

**Podcast as Policy Communicator:
How Lived Experiences of Extreme Heat Events Inform Local Policy
Conversations**

By

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We acknowledge and respect the Lək'wəḡən (Songhees and X^wsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək'wəḡən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Supervisory Committee

Podcast as Policy Communicator:

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Abstract

This study explored how the sharing of priority populations lived experiences of the 2021 heat dome in the Capital Regional District (CRD) may serve as a tool for climate change communication. It further explored how podcasting can be used as a communication tool for priority populations to share their lived experiences of the heat dome and contribute to policy listening. Priority populations, or those affected by extreme heat events, or EHEs, includes, but is not limited to, socially isolated seniors, those with perinatal lived experience, such as pregnant or nursing people, Indigenous people, people who live in a rural location, those who take medication that may make them sensitive to extreme heat and newcomers to Canada. This project built upon research that showed how these populations disproportionately experience the effects of climate change. This thesis argued that to make more equitable policy outcomes and solutions, integration of the perspectives and voices of priority populations into policy solutions and outcomes is essential. When not done, policies may be made that inadvertently oppress those they wish to serve. Seven interview participants from diverse priority populations shared their stories in a physical place of their choosing. These were recorded with the subsequent goal of producing a podcast of which the researcher is the lead producer to disseminate these interviews for wider reach, and to communicate with local policymakers and decision makers. Research findings indicated that policy and decision-makers must tailor communication efforts to the needs and perspectives of members of priority populations, and further, a sincere and honest effort is critical to build community between those who may be more privileged and those disproportionately affected by climate change to create more equitable policy outcomes.

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List of Abbreviations

The heat dome	2021 British Columbia Extreme Heat Event
B.C. (BC)	British Columbia
CBPR	Community-Based Participatory Research
CRD	Capital Regional District
EHE(s)	Extreme heat emergencies
<i>A Hot Topic</i>	<i>A Hot Topic - Addressing Heat Vulnerability to Extreme Heat Exposure in the Capital Regional District (CRD)</i>
IBPA	Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis
PAR	Participatory Action Research
VNFC	Victoria Native Friendship Centre

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Dedication

I dedicate this project to the 619 who passed during the heat dome that occurred from June 25 to July 1, 2021, those that have since passed from subsequent extreme heat events, and to all those who have suffered disproportionately. With this research, my hope was to integrate the voices of those who are disproportionately impacted by climate change into policy and to create more equitable policy solutions, and to bring light and understanding to the importance of telling, and listening, to others' lived experiences.

Chapter 1: Introduction

From July 25 to July 1, 2021, British Columbia (B.C.) experienced Canada's most deadly extreme heat event (EHE), hereon referred to as the heat dome, causing a record 619 deaths (BC Coroners' Service, 2022). EHEs, or "extreme heat emergenc[ies]," are "when daytime and nighttime temperatures get hotter every day and are well above seasonal norms" (Government of British Columbia, n.d.). This thesis project explored the creation and development of a publicly available podcast designed to amplify the voices of priority populations who disproportionately experienced adverse effects of the heat dome (Government of Canada, 2022). Priority populations, or those affected by EHEs includes, but is not limited to, socially isolated seniors, those with perinatal lived experience, such as pregnant or nursing people, Indigenous people, newcomers to Canada, and those living rurally (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This project built off of previous research, *A Hot Topic - Addressing Heat Vulnerability to Extreme Heat Exposure in the Capital Regional District (CRD)*, hereon referred to as *A Hot Topic*, conducted by a research team from the University of Victoria and the CRD Community Health Network focused on gathering data of priority populations' lived experiences of the heat dome (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). To ensure this existing research drove appropriate equity-informed policy creation (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019; Hoogeveen et al., 2021), *A Hot Topic's* research team entered the next phase of the project by amplifying the voices of those most impacted by extreme heat through the creation and development of a podcast to explore how priority populations' lived experiences can serve as a climate change communication tool. Current literature addresses the importance of implementation, but further implementation is needed by community service providers and municipal, provincial, and federal governments.

Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an outline of my thesis including the problem statement and a definition of the issue, the significance of this study, the goals and scope of this thesis and the research questions this study seeks to answer, and the conceptual framework framing this research. Then, there will be a preliminary presentation of my positionality statement and a section on the importance of this study in the research world. This presentation is preliminary because my positionality and how it relates to this study will be discussed in the research findings and discussion chapter.

Problem Statement and Issue Definition

This novel research explored how podcasting may serve as a tool for transformative social change for priority populations that are disproportionately affected by EHEs and how the amplification of the voices of these priority populations may serve as a climate change communication tool. As mentioned above, priority populations, or those affected by EHEs includes, but is not limited to, socially isolated seniors, those with perinatal lived experience, such as pregnant or nursing people, and newcomers to Canada (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This project will also include a community service provider of unhoused or precariously housed individuals, those who take medication that makes them sensitive to extreme heat and those living in rural locations within the CRD. EHEs in the CRD are becoming more frequent and are impacting priority populations and the local environment. As demonstrated by the heat dome, preparation is a key part of making informed decisions on how to adequately support priority populations that are disproportionately impacted by these events.

Climate change has inequitable effects, and *A Hot Topic* sought to address this by conducting a survey and sharing circles with those adversely affected by EHEs. Findings indicated that there were social, political, infrastructural, and economic barriers that negatively impacted these populations (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). The progress made in this research was initiated by prioritizing the lived experiences of those most adversely affected by EHEs, and *this* project seeks to further amplify these voices by way of a podcast. This project aimed to highlight the voices of those most affected by EHEs through a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to explore how lived experience storytelling or expression may serve as a tool for climate change communication. A CBPR approach “encourages engagement and full participation of community partners in every aspect of the research process from question identification to analysis and dissemination” (Hacker, 2013, p. 2). Further, “the goal of CBPR is to create an effective translational process that will increase bidirectional connections between academics and the communities that they study” (Hacker, 2013, p. 2). CBPR is an approach that is based in social justice and empowerment whereby those beneficiaries of research are in the research process itself (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). In the context of this research, the interview participants (Appendix I) were directly involved in the research design and process thereby amplifying and prioritizing their voices in the outcomes of the research.

Significance of Study

Until this project, current research had yet to explore how the use of podcasting may serve as a tool for transformative social change for priority populations that are disproportionately affected by EHEs. Further, it has been yet to be expanded upon how an exploration of how the amplification of the voices of these priority populations through the production of a podcast may serve as a climate change communication tool in policy listening.

This study contributed to the growing discourse on the role of academic podcasting and explored how the participatory action research, or PAR, approach of lived experience as expertise may contribute to more equitable policy outcomes and solutions. This study combined academic podcasting, PAR, IBPA, and phenomenology and explored how their interactions may contribute to new iterations of knowledge legitimization and sharing in the academic and public spheres.

This research was an exploratory study of how the amplification of priority populations' lived experiences may break down barriers between academia and society and empower the people behind these voices. The goal of this research was to broaden the accessibility of an academic analysis, such as a thesis, and make the information more palatable to those without academic backgrounds by way of the creation, production and dissemination of a podcast. The hope through this project was to empower priority populations to be given the opportunity to express their lived experiences thereby increasing the exposure of priority populations' stories in a society in which these voices may be underrepresented in mainstream media (Famighetti & Lewis, 2016).

Thesis Goals, Scope, and Research Questions

Project Purpose

As noted above, the goal of this study was to explore how providing an audio recording platform, such as a podcast, to priority populations and those affected by EHEs can serve as a tool of climate change communication for policy listening. It specifically considered responses within podcast interviews, the narrative arc that forms as a result of these interviews, and my experience as the interviewer. Three central objectives arose from these goals:

1. Analyze current literature on podcasting as an effective means for policy communication and identify how providing a platform for people's lived experiences served as a means to be a transformative space and empower participants and be used as a climate change communication tool.
2. Explore the central themes that resulted from these recorded interviews and conduct a phenomenological analysis on the key themes that emerge from the lived experiences of people interviewed and what the most pressing needs for individuals who are disproportionately affected by EHEs are (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011; O'Leary, 2021).
3. Identify how my experience as researcher, recruiter, interviewer, and narrator of the podcast shapes the research process and how my positionality as a white, cis-gender, and educated woman impacts its development and final product.

Purpose and Scope

Purpose

The goal of this study was to identify how the heat dome disproportionately affected priority or affected populations. It explored how this information may serve as a climate change communication tool (Levac & Wiebe, 2020). This also is in alignment with the discussed approach in *A Hot Topic's* research informed by equity and planetary health with an intersectionality-based policy approach (IBPA), design justice lens and participatory action research (PAR) lens (Wiebe & Mah, 2023; Costanza-Chock, 2020). Further, a planetary health lens in which human and natural systems are interconnected meaning that human society only flourishes as much as the natural environment and that this lens is integral to intersectional policy evaluation methods and practices (Brousselle et al., 2022). This study explored how

amplifying the voices of priority populations may serve as a tool of climate change communication and may empower priority populations.

Scope

In this study, I conducted free-form interviews with seven members of the community who identify with one or more of the identities of the proposed priority populations. This included members of priority populations, such as isolated seniors, those with perinatal lived experience, newcomers to Canada, community service providers for unhoused or precariously housed individuals, those who were on medications that make them sensitive to extreme heat, Indigenous community members, and those who live in a rural location. They were recruited within *A Hot Topic's* existing community. The population studied was not representative of the general population but was diverse in age and each are members of each priority population listed above that were living in the CRD during the heat dome. Those who did not suffer during the heat dome were not recruited for participation.

Research Question

The main question that this research answered is: how can the telling and sharing of priority populations' lived experiences of the heat dome be used as a climate change communication tool?

Sub-question

- 1) How can podcasting be used as a communication tool for priority populations to share their lived experiences of the heat dome and contribute to policy listening?

Conceptual Framework

An intersectional lens informs this study. These themes above will be analyzed and reviewed through the lens of the Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA) (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019; Hoogeveen et al., 2021). As noted above, intersectionality is defined as “the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities” (Collins, 2015, p. 2). IBPA uses intersectionality as its lens and, is “as a policy tool is to better illuminate how policy constructs individuals’ and groups’ relative power and privileges vis-à-vis their socio-economic-political status, health and well-being” (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 134). IBPA serves as a means to capture the “different dimensions of policy contexts including history, politics, everyday lived experiences, diverse knowledges and intersecting social locations” which can then “generate transformative insights, knowledge, policy solutions and actions that cannot be gleaned from other equity-focused policy frameworks” (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 135). Without the consideration of IBPA, policies and recommendations have the potential to inadvertently harm and suppress those already impacted by these intersections of their identity and lived experience (Ryder, 2018; Versey, 2021; Walker et al., 2021; Amorim-Maia, 2022; Lotfata & Munenzon, 2022). Further, IBPA drives equity for those communities that are “systematically marginalized [that] have typically contributed the least to climate change but are disproportionately negatively impacted by climate-related events, such as wildfires, extreme heat, flooding and extreme weather” (Hoogeveen et al., 2021, p. 6). IBPA provides a conceptual framework based on an equity-informed approach to the design, production and analysis of the interviews.

The interactions of intersectionality, power and democracy were used to inform this study. This includes the use of a participatory action research, or PAR, lens. As this study sought to amplify, empower and provide agency to priority populations, it is inherently “concern[ed] with power and democracy and their interactions” (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Further, PAR considers “gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities and other social factors” and intersectionality considers the confluence and interactions between these windows of identity (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Patricia Hill Collins argues that placing intersectionality and participatory democracy in dialogue aligns with both of their goals by “aspir[ing] to imagine new social relations of equality, fairness, inclusion and social justice” and this informs the conceptual framework of this study and its objectives (2019, p. 187).

Due to the nature of this study being conceived through the lens of IBPA, PAR and a phenomenological approach, it is interpretive in nature. Phenomenology argues that phenomena are constructed within the subjective experiences of individuals’ lived experiences (O’Leary, 2021). One’s “perception, rather than socio-historic context or even the supposed ‘reality’ of an object, is the focus of investigation” (O’Leary, 2021, p. 353). Interpretive, phenomenological research is a research paradigm that assumes that social reality is not subjective or objective, but that people’s lived experiences shape these realities (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011). Interpretive, phenomenological research is “focus[ed] on meaning-making and the production of contextual knowledge” of social communities and their iterations of their lived experiences (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011, p. 38). The context for this study is the telling of the lived experiences of priority populations of the heat dome in B.C.

Positionality Statement

My Role

In this research, I recruited, designed, hosted and interviewed seven participants to inform the production of a podcast. The recruitment and design were done in collaboration with Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe and Kirsten Mah. Dr. Wiebe was the supervisor of this thesis, and Assistant Professor and Graduate Advisor at the University of Victoria (UVic). Kirsten Mah, at the time of the publication of this thesis, is a Healthy Communities Planner within the Health and Capital Planning Strategies team for the Capital Regional District (CRD) municipal government. Dr. Wiebe and Kirsten co-lead the *A Hot Topic - Addressing Heat Vulnerability to Extreme Heat Exposure in the Capital Regional District (CRD)* research project in collaboration with UVic and the CRD. The seven participant interviews were conducted by me only in 2024. This EHE affected all of B.C. and though I was not physically in the CRD when the heat dome occurred, I was in Northern B.C. working an outdoor labour job and experienced the effects of the heat dome.

The week of the heat dome was the hottest temperatures I had experienced in my whole life of living in B.C., Canada. I was working as a crew boss for a tree planting company in Northern B.C. We were in the process of setting up camp in preparation for our upcoming summer planting contract. Being constantly outdoors gave us no escape from the heat. We were five hours down a forest service road with the nearest town being Mackenzie, B.C. The only reprieve from the heat was the Osilinka River where our camp was situated beside. Every ten to fifteen minutes we would jump in the ice-cold, fast-rushing river to keep cool, and then return to camp set-up. Other than the surrounding trees, the only available shade came from canvas tent structures that we constructed in the heat. Luckily, our planters were not planting during this

week as we had to move camps from the Chilcotin area up north, but at least a quarter of the people in our seventy-person camp assisted with set-up or were otherwise, languidly hiding in the shade and drinking water with electrolytes or taking regular dips in the river, or both.

I do not identify myself as a member of the priority populations listed above. I identify as a white, privileged woman in good health that is not vulnerable to health complications if exposed to extreme heat. I recognize and directly benefit from this privileged position, and thus, the power that comes with it (Le Bourdon, 2022). Though I, too, have experienced EHEs, I am in a privileged position due to my good health and ability to escape the heat separating me from some of the study participants. To action this awareness, I challenge my privilege with ongoing self-reflexive analysis and by developing and building trust between myself and study participants.

As this research was conducted within a post-secondary institution and academic environment, there are further inequities posed between me and those participating in this research project. However, “community identity and community building activities [such as this podcast] are central to academia’s functionality” (Cox et al., 2023, p. 2). When conducting interviews, I offered to and met study participants in physical locations that they were most comfortable in such as their homes or workplaces. An important part of this project was meeting people where they were at to foster a sense of accommodation and understanding and, resultantly, a sense of comfortability to put them at ease during the interview process. This meant that the relationships that were forged throughout this project were built on trust and mutual respect and followed ethical research practices and methodologies.

