelessness conference in 2014, Jarrett (2016) highlights the importance of LE for ensuring the realities of homelessness are understood while also emphasizing the need for intersectional engagement:

> In order to be effective, the NHS must be inclusive to and led by those directly affected by poverty and homelessness, including Indigenous people, women, families, single men, survivors of violence, people with disabilities, people who have been criminalized, and illicit drug users.

This reflection suggests that to successfully address housing need in Canada, the NHS needs to combat the exclusion of those with lived experience and poverty. We may see plans to address homelessness in specific communities (e.g., federal investment in an Urban, Rural and

Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy), but these plans must happen in collaboration with, and deep engagement of, impacted communities.

Promising practices for research that ensure PwLE are at the core of data collection include training peer researchers and mobilizing participatory, community-based, and narrative methods (Frederick et al., 2018). Approaches that engage PwLE throughout all phases of research and that pursue opportunities for community-defined, non-traditional outputs should be prioritized (Schwan et al., 2018; Vaccaro, 2020). Over a third of articles focused on youth homelessness involved young people with LE beyond the role of research participants, suggesting that the relative acceptance of participatory methodologies in this research may increase the likelihood of deep engagement with youth participants. Overall, there is growing attention to the use of participatory and community-based approaches that have long been used in intersectional ways by and with communities facing marginalization (Wallerstein et al., 2020). These include calls for homelessness research oriented toward justice and emancipation (for example, Ilyniak, 2022). Within this literature, researchers have also highlighted the institutional, disciplinary, funding, and symbolic barriers to undertaking this work within academia–a context that historically has overlooked and stigmatized multiple lived knowledges (Chatterton et al., 2010; Hill, 2012; Jeppesen & Nazar, 2018). While these approaches signal an important shift in many disciplines toward recognizing research that is grounded in community, we caution against seeing these methodologies as inherently demonstrating deep engagement of PwLE. Rather, we understand them as representing a first step that requires active ongoing effort and reflection to ensure LE leadership and the integration of research principles led by PwLE (for example, Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network, 2022). With an increased transparency about ways engagement happens–including the limitations to fostering engagement of PwLE–we can garner a collective understanding of how deep engagement might be fostered in more effective ways.

We wish to note that while this review focuses on PwLE engagement and leadership in research specifically examining experiences of homelessness/housing precarity, PwLE are also engaged on intersecting issues in the literature (for example, mental health research has a long history of engaging PwLE). While outside of the scope of our project, this is an important area for understanding the role of PwLE in shaping housing rights through research. Cultivating deep and long-lasting relationships will build a strong base for the engagement of lived expertise across research foci in Canada.

Self-Determination and LE Leadership: Frameworks for Ethical and Generative Research with Diverse PwLE

Albeit sparse, the growing body of research led and authored by PwLE demonstrates a shift from their roles as research subjects to leaders, not only in terms of understanding homelessness and core housing need, but also in terms of realizing the right to housing across Canada (Cataldo et al., 2021; Jarrett, 2016; Loignon et al., 2018; Malenfant & Smith, 2021; Nelson 2020). Further, increased transparency about methods and evaluation of engagement would clarify efforts to include deep engagement in research and illuminate where these efforts are not achieving their intended effects. For those most impacted by intersecting experiences of

systemic discrimination and housing precarity, including Indigenous communities, Black and racialized communities, LGBTQ2S+ communities, and those with psychiatric labels (Akom et al., 2008; Andrews & Heerde, 2021; Tuck & Yang, 2014), self-determination and LE leadership are key to ensuring research for social change is grounded in community needs and knowledge.

LE in Research on Housing Rights: Data Gaps and Challenges

We recognize that there are limitations to our approach that may impact our understanding of the current landscape of LE engagement in research for housing rights. As we were primarily interested in articles that engaged with PwLE, we did not assess the articles for quality but rather the degree that PwLE knowledge was embedded throughout each stage of research. Regarding intersectional understandings of LE, research without disaggregated data made it difficult for us to assess the degree to which intersectional approaches were integrated. Across our literature review, we did not find any examples of PwLE evaluating their experiences of engagement with research projects, which is part of a broader gap of insufficient LE perspectives on engagement in research. Moving forward, we hope to better understand how particular groups that are more frequently engaged (e.g., youth) or are unlikely to be engaged (e.g., people with disabilities, older people, newcomers, or Black communities) can contribute to developing stronger intersectional and deep engagement with diverse PwLE. And while we engaged with limited French-language articles, we also recognize that undertaking the review in English excluded relevant literature written in other languages.

Our review highlights that while some communities may be overrepresented in populations experiencing homelessness, the engagement of PwLE in research projects does not necessarily reflect those most likely to be navigating housing precarity. For example, we found the experiences of people with disabilities; gender diverse people (including trans, Two-Spirit, and non-binary people); Indigenous Peoples living outside of urban centres, on reserves, and in remote communities; families; older adults; and Black communities were rarely engaged beyond research subjects (Sakatmoto et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2023 a, b; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2017). Those experiencing hidden homelessness were also much less likely to be engaged (or to be the focus of research at all).

Overall, we view a lack of diversity and intersectionality as a significant gap in the practice of deep engagement of PwLE, where communities with LE of homelessness and housing rights violations are often discussed as a homogenous group. Recognizing that the priority groups of the NHSA are communities overrepresented in groups of PwLE, we believe that deep engagement is impossible in research spaces without acknowledging the diverse needs of PwLE who come from communities navigating intersecting and multiple forms of precarity and discrimination. Different populations require different considerations for engagement, and there is specifically a lack of discussion of intersections of experiences (e.g., across gender, ability, and race), leading to the siloing of engagement strategies**.** In the absence of considerations of robust intersectional engagement approaches, researchers risk reinforcing narrow notions of participation that fail to engage people who may not fit normative trajectories of housing precarity/stability.

Discussion: Working in Solidarity with Impacted Communities

In this article, we have outlined the work that must be done to foster deep engagement with PwLE in service of advancing housing rights through the NHSA and homelessness research. We hope to emphasize the importance and necessity of this work. The literature already outlines gaps in assuring the right to housing for all, and the contributions and deep engagement of communities most impacted by housing injustice can further illuminate what actions must be taken. Many researchers and advocates, with and without lived experience, suggest that barriers to achieving the right to housing are already well-researched (Baspaly et al., 2022). To complement this existing knowledge, future research is essential for deepening understandings of, as well as building strong relationships of trust with, impacted communities. Only then will we be able to shift from responses for those with lived experience of housing precarity toward working in solidarity *within, between, and across* impacted communities. Drawing on existing work that PwLE have done, including a plethora of recommendations to government, service providers, and researchers (Boilevan et al., 2019; CLELN, 2022; LEAC, 2016), is a fruitful first step toward honouring lived knowledge.

A shift to deeper engagement must also be accompanied by accountability to existing documented knowledge of PwLE. As reports such as Paradis' (2018) "If You Build It, They Will Claim: Rights-Based Participation and Accountability in Canada's National Housing Strategy" note, PwLE are acutely aware of the many instances in which their 'engagement' is tokenistic and feels like an exercise in researchers and policymakers checking a box (pp. 16-18), forgotten soon after. Elevating and acting on LE can lead to better outcomes for individuals, communities, and society by putting resources and efforts toward housing and programs that reflect and respond to the diverse experiences of community members. Overall, it is clear that the current approaches, tools, and processes most often used for LE engagement (e.g., surveys, focus groups, one-off consultations) are limited and that there has yet to be a comprehensive demonstration of commitment to shifts in power dynamics and accountability to PwLE of homelessness and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Through deep engagement with PwLE, research can amplify areas where current policies and practices are falling short of addressing the unmet needs of those most affected by inadequate housing systems. In Canada and elsewhere, efforts to address the human right to housing contain a disconnect between an increasing commitment to engaging with PwLE and realizing this commitment (see Authors 2022, p. xx). For example, the principles of the NHS recognize that "good housing policy requires transparent and accountable partnership between the federal government… and people with lived experience of housing need" (Government of Canada, 2018, p.5). They also acknowledge that "First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation housing strategies must be co-developed" (Government of Canada, 2018, p. 5), which highlights both the importance of LE engagement and the unique right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination. Moreover, the priorities of the NHC include emphasizing an active role for PwLE, and Chapter 7 of the NHS discusses partnerships with Indigenous governments and groups. However, Chapter 8, which focuses on fostering research that "will identify barriers to accessing housing, measure and assess the impact of existing housing policies, identify future

research opportunities, and shape the National Housing Strategy" (Government of Canada, 2018, p. 20), does not prioritize funding for research by and with PwLE. This disconnect is apparent in the extensive document dataset we reviewed.

While many of the studies we reviewed were undertaken before the introduction of the NHS, the trend of engaging minimally with PwLE, and primarily as research subjects, is clear, problematic, and ongoing despite the language of engagement included in policies such as the NHS. To advance the commitment to the right to housing as outlined in the NHS and to uphold the commitment to centring LE knowledge, research institutes, funders, and government bodies should prioritize and compensate PwLE as research designers, implementers, analysts, authors, and disseminators. Prioritizing LE knowledge also means more intentional, continuous, and transparent engagement, training, and resourcing of people with LE in housing research and advocacy spaces. This level of deep engagement requires a significant investment of time and labour, which should be recognized as necessary for meeting the aims of honoring and learning from PwLE. The promising practices outlined in this article provide a starting place to shift the landscape of research by and for those most impacted by housing rights violations.

Conclusion: Emergent Learning on Deep Engagement with PwLE

Our commitment to recognizing the expertise of PwLE means centring their knowledge. This means recognizing all people—including those who are experiencing homelessness—as rights holders, making affordable and adequate (that is, accessible, free from discrimination, and appropriate) housing available for all, and interrogating and working to redress the causes of inadequate housing (Farha & Schwan, 2020). Within a settler-colonial context such as Canada, this also includes following the leadership of the lived and living knowledges of Indigenous communities, as well as supporting self-determination in the face of colonial displacement and institutional discrimination. Deep engagement with PwLE in research and policy work requires grounding engagement in reciprocal, long-term relationships that move beyond participation as knowledge extraction towards models of co-creation and partnership. In turn, this requires a commitment to foregrounding LE knowledge at all stages of project development through participation in the conceptual stages of a project and mutual negotiation of project parameters and boundaries. Projects must be impactful for communities that are participating and co-creating and reject research generation for its own sake. It is imperative that researchers uphold their responsibility to the communities they engage with and derive knowledge from. Accountability is not limited to research ethics alone but also involves a commitment to amplifying LE knowledge and advocating for its integration in future projects. While the research team on this project includes PwLE and researchers with relationships with LE communities, the operational constraints governing this report made it impossible to engage in an approach we would describe as deep deep engagement. As such, we recognize this article grapples with challenges we outline here and presents emergent—and ongoing—learnings on how to undertake this work rather than prescriptive conclusions on how it must be done.

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Using Community-Engaged, Arts-Based Methods to Explore Housing Insecurity in Rural-Urban Spaces

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Abstract This article explores how community-engaged, arts-based research methods can enrich our understanding of homelessness, with a specific focus on housing insecurity in rural-urban communities. Drawing on a digital storytelling project in Dufferin County, Ontario, that featured twelve storytellers and eight stories, this article explores the complexities of homelessness that are often neglected in official narratives of housing and home. We argue that the dominant method of documenting homelessness—enumeration through Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts—provides a limited understanding of homelessness and contributes to the invisibility of these problems in rural-urban spaces. We explore how a participant-led, arts-based approach can point to key areas for policy change by drawing attention to housing insecurity as a form of homelessness and highlighting how individual circumstances intersect with structural factors.

KeyWords homelessness, critical arts-based methods, digital storytelling, Point-in-Time Count, rural-urban, community-engaged research

> *All human beings crave a place to call home. A safe haven to live and raise a family. The harsh reality is that this basic fundamental need is becoming harder and harder to attain.*
>
> —"Home" [research participant's digital story]

Housing is a fundamental human need and a basic human right yet many people experience homelessness. From 2016 to 2021, 230,000 relatively affordable rental units were lost in the Canadian market (Pomeroy, 2022). At the same time, the year-over-year cost of a private market rental has dramatically increased in many places (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2023) and social housing waitlists are measured in years, if not decades (Statistics Canada, 2018). These factors have made housing insecurity and homelessness urgent social problems in Canada. In response to this crisis, the federal government has increased its efforts to quantify homelessness and use this data to inform policy change (Donaldson et al., 2018). Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts are counts of people experiencing homelessness using a primarily quantitative methodology that emphasizes standardized measures (Smith, 2015). Yet the complex and

shifting ways structural dynamics shape individual experiences of homelessness are often absent from dominant methods of imagining, documenting, and enumerating homelessness.

This article explores how community-engaged, arts-based research methods can enrich our understanding of homelessness in rural-urban communities. Drawing on a digital storytelling project in Dufferin County, Ontario, involving twelve storytellers and eight stories, we explore the complexities of housing insecurity that are often neglected in official narratives of housing and home. We argue that the dominant method of documenting homelessness—enumeration through PiT Counts—provides a limited understanding of this pressing social issue and contributes to the invisibility of these problems in rural-urban spaces, where homelessness manifests differently than in urban areas. We explore how participant-led, arts-based engagement illuminates the often-neglected experiences of homelessness and shows how individual circumstances intersect with structural factors, thereby pointing to key areas for policy change.

In this paper, we first contextualize housing insecurity and homelessness in Canada and historicize the use of PiT Counts. Next, we introduce our case study location, Dufferin County, Ontario, and situate digital storytelling as a critical arts-based methodology. After, we describe how the digital storytelling workshop contributes to understandings of housing insecurity by developing complex, layered, and situated understandings; mobilizing an explicitly political framing of housing insecurity; using participatory and agentic research processes; and prioritizing process-oriented outcomes. We conclude with a brief discussion of the implications of this research.

Housing Insecurity as Homelessness in Canada

We draw on the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness' definition of homelessness as the absence of safe, adequate, and permanent housing and/or the immediate means of acquiring such housing (Gaetz et al., 2012).[1] Homelessness, and its prevalence, is shaped by complex structural factors that intersect with individual circumstances (Dej, 2020). Structural dimensions of homelessness include systematic exclusion and/or discrimination based on race, Indigeneity, disability, gender, sexuality, class, and migration status, as well as government policy decisions in intersecting areas such as fiscal policy, rent regulation, healthcare provision, and income supports (Dej et al., 2020; Levac et al., 2022). Focusing on Dufferin County situates this paper in literature exploring people's experiences of homelessness in rural areas and urban-rural spaces, categories which overlap. Schiff et al. (2015) describe rural areas as including three different zones: within commuting distance of urban areas, outside commuting distance of urban areas, and remote communities far from the urban areas that serve as local service hubs. In rural settings, homelessness is less visible because shelter systems may be underdeveloped and people experiencing unsheltered homelessness may be more hidden from public view (Schiff et al.,

1 While the Canadian Observatory on Homlessness' definition is commonly used in Canada, Métis-Cree scholar Jesse Thistle's work suggests that understanding homelessness from an Indigenous perspective requires considering the complex relations of land, culture, and displacement in Canada's settler-colonial context and how these create a sense of homelessness for Indigenous Peoples that extends beyond physical shelter (Thistle, 2017).

2015; MacDonald & Gaulin, 2020). This invisibility contributes to the inaccurate perception that homelessness is not an urgent social problem in rural settings. Yet recent research has demonstrated that homelessness not only exists in rural settings (MacDonald & Gaulin, 2020) but also that rural areas can have higher rates of per capita homelessness than major urban centres (Schiff et al., 2023).

The designation 'rural-urban' describes places falling into Schiff et al.'s (2023) first zone (rural areas within commuting distance of urban areas), where urban and rural characteristics intersect in complex and fluid ways (Pin & Haley, 2022; Scott et al., 2013). Characterized by low housing density and high population growth, rural-urban spaces are distinct from suburbs because they lack geographic contiguity with urban centres, while also being distinct from rural spaces due to being highly connected to urban centres (Ros-Tonen et al., 2015). That said, rural and rural-urban experiences of homelessness do overlap: both are characterized by hidden homelessness and the perception that homelessness is not an urgent social problem (Pin & Haley, 2022). However, the affordable housing sector and homelessness supports have historically been less developed for people in urban-rural spaces, even as they experience increasing housing market pressures and housing insecurity (Greenberg, 2021; Pin & Haley, 2022).

Enumerating Homelessness

While some national estimates exist (e.g., Gaetz et al., 2016), it is difficult to know exactly how many people are experiencing homelessness at a given time. PiT Counts attempt to enumerate the number of people experiencing homelessness in a specific geographic space at a given moment in time (Donaldson et al., 2018). During the count, trained volunteers or professionals survey individuals experiencing homelessness to gather information concerning their housing history, demographics, service use, and income sources (Donaldson et al., 2018). Despite earlier attempts by individual cities, Canada lacked a coordinated count until 2015, when the federal government and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness piloted a common PiT Count methodology in communities across Canada. The count further expanded in 2016 when the government required communities receiving federal funding to participate (Schiff et al., 2022; Smith, 2015). In addition, the province of Ontario mandates that all municipalities designated as housing service providers conduct regular PiT Counts (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2021). Thus, since 2016, there has been an increase in local efforts to enumerate homeless individuals through standardized PiT Counts, with nationally coordinated PiT Counts occurring in 2016, 2018, and 2021 (Infrastructure Canada, 2024).

PiT Counts are taken up by policy actors as the best approximation of homelessness available. Data from PiT Counts are used by governments to inform planning and service provision regarding homelessness and to make funding decisions (Schneider et al., 2016). Moreover, the data are seen as the "key to ending homelessness" (Schneider et al., 2016). Proponents suggest that counts can encourage action by providing information on local needs, informing system planning and program development, and providing a means to assess progress for reducing or ending homelessness (Donaldson et al., 2018). Thus, the results of the PiT Counts, in terms of

the numbers of individuals assessed and the demographic characteristics of these individuals, have substantial policy implications.

Nonetheless, researchers have pointed out several limitations regarding PiT Counts. PiT Counts overrepresent people experiencing chronic homelessness compared to other types of homelessness (Smith, 2015). In addition, because PiT Counts rely on enumeration based on street visibility, sometimes supplemented with data from shelters, they undercount those experiencing less visible forms of homelessness such as couch-surfing, staying in motels, sleeping in vehicles, and/or squatting (Agans et al., 2014). PiT Counts thus undercount women and youth, as well as homelessness in rural and rural/urban areas. This is because these groups are more likely to develop strategies for finding shelter that involve less street visibility (Schwan et al., 2021; Smith & Castañeda-Tinoco, 2019; Schiff et al., 2023).

These limitations mean that PiT Counts are always undercounts of the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in a community (Deleu et al., 2023; Smith2015). Moreover, by documenting service use (and service burden) and demographic characteristics that co-occur with the experience of homelessness, PiT Counts implicitly suggest that individual-level, rather than structural, factors are more useful for understanding homelessness. To elaborate, the focus on individual-level data can lead to a deficit-based understanding of demographic groups more likely to experience homelessness, where homelessness is understood as a consequence of individual choices rather than a result of systemic issues affecting housing affordability and wellbeing (Levac et al., 2022). PiT Counts inevitably imply that homelessness is mostly an issue of visible, unhoused bodies and that the depth of the problem is related simply to the question of how many bodies. Having visible bodies as the dominant image of the homeless experience positions it as a problem for the state to solve, obscuring the production of homelessness through state policies and programs. At the same time, the focus on visible bodies conceals more hidden forms of homelessness, which has the perverse effect of reproducing homelessness through policy neglect.

Dufferin DufferinCounty, Ontario

Our digital storytelling project is situated in Dufferin DufferinCounty, a place we describe as a rural-urban community. Dufferin County is an upper-tier municipality[2] in Ontario, Canada, with a population of 66,257 (Statistics Canada, 2023), located approximately 80km northwest of TorontoDufferin. While not part of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Dufferin DufferinCounty has a high degree of economic interconnectivity with urban centres in the GTA, while still maintaining the low housing density and high rates of population growth characteristic of rural-urban spaces (Statistics Canada, 2023).

As the upper-tier municipality in the area, Dufferin County is the designated housing service manager for Dufferin and other lower-tier municipalities within the county's boundaries. As such, Dufferin County produces a regularly updated housing and homelessness plan that

2 A county government is a form of local government in some areas of Southern Ontario that consists of the local municipalities (cities, towns, villages, and townships) within its boundaries. The county is referred to as an upper-tier municipality and one of its functions is to provid health and social services, including housing services.

includes information about the number of people documented as experiencing homelessness through the local PiT Count. In 2018, the first year PiT Count numbers were included, Dufferin County recorded 44 people as homeless during the PiT Count and had an average of 643 individuals waitlisted for subsidized housing (Dufferin, 2018). In 2021, the most recent year for which public data are available, Dufferin County recorded 23 people experiencing homelessness during the PiT Count and had an average of 703 individuals waitlisted for subsidized housing (Dufferin, 2021a). These data led the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness to send a letter to Dufferin County congratulating them on reducing chronic homelessness by 50% (Dufferin County, 2021b). However, the PiT Count numbers in Dufferin should not be taken as a comprehensive tally of the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the county. For example, long-term motel residents waiting for affordable housing may be counted as housed in PiT Counts but are still experiencing homelessness, as they lack permanent and adequate housing. In addition, overall housing waitlist numbers only tell part of the story, with some households falling off the waitlist due to attrition or displacement.

Besides these general challenges, PiT Counts create additional issues in rural-urban spaces such as Dufferin County, which have historically been understood as having lower levels of housing insecurity than major metropolitan areas (Bunting et al., 2004). Outer suburbs and exurban communities are often presented as places of relative affluence and voluntary in-migration from urban centres (Walker, 2010). Besides neglecting the settler-colonial context of rural-urban (and all) spaces in Canada, including the presence and displacement of Indigenous Peoples, this framing facilitates a narrative of homelessness and housing insecurity as a 'big city' problem.

In addition to the number of people experiencing homelessness and/or on the housing waitlist, Dufferin County's report cards include information about substance use, health, and emergency service use by people experiencing homelessness. For example, the 2021 report card states that 73% of individuals documented as homeless during the PiT Count had a "substance use" or "mental health" issue (Dufferin County, 2021a). This is the only demographic data presented in the report cards, which reinforces the stereotype that only certain types of people experience homelessness and that homelessness is largely a result of individual decisions (Buck-McFadyen, 2022; Dej, 2020; Schneider et al., 2010). Enumeration functions as a biopolitical mechanism that identifies homelessness as a condition of the individual body, a failure to be a fully realized neoliberal subject. Thus, under neoliberalism, these are failed bodies that need to be corrected through targeted interventions, whose success is measured by the reduction in PiT Count numbers.

The Importance of Community-Engaged Research Approaches for Understanding Housing Insecurity

As discussed, developing a comprehensive understanding of the landscape and experience of homelessness in rural-urban spaces is uniquely challenging. Community knowledge about homelessness—specifically, knowledge held by people with lived experience of homelessness who regularly navigate private rental markets, non-market housing, shelter systems, and/or the geography of sleeping rough in their own communities—is often overlooked. People with lived

experience of homelessness have a deep understanding of the strategies for obtaining housing, staying housed, or finding/making shelter; the social supports available and the benefits and risks of accessing them; and the spaces where homeless populations are in community with one another. Yet this knowledge is often overlooked when state or non-profit organizations seek to quantify the 'homelessness problem' and build solutions (Malenfant et al., 2019 Nelson, 2020). Community-engaged scholarship can fill a critical gap by mapping the complexities of homelessness in a community in a way that PiT Counts cannot.[3] The need for a community-engaged approach may be especially important in rural areas, where homelessness is often hidden from public view and/or poorly understood (Buck-McFadyen, 2022; Schiff et al., 2023). Broadly, community-engaged scholarship in the social sciences approaches knowledge creation, action, and advocacy *with* communities and is grounded in the perspective that respectful and mutually beneficial engagements with communities are essential to a rigorous and complete analysis of a social issue and any subsequent recommendations or actions (Levac & Denis, 2019; Mokos, 2022). Our adherence to a community-engaged scholarship approach includes building meaningful relationships in and with communities and making decisions about research design, implementation, and outputs collectively. Engaged research has a long and diverse history across disciplines, but common commitments include cultivating reciprocity, sharing ownership of data and outputs, centring community-identified needs, and valuing diverse knowledges (Beaulieu et al., 2018). Rather than seeing these commitments as undermining the integrity and independence of the research process, we (in agreement with other community-engaged scholars) believe that "groups do not learn from research that simply confirms their agenda or justifies their grant proposals. True advocacy research that helps community partners is critical research" (Warren et al., 2018, p. 448). For community-engaged scholars the process of doing research with the community is at least as important as the outputs, in part because mutual capacity-building is another priority of engaged research (Boilevin et al., 2017; Francisco-Menchavez & Tungohan, 2020). Community-engaged scholarship brings academic and community knowledge together to make a positive contribution, whether in terms of highlighting marginalized insights, developing policy or other recommendations, designing and implementing new programs, and/or engaging in creative works. These vital commitments and contributions are difficult—if not impossible—to achieve through PiT Counts alone. The community-engaged approach used in this project taps into community knowledge about where, how, and why people are experiencing homelessness in a given space. This vital community-based knowledge is missed in PiT Counts and other enumeration practices that produce quantitative representations of homelessness.

3 In this paper, we use "community engaged" as an umbrella term that captures variations of the community-based, participatory scholarship that, despite evolving in different disciplines, generally share similar commitments to relationship building, reciprocity, equity, shared action, and valuation of diverse forms of knowledge.

Digital Storytelling as a Critical Arts-Based Research Method

We situate digital storytelling as a community-engaged research approach, part of a broader practice of critical arts-based research in the social sciences. Arts-based research is work that explores, represents, and challenges human experience through the diverse modalities of the arts (Wang et al., 2017). *Critical* arts-based research holds a broadly consistent set of normative commitments through a "postmodern, participatory, political, and process-oriented approach to research" (Rice & Mündel, 2018, p. 5). Through a postmodern orientation, critical arts-based research recognizes the situated, partial, and embodied aspects of knowledge production and seeks to highlight difference and multiplicity through competing narratives and understandings. Through its participatory orientation, critical arts-based inquiry disrupts the notion of an externally situated researcher and internally situated participant, working through a model of co-creation in the research process and project outputs by "participant-researchers" and "researcher-participants" (Rice et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2017). Importantly, co-creation involves the production of research outputs that use everyday modalities to disrupt divisions between the academy and the community and foster shared knowledges (Finley, 2011; Rice & Mündel, 2018). Critical arts-based research is explicitly political in its orientation. It interrogates social power relations through arts-based practices and produces accessible forms of knowledge that can be mobilized for social change (Finley, 2011; Rice & Mündel, 2018). Finally, critical arts-based research is process-oriented, valuing the research process itself for opening space for meaningful engagement rooted in the normative commitments outlined above (Rice et al., 2021).

