GROWING LOCAL FOOD: CHARTING MEANING EMERGENCE THROUGH THE DYNAMICS OF DISCOURSE, RHETORIC, AND FRAMING

by

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We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆpeoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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Abstract

This dissertation seeks to understand how new meanings emerge in the context of institutional change. Existing research seeking to understand shifts in meaning has primarily accessed meaning, across numerous contexts, via the three key constructs of discourse, rhetoric, or framing. Within the context of the emergence of the local food movement in Canada, I employ a mixed methods approach using term frequencies, topic modelling and qualitative content analysis, within a computational grounded theory framework for Big Data analysis. My data consists of all articles containing any mention of the term "local food" in popular Canadian press over 37 years from 1978-2014, a database totalling 31,421 articles. My results show that firstly, new meanings pertaining to local food emerged rapidly over the 37-year period. The emergence of a new meaning for local food, associated with the politicization of food production occurred in the second half of my dataset, whereas the first half was marked by connotations of poverty and hunger, associated with the local food bank. Secondly, unexpected actors were found to significantly impact the propulsion of meaning change, by establishing new vocabularies surrounding the term "local food". Finally, this dissertation shows that the new meanings associated with local food emerged as a result of discursive opportunities, momentarily arising through the confluence of discourse, rhetoric *and* framing. I propose an emergent process model of meaning change and, further, propose that discursive opportunity structures can be better understood through the metaphor of an emergent property.

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Dedication

For my darling Iliyan who has drenched my world with meaning. I am inspired by your bravery, curiosity and strength, every day.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

At its core institutional theory is concerned with why organizations conform to normative demands that are not based on efficiency, but rather on social norms that often run counter to rational, instrumentally focused demands (Lawrence, 1999; Suddaby, 2010; Suddaby, Elsbach, Greenwood, Meyer, & Zilber, 2010). This core concern puts meaning at the center of institutional inquiry, by asking "how and why organizations attend, and attach meaning, to some elements of their institutional environments and not others" (Suddaby, 2010 p. 15). Despite having such a defined focus on meaning, institutional theory has drifted from its social constructivist origins, moving away from earlier treatments of meaning systems by seminal works in institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977), towards increasingly structural implications and outcomes of institutionalization (Phillips et al., 2004; Phillips & Malhotra, 2008; Suddaby, 2010) that "define the concept of institution in terms of patterns of action" (Phillips et al., 2004 p. 635) in the material realm at the expense of investigating the construction of meaning in the symbolic realm (Suddaby, 2010).

As a counterbalance to the contemporary "hypermuscular" conceptualizations of actors single-handedly transforming institutional fields, Suddaby (2010) echoes previous calls by Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott (2002) to "attend to instances of "profound" or field level change" (p. 15). Taking this one step further, Suddaby (2010) suggests that the way in which change is attended to also matters, stating that from a methodological standpoint, "it is much easier to count structures and organizational forms, than it is to measure meaning systems" (p. 16). It is this task of mapping changes in the "domains of meaning" that I undertake with this dissertation.

Most studies of changing meaning systems associated with processes of institutional change have focused attention on shifts in discourse (Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Phillips et al., 2004; Phillips & Oswick, 2012). An implicit assumption of discourse analysis, however, is that there is, at best, a correlational relationship between changes in highly institutionalized social practices and changes in the discourse associated with it. An alternative point of view, however, is much more causal. That is, some literature argues that language is used strategically by key actors interested in shaping field level change in specific directions by framing the process in distinct ways. Much of this literature uses the term rhetoric instead of discourse in order to distinguish the high degree of strategic intent involved in using language (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). In this view, language is used deliberately to frame action (Benford & Snow, 2000) and to infuse social actions with meaning and value beyond their technical purpose (Selznick, 1957).

Institutional theory, thus, bifurcates on the relationship between language and meaning creation. One branch suggests that language is used agentically by specific actors (i.e. institutional entrepreneurs) to change meaning structures in a way that serves their interests (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Green, Li & Nohria, 2009); here language is deliberately used to persuade and is typically termed "rhetoric". An alternative branch suggests that language evolves, less as a direct response to the agency of individual actors, and more as a reflection of evolving norms and changing social practices. Here language reflects, rather than leads, change and is typically termed "discourse".

An alternative possibility, however, is that rhetoric, discourse, and framing simultaneously contribute to processes of social change and that it is, in fact, through their interaction which language-mediated institutional change occurs. Unfortunately, most research in institutional theory fails to distinguish discourse, rhetoric, and framing as independent constructs. Indeed, much of the literature treats these terms as interchangeable. An important exception is the distinction made by Alvesson and Karremen (2000) between small-d or local, situational discourse and, big-D or long-range, historically situated macro-discourse. The distinction between the two concerns the formative range of discourse or assumptions on its scope and scale:

> One option is to take an interest in discourse at close range, considering and emphasizing local, situational context. Language use is here understood in relationship to the specific process and social context in which discourse is produced. At the other extreme we see discourse as a rather universal, if historically situated set of vocabularies standing loosely coupled to, referring to or constituting a particular phenomenon. We may talk about long-range, macro-systemic discourse (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007, p. 1133).

The distinction between small d and big D discourse roughly maps onto the distinction I observe between rhetoric and framing on the one hand and discourse on the other, in the institutional change literature.

My interest is in analyzing discourse, rhetoric and framing as independent constructs and exploring how they interact in processes of social change. My hypothesis is that these types of discourse, rhetoric and framing intersect most frequently and fatefully in discrete moments termed *discursive opportunity structures.* The term is

derived from social movement theory and refers to discrete moments in time and space which macro-cultural discourse evolves in a direction that enables local actors to frame their institutional, political or social movement project in a way that captures the defining cultural sentiment or zeitgeist. Discursive opportunities, thus, are moments in which specific local rhetoric is made more persuasive because of its resonance with broader cultural discourse. My central research question, thus, is *how do rhetoric, framing and discourse intersect in order to facilitate institutional change*? In the balance of this introduction, I first describe my empirical setting; I then justify my methodological approach and conclude by foreshadowing my results.

Choice of Empirical Setting

It is widely recognized that food is steeped in cultural meaning and that the meanings associated with the context of its production, preparation, purchase, and consumption, make it a vehicle for carrying cultural claims. The meanings associated with practices surrounding food have been explored from diverse perspectives including, Thompson & Coskuner-Balli's (2007) exploration of Community Supported Agriculture within the broader framework of Weber's (1978) notions of disenchantment, and re-enchantment; and Johnston & Baumann's (2007, 2010) work exploring the reframing of food in gourmet food journalism so as to legitimate seemingly "low-brow" foods as high-status cultural signals. Additional layers of meaning have been attached to food by the relatively recent politicization of food, and of consumption in general (Johnston & Baumann, 2007). "[The] emerging politics [of food] feeds on the centrality of food, as both biological necessity *and* cultural linchpin of human social life" (Guthman, 2002, p. 295, emphasis added). For example, "a bunch of organic arugula can mean multiple

things depending on who buys it, where it is grown, the conditions of its production, and how it is transported and sold" (Johnston & Baumann, 2010, p. 135).

Over the years, multiple social movements with food at their core have arisen in response the globalization and corporatization of food, and their social, environmental, economic and cultural consequences (Brown & Miller, 2008; Francis & Griffith, 2011; Fridell, Hudson, & Hudson, 2008; Goodman & DuPuis, 2002; Low & Davenport, 2006; Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007; van Bommel & Spicer, 2011). The Fair Trade movement, for example, was initiated as an effort to bring concerns of social justice and ecological degradation into the market place (Fridell et al., 2008; Jaffee, 2010; Low & Davenport, 2006). The Slow Food movement on the other hand, began with the desire to promote ideals of pleasure, tradition and culture inherent in local food as opposed to globalized, standardized fast food (Bommel & Spicer, 2011). The organic food movement was initially intended to support small-scale production, community engagement, and ecological responsibility (Johnston et al., 2009). Ideals of "food democracy" and "food sovereignty" also animate various decentralized activities that hold at their core, a food system that is organized "at a scale where democratic needs are met, sensitivity to resource depletion is heightened, and privileged core regions do not live off the carrying capacity of the periphery" (Johnston et al., 2009). Farmers markets, community supported agriculture, and food box schemes are examples of initiatives that fall within the realm of food democracy projects.

Although *local food* has been picking up momentum since the early 2000s, the idea of local eating is not a new phenomenon. It is representative of the way food was consumed prior to innovations in refrigeration and transportation (Halweil, 2002;

Hergesheimer & Kennedy, 2010; Johnston & Baumann, 2010). The notion of politicized eating can also be traced back to the counterculture movements of the 1970s, influenced by Rachel Carson's (1962) *Silent Spring*. Johnston & Baumann (2010) note that the emerging groups dedicated to the politics of food remained as a contained counterculture that "was not a unified, monolithic movement" (p. 131). Johnston & Baumann (2010) argue that what is new, however is "'locavorism' – the culinary and political ideal that values eating locally and seasonally as much as possible, and perhaps even forsaking long-distance fare" (p. 20). A few key publications including Pollan's (2007) *The Ominvore's Dilemma*, Smith & MacKinnon's (2007) *The 100 Mile Diet*, and Kingsolver, Kingsolver, & Hopp's (2008) *Animal, Mineral Vegetable*, have been credited with bringing the "politics of the plate" into popular discourse (Egbers et al., 2009; Johnston & Baumann, 2010).

The movement of local food and politicized eating has gone from being a contained counterculture, to permeating popular culture, to being addressed in the Business section of newspapers (Shore, 2013), and having The Economist ("Leaders," 2006; "Special Report," 2006) take aim at the politics surrounding the "varieties of 'ethical food: organic food, Fair Trade food, and local food", which begs the question of how the popular discourse around local food has evolved.

A search for *local food* in the database, Canadian Newsstream Major Dailies, yields 31, 421articles from its first mention in 1978 to December 2014. Notably, of these articles, 93% were published in or after the year 2000. Prior to 2000, the term local food held connotations of poverty, as the term was typically used to refer to a local food bank.

The meaning of *local food* thus, has changed relatively recently and very rapidly. The first mention of the "local food movement" does not occur until 1999.

The phenomenon of local food is therefore interesting for three reasons. First, it provides a very useful empirical context within which a highly rationalized and technical industrial product has become infused with political meaning and social value. As a result it offers an excellent context within which I can study how different actors use meaning systems to promote change or maintenance of an organizational field. Second, the local food phenomenon is unique in that it defies the core assumptions of institutional theory. Most studies of institutional change focus on the increased rationalization of organizational fields that were previously characterized by traditional modes of production (Suddaby et al., 2017). In this case, however, we see a highly rationalized field moving toward more traditional and less industrial modes of production. Within the theoretical context of what Suddaby and colleagues (2017) call the "re-enchantment" of institutions, marked by the re-emergence of phenomena including spirituality, religion, challenges to rationality, the rise of populism, tribalism and craft modes of production, the phenomenon of local food provides an appropriate context within which to explore this 'reversal' in rationality. Finally the phenomenon of local food has emerged recently and changed very rapidly. That is, change here has been revolutionary rather than evolutionary. The relatively tight time frames of change offer methodological advantages and efficiencies in data collection in that the process of change has unfolded over a relatively constrained time period.

Upon analysing data, which spans almost 40 years, it was apparent that in this case specific actors and their framing struggles came less to the fore than expected.

Rather, local food seemed to emerge across a number of different topics ranging from globalization to land use to health care. Given the timespan of my data, it was clear at the beginning of the dataset, the term *local food* did not exist as we know it, allowing me to track it's growth and development over close to four decades. It is also apparent from this analysis that the institutionalization of local food was not primarily a result of incumbents and challengers strategically deploying rhetoric to gain traction for their preferred frames in clear framing contests. This is not to say that rhetoric was not deployed, or that contestation was not found within my dataset, however within the large time horizon and number of data points that my dataset covers, actors' framing contests did not emerge as the primary mechanisms through which local food evolved. My key finding is that the presumption of instrumentally driven actors engaging in strategic framing contests does not always hold sole explanatory power in the process of institutional change. This is consistent with studies questioning some assumptions underlying the framing approach (Benford & Snow, 2000; Koopmans, 1999; Tarasova, 2017).

Choice of Method

Recent methodological advances in computational sciences have introduced powerful tools for the automated analysis of "big data" (Bail, 2014; DiMaggio, Nag, & Blei, 2013; Hannigan, 2015; Petchler & Gonzalez-Bailon, 2013; Uys, du Preez, & Uys, 2008). Bail (2014) has argued that computer scientists and cultural sociologists can provide a powerfully complementary skill set for one another, since sociological approaches to culture have been criticized for being "theory rich and methods poor" (DiMaggio et al., 2013, p. 571), and computer scientists have been criticized for lacking the "theoretical direction necessary to extract meaning from [the analyses]" (Bail, 2014, p. 465). Bail (2014) muses that while text form the basis of study for cultural sociology,

sociologists rely on survey research and cross-sectional interviews, even though "many archived texts are the product of conversations between individuals, groups, or organizations instead of responses to questions created by researchers who only have post-hoc intuition about the relevant factors in meaning-making – much less how culture evolves in 'real time'" (Bail, 2014, p. 467).

Similar to the previously noted criticisms of structural interpretations of institutional theory, Bail (2014) observes that "many studies identify key actors or institutions within fields and trace their influence over other parts of the field…As a result, these types of studies only observe the *consequences* of field-level processes rather than meso- or macro-level relationships between social actors and cultural elements" (p. 469 italics added). By allowing for the extraction and collection of large bodies of texts, technological advances in computing and "big data" have the potential to capture entire discursive fields in a single data set (Bail, 2014). Moreover, the vast potential of various approaches to the automated analysis of large bodies of text makes analysis and interpretation of such large data sets well within the realm of possibility. What is more, the assumptions and intuitions underlying the logic of automated textual analysis are consistent with the logic of sociological theories, which opens up interesting and novel ways to make significant methodological and theoretical contributions to sociological approaches to culture.

I have aligned my methodological approach in this dissertation with the methodological framework of computational grounded theory (Nelson, 2017) which aligns with my research question and data. The appropriateness of grounded theory for elucidating the production of meaning was initially articulated by Glaser and Strauss

(1967). Nelson (2017) distils the purpose of grounded theory into "a method designed to allow categories and themes to emerge inductively from data, culminating in data-driven but abstract theoretical understandings of the underlying social world" (p. 3). She specifies that while it is a rigorous methodology, it has been critiqued for bringing too much subjectivity and necessitating too much of the researchers' judgement, personality and predisposition into analysis, making it difficult to validate and reproduce (Nelson, 2017). Additionally, given the intensity of the relationship between the researcher and the data, grounded theory does not lend itself to scale, and therefore "cannot incorporate recent access to large amounts of unstructured social data" (Nelson, 2017, p. 3). By incorporating computational techniques into a grounded theory approach, Nelson (2017) allows for grounded theory to contend with unprecedented amounts of ("Big") data for theory generation while retaining a close, interpretive relationship with the data since outputs of computational methods can be difficult to interpret and remain distant from the researcher. In lacing together qualitative (grounded theory) and quantitative (computational techniques) methods in this way, Nelson (2017) proposes that this methodological framework is able to "[deliver] both quality *and* quantity, breadth *and* depth (Franzosi 2010:146), and allows researchers to leverage both close and distant reading (Moretti 2013) to better measure meaning" (p. 3).

While Nelson (2017) describes a fairly prescriptive three-step methodological framework, she acknowledges that within sociology, particularly in relation to inductive analysis for measuring meaning structures, there are no discipline-specific best practices for the use of computer-assisted text analysis. She therefore clarifies that the order within which the three steps are presented may not be appropriate for all types of research, and

must ultimately be driven by the fit between the research question, available data and available computational methodologies.

The first step in computational grounded theory is pattern detection or computational exploration and is intended to reduce the complexity or "messiness" of the text. This an exploratory step and can be thought of as analogous to traditional coding in that it also classifies text into categories, although with the assistance of computational techniques rather than human-coded text (Nelson, 2017). This step is not only done efficiently with large amounts of data, and with reproducible results, but also allows for categories and classifications to emerge from the data which may be novel to the researcher due to bias or fatigue (Nelson, 2017).

Topic modelling is one such method for identifying the linguistic context (DiMaggio et al., 2013), or cultural environment (Bail 2014), that surrounds social institutions, as well as for allowing categories and classifications to emerge from the large dataset. In building a case for using topic modelling to study culture from a sociological perspective, DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) articulate four prerequisites that any approach must satisfy. An appropriate approach to automated textual analysis must be explicit, automated, inductive, and it must recognize the relationality of meaning, in other words have the ability to treat terms as varying in meaning across different contexts (DiMaggio et al., 2013). DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) conclude that topic modelling satisfies these four conditions.

While DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) conveyed the potential of topic modelling in social science research, I take my analysis one step further through the use of *dynamic topic modelling*. Uys and colleagues (2008, p. 957) explain that, "dynamic topic models

provide a qualitative overview of the contents of a large document collection and also give quantitative predictive models of a sequential document corpus". What this means is that while topic modeling analyses a body of text to find the key themes present in the collection, dynamic topic modelling allows us to analyse key themes in a body of text that is segmented by year, thus providing a mechanism to measure how meaning evolves over time. Nelson (2017) also specifies that a computational first foray into big data also "structure[s] the text to allow for a reengagement with the data" (Nelson, 2017, p. 23), leading to the second step.

Step two of computational grounded theory lies much closer to traditional human-centred interpretive grounded theory, requiring the researcher to move between the results of the analysis and the data (Nelson, 2017). Once the data has been thematically classified in the first step, it is up to the researcher to undertake pattern refinement or computationally guided deep reading. In this step, the researcher reads the data in order to confirm whether the classification in the first step is appropriate, and interprets the data "into sociologically meaningful concepts to enable researchers to draw more abstract conclusions about the social world that produced the data" (Nelson, 2017, p. 28). I have undertaken this step using NVivo coding software to subject the most relevant sets of articles (determined quantitatively) within select topic outputs to a content analysis, in order to draw abstract conclusions to further my theoretical work.

The final step proposed by Nelson (2017) is pattern confirmation and is analogous to traditional hypothesis testing in that it deductively tests whether the patterns identified in the first two steps hold throughout the corpus, and provides a "general reliability test to the grounded theory process" (p. 29). It is with this step that my analysis diverges from

the framework proposed by Nelson (2017). My analysis consists of heavy iterations between steps 1 and 2, leading to a series of abstractions from the data, ultimately leading to my key theoretical contribution of how discursive opportunities are structured. My results and conclusions are more consistent with those of traditional grounded theory and do not, at this point, include deductive confirmation of proposed relationships, however a number of validity checks were performed along the way, consistent with those recommended by DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) and Nelson (2017).

Foreshadowing My Results

My overarching research question is to understand how language mediates processes of institutional change. As described above and elaborated in Chapter Two below, institutional research offers two approaches to answering this question. One approach points to broader macro-social changes in norms and values that become reflected in discourse as the primary mechanism of institutional change. Typically this approach focuses directly on shifts in language as a precursor of change rather than identifying specific actors or agents of change. A second approach identifies specific actors (typically termed institutional entrepreneurs) who use language strategically to motivate and shape the direction of change. This approach uses the terms rhetoric and framing to describe how language mediates institutional change.

The two approaches reflect different theoretical assumptions about the role of agency, power and language in processes of macro-social change. Discourse theorists view language as a reflection of institutionally embedded power that is beyond the control of individual actors. Theorists of framing and rhetoric see language as a direct form of agency, albeit typically expressed in the context of a specific actor or group of actors' professional project. Discourse theory, thus, sees language as an expression of

power, but in the absence of actors or agency. Rhetorical theory and framing, by contrast, see language as an expression of agency, but only effective when wielded by powerful actors. Another critical difference between theories of rhetorical institutional change and discursive institutional change is the level of analysis. Discourse typically is observed at a macro-societal level of analysis and rhetoric is typically observed at a more localized level of analysis in reference to a specific project of institutional change.

While I elaborate the theoretical bases of these differences more fully in Chapter 2, the critical gap in understanding is, which of these constructs – rhetoric, framing or discourse – most fully explains processes of institutional change. To foreshadow my conclusions, I find evidence that supports a strong role for both micro-processes of rhetoric and framing and macro-processes of discourse. I demonstrate how these processes intersect in discrete discursive opportunity structures created by the dynamic intersection of rhetoric, framing and discourse. More specifically, I describe a model for meaning emergence through discursive opportunities. I propose that these discursive opportunity structures occur as emergent properties resulting from the interactions between the evolution of discourse, creating moments of opportunity in which actors can rhetorically attach their institutional projects to frame in alignment with emerging cultural themes.

Ultimately, I find that that the presumption of instrumentally driven actors engaging in strategic framing contests to gain control of dominant narratives, does not always hold sole explanatory power. In fact, instrumentally driven actors engaging in framing contexts in order to further their own self-interest do not occur with any consequence until the very end of my dataset, which spans 37 years. Therefore my

findings pertain to the space between the broader cultural context, and the discursive opportunities that it may present, and various actors that may *inadvertently* further the evolution of a new meaning, through the evolution of discursive opportunity structures. Moreover, this speaks to the criticality of the dynamics within the wider discursive context and its relevance to meaning emergence, well *before* strategic action begins.

The remainder of this dissertation is as follows. The proceeding section will provide a theoretical overview of institutions, meaning and change, with a particular focus on discourse, rhetoric, framing, and discursive opportunity structures. This will be followed by an overview of the historical emergence of *local food* in the Canadian context, after which an explanation detailing my methodological approach and analysis, will lead to the presentation of my results. The final section of this dissertation will comprise of my discussion and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Overview

Institutions, Meaning and Change

Foundational works in organization theory situate organizations in their societal contexts, and explore the mutual interactions between organizations and social systems (Creed, Langstraat, & Scully, 2002; Stern & Barley, 1996). At the heart of this "original mandate" of organization studies was the recognition that "…formal organizations were integral to the cultural transformation we sometimes call modernity itself" (Stern & Barley, 1996, p. 146). One theoretical perspective that has the relationship between social systems, culture and organizations at its core, and has risen to dominance in organization studies over the last few decades, is institutional theory. Having been described as "a flu virus, constantly mutating as it diffuses" (Greenwood, 2008, p. 153), the pendulum in institutional theory has swung from seminal contributions pertaining to shared meanings and rational myths to structural aspects of institutionalization, which, while important, neglacted ideational and symbolic elements (Green Jr & Li, 2011; Green Jr., Yuan Li, & Nohria, 2009; Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Suddaby, 2010; Suddaby et al., 2010; Zilber, 2006).

In recent years, institutionalization has been conceptualized once again with a return to culture, through discourse and shared meaning (Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Maguire et al., 2004; Phillips et al., 2004; Phillips & Oswick, 2012) whereby "actions acquire social legitimacy only if they resonate with socially held norms and values" (Greenwood, 2008, p. 154). During the period of a more structural emphasis of institutional theory, Green and colleagues (2009) surmise that neoinstitutional research tended towards conflating the outcomes of

legitimation (e.g. persistence, prevalence, or change in material practice) with the process of institutionalization resulting in an overemphasis of the material aspects of institutions, neglecting the symbolic.

With meaning and social norms and values increasingly at the forefront of organization studies, Giorgi, Lockwood, & Glynn (2015) suggest that culture has remained central to organization studies, and continues to hold promise for investigating organizations from an institutional perspective. Giorgi and colleagues (2015) state that culture has experienced a renaissance in organization studies, whereby the focus has shifted to investigate how actors "use" culture rather than "be used" by a more prescriptive influence of culture. Interestingly similar language has been utilized in descriptions of the evolution of the study of rhetoric, described as evolving from how "we use words" to how "words use us" (Green & Li, 2011). Giorgi and colleagues (2015) theorize culture as "a broad system, anchored by values or overarching toolkits, within which categories, frames and stories serve as cultural manifestations, which congeal, express, and diffuse commitments, ideas, and beliefs among actors" (p. 4). In arguing that institutions and culture are intimately connected, Giorgi and colleagues (2015) frame culture as a key component of institutions. Giorgi and colleagues (2015) summarize the existing literature tying together culture and institutions by delineating research highlighting institutions' effects on culture, and culture's effect on institutions.

Existing research explores the effects of institutions in either constraining and stabilizing culture, or in prompting culture change (Giorgi et al., 2015). The latter positions culture as a tool for institutional change and maintenance, whereby actors deliberately call upon or manipulate cultural codes as a resource in social movements

(Benford & Snow, 2000) institutional entrepreneurship (Maguire et al., 2004) or cultural entrepreneurship (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001). Culture is the foundation of social movements, institutional entrepreneurship and cultural entrepreneurship, all of which are based ultimately on shifts in meaning. At the heart of the intersection between culture and institutional theory is meaning, whether it is explored through categories, frames, values, stories or toolkits. Giorgi and colleagues (2015) state that, "institutions shape interests and provide a context for meaning making in addition to providing structural order: they directly influence cultural processes that unfold among and within organizations" (p. 27).

Weber, Patel, & Heinze (2013) follow in the tradition of social anthropologists and sociologists by explicitly identifying cultural categories as "the elementary building blocks of meaning systems" (p. 356). Using a repertoire view of culture (Swidler, 1986), Weber and colleagues (2013) empirically map changes in the cultural repertoire of the field of alternative livestock agriculture until it is structured, over time, into an institutional logic. Additional studies that have kept social construction and shifts in meaning at the forefront of their inquiry include Munir's (2005) study of institutional change, which rests on the notion that, "there is nothing inherently disruptive about events" (p. 96) however it is the way that they are constructed or theorized, "justified by aligning them with normative prescriptions before their diffusion" that is of great importance to institutional theorists. It is the *framing* of events that can motivate social action.

Munir (2005) and Munir and Philips (2005) show how the diffusion of digital photography required the meaning of photography itself to change. Munir (2005) shows how the culture of photography evolved from one centred around the 'truths' of the

importance of quality, preservation and photo prints to one in which the opposite notions of sharing, enhancement and infinite images took hold. In another study exploring field-level change in field of photography, Munir and Phillips (2005) examine how photography evolved from a highly specialized activity to one that became a part of everyday life, representing a significant culture change through the infusion of specific meaning to new technology, leading to the development of the widely recognized 'Kodak Moment'.

The power of shifting meaning systems in institutional change and legitimacy, even in the absence of practice change, is explored by Maguire and Hardy (2013), Zilber (2002) and Elsbach (1994). Maguire and Hardy (2013) conclude that social resistance to chemicals required a reframing of the concept of risk. In examining organizational processes and the construction of risk, Maguire and Hardy (2013) explore how certain chemicals became labeled as "risky" within the context of chemical risk assessment and management in Canada. The chemical composition of these substances themselves did not change over time, however the authors find that the "meaning of these products – risky or safe – is…temporally and spatially contingent: it changes over time and from place to place" (Maguire & Hardy, 2013, p. 231). Explicitly bringing in notions of power and politics, Zilber (2002) also shows how rape crisis centres deliberately reframed themselves from an ideology of feminism to one of therapy, without significant changes to practice. Additionally, Elsbach (1994) shows how verbal accounts were used by the California cattle industry in order to manage perceptions of organizational legitimacy following controversial events, again, in the absence of actual changes to practice.

Similar notions pertaining to the infusion of meaning and resulting culture change, are evident in studies pertaining to the infusion of broader cultural codes into the nascent market for grass-fed beef, which allowed for the emergence and growth of a new market (Weber, Heinze, & DeSoucey, 2008), the international uptake of the Slow Food movement, originally a small, niche movement focused primarily on cultural preservation of regional cooking in Italy, growing into 35 countries by associating with meanings connecting to wider movements for organic food, farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture and microbreweries (Rao & Giorgi, 2006), and Khaire and Wadhwani's (2010) exploration of the construction of meaning in the new market category of modern Indian art. Ultimately legitimacy for both maintaining and establishing new practices is built around framing meaning systems, which is largely accomplished through language.

Language and Meaning

Influential works in institutional theory that have kept meaning central to their inquiries have done so through studying the use of language in institutional processes (Creed, Scully, & Austin, 2002; Davis, Diekmann, & Tinsley, 1994; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002; Hirsch, 1986; Kelly & Dobbin, 1998; Phillips et al., 2004; Townley, 2002). Zilber (2008) articulates a number of ways that institutional theorists have contended with meaning in their work, citing examples of studies using analogies (Davis et al., 1994), discourse (Phillips et al., 2004), legitimating accounts (Creed et al., 2002), linguistic framing (Hirsch, 1986), rhetoric or rationales (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998), rationalities or institutional myths (Townley, 2002) and theorization (Greenwood et al., 2002), all of which relate to Meyer & Rowan's (1977) notion of "rational myths - shared

meanings and understandings associated with social structures". Recognizing the ambiguity surrounding the meaning and use of the term 'meaning', Zilber (2008) defines it to "denote those aspects of institutions that are ideational and symbolic, to distinguish them from the material aspects of institutions…[acknowledging that while]…meanings and the material are intertwined…for analytical purposes it is worthwhile to focus our attention on meaning alone…for institutional processes and theory" (p. 152). It is important to acknowledge that recently, Li (2017) undertook the mammoth task of theorizing the intertwined, but arguably distinct aspects of "doing, saying, and meaning". By incorporating a multifaceted exploration of intentionality by drawing on semiotics, Li (2017) comes to a nuanced theory of institutionalization. By separating denotational and connotational institutionalization, Li (2017, p. 520) articulates how "both kinds of institutionalization processes increase the taken-for-grantedness of the sign but what is taken for granted differs drastically, which explains the heterogeneity in the institutionalization process". Since semiotic approaches are beyond the scope of my research, I will be staying closer to Zilber's (2008) recommendation to study institutional processes and theory by focusing attention on meaning alone.

In summarizing the research addressing meaning in institutional theory, Zilber (2008) categorizes the body of work along what she calls four dimensions or attributes of institutional order. These include: (1) particularities of institutionalization, which refers to micro-processes of (de)institutionalization at the organizational and field levels; (2) institutionalization in context, which refers to the connections and interactions occurring between the institution and the meaningful environment within which it is embedded; (3) institutionalization as a political process, which refers to differences in power and politics

between actors; and (4) institutionalization as a work in progress, which refers to institutionalization as fluid and dynamic, as an on-going process rather than an end point (Zilber, 2008, pp. 155–159). Recognizing that these attributes are interconnected, but differentiated in the interest of analytical clarity (Zilber, 2008), this present study is primarily aligned with the dimension of institutionalization in context, whereby "institutionalization occurs in relation to the ways meanings are contextualized within systems of meanings at the field and societal levels" (Zilber, 2008, p. 156).

It is important to note that the structural/ideational differences in interpretation, as referred to above, are especially visible in various ways in which the term "organizational field" has been operationalized. From a more structural perspective, this has been operationalized in previous studies as fields forming around industries or common technologies, which are consistent with "sets of organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life; key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148). From a more ideational perspective, Scott (2001) defines an organizational field as "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field" (p. 56). Such a definition does not negate the structural aspects of organizational fields, but serves to bring the impact of meaning systems to the fore. Rather than relying on networks of organizations alone, Hoffman (1999) argues that conceptualizing organizational fields according to meaning systems "reveals greater complexity in field formation and evolution" (p. 352). Thus, rather than operationalizing field formation around an industry or technology, Hoffman

(1999) shows that fields can also form around issues. Hardy & Maguire (2010) identify three components of institutional fields: positions, understandings, and rules. Of particular interest to this study is the component related to *understandings*, which Hardy and Maguire (2010: 1366) define as "meaning systems, which are cultural expectations, shared cognitions and beliefs based on shared conceptions that constitute the nature of socal realtiy and the frames through which meaning is made".