Ethics

To conduct this research ethically, I was granted ethics approval via UVic's Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) on January 5, 2024 (Appendix III). Participants gave informed consent with the assurance that no harm came to them, and they were assured their confidentiality (O'Leary, 2021). Prior to each interview participants were emailed the consent form and asked to review and sign it (see Appendix IV). Most interview participants had to re-sign the forms as they often had questions or didn't sign it fully as there were many fields to fill in. In the context of this research, it was essential that participants were aware that the information they provided in their interviews was recorded and will be shared publicly, with their written consent. All seven participants were informed that a central tenet of this project is to share the podcast widely to spread awareness of these lived experiences. All seven gave written consent to do so.

Bias

My biases in this study were confirmation bias and interviewer bias. I was part of this research project close to its inception, I conducted and transcribed focus groups and viewed survey results and co-wrote a final report on the study's findings. This could've led to a sense of feigned predictability of responses and pre-existing knowledge. Interviewer bias may have affected the participant's responses and the narrative arc of the podcast. To minimize these biases, the interviews were semi-scripted and tailored in a generalized manner to allow for a range of perspectives. This tailoring was achieved through a predetermined set of questions that were borrowed from *A Hot Topic's* focus groups' questions from 2023.

Positionality and Power Relations

As the study gathered first-hand accounts from priority populations, I, as the researcher, recruiter, interviewer, and narrator held power over these participants. This power-over dynamic existed because I was the researcher who was selecting the key quotes and curated the narratives presented by the interviewees. With this personal and academic lens, I was granted a position of control over the seven research participants. This created an unequal power relation between me and the participants that I actively dismantled using a participatory action research (PAR) lens. PAR's principles of emancipation ensure that "the participant is active in making informed decisions throughout all aspects of the research process for the primary purpose of imparting social change" (Macdonald, 2012, p. 34). In consideration of this, the research questions were designed to emphasize the telling of the participants' lived experiences and were designed to give participants' the space to tell their stories in how they see fit. To create an inclusive, trusting, and collaborative environment with participants, interview questions were designed to give participants control over the degree of exposure they faced with their responses. In the context of the podcast, participants will be given the opportunity to review their responses and give consent on what can and cannot be included in the final product to maintain this element of agency and transparency.

Structure of Thesis

This thesis begins with Chapter 2 on the background of this area of research and the heat dome. It moves on to Chapter 3, a thematic literature review discussing the themes that arose within the designated research question of climate change communication, podcasting and accessibility, planetary health and the disproportionate impacts of EHEs on priority populations. Chapter 4 discusses the methods and methodology, data analysis, reliability and credibility of

this research, and its strengths and limitations. Chapter 5 presents the research findings from the literature review, the document review and the interviews. These are sorted into themes identified by me to identify areas of focus and detect patterns. Chapter 6 delves into the discussion and analysis of the research findings in the previous chapter. Chapter 7 summarizes the main findings and recommendations and concludes the thesis.

Chapter 2: Background

The heat dome had catastrophic effects on priority populations and brought forth a new iteration of hot weather in the summer by causing a record 619 deaths (BC Coroners' Service, 2022). The main causes of death were heat stroke and the extreme heat's exacerbation of existing conditions such as respiratory illness and cardiovascular issues (WHO, 2018). At the peak of the heat dome, temperatures reached over 45 degrees Celsius in many parts of the province (Government of British Columbia., n.d.a). The impacts reached beyond human fatalities and included "... mass mortalities of marine life, reduced crop and fruit yields, river flooding from rapid snow and glacier melt, and a substantial increase in wildfires--the latter contributing to landslides in the months following" (White et al., 2023, p. 1). This event and those that followed demonstrated the devastating impacts of climate change and how existing systems were not prepared to act.

At the same time of this event, the COVID-19 pandemic was rampant, and B.C. had public health measures in place to reduce exposure to the virus. Healthcare systems and emergency response systems were already strained (Beugin et al., 2023). Some people were apprehensive about accessing public cooling centres and being near others in an indoor space (Yumagulova et al., 2022). Wellness checks that would have been in place had there not been a pandemic occurring simultaneously were done less frequently due to some people's reluctance to enter other's homes (Beugin et al., 2023). This could have also led to those that were isolated and not connected to their surrounding community, such as neighbours and local community organizations, being forgotten and were only given the opportunity to tell their stories now.

This event has become a popular, or a hot topic, with locals and their lived experiences because the heat dome is no longer an isolated event (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). Since the heat dome, though not at the same scale and severity, there have been additional EHEs (Government of British Columbia, n.d.b). Since 2021 there has been an overall increase in heat waves and EHEs (Government of British Columbia, n.d.a). These events have been shorter in duration but are still affecting health and infrastructure (Government of British Columbia, n.d.a). There has been a significant regional impact insofar that the interior regions of BC have become more susceptible to EHEs (Yumagulova et al., 2023). Another impact is the connection between EHEs and wildfires (Government of British Columbia, n.d.a). There is increased drought and warmer year-round weather making it easier for wildfires to start and spread. Along with an increased chance of wildfires, comes increasingly severe and frequent floods as demonstrated by the floods caused by the atmospheric river that happened in November of the same year (Gillett et al., 2022). One study showed that human-induced climate change contributed to the probability of this event and the associated flooding (Gillett et al., 2022). As this event was the costliest natural disaster in the history of BC to date, the summer and fall of 2021 were fraught with extreme weather events that were more proximate, and therefore more resonant with communities affected.

Since the heat dome, most of the literature and media has focused on the number of deaths caused by the heat dome and certain interventions, such as heat pump subsidies, that prioritize the needs of those who own single-family homes (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This inadvertently subjugates or erases the lived experiences of the people in between, such as renters, those with medical conditions and people living in isolation (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). Other reports, such as *The Case for Adapting to Extreme Heat* (Beugin et al., 2023) and *Extreme Heat and Human Mortality: A Review of Heat-Related Deaths in B.C. in Summer 2021* (The BC

Coroners Service, 2022) addressed the impact on the costs and deaths, respectively, caused by the heat dome, but there had yet to be, up until the *A Hot Topic* project, a solid focus on connecting with members of priority populations that were disproportionately affected. This research, along with the *A Hot Topic* team, sought to fill this gap by speaking to those with lived experience of being directly impacted by EHEs to understand the effects of this event and to provide an opportunity for those disproportionately affected by this event and other events since, to speak on their own lived experience of the event (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This was accomplished with a survey and sharing circles.

The majority (62%) of the survey respondents “reported having experienced negative health impacts from extreme heat with 79% of those people reporting the impact to be moderate” (Wiebe & Mah, 2023, p. 21). Respondents expressed concern not only for their own health outcomes, but their pets as well. They also expressed concern of taking medications that made it difficult for them to regulate their body temperature. Two notable individual barriers identified in the survey were the inability to afford a cooling system and strata and landlord rules that kept residents from installing their own cooling systems and window coverings (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). Barriers that related to public spaces included a “lack of transportation to access spaces, fear of exposure to COVID, mental health barriers that keep people from leaving the home, lack of seating and cooling centre rules around pets and evening hours” (Wiebe & Mah, 2023, p. 21).

The sharing circles/focus groups were oriented around consultation with members of the community to hear their perspectives and opinions on experiencing the heat dome and other EHEs that have happened since. The main findings that resulted from these sharing circles were communication, specifically the inaccessibility of heat related information before, during, and after the heat dome and an inconsistency of reliable information, the absence of and need for

comprehensive and organized community collaboration and support, and strategies for social change including recommendations for policymakers to improve conditions for priority populations (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). The identification of a gap in policymaking and improving the conditions for priority populations informs the *A Hot Topic* research, more generally.

The recommendations that resulted from the *A Hot Topic*'s survey and sharing circles centred on the prioritization of how EHEs and other environmental hazards may affect those at heightened risk for disproportionately negative health impacts (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). They centred on landlord and strata changes, tailored support for pets, the need for a multitude of publicly available cooling spaces, the need for comprehensive employer responsibilities that are industry specific and include making accommodations for their staff including the adjustment of hours, providing more breaks, and providing cold water, tailored communication campaigns to different audiences and a diversity of formats, and lastly, the identification of vulnerable, or priority populations should be made so that they can be checked-in on, and the need for the creation of mutual aid support systems that encourage connection and responsibility to each other within neighbourhoods (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). These recommendations were a call to action to increase public engagement, specifically those that are members of priority populations, in community planning and for policy makers and provincial and municipal governments to develop specific policy legislation or mandated obligations for the existing environment, not the environment that *could* be or *should* be (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). Policies that are as diverse as the members of the community they seek to serve is an integral part of developing equitable policy outcomes.

To expand the narrative of these findings, the *A Hot Topic* team received funding to design and produce a podcast centred on the voices of members of priority populations to tell

their stories of their lived experiences during the heat dome. Dr. Wiebe and Kirsten Mah acknowledge that the effects of the heat dome are not confined to these two ends of the spectrum, of those who own single-family homes and those who died as a result of the heat dome, but that there were groups in between: vulnerable, or priority populations, in the context of this study, that weren't discussed thoroughly until the onset of the *A Hot Topic* project. This thesis project seeks to take the findings of *A Hot Topic* to add personal context and a platform for those disproportionately affected by the heat dome have an opportunity to express themselves, and to amplify their stories. Hence, this project was born.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

This thematic literature review explores themes such as podcasting and accessibility, climate change communication, planetary health, and the disproportionate effects of EHEs on priority populations. By way of a document analysis, this literature review answers the research question: how can podcasting be used as a communication tool for priority populations to share their lived experiences of the heat dome and contribute to policy listening?

Mapping the Process

The process in finding resources, the use of search terms and the use of UVic databases is discussed. The resources used in this literature review were primarily peer-reviewed academic articles and reputable government institutional reports. Some resources were shared with me by my supervisor, Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe, and by my colleague, Bronwyn Dunbar. Other resources were borrowed from the research conducted by the *A Hot Topic* research team and its final report. Some resources were found via the syllabi of some of the courses of my MPA program.

The search terms that were used include “podcasting accessibility,” “climate change communication,” “planetary health,” “disproportionate effects of EHEs on vulnerable/priority populations,” and “extreme heat events British Columbia.” UVic Library was used primarily as the research database.

The role of podcasting as an academically reputable way of conveying information regarding climate change is a new topic with limited research. Current literature suggests podcasting may be used as a vessel to raise awareness, by way of an academic pursuit, shift discourse, amplify voices and offer counternarratives within academia and the public.

Main Themes of the Literature Review

The main themes of the literature review included podcasting and accessibility, climate change communication, planetary health and the disproportionate impacts of EHEs on priority populations.

Podcasting and Accessibility

A central part of taking the research of *A Hot Topic* to the next step was into the realm of podcasting. Podcasting is lauded for its accessible nature. From a tangible, technological standpoint, podcasts "... transcend accessibility barriers such as non-availability of electricity, mobile networks, and telecommunications" (Tsarwe & Chiumbu, 2023, p. 39). They are physically portable, as they can be streamed or downloaded onto smartphones, and don't require physical venues to be accessed, further increasing their availability to a wider audience (Harter, 2019). They can aid those with hearing loss and be transcribed for those with visual impairment (Colston et al., 2022). For these reasons, podcasting may reach a wider audience that may experience physical barriers in accessing information.

In terms of intellectual barriers, academic podcasting is gradually evolving as a legitimate form of sharing academic information and serves to bridge the gap between academia and society (Cox et al., 2023). It dispels barriers traditionally in place creating an accessible form of knowledge dissemination. As its popularity grows, academic information is given an alternate path imbued in storytelling to reach the masses thereby increasing its accessibility (Cox et al., 2023). Consequently, podcasting can provide an avenue of accessibility that overcomes barriers to intellectual communication and opens up possibilities for increased exposure and education to the public.

Climate Change Communication

Within the research community, climate change communication does not have an agreed-upon definition. It has evolved over the years, and continues to progress, particularly in recent years. Anne Gammelgaard Ballantyne argued this can be attributed to “diverging and incompatible understandings of communication as a theoretical construct” (2016, p. 329). Ballantyne rooted the theory of communication in a process of producing and reproducing shared meanings, an inherently interactive process, that creates a “common platform that advances multiperspective [sic] argumentation and discussion of the role of climate change communication in society” (2016, p. 329). Furthermore, climate change is portrayed in the media with multiple and conflicting messages resulting in a multitude of interpretations (Hulme, 2009). Depending on one’s view of the problem, their interpretation is different.

Another tenet of climate change and how its portrayed publicly is that no message is neutral, and that framing is a key aspect of how climate change is portrayed, and thus, how it is received by the public (Hulme, 2009). “In the very act of constructing and communicating a story about climate change, certain causes, actors or responses are favoured or demonised” (Hulme, 2009, p. 228). This is why different frames can be effective in communicating with different audiences, depending on their differing perceptions and beliefs. This is an argument against the “one-size-fits-all” approach in communicating with the public about climate change (Andreotta et al., 2022). One study identified three audience segments: Acceptors, Fencesitters and Sceptics and concluded that “... communicators should target Fencesitters who hold moderate views and are receptive to belief revision” (Andreotta et al., 2022, p. 32). Acceptors are defined as “believ[ing] anthropogenic climate change is occurring” (Andreotta et al., 2022, p. 32) and that climate change is not a hoax, and Sceptics reject this concept and that there is conclusive

evidence that human activity does not have an influence on the climate (Andreotta et al., 2022, p. 32).

A central tenet of this study was to explore how providing a platform such as a podcast to priority populations to express their lived experiences of EHEs may serve as a tool for climate change communication. A key notion of this is ensuring that the information is accessible, as noted above, and that the information is communicated in a way that is impactful and effective for the population it seeks to serve (Okaka & Leal Filho, 2013; Guida & Howarth, 2022). This included considering the population that these messages seek to reach, and to develop policy communication strategies that are tailored to their needs, and are thus, accessible to as many audiences as is possible. This included a varied approach to media use including electronic, print, and interpersonal communication (Okaka, 2013). Another key piece in consideration of policy communication is considering the power inequities that exist between government policy decision-makers and priority populations. If an intersectional-based policy analysis (IBPR) isn't taken, this could further reinforce existing inequities and leave these populations to continue to suffer disproportionately during extreme weather events, such as EHEs (Walker et al., 2021).

Planetary Health

Health Canada projects that the number of extremely hot days will double in the next thirty years (Canada, n.d.). This poses a foreboding future and impending deadline for decision makers in addressing climate emergencies. Planetary health is a budding field that argues that the health of human civilization is only as healthy as the health of the natural world (Whitmee et al., 2015). It calls for a comprehensive and intersectional approach to the climate crisis, including EHEs, based on action (Brousselle & McDavid, 2021). Solutions to the climate crisis are not hard to identify, but sustained and implemented commitments are (Brousselle & McDavid,

2021). This relationship between the health of the earth and humans may be new in mainstream institutional academic environments but has existed since time immemorial in Indigenous Peoples' ontology and epistemology (Redvers et al., 2022). This decolonial lens employs a viewpoint of planetary health based on universal interconnectedness and collectivity that is required to face inequities caused by human activities (Redvers et al., 2022). As this study explores the intersection between EHEs and those who are disproportionately impacted by climate change, planetary health is an appropriate topic to explore.