Digital storytelling is an arts-based method that uses digital technologies to combine multiple types of visual and auditory media into a narrative (Wang et al., 2017). Our specific approach to digital storytelling is rooted in the practice developed by the Re•Vision Centre for Art and Social Justice at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. Re•Vision's approach to storytelling is rooted in participant autonomy, but it also values collaboration and shared reflection. Participants are typically asked to respond to an open-ended prompt but are otherwise ungoverned by any broader constraints. The process is designed with touchpoints for collaboration, deep listening, and shared reflection (Rice & Mündel, 2018). Importantly, the process is highly supported, with one-on-one expert support available to participants as they navigate different types of technology and different approaches to storytelling. Furthermore, the process is rooted in difference: while it may include exploration of a shared structural issue or social experience, it does so through attention to the different lived experiences and relationships participants bring to this exploration (Rice et al., 2021; Rice & Mündel, 2018). This attention to difference can disrupt dominant narratives and lay the groundwork for future collaboration across differences (Rice & Mündel, 2018). Finally, through Re•Vision's specific approach to digital storytelling, the distinction between participants and researchers is often blurred or even collapsed. Rooting the process in difference enables researchers to enter a shared space of vulnerability by making and sharing stories shaped by their own positionality and reflecting on the process together with participants (Rice et al., 2021). This process of

shared reflection helps disrupt (though not necessarily resolve) hierarchies and creates space for dialogue, which are important components of community-engaged scholarship more broadly.

Our digital storytelling project arose out of past work in Dufferin County involving more traditional program evaluation and is founded on the relationships created during this time: the relationships are one of mutual respect created through shared interactions within and outside the formal research process. Importantly, our arts-based project was developed with community members with lived experience of homelessness who were interested in more participant-led research methods. Since many people experiencing homelessness experience institutional violence from landlords, service providers, and the legal system (Benbow et al., 2019; Kaufman, 2022), strong collaborative relationships were essential to our digital storytelling project.

Following Research Ethics Board approval, twelve storytellers[4], including the three members of the research team, were recruited into the workshop. All participants were compensated for their time. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the storytelling workshop occurred virtually. Participants were also provided with a digital tablet and headphones, and the research team worked one-on-one with participants to provide other supports needed to facilitate participation. The project began with a story circlewhere storytellers shared their initial responses to the prompt, "What do you want people to know about homelessness and housing insecurity in Dufferin County?" Consistent with our critical approach to social science research, the project's goal was to use storytelling to share knowledges that would otherwise be invisible and mobilize these knowledges for progressive social change. The facilitation team worked with the twelve storytellers over the next four to six weeks, producing eight stories that were 4 to 13 minutes long and included personal narratives and voice; song and soundscapes; and visuals including artwork, photos, illustrations, and videos.[5]

Findings

This section considers how the digital stories created by participants and researchers offer key insights into how housing insecurity in rural-urban spaces manifests and is experienced, adding much-needed texture and nuance to the story told about Dufferin County. The stories created through the digital storytelling process, titled "Home," "Racism in My World," "Legislated and Institutional Poverty of ODSP [Ontario Disability Support Program] Recipients," "Motel Living," "T's Story," "May Break My Bones," "Homelessness and Poverty," and "Complicating Research in and with Community" are diverse and layered interpretations of the storytelling prompt, "What do you want people to know about the experience of homelessness in Dufferin County?" We organized our discussion of the stories into four sections that mirror the commitments of arts-based engagement: postmodern, political, participatory, and process-

4 Following Rice et al. (2021), we use the category of "storytellers" to describe both participants and research team members who engaged in the process of creating a digital story, emphasizing shared engagement in the process.

5 The digital stories were completed in 2021. Seven of these stories can be viewed at www.dufferinchange.ca. The creator of the eighth story declined to post their story publicly but agreed that we could use it for this paper. Unless otherwise noted, all of the quotations in the findings section are from the digital stories.

oriented (Rice & Mündel, 2018). Woven through these sections are the challenges of leading a digital storytelling workshop with participants experiencing intersecting forms of social marginalization, including, in some cases, actively experiencing housing insecurity at the time of the workshop.

Sites/Sights: Multiple Narratives and Perspectives (Postmodern)

When it comes to the housing crisis and homelessness, the focus on quantification through enumerating homelessness and counting housing starts misses a rich analysis not only of the housing experience itself, but also of potential solutions. In light of this, digital storytelling's ability to generate and share a multiplicity of narratives makes it a valuable alternative capable of challenging dominant explanations of a problem.

The digital stories produced through our project showcase the many ways that housing precarity manifests in rural-urban spaces, ways that would be overlooked by simply counting bodies and structures. Instead, the stories take up the issue of 'site/sight.' Often, the sites of housing precarity in rural-urban spaces are unexpected and hidden from sight. In response, digital stories capture the unexpected revelations, erasures, look, and feel of housing precarity on the rural-urban edge.

For instance, "Motel Living" captures the experiences of a person who— after sleeping in cars, living in unsafe units, and experiencing what they identify as an illegal eviction—came to live in a rural motel for three and a half years. Far from grocery stores and medical services and unserved by public transportation, this person became isolated, with nowhere to go. In a motel at the edge of a highway, with farmers' fields in all directions, their health deteriorates. They are hidden from sight, invisible in homelessness counts, and concealed from the public eye but counted as housed by their social worker, emphasizing the incompleteness of official narratives. Likewise, "T's Story" takes up the power imbalance between landlords and tenants and the injustices—such as illegal evictions and rent increases—that push people into motel living. This story identifies other rural motels, as well as empty warehouses, as ignored sites that could be developed as transitional housing and speaks to the depth of the housing crisis in the county. While the use of motels and hotels as emergency and temporary housing is not new, their integration into COVID-19 homelessness response strategies raises the possibility that this form of unsuitable shelter will remain (Odd & Erfani, 2023). The hope raised in T's story for a dignified use of motels and hotels as transitional housing contrasts with the experience recounted in "Motel Living." For people in rural-urban communities, motel and hotel living often means living in isolation, out of sight and out of mind.

In "Racism in My World," the storytellers' discussion of race and racism in the predominantly white Dufferin County (Statistics Canada, 2023) also reflect the theme of site/sight, where people of colour experiencing housing precarity feel both hypervisible and invisible, an issue we have written about elsewhere (see Levac et al., 2022). The storytellers share, among other injustices, the experience of a racialized homeless family that was invited to view an apartment by a prospective landlord. When the family arrived, the sight of the prospective tenants of colour prompted the landlord to say the unit was no longer available. This story reveals the

racism (and, in particular, anti-Black racism) that is often "[swept] under the carpet" ("Racism," 2023) despite the stark housing inequality experienced by Black households. In Canada, 52% of Black households are renters compared to 27% of the total population and they are more likely to require housing subsidies; additionally, Black homeowners pay $620 more for their monthly shelter costs than the total population of homeowners (Randle et al., 2021). "Racism in My World" reveals the often-neglected racialization of housing precarity and poverty and insists on making it not just part of the conversation about homelessness in rural-urban spaces but central to understanding housing precarity.

"May Break My Bones" takes up the collision of poverty, anti-immigration sentiments, and misogyny in the production of homelessness. The storyteller explains how poverty, hunger, and homelessness forced them to hide in the woods, out of sight, and how the natural world was a site of shelter and food. The survival strategies shared in this story—sex work, hunting, and fishing—are often left out of the conversation of homelessness in Canada or else presented, in the case of sex work and sex workers, as pitying or pathologizing. "May Break My Bones" is a rich, complex story that makes hardships visible, as well as the undeniable amounts of labour and skill demanded of those navigating homelessness. In contrast to narratives that position people experiencing homelessness as without power, "May Break My Bones" flips the narrative to emphasize constant, unrelenting agency. As the narrator relates, they are always running, always working to evade oppressive systems and live with dignity.

Ultimately, these four digital stories tell multiple and overlapping stories about housing in Dufferin County, shifting our understanding of the sites/sights of housing precarity in rural-urban spaces. Importantly, the stories speak to the many gaps in formal homelessness and housing supports, as storytellers often relay working against systems to survive, a theme picked up further below.

Beyond showcasing the multiple narratives and understandings of homelessness, these digital stories highlight the movement of homeless people from a car to a hotel, across national borders, and through the woods. These stories interrupt and call into question the desirability and utility of focusing on a quantitative counting of homeless bodies to inform policymaking. As "T's Story," "Break My Bones," and "Motel Living" demonstrate, experiences of homelessness can be characterized by constant movement, where people are required to constantly reconstruct their relationship to place. Beyond calling into question enumeration's ability to capture the realities of homelessness in a particular place, these stories ("Break My Bones" in particular) showcase how movement as a survival strategy can hide a person experiencing homelessness from the biopolitical project of counting.

Ontological (In)Security: The Failures of Social Assistance (Political)

The digital stories in this project highlight how social assistance policy directly contributes to and exacerbates the experiences of housing insecurity within and beyond the rural-urban space, denying recipients ontological security. "Home" captures housing loss that resulted from the "terribly difficult" ("Home", 2021, 1:26) and very long process of applying for social assistance following a period of ill health. The storyteller of "Home" speaks to the fear of

housing loss and the denial of a "safe and comfortable" (Home, 2021,0:36) place to cultivate and maintain family ties, an experience that is part of the daily life of low-income tenants in Dufferin County where "there is a clear shortage of affordable housing and what is affordable is highly sought after and competition for rentals is fierce" (Home, 2021, 2:44). Similarly, "Poverty and Homelessness" discusses how social assistance programs produce poverty and homelessness. The story anthropomorphizes the social assistance system in Ontario, using the figure of a world-class boxer to highlight that "when you get in the ring with social assistance, be prepared to get knocked out" ("Poverty", 2021, 0:30=). Poverty and Homelessness" documents how social assistance creates uncertainty, harms self-esteem and self-worth, exhausts recipients, makes people sick, and limits hope for the future. Finally, "Legislated and Institutional Poverty of ODSP," highlights in painstaking detail the ever-present stress and anxiety that arise from a complex and cumbersome social assistance policy that impoverishes recipients.

These stories draw attention to the lack of ontological security experienced by people accessing social assistance (Woodhall-Melnik et al., 2017; Plage et al., 2023). Ontological security is, broadly, a sense of stability and control over one's life (Plage et al., 2023). The low rates of financial support that make rental market housing unaffordable for recipients, the arduous application and reporting process, and the intense surveillance experienced by social assistance recipients directly threaten their ability to exert control over or plan where and how they live. The social assistance system is captured as a policy failure that directly contributes to housing insecurity, stress, pain, and even illness, an experience not captured by PiT Counts. These digital stories bring to light the embodied experience of poverty and housing insecurity that, in these cases, is directly linked to policy failure, not individual experiences or failings. By drawing attention to the state-led creation of ontological insecurity, these stories challenge normative understandings of poverty and homelessness as an unfortunate individual experience. Instead, poverty and homelessness are identified and analyzed as structural problems in which the state is deeply implicated.

Negotiating Agency (Participatory)

In our digital storytelling workshop, the research process was co-created by storytellers. Developing the research processes and objectives was a shared undertaking. Co-creation meant that storytellers owned their stories and held authority over where and how those stories were shared. This process of ongoing consent was especially important in maintaining collective trust, which is necessary given the highly personal nature of the stories and their subject matter: housing insecurity is a fraught topic for many of the storytellers, who had experienced vulnerability and a lack of control during past discussions. In turn, storytellers' ownership of their stories helped create the trust necessary for the detailed and personal explorations that emerged in the digital stories. A second dimension of co-creation was the dual identity of the research team members as researchers and storytellers. Consistent with the call from over-researched communities that "if you want to do research with and about us, we want to know some things about you too" (Boilevin et al., 2017), all research team members participated in the process, making their own stories. Shared vulnerability was important for creating a

research space conducive to mutual respect and capacity building and, as we discuss in the next section, for disrupting the researcher-participant divide.

During and after creating the stories, storytellers worked together through ongoing conversations to revise the project's framing. A key contribution that several storytellers made was suggesting we re-think the language of "rural-urban fringe," which is how we had initially conceptualized the project's geospatial location. Two participants noted that fringe reinscribed the marginality of rural-urban areas rather than centring the space, potentially reinforcing the stereotype that homelessness is not a pressing issue outside of large cities. They were also concerned that the language of "fringe" might associate the project with extremist political rhetoric unrelated to the goals of the digital storytelling project. This prompted a group discussion of several alternatives and the adoption of the language of "rural-urban space" as more accurately describing the spatial dynamics of Dufferin County.

Another key dimension of participant agency was the interpretation of the storytelling prompt. Participants interpreted the prompt, "What do you want people to know about homelessness and housing insecurity in Dufferin County?", in ways that challenged not only dominant narratives concerning homelessness but also our interpretation of what is in/outside of scope in discussions of housing and homelessness. The digital stories all highlight the presence and urgency of homelessness, with a focus on housing insecurity in Dufferin County, but in diverse ways. "Racism in my World" centres experiences of racism and social exclusion in shaping their relationship with housing. The stories "Home," "Poverty and Homelessness," and "Legislated and Institutional Poverty of ODSP Recipients" all focus on how the shortcomings of income-support programs in Ontario are a primary driver of respondents' housing insecurity. "Motel Living" and "T's Story" focus on how state housing regulations and guidance contribute to housing insecurity, while "May Break My Bones" connects housing insecurity to gender-based violence and food insecurity. In short, participants interpreted the prompt in diverse ways, which drew attention to often-neglected dimensions of homelessness and connected individual experiences to structural socio-economic and policy dimensions. Importantly, the focus on structural issues such as the lack of affordable rental housing, the inadequacy of income support programs, and the prevalence of racism bring attention to dynamics of homelessness that extend beyond the type of data generated through PiT Counts.

Responsivity and Disrupting the Participant-Researcher Divide (Process-Orientation)

Finally, we discuss the process-oriented aspects of digital storytelling and how, consistent with critical arts-based research, the process itself was valuable, both for illuminating dimensions of housing insecurity and for creating space for future meaningful engagement among participants (Rice et al., 2021). Our research process was embedded in the structural dynamics of homelessness and marked by the harms caused by homelessness. Shortly before initial recruitment into the project, the community member 'M,' who frequently cycled in and out of homelessness, passed away very suddenly. Prior to their death, M had expressed interest in the digital storytelling project, but now their story remains untold. The absence of M's story highlights—in the most

severe way possible—how the consequences of homelessness make it difficult for research to adequately represent the lived expertise of those experiencing homelessness.

As noted in the methods discussion, the COVID-19 pandemic required us to adapt to a virtual format. Initially we had planned for all storytellers and facilitators to gather online in a digital workroom, similar to an in-person meeting space. It soon became clear that trying to work together as a large group in a digital space caused friction among participants. Some participants were observing the speed at which other participants were working on their stories and feeling left behind. Other participants were struggling with the logistics of digital engagement, which was often related to living in inadequate housing and living rural areas with less reliable internet. For some participants, irregular work commitments and/or caregiving responsibilities with little support made it difficult to commit to attending lengthy group meetings. These challenges, on top of the emotionally difficult work of exploring participants' first-hand experiences of housing insecurity and other forms of homelessness, made coping with group dynamics in a virtual environment untenable.

In response, and guided by participants' input, we changed our approach by moving the project work to one-on-one sessions between facilitators, academic leads, and participants. In this way the project pacing and support were more responsive to the needs of individual participants. For example, one participant had difficulty accessing reliable internet service and using the project-supplied tablet. This individual, however, was very comfortable with their phone, so we transitioned to working with this individual over the phone. Our initial approach of expecting everyone to use the same hardware (a project supplied tablet), attend the same group meetings, and produce their stories on the same timeline was motivated by the ambitions of digital storytelling, including building opportunities for collaborating across differences (Rice & Mündel, 2018). However, these expectations were too rigid and interrupted the goal of recognizing participants' deep and distinct lived expertise. The need for an adaptable approach speaks to the diverse and multi-layered barriers individuals with recent experiences of homelessness face when participating in arts-based research processes, which often involve intensive engagement over a prolonged period: when individuals are dedicating most of their time to meeting their basic survival needs, it is difficult to make space for this level of engagement.

Another way the participant-research divide was disrupted was through actively engaging with tensions that arose during the story creation. As a team, we had to negotiate decisions around framing and around how personal to make the stories. For the two university professors without experience of housing precarity, deciding how to express our relationship to the topic at hand without appropriating experiences was difficult and is contemplated in the story "Complicating Research with and in Community," which details our struggle with how to relate to the prompt authentically and experientially. Through the shared vulnerability created through the digital storytelling process and the moments of tension, joy, and satisfaction as the stories developed, the groundwork was developed for future research, with emergent and meaningful social relationships developing among storytellers. Specifically, the project led to

the formation of the Dufferin Lived Experience Collective, which continues to meet regularly and function as a supportive space for members.

Conclusion

Understanding the nuances and layered complexities of homelessness is not possible with PiT Counts alone. While these data serve a basic function for communities and are indeed required of them as part of government funding schemes, they underrepresent and flatten stories of homelessness. Moreover, PiT Counts fail to represent the lived experiences of people who acutely understand the challenges of navigating inadequate housing options in their communities. This is especially true in rural-urban spaces where narratives about the lack of homelessness further erase people's experiences. Digital storytelling is a critical arts-based research method that advances the overarching commitments of community-engaged scholarship, including practicing reciprocity, advocating shared capacity-building, and prioritizing community-identified needs. The digital stories produced through this research collaboration reveal critical information about sites/sights of homelessness and participants' ontological insecurity. They also provide critical policy information, such as detailing exactly why poverty and homelessness cannot be accurately understood as an individual deficit-based problem.

Working together and being process-oriented is instructive for anyone wishing to intervene on the complex causes and consequences of housing insecurity and other forms of homelessness. Moreover, it is critical for ensuring that housing-related policy efforts disrupt, rather than entrench, structural and social exclusion, discrimination, settler colonialism, sexism, and other factors that animate housing insecurity and homelessness generally in Canada (Dej, 2020; Schwan et al., 2021). Advancing more informed and just responses to homelessness and housing security depends on more collaborative research approaches–like the digital storytelling described here–that can reveal critical nuances in people's housing-related experiences.

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"A Community of One": Social Support Networks and Low-Income Tenants Living in Market-Rental Housing

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Abstract Social networks, and the supports they provide, are thought to be key to the survival of those living in poverty. In light of this, we have examined the social support networks of low-income renters living in market housing and who are in receipt of rent subsidies and assistance from housing workers. Our work is rooted in a partnered research initiative on affordable rental housing for those in greatest need. After 21 interviews with tenants and service providers, we found that participants in our study have limited informal social support and that this support is confined to instrumental rather than emotional dimensions. Many of the participants discussed how their housing helped them leave harmful networks and contributed to their decision to cut ties with former acquaintances. However, it is also clear that the individuals in our study were not without ties. Despite having limited, and also actively limiting, informal ties, participants sought and received extensive material and emotional support from non-profit organizations including harm reduction, youth, and women's centres, and housing workers. Our findings show that these organizations play an important role beyond material survival and suggest the importance of ensuring tenants are able to access these organizations and that non-profit organizations have adequate resources.

KeyWords rental housing, social support, social networks, non-profits, poverty

In the context of a continuously eroding safety net, social networks and the supports they provide are seen as essential to the survival of those living in poverty. Individuals and families may exchange resources including food, shelter, child care, and bus tickets to mitigate material hardship (Harvey et al., 2021; Martin-West, 2019; Skobba & Goetz, 2015), and the emotional support provided by social networks can help people buffer stress, cope with day-to-day circumstances, and create a sense of belonging and well-being (Marquez et al., 2019; McDonald et al., 2020). However, not all research points to helpful ties: some works identify both positive and negative aspects of social support (Curley, 2009; Gowan, 2011), while other works suggest that individuals living in poverty have fewer people to rely upon than what is commonly assumed (Desmond, 2012; Mazelis, 2017).

In this article, we focus on the social support networks of low-income tenants who live in market-based rental housing and who receive rent subsidies and assistance from housing workers to do so. We focus on this particular population and topic for several important reasons. First,

low-income tenants are among the most marginalized households nationally and globally, often experiencing deep poverty (Airgood-Obrycki et. al, 2019; Food Banks Canada, 2023) and who, in an effort to pay rent, resort to strategies such as skipping meals, forgoing healthcare, and choosing to not heat or cool their homes (Angst et al., 2023; Power & Gillon, 2021; Westbrook, 2023). This economic marginalization is not experienced equally, with Indigenous renters, women, racialized groups, seniors, and tenants with disabilities among those most likely to experience housing-related precarity (Stewart & Cloutier, 2021). These realities, exacerbated by dramatic increases in the cost of living and national crises of affordable housing and homelessness (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2023), make the support networks of low-income tenants particularly important to understand. Second, new housing policies in liberal democratic countries around the world emphasize the private market's role in providing shelter to the poor, both through Housing First initiatives that are provided alongside support and rent subsidies for tenants and result in scattered site units offered through the private market, as well as the use of housing allowances such as the Canada Housing Benefit (Cooper, 2018; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2021; Withers, 2021). This contrasts with large-scale investments in new social housing development, where formal associations and opportunities to connect can be physically embedded (Morris & Verdasco, 2021). At the same time, however, the social support networks of tenants are rarely explored outside of the U.S. context. Our research aims to address this gap in the literature while also highlighting findings that are important to not only to researchers who study poverty but also to the policy makers and front-line community sector workers involved in housing and service delivery.

Literature

Social support emerges from the relationships in our lives (Skobba & Goetz, 2015). Formal sources of support are provided by organizations and institutions such as schools, non-profits, community development corporations, and government agencies, while informal sources of support are obtained from neighbours, family, intimate partners, and friends (Gazso et al., 2016). This support can be tangible or intangible, with the former focused on meeting material and instrumental needs for shelter, food, transportation, and income (among other necessities), while the latter focuses on affective dimensions (Gazso et al., 2016). Other ways of understanding social networks include looking at what they allow recipients to do: they can help recipients cope with their circumstances or allow them to leverage opportunities and resources to gain employment, education, and upward mobility (Briggs, 1998). In our research we focus on the former: we are concerned with the social supports that help low-income renters survive.

Research on the social support networks of low-income tenants shows they sometimes receive assistance from family, friends and neighbours, with material exchanges involving caring for children, doubling or tripling up, sharing information about resources and programs, and exchanging cash and food (Clampet-Lundquist, 2010; Keene & Ruel, 2013; Skobba et al., 2015; Parrott et al., 2021; Pittman & Oakley, 2018; Ucci et al., 2022). The research shows that, given their meager incomes, this support is critical to meeting tenants' basic needs: for

example, low-income mothers who receive limited support from their family are more likely to miss rent payments (Martin-West, 2019). However, these studies do not uniformly point to the development of helpful connections. For instance, Curley (2009) shows that social ties can be beneficial and "draining" (p. 237) at the same time: network members can have overwhelming emotional needs or regularly ask for unreciprocated favours, and they can be negative influences who encourage illicit activity (Curley, 2009). Likewise, a seminal study on social support networks, based on ethnographic research on Black American families (Stack, 1974), found that while family members and those close enough to be considered kin were vital to everyday survival, the cooperative practices in place to share resources, including shelter, meant that individual households struggled to build assets and sometimes felt "controlled" (p. 36) through the requirement to exchange resources. Further, recent work on households that double-up shows that tensions arise because of expectations to give back and because of the challenging living arrangements created by living together: these tensions erode social ties rather than strengthen them (Skobba & Goetz, 2015).

Other research shows tenants deciding to limit their connections to others. Contact with neighbours might be curtailed due to fears of gossiping or general mistrust (Curley, 2009; Hayward et al., 2015; Radziszewski et al., 2022; Skobba et al., 2015), or involvement in community initiatives may be minimized out of concern about harmful influences on their children (Pittman & Oakley, 2018; Skobba et al., 2015). Raudenbush (2016) similarly found that African American tenants living in public housing showed "selective solidarity" (p.1020), engaging in exchanges of resources with a limited number of individuals while also expressing distrust of those who live around them and wanting to keep to themselves. In turn, Power and Gillon (2021) reported that older women living in social housing in Australia expressed safety concerns over other tenants' behaviour. Meanwhile, tenants have also been found to limit connections to friends due to fears of inconsistent support and "trouble" (Domínguez & Watkins, 2003, p.120), while Gowan (2011) observed that participants in his study, who were encouraged by both family and friends to be involved in the drug trade, "had come to see their wealth of social ties as their downfall, and social isolation as the only route to stability" (p. 60).

Further, some low-income tenants simply do not have access to typical sources of informal support. Family members may lack resources to share or may not be physically present to lend a hand due to involvement in the justice system or family breakdown (Desmond, 2012). If family members are available to assist, the personal judgment that may accompany their help can be too much to bear for those needing assistance (Desmond, 2012). Research on evicted tenants has, in fact, shown that emergent, material needs are met by developing ties to individuals known for only short periods of time, such as through a conversation in a waiting room or bus stop. Called "disposable ties" (Desmond, 2012, p.1296), these relationships develop quickly and often end abruptly and on negative terms, resulting in a generalized erosion of trust in others.

The formal supports of those who rent and who live in poverty have also been identified, with community agencies in particular emerging in this research rather than government (Domínguez & Watkins, 2003; Martin-West, 2019; Westbrook, 2023). Beyond providing support directly, non-profits play an important role in fostering or brokering ties which facilitate

material and emotional exchanges among their members (Mazelis, 2017). Yet findings are somewhat mixed regarding the extent to which non-profits are part of social support networks. Perceived limits to assistance from community agencies have been associated with missed rent payments among low-income mothers to an even greater degree than perceived limits to help from family (Martin-West, 2019). And Domínguez and Watkins (2003) found that while some people in their sample sought both material and emotional support from non-profits in place of draining ties to kith and kin, others conveyed a lack of trust in agencies that prevented them from using their services. Likewise, Westbrook (2023) identified the important role local non-profits play in providing emergency food and rental assistance to mostly undocumented Hispanic/Latinx renters, although some renters were less willing to seek help because they did not trust staff.

Finally, comparative research shows that housing type plays a role in social support networks. Tenants in social housing have stronger networks compared to tenants living in other subsidized units or market housing (Keene & Geronimus, 2011; Morris, 2012; Morris & Verdasco, 2021): these stronger networks are linked to the length of time residents have been living in public housing and the presence of local tenant associations that help foster connections (Hayward et al., 2015; Keene & Geronimus, 2011). Relatedly, those who have been displaced through public housing redevelopment often report the dislocation of their social support networks, which can result in the loss of emotional assistance and regular help with child care (August, 2014; Curley, 2009; Keene & Ruel, 2013). Additionally, renters with rent subsidies for market-based units do not typically form social ties with higher-income households, regardless of whether they moved to a low-poverty neighbourhood or whether their public housing was redeveloped to include higher-income residents (Chaskin & Joseph, 2019). In the more common case of tenants moving to low-income neighbourhoods as a voucher (or rent supplement) recipient, ethnographic work reveals the development of limited connections to others in these geographies due to the stigma associated with being a subsidy recipient and the physical clustering of subsidy holders within particular properties (Rosen, 2020).