Discursive approaches to research on organizational fields has shed significant light on the importance of ideational aspects of institutions. Discourses are defined as "structured collections of meaningful texts" (Phillips et al., 2004). Central to the discursive approach is the acknowledgement that discourse, whether written or spoken do not merely describe things, but contain within them the seeds of action "through the way they make sense of the world for its inhabitants, giving it meanings that generate particular experiences and practices" (Phillips et al., 2004, p. 636). While the linguistic turn in organization studies has re-emphasized the importance of meaning in organizational reasearch (Zilber, 2008), Suddaby (2010) has argued that research analysing the role of language in institutional processes and effects has been promising, yet contains much greater potential for further elaboration. The intimate connection of language and institutional processes, particularly organizational fields, is specified by Lawrence (1999) where he states, "the properties of language are such that institutionalized rules become structured within "domains of meaning" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) – fields of activity within which a common language and social structure develop. At an organizational level, we refer to such domains as "organizational

fields”” (p. 164). Such “domains of meaning” are of particular interest to this present study.

Seeing that culture and institutions are intertwined, whether culture change is explicitly mentioned, or the infusion of meanings is a proxy for culture change and/or institutional dynamics, language resides at the centre of symbolic approaches to institutional perspectives engaging with meaning. In cases where political interests are at play, the importance of language and its relationship to legitimacy, social norms and values, particularly the deliberate and strategic use of language, becomes an integral part of analysing institutional dynamics (Greenwood, 2008; Suddaby, 2010). A focus on language and communication brings the explanatory power of existing theoretical approaches back to their social constructivist roots, whereby, “speech and other forms of symbolic interactions are not just seen as expressions or reflections of inner thoughts or collective intentions but as potentially formative of institutional reality” (Cornelissen et al., 2015, p. 11). Of the existing approaches using language to access the dynamics of meaning and institutions, Cornelissen and colleagues (2015) observe that discourse and rhetoric have gained the most traction in institutional research, specifically that they, along with framing, continue to hold the potential for deeper engagement with institutional perspectives. In the remainder of this section I provide a brief summary of the literatures pertaining to discourse, rhetoric and framing as they explore shifts in meaning and culture, and ultimately institutional change. These concepts in practice are more alike than dissimilar, however in the interest of preserving the nuances between them I will be discussing them in separate subsections, explicitly delineating their convergence and divergence.

Discourse

The complexity of discourse eludes a concise definition, however the concept of discourse has been distilled into three components: (1) segments of talk or text; (2) the collection of texts that provides meaning; (3) the social context within which they occur (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). Philips and Oswick (2012) broadly describe discourse as, "pieces of talk or text as they affect and are affected by the social context in which they appear, and by the texts and ideas they draw on and influence in turn" (p. 443). Discourse analysis therefore, is defined as, "analysis of collections of texts, the ways they are made meaningful through their links to other texts, the ways in which they draw on different discourses, how and to whom they are disseminated, the methods of their production, and the manner in which they are received and consumed" (Phillips et al., 2004, p. 647).

Discourse analysis is fundamentally concerned with the process of social construction, and specifically in the role of language in the constitution of social reality (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). The linguistic turn in the social sciences moved the conceptualization of language from being a mere conduit for communication (Cornelissen et al., 2015; Phillips & Oswick, 2012) to playing a central role in the production of social reality whereby, "discourses produce and mediate organizational and social phenomena" (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, 2011, p. 1247 in Phillips & Oswick, 2012, p. 439). Phillips and Oswick (2012) summarize existing research and conclude that organization studies, and institutional theory in particular has been well suited for the insights afforded by discourse analysis, owing to the fact that, institutions "are more than persistent material practices and structures; they are also accompanied by systems of signs and symbols that rationalize and legitimize those practices" (Green et al., 2009, p. 11). Discourse analysis constitutes both methodological and theoretical contributions to

institutional theory, ultimately opening the "black box" representing the process of institutionalization (Phillips et al., 2004; Phillips & Oswick, 2012), providing the tools to "explore the process of meaning construction and reconstruction that underlie change" (Phillips & Oswick, 2012, p. 453).

Similar to Phillips and Oswick's (2012) distinction between various components of discourse, Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) outline distinctions between micro-level, meso-level, and grand and mega-level discourse in an effort to bring further clarity to the various meanings and applications of discourse. Ultimately, they propose that despite the large variety of studies utilizing discourse, discourse itself can be distilled down to two vastly divergent approaches in organization studies. The first of these is coined discourse – with a little d – which encompasses "the 'talked' and 'textual' nature of everyday interaction in organization" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007, p. 1126). The second is Discourse – distinguished from the former with a capital "D" – which constitutes "the study of social reality as discursively constructed and maintained…the determination of social reality through historically situated discursive moves" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007, p. 1126).

Some key constructs constituting the process of institutionalization that discourse analysis has been instrumental in disentangling include: institutionalization (Green Jr. et al., 2009; Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Phillips et al., 2004), deinstitutionalization (Maguire & Hardy, 2009), translation (Creed et al., 2002; Zilber, 2006), meaning construction (Khaire & Wadhwani, 2010; Maguire & Hardy, 2013), institutional entrepreneurship (Greenwood et al., 2002; Munir, 2005; Munir & Phillips, 2005), and legitimation (Vaara et al., 2006; Vaara & Tienar, 2008) among others.

The underlying assumption that is common to studies of discourse analysis is that there is, at best, a correlational relationship between changes in highly institutionalized social practices and changes in the discourse associated with it (Green & Li, 2011). All forms of organizational discourse, however, do not necessarily share this assumption. Discourse analysis and rhetorical institutionalism share the overall assumption that "discourse produces institutions, and that institutions constrain and enable action" (Green & Li, 2011, p. 1681). However, rather than focusing on the content of discourse, rhetoric shifts "[t]he emphasis on 'skill', 'convincing', and 'purposive action' [which] represents a break with traditional approaches to discourse in institutional studies, moving away from disembodied discourse that lacks descriptions of the specific actions of agents, to the embodied discourse of interest seeking agents strategically deploying language" (Green Jr & Li, 2011, p. 1682). Simply, in the management literature, rhetoric can be thought of as a subset of discourse analysis which primarily focuses on actors' strategic use of language to persuade and influence in order to shape field-level change, rather than on the content of a body of text as in discourse analysis (Hartelius & Browning, 2008; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Rhetorical analysis can be distinguished from discourse analysis based on the notion of rhetoric as "as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation…an essential element of the deliberate manipulation of cognitive legitimacy" (Suddaby, 2005 p. 40). In the following section I will further examine the use of rhetoric in institutional research.

Rhetoric

As far back as Aristotle, rhetoric has been a vibrant area of inquiry and debate. Defined broadly in Aristotelian times as "the art of persuasion" (Aristotle, 2011), rhetoric has, over time developed a variety of nuanced meanings and perspectives which continue

to share some commonalities: rhetoric continues to refer to the instrumental or deliberate use of language, and implies a strong connection to both cognition, the symbolic realm, and social action. Hartelius & Browning (2008) provide a definition of rhetoric that speaks to its evolution into a concept "…[which] permeates human interaction as long as language is used deliberately. Thus defined, rhetoric is persuasion that is in some way available to every symbolic being – every human being. As such it is a practical art and the faculty of theorizing" (p. 19). Green (2004) explicitly articulates the role of rhetoric in social construction by specifying that, "[t]hrough rhetoric, actors produce and assign meaning, constructing both their identities and the world" (p. 654).

One key distinction in the evolution of rhetoric has been the split between classical and new rhetoric. Green and Li (2011) distinguish between classical and new rhetoric based on "how we use words" (classical rhetoric) versus "how words use us" (new rhetoric). In classical rhetoric, the emphasis is on the speaker and his or her means of persuasion (Harmon et al., 2015, p. 77), it is very much focused on the formal, intentional use of persuasive language with a view to shaping action, and it is explicitly political, concerned with furthering actors' interests (Green & Li, 2011). New rhetoric on the other hand, introduces the significance of the audience in addition to the speaker, and the effect of both on social action (Harmon et al., 2015). New rhetoric relaxes the formality associated with classical rhetoric and persuasion as influence, and sees persuasion as communication (Green & Li, 2011; Harmon et al., 2015) in addition to explicitly acknowledging the connection to meaning, whereby "new rhetoric also assumes that language holds the key to accessing the symbolic world of human interaction" (Green Jr & Li, 2011, p. 1672), a view shared by Suddaby and Greenwood

(2005) in which “new rhetoric…attempts a scientific understanding of how shifts or displacements of meaning occur in the context of social change” (p. 39).

A third approach which is apparent in more contemporary applications of rhetoric combines these two traditions “to explore how social actors use language as symbolic action” (Harmon et al., 2015, p. 77). Green and Li (2011) articulate the benefit of bridging classical and new rhetoric, which “allow us to probe into how language both constructs and reflects actors and their motives in the formation of social structures and relations” (p. 1673). Arguably, classical rhetoric emphasises the potential for creativity and agency to the extent that they depend on the cognitive limits of the speaker (Green, 2004), whereas new rhetoric allows for the possibility of “patterns of shared interests, goals and shared assumptions [to] become embedded in persuasive texts” (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005, p. 40). Therefore, bridging classical and new rhetoric also provides fertile ground for exploring the dynamics of stability and change as they are encoded in and disrupted by the use of language as symbolic action. In other words, As Harmon and colleagues (2015) specify, “language operates in a performative role, shaping the underlying assumptions of both the speaker and other social actors…From a rhetorical perspective, language is a dynamic and reflexive tool that both reveals the underlying assumptions of a community and provides a motor for social change” (pp. 77–78).

In a review contrasting management literature’s use of rhetorical theory with that of communication studies, Hartelius and Browning (2008) identify five overarching themes in management literature’s treatment of rhetoric, and conclude that organization studies and rhetorical theory make “natural allies”, recommending deeper engagement with communication studies’ understanding of rhetorical theory. The five themes

Hartelius and Browning (2008) distil out of the management literature conceptualize rhetoric as: (1) a theory and as an action; (2) the substance that maintains and/or challenges organizational order; (3) being constitutive of individual and organizational identity; (4) a managerial strategy for persuading followers; and (5) a framework for narrative and rational organizational discourses. The linkages and potential for theoretical development between organization studies and rhetoric have been traced back to seminal contributions to organizational theory by Alvesson (1993) (Green & Li, 2011). According to Green and Li (2011), the crux of Alvesson's (1993) argument regarding knowledge and rhetoric, whereby "…knowledge was in fact ambiguous…and thus open to rhetorical construction and interpretation" (p. 1662) provided fertile ground to explore symbolic aspects of organizational theory. Summarizing Alvesson's contribution to organization studies, Green and Li (2011) state that, "…through rhetoric, knowledge was more a case of institutionalized myth and rationality surrogate than a technical solution to organizational problems" (p. 1662-3). This is echoed by Harmon and colleagues (2015) who emphasize that the potential of engaging with rhetoric lies with "examining arguments in terms of probabilistic outcomes that involve struggle and contestation in institutionally complex contexts" (p. 79) rather than as formalized truth.

The examination of contestation and struggle in organization theory through the lens of rhetorical theory is particularly visible in institutional perspectives. The potential for rhetorical theory to deepen our understanding of institutional dynamics has been fruitfully examined by numerous works including Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) seminal work interrogating how the legitimacy of new organizational forms is established through the use of rhetorical strategies. Green (2004) reconceptualises diffusion and

institutionalization as a product of rhetoric proposing that, "the type and sequence of discursive justification determines the speed and extent of diffusion" (p. 654) countering the prevailing "passive and oversocialized" view of diffusion. Green and colleagues (2009) and Green and Li (2011) propose that through rhetorical institutionalism, combining classical and new rhetoric to examine institutional dynamics provides an agile approach to institutional theory, which has the potential to overcome the paradox of embedded agency by providing the theoretical basis for both stability and change. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) build a case for the use of rhetoric in the study of institutional work, owing to its focus on political and interest laden discourse, which ultimately aligns with a core focus of institutional work: "how actors leverage their positions through the construction of persuasive arguments" (p. 240). In proposing a communication-centred approach to institutional theory Cornelissen and colleagues (2015) specify the potential of rhetoric, particularly new rhetoric, in deepening our understanding of and engagement with institutional logics and how they are used and mobilized in concrete actions, an idea that is empirically explored by Brown, Ainsworth, & Grant (2012) in examining the rhetoric of institutional change. Harmon and colleagues (2015) revisit the notion of legitimation and develop a model of rhetorical legitimation whereby structurally distinct forms of rhetoric are shown to coincide with two different levels of legitimacy – of the institutional context itself or of a specific action or practice within the context of the institution – which ultimately affect either institutional maintenance or change.

Most recently, Li, Green, & Hirsch (2016) use a critical rhetorical perspective, namely rhetorical genres to understand how intentionality plays into the dynamics

between actors and institutional change and maintenance, when institutional change and maintenance occur at the same time. Instead of operationalizing discursive spaces as physical or social spaces, Li and colleauges (2016) conceptualize rhetorical genres as discursive spaces which "emphasizes the role of rhetorical power – the actors' ability to use persuasive language – in unsettling existing social practices and relations" (p. 19) thus accommodating for contradictions in ideologies and interests. In examining this theoretical approach within the context of the Chinese Communist Party's adoption of the stock market, Li and colleagues (2016) are ultimately able to disentangle the concepts of authority and legitimacy and a central role for rhetoric in the construction and maintenance of authority. Ultimately, Li and colleagues (2016) provide a nuanced example of institutional change whereby change is not observed as "the antithesis of maintenance, [when] radical change often occurs only when the establishment or the incumbent actors are overthrown", but as an example of how actors "intended to maintain their authority despite, or rather because of, the introduction of radical changes" (p.20).

With shifts in meaning, social construction of reality, and the deliberate use of language at their core, studies in institutional theory that engage with rhetoric also tend to refer to framing as a mechanism through which the meaning behind practice is altered, for example through reframing according to shifts in professional constitution or through framing contests based on struggles contesting or upholding traditional professional boundaries (e.g. Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Cornelissen and colleagues (2011) draw connections between key constructs in organizational theory, rhetoric and framing by observing that, "research on organizational sensegiving and sensemaking conceptualizes framing as a pragmatic act of strategic persuasion, where individual managers, as skilled

rhetoricians, are able to directly shape and direct the interpretations of stakeholders by literally "giving" sense towards a preferred definition of reality" (p. 1704). Just as knowledge was considered ambiguous according to Alvesson (1993), leaving it open to interpretation and rhetorical construction, Gamson (1989) proposes that facts are also neutral, and "take on their meaning by being embedded in a frame or story line that organizes them and gives them coherence, selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others" (in Kuypers, 2009, p. 182) . Similar to the less formal conceptualization of new rhetoric, Kuypers (2009) proposes that framing is a normal part of the communication process, which may be intentional or unintentional, whereby "large and complex ideas and events figuratively cry out for framing since they have so many elements demanding attention. Because of this, framing analysis is a particularly useful way to understand the *impact of rhetoric*" (p. 182; italics added). Although framing and rhetoric are closely connected, framing provides a distinct and useful approach to studying changes in meaning and rhetoric, due to its connection to both cognition and culture (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014). I will, therefore, address it in a separate section below.

Framing

Since its introduction in the early 20th century, and later popularization by Goffman (1974), the concept of framing has permeated through multiple disciplines ranging from linguistics to sociology, psychology to behavioural economics, and journalism to communications (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014). Framing has been described using a number of metaphors, including a "filter" (Lamont & Small, 2008), a "bracket" (Zerubavel, 1991), a "picture frame" (Goffman, 1974), or a "window frame" (Gamson, 1989). The key idea that each of these metaphors aim to convey is that frames

are selective, and “highlight some features of reality while omitting others” (Entman, 1993 in Kuypers, 2009). Such a concept may seem simplistic at first glance, however its implications are far reaching in that, “…frames act to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements and suggest remedies” (Kuypers, 2009, p. 182). A frame can also be thought of as the “frame of a house” which functions as “the structure that holds together different rooms and supports the cultural building blocks that make up the edifices of meaning” (Creed et al., 2002, p. 37).The potential to define problems alone imbues framing with the powerful ability to “transform meanings and define a range of acceptable behaviour” (Giorgi et al., 2015, p. 11).

Frames have been formally defined in a multitude of ways with some nuances based on the originating discipline and application. For example, Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, (1986) define frames from a sensegiving perspective as, “schema of interpretation that enable individuals to locate perceive, identify and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large” (Meyer & Höllerer, 2010, p. 1242). While Snow and Benford (1988) define frames more as resources for mobilization and “collections of idea elements tied together by a unifying concept that serve to punctuate, elaborate, and motivate action on a given topic” (Creed et al., 2002, p. 37). Later on, Benford and Snow (2000) go on to define framing as, “an active processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction” (in Werner & Cornelissen, 2014, p. 203). Meanwhile, DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) define a frame with a more cognitive flavour, as “a set of discursive cues (words, images, narrative) that suggests a particular interpretation of a person, event, organization, practice, condition, or situation” (p. 593), drawing on (Gamson et al., 1992) who likened analysing framing in

media discourse to the role of schema in cognitive psychology, as “a central organizing principle that holds together and gives coherence and meaning to a diverse array of symbols” (P. DiMaggio et al., 2013, p. 593). Kuypers (2009) observes that frames “are located in the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture at large” (p. 182), which is consistent with the way framing is understood in organization theory as a concept that can be theorized and empirically examined at the micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis pertaining to individual, organizational and neo-institutional levels, as well as across levels, making framing a central construct in management and organization theory (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014).

In a recent review of framing and frame analysis within the management and organizational literature, Cornelissen and Werner (2014) organize the literature along three levels of analysis. At the micro level, they find that framing research has examined phenomena such as priming and activation of knowledge schemas and their impact on individual perceptions, inferences and actions in context. At the meso level, they find that framing research pertains to more strategic actors and how through language and symbolic gestures strategic actors attempt to frame courses of action and identities with the aim of mobilizing others. At the neo-institional level, Cornelissen and Werner (2014) find that framing research primarily focuses on how broader cultural templates of understanding become institutionalized and provide rules for appropriate behaviour within particular social settings. Since the neo-institutional level is most relevant to my study, the remainder of this section will address research at this level, although it is acknowledged that framing is particularly well suited for multi-level research.

Frames and framing have been used extensively to study institutional dynamics at the macro level. Cornelissen & Werner (2014) surmise that the reasons why framing makes a potent contribution to institutional theory can be traced back to foundational works (e.g. Bateson, 1972; Burke, 1937; Goffman, 1974) that were concerned with "how common cultural frames of reference are used by actors to define and label experiences in specific contexts" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 206). Cornelissen and Werner (2014) suggest that the dual character of framing allows the construct to "capture the institutionalization of enduring meaning structures, and provid[es] a macro-structural underpinning for actors' motivations, cognitions and discourse at a micro-level" (p. 206). Within this context, frames also set the stage for social and cultural change "at the macro level in that they can be questioned, transplanted, and changed when actors apply them in context and collectively break with convention" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 206).

Cornelissen and Werner (2014) categorize existing research addressing institutional dynamics from a framing perspective in to three areas: (1) framing and institutions; (2) framing struggles and settlements; and (3) framing, frames and institutional change. Within the first stream, Cornelissen and Werner (2014) highlight the notion that framing is directly related to the cultural-cognitive aspect of institutions which coalesce round wider symbolic underpinnings of institutions as shared meaning systems. The parallels between the content' of institutions as taken for granted cognitive frames, and Goffman's (1974) definition of frames as "latent meaning structures that organize social and cultural experience across a general area of activity" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 207) set the stage for the next two streams pertaining to struggles over meaning and institutional change.

The research streams of framing struggles and settlements, and institutional change are mostly related to field-level stability and change (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014). A number of studies identify framing contests, when "the framing of one group is often rebutted or challenged by frames of other groups", as a process by which shared meanings within an institutional field are contested, eventually leading to a precarious settlement or "fragile truce" within which one frame comes to dominate due to the work of skilled actors, often referred to as institutional entrepreneurs or cultural entrepreneurs (Ansari, Wijen, & Gray, 2013; Granqvist & Laurila, 2011; Meyer & Höllerer, 2010; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). The potential to examine the role of culture in the functioning of organizations and institutions through the construct of framing has arguably remained untapped (Creed et al., 2002). Cornelissen and collagues (2011) draw on Swidler's (1986) definition of culture as " the stock of knowledge, beliefs and conventions shared by a particular group of people at a particular point in time" (p. 1709) as a way of delineating the criticality of familiarity in the effectiveness of framing efforts.

Critique: Gaps in Theory

While discourse has played a critical role in the advancement of symbolic explorations of institutional theory, it has also been criticized for not going far enough. The underlying assumption common to studies using discourse analysis is that there is, at best, a correlational relationship between changes in highly institutionalized social practices and changes in the discourse associated with it (Green & Li, 2011). Additionally Lok & Willmott (2006) provide two main critiques to Phillips and colleagues' (2004) discursive view of institutions . Firstly, Lok and Willmott (2006) articulate how the discursive view of institutions, conflates constructivist and realist ontologies within which Phillips and colleagues (2004) place institutions. Secondly, Lok

and Willmot (2006) specify that while the discursive view of institutions claims a turn towards power and politics, the model merely alludes to power, and that "Phillips et al. offer no framework for analyzing how discourses become "structured" and "coherent", or how the provision of support from other discourses occurs, despite claiming that the strength or "power" of particular institutions is contingent on these factors" (Lok & Willmott, 2006, p. 479).

Similarly, Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) critique the tendency of discourse to "ascribe too much power…over for example fragile subjects and a discourse-driven social reality…[and] highlight problems with the tendency to work with too grandiose and too muscular view on discourse" (p. 1145). They provide a nuanced view of allowing such a "grandiose" and "muscular" view on discourse by stating, "grandoisation and muscularization of discourse should be grounded and shown…rather than be postulated" (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007, p. 1147). Suddaby, (2010) identifies similar limitations of discourse theory and echoes the observations of Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) in that it tangentially acknowledges the role agency and power, however leaves actors and their interests "in the shadows" (p.17) effectively addressing power in the absence of agency.

Rhetoric brings agency into the fore by explicitly highlighting actors and intent, and how words are deliberately used to persuade and influence (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). In rhetorical analysis, social change is facilitated by deliberately manipulating and reconceptualising values and ideologies, represented by particular discourse communities through genres of speech and writing, which are skilfully deployed by actors (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). A limitation of rhetorical analysis however, is that while it accounts for the agency of actors to manipulate texts, it does not account for where the power to do

so arises. Frames can be thought of as tools through which to deploy rhetorical power by ushering both sensegiving and sensemaking toward a preferred outcome. Analysing frames, therefore does not preclude rhetorical analysis, but instead is a useful way to understand the impact of rhetoric (Kuypers, 2009) and to trace the origins of powerful or dominant frames.

A healthy critique of existing framing research has been its tendency to "reify what are essentially dynamic and socially situated processes of meaning construction in terms of packaged outputs and relatively stable meaning systems" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 183). In relation to culture and framing, a similar critique is levied by Giorgi and colleagues (2015) whereby the presentation of "frames as stable packages of meanings that can at most be pitted one against the other" is criticised in favour of exploring "[a] more processual view of framing that emphasizes its construction and re-construction in a given context" (p. 13).

The dynamic between frames and the larger cultural context has also been articulated as a promising way forward. Cornelissen and colleagues (2011) argue that the familiarity of cultural elements fall on a spectrum from unfamiliar to a taken-for-granted fact of social life, the implications of which Rao and Giorgi (2006), also drawing on Swidler (1986) argue, pertain how "one is constrained not by internal motives but by knowledge of how one's actions may be interpreted by others…it is not the inability to imagine an alternative that constrains institutional change, but rather, the latitude to get away with a framing of a problem and its attendant solution, that influences the success of institutional entrepreneurs" (p. 273). Exploration of discursive opportunity structures, or notions of cultural resonance involving examination of salient discourses that have

momentum at a particular point in time, allowing for a particular frame to be seen as "sensible", "realistic", and "legitimate" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014; Koopmans & Statham, 1999) have been identified as possible ways forward in an effort to shed light on how frames "originate, evolve, and dissipate" (Giorgi et al., 2015, p. 13).

Through my research I had set out to overcome these critiques and heed the calls for approaching the study of changes in meaning and culture by interrogating how language is used to infuse meaning and value into technical production; to identify how elements or frames need to be maintained in order for *local food* to remain true to its social mission; and to utilize objective methodology to follow the evolution of *local food* in popular text from it's first mention through to it's taken-for-granted status 37 years later.

My core theoretical research question was *how do actors use language to politicize (i.e. infuse meaning and value in) a technical economic product in order to promote institutional change or maintenance.* However, my analysis moved the answer to my question, and in fact my research question itself, further upstream to explore how elements in the wider cultural milieu become structured into taken-for-granted frames, in a short amount of time.

At the time of developing my proposal and putting forth theoretical perspectives that I was preparing to examine, I was expecting the results of my data analysis to centre on framing contests and clear struggles and contestation between actors vying to dominate the growing narrative around local food in the popular press. This expectation was informed both by theory (e.g. Ansari, Wijen, & Gray, 2013; Granqvist & Laurila,

2011; Meyer & Höllerer, 2010; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), and by what I had found in my initial exploration of some data.

Upon analysing data, which spans almost 40 years, it was apparent that in this case, specific actors and framing struggles came less to the fore than expected. Rather, *local food* seemed to emerge across a number of different topics ranging from globalization to land use to public health. Given the timespan of my data, it was clear at the beginning of the dataset, the term *local food* did not exist as we know it, allowing me to track it's growth and development over close to four decades. It is also apparent from this analysis that the institutionalization of *local food* was not primarily a result of incumbents and challengers strategically deploying rhetoric to gain traction for their preferred frames in clear framing contests. This is not to say that rhetoric was not deployed, or that contestation was not apparent within my dataset, however within the large time horizon and number of data points that my data cover, actors' framing contests did not emerge as the primary mechanisms through which *local food* evolved.

My finding is that the presumption of instrumentally driven actors engaging in strategic framing contests does not always hold sole explanatory power. This is consistent with studies questioning some assumptions underlying the framing approach. Tarasova (2017) summarizes various long-standing criticisms against more agentic interpretations of the framing literature when she states, "…in the framing approach, social movements are seen as rational actors that construct their framing strategically and everyone understands these frames in the same way" (p. 57).

Drawing on Swidler's work, Tarasova (2017) goes on to clarify that "[a]rguments about the strategic character of framing do not hold because 'people exercise little direct

strategic control over systems of meaning and culture' (Swidler 1995:38)". Similarly, Benford & Snow (2000) acknowledge the common criticism of "movement framing research for it's failure to take seriously the constraints that 'culture out there' imposes on social movement framing activity" (p. 622), implying that there is more to framing and social movements than "strategic wit, courage, imagination, or plain luck (or the lack of those) of the different actors involved" (Koopmans, 1999, p. 100), sentiments that are echoed by Steinberg (1999). Such critique is analogous to those levelled at the "hypermuscular" interpretations of institutional entrepreneurship and literature concerning institutional change more generally, which place the prerogative for change solely on the shoulders of rational, instrumentally-driven actors (Suddaby, 2010).

In other words, "[t]he possibility of leaving behind the strategic corset is quite obvious when movement framing efforts are seen as a key to the culture…[which] means considering discursive contexts as relevant for the formation of world views and positions of engagements *well before strategic action starts* [emphasis added]" (Ullrich & Keller, 2014, p. 131). Snow, Benford, McCammon, Hewitt, & Fitzgerald (2014) identify a gap in the research on framing pertaining to frame variation. Specifically Snow and colleauges (2014) recognize that "studies that examine…the same movement over longer periods of time can use [frame] variation to better isolate factors that influence the creation, maintenance and outcomes of framing activity." (Snow et al., 2014, p. 36).

In reviewing framing and frame analysis within the organizational theory literature, Cornelissen & Werner (2014) present discursive opportunity structures as an important link between culture and agency, whereby "…the broader social context beyond individuals and organizations can gradually (or even suddenly) present discursive

opportunities (Fiss & Hirsch, 2005) – that is, opportunities for framing derived from salient discourses that are culturally significant at a particular point in time" (p. 210). Cornelissen and Werner (2014) acknowledge the significant amount of work that has been done at the institutional level, much of which has elaborated on framing contests, struggles and settlements as mechanisms of institutional change (e.g. (Ansari et al., 2013; Maguire et al., 2004; R. E. Meyer & Höllerer, 2010)). They go on to specify that future efforts in framing research may benefit from looking at frame resonance in accounting for the variation in success of framing efforts (Snow, Rochford Jr, Worden, & Benford, 1986), and discursive opportunity structures (Koopmans & Statham, 1999; McCammon, 2013; McCammon, Muse, Newman, & Terrell, 2007). A key criticism within the framing literature that the construct of discursive opporunitity structure is poised to overcome is the tautological argument that actors who won framing contexts did so by using the most resonant frames (Benford & Snow, 2000; Cornelissen & Werner, 2014); findings that have been pepetuated by primarily studying actors and social movements that have been "successful" (Fuentes, 2015).

Ultimately, when considerting meaning change in an instutional context, each of the three mechanisms observed in the literature – discourse, rhetoric, and framing – fall short of being able to explain shifts in meaning over time in their own way. Using Alvesson and Kärreman's (2007) approach to disentangling discourse from Discourses, it can be argued that instances of rhetoric and framing are representative of a more 'local' variety of discourse which represent "local achievements…with little or no general content" (p. 1126). In the absense of this "general content", it is unclear where, as summarized previously, the power to actualize shifts in meaning comes from. Essentially,

Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) argue that discourse – aligned with rhetoric and framing in my study; and Discourses – aligned with a more Foucauldian definition of discourse in my study – both fall short of containing the explanatory power to account for for meaning change. Furthermore discourse and Discourses represent a reciprical relationship with each other with regards to posessing what the other lacks: discourse contains agency without power, while Discourse contains power without agency, operating at a macro social level of analysis. Alvesson and Kärreman (2007) describe this relationship as:

> a tension between these two levels. Investigations of the local construction of discourse treat discourse as an emergent and locally constructed phenomenon, while the study of Discourses usually starts from well established a priori understandings of the phenomeon in question (p. 1134) .

I argue that my findings account for both of these levels of "discourse" and "Discourse" in the same study. The construct of discursive opportunity structures is paramount in building a bridge between instances of rhetoric and framing (discourse according to Alvesson and Kärreman (2007)); and discourse in a Foucauldian sense (Discourse according to Alvesson and Kärreman (2007)) observed in my data. Through my research, I extend the construct of discursive opportunity structures by identifying mechanisms of its structuration, leading to its emergence. I showing that processes not limited to the strategic action of challengers versus incumbents, led to the establishment of *local food* to appear "sensible, realistic and legitimate" in recent times. My study charts the evolution of this sensibility, and in the process, identifies a number of mechanisms that contribute to the structuring of a discursive opportunity structure.

Chapter 3: The Historical Emergence of Local Food In Canada

> "[t]he study of food – its production and consumption, its exchange and evolution, its abundance or scarcity – can illuminate social relations between individuals and groups, the exertion of power (political or otherwise), how cultural norms and aberrations are created, and how personal and group identity is constructed" (Iacovetta et al., 2012, p. 10).