The connection between the health of the planet and the health of society identified by planetary health science demonstrates a consequential factor of the challenges of equity. Human activity disrupts natural systems and would not occur were there not benefits to some party and costs to another (Myers, 2017). Those with the lowest socio-economic statuses also have “the fewest institutional, cultural, governmental, or philanthropic resources to help them are the most vulnerable to rapidly changing environmental conditions” (Myers, 2017, p. 2865). This means that “there is a stark contrast between those who benefit from [human] activities and those who pay the price in degraded health” directly increasing inequity (Myers, 2017, p. 2865). This issue of inequity is why an equity-informed approach was integral to this project.

Disproportionate Effects of EHEs on Priority Populations

Lillia Yumagulova, Tira Okamoto, Erica Crawford, and Kerri Klein published a Final Report to the Climate Action Secretariat in April 2022 titled “Lived Experience of Extreme Heat in BC” centred the voice of priority populations, including those with disabilities, marginalised seniors, people who are unhoused or insecurely housed, those experiencing mental health or substance use challenges in their lived experience of EHEs (Yumagulova et al., 2022). As demonstrated by this report, priority populations are addressed, but governmental and policy

action in improving the suffering of these populations is not. Concrete action has not yet been taken by policy makers to improve the situation for these populations. This report did not include pregnant and nursing people, newcomers to Canada and outdoor workers, leaving out a significant group of individuals that are particularly at risk during EHEs. As a result, these groups' needs may not be addressed in future decision-making circles.

During the heat dome, society was still grappling with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This exacerbated both public health emergencies “further compromising public health and severely straining emergency health services” (Tetzlaff et al., 2023, p. 1). At this time, public health measures related to COVID-19 were still in effect and the heat was accumulating. An existing study found that there were conflicting public health messages both provincially and federally causing a compound effect of each event and on the public health system (Tetzlaff, 2023). This systematic analysis addressed vulnerable or, priority populations, insofar that the authors recommended that there could be “tailored initiatives to support vulnerable groups such as wellness check-ins,” (Tetzlaff, 2023, p. 9) but did not mention how to coordinate these efforts from a policy and program implementation level. Though this may have not been the focus of the study, it demonstrated the gap in knowledge on how to better tailor programs to account for the intersecting and compounding effects of an extreme weather event and pandemic-level communicable diseases.

Conclusion

This thematic literature review discussed topics that related to the research question, but, to date, research has not yet explored the confluence of all these themes, particularly how the interaction of interviews of members of priority populations lived experiences of an extreme weather event, like the heat dome, and climate change communication may contribute to policy

listening. As demonstrated by this literature review, the field of academic podcasting is developing, particularly in relation to climate change communication, which demonstrates a gap in research and provides an opportunity for this study to come to fruition. Seeing how these themes interact and relate to one another shows their relevance in relation to creating policy that prioritizes the voices of those disproportionately affected by climate change and gives them an opportunity to contribute to the growing literature on the interaction of these topics.

Conceptual Framework: Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis

Elaborating the Conceptual Framework

The themes above will be analyzed and reviewed through the lens of the Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA) (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019; Hoogeveen et al., 2021). As noted above, intersectionality is defined as “the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities” (Collins, 2015, p. 2). IBPA uses intersectionality as its lens and, is “as a policy tool is to better illuminate how policy constructs individuals’ and groups’ relative power and privileges vis-à-vis their socio-economic-political status, health and well-being” (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 134). IBPA serves to capture the “different dimensions of policy contexts including history, politics, everyday lived experiences, diverse knowledges and intersecting social locations” which can then “generate transformative insights, knowledge, policy solutions and actions that cannot be gleaned from other equity-focused policy frameworks” (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 135). Without the consideration of IBPA, policies and recommendations have the potential to inadvertently harm and suppress those already impacted by these intersections of their identity and lived experience (Ryder, 2018;

Versey, 2021; Walker et al., 2021; Amorim-Maia, 2022; Lotfata & Munenzon, 2022). Further, IBPA drives equity for those communities that are “systematically marginalized [that] have typically contributed the least to climate change but are disproportionately negatively impacted by climate-related events, such as wildfires, extreme heat, flooding and extreme weather” (Hoogeveen et al., 2021, p. 6). IBPA provides a conceptual framework based on an equity-informed approach to the design, production and analysis of the interviews.

The interactions of intersectionality, power and democracy were used to inform this study, and this was informed by a participatory action research (PAR) lens. As this study sought to amplify, empower and provide agency to priority populations, it is inherently “concern[ed] with power and democracy and their interactions” (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Further, PAR considers “gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities and other social factors” and intersectionality considers the confluence and interactions between these windows of identity (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Patricia Hill Collins argues that placing intersectionality and participatory democracy in dialogue aligns with both of their goals to “aspire to imagine new social relations of equality, fairness, inclusion and social justice” and this informs the conceptual framework of this study and its objectives (2019, p. 187).

Due to the nature of this study being conceived through the lens of IBPA, PAR and a phenomenological approach, it was interpretive in nature. Interpretive research is a research paradigm that assumes that social reality is not subjective or objective, but that people’s lived experiences shape these realities (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011). Interpretive, phenomenological research is “focus[ed] on meaning-making and the production of contextual knowledge” of social communities and their iterations of their lived experiences (Schwartz-Shea

& Yanow, 2011, p. 38). The context for this study is the telling of the lived experiences of priority populations of the heat dome.

Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods

This chapter discusses the methodology, methods and tasks that were undertaken in the recruitment, collection, and analysis of this study. This research required approval from the Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) as interviews were conducted with human subjects. The certificate approval number is 22-0613 (see Appendix III).

Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature and used community-engaged research approaches. This research was guided by an equity-informed lens that “s[ought] to co-create a methodology that is designed with the input of affected communities” (Wiebe & Mah, 2023, p. 12). The methodology is a descriptive, phenomenological study that looked at the lived experiences and recommendations of priority or affected populations in the CRD. The interactions of intersectionality, power and democracy have informed this study, and this includes the use of a participatory action research (PAR) lens. The rationale for choosing this type of study was because of the emphasis on providing a platform for priority populations to recount and express their lived experiences of EHEs. Phenomena appear through the telling of their stories and demonstrate to us, as researchers, the themes that pervade these stories, if they appear.

This research sought to explore how podcasting may serve as a transformative space of social change for priority populations and how a sense of empowerment and agency may be cultivated through the expression of their lived experiences, and how the telling of their lived experiences may serve as a tool for climate change communication. This research was grounded in theories of post-positivist subjectivism of participation, collaboration, and induction (O’Leary, 2021). This requires an acceptance of the pluralities and multiplicities that “emphasizes the

subjective elements in experience and accepts that personal experiences are the foundation of actual knowledge” (O’Leary, 2021, p. 29). This was achieved through the interviewing of different members of priority populations that ranged in age, gender, and race further employing the use of an intersectional based policy approach (IBPA) and a feminist lens thereby ensuring a range of perspectives were included with the intention of connecting these perspectives to future policy development and implementation. This is known as purposive sampling whereby it can be assumed that this sample is representative of the population adversely affected by EHEs (Battaglia, 2008).

Research Process

To capture the essences of each person’s lived experience of the heat dome, I travelled to each interviewees preferred location. Dr. Wiebe, Kirsten and I discussed the importance of meeting people where they are at. This means that I asked each interviewee where and when they would like to be interviewed, and I followed suit. I was interviewed in three interviewees’ homes, one personal office, two rooms in office spaces (Jon Cooksey and Ruth Waldick were both interviewed in Jon Cooksey’s home on Salt Spring Island). I took my personal vehicle and drove to regions outside of central Victoria including T’Souke Nation and Salt Spring Island.

Thus, this research was taken to the field. The audio reflects this with each interview having background noise specific to the location, like Jon Cooksey’s dog chewing on a bone, or Maggie Gay playing seventies music on her television in the background. These elements created an atmospheric quality to the audio recordings and emphasized the role of space and place in influencing and affecting one’s experience. Speaking with people in these spaces demonstrated the uniqueness of their lived experience, and the distinct nature of each person’s lives.

Methods

Data was collected from the interviews of seven participants, my positionality analysis and a document analysis. These interviews were recorded via portable recorder, and my subjective experience will be evaluated through the lens of myself as designer, narrator, and editor of the podcast, and with related documents for the document analysis.

Participant Interviews

Interviews were semi-structured and recorded with the permission of the participants. All participants were asked the same ten questions with supplemental, improvised questions added to some interviews, depending on the nature of the conversation and how much the participant was speaking and engaging with the predetermined questions. Interviews were physically conducted in spaces of each participants' choice to maintain their comfortability to meet them where they were at.

Individuals were connected to us by Dr. Wiebe and Kirsten's contacts at each one of the seven organizations of South Island Mental Health Recovery Partners, Our Place Society, T'Souke Nation, Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC), Seniors Serving Seniors, Salt Spring Transitions and the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA). I presented the premise of the podcast, its participatory action research (PAR) and phenomenological lenses, and my position as recruiter, interviewer, and narrator of the podcast prior to the beginning of recording the interview. Outreach was attempted with the ICA; however, no contacts were able to recruit a participant in time for my departure to Europe on July 17, 2024.

My Subjective Experience as Narrator

This study was qualitative and took an interpretive, phenomenological analytical lens. This lens prioritizes the examination of individual lived experience and how individuals make sense of that experience (SAGE Research Methods, 2024). As this study prioritized the lived experiences of those affected by EHEs, this perspective was also applied to me as the researcher, recruiter, narrator, and interviewer of this project and the forthcoming podcast. Resultingly, my experience serves as data in this study. My perception of the podcasting process will serve as a reflection of how positionality impacts product, particularly as a cis-gendered, white, educated woman and how this experience enabled participants to express their lived experiences. This is reviewed and analyzed at length in the discussion section.

Document Analysis

Documents that center on climate change communication were interpreted to gain an understanding of their meaning and to broaden and expand upon the information they provide. Specifically, the documents are extracted from the British Columbia provincial government's archive of materials used to communicate with the public about EHEs in the CRD, as well as Canadian federal government materials used to communicate with the public about EHEs across Canada. A document analysis is defined as "a research tool for collecting, reviewing, interrogating, and analysing various forms of written 'text' as a primary source of research data" (O'Leary, 2021, p. 547). My own research biases were considered to ensure credibility of the sources collected and the ways in which I conduct my analysis (O'Leary, 2021). During the analysis process, I 'interview' a text to see if it will answer the questions of what I am seeking to discover in the review. Repeated occurrences will also be noted to determine the frequency of certain words and phrases such as those concepts listed in the literature review above.

Data Analysis

Interview transcripts have been transcribed, coded and analyzed by me. Interviews were analyzed using a phenomenological analysis in which phenomena presented themselves in individuals' direct awareness and experience (O'Leary, 2021). Certain phrases, words, and other linguistic sets were identified through "the use of an established coding frame designed to generate measurements from qualitative materials" (Byrne, 2016, p. 22). Phenomenological analysis was used to analyze the data in the identification of key themes and patterns of lived experiences of priority populations who were living in the CRD during the heat dome. These phenomena have been examined through an Intersectionality Based Policy Analysis (IBPA) lens as discussed in the conceptual framework. As there are only seven interviews to analyze, no external instruments or software were used.

Strengths and Limitations

Limitations

Though this project amplified the voices of those directly affected by EHEs and gained data from their responses, there were limitations regarding my positionality as the researcher, recruiter, narrator, and interviewer as a cis-gendered, white, educated woman. It was integral to this study to ensure that my role in this research was considered and understood as the podcast, and, consequently, this written thesis which has impacted the outcome of the research.

Other limitations include the barriers that arose from participant recruitment. This process proved itself to be one of the most significant barriers of this study. I began with sending emails (Appendix V) to Dr. Sarah Wiebe and Kirsten Mah's contacts from community organizations such as South Island Mental Health Recovery Partners, Our Place Society, T'Souke Nation, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, Seniors Serving Seniors, Salt Spring Transitions and the ICA.

These emails included details of this study and the desire to hear from members of priority populations, as indicated by the above definition, that were in the CRD during the heat dome. It also included the *A Hot Topic* recruitment poster (Appendix VI) and the *A Hot Topic Final Report* (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). Though myself, Kirsten and Sarah perceived this to be straight forward in our recruitment email, it was sometimes missed and caused some confusion in recruitment of participants, specifically regarding the participant from Seniors Serving Seniors and the participant from ICA, who I never ended up interviewing as they were on a different continent during the heat dome.

Another issue with participant recruitment was relying on and assuming that emailing was the most effective means of recruiting members of the above priority populations. It took months to either hear from contacts, have them recruit someone who filled our participant requirements as being a member of one of the above priority populations, and put a large amount of the onus on contacts at the above organizations to find someone who fit our requirements. I began to think that we, as researchers, could have had a more physical presence with these organizations, and personal relationships with those that use their services to build connections and have created an environment in which we were established with these organizations and had pre-existing relationships with its members.

Another limitation related to participant recruitment was the lack of follow-up I engaged in after the first email was sent. This caused a time crunch to obtain participants which may have affected my ability to recruit a participant from ICA and to recruit a larger sample size. Though it was the plan from the beginning to recruit only seven participants, it was integral to recruit people from each priority population group, which I did not do due to these limitations.

Another limitation to this study is the fact that the heat dome had occurred three years prior to the time the interviews were conducted. Most participants mentioned this in their recorded interviews or before or after the recorded interviews, when the recorder was off. A few other EHEs, though not heat domes, had occurred since the heat dome, and it being three years prior created a situation in which it was difficult for some to recall the details of the heat dome. This gap between the occurrence of the event and when the interviews were conducted could have skewed people's perceptions of the event itself and affected their responses.

This study sought to hear from priority populations that are historically excluded or not consulted in policy development and interventions and was ultimately successful in contacting most members of priority populations.

Strengths

The use of an established and widely applied methodology, being IBPA, data collection methods (semi-structured interviews, document analysis), and analysis approaches (phenomenological review) contribute to the thoroughness of the study. This research built off an existing body of research, *A Hot Topic*, demonstrating that there was existing research in this area as well as previously forged strong community partnerships that are conducive to this study's validity. The research gathered from *A Hot Topic* sought to bridge the knowledge and service gap between policy action plans and the lived experiences of those affected by EHEs (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This research found that 62% of survey respondents reported having experienced negative health impacts from extreme heat and 79% of those people reporting the impact to be moderate (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This research project and the podcast sought to take the research done in *A Hot Topic* to the next level by amplifying the voices of a select few

of these respondents to provide a space for them to express their lived experiences of the heat dome and to explore how these stories may function as a climate change communication tool.

Thesis Structure

The results and findings, discussion and analysis and conclusion follow in the coming chapters. The interviews and document analysis with a reflexive approach guide the next two chapters. The conclusion highlights key findings and recommendations and summarizes the main points of the thesis.

Conclusion

This qualitative, community-engaged research is guided by an equity-informed lens of intersectionality-based policy analysis (IBPA), participatory action research (PAR), and phenomenology. In this project, it is essential to consider the pluralities and multiplicities inherent in the subjective experiences and the perception of them as knowledge within themselves. A central tenet to this research was to speak to a range of people that vary in their age, gender, and race to ensure a diversity of people were prioritized and heard.