Research Context

Context is important when considering social support (Lubbers et al., 2020). Our study took place in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM, population 93,694), located in eastern Canada. The CBRM consists of one larger urban centre (Sydney) and several smaller towns and rural communities situated in a geography of about 2,400 square kilometres (Statistics Canada, 2023).

The number of people experiencing homelessness or who live in unaffordable housing in the CBRM is comparable to the country as a whole. Based on the last census, about one-third of renters live in unaffordable housing (Statistics Canada, 2023), and the last count of people experiencing homelessness enumerated 325 people aged 16+ (Roy et al., 2021).

Methods

Our research explores the social support networks of low-income tenants living in market rental housing and who receive rent subsidies and assistance from housing workers to do so. We focus on who is part of their social support networks and the nature of the support provided and/or exchanged.

We developed the interview guide used for this study in partnership with community organizations as part of a larger community-engaged research project focused on affordable rental housing. After obtaining approval from the research ethics board, we used a purposive sampling strategy, and one of the authors conducted 21 semi-structured interviews with 15 tenants and three staff (n=18). The tenants interviewed had lower barriers to finding and keeping housing (i.e., lower acuity) and were invited to participate through staff at a housing organization. Follow-up interviews occurred when tenants moved to a new unit (three cases). Clients come to this organization via the homeless shelter it operates, by referral from another organization with a related mission, or through direct contact by the individual requesting assistance. The organization assists individuals and families with both lower and higher levels of acuity.

Interviews typically lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and were recorded with permission, and an honorarium payment of $25 was provided. Based on participant choice, about half of the tenant interviews were held in their homes while the others took place in coffee shops or workplaces. Separate interviews were conducted with staff members, which included two housing workers and a program administrator with frontline experience. Fieldnotes were taken after interviews to describe the places where interviews occurred and the buildings and neighbourhoods in which tenants lived. Fieldwork was completed between November 2021 and August 2022, during periods within the COVID-19 pandemic when in-person contact, with precautions such as masking, was allowed.

Once interviews were transcribed, two members of the research team analyzed the data using thematic analysis, which uncovers "recurring ideas (referred to as themes) in a data set" (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016, p.33). These two members independently analyzed the data by inductively assigning codes that captured the meaning of different segments of text and then grouping similar codes into sub-themes and then themes, with both authors reading and re-reading transcripts throughout the data analysis process. These two members would jointly discuss the codes, sub-themes, and themes assigned to the data to reach a consensus on the patterns. To strengthen validity, we included many excerpts from interviews so that readers may hear the voices of the interviewees. Our draft findings and interpretations were also reviewed by our partner organization. There are also several limitations to our work. Data were collected in only one region and point in time and are based on tenant perceptions of support rather than observational data. We also collected our data during the COVID-19 pandemic: while participants did not identify the pandemic as limiting or re-shaping their social networks, it still may have had an impact. Note, however, that Nova Scotia experienced lower infection rates during the pandemic's first waves compared to the country as a whole (Steenbeek et al., 2022).

Findings

Tenant Backgrounds

The sociodemographic characteristics of tenants who participated in this study are reported in Table 1. Most were female and they ranged in age from their early 20s to their 70s, with an average age of 37. Three participants identified as Indigenous, two had Acadian roots, four had Scottish or Irish roots, and the remainder did not identify with a particular ethnicity or ethnicities. Most participants did not have intimate partners, and five tenants (four women and one non-binary individual) reported ending relationships due to intimate partner violence. Five tenants had younger children living with them at least part time. All but three participants received social assistance, and their average annual household income was below the official poverty line at CDN $15,900.

Table 1
Tenant Backgrounds

Socio-demographic characteristics	Results (n=15)
Mean age	37 (range 23 – 78 years)
Mean annual household income	$15,900
Gender	
Female	11
Male	3
Non-binary	1
Formal education	
Community college/trade	4
High school	5
Less than high school	6
Employment status	
Employed	1
Unemployed	13
Retired	1
Marital status	
Common-law	1
Single	7
Widowed	2
Separated/divorced	5
Mean length of time in current housing*	19 months (range 2 – 60 months)
Presence of children under 18 (n=7)	
In the tenant's home	5
In the care of others	2
Ethnicity	
Indigenous	3
Acadian	2
Scottish or Irish	4
Not specified	6

*For participants interviewed twice, the length of time in housing is based on their second interview.

Tenants we interviewed had housing histories that included frequent moves and living in poor quality housing, and five shared experiences of living in transitional housing or on the street. Four tenants also described histories of substance use. Ten tenants lived in converted dwellings with a small number of units (ranging from 3 to 10 units), three lived in duplexes or fourplexes, one lived in a basement suite, and one lived in a large, purpose-built apartment building. Tenants had been living in their current housing between two months and five years when they were interviewed. Six tenants lived in smaller towns outside of the largest urban centre within the CBRM.

Limited and Limiting Informal Support

Family. Participants reported limited contact with family, with less than half of those we interviewed noting current ties to kin. Contact with family, when it was in place, was focused on receiving instrumental support: for instance, some participants noted that either their parents or adult children would help ensure they had food to eat by dropping off occasional meals or delivering groceries, and three younger participants with dependents obtained some child care from women in their family network. Beyond their instrumental nature, kin connections were also typically described as being deliberately limited to material needs. For example, while one tenant noted that she got rides to the grocery store from her dad, she qualified that "me and my mom, we can't live together. We butt heads." A housing worker also noted that "a couple of my clients, they're not allowed to live at their mom's house, but their mom will come bring them clothes and they'll buy them groceries…. they'll still try and support them." Other participants not in receipt of family support spoke about purposefully limiting contact with kin; for example, one participant moved to a different town in the municipality to escape conflict with her sibling and parent, noting that by moving, "I don't have to deal with them anymore."

Friends. Most tenants had few friends who were part of their current networks; only two spoke of friendships in their lives that involved instrumental (rather than emotional) exchanges of support. Just as some tenants we interviewed purposefully broke ties with family, some deliberately cut off their former friends. For instance, one individual who used substances in the past stated that "I'm not associating myself with a lot of people I used to associate with." Tenants without histories of substance use also reported breaking personal ties as well. For example, take this participant's explanation of why she decided to limit contact with both friends and family:

> I had people in my life that were not on the right path, not helping me out, not that I was expecting help, but they were dragging me down because they were dragging themselves down…. And I've probably, since I've moved here, I've probably knocked about four or five people off my list of friends, or family members, because I just can't, I can't have that in my life. I don't want a dramatic life. I don't want drama coming into my home and I don't want you to bring it to me. I don't bring it to you, so don't bring it here.

In turn, one participant who was unable to distance herself from problematic social ties because of the location of her rental unit detailed how this caused her to engage in violent behaviour. She said, "It's pretty bad here. I've never had charges in my life, never been arrested. I came here, I mean, I think the judge [here] knows me by name. It's not good. I'm on curfew and everything."

Participants with histories of substance use appreciated housing that spatially separated them from users, since it facilitated the severing of ties. For instance, in describing what they liked about their current rental, one tenant said, "I'm away from the people who will come knocking on my door…. it's just—it's perfectly out of reach for them to come, just too far, makes them too lazy, you know what I'm saying, it's too far for them to come bug me." Another tenant similarly explained that she appreciated the location of her rental because it helped her stay away from "those kinds of people" and that she could be kept "tucked away." In contrast, one participant, who was not living on a street which provided distance from drug and alcohol use, was actively but unsuccessfully searching for a new place to live and described a makeshift strategy to physically separate herself from those nearby: "they're getting drunk and they get nasty and … shit's been going on, that's all I can say…. I just stay in my house. I put a tent in the backyard and I'm camping, I camp in the backyard. I've got lawn chairs in it, anything to keep my peace, right? Between my apartment and the yard, I'm trying to stay away from people on the street. It's not good."

Neighbours. Tenants also reported minimal contact with neighbours. During interviews, many tenants spoke about not wanting to live around people who were "nosy" and constantly in their lives, sometimes referencing past experiences in which people were overbearing or intruding. For example, one individual stated that "I do live in this tiny area but I don't know the people upstairs from me. I don't know people on the second floor, or the third floor. Maybe the odd person that I've known before, like, 'Oh you live here too?' But, in [name of former community] everybody knows everybody. So, I kind of get that privacy to myself as well. So, that's what makes me more comfortable." Another individual noted, "Everyone minds their own business. I love walking here because you don't have to worry about neighbours saying, 'Oh, can I come over?' I can just go for a walk, say 'hi' or whatever. Have a conversation. Go back home." As a final example, one tenant we interviewed noted that while he had some initial contact with the person living across the street when he moved to his new home, he eventually stopped answering the door and "trained them to stay away."

In line with this minimal contact, exchanges with neighbours were also narrow in scope and material in nature: examples include sharing internet access and cigarettes, keeping watch on the whereabouts of pets, monitoring drug use (described by tenants living in two different communities in the municipality as a type of informal "neighbourhood watch") and, in a more unusual case since it is more extensive, helping with car repairs and teaching a person how to drive. The following excerpt shows contact with only a small number of people who live around a tenant: "the neighbours that I do talk to are amazing people. Two of them actually helped me get my vehicle that's in my driveway…. So, they are great people." Only one tenant reported obtaining emotional support from someone who lived in her building, but who had moved away months before.

Community of One. Because of these limited informal social networks, most participants reported being alone. Comments such as "sticking to oneself" and "community of one" were often made during interviews. Several tenants described preferring to be on their own, sharing comments such as, "I love being by myself" and "It's like your own little kingdom, right? … I don't know, it's just nice!" Most participants also specifically identified wanting the "peace and quiet" that came from being away from others: for some, this was spatially facilitated by living in buildings and neighbourhoods with limited noise and activity and that offered access to parks or the water.

Participants also stated they were better off without people around them causing harm. For instance, in describing a recent violent relationship, one participant stated that "I've been alone almost a year now and I've done amazing by myself. I've had no issues, nobody breaking my windows." For others, being alone was mentioned as a way to maintain distance from connections which they *perceived* could cause personal harm. As one non-Indigenous participant shared: "I'd like to live in Membertou First Nation] because it's small, I don't know anyone. I don't speak the language, so I can't get in trouble any way there." Another individual, who had stayed in a local shelter before moving to transitional housing and then to his own apartment, expressed strong relief at no longer needing to use emergency housing since he felt that people "often end up in prison" based on social interactions there.

Formal Support Through Non-Profit Organizations

Community-based Organizations. Although participants had limited ties to family and even fewer ties to friends and neighbours, they reported seeking and receiving extensive support from community-based organizations (CBOs). During interviews, participants repeatedly and emphatically described the services provided by these organizations' staff as essential to their day-to-day lives, causing them to be "screwed" if they were ever without them: one tenant stated that a local harm reduction organization "is a really important resource for me," while a tenant with a young child stated that a women's centre "is a huge help a lot of days when I really need it."

All participants were connected to community-based organizations for instrumental reasons, with access to food standing out in interview data. Tenants relied heavily on food banks, and those living in the only community with a regular meal program also reported going there daily to several times a week. However, organizations with mandates beyond food security also provided important access to food. A tenant using a women's resource centre stated that "we're at the Jane Paul Centre, we're getting free meals," while others described going to a youth organization where they could get pizza coupons and participate in occasional dinners. A harm reduction agency was also noted to offer weekly access to a food pantry and provided sandwiches and coffee to those dropping in. Access to food was so important for most participants that the lack of meal programs in some smaller communities in the municipality was problematic: "When I'm starving in Sydney, I can walk to Loaves and Fishes. I can't do that here. They don't have anything like that around here."

Beyond food, tenants reported going to community-based organizations to obtain a wide range of essential goods and services: harm reduction supplies, tampons and pads, child care services, clothes, wi-fi, books, health care services, laundry services, and "heat during the day." Tenants shared that they were able to access and use these spaces for free. For example, one participant noted that the organizations he frequented were "the only two places you can spend time without the expectation of spending money." Another tenant, who lived in a more peripheral community, described not having places where you could drop in, stating that "instead you have to pay to have a cup of coffee somewhere, and that costs you four dollars." Non-profits play a critical role in the participants' lives and walkability to these organizations was mentioned by staff and tenants alike as being an important characteristic of their housing that facilitated access to these formal supports.

Aside from the material reasons for going to CBOs, people we interviewed described the important emotional support they received from staff. Younger tenants reported going to youth-serving organizations not only because of the opportunity to access essentials but also because of their connections with the staff. When describing a senior administrator who runs a CBO, one of our research participants noted that "she's helped me so much for the nine years that I've known her. I've struggled literally since I've been born. So, to have those strong mentors that I've known, helps me." Similarly, tenants frequenting a harm reduction organization commonly named two front-line employees they regularly interacted with, and one of the housing workers we interviewed remarked that staff at this organization "would give you the shirt off their backs." It is also worth noting, though, that despite the opportunities for peer interaction at many of the CBOs (e.g., communal meal settings and formal activities such as play programs), participants, with one exception, did not describe developing social ties with others using these services.

Housing Workers. Tenants also identified housing workers as part of their formal social support networks. Although this finding is related to our sampling strategy, we consider it important to report given the *range* of ways these workers assisted tenants and the *extent* that these ties were viewed as important and unique by tenants who otherwise reported not only limited, but actively limiting, informal ties. Not surprisingly, help was related to meeting daily needs, such as delivering donations of food or pet supplies, laminating identification cards, and taking tenants to the laundromat and appointments. To illustrate, one tenant noted, "It's colder now, and there's a lot of bags when you go to the food bank and Salvation Army. So, when I can't make it with cab money, [the housing worker] is there and she helps me, she'll bring it to me." Housing workers also provided assistance related to maintaining housing security: housing workers would help navigate the residential tenancies system, work with tenants to fill out energy rebate forms, serve as brokers with landlords, and ensure tenants were maintaining their units, among other activities.

These workers were also important sources of emotional support. As one participant noted, "She checks in on me too. I have my hard days that she knows about. So, when she checks in on me and asks, "How are you doing?" and stuff like that, sometimes I don't answer because I'm not doing good, but I try to keep her up to date and I appreciate that." While tenants

often spoke of severed relationships to family and friends and deliberately avoided connecting with neighbours, they spoke positively of the connections they had with staff and their desire to maintain them. One tenant shared that "I love [name of worker]. I tell her all the time I'm so grateful." Another tenant, who spoke at length about preferring to be on his own and minimizing contact with friends and neighbours, described with pleasure how his housing worker socializes with him during a visit, while a third remarked, as the interviewer was leaving her home, "If you see [name of housing worker], tell her I miss her."

Discussion

Despite the tangible and intangible supports exchanged with family, friends, and neighbours that are sometimes reported in the literature (Clampet-Lundquist, 2010; Keene & Ruel, 2013; Skobba et al., 2015; Parrott et al., 2021; Pittman & Oakley, 2018; Ucci et al., 2022), tenants in our study have very limited informal social support, which is also confined to instrumental rather than emotional dimensions. Overall, while the presence of informal networks is often thought to be a key way low-income tenants patch together their most basic of needs and cope with the day-to-day stress of living in poverty, our research finds counterevidence to this claim. Our findings add to a body of recent literature suggesting that those who live in poverty have few people on whom to address the material and emotional consequences of severe material hardship (Desmond, 2012; Mazelis, 2017).

Unexpectedly, those we interviewed often deliberately sought to minimize contact with others. Several participants highlighted recent shifts in their social networks that had them ceasing contact with former associates without replacing them with other informal supports, while others were engaged in "training" new people in their lives "to stay away." Similar to Curley's (2009) findings, tenants in our study described troublesome past ties to family, intimate partners, friends, and neighbours that affected their ability to reduce substances, get on the "right path," or avoid violence, and which resulted in decisions to not engage with those around them.

Although participants explained that living on their own was preferred and made them better off, previous research may help explain why participants felt this way and subsequently limited their informal social ties. Difficult past relationships can erode trust in others (Lewis et al., 2021), as can experiences of housing instability (Lewis et al., 2021; Skobba & Goetz, 2015). Additionally, fear of gossip could cause withdrawal from friends and neighbours (Curley, 2009), especially in smaller communities where people are perceived as more connected to each other and particularly when networks gossip about service utilization (Aisbett et al., 2007). Given their low incomes and housing histories involving frequent moves, it is also possible that, in addition to the challenging and sometimes violent relationships experienced by those in our study, tenants developed past disposable ties that were not revealed during data collection but which also affected their ability to establish new relationships (Desmond, 2012). Finally, neighborhood disadvantage also erodes trust, particularly when connections are perceived as risky because of the presence of substance use and crime (Desmond et al., 2015; Subramanian et al., 2003). While we did not analyze the aggregate-level sociodemographic characteristics of

the places tenants lived, other research shows that recipients of rent subsidies live in areas with higher levels of socioeconomic distress (Schwartz et al., 2016), while research on the location of market-rental units in the CBRM shows the same pattern (Leviten-Reid et al., 2022).

However, it is also clear that individuals in our study were not without ties. What is unique in our findings is not only the relative absence of informal supports but the critical role played by formal supports, most notably, non-profit organizations of different kinds. While others have found that non-profits do offer assistance to low-income renters (Dominguez & Watkins, 2003), the role played by organizations in these studies does not emerge nearly as prominently or as consistently as it does in our findings. Moreover, past research comparing informal and formal support (e.g., Chan et al., 2011; Ekström et al., 2013) has generally found informal support to be particularly important for social participation, inclusion, and individuals' health and wellbeing. Our study suggests, however, that for tenants in market-based housing who receive rental assistance, formal support may comprise the few social ties that tenants want and maintain. This does, however, elicit questions about reciprocity and meaning in these relationships. Scholars emphasize the importance of being able to give back in relationships, particularly when establishing a sense of meaning or purpose (Parsell & Clarke, 2022), but those offering formal social support typically do not expect any kind of exchange from those they assist. This may explain why formal supports are appealing to people experiencing disadvantage in our study: being supported without risking the losses associated with reciprocity reduces the risk in relationships (Dominguez & Watkins, 2003; Mazelis, 2017).

That non-profit organizations emerged as so important in the social support networks of low-income tenants has important implications. First, it prompts the need to rethink their role: although non-profits have always been understood to respond to material hardship, our findings suggest they do so both in the context of the growing holes in the safety net *and* tenants' limited connections to family, friends, and neighbours. Second, staff are providing low-income tenants with not only material assistance but also emotional support that is not sought from others. This is important given that emotional support in particular enhances feelings of belonging and contributes to long-term physical and mental health (Berkman, 1995; Thoits, 2011), amplifying the role of these organizations beyond material survival.

Beyond the urgent requirement to overhaul income assistance and rent subsidy programs so that recipients can address their material needs through higher incomes, our findings point to the need for non-profits to be properly resourced. Additional funding is required to enhance organizational capacity and resources within community-based organizations so they can provide fulsome formal support for low-income tenants. This is particularly important in light of the highly demanding nature of non-profit work. The burnout rate is high for these service providers, which could certainly be a consequence of the vast emotional and instrumental support they offer their clients, in addition to low pay and long hours (Phillips & Wyatt, 2021; Thériault & Vaillancourt, 2021). Consequently, resourcing the people fulfilling these roles must be a priority, particularly as these supports may be the only ones low-income tenants access. Funds are also required to address the long wait lists that currently exist for

tenants wanting to access housing workers. The time limits that are sometimes attached to their services must also be re-considered.

Additionally, these results have spatial implications for low-income tenants' access to community-based organizations and are applicable to regions similar to where this study took place as well as to larger centres where services are concentrated in downtown areas. Solutions include developing more decentralized services or, what is likely more feasible, community outreach. Relatedly, the location of new affordable housing must provide tenants with access to CBOs, or partnerships must be in place if physical proximity is not possible. This resoundingly needs to include food programs, the importance of which has been identified in studies beyond our own (Houle et al., 2018; Radziszewski et al., 2022). Depending on the tenants' backgrounds, this must also include the harm reduction, youth, and women's organizations that are providing both instrumental and emotional support and which have been left out of current assessment tools evaluating proposals for new affordable housing development (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2023). Our findings similarly suggest the need to review the construct of neighbourhood 'opportunities' so they include not only social mobility-related amenities such as employment centres and high performing schools (Jaramillo et al., 2020) but also the presence of agencies that address material hardship and low-income tenants' lack of informal social ties (Khare, 2013; Jeon, 2020).

There are other findings related to social support networks and the built environment that are important to highlight. Tenants emphasized the significance of residing in places that allow them to feel removed from past influences while simultaneously enabling them to access the non-profit services required to sustain themselves. Tenants appreciated living in units and neighbourhoods free from former habits, lives, and connections and underscored that location impacted the ability of past members of their social networks to seek them out. This should be kept in mind when helping tenants with housing searches (Rolfe & Garham, 2020). However, we acknowledge the near-impossible nature of this recommendation in light of low vacancy rates in communities across the country. At the very least, organizations developing new affordable housing should consider neighbourhood context when making siting decisions for new projects.

Finally, the results reported here lead us to consider the place of non-profit organizations in playing a more active role in building trust and informal social ties among the users of their services and within tenants' neighbourhoods. Given the limited informal ties of our research participants and the erosion of trust we posit they have experienced, this would be a challenging assignment for non-profit organizations to take on and would require greater and sustained financial resources and dedicated community development staff. However, this approach is not without precedent, even in the context of working with individuals who have experienced housing instability and severed ties to family and friends (Mazelis, 2017). Strengthening the role of non-profits in this space could help foster material exchanges and potentially lead to additional sources of emotional support for tenants, while at the same contributing to the collective infrastructure needed to organize and demand changes in the policies that keep people in poverty.

Conclusion

Overall, this research highlights the limited presence of informal social support in the lives of low-income tenants in receipt of rent subsidies and assistance from housing workers, and the importance of formal supports in their lives. Future longitudinal and observational research would help to understand how support networks may change over time (Gazso et al., 2016) and to identify potential discrepancies between what tenants describe to interviewers and what they actually receive from, and exchange with, others (Raudenbush, 2016). In the context of the increased use of rent subsidies for market rental housing, comparative research on the social support of those living in public and co-operative/non-profit housing communities versus market rentals would also be useful. Further, partnered studies that focus on sub-populations of renters such as international students, recent immigrants, and refugees would be important to conduct, given potential barriers to obtaining formal assistance and culturally specific dimensions of social support (Hanley et al., 2018; Westbrook, 2023), combined with the pressing housing challenges these groups increasingly face. Action research on non-profit efforts to foster connections among their clients or members is also an important next step. And although more research will further enhance our understanding of the social supports of those among the most marginalized, let it not obscure a most urgent need to transform income supports for renters and scale up the financial resources provided to the non-profits on which they rely.

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Intersectionality in Housing Research: Early Reflections from a Community-based Participatory Research Partnership

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Abstract This paper discusses early reflections on a project implementing intersectional praxis across the life cycle of community-based participatory research (CBPR). Drawing on our team's inaugural Co-learning Workshop, which included community and academic partners, we share our initial learnings about developing an intersectional approach to housing security. Specifically, we reflect on three key challenges, or promising puzzles, that emerged as we began our collaboration: co-defining intersectionality (across both theory and implementation), integrating intersectionality into understanding the multi-scaled complexities of housing security, and communicating intersectionality's relevance to a wider network of actors in housing security policy and programming. Drawing from our learnings, we suggest that an intersectional lens is powerful because it attends to the everyday lived experiences of housing insecurity, the interlocking systemic forms of oppression that create differentiated experiences of housing, and the specific contexts in which structural housing inequities take root.

KeyWords intersectionality, community-based participatory research, housing insecurity

Housing issues appear almost daily in Canadian newspapers. This crisis is, of course, not new. As Tranjan (2023) has articulated, the housing system in Canada has long been built to prioritize the housing of some over others.[1] This ongoing crisis foregrounds the need for more systematic and more locally responsive approaches to housing insecurity. Intersectionality is recognized as a generative framework for addressing the complexities of housing precarity and homelessness as both specifically experienced and institutionally produced (Bell, 2019; Greene et al., 2013; Schwan et al., 2020; Trochmann, 2021; Zufferey, 2016).

In this paper, we reflect on some of the preliminary learning-in-action from a community-based participatory research (CBPR) project that aims to implement intersectional perspectives throughout the life cycle of two housing research projects. Called the Intersectionality in Action Partnership (IAP), and with links to the Institute for Intersectionality Studies at the University of Alberta, our project brings together two community organizations working on housing security issues with academic partners and collaborators. Our team members have all,

1 As one of the authors has argued elsewhere (MacDonald, 2024), policies—from the reserve system to residential schools—resulting from the establishment of Canada on Indigenous land are in fact housing policies. Further work could be done to consider how immigration policies are also housing policies, as when, for example, immigrants are only allowed to live in particular parts of Canada or must live together because of immigration status.

in different ways, been engaged in CBPR and/or work that addresses housing security. The IAP is guided by the following questions: What are the methodological strengths and challenges of integrating intersectionality throughout the life cycle of CBPR partnerships? What does this process of integration look like in research that seeks more relevant, inclusive, and sustained housing outcomes for multiply marginalized populations?

As these questions suggest, our initial focus was on integrating intersectionality into CBPR, with housing as the social issue through which we would explore and understand the possibilities of doing so. However, several months into the project, and on the heels of our first full-team workshop, our emphasis shifted. Initial conversations and co-learnings showed the importance of grounding intersectionality in the concrete issues and lived experiences of homelessness and housing in the communities with which IAP partners work. [2] As a result, we flipped our research questions to first ask, "How can we best integrate and apply intersectionality to community efforts to develop inclusive, secure housing?" This concrete question has become our basis for learning about the strengths and possibilities of intersectional knowledge and practice in CBPR.

Three *promising puzzles*—challenges that we find exciting and important to tackle—emerged from our initial collective deliberations: co-defining intersectionality across theory and practice and across academic and community perspectives, integrating intersectionality into the multi-scaled complexities of housing security, and communicating intersectionality's relevance to a wider network of actors in housing policy and programming. In our concluding reflections, we suggest that the process of identifying these challenges magnifies the potential of intersectionality as a lens for tackling housing insecurity.

Context and Method

The IAP has three main components. The Urban Housing Team (UHT) and the Rural Housing Team (RHT) are each carrying out CBPR projects that integrate and explore intersectional approaches; simultaneously, the Meta-study Team (MST) is deploying constructivist-grounded theory to document and analyze what is being learned in and across the RHT and UHT about the "doing" of intersectional CBPR in housing-focused research. These streams of research activity are interwoven and sustained through a series of collaborative workshops (Muff, 2017; Narayanan & Takhellambam, 2022) fostering mutual learning and knowledge exchange among the full IAP team. Since we are in the early stages of our project, our reflections focus on our first half-day Co-learning Workshop for the whole team, held in September 2023.