Semiotic significance or symbolic weightiness has remained a core characteristic of food, and the context of its production and consumption, throughout time and across diverse cultures around the world (Smith & MacKinnon, 2007; A. Winson, 1993). Meanings associated with food have undergone significant shifts over the last century, ranging from the indigenous cultures defining poverty not in terms of whether a person ever "troubled to catch is own salmon, but was instead content to eat food produced by others" (Smith & MacKinnon, 2007, p. 160), to the other end of the spectrum whereby food is regarded as "a commodity – one in a long line of goods and services produced and sold" (Winson, 1993, p. 1). While the range of meanings associated with food appears to be significantly polarized, it has been noted that food, even as a commodity, continues to carry "its own specific and significant socio-economic, cultural, and political characteristics" (Winson, 1993, p. 1). The enactment of power, culture and politics through the manipulation of the densely symbolic nature of food is not new. In an exploration of Canadian food history, Guard (2012) recounts the successful organization of the Toronto Housewives Association against the Ontario Milk Control Board's ability to set milk prices, using the deep symbolism associated with milk and healthy children to mobilize diverse political players and community members. The Housewives gained support from wider community advocates including clergy, social workers, nutrition

experts, organized labour, milk truck delivery drivers, small dairies, retailers, and farmers on issues including raising milk prices, raising food prices, and decreasing wages, and were able to publicize issues that communist and other progressive groups had campaigned for throughout the 1930's but with little political impact. "The Housewives popularity rested on milk's extraordinary material and symbolic significance, and was bolstered by the hyperbole that exaggerated milk's importance to health…[as a]…food that was widely viewed as essential to the well-being of children and a critical necessity of mothers desperate to feed their families on inadequate breadwinner wages, milk allowed even apolitical women to take to the street in noisy protest and demand state ownership of the dairy industry in the name of responsible motherhood" (Guard, 2012, p. 275).

The symbolism associated with the production and consumption of food has evolved in the Canadian context, as in other industrialized nations, from originally being associated with family farming closely tied to land, seasonality and place, eventually shifting into a commodity associated with contract farming, closely tied to technology, driven by requirements to ship more food, further, and valuing economies of scale and efficiencies over differentiation, only to recently return to reconnect with associations of land, seasonality and place (Elton, 2010). Industrial production has been a relatively recent development in the history of food production overall (Elton, 2010; Murton, 2012; A. Winson, 1993). Owing to its colonial past, Canada made its first foray into large scale global food production prior to industrialization with produce such as apples destined for global markets, due to the British desire to market and import products from the "garden of the empire" for sale into Britain (Murton, 2012). Murton (2012) observes that in order

for globalized food trade to occur, "a whole set of connections between the local and global – cultural, infrastructural, environmental – had to be worked out" (p. 226) reminding us that "...a global market in food was not – indeed markets in general are not – natural or inevitable, but rather had to be built out of ecological conditions, farming practices, culture, and state policy" (p. 226-7). Murton (2012) argues that global markets in food did not arise simply due to the laws of supply and demand, but by state involvement and manipulation of culture by the Empire Marketing Board through the discursive construction of the "garden of the empire", highlighting the global connections that the modern globalized food system tends to hide, as well as through ecological manipulation by preferring to grow foods en masse that would travel well overseas, concurrently constructing systems of quality control in which "grading was thus a process of culturally constructing nature" (p. 236).

As Murton (2012) argues, the infrastructural, cultural, symbolic, political and economic foundations for the modern global food system were laid prior to the industrialization of food production, particularly in European settler societies like Canada. As the context of the production of food moved further away from the context of its consumption, the meanings and value associated with food also shifted. The valued qualities of food products in a globalized food system were markedly different from more localized systems of the past (Elton, 2010; Murton, 2012; A. Winson, 1993). Seasonal dependency came to be seen as a liability, uniformity in appearance and fewer, less differentiated products selected on the basis of durability and simultaneous ripening times becoming more valuable than genetic diversity, with a preference for food that looked "as if humans, not nature, made it" (Elton, 2010, p. 9). After World War II and the

introduction of pesticides such as DDT and the use of mechanized labour and advances in seeding technologies, the output of uniform agricultural products was able to meet with the increasing demand brought about by the global transport of food products (Elton, 2010; A. Winson, 1993). For the industry as a whole, however, these developments also represented a significant shift in which power and (in)dependence lay amongst players in the food system. Elton (2010) highlights that whereas in the 1950s and 60s, a family farm was characterized by a large degree of independence, the shift into contract farming with encouragement from government policies for farmers to consolidate, purchase more land and produce more, encouraged specializing in a particular product and drastically increasing scale of production destined for global markets. By the 1970s a combination of global trends including overproduction by North American farms, increasing price of oil and increasing interest rates resulted in cash flow problems for farmers who had incurred significant debts to increase production (Elton, 2010). In Canada by the 1980s a period known as The Farm Crisis began, making headlines across the country owing to alarming rates of farmers declaring bankruptcy and expressing frustration through political activism (Elton, 2010).

Unlike previous times, as food shifted into a commodity, between the context of production and consumption entered transportation, processing and distribution, as well as “educational, technical and ideological apparatuses that provide support and guidance for the more production-oriented activities of the food economy” (A. Winson, 1993, p. 9). Winson (1993) refers to the large number of activities associated with these processes as the agro-food complex. Arguing that as agribusiness grew into the modern entity we see today, Winson (1993) observes that the ultimate goals of coordinating the agricultural

sphere was to ensure regularity of supply, consistency of quality, and profitability which also precipitated a number of inequalities in power among various players in the food system. The outcome of contract farming and vertical integration from food manufacturers to producers is essentially that "integration via some form of contractual linkage typically entails the loss of producer autonomy and control over basic production decisions on the farm" (A. Winson, 1993, p. 139). This type of relationship between manufacturers and producers began in the 1960s and came to be known as corporate farming by the 1970s and was not without controversy. Apart from losing autonomy and control, farmers were also finding that while they were at the root of production for a multitude of products, they were also sheltered from price increases in the market. Food prices increased between the food that was produced, manufactured, processed and finally sold through retail channels, increases that farmers were not party to (A. Winson, 1993).

One of the largest developments in the Canadian food system to exacerbate power inequalities within the food system was the growth of food retailers. "The retailers charge the manufacturers to bring a new product into their stores, charge again for location, and space on their shelves and then charge once more for a prominent display in their advertisements and flyers. With almost insatiable appetites, many retailers then ask for additional payments over and above those already provided" (Winson, 1993, p. 160 quoting from The Globe and Mail, February 28, 1987). Winson (1993) partially attributes the growth and success of chain stores and supermarkets to wider societal trends of (1) the shift from rural to urban populations, (2) separation of people from the land, (3) decline in self-sufficiency in food production and preparation allowing for a growth in

demand for time-saving and processed food items. In such urban contexts, fruits and vegetables are brought in for resale by large supermarkets, from their international suppliers. Two major companies have dominated the Canadian food retail scene since the early 20th century: Loblaw and Metro, with increasing sales going to larger big box stores such as Walmart and Costco (Elton, 2010).

Elton (2010) summarizes the work of Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael, who have studied and coined the term “food regimes” as a way of examining food from a historical and geopolitical perspective. They argue that the last century has seen two full food regimes, the first having to do with the British Empire from 1870-1914, and the second having to do with the mass production of foods by large corporations for mass consumption, taking place after the Second World War (Elton, 2010; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989). Food regimes are characterized by conflict between actors, such as farmers and food producers, as they compete for control of the food system (Elton, 2010). Most relevant to this present study, they observe that academics are unsure as to whether a third food regime has settled, however they acknowledge that there are two potential futures: (1) the global food system controlled primarily by supermarkets, and (2) a regionally organized and diverse system which seems to be taking root (Elton, 2010). It is this uncertain future that I engage with this present study, to understand how the regionally organized and diverse system, which is antithetical to the global food system controlled primarily by supermarkets, has come about from a cultural and symbolic perspective over the last few decades and gained significant cultural currency.

Along with the consolidation of farms into larger, more dependant, and less diverse units that were reliant on chemical and mechanical technologies, fringe

counterculture movements pertaining to natural food were also taking shape starting in the 1960s and 1970s, mostly out of concern about food additives, water pollution, pesticide use, and the nutritional value of processed foods (Carstairs, 2012; Johnston & Baumann, 2010). In Canada, this took the form of more and more Canadians growing their own sprouts, baking their own bread, and seeking out health food stores within which to shop for natural food items (Carstairs, 2012). Around the same time, the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 brought ecological concerns to the forefront of public discourse, and "some politically minded individuals 'began eating with a consciousness about the environmental consequences of where their food came from and how it was produced'" (Civitello, 2011 in Johnston & Baumann, 2010, p. 10). These movements also set the stage for other political and health-related changes to popular eating habits including vegetarianism (Johnston & Baumann, 2010).

While the 1980s food trends followed general trends of conspicuous consumption, particularly in the gourmet food arena, it has been observed that the foodies of the 1980s were characterized by "a new class of aspiring, urban young people who abandoned social conscience for the pursuit of social prestige and career success, yet had brought with them all the personal and cultural assets of the counter cultural lifestyle experience, centred on individual choice and personal authenticity" (Binkley, 2007 in Johnston & Baumann, 2010, p. 11). Concurrently, however, with the rise of conspicuous consumption, the 1980s also saw a number of food scandals bring to light the darker realities of industrial food production, including for example mad cow disease in the UK, and deaths of young children eating tainted fast food in the US, setting the stage for a multitude of food movements in the coming decades (Lewis, 2011; Pollan, 2010).

The 1990s and early 2000s brought with them waves of politicized food movements ranging from the Fair Trade movement, to the Slow Food movement, through to the increasing demand for organics, and most recently local food. Both Canadian and American print media suggest that “local is the new organic”, with data showing that consumers are willing to pay significantly higher prices for local food, which at one time was only the purview of organics (Cloud, 2007; Shore, 2013). Johnston & Baumann (2010) observe, that while the counterculture of the 1970s was “not a unified monolithic movement, but operated from multiple vantage points such as food coops, the peace movement, and ‘back to the land’ lifestyles…unearthing political implications of food choices” (p. 131) was a common thread among multiple interests. The recent movements of the 1990s onwards also exhibit splintered beginnings reminiscent of the movements of the 1970s, however the splintering is arguably much more fine grained in recent times (Pollan, 2010). Issues ranging from school lunches, animal rights, genetically modified foods, organic and local food production, public health concerns including diabetes and obesity, food sovereignty, food safety, farmland reform, community access to healthy food, farm worker rights, feedlots, and nutritional labeling all fall under what is loosely referred to as the food movement as a whole (Pollan, 2010). Pollan (2010) argues that the common thread among these diverse factions within the current food movement is “around the recognition that today’s food and farming community is ‘unsustainable’ – that it can’t go on in its current form much longer without courting a breakdown of some kind, whether environmental, economic, or both” (p. 5). What is different about the current food movement as compared to that of the 1970s, is that “it is a much less conventional kind of politics, one that is about something more than food…[it] is also

about community, identity, pleasure, and, most notably, about carving out a new social and economic space removed from the influence of big corporations on one side and government on the other" (Pollan, 2010, p. 7).

Despite the enormous capacity of "buy local" approaches to mobilize individuals and organizations, the definition of what 'counts' as local is widely contested (Joseph et al., 2013; Ostrom, 2006; Smithers & Joseph, 2010). Ostrom (2006) reviews a range of definitions of 'local' and finds that they coalesce around physical scale and spacial constructions (e.g. 100-miles (Smith & MacKinnon, 2007), national/regional borders (Autio et al., 2013)), qualitative attributes (e.g. "fresher, tastier, purer, healthier" (Ostrom, 2006 p. 72)), and relational attributes (e.g. "supporting or having a relationship with a specific, idealized type farmer…small, pesticide free, kind towards animals, hard-working, trustworthy, honest, or independent" (Ostrom, 2006 p. 72)). Definitions of 'local' have also been acknowledged as being contradictory and contentious, in some cases being "less about the radical affirmation of an ethical community or care, and more to do with the reproduction of a less positive parochialism or nationalism" (Holloway & Kneafsey 2000 p. 294). Similarly, Hinrichs (2003) warns of a defensive, exclusionary localism that can become a "perilous trap" (p. 44), in addition to an overly specific focus on food and farming that can divert attention from equally as important considerations of environment and social justice. The multi-faceted and contradictory meanings surrounding "local" have rendered it meaningless, to a point where defining it "makes no sense whatsoever" (Ostrom, 2006 p. 67).

Speaking specifically of the popularity of local food, Pollan (2010) suggests that one of the most important drivers of this recent movement is the commitment to "create

new economic and social structures outside of the mainstream economy", and owing to its "communitarian impulse". Unlike the movements of the 1960s, local food advocates' criticism of corporate food, federal farm subsidies, and particularly emphasis on building community around food, local food has managed to cross the political centre and garner supporters from both the far left *and* the far right of the political spectrum (Pollan, 2010). In the Canadian context, although not unlike others, Elton (2010) observes that an entirely new generation of people want to farm, who have no recent ancestral connections to agriculture but whose parents are most likely to have been nurses, teachers, plumbers, or engineers. In addition to finding a calling within farming, this new generation of farmers also brings with it business savvy and innovation that is redefining farming as it has been known, from "the way they gain access to land, their cultivation techniques and the way they market their produce" (Elton, 2010, p. 54). Local food has been promoted as a counterpoint to mass-produced, durable foods and in many cases have taken on an artisanal or craft-like quality, whereby small-scale producers make special attempts to engage with land, production and marketing in novel ways that are often idiosyncratic to the producer, become part of their identity as sellers, and add to the experience of purchasing food through non-conventional means, outside of the mainstream economy, directly to consumers thereby further developing notions of community.

Local food as a phenomenon within Canada is difficult to quantify as a whole, owing to significant variation across provinces, and diversity in identifying what 'counts' as local. In policy documents and recommendations, local food is often defined by spatial or regional boarders such as the local community level or the provincial scale (Edge, 2013; Egbers et al., 2009). The provinces where the majority of food is produced and

consumed within the province are Quebec at 29%, Ontario at 24% and British Columbia at 16% (Edge, 2013). Reasons that are commonly cited by consumers for purchasing local food include, proximity to production, desire to help local farmers and the local economy, reducing distance food has to travel, and higher food quality and taste, which consumers are willing to pay a premium for (Shore, 2013; Telford, 2008). Telford (2008) observes that by 2006, only one in ten Canadians cited that there was no real benefit to purchasing local food, with the majority ascribing a wide range of attributes (such as those mentioned above) to local food.

Over the last few decades, the number and breadth of initiatives that fall within the umbrella of local food as significantly increased. In Canada, the most common of these initiatives include farmers markets, community supported agriculture schemes, local food within grocery stores and food co-ops, institutional procurement by universities and other government institutions, restaurant and chef initiatives, culinary tourism and regional cuisine activities, food security policy groups, food box programs, and regional value chains (Telford, 2008). Various provincial organizations have attempted to collect data regarding the economic benefits of local food initiatives. Although the data is limited, what is available, however piecemeal, shows significant economic impacts. In British Columbia alone, a report assessing the benefits of farmers' markets assembled by the BC Association of Farmers Markets in 2012, compared the number of farmers' markets in BC from 2006 to 2012. In 2006 the province contained 98 markets, which increased to 159 by 2012. The estimated total direct sales in 2006 were $46.02 million, which reached 113.69 million by 2012 (Connell, 2012). In Ontario in

2009, an impact study by Farmers' Markets Ontario reported an economic impact ranging from $641 million to 1.9 billion annually to the provincial economy.

The movement of local food and politicized eating has gone from being a contained counterculture, to permeating popular culture, to being addressed in the Business section of newspapers (Shore, 2013), and having The Economist ("Leaders," 2006; "Special Report," 2006) take aim at the politics surrounding the "varieties of 'ethical food: organic food, Fair Trade food, and local food", which begs the question of how the popular discourse around local food has evolved. Having already incorporated organic food and fair trade into their repertoire, attempts have been made for large, globally organized food retailers to respond to the growing cultural, political and economic force that is local food. In 2010, the US based store Albertsons using the term "Farmers' Market" set up their produce outside of 200 of their stores over Labor Day weekend and faced significant public backlash from local farmers' market organizations (Joseph et al., 2013). In 2012, at a Canadian National Food Summit with roughly 600 people present, the executive chairman of Loblaw Limited, Canada's largest food retailer, stated "Farmers markets are great…One day they're going to kill some people though" (Bain, 2012), which was not taken lightly by local food representatives and the public at large, who responded widely through news and social media outlets by highlighting the safety violations of Loblaw Ltd.

A third response to the growing demand for local food has been more subtle. Some of Canada's largest food retailers, including Wal-Mart, which epitomizes a globally organized system within which products (including organic food) travel large distances to reach consumers, have begun advertising in ways that evoke an association

with local food and local producers. What is more interesting is that these attempts at associating with local food practices haven't received as much (if any) public backlash those mentioned above.

The purpose of this section was to provide a brief overview of the Canadian context of the emergence of local food, and to acknowledge changes in the meaning and symbolic dimension of food over time. The notion of food as a commodity and as a convenience available in grocery stores was socially constructed and normalized over the years through processes going as far back as the British Empire. The fringe movements of the 1970s laid the foundation for more recent movements questioning the taken for granted view of food as a commodity within a global food chain, and has constructed the symbolic, taken for granted phenomenon of *local food*. Somewhere between the taken for granted phenomenon of industrialized food production, and its taken for granted antithesis of local food, a significant shift in the meanings associated with food has taken place. This study focuses on the emergence of *local food* as an institutionalized force, and aims to track its development and growth over time through the exploration of Canadian newspaper data. Much like the Toronto Housewives politicizing milk by imbuing it with meanings associated with children, health and welfare, recently the emergence of *local food* has infused the local production and consumption of food with significant cultural and political implications, making purchasing and eating food a political act. How have meanings associated with *local food* settled around a cultural phenomenon that remains relatively ill-defined, yet retains significant cultural currency?

A search for *local food* in the database, Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies, yields just over 31,000 articles from its first mention in 1977 to December 2014. Notably, of

these articles, 80% were published in or after the year 2000. Prior to 2000, the term local food held connotations of poverty, as the term was typically used to refer to a local food bank. The meaning of *local food* thus, has changed relatively recently and very rapidly. The first mention of *local food movement* does not occur until 1999.

The empirical phenomenon of *local food* is therefore interesting for three reasons. First, it provides a very useful empirical context within which a highly rationalized and technical industrial product has become infused with political meaning and social value. Second, the *local food* phenomenon is unique in that it defies the core assumptions of institutional theory. Most studies of institutional change focus on the increased rationalization of organizational fields that were previously characterized by traditional modes of production. In this case, however, we see a highly rationalized field moving toward more traditional and less industrial modes of production. Finally the phenomenon of *local food* has emerged recently and changed very rapidly. That is, change here has been revolutionary rather than evolutionary. The relatively tight time frames of change offer methodological advantages and efficiencies in data collection in that the process of change has unfolded over a relatively constrained time period.

What is unusual about the evolution of *local food* is that over the 35 year time frame, the phenomenon has shifted from being viewed as an economically 'arational' activity to a powerful economic strategy. Thus, my core empirical question is: ***how did a relatively fringe cultural activity become reframed as an economically significant one?***

Chapter 4: Methodology

The question of how shared understandings of social and/or cultural phenomena come into being has recently regained momentum. Using discourse analysis, Khaire and Wadhwani (2010) show how meaning construction directly translated into valuation criteria, moving Indian Art from an institutionalized characterization of "provincial" or "decorative" to redefining it as a valued variety of modernism. Numerous studies contend with various processes involved with the evolution and implications of language, shared meaning, (de)institutionalization, and culture change (Cornelissen et al., 2015; Green, 2004; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Khaire & Wadhwani, 2010; Maguire & Hardy, 2009, 2013; Phillips & Oswick, 2012; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). The need for studies in institutional research that take a more ideational focus, which "capture how the content or structure of discourse reflects and shapes institutionalization" (Green Jr. et al., 2009, p. 11) has been well articulated. From a linguistic perspective, early works highlighted the role of language as essential to the construction of social reality (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). Phillips and Oswick (2012) state that the analysis of the role of language in social construction was highly influenced by structuralism, which

> "emphasizes the way in which systems of meaning, such as those inherent in language, emerge from the relationships among words. Thus words are bound up in webs of other words that infuse them with meaning and the linguistic value of words is determined by their relationship to other words and to more complex texts; meaning merges from the structural connections among concepts and words" (p. 440).

It is from this perspective, with the assumption of meaning emerging from "webs of words", that I approached the empirical work for this dissertation research.

Data

The impact of media on structuring meaning has been long understood (DiMaggio et al., 2013; Fiss & Hirsch, 2005; Granqvist & Laurila, 2011; Jonsson & Buhr, 2010; Kennedy, 2008; Klaus Weber et al., 2013; Kuypers, 2009; Petkova, Rindova, & Gupta, 2012; Vaara, 2013). DiMaggio et al. (2013) articulate a number of reasons why press coverage represents a legitimate source of data when examining sociological perspectives on culture. Firstly, it provides clues as to what elites are thinking, owing to direct quotes from those deemed to have authority over the topic at hand. Secondly, press accounts influence the views of the public (DiMaggio et al., 2013; Petkova et al., 2012; Vaara, 2013) and have been shown to have a considerable impact on shareholders and other organizations in and/or the structuration of the organizational field (Jonsson & Buhr, 2010; Kennedy, 2008; K. Weber et al., 2008), as well as the critical role of media in providing a particular kind of identification, reputation and legitimacy to organizations (Vaara, 2013).

Jonsson and Buhr (2010, p. 467) state that the media has been shown to directly influence the degree to which an organization or a group of organizations are recognized and taken for granted, and surmise that "at the core of the more recent approach is the idea that media organizations not only report on events and disseminate information, but they also have the power to shape people's perception and understanding of the world". Moreover, DiMaggio and colleauges (2013) specify five mechanisms through which newspapers shape individual an public perceptions understandings: (1) priming of

existing schematic representations by serving to bolster pre-existing opinions and points of view; (2) development of new representations by connecting previously unconnected phenomena through repetition and familiarity; (3) integration with broader schemata such as wider political or ideological values or attitudes that are already in place; (4) indirect influence through selective re-telling through social interaction as fodder for informal discussions; and (5) proxy value in meaning-laden messages reaching individuals who do not consume popular media through other channels informed by media (p 573-4).

Following the lead of DiMaggio and colleagues (2013), I assembled a dataset consisting of every newspaper article in the ProQuest database entitled, Canadian Newsstream Major Dailies that mentions the term *local food* from January 1978 to December 2014. The database contains full access to articles, columns, editorials and features published in a variety of Canadian newspapers including over 300 publications of national and leading regional papers from across Canada, starting in 1977 to present day. My search for *local food* covers the time period of 1978, the first mention of *local food*, to December 2014 totalling 31,421 articles. The number of articles mentioning *local food* reached a fever pitch in 2012, decreasing thereafter year after year, which is why I have ended my data collection at the end of 2014, as shown in in Figures 1 and 2, page 62, and Table 1 page 63.

Figure 1

Number of articles published in Canadian newspapers using "local food" 1978-2014

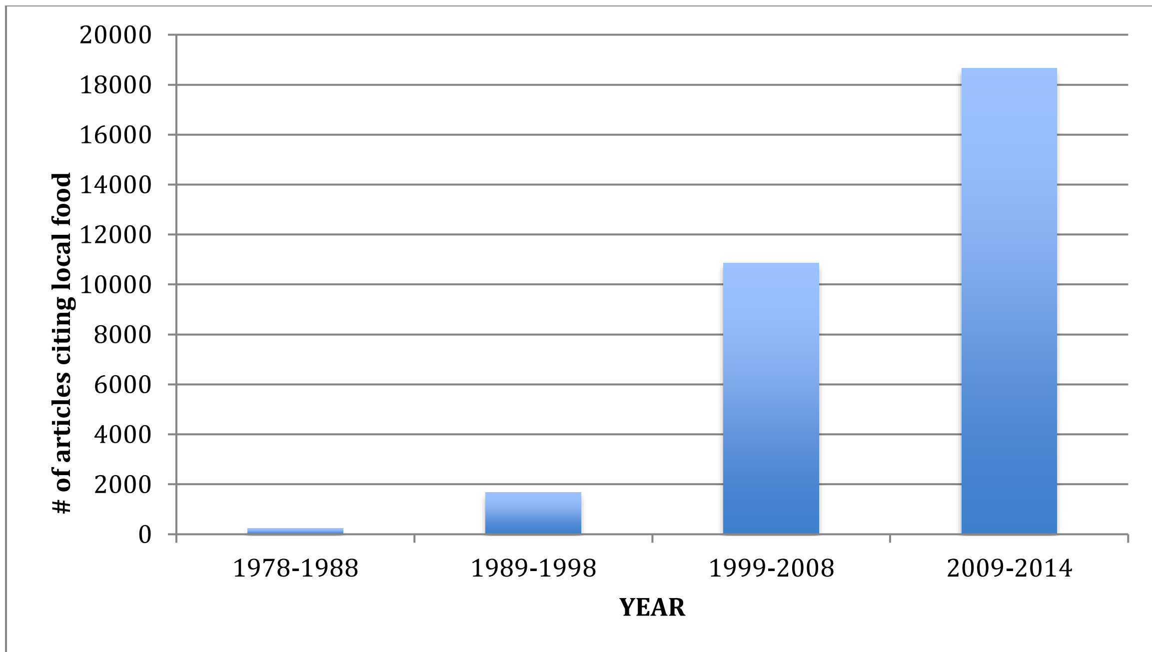


Figure 2

Number of articles published in Canadian newspapers using "local food": 2000-2014

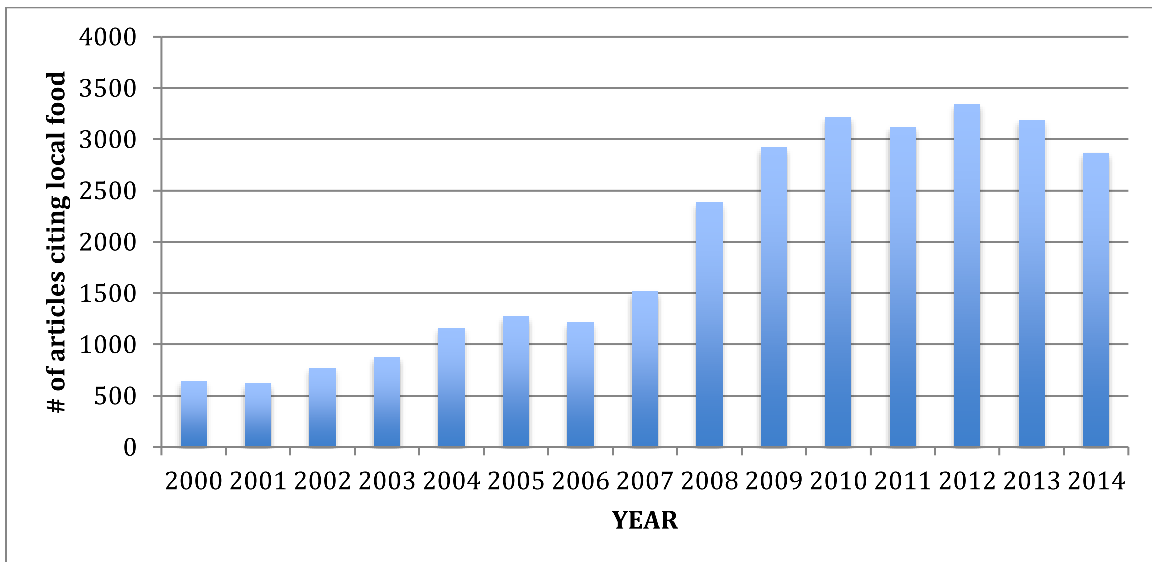


Table 1

Number of articles by year in dataset

Year	Number of Articles
1978	2
1979	2
1980	7
1981	5
1982	3
1983	6
1984	13
1985	40
1986	52
1987	40
1988	75
1989	90
1990	102
1991	158
1992	190
1993	155
1994	143
1995	164
1996	199
1997	166
1998	303
1999	406
2000	638
2001	617
Year (Cont'd)	**Number of Articles (Cont'd)**
2002	768
2003	874
2004	1160
2005	1274
2006	1212
2007	1517
2008	2383
2009	2920
2010	3215
2011	3121
2012	3345
2013	3190
2014	2866
TOTAL	31421

Study Design

The empirical phenomenon of *local food* is of particular relevance, and represents an appropriate case of theoretical sampling, for a few reasons. It provides a very useful empirical context within which a highly rationalized and technical industrial product has become infused with political meaning and social value, providing an excellent context within which I can study how meaning systems evolve. Additionally, the *local food* phenomenon is unique in that it defies the core assumptions of institutional theory. Most studies of institutional change focus on the increased rationalization of organizational fields that were previously characterized by traditional modes of production. In this case, however, we see a highly rationalized field moving toward more traditional and less industrial modes of production. Finally the phenomenon of *local food* has emerged recently and changed very rapidly, making this observed change revolutionary rather than evolutionary. The case of the emergence of *local food* can also be thought of as an instance of "profound change…a product of sustained symbolic work in which actors construct 'legitimating accounts' linking innovations to cultural views" (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005, p. 36). The relatively tight time frames of change offer methodological advantages and efficiencies in data collection in that the process of change has unfolded over a relatively constrained time period.

I use a single case study as a theoretical sample (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007) which provides an appropriate timeframe within which to study an observable shift in meaning. It is essential to note that temporal considerations are a significant factor in the design of this study. Since the goal is to map the evolution of meaning construction over time, which may be classified as a process study, longitudinal data, and archival data in particular have been especially cited as being suitable for tracing meanings over long periods of time (Langley et al.,

2013). Langley and colleagues (2013, p. 7) make a particularly important observation about longitudinal case studies, process studies and sample size,

> "it is important to note that the sample size for a process study is *not* the number of cases, but the number of *temporal observations*. Depending on how researchers structure their analysis, the number of temporal observations in a longitudinal study can be substantial. For example…in their archival study, Bingham and Kahl (2013) observed 399 articles and books from 1945-75 showing development of a business computer schema in the insurance industry".

I have structured my study design with this in mind, and although my research rests on a longitudinal case study based on theoretical sampling, the extensive archival data, and the large number of temporal observations, increase the power of this dissertation research beyond a sample size of one.

Methodological Approach

I have aligned my methodological approach in this dissertation with the methodological framework of computational grounded theory (Nelson, 2017) which aligns with my research question and data. The appropriateness of grounded theory for elucidating the production of meaning was initially articulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Nelson (2017) distils the purpose of grounded theory into "a method designed to allow categories and themes to emerge inductively from data, culminating in data-driven but abstract theoretical understandings of the underlying social world" (p. 3). She specifies that while it is a rigorous methodology, it has been critiqued for bringing too much subjectivity and necessitating too much of the researchers' judgement, personality and predisposition into analysis, making it difficult to validate and reproduce (Nelson, 2017). Additionally, given the intensity of the relationship between the

researcher and the data, grounded theory does not lend itself to scale, and therefore "cannot incorporate recent access to large amounts of unstructured social data" (Nelson, 2017, p. 3). By incorporating computational techniques into a grounded theory approach, Nelson (2017) allows for grounded theory to contend with unprecedented amounts of ("Big") data for theory generation while retaining a close, interpretive relationship with the data since outputs of computational methods can be difficult to interpret and remain distant from the researcher. In lacing together qualitative (grounded theory) and quantitative (computational techniques) methods in this way, Nelson (2017) proposes that this methodological framework is able to "[deliver] both quality *and* quantity, breadth *and* depth (Franzosi 2010:146), and allows researchers to leverage both close and distant reading (Moretti 2013) to better measure meaning" (p. 3).