By physically traveling to each person, I centred the accommodation of the interviewees' personal preferences by meeting them where they were at. This led to audio that had unique background noise, adding to the authenticity and demonstration of the prioritization of connecting with people where they felt most comfortable.

Participant interviews were semi-structured with bouts of improvisation on my part to reword the question, if needed, or to probe further. As the designer of the interviews, questions were prioritized around giving interviewees the opportunity to tell their lived experience of the

heat dome, including the barriers and challenges they encountered, and to hear their suggestions for solutions to help prepare for future EHEs.

Data analysis varied depending on the interviews or document analysis. The interviews were transcribed, coded and analyzed by me and informed by a phenomenological analysis (O’Leary, 2021). These phenomena were extracted by me, as the researcher, and are therefore subjective interpretations.

The strengths and limitations of this project ranged. Limitations included my positionality as a cisgendered, white, educated woman, challenges with participant recruitment, including with using email as the main vessel of communication, and highlighted the challenges that come with connecting with hard-to-reach populations. The strengths of this project are the established and widely applied methodology of IBPA, data collection methods and analysis approaches emphasizing the thorough nature of this study. The interviews themselves were a demonstration of connecting with hard-to-reach groups, and the types of questions to ask when connecting with members of priority populations.

These methods, approaches and lenses were suited to the purpose of this research which was to hear and record the lived experiences of members of priority populations that were disproportionately affected by the heat dome, and other extreme weather events. Particularly with recording these interviews with the intent to produce a publicly available podcast underscores the importance of amplifying and disseminating these voices.

Chapter 5: Research Findings

Introduction

This section presents the results and findings of a document analysis and interviews with seven research participants. The document analysis identifies themes, connections and gaps between educational resources intended for the public before, during and after EHEs. It also explores how government public-facing educational resources supported or refuted the themes found in the interviews and how they may have reinforced the relevance of certain themes, specifically, on building resilience and adaptation within communities and the community experiences of the heat dome on priority populations. The central themes gathered from the interviewees' responses are sorted into themes based on the interview questions (Appendix II): barriers and challenges, community experiences and solutions experienced by those with lived experience who were disproportionately affected by the heat dome.

The topics of the interviews were oriented around three themes: barriers and challenges, community experiences and solutions. "Barriers and challenges" were those that interviewees' themselves experienced or what they heard from those within their community has experienced that either prevented them from adequate preparation for the heat dome or prevented them from accessing resources while the heat dome was in progress. "Community experiences" refer to questions designed to give interviewees the opportunity to tell the story of their lived experience during the heat dome. This aligns with PAR approaches and phenomenology (O'Leary, 2021; Hall, 1992). One example of the questions is, "how did the heat dome affect you?" (Appendix II). "Coping strategies" refers to the methods interviewees used to cope with the effects of the heat dome. "Solutions" refers to the potential efforts that could be made individually, but also at

a governmental or community level to better prepare priority populations' for and to cope with the onset of future EHEs. All interviewees answered the questions within the context of their lived experience leading to a diversity of perspectives and approaches and in alignment with IBPA, PAR and phenomenological research approaches as mentioned above in the conceptual framework of this thesis.

Main Themes

Document Analysis: “Resilience” and Adaptive Tools

This document analysis reviewed ten pre-existing texts designed to educate and prepare the public for EHEs and to give them tools and adaptive strategies to cope with EHEs (Morgan, 2022). Resources were gathered from the municipal government including the CRD and the City of Victoria, the provincial government, including Island Health, PreparedBC, a resource for disaster readiness information in B.C., the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and federal resources, such as Health Canada. These resources were selected based on authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning in alignment with the key principles of document selection for a qualitative document analysis (Morgan, 2022). All the selected documents were publicly available and found on government websites. They were also selected based on their intention to communicate with the public to derive what key information is pushed forward by different levels of government to the public. The central themes found in the documents were building resilience,¹ preparation and response to EHEs, and how to identify

¹ “Resilience” is not a neutral term for priority populations or vulnerable groups as it is “rooted in an individual model of change, one that leaves untouched the structures and systems that are responsible for the trauma in the first place” and “the narratives that swirl around resilience often invoke stories of strength in the face of adversity, telegraphing that you, too, can shake off the cumulative cycle of disadvantage” (Orsini, 2020).

vulnerable populations that may be disproportionately affected by EHEs and how to support them.

Information for Homeowners Only: Home Modifications During EHEs

Most selected documents attempted to connect with the reader by giving them adaptive strategies to modify their home during EHEs. The Capital Region Pump Rebate, an infographic created by the CRD, explains what a heat pump is and describes incentives for single-unit family homes to purchase or to change their temperature system to a heat pump (Capital Regional District (CRD), 2021). This infographic appeals to affordability and environmental incentives by describing how accessing the municipal rebates for heat pumps will “help residents avoid costly oil spills, reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and save energy” (CRD, 2021). It uses a comparative image of the annual GHGs of a house fuelled by oil, gas and a heat pump demonstrating the significant reduction in GHGs when using a heat pump (CRD, 2021). This is the only selected document that seeks to reach its specific audience of those that own their residence or have a single-unit family home. HealthLinkBC recommended the installation of awnings, shutters, blinds or curtains to keep over one’s windows to keep the sun out during the day (Island Health, n.d.). *The Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide* by the Ministry of Health encourages the installation of a window air conditioner in at least one room of the home (Government of British Columbia, 2023). By focusing only on single-family unit homeowners, these suggestions inadvertently neglect renters and unhoused or precariously housed individuals who do not have the authority to make significant changes, such as the purchase and installation of a heat pump, to their own dwellings.

Building Resilience and Responding to EHEs

Building Resilience

A primary theme of these documents was to build “resilience” amongst the general population by preparing the community for an EHE and knowing how to respond during future EHEs. Resilience is defined as, “the ability of a social, ecological, or socio-ecological systems and its components to anticipate, reduce, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event or trend in a timely and efficient manner” (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2014, p. 1108). Documents also have information on resources readers may access to be alerted to incoming EHEs. This included through the VicAlert system for the City of Victoria (2024) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)’s weather alert system (Island Health, n.d.), or the local news (Government of Canada, 2024). *The Extreme Heat Fact Sheet* begins its infographic with a warning of the City of Victoria’s expectation to experience more EHEs in the coming years and then carries on with suggestions of how to become resilient and to adapt to these conditions (City of Victoria, 2024). In the eyes of these documents, and perhaps a response to the delayed action taken during the heat dome, a central part of building resilience is to be notified in advance of upcoming EHEs. During the heat dome, an Extreme Heat Alert was issued by the Lower Mainland health authorities at 2 p.m. on June 25, 2021, the first day of the heat dome (Beugin et al., 2023). At that point, there had already been nine deaths caused by it (Beugin et al., 2023). This focus on resilience demonstrates the government’s hopes to better prepare the community without developing tailored solutions to the needs of different populations.

Response Efforts to EHEs

Most, if not all, infographics focused on how community members may respond to the effects of EHEs. Signs, symptoms and interventions of different types of heat illnesses from mild to moderate to severe are mentioned in most documents (City of Victoria, 2024; Island Health, n.d.; British Columbia Health Effects of Anomalous Temperature (BC HEAT) Coordinating Committee, 2024; Government of Canada, 2024). Readers are encouraged to find air-conditioned spaces that are close to them where they may cool off, such as “staying with friends or family, or go to places like libraries, community centres, or shopping malls” (Island Health, n.d.). Response efforts that are oriented within the home and other indoor spaces include having a working fan, purchasing a digital thermometer for inside the home, staying hydrated, locating the coolest places in the home and to sleep there, if possible. Other specifics indicated what a safe indoor temperature is (Island Health, n.d.), what can be done to keep the home cool, and to locate places outside the home to cool down, such as cooling centres via a designated cooling centre map, like the one created by the City of Victoria (2024). These resources emphasized on identifying solutions and coping strategies to deal with the extreme heat.

The Identification of “Vulnerable” Populations

All selected infographics provided the reader with the opportunity to learn about the most vulnerable populations during EHEs. *The Extreme Heat Fact Sheet* by the City of Victoria, the Interactive Regional Heat Map, Island Health’s *How to Protect Yourself from HEAT this Summer*, PreparedBC’s *Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide*, *BC Provincial Heat Alert and Response System (BC HARS)*, by BC HEAT Coordinating Committee, and Health Canada’s *Staying Healthy in the Heat* and *It’s much too hot! Protect yourself from extreme heat* all prioritized the identification and recognition of vulnerable, in their words, populations. This

suggests that these resources are intended for those that do not fit the description of a member of a vulnerable, or priority population, but who may choose to use their privilege to cope with EHEs with tools such as personal air conditioning could connect with and help those that are more at risk during EHEs. These documents suggested to look beyond the individual and reflect on the diverse needs of the community and to respond accordingly.

Not all documents had the same list of the characteristics of vulnerable populations. The City of Victoria's *Extreme Heat Fact Sheet* identifies vulnerable populations as pregnant people, infants and young children, people over 65, those that live alone or are socially isolated and people with medical conditions or take medications that makes them more vulnerable to extreme heat (2024). This list is non-exhaustive and excludes other vulnerable populations, such as those listed in PreparedBC's *Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide* including "older adults (i.e. over 50), people who live alone or are socially isolated, people with pre-existing health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease or respiratory disease, people with mental illness such as schizophrenia, depression or anxiety, people with substance use disorders, people who are marginally housed, people who work in hot environments, people who are pregnant, infants and young children, and people with other disabilities or limited mobility" (2023, p. 6). The latter document is a report and not an infographic which could explain the detail and breadth of the description of vulnerable or priority populations.

Interactivity: User Engagement

The only selected resource intended for the public that required user interaction was the *Interactive Regional Heat Map* as part of the *Capital Region Extreme Heat Information Portal*, herein referred to as the portal, created by the CRD (n.d.). This heat map "allows residents and guests in the capital region an opportunity to explore and understand heat vulnerability in their

community” (CRD, n.d.). Users may click on five different maps presenting information about the population in a designated area such as the demographic vulnerability, building vulnerability, heat exposure – land surface temperature, heat exposure – air temperature and building and demographic vulnerability, a bivariate mapping demonstrating the interaction between buildings and demographic vulnerability (CRD, n.d.). This visual and interactive platform allows users to perceive the population of their community through the lens of vulnerability thereby increasing awareness of those that are at risk during EHEs. This has the potential to foster better understanding of the needs of the different demographics of the CRD.

In addition to the *Interactive Regional Heat Map*, the portal includes a “Learn” page centred on educating people on what extreme heat and heat domes are, what contributes to extreme heat, how often the CRD is expected to experience extreme heat, an explanation of heat exposure including surface temperature and air temperature, what the CRD knows about vulnerability to extreme heat, who is vulnerable to extreme heat, and the locations of vulnerable people hence the creation of the *Interactive Regional Heat Map* and a link to the *A Hot Topic Research Project* (CRD, n.d.). It then encourages users to go to the PrepareYourself.ca website to learn what to do before and during an EHE to further their knowledge and expand their tools to cope with EHEs (CRD, n.d.). This website functions as a “one-stop shop” for users to gather information about EHEs and how they may affect their community. This has the potential to be a useful tool for those who are computer literate and have access to a computer or smart phone.

Interviews: Barriers & Challenges, Community Experiences & Coping Strategies and Solutions

The main themes found in the interviews were barriers and challenges, community experiences of the heat dome, as well as coping strategies and solutions to improve circumstances for priority populations before, during and after the heat dome, and to prepare

them for future EHEs. This included communication challenges and needed improvements and the importance and effective dissemination and reach of accurate education and awareness surrounding adaptive strategies in dealing with extreme heat, and solutions to dealing with EHEs, including the importance of cultivating and maintaining community and building relationships to account for each other in crisis that is beyond government intervention and relies on the interconnectedness of people.

Barriers & Challenges

All interviewees expressed their own views, or the views of others who they knew or were members of their community who experienced barriers and challenges before, during and after the heat dome. The barriers and challenges varied depending on the intersecting vulnerabilities of priority populations. This emphasized the relevance of intersectionality and IBPA to understand these responses and how they interact to further disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.

The four most common challenges mentioned by interviewees were communication, community building, bureaucratic and socioeconomic barriers and challenges. “Communication” referred to a critique of government or community service providers’ efforts to effectively communicate resilient and adaptive strategies with priority populations, including infographic resources as analysed in the document analysis, and a lack of alternative communication methods adapted to the needs of populations disproportionately affected by EHEs.

“Community building” refers to the importance of an interconnected community where people know and converse with their neighbours and a critique of the perceived gap between priority populations’ and those, including myself, who are not members of priority populations’ who were not disproportionately affected by the heat dome. Meaning those who are not

disproportionately affected by EHEs may not have existing relationships with people in their communities who are more vulnerable than them causing a disconnect and a lack of community responsibility in time of crises. This also refers to the isolation of some priority populations' who may not have people to rely and lean on in crises increasing their vulnerability revealing a gap between those that can help themselves without community support and those where community interconnectedness and support can be a matter of life and death. Another way community building was a challenge was the perceived absence of "third spaces" accessible to the public where people could cool down and connect. This was further complicated by the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic and public health restrictions that occurred at the same time as the heat dome.

"Bureaucratic" challenges refer to existing government structures that may not be adequately equipped to cope with 'wicked' or complex problems or, a more solutions-focused term, "multifaceted" problems, such as climate change (Rittel & Webber, 1973). This can create a lack of efficient and effective accessibility of government resources to the public (Jon Cooksey & Ruth Waldick, personal communication, July 12, 2024). "Socioeconomic" barriers and challenges involve affordability and availability of certain services such as the internet and the ability to obtain a heat pump for individuals who do not own their residence and are restricted by not owning the property they live in, i.e. renters, which makes up 37% of the population of the CRD, according to the 2021 Census of Population report (Government of Canada, 2024a).

Community Experiences

In recounting their lived experiences, all respondents experienced some level of effect caused by the heat dome. The interview questions that assessed community experiences asked about how the heat dome affected respondents, how they responded during the heat dome, how

the heat dome affected their mental, physical and emotional health and well-being, and whether extreme heat has changed their community and, if it has, how (Appendix II). The first three questions focused on the individual community experiences of the heat dome while the last sought to capture if there was a perceived change within their own community because of and since the heat dome. Some effects induced more positively associated behaviour or outcomes, yet most induced more negatively associated behaviour or outcomes. Based on the interviewees' responses, the responses can be sorted into two categories: individual and environmental. Individual experiences ranged from mental, emotional and spiritual to physical and accessibility challenges. Environmental experiences ranged from ecological affects to the perceived lack of third spaces in the CRD.

Coping Strategies: Resilience and Adaptability, Flexibility & Resourcefulness

In the opening question of the interviews, the first question was, "how did the heat dome affect you?" This question sought to obtain a recounting of interviewees' lived experiences of the heat dome and its community experiences. Following this was the question, "how did you respond to the heat dome of 2021?" and "how has your behaviour changed since the last heat dome?" These interviews sought to capture the entirety of the interviewees lived experience during the heat dome. This included capturing what interviewees did to cope with the effects of the heat dome, and how these tactics ensured their survival. These questions sought to learn about the resilience, adaptability, flexibility and resourcefulness of interviewees.