The UHT project connects with an ongoing affordable housing needs assessment partnership that the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative (MCHB) has entered into with the City of Edmonton (Alberta). This City initiative asserts that "multiple intersectional identities can

2 This paper uses the word "homeless" since it is more often used by our community partners and representative of the work they are trying to do. We do note, however, that there have been important interventions suggesting the use of "unhoused" or "houseless" to capture not having a physical address, troubling the use of "home" and "house" as synonyms. While people may not have houses, they may have homes. Additionally, Jessie Thistle offers 12 dimensions of Indigenous experiences of homelessness that contrast with the Western concept of housing that equates housing with home (Thistle, 2017).

significantly influence housing needs" and that it is necessary to engage individuals with lived experience (Community and Public Services Committee [CPSC], 2022, pp. 2-3). However, approaches to holistic housing in Edmonton have fallen short, partially due to inattention to the policy drivers that marginalize newcomers in multiple ways. Racialized single mothers and senior refugees with disabilities are examples of two such groups. While specific outcomes of the UHT study are still emerging from the ongoing work of the MCHB-led research collaboration, they will likely include a) a model for holistic, socio-economically inclusive housing supports; b) tools for engaging various government and community entities in this model; and c) results that are shared with community participants.

The RHT project builds on the Rural Development Network's (RDN) development of improved estimations of unstable housing aimed at more inclusive rural housing policies and practices. While the RDN has a guide for conducting estimations and is currently revising it to decolonize the data-gathering process, there is little data, and few approaches to collecting data, that consider the experiences of equity-seeking groups who face intersecting barriers—e.g., LGBTQ2S+ youth and newcomer women. The RHT thus seeks to identify gaps and exclusions in data-gathering on rural homelessness in central Alberta and to develop resources to help communities use this expanded data to address an ever-more complex set of housing challenges. While specific outcomes of the study are still emerging from the ongoing work of the RHT, they will likely include a) recommendations for revising the estimations guide to better capture the diverse intersecting experiences of homelessness; b) resources for translating more inclusive data into more inclusive funding and policies; and c) results that are shared with community participants.

The MST focuses on facilitating and exploring the learning of all team members throughout the life cycle of the two projects, with special attention given to building inductive, hands-on knowledge about the integration of intersectionality into CBPR. This includes facilitating workshops every year and conducting ongoing data collection. Expected outcomes include publications about, and resources for, implementing intersectionality in CBPR. As suggested above, however, the MST has shifted its focus to facilitating the exploration of an intersectional lens in housing and homelessness.

Our first Co-learning Workshop was a half-day event with 17 participants from all three teams (UHT, RHT, and MST). We primarily met in person, with two collaborators joining online. The workshop's purpose was to build relationships across teams, facilitate co-learning about intersectionality, learn about the work of the respective housing teams, and provide time for the UHT and RHT to meet and begin planning their work. The workshop was designed and facilitated by members of the MST, who have diverse experiences in facilitation, housing, and intersectional research. Field notes were taken throughout the workshop by undergraduate research assistants, and participants completed a short reflection form at the end of the workshop.

Housing Security in Canada

The Canadian housing system is unable to provide housing security to a significant number of people. An estimated average of 235,000 people in Canada experience homelessness each year (see Dionne et al., 2023, for more information about homelessness in Canada or the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness for a robust set of resources). According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC, n.d., in the 2016 census, 13% of renter households were in core housing need, i.e., in need of housing that is affordable, adequate, or suitable.[3] As CMHC breaks down this data, we begin to see the importance of an intersectional lens: Aboriginal households are 1.4 times more often in core housing need than non-Aboriginal households, 28% of female-led households are in core housing need, 26.6% of recent immigrant-led households are in core housing need, and persons with disabilities aged 35-44 had the highest incidence of living in core housing need (CMHC, n.d.). These needs are potentially even higher than suggested by CMHC, which has been critiqued for its reliance on delimited measures of affordability, adequacy, and suitability (DiBellonia & Kapoor, 2023; cf. Whitzman, 2023).

While Canada's federal government released a National Housing Strategy (NHS) in 2017, it has been critiqued at various levels for failing to address housing affordability for many people and for its slow progress in achieving even modest goals (Houle, 2022). One important way people in Canada try to access affordable housing is through non-market housing, available through a range of strategies including government and non-profit provision. Non-market housing comprises approximately 5% of the Canadian housing market, which does not reflect the significant need documented by core housing need measures. Layers of bureaucracy in the provision of housing add further complexity: the federal government offers some national oversight and funding; provincial and territorial (and in some cases, municipal) governments determine how housing is provided in their jurisdictions; and municipal governments make decisions on provision, zoning, land provision, and more.[4]

For the purposes of our project, it is crucial to understand the Canadian housing system's increasing inability to provide housing security within the web of policy decisions being made at many levels of governments and communities. We locate our IAP work within this context, understanding ourselves as seeking to create more opportunities for housing security even as we are part and parcel of this entrenched system.

We deploy the terminology of "housing security" to foreground the quest for housing that is socially and economically equitable for all; this is what the IAP's partners seek for their communities. International law uses the U.N. definition of adequate housing, which

3 Core housing need indicates that someone's housing is unaffordable, inadequate, or not suitable and that they would be unable to find an acceptable alternative dwelling within their means. CMHC indicates that 1.4 million households do not have access to quality housing (i.e., housing that is affordable, adequate, or suitable) (CMHC, 2022). Housing is considered unaffordable when it costs 30% or more of before-tax household income, inadequate when it needs major repairs, and unsuitable when there are not enough rooms to fit the size and makeup of the family.

4 For a more detailed overview of Canadian housing policy, see Suttor (2016); for a description of tenant rights in Canada, see Tranjan (2023).

refers to having secure tenure (not having to worry about being evicted or having your home or lands taken away) but which also includes living somewhere affordable, in keeping with your culture, and with access to appropriate services, schools, and employment (DiBellonia & Kapoor, 2023; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2014). This definition is enshrined in housing as a human right. In Canada, the NHS and the National Housing Strategy Act (NHSA) have committed the government to a progressive realization of the right to housing, yet there is little discussion about exactly how this will be realized on a practical level. Housing justice scholars and advocates remind us that "the logic of capital accumulation increasingly trumps the right to housing" (Whitzman, 2022, p. 305), elevating the need to address how housing insecurities are systemically entrenched (MacDonald, 2024; Tranjan, 2023; Whitzman, 2022). This robust conceptualization of housing affordability and security resonates with intersectional analysis (McDowell & Collins, 2023; Blatman & Sisson, 2023).

Intersectionality and Community-Based Participatory Research

Intersectional research aims to enhance social wellbeing and equity by specifying social determinants, identifying heterogeneous effects, analyzing interlocking social structures, foregrounding pathways of change, and generating new theories (Kelly et al., 2021; Njeze et al., 2020; Salami et al., 2021). Government and community organizations increasingly emphasize need to adopt intersectional approaches to tackle social, economic, and health inequities (Bauer, 2014; Green et al., 2017; Phillips & Wyatt, 2021; UNICEF Canada, 2020). They recognize that when a social problem is framed and analyzed with an intersectional lens, knowledge about its systemic causes and solutions can be made more relevant, context specific, and actionable (Bauer, 2014; Green et al., 2017; Lapalme et al., 2020). However, the theoretical evolution of intersectionality has outpaced its methodological development, analytical techniques, and applications to programs, policies, and practices (Hall et al., 2015; Hillsburg, 2013; Levac & Denis, 2019). This notable lag in the application of intersectionality is often exacerbated by a lack of deep engagement with intersectional theories and concepts on the part of methodologists (Abrams et al., 2020). The integration of intersectional approaches into community goals, services, programs, and practices has been hindered as a result (Bowleg, 2021; Denis, 2008; Levac & Denis, 2019).

One important arena in which to address the need for robust intersectional analysis is community-based participatory research (CBPR), which aims to improve the welfare of communities through reciprocal community-driven partnerships and the direct participation of the people affected throughout the life cycle of the partnership (Baum et al., 2006; Chevalier & Buckles, 2013; Hacker, 2013; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008; Whiteford & Strom, 2013).[5] In recent years, CBPR scholars and practitioners have begun to adopt intersectional concepts

5 That said, as Holkup et al. (2004, p.164) point out in their review, CBPR has a number of strengths, including the innovative adaptation of existing resources; the exploration of local knowledge and perceptions; the alignment of research with what the community perceives as social and health goals; the joining of the varied skills, knowledge, and expertise of participants to address complex issues; the provision of resources for the involved communities; the bridging of cultural differences among the participants; and helping to dismantle the lack of trust communities may hold regarding research.

(Jhonel & Smith, 2020; McCauley et al., 2019; Okeke-Ihejirika et al., 2019; Zlotnick, 2021) to better understand diverse lived experiences and the overlapping vectors of oppression within communities (Creese & Frisby, 2011; Lacharité & Pasquier, 2014).

Still lacking, however, is research that systematically investigates the process and experience of integrating intersectional approaches into CBPR. Some methodological research documents the applications of intersectionality to policy analysis (e.g., Hankivsky & Cormier, 2011; Parken & Young, 2007), the inclusion of diverse communities in policy development (e.g., Christensen et al., 2010; Murray, 2015), and the deployment of feminist intersectionality in secondary analysis (Levac & Denis, 2019). However, there remains limited investigation into the strengths and challenges of enfolding intersectionality into the life cycle of community research partnerships, a quest that requires co-reflection across all phases and within the specific context and goals of a project (Cho et al., 2013; Hacker, 2013; Israel et al., 1998; Salma & Giri, 2021). The IAP project takes up this quest. As discussed above, however, early experiences in the project have prompted us to adjust our framework to start with the question of intersectionality and housing research.

Intersectional Approaches to Housing

Intersectional approaches have been recognized as essential to understanding and addressing the complexities of housing precarity and homelessness (Bell, 2019; Greene et al., 2013; McDowell & Collins, 2023; Schwan et al., 2020; Trochmann, 2021; Zufferey, 2016), including in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (Parker & Leviten-Reid, 2022). While some housing policies aim to prioritize the most vulnerable Canadians, gaps in data, research, and policy remain (CMHC, 2017). The NHS employs a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approach in response to these gaps—an approach that Hankivsky and Mussel (2018) consider a marked improvement on the previous implementation of GBA in Canadian policy making. However, we adopt an intersectional approach over GBA+ because of the capacity and attention in this literature to not only the lived experiences of inequalities caused by housing inequity, but also to the systems of domination that create this inequity, which is absent from the NHS (McDowell & Collins, 2023).

Despite evidence that people experiencing housing precarity belong to multiple and intersecting population groups with different housing needs (CPSC, 2022; Greene et al., 2013; Van Berkum & Oudshoorn, 2019), vulnerable people are often lumped into single-category groups. Further, conventional market-driven housing policies and strategies often reproduce colonialist definitions of land, exacerbating Indigenous displacement and dislocation (Caplan et al., 2020; Thistle, 2017). Still, intersectionality is rarely integrated into scholarship that applies community-based approaches to housing and homelessness in Canada (Christensen, 2011; Drolet & Teixiera, 2022; Kauppi et al., 2015; Oliver et al., 2022).

Research on urban housing—which dominates the literature—finds priority populations experiencing housing instability to include women and children fleeing domestic violence, Indigenous people, youth with mental illness, and immigrants and refugees (CMHC, 2017; Farrell, 2005). However, this research tends to occlude intersectional dimensions of housing

precarity (Callaghan et al., 2002; Greene et al., 2013; Hiebert et al., 2005; Paradis et al., 2008; Thurston et al., 2006; Walsh et al., 2011). For example, little work has been done to distinguish the housing status of immigrants and refugees according to gender (Bell, 2019; Hanley et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2022), despite extant research showing that they are vulnerable to homelessness due to interlocking systemic factors such as discrimination, unaffordable housing, violence, and lack of childcare (Rose & Charrette, 2011; Thurston et al., 2006; Walsh et al., 2011). Edmonton has a slightly higher core housing need than comparable cities in Canada, with those needs affecting multiple groups (CPSC, 2022). Residents experiencing homelessness doubled during the pandemic (2019-2022), with Indigenous peoples, women, and youth most affected (CPSC, 2022).

Further, with a handful of notable exceptions (Christensen, 2011; Robertson & White, 2007; Roy et al., 2003; Waegemakers Schiff et al., 2015, 2016), there is very little research on housing instability in rural settings. Rural communities often lack accurate reports of how many people are homeless (absolutely or relatively) due to challenges with enumeration (Waegemakers Schiff et al., 2015). Waegemakers Schiff et al.'s (2016) unique study in rural Alberta identified six distinct sub-populations experiencing homelessness, including victims of domestic violence, youth, newcomers, Indigenous persons, chronic substance abusers, and chronically homeless people. Still, there are only a few examples of Canadian literature on rural homelessness among immigrants and refugees (Anucha, 2007) or among Two Spirit people and Indigenous women (Belanger & Weasel Head, 2013; Kauppi et al., 2015), including the impacts of limited social supports and isolation linked to systemic racism (Callaghan & Turnbull, 1999; Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, 2011). Without a clear understanding of the specificity and complexity of Canadian rural homelessness, efforts to tailor programs and initiatives to meet diverse populations' needs are hampered.

Intersectional approaches to enumeration and assessment of needs are crucial to better serve diverse populations and to inform current and future housing strategies, programs, investment plans, and overall approaches to affordable and stable housing. Also needed is research on locating, designing, and building housing that contributes to sustained social and economic inclusion for people facing multi-faceted, complex circumstances (CPSC, 2022, pp. 2-3).

Key Themes Emerging from Our First Workshop: Initial Findings

Our first Co-learning Workshop included reflexive and team-building exercises, introductions to the work of each research team (RHT, UHT and MST), and group discussions and individual reflections around intersectionality and CBPR. In keeping with the IAP project, the event was designed to create space for collectively learning and raising questions across our diverse perspectives.

As might be expected, this first opportunity to come together at the launch of a three-year project raised important questions. Team members were excited about and deeply committed to the project, but they were also concerned about the uncertain road ahead. As we reviewed both collective and individual reflections from the workshop, three promising puzzles came to the fore:

- finding a shared, actionable understanding of intersectionality that draws on both academic knowledge and experiential knowledge in the community;
- bringing the complexities of intersectionality into understanding and responding to the already-complex field of housing security and homelessness; and
- building resources that effectively communicate and apply an intersectional lens to housing policy and practice (for policymakers, governments, and communities).

Co-defining Intersectionality

CBPR relies on partnerships across diverse kinds of knowledge and expertise. This core tenet was palpable at our launch event, with community partners and academics striving to listen to each other and find common ground upon which to build a partnership while still recognizing different perspectives in the room.

To kick-start the conversation about intersectionality, the MST provided an overview of intersectional theory. The focus was quite deliberately on a structural approach to intersectional analysis, in which particular relations of power, or "isms" (sexism, racism, classism, etc.), intersect to differentiate human experience (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Collins & Bilge, 2016; Dhamoon, 2011). People in the room expressed varying levels and types of engagement with intersectional theory, with all agreeing that we needed and wanted to go beyond the popular identity-based use of the concept toward a structural understanding of interlocking forms of oppression.

Discussion during this initial foray into intersectionality pointed to two kinds of disconnects or divides for workshop attendees. First, how could we truly honor intersectionality as praxis, where theory and practice meet? This echoed well-worn questions in CBPR regarding how to work across and cross-fertilize the different forms of knowledge and expertise held by university and community participants. One participant wondered how we would "come to a unifying goal or view about intersectionality," and another wrote, "I think I understand it as a concept but how do we do it?" Some worried that the academic concept would get in the way of listening and attending to actual lived intersectional experience. For example, frontline workers at the MCHB see every day how intersecting forms of power exclude or invisibilize people in the community seeking stable housing. This is invaluable knowledge.

A second and related gap appeared in people's perceptions of what they thought they already knew and what they could potentially learn, especially considering the group's varying viewpoints and perspectives on intersectionality. A couple of people indicated in feedback that they already had a pretty good grasp of intersectionality and did not feel they had learned much new at the workshop about intersectionality and housing. Several people wondered whether or how an enriched concept of intersectionality in housing research could be reached and then made efficacious.

Our analysis of the discussions and interactions at the workshop revealed three emergent and interrelated themes that together might offer a solid starting place for addressing (or perhaps embracing!) doubts and uncertainties around the promising puzzle of co-defining

intersectionality. Importantly, these three themes foreground values found across both intersectionality and CBPR.

First, participant comments echoed something the MST facilitators had emphasized during the workshop: the centrality of relationality (rather than individual identity locations) to both intersectionality and CBPR. As one participant said, one key thing they learned during the workshop was that "intersectionality isn't a formula or linear, it's a lens, a circle with community." If interlocking forms of power and possibility are already built into, and animate, our relationships with each other–within our teams and the communities in which we work, as well as across the two–it makes sense to start in the concreteness of those interrelationships. Some at the workshop suggested this meant working across our differentiated experiences and knowledges to build consensus around what "inclusion" in housing means. Feedback from several academic participants indicated that they were most looking forward to learning from community partners, whose knowledge of housing insecurity as an intersectional system emanated from their daily work.

Second, and closely related to this insight, was the importance of asking *who* is doing *what*? Who needs what? Who is listening and being listened to? As one participant noted, "Ensuring that the voices of those who have the least power are heard and listened to" is a key challenge. Others pointed to the need within teams to recognize variable capacities to contribute, as well as the need to directly address the limitations resulting from the predominance of white women within the project. Applying these questions within and across both a) the research team and b) the conduct of participatory research could go a long way toward activating intersectional praxis, understanding that relationality requires constant vigilance around voice and representation.

Third, and relatedly, our discussion of intersectional theory sparked conversation in the two housing research teams about the importance of naming and working with the specific context of housing insecurity experienced by the people in their respective communities. In other words, our research with communities should aim to elicit and understand which intersecting forms of power are at work in the production and experience of housing insecurity, and in what systemic ways, for which people, and in what specific times and places. Intersectional analysis is only as meaningful as the places where converging forms of power land, reproduce inequities, and spark transformation: in the case of our project, this means specifying how these forms of power work in the particular contexts of housing and homelessness where we do our community research.

Linking Complexities of Housing and Intersectionality

We know an intersectional lens is powerful and can enhance CBPR. As a general principle, this was something we could collectively wrap our heads around at the workshop. Several participants indicated that our first Co-learning Workshop had deepened their interest in how an intersectional approach might help make the practice of CBPR more inclusive, strengthening its social justice impact.

At the same time, there was concern and hesitation around mapping intersectional theory onto the already complex world of housing. As one participant put it when asked what questions they have about intersectionality, "How can we stay focused on the research topic (housing precarity is already a complex topic on its own) while meaningfully engaging with the complex topic of intersectionality?" Another expressed concern that an academic focus on the intricacies of intersectional analysis might "inadvertently take away from" the research focus on inclusive and secure housing. As the two housing teams gathered into breakout discussions of their respective projects, this question of "bringing intersectionality in" to housing research and justice was front and center.

One tension that arose was the desire and need to understand and make visible the multiple, specific invisibilities and exclusions created by intersecting relations of power in housing while also focusing on housing security as a more generalized systemic problem. Said one participant, "My concern is the different ways that intersectionality can spring off, so it somehow loses the core of what needs to be addressed for social justice." Does an intersectional focus on differentiated experiences potentially lose sight of the overarching structural inequities of housing insecurity, and/or does it reframe how we see the relationship between the two? This goal of working with both broad structural inequities and specific differentiated experiences is not new to intersectional research, but it is one that housing security research needs to pay more attention to, as discussed above in the literature review.

A second and related tension found in data from the workshop rose from the daunting task of attending to intersectional relations of power across the multiple scales and systems of housing insecurity. This concern runs counter to the previous tension, in that it is less concerned with losing sight of core issues than with capturing complexity. As one attendee put it, "It will be hard to scale down to a meaningful level." The ways that the landscape of housing policies and systems shift over time deepened this concern. Referring to the work of Dhamoon (2011)—whose dynamic, swirling visual representation of intersectionality was shared at the workshop—another participant wrote, "I liked the image that was shared that goes beyond intersections to how they shift and change in diverse contexts … and captures some of the shifts taking place in housing today … I think this is useful, but also challenging." How to capture this complexity in data collection became a focal point as the teams started to plan their respective housing projects.

It is important to note that the two housing teams have different research questions and relations to community—one is focused on specifying housing infrastructure for particular populations in one location, while the other is focused on broadening housing enumeration for many communities across a region. These two foci suggest different entry points for tackling complexity on the ground and for understanding the varied contexts in which the research projects will unfold.

Insights and comments from the workshop can help us think about both sides of this coin: how to attend to differentiated lived experiences of housing insecurity within interlocking systems of power and how to attend to the multiple political and geographic scales of housing

programs and policies (including as they shift over time). We note two capacious and hopeful themes that arose in co-learning at the workshop.

The first theme, *highlighting context*, echoes our discussion around co-defining intersectionality. At the workshop, the idea of intersectional research as always situated in context sparked some of the best conversation around housing–from wildfires and forced evacuation to changes in zoning and immigration laws. For us, this reinforces the importance of starting with the specifics of housing experiences in a given context to better conceptualize and identify how intersectional relations are at work.

Second, it became clear that the reflective and practical work of *defining community/communities* was crucial to embracing the complexities of intersectionality and housing. During an exercise in which the housing teams were asked to develop key intersectional questions for each phase of the CBPR life cycle (Milton et al., 2023), the initial phase of "defining a research question of importance to communities" seemed to especially catalyze commentary on intersectional systems and practices. Some of these were external forces, such as policy and environmental changes across time that differentiate who is affected by housing insecurity; others were internal to the research project, such as language and gender barriers to data collection on housing insecurity. Indeed, workshop participants saw real potential in intersectional CBPR for specifying the kinds of supports, advocacy, and resources needed to address housing insecurity.

Amplifying the Power of an Intersectional Lens in Housing Security

A third promising puzzle emerging from the workshop was how to carry and translate these two daunting tasks (developing a shared understanding of intersectionality and applying it to the complex world of housing insecurity) into the ultimate goal of building community capacity. While some team members' concerns were about the immediate impact of their respective (UHT and RHT) projects, most concerns were about how to contribute to longer-term shifts in approaches to housing that reached beyond the end dates of the projects.

One puzzle was around how our two housing research projects could help solidify the case for intersectionality as an essential lens in housing security policy and practice. As discussed above, partners in the IAP project might have concerns about how to deploy intersectionality, but they understand its fundamental efficacy and power and want to "pass it on." This is challenging when the organizations they work with, from municipal governments to social service and housing providers, are not necessarily on board. One workshop participant from the rural housing project wrote that in their group discussions, "it was shared that many rural housing partners do not understand or see the value of using intersectionality in housing." How, many wondered, will we communicate the power of intersectionality so that it is not just a checkbox in consultations and planning but built into how policies and programs are initiated and implemented in a robust manner?

Practicalities related to this broader question arose as the housing teams dug into the details of their respective projects. One such practicality had to do with knowledge translation. Members of the two housing teams were thinking ahead to knowledge sharing, wondering

how they would most effectively present their research in an intersectional way, i.e., so that an understanding of intersectional inequities was illuminated by the community stories and findings. Related to this was the reality that the two teams could not expect to cover all aspects of intersectional barriers and exclusions to housing in their respective projects. At a broader level, there was both high hope and perhaps a sense of burden regarding our project's goal of elevating the importance of intersectional analysis to questions, practices, and research around housing security, including at the provincial and federal levels. One participant asked, "How does intersectional research inform the development of meaningful decision-making?"

As in the previous two findings sections, we conclude here with insights gained from the workshop on what might be needed or helpful to amplify the power of an intersectional lens in housing security for a broader range of social and political actors.

First, we noted that when contemplating how to apply intersectionality to the various phases of the CBPR life cycle, the two housing teams found it easiest when considering the practicalities of 1) carrying out research with people most directly affected and 2) translating the results into action on housing security. In other words, intersectional imaginations were sparked by the "real" practices of doing research and making change. Perhaps working backwards from these practical questions is another way to wrestle (and render manageable) the initial complexities of intersectional housing work in CBPR.

Second, it was the specificity of these practicalities for particular contexts and peoples that seemed to bring intersectionality home. As the housing teams talked about the potential outcomes of their research projects, they emphasized the importance of working against the "one size fits all" tendency of housing policies and programs. This meant conducting and communicating this research through plurality and de-standardization–strengths of both intersectionality and CBPR. This also meant being specific about who is identifying what the need is and to whom findings will be presented. In other words, there were reminders to stay focused on the most immediate circle of relationships, actors, and impacts.

Finally, we suggest a third answer to the daunting task of communicating the power of an intersectional approach to housing security. Participants talked about the power of story; the UHT had already been working on composite stories from community members to demonstrate to their municipal partners how intersectional barriers to housing are at work. It struck us, looking at data from the workshop, that the story of the IAP–our unfolding learnings together–might also prove useful in conveying the meaningful impact intersectional housing research can make. Our own learning processes, whether working out mundane practicalities or experiencing "aha" moments, are their own kind of praxis. This article is an initial foray in that direction.

Discussion

It became clear from these co-learning discussions that our research partnership depends on building a shared way of seeing intersectionality in the structural dynamics and lived experiences of housing. And further, it became clear that the quest to build intersectionality into all stages of CBPR, from building a team and forming a research question to carrying out analysis and

sharing results, would follow from the concrete focus on housing security. It is through the shared experiences of working on housing insecurity that we are able to take up, discuss, and understand intersectionality and its implications for relationships, projects, and interlocking oppressions. In short, lived experiences and relationships of housing insecurity will show how intersectional power works; and lived experiences and relationships of intersectional power will guide the practices of our community-based research. We imagine that the different questions and goals of the two housing teams will provide unique, complementary examples of defining and applying intersectionality in CBPR, while perhaps also co-generating a shared map of intersectional relations of power in housing security.

The complexity of working on housing security and its related dimensions can be both overwhelming and rich for intersectional work—it enables our team to examine the complexity of viewpoints and lived experiences, as well as the multiple scales of housing policies and practices that impact those experiences. For example, we want to be deeply attentive to how bureaucracies and institutions require people to identify in particular ways, which can then impact how people navigate the world and see themselves (Green et al., 2003). In the case of the RHT and UHT, these dynamics impact enumeration data, eligibility for particular kinds of affordable housing, and how need is assessed, but they can also normalize particular identities and reify populations as inherently vulnerable (MacDonald, 2024; McDowell & Collins, 2023).

Intersectional praxis asks us to attend to both/and: it demands that work and theory inform and shape one another. In our work of co-defining intersectionality, it is becoming clear that this definition will be deeply entwined with housing security as the context in which we are connected and through which intersectional analysis occurs. What's more, we anticipate that co-defining intersectionality—including its complex relationship to decolonial praxis (Jaramillo & Carreon, 2014; Mignolo & Nanibush, 2018)—will return us to refining and grappling with the very concept of housing security.