While Nelson (2017) describes a fairly prescriptive three-step methodological framework, she acknowledges that within sociology, particularly in relation to inductive analysis for measuring meaning structures, there are no discipline-specific best practices for the use of computer-assisted text analysis. She therefore clarifies that the order within which the three steps are presented may not be appropriate for all types of research, and must ultimately be driven by the fit between the research question, available data and available computational methodologies. Within the framework of computational grounded theory, Nelson (2017) surveys a number of computational methodologies that can be employed within each step, again specifying that there may be others that are equally as appropriate, based on the research being undertaken.

Acknowledging the coherence that Nelson (2017) has provided to the relatively new space of computational textual analysis, grounded theory and meaning construction, I will present my analysis in accordance with these steps where appropriate. I will first provide a brief

overview of each step according to Nelson (2017), and then present my analysis within her framework.

Computational Grounded Theory: An Overview

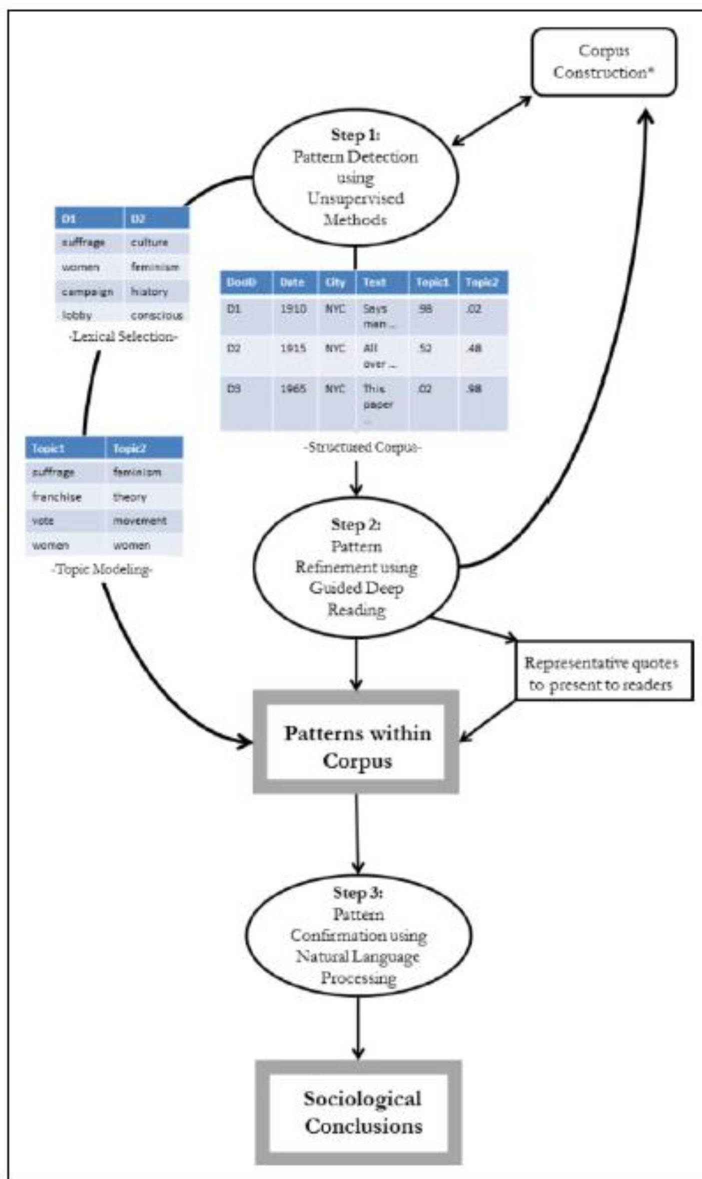
The first step in computational grounded theory is pattern detection or computational exploration and is intended to reduce the complexity or “messiness” of the text. This an exploratory step and can be thought of as analogous to traditional coding in that it also classifies text into categories, although with the assistance of computational techniques rather than human-coded text (Nelson, 2017). This step is not only done efficiently with large amounts of data, and with reproducible results, but also allows for categories and classifications to emerge from the data which may be novel to the researcher due to bias or fatigue (Nelson, 2017). Finally, and most importantly, it “structure[s] the text to allow for a reengagement with the data” (Nelson, 2017, p. 23), leading to the second step.

Step two of computational grounded theory lies much closer to traditional human-centred interpretive grounded theory, requiring the researcher to move between the results of the analysis and the data (Nelson, 2017). Once the data has been thematically classified in the first step, it is up to the researcher to undertake pattern refinement or computationally guided deep reading. In this step, the researcher reads the data in order to confirm whether the classification in the first step is appropriate, and interprets the data “into sociologically meaningful concepts to enable researchers to draw more abstract conclusions about the social world that produced the data” (Nelson, 2017, p. 28). It is important to note that due to the large amounts of data analysed, the researcher is able to computationally identify and focus on reading the most representative subsets of the data, rather than reading the full dataset. This will be explained further with my analysis.

The final step proposed by Nelson (2017) is pattern confirmation and is analogous to traditional hypothesis testing in that it deductively tests whether the patterns identified in the first two steps hold throughout the corpus, and provides a "general reliability test to the grounded theory process" (p. 29). Figure 3 below has been reprinted from Nelson (2017, p. 12) and depicts her grounded theory framework.

Figure 3

Three-step grounded theory framework . Reprinted from Nelson (2017, p. 12)**.**



Analysis

Due to the computational complexity of my analysis, I undertook my analysis in collaboration with Dr. Belaid Moa, an advanced research computing specialist who guides, mentors, teaches and supports researchers across Canada through the resources and expertise provided by Compute Canada and Westgrid for advanced research computing.

Upon completing data collection, Dr. Moa and I prepared the data for analysis, which consisted of a number of steps. Although my analyses were primarily quantitative, my methodological approach remained inductive, which meant that I spent significant time interpreting the output at each step in my analysis in order to inform further analysis or to explore my theoretical contribution. This is consistent with a grounded theory approach to analyzing data, the hallmarks of which are constant comparison and theoretical sampling. Suddaby (2006) articulates the importance of the decisions the researcher makes while analyzing data from a grounded theory perspective, and the crucial role of the researcher's interpretation of the data. It is best to understand my approach to analysis in two phases, which loosely correspond to iterations of Nelson's (2017) computational grounded theory framework (see Figure 3 above). The first phase of my analysis consists of the first iteration through Nelson's (2017) framework in which term frequencies and topic modeling is used to analyse and interrogate the data prior to traditional qualitative content analysis. The second phase of my analysis consists of a second iteration through Nelson's (2017) framework, now consisting of dynamic topic modeling followed by traditional content analysis (see Table 2, page 70).

Table 2

Summary of analytical strategy

Computational Grounded Theory Framework (Nelson 2017 p. 12)	Simplified explanation	My corresponding analytical steps: Phase I	My corresponding analytical steps: Phase II
Corpus Construction	Data collection and preparation	Preprocessing	Updating stop words
Step 1: Pattern Detection using Unsupervised Methods	Reduce "messiness"	Word frequency analysis & topic modeling	Dynamic topic modeling
Step 2: Pattern Refinement using Guided Deep Reading	Qualitative analysis of data	Content analysis of select T30 topics	Content analysis of select DTM topics
Patterns within corpus	Identify patterns within data	Graphical representation of relevance of local food in select topics	Graphical representation of relevance of local food in select topics
Step 3: Pattern Confirmation using Natural Language Processing	Reliability & validity testing	Cluster analysis	Theoretical abstraction of select topics*

*this is where my analysis differs from Nelson (2017) as my analysis was consistent with traditional grounded theory and qualitative analysis in order to reach my conclusions.

Phase 1: Term Frequency Analysis

My initial observation that sparked this dissertation was that at one point in time, when the term *local food* was mentioned, it was in reference to "local food banks" which carried connotations of need, poverty and charity. Food banks were introduced in Canada in the 1981 in Edmonton, Alberta as a temporary measure against hunger. Somewhere between 1981 and present day, the meanings associated with *local food* shifted so dramatically that over the last decade, any mention of *local food* no longer conjures up hunger and charity, but instead locally grown, fresh produce, purchased at a premium, directly from the person who grew it. In order to confirm my hypothesis that this shift had, in fact occurred, I began with a mean term frequency

analysis for the terms *local food* and *local food bank* (see Figure 4 below). Term frequencies were obtained by dividing the number of times *local food* was mentioned in a document by the length (number of words) of the document. Due to large differences in the number of articles per year ranging from two in 1978 to over three thousand in 2012 (see Table 1, page 63) the decision was made to use maximum term frequencies rather than the mean term frequencies when aggregating the data by year, as mean term frequencies tended to skew the data in earlier years, as shown below in Figure 4). This was repeated for the terms *local food bank*, *local food movement* and *local food market* and plotted over the time span of the data.

Figure 4

Mean term frequency by year for the terms: local food, local food bank, local food movement, local food market, farmers market.

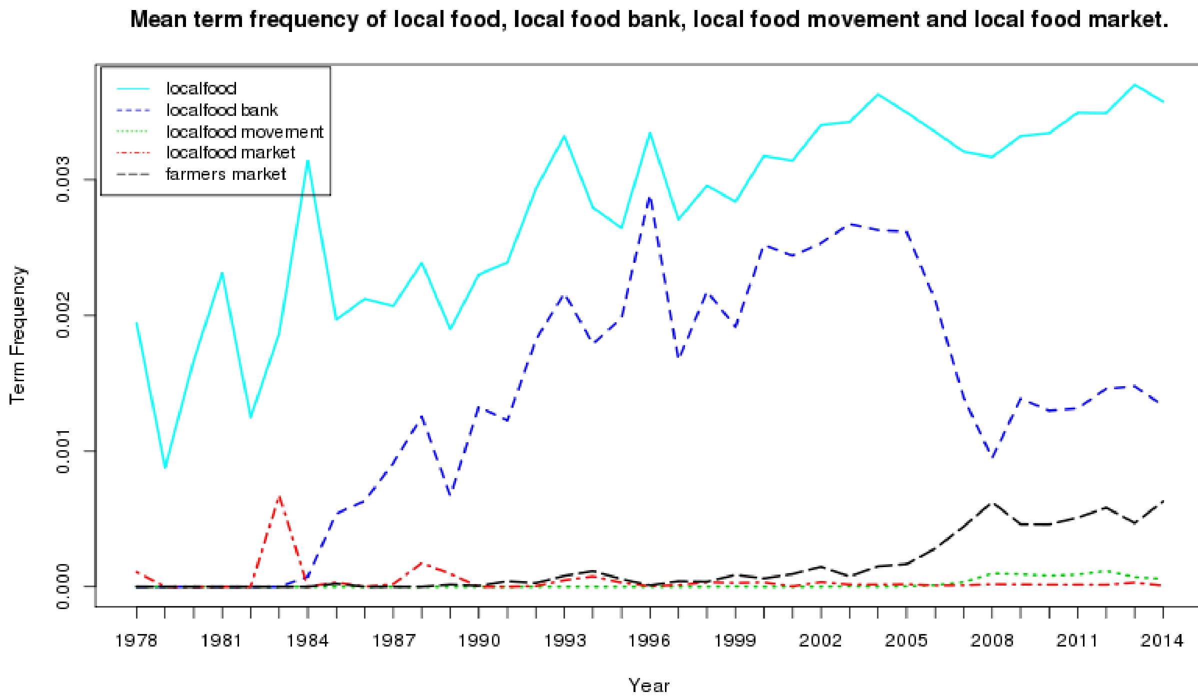
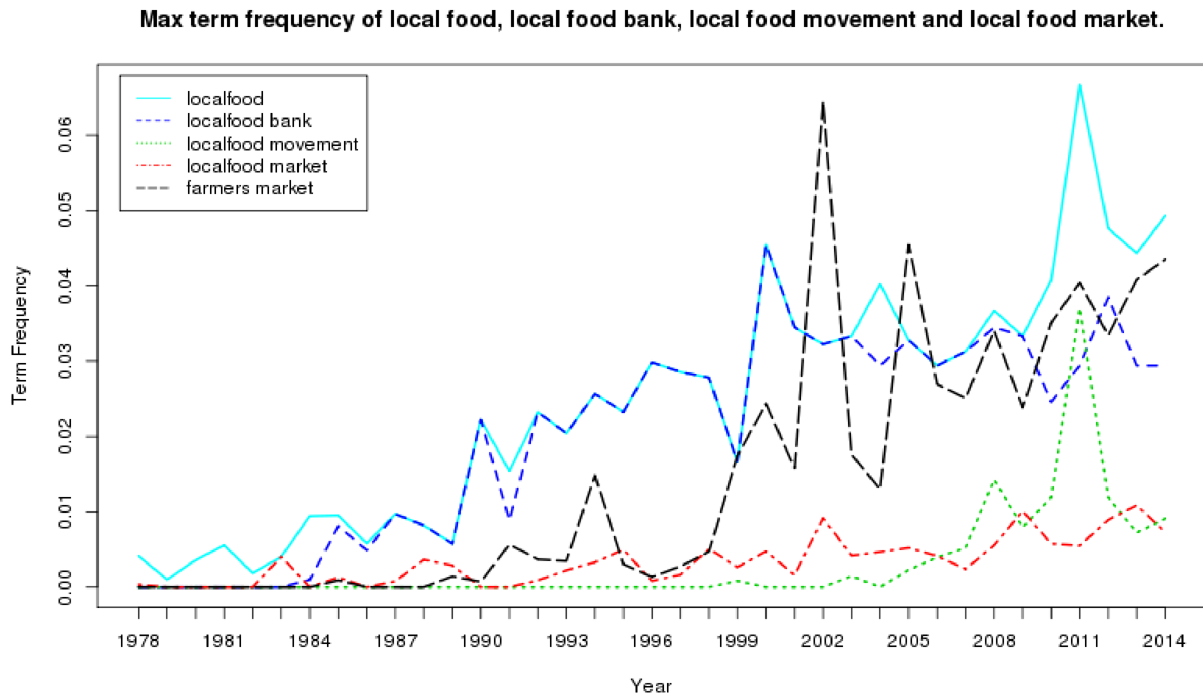


Figure 5

Maximum term frequency by year for the terms: local food, local food bank, local food movement, and local food market



In examining the figures above, we see that *local food* and *local food bank* move mostly in tandem with from 1995 to 2006, after which we see *local food bank* remain well below *local food,* which is on the rise. This confirmed my initial suspicion that for a significant number of years in my dataset, *local food* was equivalent to *local food bank*, after which the two terms began to move into varying spheres of meaning.

Phase 1: Topic Modelling

Topic modelling is relatively new form of automated text analysis using machine learning, and is often applied to studying "big data" whereby data sets that are too large to be analysed by a human, are done so with computational assistance. Within the two general categories of machine learning, Dr. Moa and I applied Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), a type of unsupervised machine learning, to the corpus after pre-processing the data. Topic modelling is built around one key assumption with respect to words and meaning: that meanings are relational (P. DiMaggio, 2015; P. DiMaggio et al., 2013; Grimmer & Stewart, 2013; Mohr & Bogdanov, 2013; Nelson, 2017; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). The assumption of the relationality of meaning is "built into the DNA of topic models" (DiMaggio et al., 2013 p. 587), and is operationalized through the notion that meanings are derived from word clusters (or topics) in that, "topics can be thought of as the constellation of words that tend to come up in a discussion (and, thus, to co-occur more frequently than they otherwise would) whenever that (unobserved and latent) topic is being discussed" (Mohr & Bogdanov, 2013, p. 547).

The output lists are open to interpretation, since the analysis does *not* label headings or topics as part of the analysis, and leaves this up to the researcher. This, along with the degree of researcher input into the pre-processing step satisfies the requisite inductive approach of qualitative research and grounded theory. With respect to sociological constructs, topics have been operationalized in a number of ways ranging from state discourse and media frames (Bonilla & Grimmer, 2013; DiMaggio et al., 2013), to rhetoric (Mohr et al., 2013), and academic and literary fields (Marshall, 2013; McFarland et al., 2013; Tangherlini & Leonard, 2013).

While much attention goes to the technical aspects of the topic model itself, Mohr & Bogdanov (2013) warn that "brilliant cultural research" is not merely an outcome of a software program, but "the quality of the knowledge about the case and the clarity of thinking about the

phenomena to determine the utility and richness of the analysis regardless of the sophistication of the methods employed" (p. 559). After the algorithm has run its course, it is the researcher's interpretation of the output that determines model "accuracy". As DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) specify, the purpose of the model is not to reproduce a statistically accurate representation of language, but "to identify a lens through which one can see the data most clearly" in other words, as DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) quote the statistician George Box: "All [models] are wrong; some are useful" (p. 582), a sentiment echoed by Grimmer and Stewart, (2013). Since the pre-processing step of data is intended to reduce the complexity of the dataset, as well as essentially turn the data from words into numbers for analysis (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013), there is general consensus that decisions made in the pre-processing step significantly impact the output. However, there are no clear guidelines on how to choose parameters (Nelson, 2017). Grimmer & Stewart (2013) articulate a number of steps that can be taken when data is analysed in this way. The first and foremost assumption that is unique to topic modelling is the assumption that all the words contained in the documents that make up the corpus are essentially a "bag of words" and order or syntax does not inform the analysis (Blei et al., 2003; Bonilla & Grimmer, 2013; P. DiMaggio et al., 2013). In order to reduce this large "bag of words" into data that are appropriate for analysing the phenomenon of interest, pre-processing provides a way to reduce the complexity or the "noise" of words that will not impact the analysis in a meaningful way.

I began my analysis by making some key decisions in the pre-processing of the data. As mentioned previously, my dataset consists of 31,421 newspaper articles ranging from 1978 to 2014 from across Canada, selected for inclusion in my dataset if they contained the term *local food*. From this database, the first decision I made in order to prepare the data for modeling was

to exclude the names of the newspapers that the articles came from, in addition to the titles, authors, and dates of publication for each article. This was done in order to ensure that the model was not skewed by recurring words that were not relevant to my analysis. A number of common stop words were also removed prior to running the initial model. Stop words are very common words such which do not convey meaning but serve grammatical functions, such as *the, a, of, and* etc (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013). The term *local food* was collapsed into *localfood* in order to retain a distinction between the terms *local food* and *local* and *food*, all of which were integral to my analysis. In order to simplify the dataset further, we applied a stemming algorithm, "which reduces the complexity by mapping words that refer to the same basic concept to a single root" (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013, p. 272). An example of this would be collapsing *family, families, families'* into the root of *famili* (example in Grimmer & Stewart, 2013). In addition to stop words, punctuation and capitalization were also removed.

The final decision that was made was to determine the number of topics that the model would generate. Dr. Moa and I decided to begin with specifying the model to generate 30 topics initially with an output of the top 10 words within each topic, and then determine whether the number of topics or any parameters within the pre-processing steps needed to be adjusted for an optimal solution. The output of the 30-topic model was successful and seemed as though it adequately separated the topics out into themes, a number of which appeared to be optimal and appropriate for further investigation. See Table 4, page 78.

I then asked Dr. Moa to generate a list of articles for each topic in which the articles were ordered from most to least relevant to each topic. Next, I read an average of 25 articles per topic (approximately 750 articles in total) in order to qualitatively identify the theme that each topic represented. DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) specify "in LDA, each topic can be viewed as a

distinct discursive context for a term that is sometimes assigned to it". This property, they argue, allows for what they term sematic validation of the topic model. This means that if the model output is valid, it should be able to discern different uses of the same term among different topics. Our initial 30-topic model was able to show this quality, since it was evident in some topics the term *localfood* appeared with the terms *food, bank, banks, year, canada, train, community, localfood, holiday hunger*; whereas within other topics, it appeared alongside the terms *food, local, farmers, localfood, foods, organic, production, grown, eat, produce* (see Table 3 page 77).

Table 3

Topic modelling 30-topic output with top 10 words

Topics	Top 10 words
Topic 0	victoria, family, cowichan, years, life, duncan, friends, great, service, held
Topic 1	business, company, store, windsor, canada, stores, customers, year, years, sales
Topic 2	police, fire, hospital, year, court, man, rcmp, area, public, home
Topic 3	team, hockey, game, games, high, league, prairie, season, players, teams
Topic 4	government, ontario, province, party, provincial, canada, minister, tax, federal, million
Topic 5	garden, grow, gardens, plant, plants, fruit, produce, growing, vegetables, gardening
Topic 6	island, hotel, day, travel, city, down, trip, beach, small, tour
Topic 7	*food, bank, donations, year, community, drive, banks, people, items, localfood*
Topic 8	*farmers, market, local, farm, food, localfood, farms, produce, products, markets*
Topic 9	school, students, community, year, children, student, program, schools, youth, award
Topic 10	call, centre, info, information, club, group, support, community, free, meets
Topic 11	music, tickets, theatre, show, concert, saturday, art, centre, gallery, band
Topic 12	*community, food, local, people, localfood, health, project, program, communities, support*
Topic 13	church, call, information, hall, centre, community, saturday, april, club, legion
Topic 14	people, time, good, year, years, back, day, make, things, lot
Topic 15	people, cent, food, children, social, year, income, poverty, families, bank
Topic 16	world, canadian, canada, book, country, toronto, international, countries, north, chinese
Topic 17	meat, health, deer, animals, food, chickens, beef, animal, fish, birds
Topic 18	moncton, information, call, library, visit, friday, free, gallery, info, month
Topic 19	hamilton, niagra, waterloo, church, call, burlington, centre, free, kichener, guelph
Topic 20	event, year, festival, day, saturday, annual, park, show, events, sunday
Topic 21	cup, fresh, salt, oil, add, sauce, minutes, chicken, cream, pepper
Topic 22	city, council, land, community, urban, plan, residents, develop, mayor, public
Topic 23	vancouver, september, theatre, free, august, centre, surrey, jan, feb, org
Topic 24	*food, local, farmers, localfood, foods, organic, production, grown, eat, produce*
Topic 25	john, church, saint, fredericton, brunswick, montreal, call, quebec, saturday, kingston
Topic 26	water, green, energy, waste, environmental, environment, earth, day, halton, carbon
Topic 27	food, wine, restaurant, chef, chefs, restaurants, local, culinary, menu, cooking
Topic 28	christmas, dec, holiday, santa, family, gift, season, december, year, children
Topic 29	*food, bank, banks, year, canada, train, community, localfood, holiday, hunger*

Note. Italicized topics contain *localfood* within the top 10 most relevant words.

Table 4

Topic themes identified qualitatively; not by algorithm

Topic Number	Theme	Topic Number	Theme
0	Obituaries	15	Poverty/unaffordability
1	Business	16	Movie/book reviews
2	Crime reports	17	Food safety
3	Sporting event food bank donations	18	Community calendar: east coast
4	Government/policy	19	Community calendar: Ontario
5	Gardening	20	Special events
6	Travel and tourism	21	Recipes
7	*Food bank donation drives*	22	Land use
8	*Local producers*	23	Community calendar: west coast
9	Student activism	*24*	*Building the case for local food*
10	Community calendar	25	Church calendars
11	Calendar of events: music	26	Environment
12	*Community food security*	27	Restaurants and chef profiles
13	Community calendar	28	Christmas giving/charity
14	Lifestyle/op-ed	*29*	*Corporate fundraising*

Note. Italicized topics contain *localfood* within the top 10 most relevant words.

In the interest of thoroughness, the model was run again with the same pre-processing decisions, however with 60 topics instead of 30. What I found was that while some important topics remained in tact, others were split beyond their utility and were adding confusion rather than clarity. This suggested that the 30-topic model was optimal, based on three tests of validity: semantic validity, internal validity established through qualitative analysis of the top 25 articles comprising each topic, and comparing the 30-topic model with a 60-topic model, finding substantive meaning in my 30-topic model. It is critical to note also that according Nelson (2017) "while there have been attempts to provide guidelines about these decisions, the general conclusion is that the output should be judged based on how helpful it is to the researcher."

DiMaggio and colleagues (2013) articulate that "when topic modelling is used to identify themes and assist in interpretation, rather than to predict a knowable state or quantity, there is no statistical test for the optimal number of topics or for the quality of a solution" (p. 582). They go on to specify, "the test of the model as a whole is its ability to identify *a number* of substantively

meaningful and analytically useful topics, *not in its success in optimizing across all topics*" (p. 582-3, emphasis added), meaning that while a particular model may be specified to generate a certain number of topics, not all topics need to be relevant for the model to be deemed successful. Important topics were first selected based on whether the term *localfood* appeared within the top 30 words of the topic. This decreased the number of topics of interest to 14 from 30. The remaining 14 topics were then reviewed qualitatively to further understand their discursive contexts and determine their relevance. Another 3 topics were removed due to their use of *localfood* pertaining to crime reports, special events, or sporting events, leaving 11 topics of interest. These topic themes included: government/policy, gardening, food bank donation drives, local producers, community food security, food safety, land use, building the case for local food, restaurant and chef profiles, Christmas giving/charity and corporate fundraising. These topics were then explored qualitatively in order to gain a deeper understanding of how *local food* was being used within these selected themes or "discursive contexts" (P. DiMaggio et al., 2013). Ultimately, topics 7 – food bank donation drives, 8 – local producers, 12 – community food security, and 24 – building the case for local food, were selected to depict changes over time and include in this dissertation to further show the validity of my topic model.

Since the model was now validated, and topics of interest identified, the next step was to observe how the selected topics changed over time. Since I was examining a basic 30-topic model, the way that I decided to do this was to look at how the number of times *local food* was mentioned each year changed over time, within each topic. Typically, after the topic model has been completed, *documents* are then analysed to determine which topics are discussed within a given document, operationalized as "heteroglossia" by DiMaggio and colleagues (2013). I quickly saw that my research question was intending to use topic modeling "inside-out" relative

to how it is used typically, in that the topic make-up of specific document was not central to my inquiry, but how the relative importance of each topic evolved over time. Two challenges arose: (1) determining how best to aggregate the documents by year; and (2) how to account for variance in the number of articles within each year, ranging from 2 in the early years of my dataset to over 3000 in the years 2010-2013. Ultimately, since I was interested in topic trends over time in relation to other topics, we decided to plot the graphs aggregating each year according to the mean, accepting that the results for the first few years would be skewed. This did not take away from visualizing the overall trends over time for each topic (see following results chapter for graphical depictions).

Phase 1: Clustering

Our final analysis for the 30-topic model was to run a specified 10-cluster model in order to further validate findings, and establish internal consistency of the data, as well as an unspecified cluster model, in which the machine identified the optimal number of clusters, in this case 5. This step was essentially another way of validating the internal consistency of the topic themes since it was apparent – particularly in the unspecified cluster model within which the clustered topics appeared logically consistent (See Tables 5 and 6 below, pp. 81-83).

Table 5

Specified 10 cluster model with topics and themes

Cluster	Cluster Theme	Relevance to *local food*	Topic Number and Theme
1	obituaries	people leaving gifts for the local food bank	0: obituaries
2	crime reports	cases of local food stores being broken into	2: crime reports
3	sporting event food bank donations	attending sporting events with food bank donations	3: sporting event food bank donations
4	government/ politics	reports on government activity related to local food banks or land use	1: business strategy 4: government/policy 15: poverty/unaffordability 22: land use
5	travel and tourism	references to "try the local food" of a country	6: travel and tourism 14: lifestyle/oped 16: movie/book reviews/international news
6	community events and recognition	community events allowing acces with food bank donations	9: student activism 10: community calendar 11: calendar of events: music 12: community food securiy 13: community calendar 18: community calendar - east coast 19: community calendar -ontario 20: special events 23: community calendar - west coast 28: christmas giving/charity
7	food	local food recipes and chefs	21: recipes 27: restaurans and chef profiles
8	local eating	various aspects of eating locally	5: gardening 8: local producers 17: food safety 24: building the case for local food 26: environment
9	church calendars	church events collecting donations for local food bank	25: church calendars
10	seasonal fundraising	corp. fundraising for local food bank	7: corporate fundraising 29: food bank donation drives

Table 6

Unspecified cluster model identifying topics and themes; machine optimized at 5 clusters

Cluster	Cluster Theme	Relevance to *local food*	Topic Number and Theme
1	government/ politics	government activity related to food bank or local food	1: business strategy 2: crime reports 4: government/policy 15: poverty/unaffordability 22: land use
2	lifestyle	luxury and local food	6: travel and tourism 14: lifestyle/op-ed 16: movie/book reviews/international news 21: recipes 27: restaurants and chef profiles
3	community events	community events allowing access with food bank donations	0: obituaries 3: sporting event food bank donations 9: student activism 10: community calendar 11: calendar of events: music 12: community food security 13: community calendar 18: community calendar - east coast 19: community calendar -ontario 20: special events 23: community calendar - west coast 28: christmas giving/charity
4	local eating	various aspects of eating locally	5: gardening 8: local producers 17: food safety 24: building the case for local food 26: environment
5	seasonal fundraising	corp. fundraising for local food bank	7: corporate fundraising 29: food bank donation drives
6	community events and recognition	community events allowing acces with food bank donations	9: student activism 10: community calendar 11: calendar of events: music 12: community food securiy 13: community calendar 18: community calendar - east coast 19: community calendar -ontario 20: special events 23: community calendar - west coast 28: christmas giving/charity
7	food	local food recipes and chefs	21: recipes 27: restaurans and chef profiles
8	local eating	various aspects of eating locally	5: gardening 8: local producers 17: food safety 24: building the case for local food 26: environment

9	church calendars	church events collecting donations for local food bank	25: church calendars
10	seasonal fundraising	corp. fundraising for local food bank	7: corporate fundraising 29: food bank donation drives

Overall, phase 1 of my analysis has yielded a valid and reliable model of the entire corpus of my dataset. It has also provided me with an overview of the themes present in the dataset, and provided a quick view into the relevance of select topics as the dataset has progressed over time. Moreover, at the start of my analysis I was expecting to operationalize topics as frames as in DiMaggio and colleagues' (2013) study. However, as mentioned previously, I quickly saw that my research question was intending to use topic modeling "inside-out" relative to how it is used typically, in that the topic make-up of specific *documents* was not central to my inquiry. What I was interested in was how specific *topics* changed over time. This discovery served to shift my initial assumptions regarding the roll of actors and framing contests in the process of meaning change, to operationalizing topics as separate discursive contexts evolving over time, rather than as frames evolving over time. With this evolution in my thinking, and confidence in my model and data, I carried on to phase 2 of my analysis: dynamic topic modelling, aiming to understand the mechanisms through which meaning evolves over time.

Phase 2: Dynamic Topic Modelling

With basic topic models, as in the previous section, the complexity of the dataset is reduced, and the entire corpus is categorized into a predetermined number of topics that the algorithm then fits the data into. These topics are considered stable entities and time is not considered in the analysis of basic topic models. Dynamic topic modelling, however, has been developed as a way of overcoming the assumption in topic modelling whereby words and documents are exchangeable within a corpus (Blei et al., 2003). In dynamic topic modelling, the

assumption is that for many corpora such as scholarly journals and news articles, that content evolves over time, rendering the assumption of their exchangeability invalid (Blei et al., 2003). In other words, because the content and meaning of certain collections of documents are known to change with time, rather than assuming that multiple mentions of the same term are *interchangeable*, dynamic topic modelling accounts for their relatedness, *without* assuming exchangeability. For example, a journal article from 1930 discussing neuroscience will vary significantly from a journal article from discussing neuroscience in 2015. The articles will both contain the term *neuroscience* but they will differ in the technology they refer to, the questions they explore and, likely the themes they engage with.

As I presented in the previous section, the output of basic topic modelling is a list of words that are associated with a number of topics that have been uncovered within the corpus. The output of dynamic topic modelling is similar, however increasingly complex. Just as with topic modelling, it is up to the researcher to specify how many topics the model is to generate. However, the output of dynamic topic modelling when considering time, for example, becomes a list of words per topic, *per year*; thus exponentially increasing the complexity of the output.