*Resilience*²

Resilience is defined as, “the ability of a social, ecological, or socio-ecological systems and its components to anticipate, reduce, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event or trend in a timely and efficient manner” (IPCC, 2014, p. 1108). Of the seven interviewees, three told anecdotes of resilience and coping strategies they used during the heat dome. John Lamont filled his tub with cold water and sat in it when he could. He said that with this strategy, he felt “pretty invincible” and that he could “tough it out” (Personal communication, July 2, 2024). He framed his experience with the heat dome as a temporary challenge and that that mentality helped him get through it. Kari-Ann Leadbitter recounted the use of ice packs, specifically ones that are designed to prevent direct contact with the skin as she had had her baby by the time there were subsequent EHEs (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Other tips she mentioned included going into air-conditioned places, “if you can,” keep hydrated, stay out of direct sun and monitor headaches to ensure their condition doesn’t progress to heat stroke. Ruth Waldick, a resident of Salt Spring Island, recounted the existing emergency pod program designed to connect people in the neighbourhood so that community members are aware if there are any members of priority populations’ that could be more vulnerable during fires, power outages, or EHEs. It is also designed to inform community members of the resources that may be in their neighbourhoods such as a chainsaw or generator (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Though this program has worked effectively in the past, Ruth argued that there is a lack of leadership or automatic response in the event of a local emergency. She also argues that there is a unique advantage in being a resident of a rural community as “you [may] have more

² As a reminder from above, “resilience” is not a neutral term for priority populations or vulnerable groups as it is “rooted in an individual model of change, one that leaves untouched the structures and systems that are responsible for the trauma in the first place” and “the narratives that swirl around resilience often invoke stories of strength in the face of adversity, telegraphing that you, too, can shake off the cumulative cycle of disadvantage” (Orsini, 2020).

agency... you know your place more” which then leads into effective resiliency in the wake of crises.

Adaptability, Flexibility & Resourcefulness

Adaptability can be defined as, “a response strategy to anticipate and cope with impacts that cannot be (or are not) avoided under different scenarios of climate change” (IPCC, 2014, p. 1104). John Lamont expressed feeling acclimatized to the heat as he had been attending weekly hot yoga classes where the room temperature hovered around 31 degrees. He acknowledged that despite this acclimatization, the increase to 35 degrees during the heat dome was still uncomfortable. During the heat dome, he took cold showers, purchased an indoor thermometer for his apartment, went to Mayfair Shopping Centre to spend time in an air-conditioned environment in the evenings, kept hydrated and went down to the ocean as it is typically cooler closer to the ocean. He noted how the specific geography of the CRD, with ample coastal access, may serve as a resource for some populations (Personal communication, July 2, 2024).

Jordan Cooper mentioned the adaptative tactic to use resources that already exist, such as water stations Our Place Society had in their courtyard that had been built in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He expressed that Our Place Society as a community service provider had been exploring options to adapt existing resources to EHEs and was still in the process of coordinating these efforts (Personal communication, July 3, 2024).

Eva Shaffer focused on emotional adaptability, such as maintaining optimism, as a key motive in the prevention of going to “a point of no return” and as a tool of “doing the work” in terms of staying engaged and motivated to do what she can to fight the effects of extreme climate events. She said she looks for the good news stories to learn about adaptability and flexibility

strategies that could be useful to employ in her community (Personal communication, July 4, 2024).

Kari-Ann Leadbitter told stories of adaptability and resourcefulness that ranged from her home to her work. At the time of the heat dome, her and her partner moved from their townhouse into their travel trailer on their property because it had air conditioning. They cooked inside their hot house when required to do so, and ate, slept and “did everything else” in the trailer. After the heat dome, her and her partner bought a heat pump for their townhouse. She mentioned how big of a cost it was even though her partner is an HVAC worker and installed the heat pump himself. She said that “if we weren’t a double income family, there’s no way we could [have done] that” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). She also expressed how she and her partner felt they had little choice in purchasing a heat pump as they had a baby on the way and knew they had to do what was in their power to provide a safe environment for their child in the event of future EHEs. As she was pregnant at the time of the heat dome, she focused on actively monitoring her water intake and expressed how it felt like “a weird thing to do” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). At her workplace of VNFC, some changes were made to adapt to future EHEs for employees. This included advocating for their staff to get a higher wage in the event they had to pay to stay in a hotel to keep cool. She also addressed the challenge of most people having limited means and that most people she knew who could adapt to the heat dome had some level of privilege that allowed them to do so. This theme of adaptability as privilege will be analysed in the following chapter.

Maggie Gay, a senior living alone in a basement suite, shared her adaptive strategies including staying home when it’s “really super-hot” (Personal communication, July 8, 2024). For future EHEs, she relies on her son to phone call her to warn her of upcoming EHEs. This leads to

her dedicating her time to preparing for the event by “going to the stores” and buying water and juice so that she doesn’t need to go out during the anticipated EHE. She also ensures her housework is completed prior to 9 AM and does her heated cooking in the morning to avoid turning on the stove in the afternoon to avoid raising the temperature of her apartment. She also mentioned her best friend who lives in Langford who has a swimming pool that she is welcome to access during EHEs (Personal communication, July 8, 2024).

Jon Cooksey, as a homeowner on Salt Spring Island, discussed strategies he used to adapt his home during the heat dome. Jon explained the cooling system he created in his home via his many windows and retreating to the basement though he acknowledged that these methods are not accessible to most of the population to keep cool (Personal communication, July 12, 2024).

Ruth, also a homeowner on Salt Spring Island focused more on the geography of the area and argued that her local community, and the CRD more generally, have time to prepare for future EHEs. As for keeping cool during the heat dome, she withdrew to her neighbourhood and checked in with her neighbours to see who needed what, if anything. She spoke of local livestock and produce farmers and how they have had to develop adaptive strategies such as using shade cloths and adapting their irrigation systems. She argued that local farmers are doing what they can to survive, amidst governing bodies focusing on creating resources for urban environments, such as establishing cooling centres and how this method does not address the needs of local farmers (Personal communication, July 12, 2024).

*Individual Concerns: Mental, Emotional & Spiritual to Education & Awareness
to Physical*

Mental, emotional and spiritual concerns of the heat dome were spoken of by six out of seven interviewees. John Lamont expressed that he felt anxiety and fear when it’s *that* hot (as hot

as it was during the heat dome) (Personal communication, July 2, 2024). Jordan Cooper discussed how community service providers were feeling “really grumpy” during the heat dome and that the unhoused or precariously housed community was further “overwhelmed” by the intensity of the heat (Personal communication, July 3, 2024). Eva Shaffer expressed that it was difficult to “maintain optimism” during the heat dome and has experienced depression since 2010 “knowing that we needed to be doing something about [climate change], and watching it get worse and worse and worse as the years progressed” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Maggie Gay expressed feeling “embarrassed” by having an invisible disability, including restricted lung capacity, that prevented her from getting on the bus at the same speed as the other patrons (Personal communication, July 8, 2024). Jon Cooksey recounted feeling “scared for 30 years” as climate emergencies have repeatedly occurred (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Lastly, Ruth Waldick expressed feeling “surprised” at the reaction of the international climate change research world to the magnitude and severity of the heat dome (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Six out of seven interviewees experienced some level of emotional, mental and spiritual concerns because of the heat dome.

A repeatedly mentioned barrier by interviewees was the community experiences of the absence of education and awareness about EHEs, and their importance in coping with the heat dome. Responses depended on the ability of interviewees to access resources to alleviate the more negative effects of the heat dome such as accessing educational resources via the internet to prevent heat illnesses or to have the resources to treat themselves (Jon Cooksey; Ruth Waldick, personal communication, July 12, 2024; Kari-Ann Leadbitter, personal communication, July 4, 2024).

Physical and accessibility community concerns were discussed by all interviewees. John Lamont explained that the heat dome “forced” him to “get out of the house more than [he] normally would and find things to do” but that other people “... just end up doing less when it’s that hot, like, they’re just kind of little bit more on the, like, lazy side” (Personal communication, July 2, 2024). Jordan Cooper, as the Director of Services at Our Place Society during the heat dome, discussed how a lot of their “family members,” the name that Our Place staff have given to those who access Our Place’s services, have mobility issues “so, when the heat was affecting them to that point, they didn’t have the energy even to get into their scooter and go somewhere” and, consequently, those living alone remained in isolation. He also discussed the effects on unhoused or precariously housed people that lived in tent encampments at the time of the heat dome where their physical condition was stressed due to living in close quarters in tents with no cooling properties and people were already experiencing some level of dehydration on a regular basis (Jordan Cooper, personal communication, July 3, 2024). Eva Shaffer expressed how she got outside more, like hiked and went for swims which she may not have done without the presence of extreme heat (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Kari-Ann Leadbitter explained how she moved into her portable trailer to keep cool giving her the ability to change her location to be more comfortable (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Maggie Gay expressed that she has diminished lung capacity which prevented her from being able to get on public transit as fast a rate as other patrons (Personal communication, July 8, 2024). Jon Cooksey and Ruth Waldick, both residents of Salt Spring Island, own their properties and were able to adapt their homes to the effects of the heat dome (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Therefore, they did not experience physical limitations or barriers like the other interviewees during the heat dome.

Environmental Concerns: Ecology and, Infrastructure & Access to Third Spaces

Environmental concerns such as ecological concerns were expressed by four out of seven interviewees. Eva Shaffer is a member of the T'Sou-ke Nation territory and is a Scientist and Marine Liaison Officer on the T'Sou-ke First Nation team. She discussed at length the ecological community experiences the heat dome had on the T'Sou-ke Nation territory and its neighbouring territories. She explained how the T'Sou-ke Nation is in a unique geographic zone in which it is typically “a good five degrees cooler than [the] surrounding communities” consequently neighbouring territories suffered more than them (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). However, she explained how “a lot of terrestrial food species and trees... saw a lot of stress” as newly planted trees died because of the extreme heat and “a good century of [reforestation] mismanagement” causing a weakened ecosystem not resilient enough to cope with extreme weather events, such as the heat dome. Certain plant species did not cultivate and affected local Indigenous' populations' forage harvests (Eva Shaffer, personal communication, July 4, 2024).

Maggie Gay focused her attention primarily on the lack of shade and comfortable seats at bus shelters further exacerbating her discomfort during the heat dome and subsequent EHEs (Personal communication, July 8, 2024). Jon Cooksey and Ruth Waldick drew attention to the unique challenges of living rurally on Salt Spring Island and how their local farmers were, in their opinion, most negatively affected by the heat dome as their crops can be killed by extreme heat, and that the pollinators were absent which prevented the growth of local food on the island (Personal communication, July 12, 2024).

Solutions: The Importance of Community Connections & Effective Communication

The last two interview questions asked interviewees, “how could municipal, provincial and federal government and service providers better communicate with the community about

EHEs,” and “what types of community support would be useful during EHEs?” (Appendix II). In response to these questions, interviewees often claimed they had few, or no, suggestions or solutions to cope with the heat dome and future EHEs. However, as they began speaking, they brainstormed out loud and came up with solutions.

The central themes of the solutions revolved around the importance of community outreach and relationship building, and the need for effective communication and education for priority populations before, during and after the heat dome and future EHEs. John Lamont lives in a subsidized group home managed by mental health workers and suggested they organize communal events in the common room of their building to bring people together (Personal communication, July 2, 2024). He argued this creates a sense of connectedness “like, you’re in it together, you’re all there just to try to beat the heat wave” (Personal communication, July 2, 2024). Jordan Cooper emphasized the importance of outreach, specifically volunteer teams that could check on people living alone and “bring them care packages,” or schedule regular phone calls to those living in isolation that may not be receiving support from Our Place as they are not physically accessing facilities (Personal communication, July 3, 2024). These check-ins were a practice put into place during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic when “family members” couldn’t access Our Place facilities (Personal communication, July 3, 2024). Eva Shaffer, as a member of the T’Sou-ke Nation, expressed the importance of having the elders looked after during the heat dome. Like Jordan Cooper, she also mentioned the importance of outreach, “real outreach... door to door, make sure people are doing okay, see what they’ve got, what they need” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Kari-Ann Leadbitter recounted the heat dome as a time in which the townhouse community she is part of came together to share resources, like sharing shaded areas in one’s backyard, keeping their children cool, and brainstorming ideas on

alternative methods to cooking with heat (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Like Jordan Cooper and Eva Shaffer, Kari-Ann Leadbitter, as a staff member of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) spoke of their outreach to elders via phone calls, but she mentioned that this was a small population of people, roughly five to ten, who staff of VNFC were regularly in contact with (Personal communication, July 4, 2024).

Isolation was a common topic that came up for Maggie Gay, who is a senior living alone in a more rural part of the CRD, and Jon Cooksey and Ruth Waldick, both residents of Salt Spring Island. Maggie, a senior living alone in a basement suite in Saanichton expressed how healthy it had been for her to have a social worker checking on her when she was in recovery after a heart attack. As Maggie said, “well, how else would anybody know about me?” (Personal communication, July 8, 2024). Echoing this, Jon Cooksey said, “you need community... especially if you’re isolated, so at least in a rural community” and that there is no substitute for knowing your neighbour as that might be the only resource one has living in a rural location. Jon identifies as a community organizer and argues that “it all just boils down to friendship” and that “relationships are what does the changing in a complex system” (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Ruth Waldick argued that rural communities already have these connections with those most isolated in their communities, because most residents are somewhat isolated geographically and it is essential for people to know who lives around them (Personal communication, July 12, 2024).

Noting infrastructure concerns, Jordan Cooper argued for constructing shelters that exist for extreme cold weather events that should be tailored for EHEs. He also argued that not only do services need to be expanded during the day, but there is a need for more resources in the evening as often daytime resources close at the end of the day, yet, during the heat dome, it

wasn't cooling off enough in the evening to provide reprieve from the heat (Personal communication, July 3, 2024).

Eva Shaffer argued for a need for “more community preparedness, like trying to get the word out there, trying to spread the good news stories... and try not to let it get you too sad” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). She was also interested in acting locally by “[starting] a community forest that is built around the concept of sustainable food management.” As for government action, she recommended a focus on creating sustainable, healthy communities (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). This could be achieved by improving local infrastructure through retrofitting older housing and building new, affordable housing that is high density and walkable thereby reducing reliance on cars and transit. Lastly, she argued that community-based infrastructure development that focuses on sustainable, healthy communities also should encompass “access to nature so that people have the time and the means to get out and actually appreciate it, enjoy it, and understand what we’re losing” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024). Kari-Ann Leadbitter suggested posting information on buses as they’re air conditioned and people in the community that do not have vehicles ride the bus. She also suggested using local fields and recreation centres in a more “family-focused way,” then people would have been motivated to use them a lot more. She argued that “if we had stations where they could keep cool like [her community] uses for festivals, like if we ran the city like we run festivals, we would have been fine” (Personal communication, July 4, 2024).