As we continue in our co-learning, we will continue to explore the tensions articulated by participants about the need to centre both intersectionality and housing security and the worry that doing this carries the risk of dividing attention. How might developing a shared understanding of intersectionality be embedded in our understanding of housing security so that conversations about housing are also questions about intersectionality? Through the workshop, it became clear that participants were already thinking about housing in intersectional ways, even if not yet articulated as such, and that these understandings were best articulated in the concrete tasks of creating relations and planning research. So, our collective task is not to begin to understand an academic concept but rather to develop shared understandings and practices through implementation of the UHT and RHT.

As Tranjan (2023) has cogently argued, the housing crisis "is a permanent state of affairs that harms people in, or in need of, rental housing, which is roughly one-third of the country's households" (p. 2). While this important intervention into understanding the Canadian housing crisis centres tenants as a class, our work takes up intersectional praxis to both map and address the ways housing need is differentially felt by people depending on their social

locations; this is a re-imagining of what the NHS talks about as "priority populations." We are beginning to see how an intersectional lens highlights the *impacts* of the housing crisis (differential housing need), as well as the *roots* of this crisis (interlocking forms of oppression), and we are eager to see how this informs the work of the teams.

Conclusion

Housing justice work is complex and pressing. As we write this article in Edmonton, Alberta, the weather is getting colder and there are not enough shelter spaces or kinds of spaces for people to access while rents continue to rise across the country. The urgency of this work is felt by everyone on the team as our projects unfold. The work of the RHT and UHT offers multiple entry points into housing justice through an intersectional lens, as well as new points of connection: while homelessness and affordable housing are connected issues, they are often funded and studied in different streams. Intersectionality as a powerful research lens will bring these CBPR teams together to consider the continuum of housing. On the heels of this first workshop, we are curious to see how an intersectional lens will enable analysis of scales—to consider how an enumeration of homelessness and the development of inclusive housing will illuminate lived experience, housing systems at multiple governing levels, and structural injustice all at once.

As our collaboration unfolds, we will focus on developing a shared, evolving understanding of intersectionality that is informed in and through housing security and the work in which all three teams are engaged. We are especially interested in how a persistent commitment to intersectional praxis in these projects will attend to both the immediate and pressing concerns of housing needs, as well as the systems through which housing needs and the housing crisis are produced. As discussed at the outset, the housing crisis is not something new but is rather how the housing system was designed. To address housing insecurity, we must both support the need for housing access now, as well as examine and address the systems that create housing insecurity in and through interlocking forms of oppression.

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Reports from the Field

Less Talk, More Builds: The Mixed-Income Residential Tower Model of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation

Edward T. Jackson, Jeremy E. Read

Abstract The search for and replication of scalable models for affordable housing amid North America's housing insecurity crisis has been frustratingly slow. Governments are flailing—and, so far, failing—as they try to put in place the necessary policies and incentives for the private, public, and non-profit sectors to accelerate the construction of the millions of new affordable units required to confront the crisis. This paper highlights one model whose replication is underway in Winnipeg's downtown core: that of a mixed-income, mixed-use residential tower offering nearly half of its units at affordable rental prices for marginalized residents and designed, built, and managed with a deep commitment to multi-dimensional sustainability. The catalyst for this initiative is the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC), a non-profit foundation that works in partnership with community organizations and is now Winnipeg's leading social real estate developer. The Corporation is the second component of the model. While there are no perfect strategies for solving the housing crisis, UWCRC's approach deserves to be widely known, deeply studied, and rapidly adapted and replicated at scale by universities, colleges, and other public institutions in urban centres throughout North America. Engaged scholars can play important roles in this effort.

KeyWords affordable housing, social real estate, social enterprise, community-university partnerships, non-profit corporations

The purpose of this paper is to profile a promising model for affordable rental housing that was created and is now being replicated by the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC), a non-profit foundation operating in Winnipeg's downtown core. Designed and built off-campus by the Corporation in partnership with community organizations, and anchored in a multi-dimensional commitment to sustainability, UWCRC's mixed-income, mixed-use residential tower model offers a spectrum of premium, market-rate and affordable units. Some 40% to 51% of its apartments and suites are designated as affordable and are prioritized for low-income immigrants and refugees, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities and other citizens facing multiple barriers. Building on its first off-campus project, the 14-story Downtown Commons that opened in 2016, UWCRC has completed two replications of the model, is in the construction phase of two more, and is actively pursuing

the development of three other similar projects. In the process, the Corporation has become the largest non-governmental social real estate developer in Winnipeg's inner city and, with the completion of its current projects in late 2025 and early 2026, it will be the city's largest downtown residential development organization.

Engaged scholars may be interested in analyzing and acting on the UWCRC experience through the lens of community engagement in, among other things, adapting and replicating this model in other cities, deepening partnerships with civil society organizations, formulating government policies at all levels to accelerate scaled replication, assessing the efficacy of specific financing products and tools (e.g., mortgages, loans, subsidies, etc.), interrogating the dynamics of mixed-income groups that decide to live together and sustain these diverse communities, and understanding the strategic and operational contributions and challenges of a non-profit entity of a university or college that builds and manages off-campus social housing.

Context

The lack of supply of affordable rental homes for low-income citizens is at the centre of the housing insecurity crisis currently afflicting North America. More than 7 million new affordable units are needed for very-low-income citizens in the United States (Aurand et al, 2023). Canada's federal housing agency has been called on to double its social housing stock to 1.3 million units (Richter et al., 2023; Moffatt and Boessenkool, 2023). At the heart of this crisis that undermines the well-being of far too many sections of society—the homeless, those suffering from mental illness and addiction, low-income and single-parent households, persons with disabilities, Indigenous persons, new immigrants, refugees, young families—is, fundamentally, insufficient supply. What is needed now is less talk and more builds. All institutions must cooperate to ignite the rapid construction of more affordable housing units, sustainably and at meaningful scale, to generate powerful improvements in the lives of individuals and families.

Universities and colleges possess formidable capacities in real estate, construction, and property management. As institutions-for-themselves, they almost always have mobilized these capabilities for their own strategic and operational purposes. Tapping government and private financing as well as their own revenues from student fees, endowments and pension funds, tertiary-level educational institutions have built hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of classrooms, laboratories, clinics, athletic facilities, and residences, increasingly employing green building standards and materials. These projects foster front-end local economic multipliers through construction jobs and the procurement of building materials and professional (engineering, architectural, legal) services. However, in the community at large, such projects have only infrequently directly benefited off-campus marginalized groups in the form of more and better affordable housing (see Baldwin, 2021). In some urban settings, post-secondary institutions have worked creatively with local non-profits to build affordable housing off-campus. One example is Saint Louis University's collaboration with Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis to build five new homes for low-income families at the edge of its grounds (Saint Louis University, 2019). But, while the partnerships underlying these projects may be solid,

the number of new housing units constructed or renovated is often too small to make a major impact. In other cities, more ambitiously, universities have provided faculty and students with financial incentives to purchase or rent homes in neighbourhoods adjacent to campus with the goal of creating new "knowledge districts", including health care hubs, while also working with community groups to improve housing and make neighbourhoods safer and more livable. One prominent case is that of the West Philadelphia Initiative of the University of Pennsylvania, which mobilized government and private financing to support the populating by faculty and students of a new research district bordering campus and worked with community organizations to upgrade local housing stock (Rodin, 2007).

However, the dynamics of such efforts can be complex, even damaging. Indeed, they can generate unintended negative outcomes for low-income residents by driving up housing values through gentrification, consequently pricing households with low or modest incomes out of the rental market (see Baldwin, 2021; Garton, 2021). Universities and colleges must, and can, do better. Affordable housing projects promoted by post-secondary institutions must be rooted in meaningful, reciprocal collaboration with community groups; demonstrably advance the material housing interests of residents, especially marginalized citizens; and, to address climate change, be built using environmentally sustainable design and materials—all at scale and with urgency.

A generation ago, Wiewel et al (2000) assessed the experience of community-university partnerships to advance affordable housing in cities in the US and Europe, primarily through government-supported technical assistance, applied research, training, and financial assistance, and sometimes the physical development of housing. While the authors identified important benefits of partnerships in the housing space, universities were, they noted, often viewed by the wider society as "self regarding and more given to abstract and arrogant theories about social problems than to their resolution" while the community perspective, they found, was: "We know the facts; we have to live with them. The issue is, what do we do about them?" (p. 35). Wiewel et al. (2000) argued that: "The university as a corporation has to eschew the narrow privatism that has dominated conventional growth coalitions, and there must be open debate about the institutional self-interests of universities in partnerships" (p. 41).

With the growth of engaged scholarship, much more is known now about good practices in structuring and implementing community-campus collaborations. Andree et al. (2018) underscore the importance of academic actors not only developing and promoting partnerships but also continuously engaging in critical reflection on the challenges of employing a "community first" approach. The work of engaged scholars should be based, they argue, on the four foundational elements of authentic partnerships set out by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health: guiding principles of partnership (mutual respect and trust, clear accountability processes, shared benefits, etc.); meaningful outcomes (tangible and relevant to communities); quality processes (open, ethical, with mutual learning); and transformative experiences (at the personal, institutional, community, knowledge production and political levels) (Andree et al., 2028; CCPH Board of Directors, 2013).

In the context of today's affordable housing crisis, the metrics that arguably matter most are, first, the number of affordable units built and, second, the number of marginalized

persons appropriately housed. There is a strong case to be made, therefore, that significantly and rapidly adding to the supply of affordable housing stock is imperative and demonstrably trumps other outcomes. There are few more transformative moments than a previously housing-insecure family taking occupancy of their new permanent, affordable home for the first time. And, while it is important to ensure as much as possible that all the elements of authentic partnership undergird collaborative efforts, it is even more important in the current conjuncture to accelerate the pace and increase the scale of the *construction* of affordable accommodation—and to do this in a community-responsive and environmentally sustainable way. Advancing this outcome-focused mission requires the leadership of social real estate developers to coordinate and accelerate the efforts of engineers, contractors, architects, and lawyers, as well as public, private and philanthropic investors, in working with community organizations to design and secure suitable land and execute new projects. In what ways can governments incentivize universities and colleges to become active, innovative social real estate developers for and with their neighbours? How can post-secondary institutions best organize themselves to meet this challenge? And to what extent and in what ways can engaged scholars relate to, support, critique, and strengthen this trajectory of action?

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation

Origins

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation was established in 2005 under the university presidency of Lloyd Axworthy, a longtime policy advocate for urban development and a former federal Cabinet minister. Designed to serve as a nimble, entrepreneurial instrument for renewing the real estate stock of the University of Winnipeg in an environmentally sustainable manner, opening the institution to the local community, and promoting downtown revitalization, the Corporation spent its first decade accessing government infrastructure grants and loans to build $200M worth of new, greener classrooms, laboratories, offices, a student residence, and recreational facilities (Jackson, 2018). UWCRC is overseen by a Board of Directors chaired by the University President and comprising representatives of both the university and the broader community, including governments, the private sector, and community-based organizations. The founding Managing Director of the Corporation was the late Sherman Kreiner, a talented lawyer with long experience in community partnerships and in deploying finance and investment for social purposes (see Kreiner, 2022). Most importantly, perhaps, beyond a bank of offices provided without rent, UWCRC was not provided with a core operating budget from the University. Except for a handful of small properties transferred from the university to its ownership, and some initial salary support, UWCRC was from the outset required to become self-sustaining through its fees from consulting, planning, construction projects, and post-construction activities. This arrangement continues.

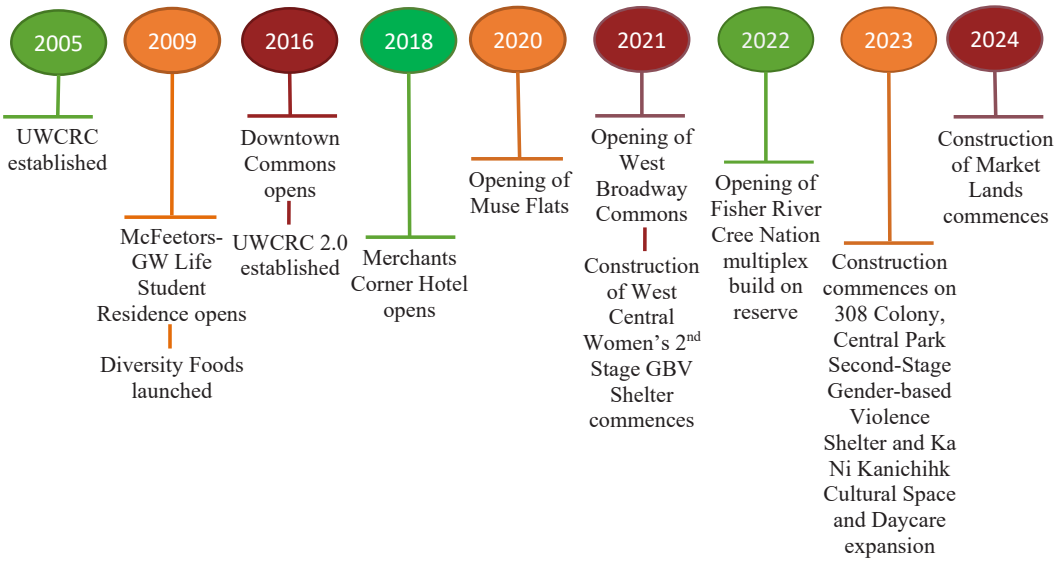

Figure 1. UWCRC Timeline, 2005-2024

Sustainability

Central to the mandate and operations of UWCRC from the beginning was a commitment to designing and building structures based on a four-pillar framework of multi-dimensional sustainability: environmental, economic, social, and cultural. Its guidelines direct that projects leave a small ecological footprint, so that natural resources are stewarded for present and future generations to meet their needs, and "limit the use of natural resources, use renewable energy sources where possible, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote material re-use." The Corporation's projects also aim to be "inclusive, help overcome barriers for excluded individuals to basic services such as education, employment, healthcare, childcare and housing." On the economic dimension, UWCRC pledges to narrow the wealth and income gap between rich and poor, and create opportunities for local businesses, cooperatives, and social enterprises to generate good-quality jobs and employee empowerment. Finally, the Corporation works to "encourage and celebrate diversity and provide supports for individuals from various ethnic, cultural and religious groups" and "focus on achieving cultural sustainability by helping to enhance the quality of life and place and recognizing and addressing the needs of the diverse communities involved in projects" (UWCRC, 2023).

In practice, all buildings on and off campus have been built to green standards and often offer retail space for local businesses (e.g., restaurants, art galleries) and non-profits. And all residential facilities feature common areas for community activities, including rooms for smudging ceremonies by Indigenous residents. Several buildings offer space for car-share services and extensive bicycle storage. During its first decade of operations, UWCRC built two LEED Gold and three LEED Silver projects. Furthermore, with the Market Lands and 308

Colony builds, respectively, the Corporation delivered Canada's first CaGBC (Canada Green Building Council) certified Zero Carbon Building Design (i.e. new building) in the multi-unit residential mid-rise (ten storeys and under) category and is positioned to be the first CaGBC certified Zero Carbon Building Design in the multi-unit residential high-rise (greater than ten storeys) category.

Diversity Food Services

About half-way into its first decade, UWCRC joined forces with SEED, a local community-economic development non-profit, to spin off a new social enterprise: Diversity Food Services. In response to widespread criticism of the quality of the food offered on campus by a major catering corporation, the University awarded Diversity the contract to provide on-campus food services offering healthy, nutritious foods at affordable prices, sourcing fresh produce from local farms, and employing a diverse labour force that included immigrants and refugees and Indigenous persons. A decade later, in addition to a full suite of on-campus food services, Diversity was also operating cafes and catering services off-campus; winning awards for food quality and innovation; buying produce from 60 providers in the region; employing, training, and supporting more than 100 workers; and generating more than $3.5M in annual gross revenue. By 2018, Diversity had become one of Canada's largest and most successful social businesses, with a host of other universities learning from and adopting its approach. However, the arrival of Covid-19 emptied the campus of students and faculty, and, in the absence of this core business, Diversity was obliged to radically downsize its staff to about 20 employees and pivot to mobile food delivery. Nonetheless, coming out of the pandemic, the business has rebuilt its on-campus operations and its staff complement and has even expanded its off-campus and catering activities, which has included the acquisition of a local retail and commercial production bakery operation. While its revenues and job numbers were slow in fully returning to pre-pandemic levels, Diversity has proven to be an impressively resilient and adaptive enterprise. In fact, the business projects exceeding $3.5M in annual gross revenues in its 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Structures

UWCRC was set up as a non-profit foundation to undertake contracts, develop and manage properties, and access a range of public, private, and philanthropic sources of financing, including mortgages, loans, grants, and tax subsidies. As UWCRC completed its first decade of operation, the Corporation's leadership identified a major new opportunity: to build and manage mixed-income residential housing and other social infrastructure *off campus*. The Board viewed this new direction as a way of contributing to inner-city, urban/sub-urban, rural/northern, and on-reserve economic and social real estate development, sparking revitalization in the context where it and its clients' projects could be located. Importantly, this work aimed at achieving a significant positive impact on the stock of mixed-income and affordable housing in the inner city and other contexts that would, in turn, contribute to immediate and long-term wealth generation in the not-for-profit and Indigenous sectors where the Corporation

aspired to be active. In addition to the objectives of igniting economic, social and real estate revitalization and generating new revenue streams, there was also an aspiration to ensure that some of the economic benefits of these activities could be made to benefit the university's budget and/or financial position in the short to long term. After considerable internal discussion, in 2016 the Corporation established a new vehicle—a parallel development corporation—for this new agenda which was called UWCRC 2.0. The new body embedded these additional lines of business in its mandate and operational priorities.

In parallel, UWCRC was in the process of completing its initial prototype of the mixed-income, mixed-use residential tower, which opened in 2016. With 14 storeys and 102 units, 51 of which are affordable, the $31M Downtown Commons project was financed through a mortgage from the Royal Bank of Canada and additional financial support from the city and province. The successful design and construction and long waiting list of applicants for the project constituted the proof-of-concept and launchpad for UWCRC 2.0 to refine and replicate the model. Among other accomplishments, the model has proven its worth as an instrument for asylum seekers. Since 2016, the building has been home to four Syrian refugee families living in market units. In 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Downtown Commons temporarily housed 30 Ukrainian refugees in market units in the building that had become vacant coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mixed-Income, Mixed-Use Residential Tower Model

The newly launched UWCRC 2.0 began immediately identifying potential partners and properties where it could adapt and replicate its new mixed-income model. Overall, the main elements of this model are:

- Offering a mix of premium, market-rate, and affordable units in the same multi-story tower with the same basic design features for each unit.
- Designating 40 to 51% of the units as affordable according to government regulations.
- Prioritizing the housing needs of marginalized groups, including Indigenous, immigrant and refugee households and persons with disabilities.
- Providing street-level retail space for non-profits, cultural groups, cafes, and local small businesses.
- Creating shared community space in the building for resident and community gatherings, including smudging ceremonies, etc.
- Designing and building to green standards using environmentally appropriate design and materials.
- Integrating eco-services such as on-site bicycle storage and car sharing.
- Mobilizing a blend of public and private financing, including from all levels of government, conventional borrowing, and impact investments.
- Providing socially responsive property management services.

As Table 1 shows, since Downtown Commons opened, UWCRC 2.0 has created or is in the process of creating 565 additional residential units off-campus in downtown Winnipeg worth $198 million. Of these units, 263, or 47%, are affordable as defined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Median Market Rent (MMR), Manitoba's MMR, or Manitoba's Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI) guidelines. Four of the six projects listed in Table 1 are replications of the mixed income residential model: Muse Flats, West Broadway Commons, 308 Colony, and Market Lands. Two smaller projects provide transitional housing for Indigenous women facing gender-based violence (GBV).At the same time, UWCRC 2.0 has begun planning the construction of another 575 residential units, 61% of which are targeted as affordable (see Table 2). If funded, these projects, worth a combined value of $154 million, are scheduled for completion in 2027. Three of the projects in development are replications of the mixed income residential tower model, further increasing the supply of affordable housing in downtown Winnipeg. Four are smaller projects building transitional housing for women facing GBV; two of these initiatives are planned for other Manitoba communities (Winkler and Flin Flon).

Three over-arching features of the mixed-income model are worth noting. First, in terms of post-construction operating revenue, higher rental fees from the premium and market-rate units in effect cross-subsidize the smaller income stream from the affordable units, although the latter are supported with government subsidies and/or beneficial government-supported financing. Second, regarding community-building, the model assumes that a diverse mix of residents from very different socio-economic, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds can live together harmoniously and enjoyably, the possibility of which is bolstered by the self-selection dynamic of prospective tenants applying to rent units in the towers. Third, for the completed builds, UWCRC 2.0 is at the front end of its own learning curve in understanding how best to provide community-oriented, diligent property management services to the diverse communities of residents living in its buildings.

Table 1: Current and Recently Completed UWCRC 2.0 & Partner/Client Projects

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
Muse Flats (290 Colony) – mixed-income residential tower	**119**	**46**	• Manitoba Median Market Rent (MB MMR) • Pending Application for 15 MB Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGIs)	COMPLETE & OPERATING • UWCRC 2.0 Project (100% influence) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project: $30M • Opened Sept 2020 • 95%+ leased as at 1 Oct 2021 • 209 households on the affordable unit wait list • www.museflatswinnipeg.ca	• CMHC Rental Construction Finance initiative (RCFi) - $26.2M loan • MB Rental Housing Construction Tax Credit (RHCTC), i.e. expired MB PST rebate program - $1.428M • City of Winnipeg – Housing Rehabilitation Reserve (HRIR)- $250K • Efficiency MB – New Building Performance Path Funding (NBPP) - $200K • Owner Contributed Land/Equity $2M
West Broadway Commons (167 Colony) mixed-income residential tower	**110**	**56**	79% CMHC Median Market Rent (CMHC MMR)	COMPLETE & OPERATING • Joint Venture: All Saints Anglican Church (51% influence); UWCRC 2.0 (49% influence) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $31M • Partially opened Dec 2020; Fully opened Feb 2021 • 97%+ leased as at 1 Oct 2021 • 452 households on the affordable unit wait list • www.westbroadwaycommons.ca	• CMHC National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) - $17.6 M loan; $7.9M grant • CMHC SEED $80K • MB RHCTC – $1.32 • City of Winnipeg – Housing Rehabilitation Reserve (HRIR) - $250K • Efficiency MB – New Building Performance Path Funding - $200K • Owners' Contributed Equity $2.9M
308 Colony Net Carbon Zero, mixed-income residential tower	**214**	**86**	• 25 units at 59% CMHC MMR • 61 units at 69% CMHC MMR	ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION • Joint Venture: UWCRC 2.0 (51% influence); Lotus Winnipeg Holdings Ltd (49% influence) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $77M • Demolition: Feb 2023 • Construction/Foundations Start: Sept 26, 2023 • Anticipated construction End: Dec 2025	• CMHC National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) - $16.05 M grant • CMHC AHIF - $9.3M • CMHC SEED - $500K • CMHC MLI Select Loan (placed with RBC)- $44.5M loan • MB Works! Capital Incentive Program 10-yr, 100% MB • portion of property tax rebate • MHRC PDF $40K • Reintroduced RHCTC/MB PST rebate - $2.568 MB • MB Climate & Conservation Fund - $150K • City of Winnipeg Affordable Housing Now: $250K grant; 25-yr, 80% property tax rebate • City of Winnipeg HRIR - $21.6K • Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) - $200K

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
					• Efficiency MB NBPP, Solar rebate & Innovation Fund – $625K • Balance – Owners' Contributed Land/ Equity & other $4-6M
454 Edmonton - Gender-Based Violence (GBV) 2nd Stage Transitional Housing	**11**	**11**	All units @ a maximum rent of 59% CMHC MMR – RGI application to MB in 2024	ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION • UWCRC 2.0 Project (100% Owner) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Operating Partners: Ikwe Widdjiitiwin; New Journey Housing & Family Dynamics • Project Cost: $8.9M • Construction Start: Oct 2023 • Construction End: Nov 2024 • Construction/Foundations Start: Sept 26, 2023	• CMHC/CoW/MB – Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) Round 3 - $6.11M • Infrastructure Canada – Reaching Home (End Homelessness) Winnipeg - $1.373M • Efficiency MB NBPP & Deep Retrofit - $60k • MHRC PDF - $40K • MB Heritage - $25K • City of Winnipeg Affordable Housing Now - $110K grant; 25-yr, 80% property tax rebate • City of Winnipeg Heritage - $15K • Community Housing Transformation Centre - $25K • Other grants and owner's equity contribution -$1M
West Central Women's Resource Centre (WCWRC) – GBV 2nd Stage Transitional Housing (Conttinued)	**16**	**16**	All units @ a maximum rent of 59% CMHC MMR	NEARING CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION • WCWRC (100% owner) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager • Project Cost: $10M Construction End: January 2024	• CMHC/CoW Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) Round 2 - $4.31M • Infrastructure Canada – Reaching Home (End Homelessness) Winnipeg - $1.5M • MHRC - $855K MB Building Sustainable Communities grant - $257K • Efficiency MB NBPP & Deep Retrofit - $35K • Community Housing Transformation Centre - $25K • Balance – Owner fundraising - $3M+
Market Lands (South) – Net Carbon Zero, Multi-residential Tower and Cultural Hub	**95**	**48**	• 28 units (59%) of CMHC MMR • 20 units RGI (request to MB pending)	CONSTRUCTION COMMENCED JAN 2024 • UWCRC 2.0 (Controlling interest) • UWCRC 2.0 & Centre Venture, Developers • UWCRC 2.0 Project Manager & Property manager • Project Cost: $54M • Tenders to be Issued Nov 2023 • Construction to commence Jan 2024, pending building permit approval • Construction End: March 2026	• CMHC National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) - $9.8 M grant; $10M loan • CMHC AHIF - $2.6M • CMHC SEED - $110K • Heritage Canada – Cultural Spaces $4.5M • Infrastructure Canada GICB-$4.9M • Federation of CDN Municipalities (FCM)- $5M grant; $5M loan • MB Arts, Culture and Sport in Community Fund - $5M grant • City of Winnipeg - $3.6M land/City of Winnipeg - $2.5M grant • MB Housing NRFP request/PST rebate - $4M • Winnipeg Foundation - $750K

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
					• Efficiency MB NBPP and Solar Rebate -$250K
Totals	**565**	**263 (47%)**	**RGI to MB MMR**	**• $86 million of work in place • $112 million in process to 2026 • $12.7 million in MB contributions**	**• $198M in projects • 15X leverage of other sources to Provincial dollars**