Since the core of my research pertains to the evolution of meaning, dynamic topic modelling appeared to be a logical next step to understand how local food, as it is understood in popular media discourse, was constructed over 37 years. Pre-processing of the data had already been completed for topic modeling, therefore, Dr. Moa and I ran the dynamic topic model using 30 topics as a starting point once again, over 37 time steps corresponding to the 37 years of my dataset. We generated the top 10 words per topic, per year.

Upon running the first model, it was clear that the list of stop words needed to be adjusted since there were many words and numbers that were clouding the generated topic lists and

preventing visibility into the actual content of the topics. I decided that before we could determine whether the model was successful, we needed to run the model again with additional stop words. The second round of stop words included months of the year, days of the week, and words such as *open, information, street, photo,* and *put* (among others) which were not adding any interpretive value by appearing in the topic lists. The initial output of the top 10 words of each topic was also increased to generate the top 20 words per topic, in order to make differences between word lists belonging to the same topic over multiple years more visible. Once the model was run again with the updated list of stop words, it was evident that the "noise" in the previous run had been reduced, and topics seemed to show potential for further analysis.

A few points are important to note when exploring dynamic topic modelling. Firstly, the resulting output has the potential to generate an overwhelming number of unique topics based on the number of time steps multiplied by the number of specified topics. For example, in my dataset we specified 30 topics, over 37 years, generating 1,110 unique topics. The reason this many topics are potentially unique, is that for a given topic (T1) at time 1 ($_{\text{Time1}}$), $T1_{\text{Time1}}$ the output will show the top 20 words for that given topic *at that given time step*. Because dynamic topic modelling assumes change over time,

> topics cease to explicitly represent event-like stable concepts but rather generalize to semantic concepts that may be interpreted but *naturally undergo some change*, be it because the whole concept's semantics, or the vocabulary used to refer to one and the same concept changes (Jähnichen, 2015, p. 82, emphasis added).

It is therefore not unreasonable to expect that the same topic at time 2 ($T1_{\text{Time 2}}$) may consist of a list of words that is slightly altered due to changes in the discursive context between the two time periods. After acquiring this overwhelmingly large data output, I began to ascribe themes to each

topic based on my previous knowledge of the overall content through my previous round of topic modelling (phase 1), and by analysing the word lists of each topic over 37 years, resulting form dynamic topic modelling. This initial round of roughly ascribing themes to topics was with the expectation that themes would be refined further as my analysis deepened (see Table 7, page 87 for topic themes).

Table 7

Topic themes for dynamic topic model: all topics

Topic number	Topic theme
1	Environment
2	Christmas time need
3	Regional headlines
4	International development
5	Advocacy
6	Tourism
7	Unclear
8	Evolution of farming
9	Local event listings
10	Obituaries
11	Gardening
12	Church event listings
13	Recipes
14	Restaurant, chef and festival trends
15	Local event listings
16	Restaurant profiles
17	Political parties, elections
18	Poverty, unaffordability
19	Christmas food bank campaign
20	Local event listings
21	Local event listings
22	Crime reports
23	Fundraising for local food bank
24	Fundraising for local food bank
25	Winter/Christmas events
26	Land use
27	Church event listings
28	Student action
29	Volunteer recognition
30	Local event listings

The purpose of my first round of topic selection was to eliminate topics that were either obviously not relevant (for example topic 10 consisted of obituaries within which donations had been left for the local food bank) or topics that did not pertain to *local food* in relation to the distance between the production and consumption of food. Topics relating to the *local food bank, poverty, tourism, regional events, or fundraising* were removed (see table 8, page 88). I was then able to narrow my focus to 11 topics, most of which either had a clear connection to *local food* or appeared to show potential (e.g. *environment,* and *political parties/elections*) and were included

in the second round of analysis to determine whether they would be beneficial for deeper analyses.

It is essential to acknowledge here, however that 11 topics, over 37 years, still yielded 407 unique topics of interest. Just has I had done with the topics of the previous model, I reviewed the top 3 articles for each topic of interest (11 topics) over each time step (37 years), leading to a maximum of 1,221 articles. I then reviewed these articles and determined the final topics that I would explore using deeper qualitative analysis. The topics selected for further qualitative analysis were topic numbers 4, 5, 8 and 26 (see Table 8 below).

Table 8

Selection of final topics for detailed qualitative analysis

Topic number	Topic theme	Included or Excluded	Reasoning
1	Environment	X	topic consists of repetitive articles about Earth Day
4	International development	Included	topic evolution clearly visible
5	Advocacy	Included	topic pertains primarily to local food; evolution apparent
7	Unclear	X	no clear theme evident
8	Evolution of farming	Included	topic pertains primarily to local food; evolution apparent
11	Gardening	X	not much change in topic over time
13	Recipes	X	not much change - local ingredients profiled later
14	Restaurant, chef and festival trends	X	not much change - local ingredients profiled later
16	Restaurant profiles	X	not much change - local ingredients profiled later
17	Political parties, elections	X	local food bank and local food muddled together
26	Land use	Included	topic evolution clearly visible

The interpretive aspect of topic modelling became critical at this point, since the data had been parsed into topics over time, and word lists had been modeled. In order to understand

qualitatively how a given topic was discussed within each time step, I collated the top 3 articles within each year for each topic (totalling a potential maximum 111 articles per topic; and a potential maximum 444 articles total). For example, in considering topic 4, I collated the top 3 articles for each year from 1978 to 2014. However, it is essential to note that of the 37 possible time steps, I only included for collation the articles that had a probability of containing the term *local food* greater than 0.4. Therefore, for topic 4 for example, out of a possible 111 articles to review (3 per year, over 37 years), my collation consisted of 87 articles. Of these 87 articles, once duplicates were considered, my total collated collection for topic 4 consisted of 60 articles. I underwent the same process for the other three topics in order to ensure the articles that I was including in my qualitative analysis were valid representations of the given topics. I repeated this process for each of the four topics selected. The number of articles analysed in each topic are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Number of articles qualitatively analysed per topic

Topic	# of articles with probability ≥ 0.4 of containing local food	Total after duplicates are removed
4	87	60
5	60	47
8	55	46
26	56	53
	TOTAL:	206

I qualitatively analysed each final collection of articles within each topic, with a view to identifying the overall content of the topic and shifts in the topic over time. These articles are the most representative articles of the selected topics each year, and as Nelson (2017) concludes, “both the research and reader, additionally, can trust that when a quote is chosen as an example of something, it is not an outlier but is indeed representative of some theme in the text” (p. 24) .

Since the primary advantage of Dynamic Topic Modelling is its ability to follow the evolution of topics over time (Blei et al., 2003), these articles were representative of how each topic evolved over the dataset. Using content analysis with the support of NVivo software, I qualitatively analysed these articles paying particular attention to the overall topic discussed, shifts in the conversation, and how *local food* was utilized over time. Typically, my first rounds of analysis revealed topic themes, what the content of the topics actually represented, and how it evolved as the topic progressed. In alignment with grounded theory approaches, in my later rounds of analysis, I shifted my attention from the actual content of the topics into an abstraction of the theoretical mechanism that each topic was representing. An overview of the topic selection process (Figure 6 below), and final four the topic numbers and their finalized themes are listed in Table 10, page 91.

Figure 6

Overview of topic selection process

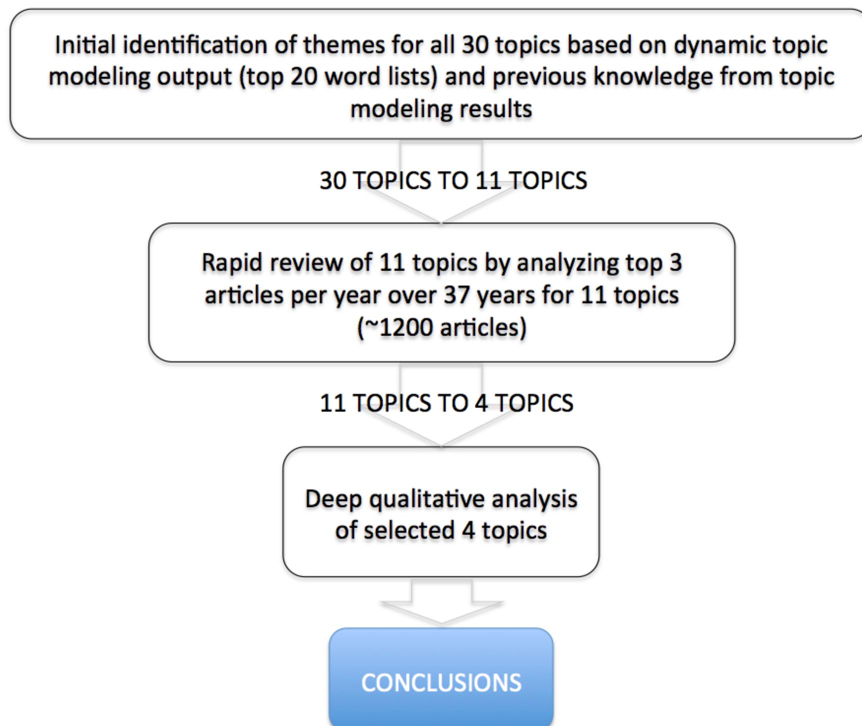


Table 10

Topic number and theme for manual content analysis

Topic Number	Topic Theme
4	Globalization
5	Health
8	Farmers
26	Land Use

Chapter 5: Results

At its core, my dissertation asks the question: *how does meaning change?*. Extant literature ultimately suggests that meaning is changed through discourse (e.g. Hardy & Maguire, 2016; Maguire & Hardy, 2009, 2013; Phillips et al., 2004), actors engaging with rhetoric (e.g. Green et al., 2009; Green & Li, 2011; Li et al., 2016; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), framing (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000; Cornelissen et al., 2015; Cornelissen & Werner, 2014; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014), or resonance with discursive opportunities (e.g. Ferree, 2003; Koopmans & Olzak, 2004; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014).

My data shows that a new meaning for *local food* did emerge, and did so rapidly. My data also shows that actors were involved, and that there were instances of discourse, rhetoric *and* framing, as well as discursive opportunities evident as the institutionalization of *local food* took place. However, my data also shows that the discursive landscape began to coalesce well *before* strategic action took place. When strategic action did take place, it occurred in unexpected places. Moreover, strategic action occurred within separate discursive contexts, which eventually resulted in the transposition of words related to *local food* on order to suit specific actors' distinct agendas, thus structuring discursive opportunities. The remainder of this chapter conveys my results in alignment with each phase of my analysis, along with implications of my findings for how meaning evolves.

Phase I Results: Topic Modelling

Taken together, my analyses for phase one confirmed the evolution of a discursive context from one in which *local food* was consistent with notions of poverty and unaffordability, which eventually forked into two distinct contexts: one remaining concerned with poverty and access to food through local food banks; and another which is concerned with the distance between the production and consumption of food. The 30-topic topic model essentially served to

provide a “table of contents” through which I could understand and access latent themes within the data that may have not been accessible through manual coding alone. This provided an overview of the discursive landscape of *local food*, and allowed me to begin interrogating trends over time with regards to various topics of interest, which added some dimensionality to my understanding of the evolution of *local food*, and presented some ideas for future research.

For example, in the topics depicted graphically below, it is evident that topic 7, related to the local food bank (see below), remains in a relative upswing from its start in the 1980s until about 2002. After this point, the topic begins to drop significantly, from 2002-2014. The opposite trend is observed in topic 12-community food security (see Figure 8, page 94). Around the same time that topic 7 begins to decrease, topic 12 begins to increase. Interestingly, community food security is defined as, “the availability and access at all times, to sufficient, safe, nutritious food; where access includes affordability” (*What Is Food Security? | WFP | United Nations World Food Programme - Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, n.d.).

Figure 7

Topic 7: Food bank donation drive. Proportion of topic 7 across all documents.

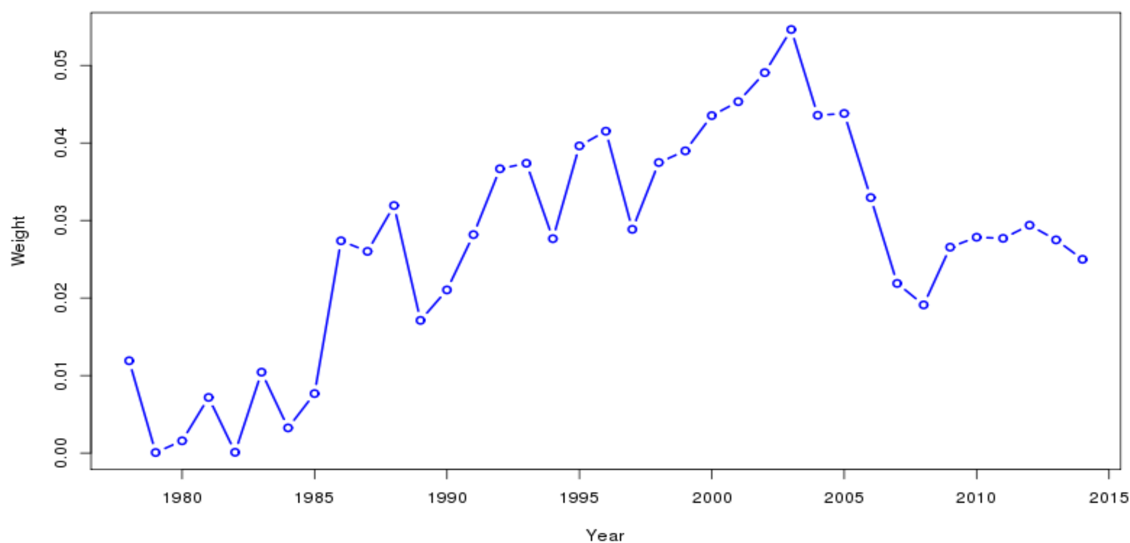
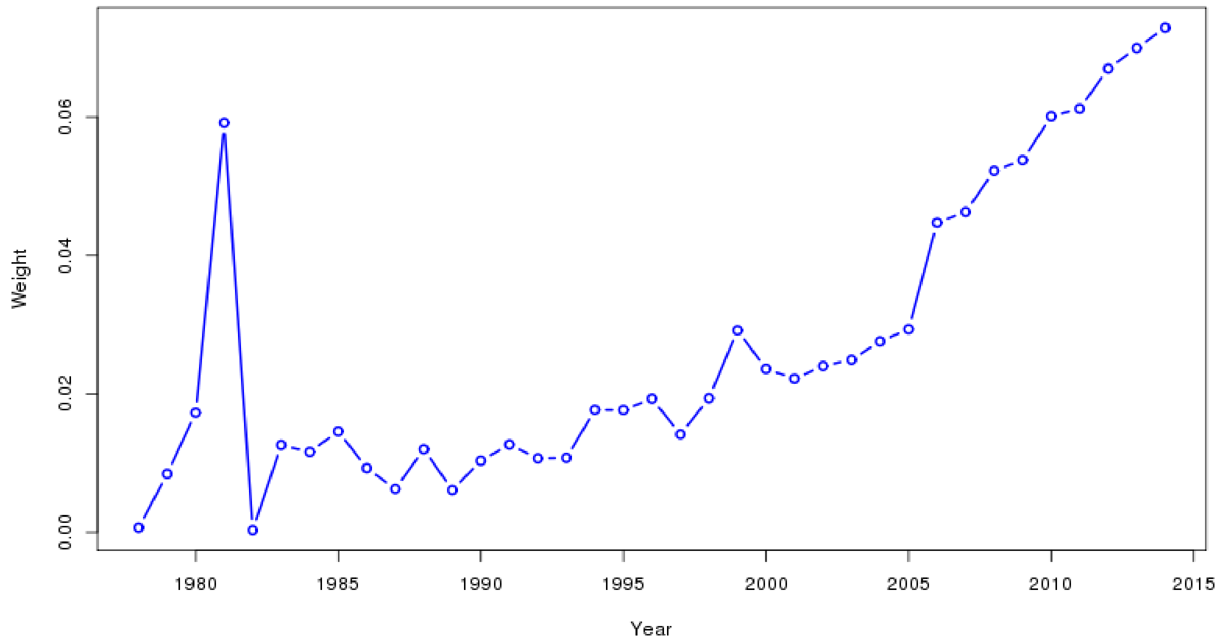


Figure 8

Topic 12: Community food security. Proportion of topic 12 across all documents.



Topics pertaining to the local food bank and to food security both contain issues of access to food for people in need, however carry very different connotations. Whereas food access issues framed within the context of the food bank are primarily in relation to donation drives collecting food and monetary donations to support local food banks, food access issues framed within the context of community food security, pertain to issues of health, belonging, and social justice for people who are living in poverty and are "food insecure". This raises the question as to whether what is represented in the evolution of these topics is a shift in discourse in which poverty and unaffordability of food is reframed from discourse pertaining to food banks and donations to discourse pertaining to community food security and empowerment.

Topics pertaining to trends over time with respect to the development of *local food* pertaining to the distance between the production and consumption of food were also found, and

are consistent with the proliferation of *local food* in the general cultural milieu. For example, two key topics, topic 8 – Local Producers (see Figure 9 below) and topic 24 (see Figure 10 page 96) – Building the Case for Local Food, both show a relative increase in relevance between 2005-2010, a time in which local food in general is also picking up momentum.

Figure 9

Topic 8: Local food producers. Proportion of topic 8 across all documents.

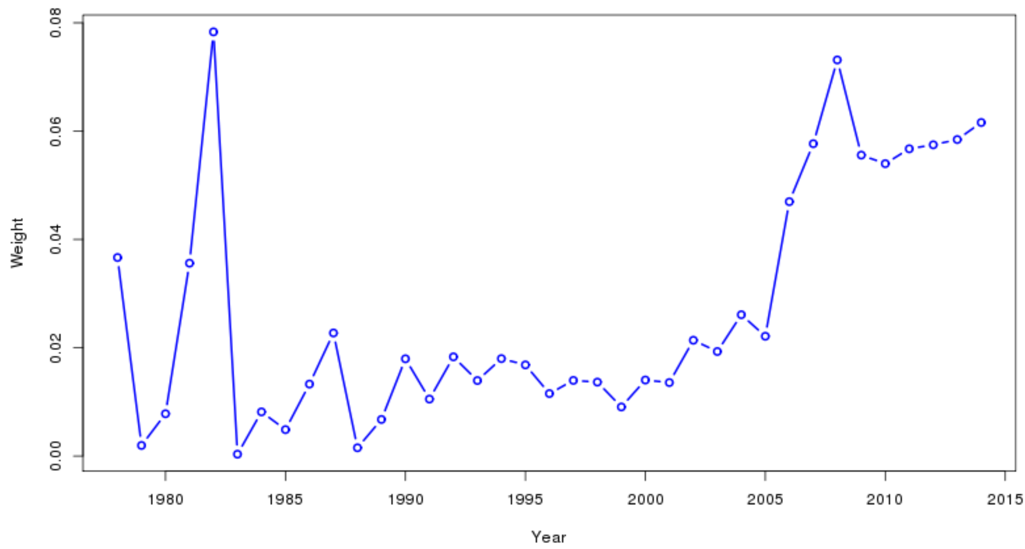
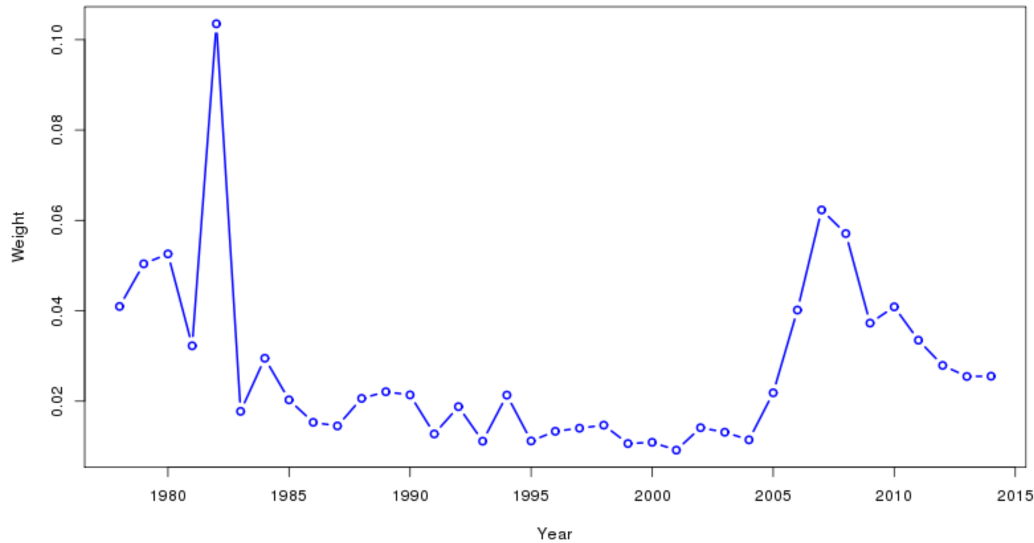


Figure 10

Topic 24: The case for local food. Proportion of topic 24 across all documents.



This serves to confirm the validity of the model, and also raises the question of what mechanisms suddenly present the opportunities for these topics to increase in relevance so rapidly. A question that is further explored through my phase 2 analysis: dynamic topic modelling.

Surprisingly, what I did not find in my exploration of data in this phase was any reference to specific actors attempting to dominate the narrative, apart from general categories of government, farmers, chefs, or dieticians, none of which were engaged in dialogue with each other, as they were only visible within separate topics corresponding to separate discursive contexts. Nor was any contestation or framing struggle evident with regards to the meaning of *local food*. I also did not find industry incumbents defending their position as large retailers in a globalized food system, or any visible attempts to co-opt the emerging dialogue around *local food* at this stage.

What makes topic modeling particularly powerful in this research is that while topics themselves do not carry any weight in terms of the importance of one over the other, the order of the words that are generated within each topic are important, with the first word within each topic being the most relevant to that topic and so decreasing as we progress down the list of words. Further, we are able to order all the articles in the database as most and least relevant to each topic. This allows the researcher to have confidence that articles within each topic are actually representative of the theme that that topic has coalesced around. As Nelson (2017) states, "both the researcher and reader, additionally, can trust that when a quote is chosen as an example of something, it is not an outlier but is indeed representative of some theme in the text ", p. 27).

Phase 2 Results: Dynamic Topic Modelling

The four topics ultimately selected from the dynamic topic modelling output include topics pertaining to health, farmers, globalization and land use. Interestingly, upon qualitatively reviewing these selected topics, it was evident that two of the four topics coalesced around actors, while the remaining two topics coalesced around issues. The topic pertaining to health and the topic pertaining to farmers pertained primarily to the construction of the identities of public health practitioners (topic 5) and farmers (topic 8). Meanwhile, topics 4 and 26 coalesced around the issues of globalization (topic 4) and land use (topic 26). The results of the qualitative analysis of the above mentioned topics are summarized in the following two sections: Actor Topics, and Issue Topics.

Actor Topics

Topic 5: Health

The first article for this topic occurs in 1988 and begins with an analysis of significant changes within the Canadian food system. It outlines the potential impacts of an unprecedented degree of merger activity among Canadian 'food giants' on small food processors, small farms, communities and consumers. The article reports that, "retail food chain stores have expanded their control dramatically from 23 per cent in 1950 to more than 75 per cent [in 1988]" (Winson, 1988, p. B1). The author specifies that the fewer the number of retailers within the Canadian food landscape, the more leverage retail giants have against small processors, which leads to a ripple effect:

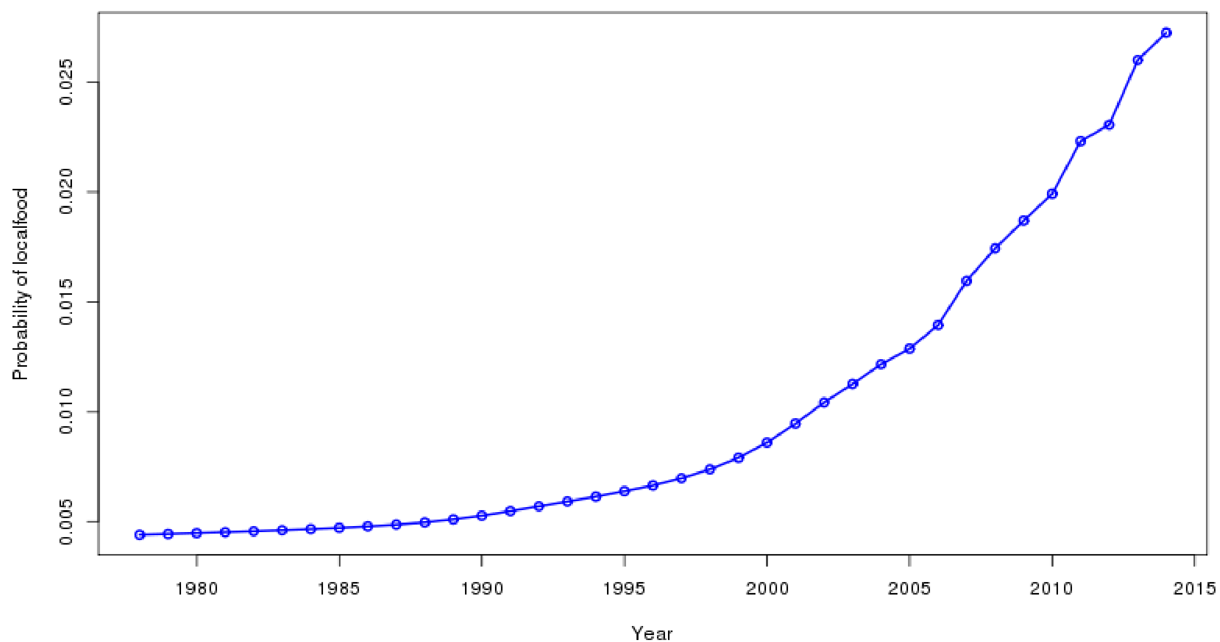
> In fruit and vegetable production, for example, the smaller food processors are the most willing to deal with small farmers, who often have no alternatives for selling their products…the loss of a local food processor would be a serious blow to the farmers supplying it…Moreover, a viable small farm sector supports the development of healthy and vibrant rural communities. The loss of these small farms will be felt by more than just farmers and their families. It will certainly affect the remaining network of rural communities that are already experiencing considerable stress from years of consolidation in the farm and processing sectors (Winson, 1988, p. B1).

The 1988 article summarized above is an anomaly relative to the other articles within the dataset. Following this initial article, which highlights the precarious position small producers found themselves in, the other articles in this topic occur yearly from 1994 to 2014 (with a gap in 1997) and follow the contours of how *local food* is enacted through its many configurations. The enactment of *local food* which grounds this topic in *local food* related activities, appears to occur in phases as the dataset progresses. The enactment of *local food* began in this topic with early

establishment of *local food* related networks (1994-2000), which then progressed into a focus on direct sales on the farm (2002-2005) and food labeling of *local food* at the point of sale (2006-7). By 2008, farmers' markets became the primary mode of enactment that the articles in this topic discussed, followed by food cooperatives dominating the content of the articles in the final year of my dataset, 2014. Figure 11 below depicts the probablity of the term *local food* occuring in this topic over the years of my dataset.

Figure 11

Probability of local food occurring over evolution of topic 5



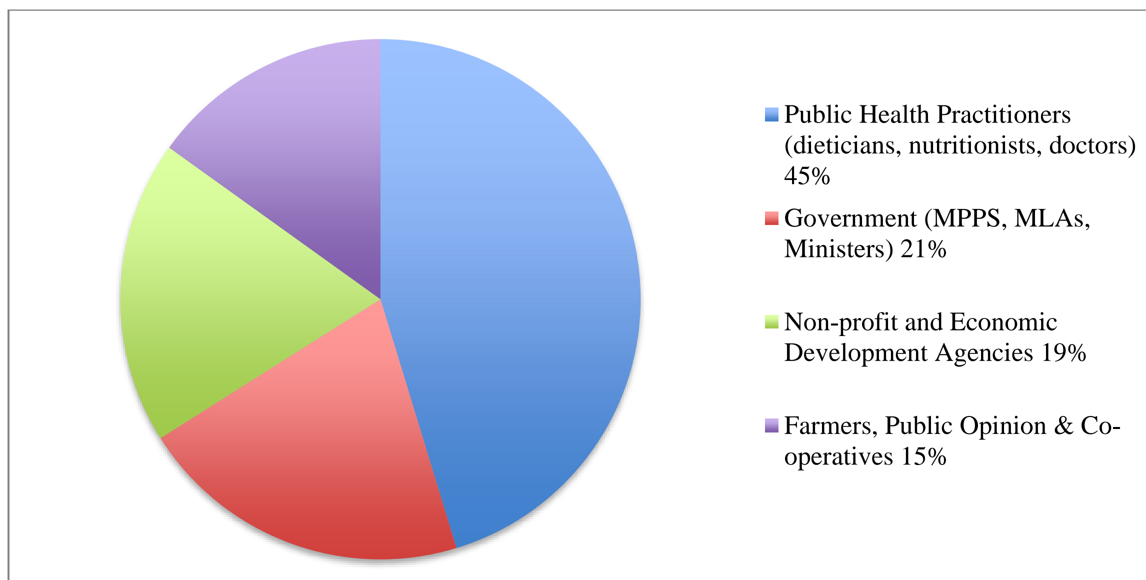
My content analysis of this topic revealed that the articles ranging from 1994 to 2014 were largely reporting on activities underway in response to the need to "improve the farm-to-kitchen food system" ("County in Brief," 1995, p. B1). The rhetoric underlying this topic pertains to ideas of what constitutes "good food" – food that has not travelled far – as opposed to

imported food within the industrial food system that has travelled distances which is, by default, "bad food", although this is distinction is heavily implied and not explicitly stated.

What is especially interesting about this topic, however is that as much as it pertains to "good food" and the enactment of *local food*, what distinguishes it from a similar topic, Topic 8: Farmers – which also profiles farmers' markets and other forms of enacting *local food* – is that the current topic, topic 5, coalesced around an unexpected actor: public health practitioners. Within this topic, dieticians and nutritionists and other public health practitioners are the primary actors responsible for constructing and relaying the value of *local food* to the public (see figure 12 below).

Figure 12

Actors involved in the rhetorical construction of health and local food



Moreover, my data show that the public health professionals rhetorically construct a relationship between health and *local food* and that they accomplish this in two ways: the first by intentionally and explicitly expanding the scope of their practice beyond the traditional

boundaries; and secondly, by expanding the notions of health beyond individual factors. For example,

> Why should nutritionists care where the food we eat comes from? Aren't they just supposed to teach people how to eat healthfully? Not any more. The BC Dietician's and Nutritionists' Association has, in its own words, moved "beyond traditional food guidance, which is driven primarily by health concerns, to consider the social, economic and environmental impact of food purchases" ("Column One," 1994, p. C1).

The Dieticians' and Nutritionists Association is further quoted highlighting the importance of self-reliance in food production, as well as how "buying locally means you're supporting a system that uses fewer agricultural chemicals" ("Column One," 1994, p. C1). This type of rhetoric begins to form the dichotomy between certain (local) foods as "good" and other (non-local; imported) foods as "bad", albeit implicitly.

In expanding notions of health well beyond nutrition to encompass the social, environmental and economic aspects of food and eating, *local food* becomes increasingly tied to health:

> critical decisions about B.C.'s food system are made on the basis of the bottom line of these corporations, not the needs of B.C.'s farmers or consumers. The *struggle for nutritional health* and an end to hunger has to be considered in this context…we can't get rid of hunger in the long term until we regain control of our food system" (Kalina, 1999, p. B2, emphasis added).