From the perspective of those living rurally on Salt Spring Island, Jon Cooksey and Ruth Waldick saw the heat dome as a symptom of a larger, complex problem. Jon took an approach grounded in shifting one’s perspective by arguing that everyone must be “unified and organized and made to feel like there is something meaningful that they can do about [climate change] in a

changing system whose outcome is unpredictable” (Personal communication, July 12, 2024). Ruth Waldick argued for a bottom-up approach focused on collaborating with her local community. She explained that Salt Spring Island has an emergency pod program whereby community members’ who have resources that could be useful in the event of a power outage or emergency weather event can share these resources with their neighbours and surrounding community. Everyone in the area is aware of who has a generator and who has a chainsaw, for example, to ensure that people know where to get help if they need it. It was put into place to better prepare the community in coping with forest fires or a loss of electricity during the cold winter months. Ruth argues that this system could, with more funding, involve extreme weather preparation training and additional resources to adapt the program to EHEs, and other climate emergencies more generally. Ruth argued that an extreme heat event, or a forest fire, or a power outage cannot be seen as individual events but rather part of the whole complex problem of climate change as this perspective could cause problems to compound (Personal communication, July 12, 2024).

Less commonly suggested solutions were personal, small-scale modifications, such as purchasing a portable air conditioner although this comes with limitations such as being unaffordable for some populations, particularly those without disposable income, or those on government disability benefits who are renting and the noise they can make and have the potential to disrupt neighbours (John Lamont, personal communication, July 2, 2024).

Less Frequently Mentioned Themes

Other less frequently mentioned themes included barriers of affordability and accessibility to adaptive strategies, how an individualistic approach and lack of community approach may further exacerbate inequities experienced by priority populations and how

important it is to integrate intersectionality, or IBPA, to ensure that policies and recommendations are not inadvertently harming and suppressing those already affected by the intersections of their identity and lived experience (Ryder, 2018; Versey, 2021; Walker et al., 2021; Amorim-Maia, 2022; Lotfata & Munenzon, 2022). Members of priority populations were further disproportionately affected by the heat dome as it caused compounding problems with COVID-19 health restrictions, the length of the heat dome (seven days), and the overdose crisis affecting predominantly the unhoused or precariously housed population during the event.

In terms of personal reflection of the experience, a few interviewees mentioned the challenge of recounting an event that happened three years ago, June and July 2021, at the time of the interviews, July 2024, and how events may not be perceived “as bad” when reflected on when time had passed. Another challenge mentioned was how a perceived lack or absence of third spaces where people can gather to cool down and to connect is a barrier in reducing isolation for those that live alone and can create connection and accountability to each other in times of crises. An emotional experience noted by two interviewees was the emotional benefit of providing a space for those to tell their stories of lived experience through the interviews themselves and through the production of a podcast prioritizing these voices. A solution that was posed included potential infrastructural remedies that could build community resilience as well as a culture shift in viewing the CRD as a region that can experience EHEs as opposed to a coastal city that has predominantly temperate weather.

Summary

The document review and analysis of the interviews demonstrated the difference in government designed communication sources, and the lived experiences of those directly impacted by the heat dome, and subsequent EHEs. The document analysis stressed the

importance of communication, in particular, the importance of tailoring communication to the audience, and the repetitive nature of EHE resources produced by different levels of government. This repetition suggests a homogenization of sources further stressing the integral nature of tailoring communication efforts to different populations, in the context of this study, priority populations, depending on their different needs. The interviews brought forth the richness and diversity of the lived experiences of seven members of priority populations' and how their specific experiences further argue for incorporating a wide range of voices in policy listening, development and implementation.

As identified in the document analysis, the central messages focused on providing information for homeowners, subsequently neglecting the unique needs of those who do not own their homes and may not have as much freedom to tailor their home to their liking, as well as the challenge of affordability that many renters must cope with. There is also a focus on building resilience, and how to respond to EHEs. As noted above, resilience is a contested term in the realm of priority populations, as resilience cannot be understood without the context of the structures and systems that are responsible for the trauma creating the need for resilience in the first place (Orsini, 2020). The other central focus of the selected government resources included a prescriptive identification of vulnerable populations. This focus on identifying these populations encourages a sense of community responsibility but also suggests that these resources are primarily intended for those that do not identify as a member of a priority population, but it suggests an importance to be aware of priority populations in one's neighbourhood to bring awareness to those who are disproportionately affected by climate change. The *Interactive Regional Heat Map* is the only selected resource that encouraged

interactivity and showed a stark visual demonstration on the distribution of vulnerable, or priority populations, in neighbourhoods within the CRD.

The themes in the interviews were shaped around the interview questions (see Appendix II). These themes were barriers and challenges, community experiences and coping strategies and solutions. The barriers and challenges identified by interviewees were communication, community building, bureaucratic and socioeconomic. The community experiences, or the effects of the heat dome on priority populations focused on coping strategies, including resilience and adaptability, flexibility and resourcefulness, and their individual, including mental, emotional, and spiritual experiences to education and awareness to physical experiences, to environmental concerns, including ecology, infrastructure and access to third spaces.

The solutions expressed by the interviewees stressed the importance of community connection and effective communication before, during and after EHEs. In the context of the interviewees' responses, building community and having personal relationships was mentioned repeatedly and tailoring communication responses that reflects the diversity of the community it seeks to serve, particularly priority populations who are disproportionately more susceptible to the negative effects of climate change.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter analyses and interprets the research findings stated in the previous chapter. It addresses whether and how the research questions were answered, what the significance of the findings are including the themes found in the primary research but were not found in the literature review. The meanings of the findings are explored in relation to the theoretical body of knowledge on the subject of climate change communication and to the profession and field of public administration. It then discusses new themes and ideas, as well as unexpected findings and revisits the conceptual framework to determine how it guided and reinforced the research findings. Then, strategic and practical implications of this research including recommendations are explored. This chapter will close with a discussion of the limitations of this analysis and proposed areas for future research.

Answering the Research Questions

The research questions were:

1. How can the telling and sharing of priority populations' lived experiences of the heat dome be used as a climate change communication tool, and;
2. How does the telling of these stories create more equitable outcomes for priority populations' that are disproportionately impacted by climate change?

The findings answered the first question by having the telling of first-hand lived experience to capture the essence of the barriers and challenges experienced by priority populations' and gave them the opportunity to speak on their own behalf of what they

experienced, how they were impacted by this event and possible solutions to prepare for future EHEs. By giving them the opportunity to tell their stories and asking probing questions that sought to hear about their experiences from the people themselves is an integral piece in developing equitable policy solutions. Further, the creation of a podcast focused on their experiences serves as a way of communicating the impacts of climate change on seven members of priority populations to the wider public. By incorporating the voices of different people of different identities, this study aligned with Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis (IBPA), participatory action research (PAR) and phenomenological approaches discussed in the conceptual framework.

The answer to the second question, in alignment with PAR principles, the researcher, me, spoke directly *with* those affected by the problem rather than conducted a study *on* them (Jacobs, 2018). This democratizes the research and has transformative potential by which power and hierarchy are challenged (Jacobs, 2018). This refutes the hierarchical nature of the traditional positivist research approach by directly involving research participants in the research process. This more democratic research process had the potential to benefit participants more than in a traditional positivist research study whereby participants' may not be as involved in the research process (Jacobs, 2018). This direct involvement of the population in which this study sought to analyze created an integration of knowledge production based on real-life experience of the people it sought to help.

Significance of Findings

The most significant findings in the **literature review** were:

- Podcasting can serve as an effective tool to communicate academic research with the wider public.

- Climate change communication is never neutral when portrayed publicly. It is nuanced and has different meanings to everyone depending on one's view of the problem.
- If we are to view the health of the planet in relation to the health of humans, or with a planetary health lens, inequities of the effects of climate change can be exposed.
- One of the reasons priority populations are disproportionately affected by extreme weather events, such as EHEs, is due to ineffective communication and the compounding nature of other problems happening simultaneously such as COVID-19 and the opioid overdose crisis.

The most significant finding of the **document review** was:

- Most selected government infographics portrayed information that seemed geared toward people that are *not* members of priority populations. These infographics had recommendations that lacked a tailored approach to people that are members of priority populations' thereby neglecting to provide tailored recommendations to their needs during EHEs.

In the interviews, the most significant findings were oriented around barriers and challenges, community experiences and coping strategies and solutions. The most significant findings in the **interviews** were:

- The challenges and barriers, effects and coping strategies and solutions depend on the unique lived experience of a person. This emphasized the integral nature of taking an intersectional approach to the recruitment of individuals to get a varied and detailed

- account of their lived experience, as no lived experience of one person is the exact same as the next.
- Adaptability and “resilience” are measures that can be viewed as privileges not afforded to everyone. Though they may help and inform some members of the community, if the measures are not tailored to different populations with different needs, they may reinforce power inequities of decision making of government policy decision makers over members of priority populations.
 - Small-scale modifications, as opposed to larger-scale modifications such as purchasing one’s own home and modifying it as the owner sees fit, such as the purchasing of an air conditioner or heat pump, is an adaptive strategy that is not applicable to those who do not own their home. These adjustments are prevented in current building codes in B.C. as they do not consider cooling in the same manner as heating requirements (Beugin et al., 2023).
 - Major weather events, such as EHEs, encompass a multilayered/structural responsibility that goes beyond the individual; there is a community responsibility to act to support priority populations during these events thereby creating more equitable outcomes for priority populations who are disproportionately impacted by climate change. This aligns with the Intersectional-Based Policy Approach (IBPA) discussed in the conceptual framework of this study.
 - Amongst interviewees, there is a perceived lack or absence of third spaces where people can gather to cool down and connect. To create equitable solutions in preparation for, during and after extreme weather events there is a community responsibility to invest in spaces that encourage community connection thereby

enforcing a sense of accountability to the more privileged members of the community to help members of priority populations in time of crises.

In summary, each of these key findings support the fundamental importance of incorporating the voices of priority populations in local decision-making processes and policy development in the creation of equitable solutions. Without these voices, solutions may have the potential to further oppress those they seek to protect, as alluded to in the conceptual framework of this study (Ryder, 2018; Versey, 2021; Walker et al., 2021; Amorim-Maia, 2022; Lotfata & Munenzon, 2022). It also emphasizes the diverse and varied nature of each interviewees' experience and how no two experiences replicate one another.

There may be parallels and similarities, hence, the development of themes in the context of this study and for the sake of discussion, but one person's identity and lived experience cannot be reduced to one moment or comment. The intersection of different people's lived experiences and the pillars of their identity may influence how they experience and are affected by extreme weather events, and climate change, more generally. In the context of this study, and this chapter specifically, I relegated the interviewees' responses into quotes and themes that have been interpreted by me, as the researcher. I acknowledged and argued that this is fraught with subjective interpretation, as established in the conceptual framework of this study. Applying a phenomenological lens to the development of themes and patterns in the research findings explained a reason for how and why I arrived at my interpretations but is not the only way to perceive and interpret the responses to the questions. In the context of building relationships and interviewing members of priority populations, this has particularly gravity as I, as a cis-gendered,

white, educated woman as a member of an academic institution has a particular lens in which I interpreted and viewed these responses.

Themes Found in Primary Research, but Not Found in Literature Review

The themes mentioned in the literature review were podcasting and accessibility, climate change communication, planetary health, and the disproportionate effects of EHEs on priority populations. The themes found in the primary research all related to the themes found in the literature review, but didn't necessarily use those specific terms. It is important to recognize that the literature review was conducted within an academic setting with the collection of academic sources that can be disconnected from the daily language used by members of priority populations' telling their stories of their lived experiences. For example, planetary health as an academic term is not explicitly mentioned by interviewees, but the connection between their lived experiences and the environment is referred to frequently. It was expressed by all interviewees that they were in some way affected by the heat dome, an event that harshly impacted the environment, and, consequently, impacted members of priority populations that live within said environment. However, the nature of a phenomenological analysis requires interpretation and, as the researcher in this study, this is my interpretation based on the themes found in the interviewees' responses. Though, as expected, each of these themes were touched on by interviewees. The barriers and challenges and community experiences generated themes less connected to the literature review, whereas the solutions connected more to the themes found in the literature review as they centred around community connections and effective communication.

Themes found in the primary research, but that weren't found in the literature review were the barriers and challenges of community building and how prioritizing spaces that build

connection between neighbours can save lives during crises. The coping strategies present in the primary research but not the literature review were the pervasiveness of resiliency, adaptability, flexibility and resourcefulness. The community experiences oriented around individual experiences such as emotional and spiritual experiences were not mentioned in the literature review but were discussed at length in the interviews. The absence of education and awareness about EHEs tailored to priority populations and the physical concerns experienced by the interviewees were themes found in the primary research yet not discussed in the literature review. Environmental concerns, such as concerns about the local ecology, infrastructure, and the perceived lack of or absence of third spaces for people to congregate in to connect and share information were other themes that came forward in the interviews but were absent from the literature review.

The less frequently mentioned themes included how an individualistic approach and lack of community approach may further exacerbate inequities experienced by priority populations, how it can be challenging to recount an experience that had happened three years ago, June and July 2021, at the time of the interviews, July 2024, and how events may not be perceived “as bad” when reflected on once time has passed, a perceived lack or absence of third spaces where people can gather to cool down and connect thereby reducing isolation for those that live alone and consequently, creating connection and accountability to each other in time of crises. An emotional experience noted by two interviewees was the emotional benefit of providing a space for those to tell their stories of lived experiences through the interviews themselves, and, in the future, by way of a podcast. As a reminder, the purpose of the production of the podcast is to create a palatable way to hear and learn about these lived experiences and to spread the reach of these interviews to the wider public. All these themes were not addressed in the literature review,

as they were contingent on the responses of the interviewees and of the telling of their lived experiences during the heat dome.

Meaning of Findings in Relation to Theoretical Body of Knowledge & Profession and Field of Public Administration

The findings are important to the theoretical body of knowledge and the profession and field of public administration because they add to the growing discourse on the role of podcasting in academia providing alternative methods to communicate research studies and results to the public thereby forging new pathways of communication between academia and the public. Further to this advancement in communicating academic results, this study explored the ways in which academic research results can be transmitted and commuted to the public, and that the integration of those that are disproportionately affected by climate change into the entirety of the research process, such as in the case of PAR, has the potential to empower and embolden priority populations' to be heard and their views to be integrated into future decision making and policy making.

This study also explored the different ways to connect with and reach members of the community, or how to reach hard-to-reach groups. In the selection process of interviewees, it was integral that they self-identified with the definition of priority populations. As iterated above priority populations, or, those affected by EHEs, includes, but is not limited to, socially isolated seniors, those with perinatal lived experience, such as pregnant or nursing people, and newcomers to Canada (Wiebe & Mah, 2023). This inclusion of these voices that may not typically be involved in decision making processes that relate to and impact their communities propels the need for more equitable solutions to multifaceted issues such as climate change. As this study is informed by the intersectional lens of IBPA, it was essential to speak with members

of different communities with varying pieces of their identity that interact and inform their lived experiences within the CRD and of EHEs. This included a person living in subsidized government housing for those needing mental health support, an employee of a public shelter, an Indigenous ecologist, an Indigenous employee of the VNFC, an elder living in isolation, and two community members inhabiting a rural region of the CRD. These differences of lived experience also lend to different ways of being and knowing from the Western framework, that are based on trust and relationship building (Cochran et al., 2008). Though this sample size was limited due to being a master's thesis, as well as time, resources and budget, it gives a window into the lived experiences of those disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.