Source: University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, 2024

Table 2: UWCRC 2.0 & Partner/Client Projects in Development

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
282-84 Balmoral- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) 2nd Stage Transitional Housing	**15**	**15**	All units @ a maximum rent of 59% CMHC MMR – RGI application to MB in 2024	SHOVEL-READY PROJECT/12-14 MONTH CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE (Rezoning complete; Development Permit and Land Consolidation in -process; Issued for Construction Drawings under-review for finalization; Class A costing obtained) • $1.1M confirmed funding; $5.5 million applications in process • University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (100% Owner) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Operating Partners: Ikwe Widdjiitiwin; New Journey Housing & Family Dynamics • Project Cost: $9M • Construction Start: Spring/Summer 2024, pending confirmation of all sources of funding • Construction End: Spring/Summer 2025	Confirmed: • CMHC SEED - $75K • FCM Planning Grant - $25K • FCM Study Grant - $143K • MB PDF- $40K • Community Housing Transformation Centre – Local Projects Grant $25K • $600k in owner-contributed land • City of Winnipeg Affordable Housing Now - $150K grant; 25-yr, 80% property tax rebate • $750K ACU line of Credit (working capital line of Credit) Proposed (To be confirmed): • MB Housing Capital and/or MB merit-based Low-Carbon Economy Fund -$2.25M • FCM Green Municipal Fund Sustainable Affordable Housing Capital Grant - $1.8M • CoW Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) • CMHC NHCF – $1.125M • Infrastructure Canada – Reaching Home (End Homelessness) Winnipeg - $1.4M • Efficiency MB NBPP- $265K • MHRC RGI supplement agreement
First Nation Healing Centre (Fisher River	**13**	**13**	All units @ a max rent of 59% CMHC MMR –	ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT/30% FUNDED/SHOVEL READY WITHIN 9 MONTHS OF FUNDING	Confirmed: • CMHC Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing initiative - $3.48M

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
Cree Nation) – Urban location, Second-Stage GBV Transitional Housing Project			RGI application to MB in 2024/5	CONFRIMATIONS/12 MONTH CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE • First Nation Healing Centre (100% Owner/operator) – Controlled entity of Fisher River Cree Nation • To be located at 270 Morley Avenue • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $12.7M • Schematic Design and Class D costing • Initial Energy Modeling – 70% better energy performance over existing • Construction Start: Fall 2024, pending confirmation of all sources of funding • Construction End: Fall 2025	• Indigenous Services Canada - $40K SEED, $250K start up capital (FF&E), & $500k/year operating • City of Winnipeg Affordable Housing Now - $130K grant; 25-yr, 80% property tax rebate Proposed (To be confirmed): • Infrastructure Canada – GICB fund - $8.7M (application pending since Feb 2023) • Alternate to GICB (FCM, MB Housing, MB PST credit, CoW HAF, National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. (NICHI), CMHC NHCF)
Genesis House - Second-Stage GBV Transitional Housing Project (Winkler, MB)	**25**	**25**	All units @ a maximum rent of 59% CMHC MMR – RGI application to MB in 2024/5	ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT/NEAR SHOVEL READY/30% CONFIRMED FUNDING • Genesis House (South Central Committee on Family Violence) • Located in Winkler, MB (Corner of Stanley and 3rd) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $14.3M • 66% construction Drawings • Construction Start: Spring/Summer 2024, pending confirmation of all sources of funding • Construction End: Spring/Summer 2025	Confirmed: • $765K in owner-contributed land • MB Capital Grant - $2.4M (confirmed, pending CMHC NHS) • CMHC SEED - $125K • Reaching Home (Brandon) SEED - $118K • MB PDF- $75K • Women's Shelters Canada - $50K • CHTC – Local Projects Grant $25K • Foundation & other grants- $81K • City of Winkler: 5-yr, TIF rebate, $5K Seed grant Proposed (To be confirmed): • MB Housing Capital NRFP - $3.75M (application pending) • CMHC NHCF – $2.5M (in process) • Infrastructure Canada – Reaching Home (Brandon) - $2.25M • Efficiency MB NBPP- $75K • MB Building Sustainable Communities Grant- -$300K • MB PST rebate-$300K • MHRC RGI supplement agreement

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
SAM Management/ Property Holdings Net Carbon Zero, Mixed-Income Development (1321 Beaumont Street)	**136**	**69**	Affordable units at 79% CMHC MMR	ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT – WORKING TOWARDS 33% CONSTRUCITON DRAWINGS FOR MARCH 2024/$2.5 MILLION IN CONFIRMED FUNDING • SAM property Holdings (100% owner) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $45M • 66% Construction Drawings • Construction Start: Fall/Winter 2024/25, pending confirmation of all sources of funding • Construction End: January 2027	Confirmed: • $1.8M land • CMHC SEED - $412K • MB HOUSING PDF- $75K • FCM Planning - $25K • MB CCF- $150K Proposed (To be confirmed): • FCM Study - $175K • CMHC NHCF - $10.2M non-repayable contribution • FCM New Building Grant/Loan - $8.9M • CMHC Direct Lending RCFi - $18.9M • Reintroduced RHCTC/MB PST rebate - $1.6M • City of Winnipeg Affordable Housing Now: $250K grant; 25-yr, 80% property tax rebate • Efficiency MB/CAN and MB Green tax credits- $1.1M
Forks Railside, Net Carbon Zero, Mixed Income	**65**	**33**	59% CMHC MMR- with MB RGI application 2026	ACTIVE PROJECT – PROCEEDING FROM SCHEMATIC TO DESIGN DEVELOPMENT • UWCRC 2.0 Inc. (100% owner) • UWCRC 2.0 Developer, Project Manager and Property Manager • Project Cost: $28M • IFC Drawings: Fall 2024, pending confirmation of planning dollars • Construction Start Fall 2024, pending confirmation of funding • Construction End: Spring/Summer 2026	Confirmed: • MB PDF - $40K • FCM Planning - $25K Proposed (To be confirmed): • FCM Study - $175K • MB CCF - $150K • CMHC SEED - $500K ($150K non-repayable) • Cow AHN – 150K • MB Merit-Based Low-Carbon Economy Fund - $2M • FCM New Building – grant/loan $5.6M • CoW HAF - $2.9M • CMHC AHIF - $2.3M • MB Housing - $1.5M ($50k/affordable unit) • MB PST rebate – $780K • Efficiency MB & Green Tech tax credits - $630K

Project	# of Units	# of Affordable Units	Depth of Affordability	Project Status	Funding and Financing
Other Projects in Early Development • **Flin Flon Aboriginal** • **Friendship Centre** • **Willow Place** • **Tunngasugit** • **Market Lands (North)**	**320**	**200**	Emergency transition beds, RGI and 79% CMHC MMR	Project Cost: Estimated $160M	Stacked funding Programs Note: The Market Lands North Parcel includes $6M in Lands and $1M in secured pre-development/ development dollars & 20,000ft+ in institutional office/commercial use space.
Totals	574	355 (61% affordable)	RGI to 79% CMHC MMR	• $154 million in various stages of development • All deliverable, if funded, by 2027 • 4.8X leverage of other sources to Provincial dollars	• Over $19.5 million in confirmed funding on new residential projects to date • $32M in anticipated asks to Province

Source: University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, 2024

Indigenous Economic Development

From the outset, UWCRC and later UWCRC 2.0 have also served as consultants in advancing Indigenous economic development in both urban Winnipeg and rural First Nation communities. While this work has thus far constituted a smaller part of the Corporation's activities, it has entailed providing business planning advice to a wide range of projects, from urban-property acquisition to on-reserve capital-equipment purchases, housing development and repair, and community benefit agreements related to on-reserve school construction. In addition, UWCRC has cooperated with the University of Winnipeg's Master's program in development practice to support student field placements with the Fisher River First Nation, home of Manitoba's largest utility-scale solar farm (Fisher River, 2020), whose business planning UWCRC 2.0 supported. The largest initiative the Corporation is working on with Fisher River First Nation is the Ka Ni Kanichihk project, an $11.5 million, CaGBC Net Carbon Zero Design day care and cultural centre expansion project, which is under active construction, with all funding confirmed.

Gender-Based Violence Transitional Housing

More recently, a new opportunity arose for UWCRC 2.0 to serve as developer and project manager for a new second-stage transitional housing project of the non-profit West Central Women's Resource Centre (WCWRC), which would operate the facility. Located at 590 Victor Street in downtown Winnipeg, and featuring 16 housing units, the project will "create safe, accessible, supportive, and culturally appropriate transitional housing units for individuals who have experienced gender-based violence" (UWCRC, 2023). In addition, through its Rapid Housing Initiative, the City of Winnipeg approved support for another transitional housing project at 454 Edmonton Street, which will include "11 units of transitional housing for women and children who have experienced gender-based violence." It is expected that most of the participants for both projects will be Indigenous women and children, with newcomer households also served. UWCRC 2.0 is undertaking five similar emergency and/or second-stage transitional-housing projects with other women's organizations in Winnipeg and Winkler, Manitoba, as well as an urban second stage GBV project with Fisher River Cree Nation and emergency transitional housing with the Flin Flon Friendship Centre. Several of these projects have received pre-development support via CMHC, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the Province of Manitoba, with major capital applications currently in process. If these projects proceed to construction they would account for 45 emergency shelter beds and 75 self-contained transitional housing units for women and children who have experienced gender-based violence.

Discussion

As UWCRC 2.0 proceeds with its off-campus replication agenda, ramping up its building of affordable housing units, engaged scholars may be interested in exploring and taking action on several dimensions of this leading-edge case.

1) ***Replicating the model in other urban centres.*** There are many small- to medium-sized cities and larger towns across North America where the mixed-income residential model could be adapted and applied to rapidly build more affordable housing. Some caveats are necessary, though. From a real estate perspective, suitable properties must be available to buy at affordable prices in these urban centres. There also must be a sufficient mix of possible financing sources and instruments to underwrite each build. And, not insignificantly, there must be ample demand from prospective tenants at all income levels to live in the towers to be built.

   Furthermore, the UWCRC case is, in fact, a two-component model: An agile, entrepreneurial development organization that runs alongside the larger public institution, like UWCRC and its parallel instrument UWCRC 2.0, must be capable of catalyzing the partnerships and deals that drive the builds from land acquisition to design and execution. These and related issues may be of particular interest to scholars in business, economics, architecture, engineering, law, and public policy.

2) ***Understanding and managing diverse communities of residents.*** The model discussed here assumes that very diverse income and cultural groups will decide to live together in the same space and, with the help of community-oriented property management services, that they will nurture, strengthen, and problem-solve to grow and sustain these diverse communities of residents. There are complex dynamics involved here, and the work is challenging. For its part, UWCRC 2.0 is still early in its journey as a social real estate property manager. The insights from the engaged scholarship of sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and specialists in adult learning, Indigenous studies, gender studies, anti-racism, and ethnic and religious studies, among others, could help the Corporation and similar organizations play their property management roles more effectively. Such efforts could also potentially ignite more impactful participation by residents in the co-design and co-management of their residences.

3) ***Dealing with leadership and political rotation.*** Over its nearly two decades of operation, UWCRC has worked with five successive presidents of the University of Winnipeg, a not uncommon rotation cycle for a university. Each president had to be briefed and engaged within the framework of the unique strategic objectives of their presidency. Not surprisingly perhaps, some presidents have been more interested in the Corporation's work than others, inevitably viewing UWCRC's work through the lens of the priorities of their individual presidencies. Managing the relationship with the Office of the President has proven to be an important and continuous function requiring the time, effort, and agility of UWCRC's executive team and Board.

   The second type of leadership rotation affecting UWCRC has been political. Different federal, provincial, and municipal governments have espoused a wide range of housing policies and provided varied programs over time, with their own positions often changing, for better or worse, in light of events and new information. In general,

conservative governments have been less willing than liberal and social democratic governments to spend public money on social housing and, for that matter, on higher education. UWCRC has thus been obliged to understand the key ministers and policies of successive governments at all levels as they arrive on the scene after elections, and, to the extent possible, build productive relationships with them. Engaged scholars in the fields of political science and public policy may be interested in carrying out action research on these and related issues.

4) ***Deepening community partnerships.*** Currently, the UWCRC Board of Directors comprises solely senior executives of the University of Winnipeg and is chaired by the President of the university. In contrast, the Board of UWCRC 2.0 presently features six community members and five university representatives, with the chair being held by a community member and the chief executive of the Corporation sitting as the 12th Board member. Community Board members of UWCRC 2.0 include two former deputy ministers in the Manitoba government, the former chief executive of the Winnipeg Foundation, two owners of local real estate development corporations, and a staff member of the First Nations Financial Management Board. The 2.0 corporation will expand the size of its Board in 2024.

   At the project level, UWCRC 2.0 has partnered in its housing builds with a church congregation, a municipal government developer, a private developer, and several local social service and arts and cultural non-profits, as well as Indigenous governments and other Indigenous-led organizations. These focused collaborations have prioritized the concrete outcome of the construction of affordable housing units within a mixed-income or transitional/social housing model, with some accompanying social programs included or provided on a stand-alone basis. Engaged scholars in sociology, Indigenous studies, gender studies and other social science fields may be interested in carrying out research on the voices and choices of low-income and marginalized community members in these various partnerships.

5) ***Aligning with the research agenda of the university.*** Given its preoccupation with real estate, design, and construction—that is, with building structures rather than studying them in the more academic sense—UWCRC has not developed strong links with the research agenda of the University of Winnipeg. To be sure, it has to date engaged 15 student interns to work on its projects. And the Corporation has cooperated on field placements with the university's Master's program in development practice. However, overall, UWCRC's links with faculty and student research remain underdeveloped. Engaged scholars from all disciplines could contribute to identifying and facilitating effective ways and means of nurturing these links.

Conclusion

Universities and colleges possess powerful capacities in real estate, construction and property management that are urgently needed to combat the crisis of housing insecurity in the cities and towns where these institutions are located. The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, a non-profit foundation, has created a two-component model whose strong track record and increasing momenturn are worthy of careful study, localized adaption, and rapid replication. The first component of the model is UWCRC itself and its sister company, UWCRC 2.0, constituting an agile, entrepreneurial social real estate developer that operates on a self-sustaining basis. The second component is the Corporation's mixed-income, mixed-use residential tower offering 40% to 51% of its units on an affordable basis and for which UWCRC 2.0 provides property management services. There is an array of opportunities for engaged scholars to examine and interrogate this experience, generate insights that strengthen or adapt the model, and enable rapid replication to address the pressing need for millions of new, affordable rental units across North America. This work is important, it is urgent, and it is feasible.

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Survival and Resistance: A Zine Study with Young Women and Femmes Experiencing Housing Injustice in Canadian Cities

Nicole Santos Dunn and Jeffrey Ansloos

Abstract Housing injustice is a serious public health issue among young women and femmes (aged 18-24) in Canada but the research available on this topic seldom centres the voices of people with lived and living experience. This population is marginally visible in the shelter systems; instead their experiences may be described as "hidden homelessness". This housing typology refers to situations where someone seeks shelter in ways like couch-surfing, car sleeping, or other short-term accommodations that are not typically recognized as responding to housing injustice. Drawing from a methodology of social constructionism, this paper reviews findings from an arts-based inquiry that sought to answer the research question, "what are the survival and resistance strategies that young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice use to support their wellness and engage with life?" Using reflexive thematic analysis, a zine was created and analyzed to reveal five themes: 1). Affective and Psychological Strategies of Resistance; 2). Survival Strategies and Behaviours to Ensure Material Survival; 3). Felt Knowledge About Good Living; 4). Organized Abandonment and Other Normed Chaos; and, 5). Importance of Human Connection, Solidarity, and Radical Care. The strengths and limitations, along with implications for public health policy and research are discussed.

KeyWords housing injustice, women and femmes, resistance, public health, policy, arts-based research

Young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice are marginally visible in the shelter systems. In this study "women and femmes" refers to people whose gender identity expresses femininity and acknowledges a range of gender expressions. Expressions of femininity are subject to misogyny and transmisogyny—particularly in male-dominated public spaces like shelters and the streets. This discrimination can fuel "hidden homelessness" and this typology refers to instances of couch surfing with friends, staying with family, living in a vehicle, or exchanging services for shelter (Schwan et al., 2020). Since hidden homelessness is often rendered invisible through the eyes of public health, it is very difficult to get an accurate sense of the experience. At present, the unique needs of this population are not well described in the academic literature and attempts at elucidating these needs must ethically respond to concerns of safety, power differentials, and exploitation (Couch et al., 2012).

Literature Review

Youth Housing Injustice

Youth homelessness refers to the situation of young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire a stable, safe, or consistent residence (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2016, p. 1). However, who is considered a youth depends on how "youth" is conceptualized. While ages 13-24 here are considered part of youthhood, the United Nations (n.d.) recognizes youthhood as occurring between the ages of 15 and 24. According to Statistics Canada (2021), youthhood is the period between ages 15 and 29, while the Youth Criminal Justice Act defines youthhood as occurring between ages 12 and17 (Department of Justice, 2021). There is variation in how youthhood is conceptualized and legalized. Yang and Tuck (2014) ask us to consider if youthhood is a developmental period or a structural framing. As a developmental framing, youthhood is measured against proximity to adulthood and so questions of self-determination become important. However, as a structural framing, "youth" becomes a category around which institutions are built with material implications for those experiencing homelessness (Yang & Tuck, 2014). Regardless of its definition, youth homelessness is a human rights violation.

Young people seek support differently than their adult counterparts experiencing homelessness, and often avoid services that may put them in contact with authorities for fear of penalization (Gaetz et al., 2016). Hidden homelessness prevents youth from experiencing the necessary nurturing attachments that facilitate safety and personal development. To date it is very difficult to get an accurate sense of the proportion of women and femmes who experience this issue, and it is estimated that homelessness among women is three and a half times greater than what we presently know (Klassen & Spring, 2015).

Resistance

Identifying resistance requires asking questions about what is being responded to, including feelings, individuals, ideologies, and structures (Yang & Tuck, 2014). Wade (1997) refers to resistance as "any mental or behavioural act through which a person attempts to expose, withstand, repel, stop, prevent, abstain from, strive against, impede, refuse to comply with, or oppose any form of violence or oppression" (p. 25). This definition provides a useful baseline conceptualization of resistance but is considered vague in the context of this paper. To further understand resistance, the contextual dimensions of what is being resisted must be considered. Yang and Tuck (2014) point out that "theories of resistance cannot be generalized. Resistance is always in context, in a place, between real people—even when some of those people embody the state. Resistance is always in real time too, and what is possible in one time and context is unthinkable in another time and context" (p.8). The point is that resistance is a complicated concept because how it is understood is highly contingent on how it is framed. What may be true for one individual or community in a particular context must not be generalized to others.

Resistance and psychotherapy. In psychotherapy, finding counter-narratives of resistance can destabilize problem-saturated stories about oppression and support individuals to consider the ways they practiced survivance and agency, as, for example, in the case of children who refuse to cry in front of their abusers. While some might pathologize this experience as dissociation, an alternate understanding might consider and celebrate the child's decision to safeguard their emotions from unsafe people. It is therapeutic to highlight how an individual *responded* to violence, and not exclusively focus on how it *affected* them (Wade, 1997). Engaging with this framing considers what this resistance might say about the child, their hopes for themselves, and their life.

Youth resistance. Youth resistance runs the risk of being "made precious" through a focus on youth as a developmental category (Yang & Tuck, 2014, p. 4). Developmental categorization risks resistance behaviours being viewed as deviant or pathological instead of autonomous or wise. There may also be undeclared expectations about what resistance looks like, that it perhaps moves its actors towards "empowerment" (Yang & Tuck, 2014, p. 9). As Kelley and colleagues (2014) assert:

> We cannot decide what resistance is, based on its perceived effectiveness. We have to understand where people are coming from—the limits, the cultures, the experiences, the histories, the memories—and see self-activity as self-active, self-generated modes of struggle. We don't have to like these self-activities. We don't have to think they're great or grand. We miss the point if we only judge them strictly on whether or not they succeed (p. 91).

Their point is important because it insists that resistance is not uni-directional but is instead entangled in particular living realities.

Resistance and women. Resistance occurring among women has also been theorized among radical feminist scholars. Burstow (1992) proposed that women's resistance to violence, particularly male violence, can be understood as existing on a continuum. On one side, resistance is seen as passive actions or behaviours that do not stop the violence or challenge the status quo. On the other side is collective action grounded in critical consciousness that seeks to destabilize patriarchal systems of oppression. Within housing injustice, women's resistance is a useful concept for interrogating stereotypes of disempowerment (Hellegers, 2011).

What resistance is not. It is important to disentangle what resistance is *not*. When it comes to the issues of structural violence, we can see that resistance has been "domesticated into forms of political and commercial participation" that do not necessarily advance or alleviate the conditions of precarity contributing to distress (Yang & Tuck, 2014, p. 8). These participatory initiatives center on raising awareness about various issues without abolishing the systems that

sustain harm (Dej, 2020). These initiatives are often observed within the non-profit industrial complex and, subsequently, the homelessness industrial complex.

Methodology and Methods

Social Constructionism

Social constructionism is concerned with meaning making as it occurs through social interactions (Chen et al., 2011) and is in direct opposition to positivist ways of knowing. Social constructionism privileges knowledge that is typically taken for granted, such as insider knowledge and "tacit knowing" (Hoshmand, 2005) and is concerned with the ways that meaning making is connected to context (Chen et al., 2011, p.131). Pertinent to this study, various forms of exclusion and violence such as patriarchy, transphobia, misogyny, ableism, and classism must be named and interrogated. Importantly, social constructionism attends to language use. The words we choose hold power and where this power is located can change our understanding of the issue being investigated.

Desire-Driven Research

Too often research can totalize conditions of oppression with the identities of those the research seeks to understand. Tuck (2009) defines this damage-centered research as "research that operates, even benevolently, from a theory of change that establishes harm or injury in order to achieve reparation" (p. 413). All research is complicit in some level of harm and this study aims not only to mitigate harm but to "suspend damage". Tuck argues for an epistemological shift in the framing of research with marginalized communities towards desire-centered research. Tuck states, "desire-based research frameworks are concerned with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives" (p. 416). This kind of research "not only documents the painful elements of social realities but also the wisdom and hope" (Truck, 2009, p. 416). As such, a desire-based research approach is reflected in the choice to pursue an arts-based inquiry and to promote an experience that was hopeful, reflective, and, possibly fun.

Arts-Based Research

The choice to pursue arts-based research speaks to the observation that when it comes to complicated and emotional topics, words fail us (Jaworski & Scott, 2016). This method is also an ecologically validated approach to research with those who experience houselessness (Conrad & Kendall, 2009; Eastham et al., 2010; Sakamoto et al., 2008; Schwan et al., 2017; Walsh et al., 2009). In this study, young women and femmes were invited to respond to a series of strengths-based prompts using a creative art medium called "zines" (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2009). This method seeks to make visible experiences that are often made invisible within mainstream discourses (Estrella & Forinash, 2007; Finley, 2003; Prinsloo, 2010). Zines are not only for the purpose of data collection in this study; the completed zines hold valuable knowledge that reaches the community in an accessible and timely way, unlike research publications that have a slow turnaround time and a limited audience (Chavis et al., 1983).

Zines

Zines are independently produced, tiny publications, born from youth counterculture to document personal and often overlooked facets of living (Hays, 2017). They are made with easily accessible office materials (often folded printer paper bound to create a small folio), making them simple to produce. They are self-published, share "insider knowledge" (Epston & White, 1990) and archive ways of knowing. Zines can house almost everything, including poetry, short stories, essays, points of view, art, lists, opinions, drawings, recipes, rants, photographs, and more. If it can fit on the page, it can exist in a zine. Their very existence materializes voices located at margins, making them an appropriate vehicle for knowledge exploration and mobilization within this study (Hays, 2017).

Social Engagement and Data Collection

Social engagement occurred through consultation with community agencies that served the population in question and took seriously the feedback provided. Over 75 organizations were contacted and 17 provided feedback about the methods and best approaches to ethical "data" collection. To support fairness, the authors agreed to collect the first thirteen pieces that were submitted to honour the time and care participants took to submit to the project. Participant submissions were compensated with $50 delivered in whatever medium they preferred (e.g., e-transfers, cash, gift cards). The zine sought to return its knowledge to the community quickly and freely online without the barriers of access to academic databases. The zine itself belongs to its contributors and broader community.

Method of Analysis

The zine submissions containing both language and imagery were digitized and uploaded to NVivo coding software for a comprehensive analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) emphasizing researcher reflexivity was employed (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The analysis involved six phases: 1. familiarization with each zine submission; 2. coding the data; 3. generating initial themes; 4. further reviewing and developing the themes to account for nuance; 5. refining, defining, and naming the themes while coming to a consensus on what findings are emerging; and, finally, 6. writing up the results (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Elements of close reading and visual discourse analysis within the RTA were also considered. While close reading is a literary criticism technique attending closely to what is said and how it is said (Harvard University, 2024), visual discourse analysis is concerned with the meaning of images including what they intend to represent and how audiences interpret them (Trau et al., 2019).

Research Team Positionality

The first author of this study is an adult white settler of Portuguese and Irish ancestry. She is a psychotherapist and doctoral candidate in clinical and counselling psychology with a history of working in community settings with young people who have experienced violence. She lives in an urban context and has never been unhoused. The second author is a queer Cree and English, belonging to Fisher River Cree Nation. He is a psychologist and researcher working

in the area of social and environmental dimensions of Indigenous health justice, housing, and suicide prevention.

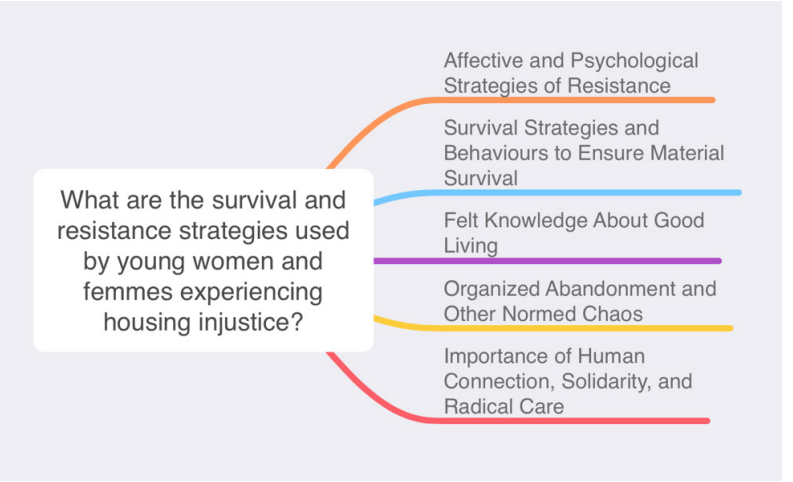
Reflexivity

Reflexivity was engaged as a practice of critical decision making across every aspect of the study (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). Four broad categories recommended by Walsh (2003) were used to organize this process: contextual, methodological, interpersonal, and personal. Contextually, we critically engaged with anti-capitalist principles, seeking to deeply reflect on exploitation in research, which resulted in compensation to improve the finances of participants. Methodologically, moves towards suspending damage (Tuck, 2009) were prioritized for hopeful and generative art that could be returned immediately to the community (Chavis et al., 1983). Interpersonally, this research sought accountability and transparency in power dynamics across agency contact, recruitment, and relationships with participants. Personally, we reflected in an iterative and ongoing process on how our own language could illuminate or disenfranchise the submissions, especially in considering how the language of deviance is often weaponized to conceal creative and useful practices of resistance.