Further, dieticians and nutritionists also rhetorically connect the work of grassroots organizations working to "improve the food system" to fostering good health:

> It is grassroots projects and organization, *which foster food access and good health* that have spurred the province to create a policy, which improves the food system in BC. You

> have a lot of grassroots projects going on, but they need legitimizing. There are so many barriers (Muir, 1999, p. B2, emphasis added).

In 2001, a registered dietician outlines the ways in which local food is better for the community citing "the economic multiplier principle [whereby] every dollar you spend on locally grown foods means at least an extra $3 in the local economy" (Davidson, 2001, p. D02) in addition to explaing that *local food* is inherently better for local farmers, and individual consumers. A later set of articles contain "ask a dietician" segments in which questions include, "I want to eat more vegetables and fruits. Is there any advantage to buying local produce over produce from other countries?" ("Helath Fare," 2002, p. E3) and, in a separate article, "My grocery store sells fruit and vegetables from several places, such as Mexico, the United States, and Ontario. Which should I choose?" (Desjardins & Lepp, 2002, p. C2). Both articles contain a simiar response stating,

> All fruits and vegetables are a good choice for your health. When you buy produce however, you can also make choices that support a more sustainable food system…When you choose food grown locally, you support local farmers. It is also a more environmentally sustainable choice (Desjardins & Lepp, 2002, p. C2).

Further, by suggesting the public begin to "encourage government, private business and citizens to support the local food system and make nutritious food available to everyone" (Kalina, 2001, p. B2), public health practitioners and dieticians, were able to bring the "local food system" in close proximity with "nutritious food" making them synonymous. In articulating the benefits of locally grown food, the articles position *local food* as better with respect to expanded notions of health including but not limited only to nutrition; instead further encompassing environmental

sustainability, the local economy, and social connection – rhetoric that was repeated consistenly by public health practitioners throughout the dataset (see Table 11, below)

Table 11

Repetitive rhetorical construction of local food and health by public health practitioners

Year	Statements by public health professionals
1994	The B.C. Dietitians' and Nutritionists' Association says it has moved beyond traditional food guidance, which is driven primarily by health concerns, to consider the social, economic and environmental impact of food purchases. Buying local food supports family farms; 98 per cent of B.C. farms are family-operated ("Column One," 1994, p. C1)
1999	There is increasing understanding in the health-care system about the role of nutrition as the basis for health. Agriculture is not just an industry producing food as a valuable commodity....Agriculture and food are the basis of life, health and the economy (Kalina, 1999).
1999	We need to look at food sustainability…food impacts everybody... Supporting local food systems and projects to ensure communities remain healthy (Muir, 1999).
1999	Food prices tied to a worldwide marketplace. Throw in poverty, unemployment or other social conditions -- which may deny many Island residences full access to a nutritious diet -- and "food security" takes on an even wider scope ("Local Groups Sound Food Wake-up Call," 1999).
2001	By buying locally produced foods we benefit as a community as well as individually. First of all, buying locally grown food helps the local economy. Secondly, buying locally grown food is better for the environment. Finally, but equally important, is that locally grown food tastes good and is nutritious. (Davidson, 2001)
2001	Encourage government, private business, and citizens to support the local food system and make nutritious food available to everyone (Kalina, 2001)
2002	Local food is fresh, tasty and loaded with flavour. Local food helps support local farm families. Local food can be more economical for the consumer. Local food helps build community. Local food helps preserve farmland. Local food supports a clean environment. Local food can be an important part of healthy eating ("HEALTH FARE," 2002).

2003	Food grown in your own community was probably picked within the last day or two. It's fresh, sweet and loaded with flavour. When you buy directly from the farmer, you establish a direct connection between people who grow food and people who eat it. Local food preserves genetic diversity. When you buy locally grown food, you are helping preserve land needed to keep our community food secure. Food grown and sold locally travels a much shorter distance. Local produce may encourage you to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables (“Fresh and Fabulous at Local Farms,” 2003).
2004	The way food is grown and distributed has an effect on health. Increasing consumption of local food reduces air pollution, helps the local economy and encourages social interaction, all of which contributes to our health (“Buying Locally Important, Says Survey,” 2004)
2005	Buying local food benefits the region by preventing dollars from "leaking" out of the local economy (Zuereb & Desjardin, 2005).
2010	Understanding how food is grown, where it comes from and the various issues surrounding food production is an important aspect of healthy living; this year we are promoting foods, where they're from and how it comes form the garden to your plate; environmental plusses, support for the local economy, and the fact that local food generally has less processing and can be a healthier choice (Mallory, 2010).
2011	The more food is processed, packaged and shipped the more negative impact it has on the environment. Foods that are grown close to home can be consumed fresh and have more flavour. Buying foods that are grown in your region supports the local economy and helps create a more sustainable food system (Jennings, 2011).

Ultimately, public health professionals, namely dieticians and nutritionists, rhetorically constructed the expansion of their own scope of practice, as well as rhetorically constructed expanded notions of health to include individual, social, community, economic, and environmental benefits of local food, along with some doctors and other public health practitioners. Interestingly, government actors also proceed to repeat the same rhetoric initially introduced by public health practitioners, almost verbatim (see Table 12 page 105)

Table 12

Repetition of rhetoric regarding local food and health by government actors

Year	Statements by government
2006	the consumer is prepared to pay more for [locally] grown products…The retailer benefits from that, the wholesaler benefits from that, the farmer benefits from that ("Fresh and Fabulous at Local Farms," 2003)
2008	Buying locally is healthy, environmentally sustainable, and supports our farming families. Choosing locally produced items also gives consumers more control over the freshness and quality of what they buy; personal connection with food (Roddick, 2008)
2009	People are becoming more aware and realizing the importance of knowing where their food is coming from. They also want to support our local economy (Anonymous, 2009a)
2009	[Local food] tastes better, it is naturally healthy, and it boosts our economy by supporting local industries; it means not only are we making the healthy choice to nourish ourselves, but we are also supporting local producers as we head into the winter season (Anonymous, 2009b)

While this topic maps the progression of the various manifestations apparent in the enactment of *local food*, theoretically speaking this topic aligns with the rhetorical construction of meaning. Of all the nuanced approaches and definitions of rhetoric available, the definition and approach that is most evident in my data combines Green's (2004) definition of rhetoric where, "through rhetoric, actors produce and assign meaning, constructing both their identities and the world" (p. 654) and the contours of new rhetoric outlined by Suddaby & Greenwood (2005) which allows for "patterns of shared interests, goals and shared assumptions [to] become embedded in persuasive texts" (p. 40), effectively setting the stage for bridging classical and new rhetoric.

With regards to actors "constructing both their identities and the world" (Green, 2004, p. 654), my data shows statements of dieticians and nutritionists constructing their identities by expanding their role and influence in human nutrition by explicitly stating their desire to move "beyond traditional food guidance, which is driven primarily by health concerns, to consider the

social, economic and environmental impact of food purchases" ("Column One," 1994, p. C1). Within my dataset, we also see a similar statement later in 2010 with the announcement of the Dieticians of Canada's National Nutrition Month Campaign: "This year is sort of different from other years that we were promoting nutrition. It's really promoting foods, where they're from and how it comes from the garden to your plate and all the process before, during and when it gets there" (Mallory, 2010). Taking heed of Nelson's (2017) explanation regarding the significance of direct quotes from data resulting from topic modelling in which she states, "both the researcher and reader, additionally, can trust that when a quote is chosen as an example of something, it is not an outlier but is indeed representative of some theme in the text " (p. 27).

Through these examples, we are able to observe the deliberate use of language in order to expand the identities of dieticians and nutritionists as moving beyond "traditional food guidance" towards a different way of promoting nutrition in which they consider the expanse of "where [food is] from and how it comes from the garden to your plate and all the process before, during and when it gets there" as being well within their purview.

Moreover, Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) articulate the importance of "patterns of shared interests, goals and shared assumptions [to] become embedded in persuasive texts" (p. 40), which can be considered an operationalization of "how words use us" (Green & Li, 2011) in the context of new rhetoric. In alignment with this, my data also show such patterning in the form of repetitive language (see Table 11, page 105), and shared interests, goals and assumptions as the same rhetoric is utilized verbatim by another notable actor within this topic, government (see Table 12, page 107). With regards to encoding such rhetoric into persuasive texts, we see examples of the expanded role of dieticians and nutritionists constructing their identities in association with *local food*, by highlighting locally produced food choices in their professionally

published food guides in 1994, justifying the addition based on social, economic and environmental impacts of food. Additionally, the source of my data itself, newspaper articles, have been acknowledged as highly persuasive texts in and of themselves. For example, DiMaggio and colleagues (2013), Petkova and colleagues (2012) and Vaara (2013) all specify how press accounts influence the views of the public and have been shown to have a considerable impact on shareholders and other organizations in and/or the structuration of the organizational field (Jonsson & Buhr, 2010; Kennedy, 2008; K. Weber et al., 2008), as well as the critical role of media in providing a particular kind of identification, reputation and legitimacy to organizations (Vaara, 2013). Finally, instances referencing "the Ministry of Agriculture…planning to develop an Agri-Food Policy for B.C. to assist the agriculture industry and farming communities" (Kalina, 1999) provides a nod to further encoding principles supporting *local food* into persuasive government documents.

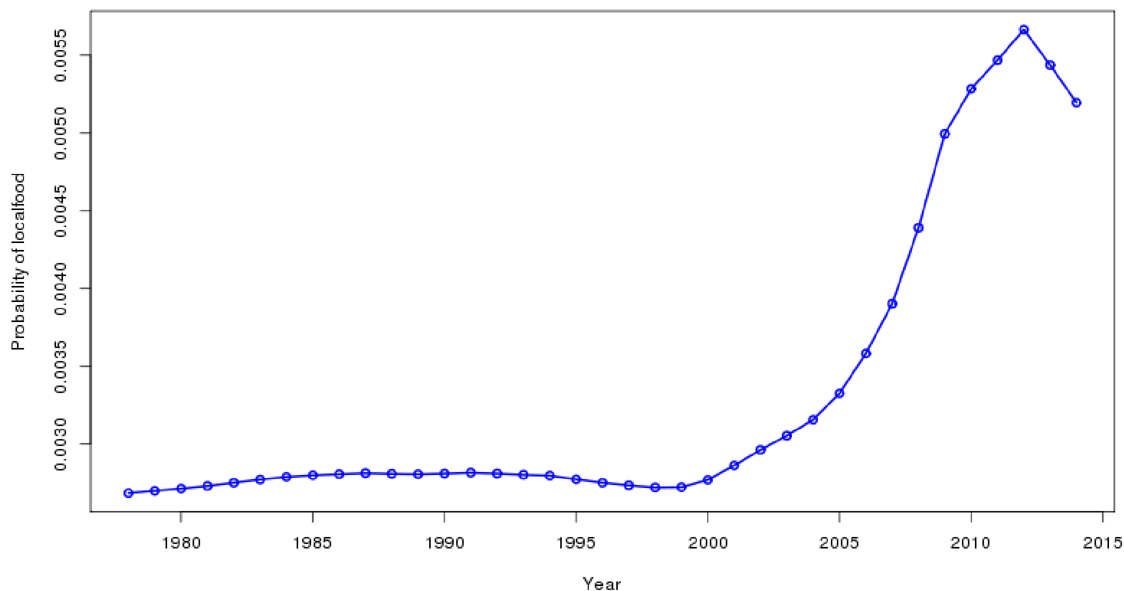
Ultimately, by "constructing both their identities and the word", and encoding patterns, shared understandings and assumptions into persuasive texts, public health professionals rhetorically constructed the connection between *local food* and health within the context of the enactment of *local food*, and rhetorically expanded their professional identities.

Topic 8: Farmers

The second topic that coalesced around actors as a result of dynamic topic modelling is topic 8, which thematically concerns farmers. The narrative structure of this topic follows the shifting importance of various degrees of organizing in the enactment of *local food*. With few exceptions, the majority of the articles within this topic can be classified as profiling individual farmers and their farms, farm-related festivals, farmers' markets, or community supported agriculture programs. These forms of organization represent the enactment of *local food*, albeit differently than what was observed in topic 5, health. Whereas topic 5 constructed a rhetorical connection between health and *local food*, the enactment of *local food* in this topic is constructed alongside the emerging visibility of farmers themselves, making this topic primarily about the rhetorical construction of visibility with respect to farmers. Figure 13 below depicts the probablity of the term *local food* occuring in this topic over the years of my dataset.

Figure 13

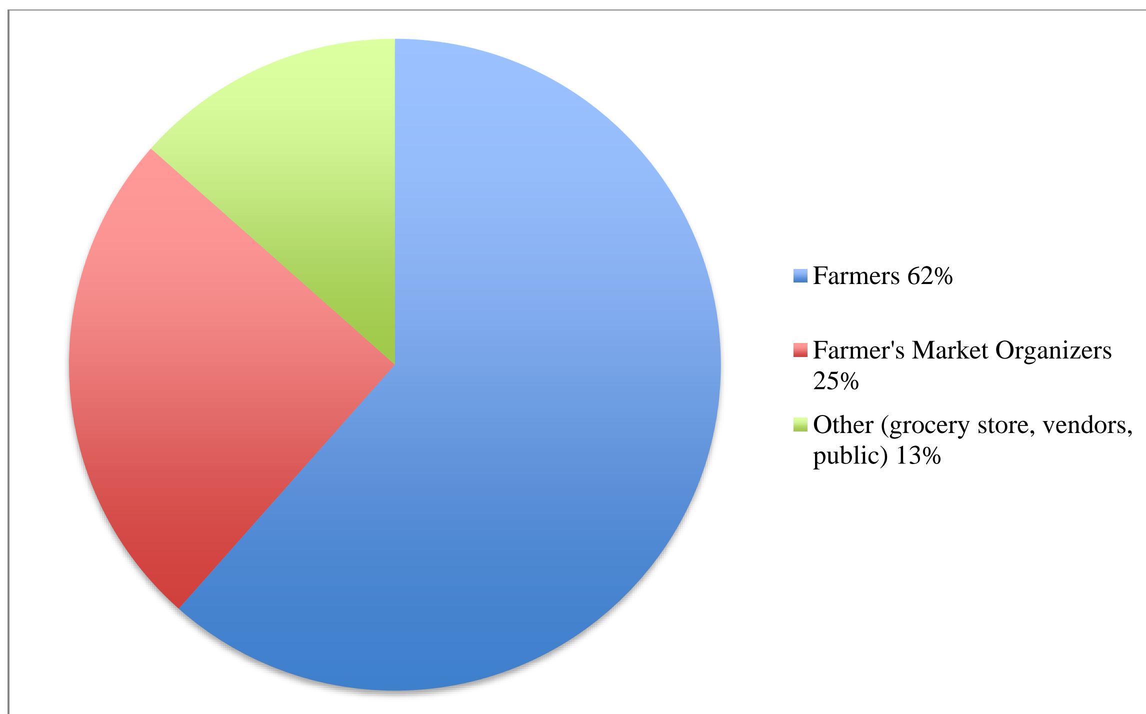
Probability of local food occurring over evolution of topic 8.



While there is significant overlap over the years that certain forms of organizing appear to dominate, it is also impossible to ignore the dimension of time as specific forms of organizing come into and out of focus throughout the topic (see Table 13, page 110). It is important to note that while different forms of enacting and organizing *local food* evolve over the timespan of the topic, within each form, whether farmer, market, festival or community supported agriculture, farmers' voices remain prominent.

Figure 14

Actors involved in rhetorical construction of visibility



As evident in Table 13 below, profiles of individual farms and farmers are prominent from 2003 to 2008, after which no more articles profile individual farmers for the remainder of the dataset. Farm-related festivals are profiled sporadically, without an observable trend within this dataset. Profiles of farmers' markets are consistently visible throughout the dataset, with an uninterrupted streak from 2009 to the end of the dataset in 2014. Cooperatives and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs are mentioned sporadically with two consecutive profiles

in 2013 and 2014. It is unclear as to whether this can be extrapolated as gaining traction beyond the confines of the dataset, however it is important to note that CSAs are described as gaining popularity "following on the heels of the farmers' markets" (Luymes, 2014, p. A12) suggesting some kind of progression.

Table 13

Articles profiling forms of organizing over time

Year	Farmers	Festivals	Farmers Markets	Coops and CSAs
1991			X	
1992	X			X
1993	X			
1994			X	
1996		X		
1998		X		
1999	X			
2000	X		X	
2001			X	
2002			X	
2003	X			X
2004	X	X		
2005	X		X	
2006	X		X	
2007			X	X
2008	X			
2009			X	
2010			X	
2011			X	
2012			X	
2013			X	X
2014			X	X

As described in the empirical context, globalization resulted in the marginalization of small-scale farmers. With regards to food production, this served to disassociate food prices from local food growing conditions, which ultimately brought global market conditions to the fore, and rendered food producers, essentially invisible. This invisibility is captured within the rhetoric

constructing the plight of farmers in the early years of this topic. Following the construction of invisibility, is the subsequent rhetorical construction of visibility of small producers as they navigate their survival, and essentially rhetorically construct their identities outside of, and in opposition to, the industrial food system. The following sections describe the various rhetorical elements used in the construction of invisibility: globalization and the plight of farmers; and in the construction of visibility: farmer identity, product identity and organizational identity.

Constructing Invisibility

Globalization and the Plight of Farmers

The first few profiles in the early 1990s begin by framing the plight of farmers as they contend with the impacts of globalization, particularly vegetables imported from the US, below the cost of production.

> But lettuce is no longer the color of money. Nor are onions or cabbage or anything else Fraser Valley vegetable farmers grow. Everything they plant comes up red. They can't make a profit on them. They can't find buyers. So, like Sprangers did Tuesday on his Surrey farm, they plow their produce under. They're victims of a trend. Many of the local wholesalers who traditionally bought local produce now import huge shipments of vegetables from the U.S (McMartin, 1992, p. B1).

The only recourse cited by farmers in this article is to file anti-dumping legislation on certain vegetables from the US, however since “the farmers, dependent as they are on the wholesalers to get their product to market, cannot afford to anger them” (McMartin, 1992, p. B1). The relationship between growers and wholesalers is described as “delicate” since Canadian wholesalers who are not strong supporters of local produce “may choose not to buy any of [the Canadian growers’] products” (McMartin, 1992, p. B1).

The frustration of farmers is palpable with issues of land use as well, since “enforced inclusion in the Agricultural Land Reserve keeps the price of their land low relative to residential areas. They find themselves with produce that doesn't make any money, and land that is undervalued because it is farmed” (McMartin, 1992, p. B1). With minimal options to bypass wholesalers, upset wholesalers, or sell their land, farmers ultimately call on the public to support their efforts, “if the public demands we stay in the ALR, then they should support us. If not, then they should let the land come out of the ALR, and we'll sell and get on with other careers” (McMartin, 1992, p. B1).

A further article in 1993 also frames the impact of globalization on local farmers in terms of the untethering of bad weather and poor local crop yields to food prices. Due to unseasonable weather patterns, many farmers had no choice but to plow their products under due to poor yields and low quality, relying on insurance claims to survive the season. Meanwhile, an agricultural economist was quoted as stating:

> It's an increasingly global market, so fluctuations in local weather have more to do with trade patterns than prices. If we're short of strawberries, they'll just move them in from Michigan or somewhere else… That's particularly true for corn. We could lose a million bushels, and it wouldn't make a bit of difference" to local corn prices, let alone supermarket food prices (Romahn, 1993, p. B6).

By the year 2000, although the overall tone of articles shifts to profile the hard and rewarding work of farmers, the impact of globalization continues as an undercurrent where farmers state, “we're trying to compete on the world market against farmers from other countries who are subsidized and dragging down prices, while at the same time we are receiving no help from the government…it isn’t right” (Spence, 2000), a sentiment that is also echoed later, where

farmers explain that, “without the aid farmers in other countries receive, many farmers could leave the business” (Hill, 2006, p. A5).

The increasingly globalized agricultural landscape, industrial production of food, and dependence of farmers on wholesalers and retailers to move their products to market, arguably created an environment within which the production of food and producers of food, were sequestered into an invisible space only accessible to the consumers of food (the general public) through retailers. It is in this context that the remaining farmers’ profiles evolve into regaining the visibility of the farmer in the production of food through rhetorically constructing their identities.

Constructing Visibility and Oppositional Identity

Farmer Identity

My data show that farmer identity is primarily constructed through rhetoric drawing on aspects of tradition and nostalgia and a larger purpose behind farmers engaging in their work.

Tradition and Nostalgia

As mentioned previously, by 1999 to 2000 farmer profiles focus less on the plight of the farmer, and instead begin to depict “a day in the life” of farmers as hard working, steady and principled people, in a quaint and idyllic setting, with story-like language and rhetoric drawing on notions of history, tradition, and nostalgia. Using phrases like “…the old way of making and growing food is often still the best way” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2); “given the choice, he’ll stick with the tried and true ways of livestock raising” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2); and “…running his farm is all about tradition, and that sense of tradition keep him loyal to the land in spite of various hardships” (Spence, 2000), a sense of history and tradition is brought into the present, pulling legitimacy from age old, “tried and true” (Birnbaum, 1999, p. B13) practices that farmers use to set their operations apart from others.

The articles themselves set the context with visual imagery that evokes notions of a by-gone era describing the start of a tour the journalist takes, “a tour of the area begins in Oak Mountain, at Blackie's Meat Shop, at the point where the Speerville Road tapers off into a gravel path” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). Whereas in the previous section, the plight of the farmer could be described in the farmers’ invisibility with regards to the production of food, the farmer profiles now bring food producers and their work directly to the fore. The journalist describes, “When I arrive, a severed cow’s head lies by Troy Grant’s feet, as he finishes slaughtering and eviscerating the animal. ‘I hope you’re not squeamish’, he says, winching the 135-kilogram (300-pound) carcass on his butcher’s hooks” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2).

Farmers with historical knowledge of the region describe how much farm communities have changed with a strong sense of nostalgia, “There used to be many farmers who had a few dairy cattle and they would sell the cream, but when the dairy quote came into effect most were forced out of business. ‘There aren’t many medium-sized farms around now’ he says, regretfully” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). Others recall the disappearance of a local industry altogether, “by 1982, when actual grinding of flour began in Speerville, every other grist mill in the Maritimes had disappeared and the region had become an importer of wheat produced in the West. The highways were filled with the trucks carrying foods all over the continent, usually far from where it was produced” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). Others find ways of bringing the past into the present, by drawing on the way things were:

> the padded horse collars and leather harness hanging on the stable walls look as if they were put away yesterday. Actually they were used more than 20 years ago, when Lyle young’s grandfather…called it quits after 56 years of farming. But Cowichan Bay Farm

> is still a place his grandfather would recognize, down to his old red Massey Harris tractor, 1945 model, that still runs (Gidney, 2003, p. E1).

And, “It is a scene from a century ago, coming back to the present. ‘Our children have grown up with this traditional life and they will know how to do it’ he says” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2).

What is interesting about the way farmer identity evolves, is that the initial reliance on using tradition and nostalgia as way of rhetorically constructing an identity in opposition to industrial farming is reversed by 2008. Whereas in previous years the farms and farmers profiled highlighted their long history and continuation of tradition, in 2008 farmers identified themselves as, “city kids, super naïve”. The article states:

> Meet Canada's newest farmers. They're well educated, with university degrees in everything from plant biology to film studies. They're idealistic, committed to the principles of organic farming and the local food movement. And, though they grew up in suburbs or city neighbourhoods, they're not afraid to get their hands dirty (Lawson, 2008, p. A8).

Moreover, a farm supplier observes that the reason “so many organic farmers come from non-farming backgrounds” is that “they don’t have a lot of baggage. *They’re unencumbered by history, habits or assets*” (Lawson, 2008, p. A8, emphasis added).

A Larger Purpose

Farmer profiles highlighted a sense of purpose much larger than making a living. For example, “When he speaks of his land and his abattoir he says, "I'm the caretaker for my generation” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). Another farmer profiled in the same article states, “He would agree with the view of a small business being about "a life not a livelihood." He says he believes that capitalism should have a social purpose beyond making money.” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). In the following year, a similar sense of purpose is highlighted by another farmer

profile, “And farming has got to be one of the most humanitarian occupations in the world, Acton adds. After all, we’re providing people with food to help them live” (Spence, 2000).

Specifically with respect to local food, a farmer in a 1999 profile stated his intention of wanting to “create a market for grain grown by local farmers for production of local food to be consumed locally” (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). This was also mentioned as a key purpose in a later profile in which a farmer articulated the desire of, “raising awareness among a population that wants to know more about how food is grown and treated” (Gidney, 2003, p. E1). Additionally, the “new farmers” of 2008 also share a larger sense of purpose; “She still wants to save the world, but she’ll concentrate on her own 50-acre plot” (Lawson, 2008, p. A8). And, “It's a chance for us to shift the agricultural base to something a little more sustainable. It will be food that has a story," says Frere enthusiastically. "You'll know where your food came from, how it was grown and the story behind it.” (Lawson, 2008, p. A8).

Product Identity

The second aspect of the rhetorical construction of visibility occurs via the rhetorical construction of product identity whereby articles within this topic contrast the outcomes of their small-scale traditional modes of production, with those of industrial production. Furthermore, product identity is also infused with value through notions of consumer demand, which are also strategically used to differentiate their products. Rhetorical construction of products, allows for farmers and their products to gain visibility outside of and in contrast to the industrial food system.

Small-Scale versus Industrial Production

Scale, particularly small scale, is used to compare more traditional modes of local production to products of industrial production destined to travel. With traditional modes of production claiming a significantly smaller scale of production than industrial modes, farmers

engaging with a smaller scale of production strategically articulate the advantages of *intentionally* producing at a smaller scale. Such advantages include: reputation for quality, the ability to select which scientific advances to adopt and which ones to reject, and production processes that are not based on maximizing volume but other qualities such as nutrition. Farmers compare the freshness of their own produce at farmers markets with the produce they themselves supply to grocery stores: "I'm not saying grocery stores aren't the way to go, but if I sell directly to people, I sell fresher produce" (Rothbauer, 2011, p. 26). And: "all of my products [sold at the farmers' market] are heirloom varieties – not often seen in the supermarket" ("At the Market," 2005, p. 9).

Farmers, whether through markets, or direct sales, also highlight their ability to provide a superior product based on the experience of a welcoming social environment. "'We're getting out of supplying stores slightly, though' says Marc, 'and we are concentrating more on the roadside stand. We want people to stop by in the evening or on a Sunday afternoon to pick up some fresh produce for dinner. We want our customers to see our stand as a gathering place, where they can meet old and new friends and socialize'" (Spence, 2000). This again serves to increase the visibility of the farm, farmer and related operations.

Consumers' Value of Local Food

Some farmers profiled earlier in the dataset express frustration at consumers who are "also playing a hand in the decline of family farms…people today don't care where their food comes from, says Acton. They only care about the price. But if they want quality, local food they have to speak up and tell the government what they want" (Spence, 2000). At the same time, others notice that, "increasing numbers of urban people are willing to spend a small premium for locally-produced, organic foods" (Tutton, 1999, pp. B1-B2). The data show, for example, that by 2005 the demand for locally grown, vine ripened strawberries increases significantly, and finally

by 2008 for new, first generation farmers, "there is an ever-growing demand for their product", to the point where, "for local food, the demand side of the equation is 'instantaneous'…for supply, there is a long lag time" (Lawson, 2008, p. A8).

Organization Identity

Interestingly, the very first article in this topic profiles an early farmers' market in which priority was given to local food producers. This market included "some vendors selling out of the backs of their trucks" ("Carleton Place Sets up Downtown Market," 1991, p. B2), speaking to the informal nature of early markets. The enactment of *local food* in this topic ranges from: individual farmers and their respective farms engaging with small-scale local production (as described above), farmers organizing into selling produce at farmers markets, organizing into cooperatives and community supported agriculture programs, and short-lived organizations of intermittent food festivals. Each of these forms of organizing constructs their respective identities on notions of (re)connection and popularity. These will be discussed below.

(Re)Connection

By 1994 the localness of food becomes a greater motivation for establishing markets and over the next few years. The notion of farmers' markets meeting an unmet need for fresh, local produce sold directly to the community by farmers is reiterated throughout a number of market profiles. A 2001 article contextualizes farmers markets as having been "common affairs during the earlier part of the 20th century. They were the way that food was brought 'to the people'. Centralizing our food production, processing, and distribution systems has resulted in *isolating the consumer from the producer*" ("Farmers' markets in demand," 2001, p. 10, emphasis added). Identifying this isolation sets the stage for rhetorically constructing notions of reconnection through farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) programs and food festivals.

In 2005 a strong farmer's voice is observed in relation to their work and motivation to get involved at farmers' markets. "I also very much support the concept of a local economy. I do this by selling my product where I grow it. What I earn goes back to the local economy when I shop in town" ("At the Market," 2005, p. 9). Farmers also specify that their clients "love knowing where their food comes from" ("At the Market," 2005, p. 9). Further echoing sentiments of a lost connection between consumers and producers, the farmer interviewed in the article states:

> I believe Canadians appreciate farmers but have really gotten out of touch with them. I imagine many people don't know that farmers are gamblers (gambling on weather); studious (ever-changing management of crops); mechanics (working on tractors and other implements); marketers (of product); managers (if you can afford staff); and magicians (getting crops off in all kinds of weather) ("At the Market," 2005, p. 9).

Additionally, well into 2010 farmers involved with markets continue to state, "real food security is knowing where your food comes from and that's what we're striving for (with the market)" (Kulp, 2010, p. 23).

CSA[1] profiles only appear in five years scattered throughout the dataset, picking up some momentum in the final two years of the dataset. CSAs also identify with notions of reconnection. As early as 1992 an 'Adopt-a-Farmer' program, essentially a CSA, is described as, "an innovative plan to bring urbanites and farmers closer together through a produce co-operative"

[1] CSAs are programs that allow consumers to purchase a share in the season's harvest and provide a guaranteed income to producers and growers in the spring, a time that is very expensive for farmers. Rather than taking loans, farmers belonging to successful CSAs are able to accumulate enough income to cover the costs of seed and other expenses to prepare for the growing season. When harvest time comes, the consumers that purchased shares receive weekly boxes of produce (often picked the same day) throughout the season.

(Roberts, 1992, p. A6). Farmers also describe feeling connected to consumers and "get a lot more satisfaction when you know the people you're growing for" (Roberts, 1992, p. A6). Furthermore, with such a connection, in the event of bad weather and less than expected harvest, shareholders are much more understanding, "they say, 'don't worry, we know what the weather's been like' I guess it's good because it means they share in the risk as well" (Roberts, 1992, p. A6).

By 2007, drawing again on the frame of connection "as people get to know farmers and know where food is grown" (Dharmarajah, 2007, p. A2), CSAs are described by farmers as meeting an "insatiable demand…as more people buy locally" (Dharmarajah, 2007, p. A2). In 2013, we see the *plight of the farmer* rhetoric revived, as motivation for engaging in alternative distribution such as CSA programs: "The farmers in the [region] had been selling wholesale to large distributors and weren't making a living…they were barely getting paid for the seed" (Black, 2013, p. GT8). Similar to previous articles, the establishment of the CSA is described as "bringing two disparate communities together: farmers and city dwellers" (Black, 2013, p. GT8).