The tangible output of the publicly available podcast of these interviews illustrates that this study was not a static report and seeks to revivify the results of this study and the data, the interviews, themselves. This pursuit has been demonstrated through podcasts such as *The Indigenous Planetary Health Podcast* and *Frontlines Are Everywhere*, podcasts both produced by teams at the University of Victoria (UVic) in Victoria, British Columbia. *The Indigenous Planetary Health Podcast* is produced by Dr. Heather Castleden and Dr. Hōkūlani Aikau as part of the Archipelagos Collective (Archipelagos Collective, 2025) “brings... conversations with Indigenous artists, activists, and academics who are tackling the triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution through daily acts of asserting self-determination to broad trans-Indigenous collective action” (Archipelagos Collective, 2025). *Frontlines Are Everywhere*, produced by Dr. Jeff Ganohalidoh Corntassel “... takes a critical look at world politics and Indigenous nationhood by discussing Indigenous-led resurgence and activist movements, Indigenous trade networks, Indigenous climate action and the formation of new alliances that transcend colonial state borders among other topics” (Borders in Globalization UVic, 2025).

Both podcasts serve as examples of the developing field of using podcasts to integrate research grounded in community connection and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

New and Unexpected Findings

The barriers and challenges, community experiences and solutions varied depending on the intersecting vulnerabilities of the interviewed members of priority populations. This emphasized the relevance of IBPA to interpret these responses and how they interact and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations during EHEs. The unique nature of each person's lived experience lent to unique answers to the interview questions, but themes were deduced based on these responses. Noted above, no one person can be limited to their quotes gathered by a researcher such as myself, but it helps to identify patterns and connections that can be interpreted and given meaning in the context of qualitative research.

This understanding of the complex, intersectional and diverse nature of priority populations' lived experiences of the heat dome provides a pathway for PAR to be applied to policy listening, development and implementation. It bridges academic research and policy research insofar that PAR does not have to be restricted to academia, and, when applied outside of academia, in the realm of policy creation, it has the potential to create more equitable policy outcomes and solutions. This emphasizes a more involved approach to public consultation that prioritizes conversing and connecting with members of priority populations' that are notoriously ignored, neglected or subjugated by policies, thereby potentially further oppressing these populations in policymaking.

Summary and Revisiting the Conceptual Framework

Having completed this study with the established conceptual framework corroborating and guiding this research, I found that it provided a formidable foundation in developing equitable solutions to multifaceted policy issues such as climate change and its disproportionate effects on priority populations. It emphasizes the importance of PAR and in taking a phenomenological approach in developing equitable solutions to multifaceted challenges such as climate change and accounting for and supporting priority populations before, during and after EHEs. The interpretive nature of these methods centres the sensitive, caring and intimate work involved in building relationships with members of the community and giving them the space and time to share their lived experiences.

The advice I would give to policymakers and public administrators, is that in order to integrate these voices and their perspectives into decision-making, it is integral to build relationships and participate in community building, as mentioned above as a solution to better preparing and supporting priority populations during EHEs. These institutional bodies are not outside of the need for communities to be more connected and responsible for one another; it includes the institutions that make the policies that ultimately effect the lives of the public, and, more specifically, priority populations. This borrows from Indigenous ways of being and knowing insofar that relationship building is the foundation in building trust and conducting any sort of partnership or connection with Indigenous communities and in actively working toward reconciliation (Lightfoot & Maddison, 2024; Alidina et al., 2020). As well, these relationships are not solely for the gain of knowledge gathering on part of policymakers and decisionmakers; it is a conscious and careful effort to take the time to build these relationships. As mentioned

throughout this thesis, the integration of priority populations' voices is crucial in creating equitable policy solutions.

Another piece of advice in building trusting relationships with members of priority populations is to meet them where they are at. This was an integral part of the research done in this study, in which I went to people's homes and offices to talk with them. This cannot be underestimated as an instrument in building community and connection with these populations. It added an element of ease and comfortability of the interviewees and demonstrated to them that what they had to say and to contribute to the conversation was more important than getting perfect sound quality, or making participants meet me, as the researcher, where *I* felt most comfortable. Luckily, I greatly enjoyed this element of going into peoples' homes, but I am aware that this may not be the same for everyone. However, prioritizing this, I argue, was an integral part in providing a comfortable environment for people to open up about their lived experiences of the heat dome.

Conceptual Framework

This thesis offers several insights for policymakers oriented to equity-informed policy creation. These themes above have been analyzed and reviewed through the lens of the Intersectionality-Based Policy Analysis Framework (IBPA) (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019; Hoogeveen et al., 2021). As noted above, intersectionality is defined as “the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities” (Collins, 2015, p. 2). IBPA uses intersectionality as its lens and, is “as a policy tool is to better illuminate how policy constructs individuals' and groups' relative power and privileges vis-à-vis their socio-economic-political status, health and well-being”

(Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 134). IBPA serves as a means to capture the “different dimensions of policy contexts including history, politics, everyday lived experiences, diverse knowledges and intersecting social locations” which can then “generate transformative insights, knowledge, policy solutions and actions that cannot be gleaned from other equity-focused policy frameworks” (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019, p. 135). Without the consideration of IBPA, policies and recommendations have the potential to inadvertently harm and suppress those already impacted by these intersections of their identity and lived experience (Ryder, 2018; Versey, 2021; Walker et al., 2021; Amorim-Maia, 2022; Lotfata & Munenzon, 2022). Further, IBPA drives equity for those communities that are “systematically marginalized [that] have typically contributed the least to climate change but are disproportionately negatively impacted by climate-related events, such as wildfires, extreme heat, flooding and extreme weather” (Hoogeveen et al., 2021, p. 6). IBPA provided a conceptual framework based on an equity-informed approach to the design, production and analysis of the interviews.

The interactions of intersectionality, power and democracy were used to inform this study, and this included the use of a participatory action research (PAR) lens. As this study sought to amplify, empower and provide agency to priority populations, it is inherently “concern[ed] with power and democracy and their interactions” (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Further, PAR considers “gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities and other social factors” and intersectionality considers the confluence and interactions between these windows of identity (Hall, 1992, p. 16). Patricia Hill Collins argued that placing intersectionality and participatory democracy in dialogue aligns with both of their goals by “aspir[ing] to imagine new social relations of equality, fairness, inclusion and social justice” and this informed the conceptual framework of this study and its objectives (2019, p. 187).

Due to the nature of this study being conceived through the lens of IBPA, PAR and a phenomenological approach, it was interpretive in nature. Interpretive research is a research paradigm that assumes that social reality is not subjective or objective, but that people's lived experiences shape these realities (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011). Interpretive, phenomenological research is "focus[ed] on meaning-making and the production of contextual knowledge" of social communities and their iterations of their lived experiences (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2011, p. 38). The context for this study was the telling, and recording, of the lived experiences of priority populations of the heat dome and to share these stories publicly via a podcast.

Strategic and Practical Implications of this Research

One of the central goals of this study was to give members of priority populations the opportunity to tell their lived experience of the heat dome. The intention was to explore how the telling of these stories may serve as a climate change communication tool. The purpose of producing a publicly available podcast is to create awareness around the lived experiences of members of priority populations who are typically underrepresented and often neglected in decision making spheres, and to reach local decision makers and policy makers creating policy in response to extreme weather events in hopes to create more equitable policy solutions. It is important to note that this integration with local decision makers will not be measured in this study as it expands beyond the scope of this project. This study suggests that those who are in decision making spheres designing policy for these populations may choose to tailor their policy to these different populations if they hear directly from them. Therefore, this study was created for the audience of local decision makers and policy makers and the recommendations are designed accordingly.

Recommendations

The recommendations from this study will be meaningful and effective depending on the member of the population they are directed to, whether that be a local policy maker, a person with the privilege to access cooling capabilities and other resources, or members of priority populations that are disproportionately impacted by climate change. In the field of climate change communication, the consideration of the audience and tailoring of information is referred to as audience segmentation (Chryst et al., 2018). This “process... involves identifying... subgroups that share similar psychographic profiles” (Chryst et al., 2018, p. 1110). Subgroups are defined by their “unique beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors [sic]” and this allows for tailored communications (Chryst et al., 2018). In the context of this study, these recommendations are directed toward government decision makers who have a seat at the table creating policy that impacts these priority populations and those not part of priority populations to understand the role they may play in their community as a resource for priority populations and how priority populations are disproportionately affected before, during and after these events. As noted in the literature review above, if solutions don’t include the voices of those most disproportionately affected by climate change measures are at risk of continuing to oppress those populations which they seek to protect.

A recommendation that has spawned from this study is on how to reach groups that are notoriously hard-to-reach. Though I do not consider myself an expert, there were methods used to connect with local community members for interview recruitment. Dr. Wiebe and Kirsten reached out to their existing connections with different community organizations, including the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA), the Alliance to End Homelessness, Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC), Mental Health Recovery Partners, South Island, BC Seniors

Advocate, the Transition Salt Spring Society, and Seniors Serving Seniors. Further connections were made from these initial connections that led to the final selected interviewees. For future efforts in connecting with hard-to-reach groups, ample time and a sizable budget are required and cannot be underestimated. It takes time to cultivate relationships with priority populations, as noted by Kerri-Ann Leadbitter in her interview in which she explained that many Indigenous folks would feel uncomfortable and likely reject an interview from someone, like me, who represents an institution such as a university (Personal communication, July 4, 2024).

The consideration and design of communication efforts with the audience at the forefront is an integral piece of sharing information with the public. As demonstrated by the document review and the responses in the interviews themselves, different opinions and perspectives will come from people with different lived experience. This difference will inform the support and education needed to improve the conditions of those disproportionately affected by climate change, and in the case of this study, EHEs. Therefore, a recommendation that comes from this research is to use a IBPA lens in developing policy that advocates for priority populations needs. This can be accomplished by initiating a public engagement effort focused on centring an intersectional perspective.

Limitations of Analysis

The limitations of this analysis included logistical challenges, interpretive challenges, and the nature of my positionality in relation to the interviewees and the analysis itself. There were logistical limitations such as budget and time constraints that prevented me from connecting with a newcomer to Canada or a precariously housed or unhoused individual at the time I was conducting interviews. Another logistical limitation was that I was out of the country from July

17, 2024, to November 30, 2024. This resulted in a limited time frame to conduct the interviews, and to expand my web of connection with different members of the community.

The interpretive lenses applied to this study, an intersectional policy-based analysis (IBPA), participatory action research (PAR) approach and a phenomenological analysis have limitations inherent to them. This means that by nature of an interpretive approach to this study and to the analyses, they are impacted by my positionality as a cisgender, white, education woman conducting this study as part of my master's thesis project. These approaches and lens are interpretive in nature. The meaning-making garnered from this study are made by me, a cisgendered, white, educated woman who conducted a research study as a member of an academic institution. Though the phenomena found in the study were expressed by interview participants, my interpretation and analysis informed its meaning-making. This is a limitation inherent to a post-positivist subjectivism of participation, collaboration and induction (O'Leary, 2021).

A central tenet of this project, and *A Hot Topic* more generally, was to reach hard-to-reach groups. However, each interviewee had some level of privilege that allowed me to contact them and engage with them in a location that was of their choosing. Part of this indicates that those who I *did* interview had some element of their lived experience that allowed me to reach them, and for them to feel comfortable to be interviewed by me, therefore demonstrating a level of privilege. This leaves a gap between myself, as the researcher, and those members of priority populations that I did not actually reach. As mentioned by Kari-Ann Leadbitter, if I was to place a microphone in front of some of the people who use the resources at the VNFC, some people would not feel comfortable engaging with me at all. Merely being a member of an academic

institution, or there being any speculation of my intention, further speaks to the challenge of reaching hard-to-reach groups.

Additionally, one of the groups we sought to connect with was isolated seniors. The majority of the deaths during the heat dome were of isolated seniors (BC Coroners' Service, 2022). These individuals are sometimes so isolated that they may not be connected to any community organization, such as the ones I reached out to for recruitment, and are therefore, unreachable by the public. It is possible that their neighbours don't know of them, let alone community organizations. This fact further stresses the need for community connectedness and integration in creating a sense of responsibility to one another, to ensure no one is isolated and left behind during extreme weather events and climate emergencies.

Areas for Future Research

As this was a master's research study with limited scope, there are further opportunities for future research in relation to this project. Some areas of further research include interviewing more members of priority populations creating a wider breadth of voices and experiences, as well as connecting with populations who have more direct lived experience of EHEs than those who were interviewed in this study, expanding the geographical region of people being interviewed and assessing the impact of these stories and the podcast on local decision makers and policy makers, pending the podcast's release to the public by way of an implementation analysis. Other populations, such as newcomers to Canada and outdoor workers, who were not included in this study, but are disproportionately affected by EHEs could be recruited for future interviews to expand the scope of priority populations.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

“... [everyone has] to be unified and organized and made to feel like there is something meaningful that they can do about [climate change] in a changing system whose outcome is unpredictable.”

Jon Cooksey, interview participant

Final Reflections

This paper argued that the telling of lived experiences of priority populations is integral in creating policy solutions that are equitable. It emphasized the unique and individual nature of people’s lived experiences, and how hearing and prioritizing these stories is the way to advocating for the needs of priority populations. The intention to develop these interviews into a publicly available podcast is an integral portion of demonstrating the emerging field of using podcasting to convey academic research and its findings and observations. This is the central contribution this project has had to the field of public administration, and academia more generally.

Speaking directly with members of priority populations also aligns with IBPA, PAR and phenomenological approaches as it is interpretive in nature and emphasizes their telling as actual and reputable knowledge. This connected, caring, and intimate work can be just as data driven as a quantitative study and is arguably an integral part in building trusting relationships and connections with members of priority populations. This demonstrates the crucial nature of taking the time to build relationships with members of priority populations to build trust and rapport in this type of IBPA, PAR, and phenomenological research. It also stresses the importance of adapting to building relationships in a way that meets them where they are at. This means

physically, mentally and emotionally meeting them where they feel comfortable and at ease and tailoring the consultative process to their individual needs. This project, with a PAR approach, sought to integrate the interviewees in the process and design that prioritized their lived experience to find more equitable policy solutions. As there were limitations to this study, as discussed above, the effect this podcast will have on local decision-making was not and will not be evaluated and measured, but it sets the precedent that these voices are instrumental in creating equitable policy solutions as they are based on lived experience. Lived experience can not only be perceived as data, in the context of academia, but as a way to subvert the stereotypical framework of objective research approaches insofar that subjective and interpretive analyses are meaningful work with real-life effects.