Results

The analysis of the zine generated five themes from the thirteen submissions: 1. Affective and psychological strategies of resistance; 2. Survival strategies and behaviours to ensure material survival; 3. Felt knowledge about good living; 4. Organized abandonment and other normed chaos; and, 5. Importance of human connection, solidarity, and radical care (see Figure 1). The themes reflect their relevance to the research questions and their salience across analysis.

Figure 1. Theme Tree



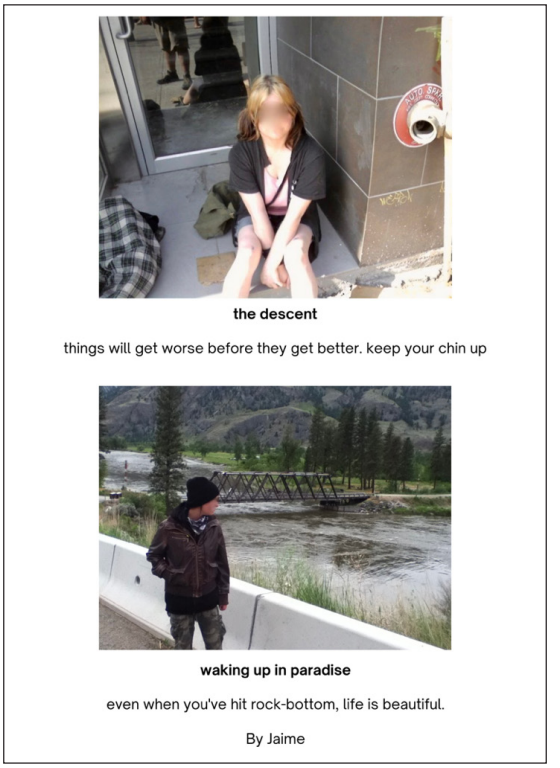
Note: Five overarching themes yielded from reflexive thematic analysis.

Theme 1. Affective and Psychological Strategies of Resistance

Affective and psychological strategies of resistance involve participants employing emotional or cognitive means to resist injustice. Affective strategies typically used emotions and cognitive strategies used psychological tools such as critical thinking, self-reflection, and self-regulation to challenge oppressive narratives and to expose imbalances of power. Psychological strategies may also involve less obvious approaches such as self-harm or substance use to cope, which may be both affective and cognitive.

In Jaime's submission "the descent & waking up in paradise" (see Figure 2), she offers two different images with two different captions that reflect the present theme. In the first image of a girl sitting on the ground in a vestibule of what appears to be a city building, Jaime demonstrates hopefulness about the future: "things will get worse before they get better. Keep your chin up." Here we can see that Jaime is offering encouragement and solidarity to her former self and potentially other young people reading the zine. In the second image, a person standing at the side of a highway looking out over a riverbank; the caption says, "even when you've hit rock-bottom, life is beautiful". Jaime is resisting despair rooted in housing injustice by practicing gratitude and an appreciation for her surroundings.

Figure 2. Zine Submission



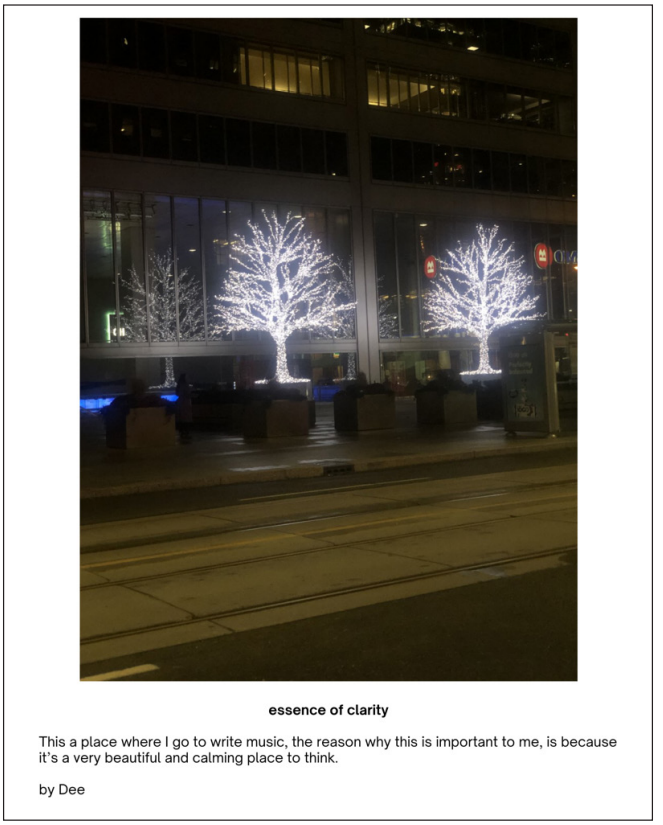
Note: Affective and psychological strategies of resistance.

Emotions like anger and feelings of outrage are interpreted in the tone from pieces such as "Hear me out-" by Lucy and "And Soon" by c.j.. In both submissions, readings of anger and outrage are directly related to experiences of unmet material needs. Lucy speaks of being unable to live, pay rent, and access food. Similarly, c.j. speaks about food insecurity, defensive design, hostile architecture (Licht, 2020), and inaccessible rent. These expressions of anger are logical as both submissions speak about chaos related to organized abandonment (Kumanyika, 2020) and human rights violations. In their expression, these two pieces resist the silencing and erasure that is typical of young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice and expectations about the gendered experience of getting needs met—to be quiet, polite, and passive.

In a poem "It's Getting Late" by Ivy, we see psychological acts of resistance. Ivy references the use of substances to cope with psychological pain: "It's getting late and night has come/ Take away the pain with vodka, gin, and rum." Here we see self-medication as a practical response to resist the psychological pain of housing injustice. In the following verse, she identifies cognitive strategies of "make-believe" to survive: "Make-believe used to mean teddy bears and fairy tales/ Now it's the only way to survive/ Telling herself over and over and over: *"I'm fine"* (emphasis original). This cognitive strategy to cope with having no place to go is interpreted here as a creative act of resistance, using her imagination and positive self-talk to cope with her experience of structural abandonment (Kumanyika, 2020).

Dee shares an image of two trees lit up by LED lights in the financial district of Toronto. Dee titles this piece "essence of clarity" and shares that "This is a place where I go to write music, the reason why this is important to me, is because it's a very beautiful and calming place to think" (see Figure 3). Here, the very pursuit of hobbies in public spaces in a city that has undergone significant austerity measures is an act of resistance. Geographically this is a space representing industry that is not generally dedicated to the hobbies of young people. By accessing this space to engage in creative activities, Dee is resisting narratives about who can take up space and where.

Figure 3. Zine Submission



Note: Affective and psychological strategies of resistance.

Theme 2. Survival Strategies and Behaviours to Ensure Material Survival

Survival strategies and behaviours refer to individual actions and decisions to ensure their material survival in oppressive conditions. This could include seeking basic resources, securing income or employment opportunities, creative problem-solving, such as finding alternative sources of support or developing new skills to adapt to changing circumstances. In other cases, survival behaviours may involve engaging in activities with increased risk or legal consequences such as sex work or theft. These strategies often respond to underlying systemic inequalities and injustices.

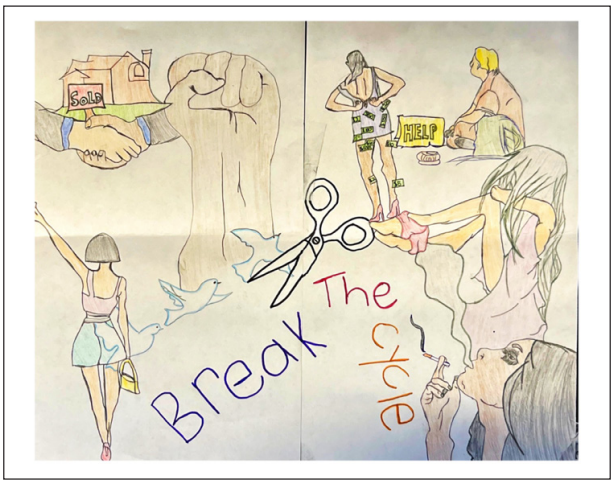
In her piece "Hear me out-", Lucy describes "sleeping on a couch or floor" to avoid sleeping rough. Crashing in places that are not her own is a resistance strategy to avoid sleeping outside, which can be very dangerous for young people: "As a woman sleeping on the street you know you are in constant danger." Lucy is describing her own advocacy against the gendered struggle to stay safe against "overrun" shelters and access "livable rent" by staying at places that are not her own. This does not necessarily imply that other spaces are safe but invites us to respect the ways

in which Lucy perceives what is safest for her even if it invites new forms of danger. Her choices do not necessarily relieve her from danger but reflect an autonomous choice to be respected.

In Ivy's poem, she describes sex work or survival sex as a means for survival, perhaps to gain a place to sleep: "It's getting late and as the sun goes low/ She does too, on a man she doesn't know/ It's getting late and she has no home/ This bed slept in by the girls that came before her/ This room is not her own". Here, sex work or survival sex keep her safe by remaining sheltered or receiving monetary resources to take care of herself. This choice also incurs new forms of danger like the possibility of exploitation and victimization.

In a piece entitled "Break The Cycle," Trynelle Thomas states that "the right side of my art piece represents the pain I faced while living on the streets and that feeling of hopelessness." Accompanying the text are four images: one includes a woman in heels opening or closing the zipper of her dress and sprinkled with dollar bills and the next is of a person asking for change beside a sign that says "HELP". Underneath this image is a female presenting person who sits with her head on her knees and underwear wrapped around her ankles. The final image is of another femme presenting person smoking a cigarette. The pictures suggest a variety of ways that Trynelle has ensured material survival. In this case, sex work and asking for money or panhandling[1] were strategies of material survival, even if portrayed in ways that suggest these experiences were difficult.

Figure 4. Zine Submission



Note: Survival strategies and behaviour to ensure material survival.

1 The term "panhandling" is attached to profound stigma and does not adequately represent the ways individuals engaging in this behaviour are resisting financial oppression and seeking mutual aid.

Theme 3. Theorizations About Good Living

Theorizations about good living refer to the intuitive and personal understandings about what makes a fulfilling and meaningful life. This knowledge, informed by a variety of values and beliefs, may also be tacit, making it appear resistant to social or political norms. This theme also reflects the importance of responsive approaches to social policy and practice.

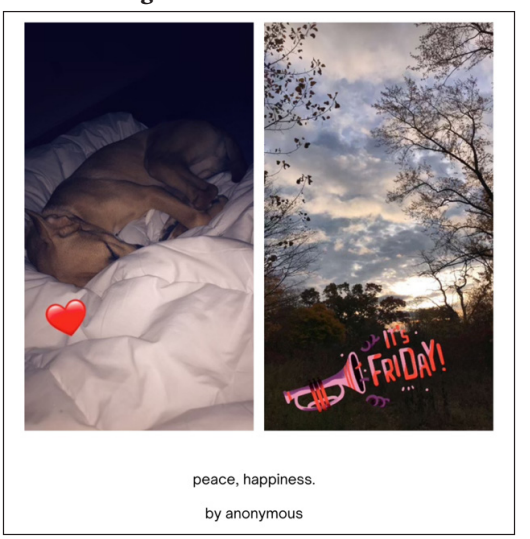
In Lucy's submission "Hear me out-" she provides many statements theorizing good living: for example, "I would really like to live. Not be alive, live. I want to be able to wake up in the morning and get out of bed. Not roll off my friend couch, not wake up in the middle of the night because it's too cold to sleep outside". In this contribution safe and stable housing is identified as a marker of good living. To that end, she wants:

> to have a stove to make food, and not worry when I can use the bathroom next. I want cupboards to store that food – oh, and I want to be able to afford that food instead of watching my hard-earned money drain away to pay rent.

Here, Lucy speaks to the importance of food security, dignity, and livable wages to pay for a secure living space.

In a submission by anonymous (see Figure 5), we see two images. One of a dog curled up in a white duvet and another of outdoor scenery with trees and the caption "It's Friday" triumphantly exclaimed from a trumpet. Both images are captioned under the title "peace, happiness", both markers of good living. They are also attached to a bed in a house, and perhaps the end of the work week, which also suggests that good living is tied to labour practices that ensure breaks and rest for workers.

Figure 5. Zine Submission



Note: Theorizations about good living.

Nester's submission entitled "Dreaming of the good life" shows a bedroom with three single beds in a small room that appears to be a shelter space. The caption attached to the photo reads "Stressful living! Complete deprivation of privacy!" (see Figure 6). Good living can be understood here as the opposite of stress and a lack of privacy.

Figure 6. Zine Submission

Note: Theorizations about good living.

Trynelle Thomas states, "I have been able to move out on my own started my healing journey which is w[ha]t the [left side] of this piece shows". The images that accompany the corresponding text include hands shaking in front of a house that says "Sold", a fist triumphantly lifted to the sky, and a female figure walking amongst images of doves. Here, we see that having a secure living situation, and specifically having the economic power to be able to buy a house, is important to her desires--as is being empowered represented by the fist and experiencing peace represented by the doves (see Figure 4).

Theme 4. Organized Abandonment and Other Normed Chaos

Organized abandonment refers to deliberate disinvestment in particular communities or issues (Kumanyika, 2020), which can lead to chaos when the lack of resources and social support exacerbate existing problems and create new ones. Chaos here refers to a state of disorder, confusion, and unpredictability felt by participants, which manifested in many and different ways for each person. It often emerged as the tension between trying to get needs met within systems and structures that do not make this process clear or direct.

Lucy and c.j. explicitly speak about organized abandonment across a variety of structures such as housing and health care. Lucy states, "The homeless shelters are overrun and no one is bothering to try and build more". Here, "no one" is interpreted as referring to people in positions of power. In response to experiences of housing injustice, Lucy questions, "Why has the world today made it seem like it's only a choice?" when referring to being houseless. Lucy's comments highlight the shifting of responsibility for housing injustices onto individuals, especially young people. c.j. also writes with urgency in her piece "And Soon" where she acknowledges the decay of structures that provide lifesaving services: "hotels turned to shelters for those in need, back to hotels. Mental health institutions overworked, underfunded, overcapacity, underappreciated". c.j.'s concern is not only political abandonment but the willful neglect of important lifesaving services: "This society is NOT livable. It is trying to eradicate us, as if we're weeds" and "It's a passive, slow genocide". The comparison of young people experiencing houselessness to "weeds" is both compelling and unsettling. It points to the felt and material experience of being intentionally abandoned as something undesirable and unwelcome. c.j.'s reference to this process as "genocide" is logical and shocking. c.j.'s writing underscores the cruel implication of withholding essential services, painting it as an act of ageism, ableism, and classism.

Adriana Sutherland speaks about literally being abandoned in "It Sounds Like a Summer". She states that after 19 weeks (about four and a half months) of sleeping in an encampment, and five years of being unhoused, "I'm still homeless/ It's like they forgot about me." The "they" refers to the governments and social services she would rely on to improve her situation, while the length of her experience of housing injustice and use of the term "forgot" speaks to a gross injustice and failure on the part of provincial bodies to care for those in an urgent housing situation—especially for young people whose housing injustice is a violation of their right to safe and stable housing.

Theme 5. Importance of Human Connection, Solidarity, and Radical Care

This theme describes the fundamental importance of relationships and human connection in the project of healing from housing injustice. Here, human connection involves the emotional, psychological, and physical relationships that individuals co-create through shared solidarity, empathy, and reciprocity. Radical care involves a deep commitment to empathy and safety, particularly for those who have experienced extreme exclusion. Radical care took many forms including solidarity, practical help, and advocacy. Together, human connection and radical care reflect the potential for transformative justice through compassion.

Jaime's zine contribution offers advice accompanying images of a girl, presumably a representation of herself. The guidance seems directed not only at the girl depicted but also at other insecurely housed young people who might encounter the zine (see Figure 2). Similarly, Manuella's submission provides advice directly to other women and femmes experiencing housing injustice:

> for people who are in my situation I would like to say it's OK to be scared it's OK to be nervous being in a shelter being homeless but I always keep your

> head up better days will come ahead I would like I to know who were in my situation to use it as a steppingstone.

Manuella's comments resonate with the challenges faced by young individuals in shelter settings. Her words of solidarity validate their emotional journey while providing hope for brighter days. Both Jaime's and Manuella's contributions emphasize the therapeutic impact of forging connections with individuals who have undergone similar trials, stressing the importance of peer-based and lived-experience centered support practices.

Adriana Sutherland's "It Sounds Like a Summer" stresses the significance of community connection. Reflecting on her experience of sleeping in a tent within an encampment, she writes, "[t]he tent covered me/ I had a place to lay my head/ It was a community." And, "Many days out in the rain/ It would be muddy back there/ But it still felt safe". Contrary to popular views that portray encampments as incubators for crime and violence, inviting police action and state-sanctioned brutality, Adriana paints them as a haven of community safety.

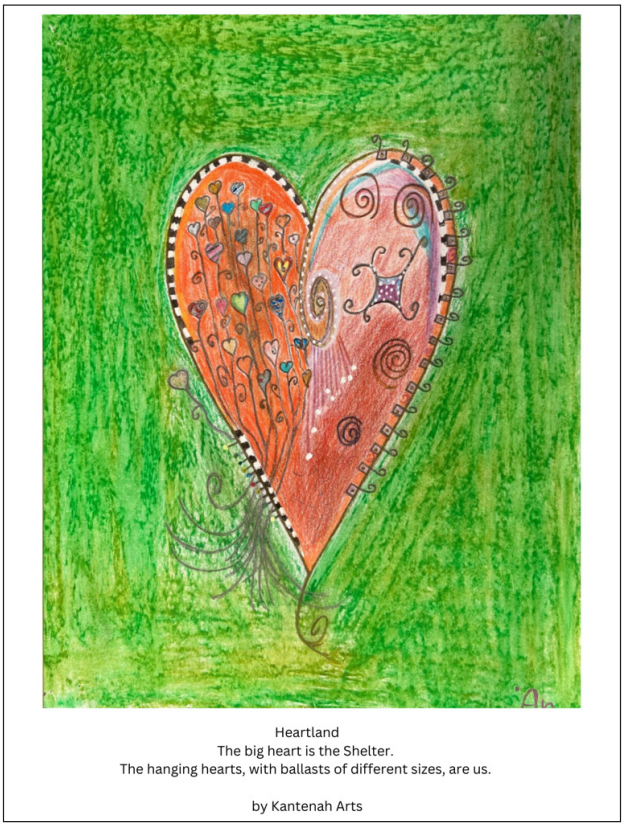
Lynsey's "Nature and Beings" presents an image of a man sitting on a park bench in the fall holding a dog on his lap. An accompanying description reads, "Nature and beings—selfless in their truest form. Care for one another with the simplest touch of love" (see Figure 8). The combined visual and textual elements emphasize the transformative power of love and genuine connections. Symbolically, the park bench—a piece of public infrastructure often subjected to defensive design to deter unhoused people—stands as a poignant reminder of often overlooked human moments and the ongoing importance of common spaces for these kinds of connections.

Figure 8. Zine Submission

Note: Importance of human connection, solidarity, and radical care.

Similarly, Kantenah Arts' moving "Heartland" showcases a large heart and within it, many smaller hearts. Kantenah Arts describes the image as "The big heart is the Shelter. The hanging hearts, with ballasts of different sizes, are us." (see Figure 9). The personification of people and the shelter as hearts, are interpreted to represent the humanization of people who are unhoused, along with the place that provides them shelter, spotlighting radical care and loving kindness. This image is especially important because shelter spaces are often stereotyped as sites of violence.

Figure 9. Zine Submission



Note: Importance of human connection, solidarity, and radical care.

Finally, Trynelle Thomas, in "Break The Cycle," demonstrates radical care in her desire to care for other people who have struggled in the same way she has: "I hope to one day overcome my trauma and hopefully to own property ranch and build rooms in that home to help and house those who have been in the same position I was once in. I wish to create a place for many to call home". Trynelle's submission is a testament to the importance of mutual aid in overcoming adversity.

Discussion

This study invited young women and femmes to illustrate their resistance to housing injustice and the ways they create care through a zine. This collection revealed nuanced themes about their often-invisible experiences. Our discussion outlines key findings and offers recommendations for public health, service delivery, and future research.

The findings deepen our understanding of structural pathways and the maintenance of housing injustice through organized abandonment in several ways. First, our study affirms the

extant literature on the gendered experience of housing injustice by highlighting structural barriers within systems of support and disjointed services that contribute to distress (Gaetz et al., 2016; Milaney et al., 2019; Schwan et al., 2020). Our study illuminates the way in which structural supports fail to meet the gendered needs of young people in terms of financial, food, and housing security, underlining services that are absent in the care of women and femmes. The submissions suggest a universal basic income, livable wage, rent relief and regulation, rapid housing support, and timely and affordable mental healthcare are required for livability.

Second, this study provides evidence of the relationship between organized abandonment, housing injustice, and psychological suffering. The young people in this study are acutely aware of how the systems and structures that should serve them fail them and how it makes them feel. Distress was felt in vicious cycles of housing injustice, stagnated support, food insecurity, and job insecurity. The young people in this study described feeling angry, hopeless, "forgotten" (Adrianna) and like "weeds" (c.j.). Given these sentiments, it is understandable that the study participants experience distress as a direct result of the ways systems and structures have abandoned them. Feeling bad about needing to access the necessities for living implicates the mental health of young people experiencing housing injustice. Within this study, there is a clear link between organized abandonment and psychological suffering. This finding extends mental healthcare beyond individual service delivery to policy interventions.

Third, the zine submissions invite us to complicate and depathologize young people's negotiations of risk. In our analysis, we refuse to intellectualize young people's choices as problematic and instead see young people as autonomous decision makers who ought to be trusted. In the absence of stable and long-term pathways to housing justice, all moves to seek housing security incur some level of risk and are still valid. This finding is commensurate with assumptions of harm reduction, to recognize that risk is involved in *all* behaviours, even those deemed 'safe' and, as such, we should consider what is perceived as 'safer'. Choices to engage in shelter living, tenting, couch surfing, survival sex, or sleeping rough hinged on each individual's perception of risk and represented the ways in which young people interpreted what was safer. Risk is negotiated in context and does not preclude participants of this study from criminalization, exploitation, and victimization.

Fourth, this study helps us to theorize resistance to housing injustice and organized abandonment in ways that center harm reduction principles of pragmatism and autonomy (Ansloos & Gardner, 2023). Through an analysis of their affective, cognitive, and behavioural strategies, young people emerge as active agents in their wellbeing and deeply invested in living good lives. In many cases, acts of resistance were illegal and appeared to violate the norms of systems such as sex work, tenting, and "panhandling". This observation is consistent with Clay (2023) who argues that 'risky' approaches to self-care are often deeply considered and are not expressions of "reckless abandon". Morality politics combined with the developmental period of participants obscures our ability to see that the young people are responding to structural failures and not acting from a place of deviance (Yang & Tuck, 2014). We submit that the illustrated acts of resistance are logical responses to suffering. They are pragmatic and autonomous in the unique contexts experienced by participants.

Finally, the findings of this zine make a strong case for the importance of human connection, solidarity, and radical care in the gendered experience of healing from housing injustice. We see in personal reflections and advice to other young people in shared situations profound empathy and a desire to lift each other's spirits. The submissions evoked a range of emotions and a shared desire for change to promote good living and wellness in youth and emerging adulthood. This zine reminds its readers that healing from conditions of housing injustice as well as its related psychological distress cannot be done in silo—it is a collective struggle. This zine provides strong support for peer-support initiatives and political and policy-based applications of radical care and unconditionality.

This study responds to the calls to action outlined in the National Youth Homelessness Report (Gaetz et al., 2016) and the State of Women's Homelessness Literature Review (Schwan et al., 2020) regarding the urgency of identifying solutions to houselessness among this population. While the voices of young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice have always been present, rarely has space been created within a research context to meaningfully amplify their strength-based stories. In many ways, this zine evokes clear sites of intervention for young people experiencing housing injustice and mental health concerns in ways that are re-politicized and not complex as research often suggests.

Implications

To make these shifts to political and policy uptake, the Ottawa Charter of Public Health (World Health Organization, 1986) offers a useful framework to organize study implications. This model proposes three levels for intervening in health disparities: First, "downstream" interventions seek to improve health disparities at the individual level, typically at service provision, reacting to the immediate needs of an individual or community and providing short-term solutions. Second, "midstream" interventions seek to improve public health disparities at the policy level. Finally, "upstream" interventions seek to address the "causes of the cause" by intervening upon the ecological dimensions of public health disparities (National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, 2024, p. 2). Their value is that they may create long-term and sustainable solutions.

Downstream Recommendations

At the downstream level, the young zine participants demonstrated their valuable knowledge about their experiences and a desire to share their personal insights with youth going through similar experiences and their perspectives on public health and policies. It is therefore recommended that agencies serving young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice create and maintain peer support programs where people with lived and living experience may be paid equitably for their human services. Other downstream interventions include participatory governance strategies where young people may connect with their local governments and influence the policies intended to serve them.

Midstream Recommendations

At the level of midstream intervention, this zine provides validation for taking harm reduction seriously and expanding these services. In the absence of clear pathways to housing stability, participants demonstrated various strategies for coping with and resisting conditions of violence. This zine points toward the value of taking up a harm reduction lens—a care approach emphasizing meeting people where they are, while prioritizing their own goals for well-being—in the care of young people experiencing housing injustice. Although harm reduction has been prominently associated with substance use, it is also applicable to a range of situations described in this study (Ansloos & Gardner, 2023). These could include resourcing encampments, rent relief, social housing, the creation of a living wage, and universal basic income. In the absence of organized care by policy makers, providing harm reduction is not just good sense, but a way to keep young people safe.

Upstream Recommendations

At the level of upstream intervention, this zine demonstrates the ways in which young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice are acutely aware of how organized abandonment resulting from neoliberalism and austerity measures played out in their lives. Policy makers must take seriously the psychological and material impacts of their choices not merely because that is their job in serving their constituents, but because youth housing injustice is a human rights issue. We suggest that governments and policy makers shift from neoliberal housing and social policies to a human rights approach that values unconditionality. Housing must be provided without prior requirements. Barriers to housing like age requirements or maintaining a certain quality of mental health or health status are institutionally violent. Considering this suggestion, policy makers must take heed from people with lived and living experience and interrogate their own *willingness* to actualize change.