Rhetoric defining food festival organizations is also related to the theme of connectedness. Some festivals were geared toward showcasing local, seasonal food to local restaurants in order to build a connection between local producers and chefs. "There's a cry for good local food…and a regional cuisine. People have lost the link between the farm and themselves. They used to know what farmer had the biggest corn and the sweetest pumpkins, but that's gone" (May, 1996, p. D1). A 2004 food festival organized to raise funds for a farming coop also builds on connectedness: "Though shareholders are not making a profit [and instead can visit and purchase produce] from the farm, they benefit because it makes them feel good knowing they're encouraging local food production…they're getting a sense of community and a

sense of security…you can't eat a dollar bill" ("Produce, Sense of Community Growing at Organic Co-Op Farm," 2004, p. 11).

Popularity

By 2007, the "slow food and local food movements" are cited for the first time as having "really come to the forefront of people's thinking…[and that]…farmers' markets fit right in" (McDonald, 2007, p. 1). In the following years, we see similar framing pick up momentum regarding an increasingly mainstream interest in local food. Towards the end of the dataset, references to "the public" wanting to "engage in local food culture" (Rothbauer, 2011, p. 26) through farmers markets and purchasing directly from producers is common. The articles also reference a "trend" toward local food, and over the remaining three years refer to "passion" for local food and "the 100-mile diet", the popularity of which is held responsible for "more and more Canadians looking to find their food supply closer to home…[since] that connection is so important for promoting and protecting our local food system" ("A Fresh Way to Spend Saturday Mornings," 2013, p. 6). By 2014 articles take for granted that,

> there is no doubt that the idea of local, sustainable food is popular right now…[with]…communities across the province…bringing the concept of feeding ourselves to the forefront. And farmers' markets, which bring that fresh local food to local consumers, are proving very popular (Grant, 2014, p. A1).

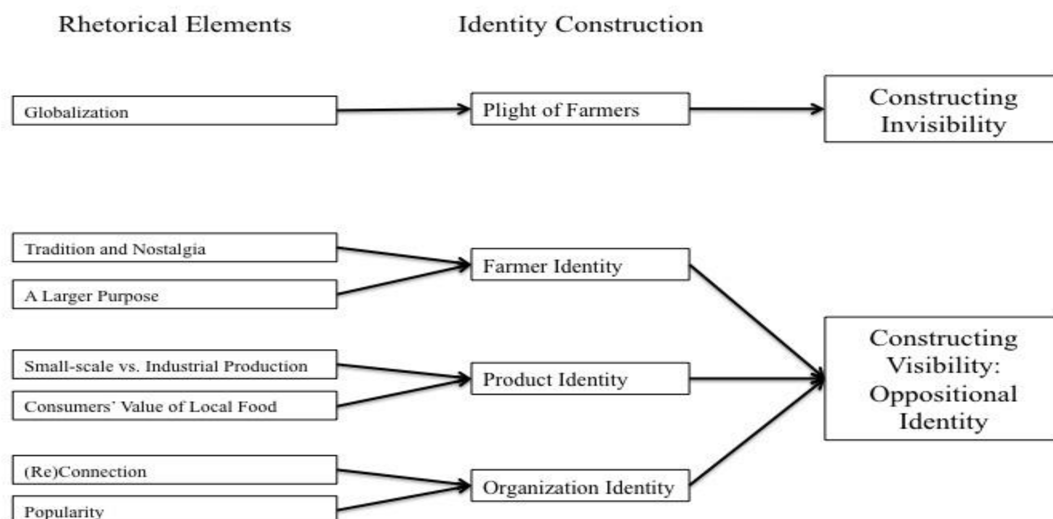
In 2014, farmers attribute the increasing demand for CSAs to the growth of the local food movement and popularity of farmers' markets. Here, the increase in popularity of produce CSAs also gives way to CSAs for sustainable locally grown meat, grain, honey and seafood.

Globalization brought with it a need for farmers to make sense of how conditions surrounding them were evolving. While food production was disassociating from local growing conditions, global market conditions came to the fore, rendering farmers and their plight,

essentially invisible. Following the construction of invisibility are subsequent efforts at the rhetorical construction of visibility, via the construction of identity in opposition to, and outside of, the industrial, globalized food system. Ultimately this topic theoretically aligns with Green's (2004) conceptualization of rhetoric, whereby rhetoric represents the deliberate use of language whereby, “actors produce and assign meaning, constructing both their identities and the world” (p. 654). Furthermore, in alignment with Harmon and colleagues (2015), this data shows that “language operates in a performative role, shaping the underlying assumptions of both the speaker and other social actors…From a rhetorical perspective, language is a dynamic and reflexive tool that both reveals the underlying assumptions of a community and provides a motor for social change” (pp. 77–78). Ultimately, I find that this topic pertains to the rhetorical construction of oppositional identities for farmers, their products, and the ways in which they choose to organize, see Figure 15 below.

Figure 15

Process of visibility and oppositional identity construction



Issue Topics

The remaining two topics that underwent in-depth qualitative, content analysis were found to coalesce around the issues of globalization and land use, as opposed to the previous two topics, which were found to pertain directly to prominent actors.

Topic 4: Globalization

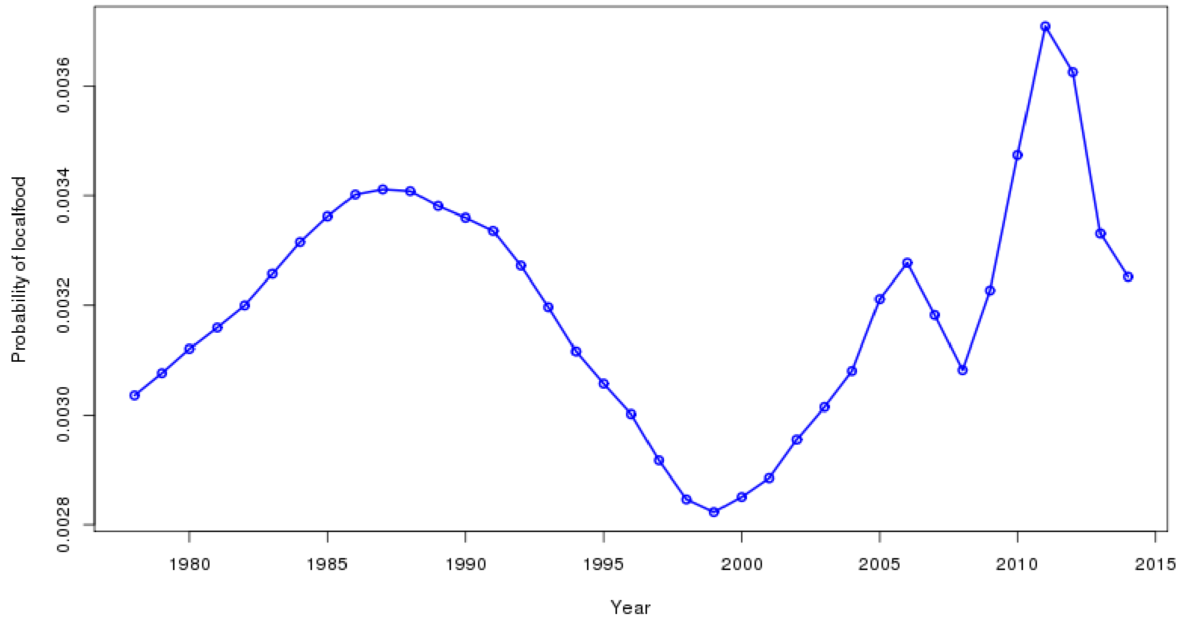
Early in the content analysis, it was apparent that the focus of this topic is the relationship between global decisions and local impacts: what was occurring locally – whether 'local' was in relation to African countries in the 1980s or Albertan farmers in the 1990s – and what was occurring globally as countries were negotiating the terms and impacts of supra-national agreements. Essentially, the theme or content of this topic pertains to globalization. Figure 16 (page 124) depicts the probablity of the term *local food* occuring in this topic over the years of my dataset.

Unlike previously discussed topics, no specific actors were observed as prominent within the narrative of this topic, nor were any actors found to be negotiating their identities as this topic progressed. However, despite the absence of agency within this topic, the content of it continued to evolve as the topic progressed. Therefore, as opposed to an agentic, actor driven evolution, this topic appears to follow a more disembodied discursive evolution, with closer theoretical alignment to Phillips and Oswick's (2012) description of discourse as, "pieces of talk or text as they affect and are affected by the social context in which they appear, and by the texts and ideas they draw on and influence in turn" (p. 443).

Focusing on shifts in the conversation and how the term *local food* was utilized over time, I was able to discern four main periods in the evolution of how *local food* was discussed within the context of globalization. The four periods are outlined below in Figure 17, page 125.

Figure 16

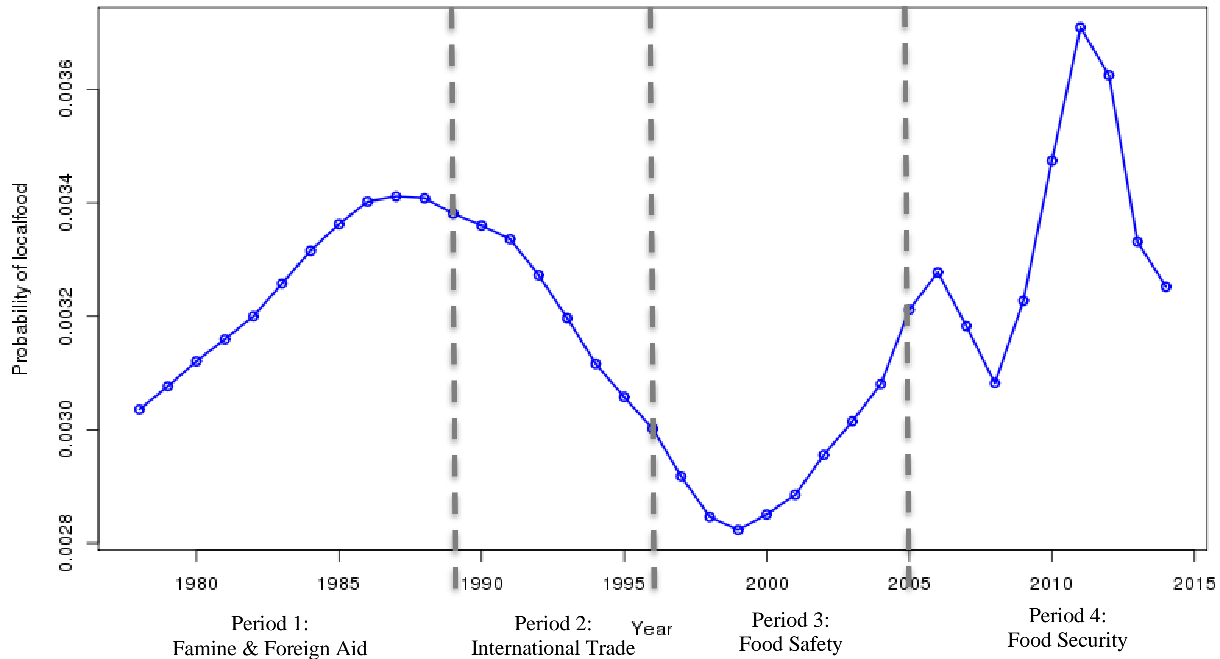
Probability of local food occurring over evolution of topic 4.



It is important to note that the periodization of topic 4 was undertaken prior to examining the graph. Instead, it was periodized purely based on shifts in discourse throughout topic 4, and how *local food* was discussed qualitatively. I then mapped the periods onto the graph above, and saw that they aligned with changes in the probability of local food being mentioned in this topic. This validated both my qualitative interpretation of topic 4, and the quantitative probability curve for how relevant *local food* was over the evolution of this topic.

Figure 17

Periodization of Topic 4: Globalization



Period 1 – 1979-1989: Famine and Foreign Aid

The first period occurs from 1979-1989 and predominantly discusses famine in African countries and international aid. While some articles look to environmental factors like drought causing a decrease in the availability of food, others criticize geopolitical and historical realities including colonialism, corrupt governments, and diversion of resources for export. Yet others state that "imitative modernism" (Channing, 1989, p. B6), whereby Africans trying to "eat like Westerners" (Channing, 1989, p. B6) is partly to blame. World leaders vary in their belief of whether food aid is helpful or harmful to African countries. Rising criticism of complacency of Western nations, foreign aid, and food aid is notable.

The use of the term “local food” in this time period primarily refers to traditional food that is grown in African countries for local consumption, essentially subsistence farming. It is often presented in opposition to food that is grown for export, or in opposition to food aid.

Period 2 – 1990-1996: International Trade

While famine and international development were prominent in the previous period, in this period the conversation becomes increasingly more critical of International Monetary Fund and World Bank policies, and of a food system that increasingly separates food production from consumption. The term *food security*[2] is mentioned for the first time in this period. Here we also begin to see domestic issues come to the fore through discussions of American and Canadian farmers expressing concerns of increasing competition within their industry; as well as op-eds warning farmers of the impact of proposed changes to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Taxes (GATT), resulting in compromised democracy, freedom, health and sustainable food supply. Ideas pertaining to environmental sustainability also enter the discussion, although peripherally.

The use of the term *local food* in this period mostly relates to either local food stores or shops in a given region, food that is produced and consumed in the same area, mostly in relation to developing countries, and in contrast to food produced for export or food aid. This period also begins to touch on local food economies, food safety, and contains the first mention of local food banks.

Period 3 – 1997-2005: Food Safety

In this period famine and international development have left the conversation and do not resurface for the remainder of the topic. Food borne illnesses are framed as risk associated with

[2] Food Security is defined as the availability and access at all times, to sufficient, safe, nutritious food; where access includes affordability (*What Is Food Security? | WFP | United Nations World Food Programme - Fighting Hunger Worldwide*, n.d.)

the reality of eating (e.g. “There’s no way to eat and not have risk” (Read, 1997, p. B1)) while at the same time acknowledging that something has changed (“Now, were starting to see very serious bugs like E. coli 0157 get into food, and they’re in places they shouldn’t be” (Read, 1997, p. B1)). Major food safety scandals such as Mad Cow (2003), avian flu (2004), and salmonella (2005) appear within the Canadian context and are discussed in relation to their impact on trade.

Additionally, a significant shift is observed whereby *local food* is no longer associated with domestic markets of developing countries, nor as an antithesis to export or food aid. While it is still associated with domestic markets, it is unpaired from discussion of international development, and instead held up against global agribusiness (e.g. “When global agribusiness dictates trade rules that discourage local food production, have we not submitted to the whips of economic sado-masochism and deadly bacterial imports?” (Nikiforuk, 1997, p. D.17)). Sentiments also arise not only criticising World Trade Organization (WTO) but also beginning to connect WTO, free trade, the rise in agribusiness, and the “disastrous effects on farmers, food security and the environment (Anglin, 2005 p. A19)”. This again is not in relation to developing countries, but countries affected by free trade agreements (WTO, NAFTA, CAFTA, FTAA). Here, local food is associated with food sovereignty[3].

Period 4 – 2006-2014: Food Security

We see an increase in various levels of government entering the discussion espousing direct benefits of local food (vs. imported food) to health, the environment and food security. We begin to see Members of Parliament penning op-eds proposing food sovereignty as a basis for any new Canadian agriculture policy. Internationally we see countries such as Britain shifting

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[3] *Food Sovereignty is “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.”*(*What Is Food Sovereignty*, 2013)

focus to develop a strategy to ensure sustainable, secure food supply, while specifying that, "…open international trade has many benefits that should not be discounted out of slavish adherence to the 100-mile diet" (Anonymous, 2010, p. A.12).

Developed countries are reported as increasingly vulnerable to increasing food prices resulting from "agriculture and the food system becoming much more integrated into the geopolitical issues of the day" (Teel & Toneguzzi, 2008, p. A4), the impact of ethanol and the production of biofuels, the dependence of industrial farming on oil, "an unsustainable agriculture system" (Atamanenko, 2007, p. 4), and a "small number of giants" (Atamanenko, 2007, p. 4). In response, we begin see stronger language urging agricultural policy to retain principles of food sovereignty with local food production at its core, and outright criticism of industrialization which has "brought the easier transmission of food-related disease, ruthless competition among countries for food staples, a flawed distribution of goods that leaves many hungry…[the] bulk of earning that goes to handful of companies" (Boyens, 2008, p. D9). In addition the vulnerabilities of the current food system are pinpointed to oil prices, climate change, and food-borne illnesses. Some high-profile compromises to food safety in Canada are notable in this period, including toxic chemicals found in Taiwanese food imports, and the largest food recall in Canada resulting from E.coli tainted beef from Alberta's XL foods. However, unlike in previous periods, these breeches in food safety are now explicitly connected to the industrialized food system, rather than as an expected risk of eating food. Local food advocates use the XL foods recall to juxtapose the vulnerabilities in a large industrial food system to that of a sustainable local food system.

Unlike previous periods, here we begin to see a range of responses to the description of a sustainable local food system as virtuous, naïve, or even dangerous. We begin to see large pro-

business bodies weigh in on the debate by reporting on a study stating that increasing international trade is the only way alleviate concerns about food security, and go as far as to say that this report is “welcome and overdue counter-balance to some of the nonsense that’s stated or implied in discussion bout those trendy 100-mile diets and eat-local campaigns” and that “there is nothing wrong with local food – it can be healthy and tasty, though it’s by no means as inherently virtuous as its fans might have you believe” (Cayo, 2013, p. A4).

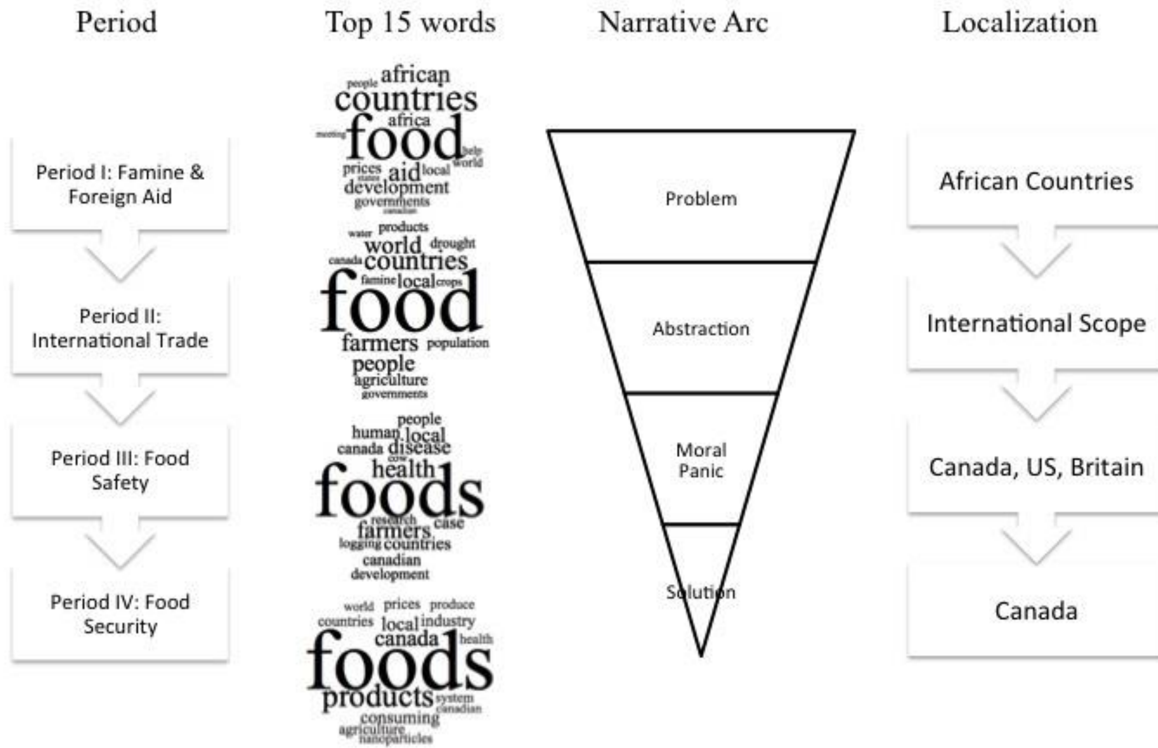
Unlike in period 1 where local food (food grown locally for local consumption, mostly in developing countries) was presented in opposition to food and other agricultural products grown for export, in this period, we see that local food still refers to food grown locally for local consumption, however this time, it is solely in the context of developed countries. Furthermore, rather than presenting local food in opposition to food grown for export, it is defined against food that travels long distances and is *imported* from other countries. In addition, it is associated with healthfulness, safety, food security, food sovereignty, and environmental, social and economic sustainability “outside of the industrialized system” (Boyens, 2008, p. D9).

Ultimately, this topic centres on the progressive discursive *localization* of globalization. The discourse within Period I begins with outlining the problem “out there” relating to the plight of African countries suffering from famine resulting from environmental, geopolitical and historical factors, as well development and foreign aid practices originated from the West. Period II brings the discourse into an international space within which the impact of international trade agreements is debated within many different country contexts. Period III begins to pull the discourse closer to the North American context, particularly around risk the risk of eating, akin to moral panic regarding food safety. Finally, Period IV condenses the discourse within the Canadian context appearing to propose solutions to issues of a globalized food system identified

in previous periods, through discourse pertaining to *local food* and food security, within the Canadian context (See figure 18 below).

Figure 18

Discursive Localization of Globalization



Although understated within dominant approaches to organization studies, problematization has been the fulcrum within a number of theoretical perspectives utilized in the study of change. Within the institutional approach, particularly in relation to discourse, language and meaning, problematization is often positioned as a linchpin to the progress of institutional change (Bouilloud et al., 2019; Hardy & Maguire, 2016; Hoffman et al., 2015; Khaire & Wadhwani, 2010, 2010; Li, 2017; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Nilsson, 2015; Slavich et al., 2019; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Wadhwani, 2018). Problematization also constitutes a key

element of translation theory (e.g. Wæraas & Nielsen, 2016), and of Foucauldian approaches to studying change from a critical perspective (e.g. Dey & Mason, 2018).

These perspectives vary in their treatment of problematization as more or less central to the crux of their theoretical arguments. Two seminal works within the institutional perspective operationalize problematizing in different ways. In the first, Suddaby & Greenwood (2005) use problematizing as a tool to code their data based on what was being problematized and on what basis, in order to build a larger argument for how rhetorical strategies, institutional vocabularies and theorization, to legitimate profound institutional change. Since, for Suddaby & Greenwood (2005) problematizing was a mere tool within a larger framework and not a key theoretical element, a definition was not presented. Maguire & Hardy (2009) identify problematizing as a key theoretical element in their presentation of the process of deinstitutionalization, along with translation, and define it as, "the production of texts that include claims, arguments, stories, examples, statistics, anecdotes, and so forth that "substantiate and dramatize the ineffectiveness and injustice of existing practices" (Colomy, 1998: 289)" (p. 151). Khaire & Wadhwani (2010) explore how problematizing Western-centric meanings of modernism in art created an opportunity to re-envision the meaning modernism and what could be included as such. Recently, Wadhwani (2018) explores the confluence of historical framing and problematization and argues that historical narratives "inherently establish causal claims pertaining to the objects and actions they represent, and ascribe credit or blame for its consequences" (p. 568).

Within the context of translation theory, Wæraas & Nielsen (2016) identify problematization as the first of four stages in the process of translation; defining it as "when actors offer problem statements and seek to convince others that they have the correct solutions" (p. 237-8). Wæraas & Nielsen (2016) identify three 'translations' of translation theory: actor

network theory, knowledge based perspectives, and Scandinavian institutionalism, with problematization subsumed within actor network approaches.

Unsurprisingly, problematization rests at the centre of critical perspectives, particularly those undertaking a Foucauldian approach to analysis. Dey & Mason (2018) explore the role of speech and problematizing in reference to re-envisioning entrepreneurship as a social change activity, having a primarily economic outcome containing the potential for social change, into "entrepreneurship as an inherently *disruptive activity* with positive social change outcomes" (p. 85, italics in original). Summarizing Foucault's work, Dey & Mason (2018) define problematization as:

> how taken-for-granted objects of experience…'becomes a problem, raises discussion and debate, incites new reactions, and induces a crisis in the previously silent behaviour, habits, practices and institutions' (Foucault, 2001, p. 74). Problematization describes a state where people start to care about particular issues or actors as a result of how they become subject to public critique. (p. 88)

Dey & Mason (2018) go further in stating that, "problematization serves the purpose not only of grabbing the public's attention about critical issues associated with powerful actors…but for compelling these actors to rethink their dominant modus operandi so as to encourage more progressive forms of business conduct."

Regardless of the theoretical perspective within which problematization is contained, three commonalities remain with regards to its operationalization. The first is that language is the focus of analysis. The second is that power and politics are often at play. Finally, some element of critiquing the status quo is involved, whether it is through questioning taken-for-granted assumptions (Bouilloud et al., 2019), denaturalization (Dey & Mason, 2018), or simply framing

risk (Christiansen & Thrane, 2014); problematization is seen has carrying the potential for opening new possibilities (Khaire & Wadhwani, 2010), creating freedom from 'orthodox social imaginary'(Dey & Mason, 2018), or containing "resource material by which legitimacy is contested" (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005, p. 59). Based on these three commonalities: language, politics, and critique, it was evident that while the overall theme of this topic was broadly *globalization*, the engine that was evident in propelling the discourse forward, is *problematization*.

Each of the four periods contained problematization of some aspect of globalization, which ultimately created the "resource material" to allow *local food* to emerge as a new possibility, or solution. As evident in the data, *local food* emerged as a phenomenon to enough of an extent that articles discrediting *local food*, that were decidedly pro-industry and pro-free market, also emerged as important voices towards the end of the dataset, and were problematizing *local food* itself. This topic consists of the progressive discursive localization of globalization, and represents the disembodied evolution of the discourse around globalization, in the absence of agency and key actors. Table 14 on pages 134-136 highlights the occurrence of problematization in each of the 4 periods identified in the data.

Table 14

Problematization of globalization over four periods

Period	Problematization of	Data Segment	Proposed Solution	Data Segment	Local Food is:
1 (1979-1989)	International development & foreign aid	"The lesson of Ethiopia must surely be that drought, famine and environmental bankruptcy are not unpredictable acts of God. They have been caused, and caused on the whole, by human stupidity and mismanagement." …"There is probably no way now of saving millions from a miserable death. "And it is increasingly clear that these deaths will be the direct result of predictable, if not predicted, foolish and unsound agricultural and environmental policies on the part of both African governments and the western and international aid agencies." ("Expert Blames Aid Policies for Extent of Famine," 1985, p. 5)	Support production and strengthening of local food production	"Aid agencies and governments must shift their emphasis to fostering local food production, supporting community involvement in planning and administering aid programs, and granting greater financial support to non- governmental aid agencies, he said." ("Expert Blames Aid Policies for Extent of Famine," 1985, p. 5)	Traditional food, grown in African countries for local consumption
2 (1990-1996)	International Trade Agreements	The IMF and the World Bank encourage farmers in poor countries to shift from subsistence farming to cash crops worth next to nothing on world markets. When crises erupt, privileged countries deliver tonnes of food aid from their overstocked shelves. Canada's specialty is wheat. But the beneficiaries of our largesse often have little reason to be grateful ("We Need the Will to Feed the Hungry," 1992, p. B1) These changes [to GATT] would throw every farmer in the member nations into competition in the so-called free market. North American farmers, who must continue to buy expensive labor-saving machines, fuels and chemicals, will be forced to compete against the cheap labor of poor countries. And poor countries will see much-needed food vacuumed off their plates by lucrative export markets (Berry & Ness, 1993, p. A11)	Reduce dependency on international exports or food aid and promote local food	Anybody interested in real harmony, in economic and ecological justice, will see immediately that justice requires not international uniformity but an international generosity toward local diversity. And anybody interested in solving, rather than profiting from, the problems of food production and distribution will see that in the long run the safest food supply is local, not dependent on the global economy (Berry & Ness, 1993, p. A11)	Food that is produced and consumed in the same area; antithetical to export and food that is imported

Period	Problematization of	Data Segment	Proposed Solution	Data Segment	Local Food is:
3 (1997-2005)	Impact of free trade	``Now, we're starting to see very serious bugs like E. coli 0157 get into food, and they're in places they shouldn't be. They're evolving and we should, too." (Read, 1997, p. B1)	No solution, inherent risk to eating	``No!" says B.C. food sanitation specialist Sheri Nielson. ``There's no way to eat and not have a risk. We can't live in a sterile environment." (Read, 1997, p. B1)	Not associated with domestic markets of developing countries or international development; instead held up against global agribusiness
		The risk experts corrupt plain English with a foreign language; the truth eventually dribbles out; and the biggest environmental and health risk of all, a cheap-food policy at any cost, safely escapes detection. (Nikiforuk, 1997, p. D17)			
4a (2006-2014)	Agribusines and industrial food production	Today's intense level of industrial farming and the global food trade is completely dependent on burning vast amounts of cheap fossil fuels, the emissions of which are contributing significantly to the current climate crisis. (Atamanenko, 2007, p. 4)	Support local food production	We could lead this effort by adopting the principle of food sovereignty as the basis for any new Canadian agriculture policy. To do so, we would have to place our emphasis on local food production that empowers the family farm over the high input mega-industrial model as the best way to promote environmental, social and economic sustainability. (Atamanenko, 2007, p. 4)	outside industrialized system, shorter supply chain, in closer proximity and safer; only discussed in relation to developed countries
		The common thread in these outbreaks is contamination of food somewhere between the farm, the processing plant and the plate - and serious ramifications have rippled out across the great distances that our food travels. Outbreaks like these prompt calls for traceability and an increase in food safety control for large producers. (Fisman & Elton, 2012, p. A11) For years, capitalism has demonstrated its ability to create wealth while relying on consumers' willingness to intrinsically trust what is being offered to them. Our food industry is literally playing with fire. ("We Need to Talk about the Use of Nanoparticles in Our Food," 2014, p. A7)	Shorten supply chain	Roberts applauds the efforts of urban gardeners, local food enthusiasts and those who work outside of the industrialized system to build a "regionalized food economy." Their efforts are commendable, much like the initiatives of those who advocate alternative energy strategies in the world of oil. (Boyens, 2008, p. D9) There is, however, another way to build a safer food system: shorten the supply chain. Or, in the words of the good food movement, go local. (Fisman & Elton, 2012, p. A11)	

Period	Problematization of	Data Segment	Proposed Solution	Data Segment	Local Food is:
4b (2006-2014)	Local food	Local food activists, or locavores, believe food should be grown or produced in their local community or region. Local food is fresher, better-tasting and more nutritious, they maintain. They adhere to the "food miles" notion that shipping food long distances increases greenhouse gases, so they avoid it. Yet there is no convincing evidence that local food is better tasting or more nutritious. We buy exported food because it is a better bang for our buck. Local food is often more costly. (Quesnel, 2012, p. A17)			Naïve, misguided, inherently unsafe, almost protectionist
		Local food activists romanticize the pastoral past but modern scientific advances eliminated food problems that were endemic in the past. Most food-borne illnesses requiring hospitalization or leading to fatalities don't come from contaminated food in large food-producing facilities. (Quesnel, 2012, p. A17)	Potential to scale food safety in ways small producers cannot	Large, centralized operations, Desrochers notes, allow companies to hire staff that study and enact food safety protocols for a living, which would be impossible for smaller farming operations. So food safety is more likely compromised in smaller operations because they cannot cost-effectively assemble the food safety equipment and know-how that larger operations can. (Quesnel, 2012, p. A17)	
		This under-reported analysis, published late last month, is a welcome and overdue counter-balance to some of the nonsense that's stated or implied in discussions about those trendy 100-mile diets and eat-local campaigns. There's nothing wrong with local food - it can be healthy and tasty, though it's by no means as inherently virtuous as its fans might have you believe. But to promote over-reliance on homegrown edibles, especially in densely populated areas, is to invite serious unintended consequences. A big issue - the one this analysis focuses on - is economic. (Cayo, 2013, p. A4)		"Trade in food provides significant benefits," writes Kristelle Audet, a Conference Board economist who wrote this report. "Without it, Canadian production of things like canola, wheat, lentils, soybeans, and red meat would be much lower; our access to fresh fruits and vegetables year-round would be limited; and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find things like coffee and sugar in our supermarkets."(Cayo, 2013, p. A4)	

Topic 26: Land Use

Early in the content analysis, it was apparent that the focus of this topic is land use – mostly concerning the tensions between urbanization and preservation of agricultural land. Unlike other topics, four distinct groups of actors remain in the orbit of this topic throughout most of the dataset: (1) developers, (2) citizens and citizens groups, (3) local politicians and government, and (4) farmers, each with their own interpretation of how the value of land is construed, interact throughout the dataset primarily exhibiting contention over how land is valued and should be used. The degree of contention and agency notable in this topic suggests a strong theoretical alignment to Benford and Snow's (2000) conceptualization of framing, whereby framing is described as, “an active processural phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction” (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 203).