Lessons: Build Trusting Relationships, Engage in Meaningful Consultation & Tailor Communication Efforts

The lessons policymakers can learn from this study is that building trusting relationships and engaging in meaningful consultation efforts are integral pieces of the puzzle in developing equitable policy outcomes. Creating tailored communication efforts that are designed for members of priority populations themselves is also an area that could be further expanded on. To begin this process, using current community connections, such as through local organizations, like Mental Health Recovery Partners South Island or Our Place Society, as myself, Dr. Wiebe and Kirsten did to reach out to members of priority populations is a useful starting point. This is also part of meeting people where they are at, in spheres that they may already be comfortable in to engage in trust and rapport building. As mentioned in this study, those populations that are hard-to-reach may not be members of local organizations and may require tapping into community building efforts to identify who may be disproportionately impacted during an EHE.

A suggestion of this could be the use of the *Interactive Regional Heat Map* to identify the most vulnerable neighbourhoods in a given area (CRD, n.d.). This could lay the groundwork of areas to prioritize these efforts, though all members of priority populations should be prioritized in preparing for future EHEs.

Recommendations and Implementation

As the summer of 2025 is around the corner at the publishing of this thesis, the recommendations above must be acted upon urgently. Based on the last four summers, EHEs are becoming the norm and are becoming more frequent. These events are no longer unprecedented and promptly require funding and resources as soon as possible, particularly in efforts going toward preparing for these events, specifically, in the preparation of priority populations. Through this study, municipal, provincial and federal policymakers are invited to take action to respond to the needs of priority populations in their respective level of government. As this study was conducted in the CRD, local government organizations such as the CRD Community Health Network (CHN) are encouraged to expand on their efforts in their Capital Region Extreme Heat Information Portal and to develop a comprehensive consultation process that incorporates the perspectives of priority populations. The responses given by the interview participants in this study may serve as a resource and blueprint in the pursuit of expanding these efforts. Areas of focus include creating more resources tailored to the needs of renters, or those who are unhoused or precariously housed, like, for example, reducing barriers in acquiring portable air conditioning units and overriding bylaws surrounding the prohibition of air conditioning units (Government of British Columbia, n.d.c).

Another effort that can be made by the municipal government is on promoting, using tailored communication efforts that consider the unique needs of each audience, in particular, the

needs of members of priority populations the need for learning about one's neighbours and putting in the conscious effort to be aware of those in one's neighbourhood. This could be paired with the development of outreach teams who are responsible for assessing and recording those who are members of priority populations that may need more support during EHEs. A campaign tailored at, not only knowing who members of priority populations are, as that's already been done, but creating a link between people, such as having each other's phone numbers, or a designated drop-in time, to connect with these individuals to check in on them during EHEs. This would have to be done with the members of priority populations' consent. It will not come without its challenges and will require further research and planning beyond the recommendation of this thesis but is important to consider in recommendations moving forward. In the context of this study, it is focused on the needs of priority populations based in the CRD, but provincial and federal governments may campaign, in a similar fashion, the urgency and need for sufficient preparation and support before, during and after EHEs.

As discussed above, preparing priority populations for these events is an integral piece in supporting and equipping the community with the necessary, vital and life-savings tools, from community connections and relationship building to applying for grants to receive portable air conditioners (BC Hydro, 2025). The time is now for policymakers and decision makers to act. As mentioned above, summer 2025 is coming soon, and there isn't much time to prepare. The deaths that have occurred due to EHEs can be avoided with adequate preparation and support during and after these events. It is time to catch up with the times where extreme weather events are no longer isolated and are happening more and more frequently. How many people will have to die before action can be taken? How many more catastrophes must happen that disproportionately impact priority populations? What will it take for the needs of priority populations to be

integrated into decision making? How can listening to the needs of priority populations create more equitable policy outcomes and solutions? These questions are being asked as the temperature rises.

Concluding Thoughts

I chose the quote at the beginning of this chapter to signal to policymakers and decision makers to emphasize that everyone, meaning *everyone*, particularly members of priority populations, should be given the resources they need to feel supported in responding to the impacts of climate change, and more specifically, of EHEs. Having the resources to cope with climate change without community support is a privilege that is not afforded to everyone. As mentioned repeatedly in this thesis, climate change disproportionately affects members of priority populations but is not necessarily exacerbated by these communities. Those that are disproportionately affected are treated as expendable and bear the brunt of these impacts. An equitable, inclusive, consultative process built on relationship building and community awareness is integral in providing an equitable environment in which we can cope with the effects of climate change together. There must be unification and organization, as Jon Cooksey said, and connection, I would add, to prepare for, cope with and deal with the aftermath of EHEs in the CRD.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Interview Participants

Interview Participant	Description	Date of Interview	Location of Interview
John Lamont	Staff at Mental Health Recovery Partners, South Island	July 2, 2024	Office of Mental Health Recovery Partners, South Island
Jordan Cooper	Director of Services at Our Place Society	July 3, 2024	Room at Our Place Society
Eva Schaffer	Member of T'Souke First Nation and Scientist and Marine Liaison Officer on the T'Souke First Nation team	July 4, 2024	Her home on T'Souke Nation territory

Kari-Ann Leadbitter	Director of Early Childhood Supports at Victoria Native Friendship Centre. (VNFC)	July 4, 2024	Her office at VNFC
Maggie Gay	Retired person above the age of 70 living alone	July 8, 2024	Her home in Saanich
Jon Cooksey	TV Writer and Producer, communications specialist in climate change and activist	July 12, 2024	His home on Salt Spring Island
Ruth Waldick	Ecologist based on Salt Spring Island	July 12, 2024	Jon Cooksey's home on Salt Spring Island

Appendix II: Interview Questions

Interview Questions July 2024

3 stories

1. How did the 2021 heat dome affect you?
 - a. Where were you during that time?
2. How did you respond to the heat dome of 2021?
 - b. How has your behaviour changed since the last heat dome?
3. How has the extreme heat affected your mental, physical and emotional health and well-being?

3 barriers

4. What are some of the barriers you experienced during the heat dome of 2021?
5. What resources or tools did you use to cope with the extreme heat?
 - c. What, if any, government resources did you use to cope during the heat dome of 2021?
6. How has extreme heat changed your community?

3 solutions

7. How could municipal, provincial and federal government and service providers better communicate with the community about extreme heat events?
8. What types of community support would be useful during extreme heat events?

9. Is there anything else I should ask but didn't?

Appendix III: Ethics Certificate of Approval



Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board
 Michael Williams Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
 T 250-472-4645 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

Certificate of Approval - Annual Renewal

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Sarah Marie Wiebe	ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER 22-0613 Expedited review - delegated
UVIC DEPARTMENT: Public Administration PADM	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE: 06-Jan-2023
	APPROVED ON: 05-Jan-2024
	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE: 05-Jan-2025
<p>PROJECT TITLE: Feeling the Heat of B.C.'s Climate Emergency: Co-Creating Equity-Informed Emergency Planning and Climate Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Heat Exposures in the Capital Regional District</p> <p>RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS: Erica Dolman - Research Assistant, University of Victoria Alfonsine Leynes - Research Assistant, University of Victoria Kirsten Mah - Co-lead, Capital Regional District Jumai Emenike - Research Assistant, University of Victoria</p> <p>DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), University of Victoria Michael Smith Health Research BC (HEALTHRESEARCHBC), University of Victoria Michael Smith Health Research BC (HEALTHRESEARCHBC), University of Victoria</p> <p>DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL: Lynes_tcps2-eptc2-certificate.pdf - 22-Nov-2022 Emenike_tcps2-eptc2-certificate.pdf - 22-Nov-2022 Letter of Invitation and Information_Heat Exposure Study 2022.docx - 22-Nov-2022 DOLMAN tcps2-eptc2-certificate.pdf - 21-Feb-2023 A hot topic flyer_March 1 2023.pdf - 01-Mar-2023 REVISED_A Hot Topic_Survey Template_March 1 2023_SMW.docx - 01-Mar-2023 REVISED_A Hot Topic_Interview Guide_March 1 2023.docx - 01-Mar-2023 A hot topic flyer_March 1 2023.pdf - 01-Mar-2023 Consent_Form_Feeling the Heat_Revised March 3 2023.doc - 03-Mar-2023 Consent_Form_Feeling the Heat_Revised March 3 2023.doc - 03-Mar-2023</p>	
Conditions of approval	
<p>This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.</p> <p>Amendments To make changes to the approved research procedure in your study, please submit "Amendments" or "Annual renewal with amendments" form. You must receive research ethics approval before proceeding with your amended protocol.</p> <p>Renewals Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.</p> <p>Project Closures When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.</p>	
Certification	

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria's policies for research involving human participants.

Dr. Sandra Gibbons
 Chair, Human Research Ethics Board

Dr. Matthew Murphy
 Vice-chair, Human Research Ethics Board

Certificate issued On: 05-Jan-2024

Appendix IV: Written Consent Form



University of Victoria

Participant Consent Form

Feeling the Heat of B.C.'s Climate Emergency: Co-Creating Equity-Informed Emergency Planning and Climate Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Heat Exposures in the Capital Regional District

You are invited to participate in a study entitled ***Feeling the Heat of B.C.'s Climate Emergency: Co-Creating Equity-Informed Emergency Planning and Climate Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Heat Exposures in the Capital Regional District*** that is being conducted by Erica Dolman (Masters of Public Administration Student, University of Victoria), Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe (Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria) and Kirsten Mah (Healthy Communities Planner, Capital Regional District).

This research is being funded by the Social Sciences Humanities Council of Canada (SSHRC) and Michael Smith Health Research BC.

Purpose and Objectives

This research aims to learn from the lived experiences of groups of people with negative health impacts related to extreme weather, to improve adaptation and emergency preparedness in British Columbia. Our research will focus on an examination of the impact of extreme heat.

Our research questions include: *How are local, regional, provincial, Indigenous and federal governments preparing for extreme weather events in Canada? Who are the most vulnerable or priority populations to negative health impacts related to extreme heat events? What does the experience of extreme heat look like for these groups? What recommendations do they have for improving emergency planning, policy and practice before, during and after extreme heat events?*

These questions will be answered through quantitative and qualitative methods, involving secondary and primary research.

Importance of this Research

This project brings an equity-informed lens to create a safer space for affected communities to tell their stories so that policymakers can learn from their lived-experiences and improve outcomes.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your experience of and vulnerability to extreme heat in the Capital Regional District of British Columbia.

What is involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include completing a survey, participating in a focus group/sharing circle, community engagement session/workshop or in-depth interview.

Audiotapes, written notes, and observations will be taken by our research team and a transcription will be made available afterwards. If you provide our team with any items such as images, videos or journal reflections regarding your experience of extreme heat exposure, you will have the option to be credited with your name, pseudonym or identifier such as "Participant A". Any images collected must be accompanied with consent as indicated below to be included in the reporting, presentation and publication of research findings.

Inconvenience

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including travel to any in person meetings or emotional discomfort when discussing lived experience of extreme heat exposure.

Risks

There are potential risks to you by participating in this research, including emotional discomfort. To prevent or to deal with these risks, our team will make local resources to community health programs available. You may also pause or withdraw your contribution to the project at any time without penalty. If you provide us with images, videos, journal reflections or artworks, you may be identified in the presentation and publication of the results of this study.

Benefits

Participants will have the benefit of sharing their experiences with researchers with the aim of influence policy and action. Societal benefits include enriched awareness about the links between vulnerability, equity and extreme heat in the Capital Regional District and enhanced communication during extreme weather events. Benefits to the state of knowledge include deepened understanding of vulnerable populations'

My images (artworks, photographs, videos), for: Analysis* _____ Dissemination** _____

Journal reflections may be included for: Analysis* _____ Dissemination** _____

Photos may be taken of me [my child] for: Analysis* _____ Dissemination** _____

Videos may be taken of me [my child] for: Analysis* _____ Dissemination** _____

*Analysis means it will only be reviewed by our research team and not shared publicly.

** Dissemination means this will be shared publicly. Even if no names are used, you [or your child] may be recognizable if visual images are shown in the results.

PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT only if you consent:

I consent to be identified by name / credited in the results of the study: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the results: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

Future Use of Data

PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT:

I consent to the use of my data in future research: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

I **do not** consent to the use of my data in future research: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

I consent to be contacted in the event my data is requested for future research: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix V: Recruitment Email Sent to Organizations

Hello!

My name is Erica Dolman, and I am the Research Assistant on this project that will be conducting the interviews.

We're making a podcast and want to hear your voice!

Feeling the Heat of B.C.'s Climate Emergency: Co-Creating Equity-Informed Emergency Planning and Climate Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Heat Exposures in the Capital Regional District

You are invited to participate in a study entitled **Feeling the Heat of B.C.'s Climate Emergency: Co-Creating Equity-Informed Emergency Planning and Climate Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Heat Exposures in the Capital Regional District** that is being conducted by Erica Dolman (Masters of Public Administration Student, University of Victoria), Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe (Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria) and Kirsten Mah (Healthy Communities Planner, Capital Regional District).

Purpose and Objectives

To learn from the lived experiences of groups of people with negative health impacts related to extreme weather, to improve adaptation and emergency preparedness in British Columbia. Our research will focus on an examination of the impact of extreme heat.

What is involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this podcast and research, your participation will include participating in a recorded interview that will be shared publicly, also with your consent.

Interviews will be one-on-one with Erica Dolman, the Research Assistant, and will take no longer than 1.5 hours.

Audiotapes, written notes, and observations will be taken by our research team and a transcription will be made available afterwards.

<https://outlook.office.com/mail/AAMkAGJmOWY50TkyLTZmMjetNDIjZiIiZDkzLTjYzgwZGRkYjNIOQAuAAAAAD7QM7zg8feQbMMytNMz4dxAQDCyoyoJ95MTpYdCQ9bqjXYAAHAggWIAAA%3D/id/AAQ...>

1/6/25, 3:17 PM

Mail - Erica Dolman - Outlook

Compensation

Research participants will be given a \$50 honorarium for their participation.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be used only with your permission granted in writing. If you withdraw partway through the study, you will still receive compensation.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: a publicly available podcast, public presentations, reports, and a master's thesis. Individual participants will remain anonymous in these products unless consent is provided on the participation consent form.

Our research poster, *A Hot Topic* Final Report, and Consent Form are attached to this email and can be shared with those that are interested in participating in the podcast.

Please contact me, Kirsten or Sarah if you have any questions or are interested in being interviewed.

Warmly,

Erica Dolman (she/her/hers)

Master of Public Administration Student | University of Victoria

Graduate Researcher, *A Hot Topic - Addressing Vulnerability to Extreme Heat Exposure in the CRD* | University of Victoria and Capital Regional District Community Health Network

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[LinkedIn](#)

I live and work on the unceded and stolen territory of the Lək̓ʷəŋən speaking peoples: the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples. My responsibility as a settler scholar on these lands is to advocate for decolonization, institutional and individual accountability, a full response to the TRC calls to action, and a future of Indigenous sovereignty and Land Back across Turtle Island. We are all Treaty People.

Appendix VI: Recruitment Poster for A Hot Topic

A HOT TOPIC

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT

Community-engaged research with vulnerable communities directly impacted by extreme heat exposure in British Columbia



MIXED METHODS



Data gathered through a community-engaged design justice approach, including a survey, sharing circles and climate cafés with affected communities

SHARED LEADERSHIP



Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe (School of Public Administration, University of Victoria), academic co-lead with community health planners and participating health authorities from climate, health and emergency roles

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