Research Recommendations

This zine's creation is at the intersections of qualitative inquiry, activism, art, and policy. In its conception, this study wanted to "do research" differently. The result is a valuable collection of art and knowledge that was returned to the community. The timeliness of this project (unlike academic publishing) contributes to the project's ethic towards justice. This study demonstrates the value of social engagement by centering the wisdom of people with lived and living experience in research that intends to serve them. It also emphasizes the importance of researching in ways that are life affirming and desire driven (Tuck, 2009). Importantly, the zine suggests that future research must investigate the actors, structures, and systems complicit in projects of organized abandonment. The "make work cycle" of research on "homelessness" has spent a great deal of time, fiscal investment, and energy trying to develop interventions and strategies to address housing injustice that ultimately maintain the status quo (Ilyniak, 2022). Instead, it is recommended that researchers channel their efforts to better understand why various levels of government actively ignore evidence that supports practices that would greatly improve the lives of those most vulnerable. To increase accountability and destabilize

power structures within the housing industrial complex, we need research that troubles the scarce political will to make change.

Conclusion

This study created a strengths-based and desire-driven space for young women and femmes to celebrate the ways in which they resist housing injustice and create care. Each zine submission has identified important themes focused on affective and psychological strategies of resistance; strategies and behaviours to ensure material survival; felt knowledge about good living; recognition of organized abandonment and other normed chaos; and the importance of human connection and radical care. The themes pointed towards considerations for therapeutic practice, policy, and research. Importantly, this zine makes clear various sites of intervention for young women and femmes experiencing housing injustice that are not complicated. What remains clear from this artistic research endeavor is that arts-based research that rejects damage-centered narratives has transformative possibilities.

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Exchanges

Exchanges

In Exchanges, we present conversations with scholars and practitioners of community engagement, responses to previously published material, and other reflections on various aspects of community-engaged scholarship meant to provoke further dialogue and discussion. In this section, we invite our readers to offer their thoughts and ideas on the meanings and understandings of engaged scholarship, as practiced in local or faraway communities, diverse cultural settings, and in various disciplinary contexts. We especially welcome community-based scholars' views and opinions on their collaborations with university-based partners in particular and engaged scholarship in general.

In this issue, Wanda Martin, Kerry McPhedran, Shelley Kirychuk, and Lori Bradford, ESJ's editor-in-chief, explores the concept of engaged scholarship within the realm of housing insecurity and the built environment. They shared their insights and experiences regarding the challenges and opportunities inherent in engaged scholarship, particularly in addressing inequities in housing and the built environment.

Engaged Scholarship in the Context of Housing Insecurity and the Built Environment

Lori: We'll dive right in with our first question: How do you define or think about engaged scholarship in the context of housing and the built environment?

Wanda: It's never easy to define. I mean when you live it, when you're in it, it's hard to describe what you do because you think everybody does this, which is not true. But in the built environment, I mean I think being an engaged scholar means to be listening and to be flexible and to be nimble in response to what you're hearing. It requires adaptability, flexibility, and responsiveness to community needs. It involves listening and collaborating with rights- and stakeholders to address housing challenges.

Kerry: From an engineering perspective, we tend to do a lot of research and work on *things* rather than *with people*. And so another way of thinking about it that we're working with people and outcomes that you have should be beneficial to everybody. I found working with the built environment team, and doing engaged scholarship made me not just worry about research outcomes that are good for the general population but instead come up with research outcomes that are beneficial directly for the people we're working with. That also becomes beneficial for us because we get more personal feedback on our work.

Lori: So, we've heard about adaptability, flexibility, this idea that isn't this what everybody does, and the benefit of personal feedback on our work, and we also think about who you're benefiting and how as well as we're being reciprocal. Do you have more to add to that?

Shelley: From partners, I've learned that engaged scholarship in housing focuses on reconciliACTION—moving research beyond academia to drive tangible actions and outcomes in communities.

Lori: Tell us more about that.

Shelley: Well, I think often research is conducted with and occasionally on rather than alongside. And then some actions come from the research that have an impact, more for an academic career, but not as much for communities. And so I think a lot of the work that's come out of the built environment group has instead had action items with it, which then is seen as impactful and they call it reconciliACTION. So not just doing the research, but it's about there being reconciliation in the actions. So, a colleague I work with, he calls it reconciliACTION. It's not just research, it's putting things into action. By that I mean sharing in the interpretation, meeting with community members regularly, developing the policy briefs and helping them develop the policy briefs, and being alongside them when they're asking for change related to the research.

Lori: Thanks Shelly, and you've already jumped into question number two about sharing your experiences as an engaged scholar. I know you've done a number of these policy briefs and they've had impact for indoor air quality in particular. Can you tell us more about your experiences engaging with non-university colleagues on issues around housing equality and the built environment?

Shelley: Well, I think we've all been part of it maybe in different settings, but I think I'm going back to Dr. Merle Massie's TEDtalk that everybody is a researcher and at least from my eyes, I am one type of researcher, I'm an academic researcher, but the members in the community that are engaged in the research that we're doing and the funding that we're getting, they are community researchers, and that's just a different term for the same thing. We are all researchers engaged in the same vision and mission and I think that's what I see as engaged scholarship from the work that we're doing. Engaging with community members as equal partners in research fosters mutual learning and impactful outcomes. It emphasizes the role of community researchers alongside academic scholars.

Kerry: My experiences in engineering often involve practical, hands-on solutions to housing and infrastructure challenges. Engaging with communities directly informs research directions and fosters meaningful collaboration. We do talk about equity and trying to get new housing, but a lot of the barriers that I deal with, with consulting and government as well is actually in keeping the housing that you have up to par. The infrastructure of

the power and water treatment plants and wastewater treatment and those types of things need work. So, a lot that I deal with in communities is getting support for the feet-on-the-ground, and fixing things rather than just the research aspects of it. Figuring out what needs to be fixed when is also research. So I always try and fit in the more practical, hands-on type of research and results. I go into the community with the curiosity of what can we do to help you first? And then I try and come up with kind of research after-the-fact rather than as part of it and talk with people. And I think that's a problem historically as researchers come in and say you want to do this research, it's for the better good. But it is kind of… hmm, it's for us, right? In the end, it's going to benefit us first, but if we think about how can we help solve the housing problems first, and the research is a side mission, that's more agreeable to me? My team's research is more to develop how we build houses, how we build them onsite, how we train people to do the maintenance, the wastewater treatment and how do we get them paid equitably. So it's such not a simple classical engineering problem to solve, but a complex human problem in a research context. A wicked problem. I'll use that term and embrace the complexity of it. When you work with people in a community, you encounter a level of complexity that differs vastly from the straightforward processes observed in a lab. While some of my colleagues in the lab simply add a different chemical to water and publish it, those situations rarely reflect real-world scenarios that I see. Dealing with complexity means being engaged with those people that the problem affects directly. It means understanding the nuances of human interaction and the dynamic nature of community dynamics. This understanding comes through experience and involves reciprocity.

Wanda: It's interesting to hear everybody's views, particularly Kerry's. I don't engage in conversation with you enough to understand the engaged engineering perspective. It's interesting to hear that because I mean Shelly and I are in the sort of medical and nursing world, so it's good to hear from across campus. When I consider my work, I think the term equity is a challenge. If we're going to talk about equity and what that means and what context includes equity versus equality, we have an agenda, there's a research agenda. But we recognize that we work with and for people who have other competing demands, and the academic stuff is not on high in their to-do list. So, as I wait and as I wait and as I try to contact and engage, I am wary of our funding deadlines, but also of respecting relationships. As a person who's newer into the relationship-building process, I sit here going, what more can I do? And I can't really do anything without somebody who has stronger relationships to start to move the dial because I can't just barge in and say, I need this done because I have a grant that has this timeline and I need to be able to go do this now because of things in my world. So the experience of waiting and of accepting that change for me is more of the struggle, and not just in terms of what's going on in reserve, and trying to connect with the industry folks who said that they were going to be supporting the research and recognizing they don't have the capacity either right now. So backing up and learning how to be patient with that is for me, an essential part of engaged scholarship.

Lori: Yeah, I can empathize with that waiting piece. Sometimes people are waiting on me and I'm waiting on community members to get back to me about something. There's a fine dance there to try to maintain all those relationships that I think a lot of people who don't regularly do engaged scholarship, or engaged research understand. Right now there are elections going on in some of the communities I work with and I can't be communicating with the people that I normally do. We normally communicate daily with texts, emails, or for signatures that need to happen on forms and applications. But right now we can't do that. And I feel a huge sense of responsibility to do that dance very well as an engaged scholar.

Lori: Lastly, what do you believe can be done to enhance engaged scholarship in addressing housing insecurity and the built environment?

Kerry: So yeah, what can we do better? That's a tough one. See, I tried to better balance our research with the actual needs and communities. And it is a challenge when you do have those turnovers with Band leadership too… reconnecting with them. And what we're trying to do with the new compendium is have the information available and have a bedrock thing where we could always go to and as a starting point with people, the same as new students. You got new students coming in, you take them to their new office space, give them a new laptop… it's a routine. And they want to work with Indigenous and partnering communities in this area and they don't know where to start. And I know where I started, but I don't know how to explain where I started or how to do it, right? I'm trying to do that introspection, of "this is how I do things", but if I tried to teach a course in engineering on how to do engagement, I don't know what that looks like right now. And so I've been trying to work on that. I think when we go a community, people don't know what our research looks like. They just think it's something in Ivory Tower. That's not what I do, but I'm not very good at describing my journey yet. Sometimes I send my students off to meetings for me, and I think that's good so they can learn too, but in the end, I'm missing out a lot of the experiences myself. So just going out there, being involved, and bumping into people is where it starts. It's not the meeting you're going to, it's the conversations you have outside of it. It's kind of cliche to say that, but that's where almost every one of my projects has started, not because of the meeting, but because of the conversations afterward. So as far as housing security and the built environment, I think a lot of it is conversations within this team. In engineering, I want to really get more people engaged in knowing what they can do. There's lots of research areas, there's lots of important work that you do in the end. But, publications aren't going to be the end-all and be-all because we're not going to get a lot of publications out in this type of work, but it's still rewarding in and of itself. We need to better balance academic research with community needs and experiences in our College. Creating accessible resources and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, to me, are key to solving housing challenges.

Shelley: Kerry brings up a very good point and I think what's so unique and important about the group that's working together right now in this area is that it's interdisciplinary and

there's so much strength in doing interdisciplinary work. It's the conversations and the information that's transferred between individuals during these meetings and between disciplines. It just takes everything so much further and I think just broadens the impact. Engaged scholarship should prioritize spaces for interdisciplinarity, accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that the research outcomes are relevant and beneficial to communities and includes ACTION!

Wanda: I think the thing that could be improved though, there's something that needs to be done in terms of the longevity, who's got the institutional memory, what has been produced and where is it sitting? And this has already been done and we've already gone through this. And if researchers go into a space and think that they're doing something novel somebody will surely sit around the table and say, we talked about this 15 years ago. So how do we make things produce something that is going to stick on the wall and sort of be a memory for someone to refer back to and say, we should look at that because here is an example of exactly what you're talking about and it's been sitting there for a number of years and maybe we need, how do we better build on what we've already done versus reinventing the wheel? Academic institutions should recognize the time and effort required for community-engaged research. Acknowledging the value of this work and supporting interdisciplinary collaboration will drive meaningful change in addressing housing insecurity.

Additional Insights: Balancing Academic Goals with Community Priorities

Lori: Thank you all for sharing so much with me today. I think the Engaged Scholar Journal has a role to play in this space in that we are going on 10 years, our 10th anniversary is next year. And I look back at some of the pieces that were published in 2015 and 2016 and think, wow, I wish I had read this sooner because it would inform what I'm doing right now, or I could have avoided a mistake had I learned lessons from that. So I think maybe one of the things that might help with that memory piece in the engaged scholar community is having journals like the Engaged Scholar Journal and Gateways and others that are out there of a higher profile and broadcast more and out there in social media and really putting us out there as the experts in this, but also having engaged scholarship and community engagement offices on campuses expanded and properly resourced. Pre-COVID, there was a big cutback to engage scholarship across Canada, but now we're recognizing the need for that institutional memory. I think about how many hours we could have saved on things like ethics applications had we known what Engaged Scholars went through a decade ago and how they got through things. So as we're winding up, I want to open it up for any last thoughts.

Shelley: Well, I do think that this team specifically does have that focus on producing things that are usable and memorable and brief. And that's something that we all need to learn to continue to try to strive for and remember how to do reconciliACTION, and be

serendipitous – take the opportunities presented to be interdisciplinary, be action-oriented, be there for communities.

Kerry: Yeah, I think we're going in a good direction. I'm still thinking of doing a micro credential three course kind of thing, and I'm sure I'm going to lean on this group pretty heavily for that. Especially for my profession, having that type of training where people go and get immersed in this kind of work, it also gives us a good reason to put some of our experience right in the course to teach the next generations. You have to do that and that's going to be the big part of that. And Shelly, I think it's serendipitous. That's a good way of saying that. I like that word rather than accidental. It's a nice word to say. Yeah, things work out, when we work together.

Shelley: It's true. I was just going to add that Wanda was using the word short or brief, but I actually think the right word is accessible. And that's the other part of engaged scholarship is that what we're returning to the communities or what we're sharing with the communities is accessible to them. And that means it's written alongside or with community members that it's what they would see as being useful in their community or might resonate with their community. So a graphic design or whatever it is that the community sees would help get the message across. But when they're part of the conversations all the way along, they're understanding the messaging, they can support the production of the message and get it back to community not as an end report, but as a continuous process of engagement.

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Book Reviews

The Tenant Class by Ricardo Tranjan. Between the Lines, 2023. 148pp. ISBN-10-1771136227

As a legal academic who collaborates with housing rights and tenants' rights organizations, I am always looking for new books that address housing systems and the struggles that tenants face in securing places to call home. This is why I was very happy to pick up a copy of T*he Tenant Class* (Between the Lines Press, 2023) by Ricardo Tranjan. This book is a short yet powerful contribution to the literature on housing in Canada. It will be of great interest to anyone seeking a highly readable and forceful critique of Canada's inequitable housing markets as well as a prescription for an alternate approach.Tranjan is an analyst for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, an organization that seeks to bring progressive research and analysis into Canadian policy debates. He brings his own positionality and experiences into his book. As a child growing up in the context of the tumultuous political struggles of 1980s Brazil, he observed first-hand the ways that those with power work to construct narratives that naturalize the status quo. He also witnessed how social movements and organizing are fundamental prerequisites for real changes to inequitable conditions.

Tranjan argues that the ubiquitous language of "crisis" deployed in debates about housing obscures the real problems and power relations within Canada's housing markets. This is because the language of "crisis" suggests a state of temporary emergency that could be fixed by technical solutions. This distracts people from paying attention to the ways the system itself is designed to entrench fundamental inequality between landlords and tenants. Tranjan points out that for most landlords, real estate investment firms, and property developers, there is, in fact, no crisis. Rather, these landlords operate within a "stable and lucrative business environment" that is designed as a "permanent state of affairs". This market actively tolerates and even encourages exploitative practices and allows many landlords to amass wealth while creating ongoing precarity for tenants. Thus, while dominant discourses frame high rents and housing insecurity as the result of a glitch in the system that could be fixed with the right technical solutions, Tranjan disagrees. Instead, he argues, it will take organizing and "political power to move the needle."

The book is divided into six short chapters. Following an introductory chapter that outlines the core arguments of the book, chapters one and two advance the argument that tenants comprise a social class that is subject to economic exploitation by landlords. Tranjan points out that tenants, as a group, earn less income and are more likely to work in precarious and low-paying jobs than homeowners. He also points out that for increasing numbers of tenants, and historically for many groups, being a tenant is not simply a "phase" on the road to becoming a homeowner. Meanwhile, landlords extract ever greater shares of tenant income, and rent increases have far outpaced increases in tenant wages and income over time. This part of the book opens some key insights, including a critique of the ways that "affordability' discourses are consistently framed in mainstream media as a problem of tenants not having enough money to pay rent. Rather, Tranjan argues, the questions should be (1) Why are landlords charging such high rents, and (2) Why do governments allow this to continue?

Chapter three is entitled "But what about the landlords?" This chapter directly confronts and deconstructs common arguments about landlords. Tranjan notes that media and policy

makers often portray landlords as a sympathetic group, commonly deploying the trope of the "mom and pop" operation who are themselves struggling to get by. This narrative cultivates sympathy and suggests that landlords and tenant have commensurate interests to balance out. While Tranjan is clear that some landlords in Canada certainly fit the struggling "mom and pop" image, most landlords do not in any way fit this description. Rather, most private landlords are wealthy families, businesses, large corporations, and financial investors. They are in the business of building equity, making profits, and, in many cases, "squeezing" as much money as they can from their properties. Tranjan forcefully makes the case in this chapter that large corporate landlords benefit substantially from mainstream depictions of landlords as sympathetic "mom and pop" operations. This narrative conceals the massive power disparities that exist in most landlord-tenant relationships in Canada, depoliticizes discussions about landlords and tenants, and thereby helps sustain the status quo.

In chapters four and five, Tranjan turns to historical and contemporary stories of tenant organizing in Canada. He concisely summarizes some key examples of tenant organizing, noting that knowledge about the history of tenant struggles helps us understand the dynamics of the longstanding inequities in our housing markets and adds new insights into current policy discussions. These chapters constitute a valuable compendium of examples of tenant organizing in Canada.

Finally, chapter 6 returns to the book's central arguments and sets out some prescriptions for change. According to Tranjan, the solutions to the current problems with housing are not technical, but political, and require challenging the entrenched interests of those who benefit from the current system. We must, Tranjan writes, work to move as much housing as possible out of private markets; tightly regulate market provision of rental housing, and "organize tenants to ensure quality and access." These solutions require the building of political power, the rejection of status quo narratives, and the commitment to focussing on "stretching the realm of the possible".

Tranjan's focus on the power dynamics and political underpinnings of the current system and the ways that it benefits landlords is a valuable insight for tenant advocates, as is his clear demonstration of how the way we frame issues dictates the types of solutions we generate. Despite its short length, the book is filled with helpful statistics and information about landlords, tenants, and housing, and, as mentioned above, compiles important and often-neglected histories of tenant organizing in Canada. The book is clear, passionate, and constructively polemical.

However, perhaps because of its pocket-sized length and practical focus, there are some gaps in the book. Notably, the book does not really situate itself in conversation with the relevant literature. Absent, for example, is reference to David Madden and Peter Marcuse's 2016 book, *In Defence of Housing: The Politics of Crisis*, which makes some very similar arguments. For example, Madden and Marcuse write in their book: the "housing crisis is not a result of the system breaking down but of the system working as it is intended." (p.10). Likewise, Tranjan does not mention the work of scholars like Matthew Desmond who have written extensively about exploitation in landlord-tenant relationships. The book also says very little about international examples of jurisdictions that have adopted some of the types of

proposals and approaches it argues for. I also wondered why there was not more emphasis on the role that co-operative housing might play in building housing security. Finally, the book also says very little about the human right to housing. This is a notable omission given that Canada recognized housing as a human right in its *National Housing Strategy Act* because of grassroots pressure and organizing, and there is significant ongoing energy and organizing in Canada and internationally centred on the human right to housing. However, these omissions do not significantly detract from the value of the book. Indeed, the book's brevity and clarity mean that it will be more accessible and useful busy advocates and organizers in their work to create equitable and just housing for all.

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Resisting Eviction: Domicide and the Financialization of Rental Housing by Andrew Crosby. Fernwood Publishing Co. Ltd., 2023. 196 pp. ISBN: 9781773636375

My interest in tenant housing rights issues in Canada, especially as it relates to tenant eviction and displacement, prompted me to pick up this boldly written and insightful book by Andrew Crosby. At the School of Planning, University of Waterloo, Crosby serves as a postdoctoral researcher with interest in housing-related matters. Crosby powerfully captures, in an investigative manner, the unwholesome practices that propelled the demolition of rental units in Heron Gate neighbourhood, Ottawa, and the consequent eviction and displacement of its close- knit renters. The book has ten chapters, and to gradually ease readers into the issues to be discussed, Crosby, in chapter one, adopts a story-telling approach. He starts off by narrating his housing experiences during his teenage years, describing what affordable living was like and how that compares to the Heron Gate and Heatherington neighbourhoods as it relates to the general "make-up of the neighbourhood" and the "sense of community" it offered.

Using his mother's experiences to represent a fraction of the experiences of most renters across the rental market in Canada, Crosby lays bare the adverse impacts of financialization of housing on affordability and liveability of rental units in Canada. He describes his mother's rental experiences in Canada and how the unscrupulous practices of most financialized corporate landlords threw renters like her into an almost unending cycle and quest to rent cheaper units, even when such is at the detriment of their living conditions and physical security. He explains how this left in his mother an undying desire for adequate living which was met only through homeownership. However, Crosby notes that continued reliance on homeownership invariably contributes towards what he categorizes as "manufactured housing crises" as it promotes the gentrification of low-income neighbourhoods by removing affordable housing options and substituting them with high-end unaffordable rental units.

To better support these claims, in chapter two, Crosby engages with the history of colonial settlement to show how the first contact of European settlers with the Indigenous People of unceded Algonquin territory translated into unauthorized appropriation and questionable occupation of their native homelands which were subsequently transformed into rental communities like the contemporary Heron Gate neighbourhood under urban development schemes that are hinged on the displacement of "undesired" and "non-preferred" Indigenous and racialized populations.

Chapter three challenges the objectivity of liveability as the foundational rationale behind urbanism. Crosby appears to be highly skeptical about the generality of the discourse on liveability. He believes this to be a municipality and white agenda towards displacing Indigenous and racialized people for the purpose of creating liveable whitespaces as urban cities for settler societies. He uses the example of Heron Gate to demonstrate this. He notes that settler-induced gentrification hides under the guise of revamping such 'unliveable' areas to demolish and erase traces of unwanted occupants of these areas—Indigenous and migrant populations—so as to reproduce liveable urban spaces for white settlers only. Chapter four explains the research methodology adopted. Crosby utilizes a qualitative research method

by way of "political activist ethnography" that involves data collection and analysis through interviews, participant observation, and textual research.

Chapter five traces the rationale behind the eviction and demolition practices in Heron Gate to a rigged social system that Crosby believes is embedded with racially-motivated economic inequity and stigma. The chapter carefully navigates the lived experiences of some residents of the Heron Gate neighbourhood and concludes that the eviction trend in such low-income areas is hinged on a predatory approach whereby financialized corporate landlords go after the vulnerable renters in these areas on the notion that they are less likely to challenge their evictions. Crosby points out that these evictions are falsely justified with claims of landlords wanting to upgrade the units and make them more liveable. He exposes this flawed justification for eviction and displacement of tenants and links the reason to landlords' desire for these areas to be cleansed. Crosby further notes that these landlords aim to achieve this by frustrating renters out of their units through purposeful maintenance neglect.

Chapter six discusses the strategies adopted by financialized landlords to foster the eviction, displacement, and replacement of 'undesirable' tenants with tenants that have the ability to pay rent at market rates. Chapter seven narrows in on the public relations efforts used to play down the precarious reality of the housing situation of most tenants after the first phase of demolition of Heron Gate neighbourhood. Crosby implicates the regulatory system in Ontario as an agent and facilitator of gentrified evictions and displacements. He then ascribes some racial and traumatic undertones to this demolition. Chapter eight explains how tenants mobilized to resist the second phase of demolition of Heron Gate, showing how this resistance by tenants' coalition was met with ugly repressive tactics that sought to suppress agitated tenants through intimidation in a bid to protect the landlord's brand.

Chapter nine explains how the involvement of Heron Gate tenants as part of the redevelopment design process lacks transparency of purpose and is a mere smokescreen used by the financialized landlord as a public relations strategy to make its demolition process appear to be driven by community wellbeing. Crosby claims that the relationship between property developers and some municipal officials in Ottawa is mutually beneficial and ultimately facilitates gentrification and displacement of undesired tenants. Chapter ten sets out an overview of the human rights lawsuit initiated by former tenants of Heron Gate neighbourhood. Crosby relishes the positive impacts the case could have on the future of housing rights in Canada.

This book is a must read for researchers interested in uncovering, from the lived experiences of evictees, the hidden reasons for evictions. However, probably because of its focus on a particular neighbourhood in Ottawa, I should note that there is one significant lacuna in the book. I observed that Crosby did not engage with discussions on the hosting of Mega Sporting Events in Ontario and how that adversely contributes to the trend of financialization of rental housing in Toronto and Ottawa. For instance, with regards to the 2026 FIFA World Cup scheduled to be held in the city of Toronto, there is concern that financialized landlords in Toronto may exploit the precarious housing situation by engaging in 'no-fault' eviction of tenants so as to raise their rent and make profit based on the anticipated high demand that would be placed on the housing market by soccer fans and spectators coming into the host city in 2026.

Should such happen, it would occasion evictions, displacements, and homelessness, not just in the city of Toronto, but also in nearby cities like Ottawa. Thus, out of curiosity to learn more about this, I was hopeful the book would discuss it or make references to it. However, it did not but this still does not take away from the value of the book; just that discussing it would have further strengthened Crosby's claims on the adverse effects of financialization of rental housing.

Reviewed by

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About the Artist and Artwork

"Vancouver Affordable Housing" by Gary Nay (2019)

About Gary Nay

My early art ambitions were sidetracked by a 30-year career as a stockbroker. Now as a full-time artist, I use an iPad as my canvas and a stylus as my brush to create digital images that become original acrylic on canvas paintings as well as limited edition prints and art cards.

I am particularly inspired by the urban environment around me and the many great artists before me. I like to take familiar scenes and twist them around to make them my own. They generally begin as simple landscapes. But, along the way, as details are added and deleted, they

become very personal expressions of my connection to the scene. They are deceptively simple yet curiously engaging. The finished paintings are instantly recognizable, but subtly offer a quiet, thought-provoking edge. The devil is in the details!

I love the digital medium because it allows for an abundance of experimentation, spontaneity and whimsicality. I also love that I can create affordable limited edition prints from these paintings, which makes it possible for more people to own and enjoy local, original art. This is important to me and adds to my creative process.

I am an award-winning member of the Federation of Canadian Artists, a partner in Vancouver's longest running cooperative gallery – ARTS OFF MAIN, and I actively promote the local artistic community through various organizations including serving as a board member of Artists in Our Midst and the West of Main Art Walk.

Visit my website at www.GNAYart.com, or email me at gnayart@gmail.com.

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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- to promote and support reciprocal and meaningful co-creation of knowledge among scholars, educators, professionals and community leaders, in Canada and worldwide
- to inspire and promote productive dialogue between practice and theory of engaged scholarship
- to critically reflect on engaged scholarship, research, and pedagogy pursued by various university and community partners, working locally, nationally and internationally, across various academic disciplines and areas of application
- to serve as a forum of constructive debate on the meanings and applications of engaged scholarship among partners and communities

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We welcome contributions from community and academic partners, educators, researchers and scholars who pursue their work in collaboration with various communities in Canada and the world. For submission guidelines visit http://esj.usask.ca/index.php/esj/information/authors.

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Cover Art: "Vancouver Affordable Housing" by Gary Nay (2019) is an original iPad painting created using the ArtRage app (www.artrage.com). Subsequent to creating the iPad image, the artist painted a 18"x24" acrylic on canvas, also created in 2019.
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