What is particularly noteworthy in this dataset is the ultimate reversal of what is considered a valid, legitimate use of land at the end of the dataset as compared to the start. The dataset opens with an article in 1987, describing the vision of an Ontario citizens’ group proposing that planners consider creating “small urban plots for market gardens and other farm uses”(Steen, 1987, p. A7), in order to preserve farmland that they are releasing to developers. The response from the Ontario Municipal Board is dismissive in its tone, in stating that they “do not believe the group’s report has merit” (Steen, 1987, p. A7), arguing instead that, “the noise, smells and dangers of agriculture are not desirable in urban areas” (Steen, 1987, p. A7). However by 2003 in many parts of Canada, city councils themselves are citing the benefits of rooftop gardens and community gardens, and by 2007 municipalities are approving backyard chicken coops.

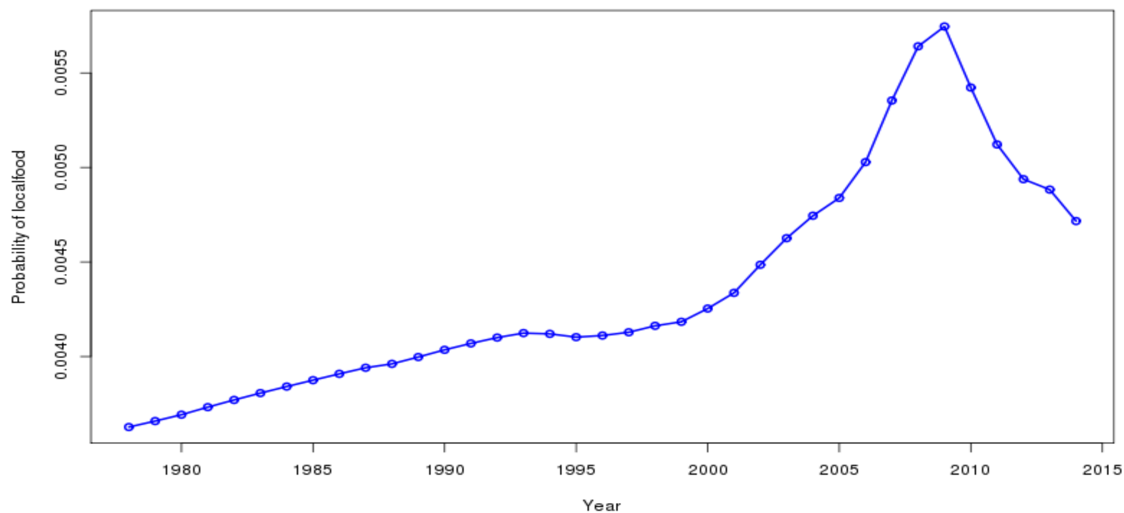
By 2012, in a complete reversal relative to 1987, developers themselves include the preservation of farmland in their proposal to develop a large mass of land:

> the largest piece of land is set aside for community trust farming, creating a valuable, community-controlled agricultural asset which supports a new generation of farmer and ensures local food production. Farming will occur at various scales, including community gardens and public allotment gardens and multi-acre farms growing produce for local markets (Gyarmati, 2012a, p. 3).

Interestingly, the statement made by the Municipal Board in 1987 with regards to the incompatibility of agriculture in urban areas would suggest the term *urban agriculture* was an oxymoron at best, if not nonsensical. However, by 2007 “town councillors endorsed the concept of urban agriculture” (“Urban Farming Gets Green Thumbs up from Esquimalt Councillors,” 2007, p. 8). Figure 19 below depicts the probability of the term *local food* occurring within this topic over time.

Figure 19

Probability of local food occurring over evolution of topic 26.



In order to understand how the reversal in desirability of land set aside for farming alongside developments took place; and to investigate how *urban agriculture* went from an idea worth dismissing in the early years to a model of aspirational land use later on, I draw on Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) theory of justification.

Orders of Worth

Referred to by a number of names, Boltanski & Thévenot's (2006) economies of worth perspective rests among theoretical approaches that grapple with plurality, or the "coexistence of competing rationalities" including, but not limited to, institutional pluralism and institutional logics (Jagd, 2011, p. 343). Contrary to Bourdieu's critical sociology within which action "is primarily explained by reference to internalizing, or even incorporation, of dominant norms" (Jagd, 2011, p. 345), the economies of worth perspective assumes actors as "active…and the social world does not appear as a place of domination suffered passively and unconsciously but more like a space intersected by a multitude of disputes, critiques, disagreements and attempts to produce fragile local agreements" (Jagd, 2011, pp. 345–346).

Rather than framing stability as the norm and disruption and change as the exception, Boltanski and Thévenot's framework presumes that, "social order is negotiated on an ongoing basis…[with] the harmonious arrangement of things and persons…always 'up for grabs'. [Stability] requires deliberate efforts aimed at resolving disputes and achieving compromise" (Patriotta et al., 2011, p. 1806), making the orders of worth framework more enabling and amenable to change than constraining (Cloutier & Langley, 2013).

The unit of analysis within this framework is the situation, specifically one that cannot be ordered by love, violence, planned action or familiarity, and instead disputes or

controversies arise which evoke criticism and/or justification via public debate comprising a 'test of worth' (Ramirez, 2013). Cloutier and Langley (2013) explain that tests of worth clarify "hierarchies (who or what is more or less worthy) and legitimize actors and objects within worlds" (p. 367), which points to the requirement of considering the material dimension in this type of analysis (Patriotta et al., 2011).

Patriotta and colleauges (2011) refer to orders of worth as "systematic and coherent principles of evaluation that can exist in the same social space" (p. 1809). Cloutier and Langley (2013) summarize the concept of orders of worth as

> [seven] sets of equivalent definitions of what is the 'most proper or legitimate action or standard of action' (Silber, 2003 p. 429) to pursue in a given situation or context…[the economies of worth perspective] assumes that actors can draw on elements from any world and use them strategically to suit their rhetorical needs in situations where there is disagreement…all worlds are available to all actors (p. 365-6).

The orders of worth (or worlds) identified by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), and summarized by Patriotta and colleagues (2011) are: *market*, *industrial*, *civic*, *domestic*, *inspired*, *fame*, and *green*. An overview of what constitutes each world can be found in table X. Orders of worth are universal, symmetrical, and "provide universal principles of logical coherence as well as justice" (Patriotta et al., 2011, p. 1809).

Tests of worth challenge how an object is valued and therefore require relevant actors to mobilize various orders of worth, in order to challenge or maintain the legitimacy of that which is questioned. Patriotta and colleagues (2011) specify that, "effectiveness depends on how justifications are constructed within [orders of worth] and

publicly put forward" (p. 1811), clarifying that orders of worth "constitute a 'political grammar'" (p. 1811) incorporating discursive resources and power. Ultimately, having developed a framework for the analysis of justification, Boltanski and Thévenot, (2006) suggest that it is the need for justification – whether that be justification to criticize or justification in response to criticism – that triggers actors' invocation of various orders of worth to legitimize their actions (Jagd, 2011).

Table 15

Overview of the seven Orders of Worth in Boltanski and Thévenot's framework

Orders of Worth	*Market*	*Industrial*	*Civic*	*Domestic*	*Inspired*	*Fame*	*Green*
Evaluation	Price, cost	Technical efficiency	Collective welfare	Esteem, reputation	Grace, singularity, creativeness	Renown, fame	Environmental friendliness
Test	Market competitiveness	Competence, reliability, planning	Equality and solidarity	Trustworthiness	Passion, enthusiasm	Popularity, audience, recognition	Sustainability, renewability
Qualified objects	Freely circulating market good or service	Infrastructure, project, technical object, method, plan	Rules, regulations, fundamental rights, welfare politics	Patrimony, locale, heritage	Emotionally invested body or item, the sublime	Sign, media	Pristine wilderness, healthy environment, natural habitat
Qualified human beings	Customer, consumer, merchant seller	Engineer, professional, expert	Equal citizens, solidarity unions	Authority	Creative beings, artists	Celebrity	Environmentalists, ecologists

(adapted from Patriotta et al., 2011 p. 1810)

As mentioned previously, the data contained in this topic reflect public debate regarding land use, most often pertaining to the protection versus the development of agricultural land with four groups of actors weighing in throughout the dataset. I show that these data dovetail with the economies of worth perspective for analysis. Finch, Geiger, and Harkness (2017, p. 75) articulate that “problems and questions which actors can address by moving about different orders, deploying these flexibly and instrumentally to help them characterize, portray or ‘unveil’ cases of disputes or disagreements” are of particular interest to Boltanski and Thévenot. The various groups of actors in my data use specific justifications to further their (often opposing) perspectives. What is interesting in this dataset is that the specific actors within each group change over time since the dataset spans multiple decades across Canada, however the categories of actors remain consistent throughout the dataset as well as the core disagreement over how land should (or should not) be used. My analysis explores broadly similar notions to that of Hawkins (2011) study which explores how actors cope when “bottled water is valued as an environmental health concern rather than a commodity” (Finch et al., 2017, p. 72)

An early study cited by Cloutier and Langley (2013) whereby Boisard and Letablier (1987, 1989) used the economies of worth perspective to study the confrontation between artisanry and industrial pressures of globalization and mass production among makers of camembert cheese. The result was the application of a world renowned label for cheese produced the traditional way, or “a compelling example of an institutionalized, hybrid arrangement between competing worlds that Boltanski and Thévenot called a compromise” (Cloutier & Langley, 2013, p. 368). Similarly, I find that within my dataset, the introduction and use of the term *urban agriculture* may also

represent such a compromise, or precarious settling between multiple orders of worth pertaining to land use as it relates to *local food*.

Once the theme of land use was initially identified as the main theme of this topic, I first reviewed the dataset to identify the categories of actors that were engaging with the controversy of land use. As mentioned previously the actors included: farmers; citizens and citizens groups; local government and local politicians; and developers and business. I then looked at how the various categories of actors justified their positions regarding how land ought to be used, for agriculture or development, throughout the dataset. My approach is similar to a number of studies that have used the economies of worth perspective to explore various controversies, including Patriotta and colleagues' (2011) study of nuclear power, Hendricks' (2016) study on independent record stores, Finch and colleagues' study of the petroleum industry (2017), Whelan and Gond's (2017) study of animal rights activism, and Forssell and Lankoski's (2017) study of alternative food networks. Each of these studies utilized the orders of worth identified by Boltanski and Thévenot as a guide to facilitate the coding of justifications used by relevant actors in their given studies. A number of the above-mentioned studies augmented the original orders of worth with key words or concepts that were translated for the particular context being studied. Most relevant to my context are Forssell and Lankoski's (2017) additions specific to agriculture and small scale production, summarized below in Table 16 page 145. Using these adaptations as a guide, I analyzed and coded my dataset according to which orders of worth were being mobilized by each category of actors over time, pertaining to legitimate options for land use.

Table 16 *Orders of Worth augmented with agri-food literature*

Order of Worth	Description (drawing on Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006)	Interpretations in Agri-food literature as cited by Forssell & Lankoski (2017))	Select notions of worth from Forssell and Lankoski's (2017) data
Domestic	Importance of relationships Tradition Trustworthiness Honesty Community Rejection of selfishness Not taking advantage of the weak	Face to face contact Trust, long-term relationships Brands Geographical indications Small Scale	Localness, favouring local foods Personal involvement Moderation
Civic	The collective Social movement Solidarity Justice Principles, rejecting dilution of principles	Healthiness of foods Fair Trade	Affordability, accessibility to all rather than elite business Political activism
Green	Value of nature	Ecological production	Working with nature Protecting the land and biodiversity
Market	Opportunism Self-interest, profit Success, challenging oneself Competitiveness Price, value Desirable products Luxury	Coordination by price	High quality foods Excellent service
Industrial	Scientific methods Technology Efficiency, productivity Professionalism, reliability Work, achievement Control Standardization	Standardized products Third-party certification	Criticism of incompetence Approval Consistent quality
Renown	Recognition, visibility Reputation Opinion leader Brand	Third party endorsement	Awards, recognition
Inspiration	Emotions, passion, enthusiasm Sponteneity, creativity Rejection of habits, norms, independence	Creativity	Autonomy Freedom from corporate world Emotional arguments

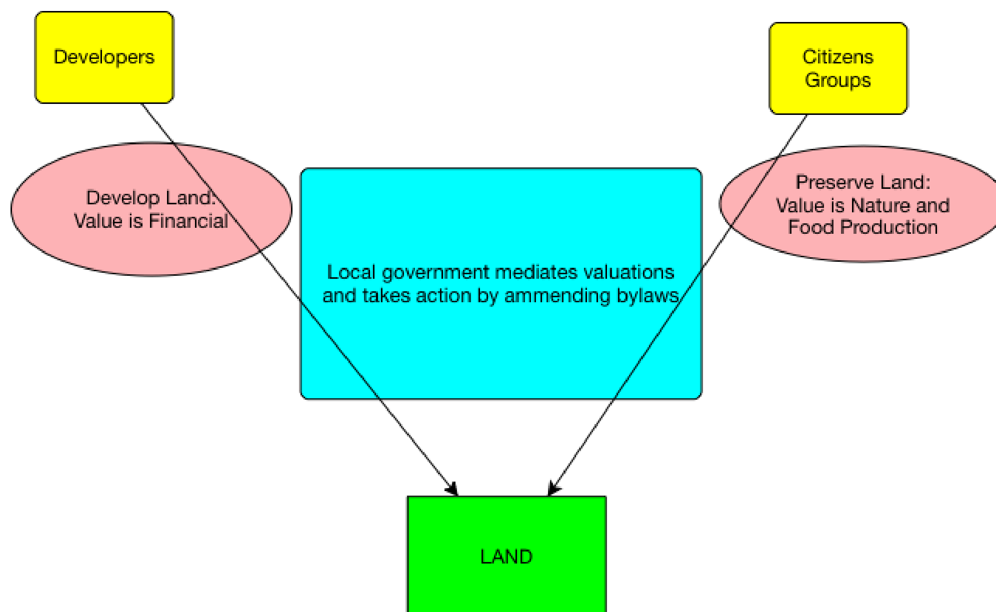
Adapted from Forssell and Lankoski (2017)

Actors

As mentioned previously, it was surprising that clear categories of actors were evident within the data in this topic. Figure 20 below shows how the actors relate to one another in very simplistic way, in order to show their varying roles in the public debate regarding how land should be used. Farmers are absent in the figure, and also represent the smallest percentage of the data in this topic. Primarily, local government and citizen's groups dominate the public debates, with developers and business also representing an increasingly large proportion of the debate in later years. What is notable, is that while the public debate in this dataset begins in 1987 and picks up momentum from 1995 through 2014 (the end of my dataset) farmers are seen joining the debate in 1996 and are not seen again after 2000. Interestingly, developers and business enter the debate briefly in 1987 and then not again until the year 2000 and remain within the debate until 2014.

Figure 20

Actors' general relationships to valuing land



While Figure 19 above is helpful in outlining the various actors and their general relationship to each other and land use in the public debate evident within this topic, the actual arguments (justifications and criticisms) made by each actor category are significantly more nuanced. The following sections will summarize the evolution of the debate by category of actor. It is important to remember that the data segments quoted in the tables in the following sections are not insignificant. In adopting a computational grounded theory methodology and utilizing topic modelling to identify significant themes and critical segments from within the larger dataset, "researchers…can trust that when a quote is chosen as an example of something, it is not an outlier but is indeed representative of some theme in the text" (Nelson, 2017, p. 24).

Citizens Groups

Citizens groups were the most actively engaged in the public debate regarding land use, primarily representing the perspective that land ought to be preserved particularly when faced with possibilities of developing farmland. During the majority of the dataset, citizens groups mobilized *domestic*, *civic* and *green* orders of worth when criticizing the removal of land from the agricultural land reserve (ALR) for development and urbanization, or proposing agricultural uses for land that was available for alternative uses. Interestingly, towards the end of the dataset I was able to observe the mobilization of an economic argument whereby *market* and *industrial* orders of worth were drawn upon, presumably in an effort build a compromise and support the case for urban agriculture. Table 17 on pages 148-149 identifies the various orders of worth evoked by citizens groups over time.

Table 17

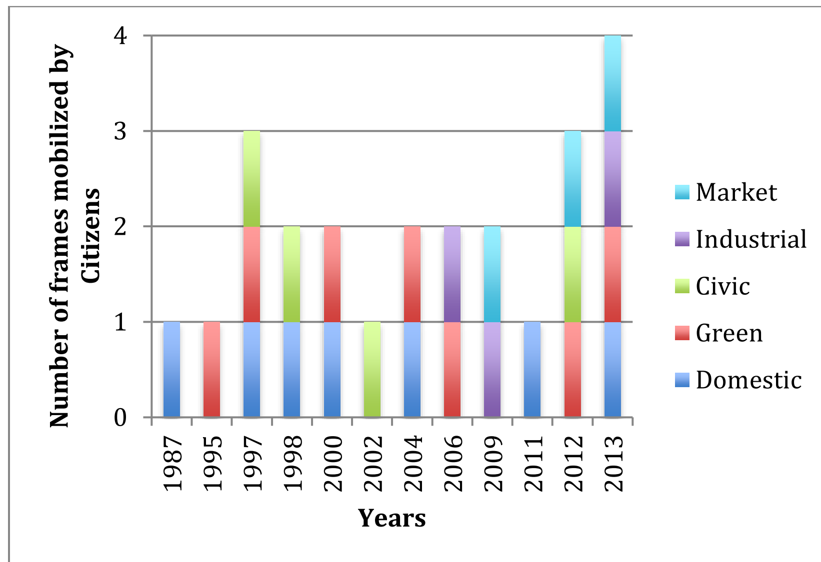
Orders of Worth invoked by Citizens and Citizens Groups

Year	Data Segment	Primary Action	Justification	Corresponding Orders of Worth
1987	The idea is to build homes closer together and leave small urban plots for market gardens and other farm uses. Flowers says there would be no reduction in population densities in the plan that would rearrange traditional subdivision layouts to allow for local food production in backyard gardens and small pick-your-own operations (Steen, 1987, p. A7)	Suggesting multiple uses (and value) for land: development as well as agriculture	Continuity Small scale	Domestic
1995	Some people claim the woods, streams and valleys and all that live in them form a natural community with its own right to existence, but this is not taken seriously in high places, and the reality is that nothing wild exists in Burlington unless the citizens let it. (Farrell, 1995, p. A11)	Criticizing lack of value placed on nature	Value of nature	Green
1997	The fate that alternate users will use up to 60 per cent of our best land and in the process endanger the rest of the land because they don't appreciate and respect the agricultural activity. Taking the best farmland out of production fragments the rest of the community and makes viability more difficult (Gilmour, 1997, p. A7)	Criticizing non-agricultural use of farmland	Preservation of land impact on community	Green Civic
1997	The city would be greatly enhanced if it was to be preserved for local food production and used as a local conservation zone and the city expanded in different areas (Gilmour, 1997, p. A7)	Valuing agricultural use and conservation over development	Local food Conservation	Domestic Green
1998	We must remember that the ALR (agricultural land reserve) was established because local communities and politicians could not resist the intense pressure from land developers. We must realize that local food production is essential to food security (Johnstone, 1998, p. A13)	Criticizing removal of land from ALR for development	Criticizing market Invoking local food & food security	Domestic Civic
2000	The perceived need for more golf courses in our region is based on temporary, fashionable recreational activity…the need to produce food locally, on the other hand, is essential and long term (Caldwell, 2000, p. B03)	Criticizing development of land for recreation vs. agriculture	Criticizing market Value on long term	Domestic
2000	We will stumble farther down the slippery slope of abandoning the protection of our local food production in the name of short term economic gains (Caldwell, 2000, p. B03)	Criticizing non-agricultural use of land	Criticizing market Value on long term Protection of land	Domestic Green
2002	The group believes the garden will help: educate residents on backyard food production as a basic life skill; make gardening accessible for people with special needs; reduce strain on the local food banks; and enhance the sense of	Proposing agricultural use of land	Focus on community and accessibility	Civic

	neighbourhood by creating a community focal point ("Group Proposing Community Garden," 2002, p. 4)			
2004	The community of Willoughby is in the midst of a residential housing boom that residents fear is taking away the natural environment (Jantzi, 2004, p. 11)	Criticism of urbanization	Criticizing market; Value of nature	Green
2004	If it is all developed, they say, it will rob the area of scenic countryside and a source of local food, and force more residents to sit in traffic jams and breathe increasingly polluted air (Monsebraaten, 2004, p. A01)	Criticism of urbanization at expense of nature and agriculture	Criticizing market Value of nature and local food	Domestic Green
2006	The proposed 85 per cent of the existing farmland to enable the development of an industrial park will not only eliminate an important local food source for the region, but will permanently remove a vial ecological stepping stone for the GVRD's Greenzone ("Barnston Island Must Remain Protected," 2006, p. 13)	Criticism of development at expense of nature and agriculture	Importance of local food and ecological considerations	Domestic Green
2006	It possesses some of the highest value soils for various forms of production and provides our ever-growing population with accessible open space and respite from urban sprawl ("Barnston Island Must Remain Protected," 2006, p. 13)	Criticism of development at expense of nature and agriculture	Scientific soil evaluation and importance of nature	Green Industrial
2009	Nanaimo is a city of semi-rural and low-density housing, which provides and excellent opportunity to consider urban agriculture. We believe that allowing backyard poultry is a low-risk, high-benefit option (Gorman, 2009, p. 1)	Proposing backyard chickens	City plan amenable to proposal Cost-benefit language	Market Industrial
2011	He said FUAL is a group of Lantzville residents who are committed to encouraging sustainable agricultural practices on any property, regardless of zoning. I think this is one of the most important issues of our time (Cordery, 2011b, p. A3)	Proposing agricultural use regardless of zoning	Promote agriculture	Domestic
2012	You have a right to oppose the impact that this will have on your community. The 20 years of noise and traffic from the construction, the risk of development on a flood plain, the loss of yet even more irreplaceable farmland, combined with the increased traffic congestion make this development proposal not only senseless but irresponsible (Gyarmati, 2012a, p. 3)	Criticism of development Specifying right of citizens to speak out	Undesirability of development process Loss of farmland	Civic Green Market
2013	The open farming and hedgerows retain healthy habitats for wildlife in contrast to greenhouse farming. Small "green" farming plots avoid industrial farming with its admitted environmental problems while providing local food sources. Limited housing on the least arable land provides the funding required to help build the infrastructure to support the farming - and may even attract younger residents able to kneel down and farm! The plan considerately keeps green buffer zones to protect the neighbours from the construction phases. Like all compromises, no party gets all of their vision exclusively, but there is enough natural wealth in the Southlands to share amongst the many stakeholders. (Lloyd, 2013, p. A9)	Compromise between development and agriculture	Give and take between protecting farmland and releasing land Enough wealth to go around	Domestic Green Market Industrial

Figure 21

Configurations of orders of worth over time: Citizens groups



As evident in Figure 21 above, citizens and citizen's groups consistently evoked frames, situated in specific orders of worth that were initially consistent with their construction of reality, namely: domestic, green, and civic. As time progressed however, citizens and citizens group expended their repertoire of frames and strategically evoked market and industrial orders of worth that were counter to their initial arguments. By the end of the dataset, citizens and citizens groups were evoking the full range of market, industrial, civic, green, and domestic orders of worth, interestingly in order to justify their position of land as having inherent value as nature and for food production, a position that remained consistent from the beginning of the dataset.

Local Government

Local government, much like citizens groups, remain active throughout the dataset. It is within the purview of the local government to ultimately determine how land is to be used within its given jurisdiction, therefore within the public debate over land use, local government was often found justifying decisions or promoting a vision. At the start of the dataset, local government provided an unapologetically economic justification for rejecting the inclusion of agricultural considerations in urban planning using a *market* order of worth. However, as the dataset progresses, local government is increasingly seen drawing on *domestic*, *green* and even *civic* orders of worth to justify decisions. Interestingly, often times the market and industrial orders of worth are also present, particularly when justifying the need for compromise, particularly in relation to urban agriculture. Table 18 on pages 152-153 identifies the various orders of worth evoked by local government over time.

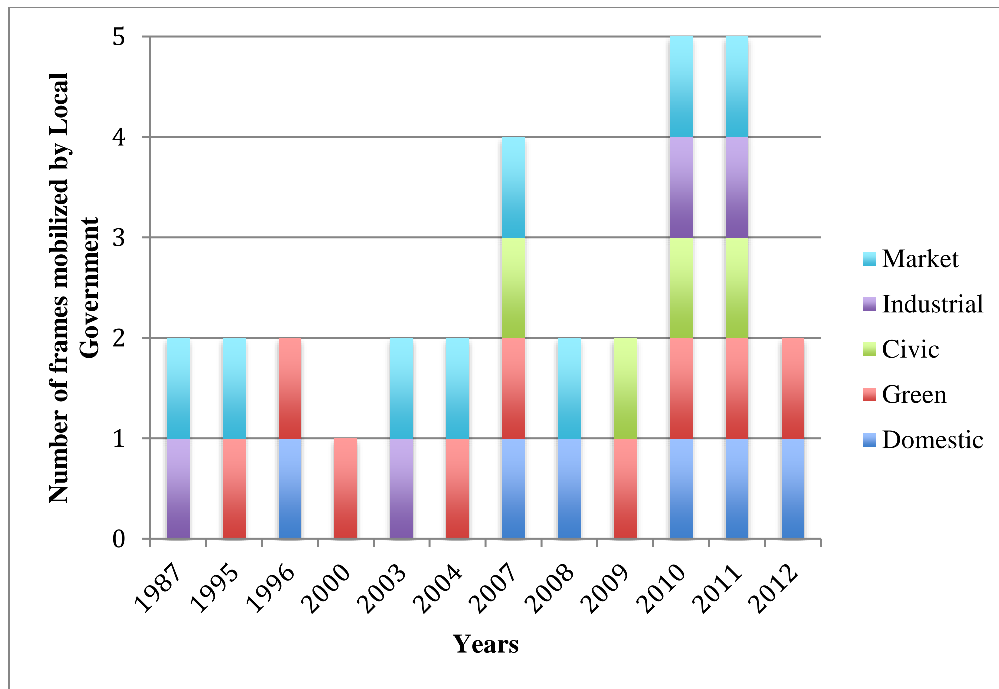
Table 18 *Orders of wroth invoked by local government*

Year	Data Segment	Primary Action	Justification	Corresponding Orders of Worth
1987	He said farm and urban uses are often in conflict. The noise, smells and dangers of agriculture are not desirable in urban areas (Steen, 1987, p. A7)	Criticizing proposal of mixed use for land in favour of urbanization	Undesirability of agriculture in urban areas	Market
1987	The Environment Ministry said it is aware of the violation and is allowing the landfill to continue operating while the board prepares the necessary studies to apply for a change to it's operating certificate that would recognize and legalize the existing contours (Belanger, 1987, p. A5)	Defending land use for landfill	Allowing time for studies	Industrial
1995	North Aldershot should remain a distinct, identifiable area defined by its special characteristics including the Escarpment, topography, habitat, vegetation, creeks, valleys and ravines, and settlement patterns. There should continue to be a diversity of uses, activities and users. Therefore while change should be permitted, it must regard and respect the area's existing character (Farrell, 1995, p. A11)	Attempting compromise between various uses of land	Preserving natural characteristics while allowing change	Green Market
1996	The Peninsula is a bit of a jewel within the CRD and it's a benefit, in terms of local food supply and open green spaces, to all who live within the CRD, said North Saanich Mayor (Danard, 1996, p. 1)	Defending importance of farmland	Importance of local food and green space	Domestic Green
2000	We are stewards of the land and we must do things in a sensitive, sensible way (Caldwell, 2000, p. B03)	Criticizing developers for rushing project	Stewardship of land	Green
2003	The city has approved the creation of a rooftop food garden on its new works building in the False Creek Flats, but is considering a feasibility study on how to encourage others to do the same (Carrigg, 2003, p. 9)	Promote rooftop gardens	Feasibility studies	Industrial
2003	By increasing the number of community gardens you reduce storm water management costs, encourage composting and reduce emissions and transportation costs (Carrigg, 2003, p. 9)	Promoting community gardens	Citing reduction of costs	Market
2004	We must be getting it just about right when the Urban Development Institute and the Greater Ontario Home Builders are saying we haven't left enough land for urban development and Neptis says we're leaving too much (Monsebraaten, 2004, p. A01)	Justifying balance between development and preservation	Validity of both land preservation and development	Green Market
2007	The city of Victoria's resolution supported urban agriculture as a source of fresher, more nutritious food, an economic benefit to the community, a potential resource for emergency food agencies, and an environmentally beneficial	Justifying support for urban agriculture proposing	Citing local food, economic benefit, and environment	Domestic Civic Green

	practice ("Urban Farming Gets Green Thumbs up from Esquimalt Councillors," 2007, p. 8)	compromise		Market
2008	Protecting farmland in an atmosphere of declining local food production is among challenges prompting the Regional District of Nanaimo's move to form a 10-member agricultural advisory committee (Davies, 2008, p. A29)	Justifying focus on agricultural use of land	Citing value of local food production	Domestic
2008	Some Agricultural Land Reserve Land is marginal and could be better used for other purposes Hogarth said, adding he wasn't talking about more suburbs, but business parks (Melnychuk, 2008, p. 11)	Justifying removal of land from ALR for development	Citing better use of land for development	Market
2009	This is a move that would put us a little bit closer to greater sustainability. It also offers benefits of food security and local food production, and those are major objectives for Saanich council and this is something that would allow us to achieve that (Cleverly, 2009, p. A4)	Justifying legalization of urban chickens	Citing sustainability, food security	Civic Green
2010	The lands north of the city are primarily owned by private developers. "There has been a huge push back. We've been hanging tough on this for a while," Mr. Meffe said. "I want to protect the farmland. I want to do it in a reasonable way that looks at establishing policies to create agriculture and food production as a viable alternative to development" (Grech, 2010, p. 1)	Justifying keeping north of city agricultural	Land preservation, viability of agriculture	Green Market
2010	Among the policies outlined in the plan are to encourage farmers' market opportunities in urban areas, community-supported agriculture and agriculture co-operatives, and small-scale innovative food production and packaging initiatives (Grech, 2010, p. 1)	Justifying support for agricultural use of land	Encouraging relationships, small scale, planning	Domestic Civic Industrial
2011	The issue of urban agriculture was brought to the forefront of our community as a result of a property owner who is currently conducting intensive agricultural activity on land that is zoned residential and therefore does not comply with district bylaws, he said. (Cordery, 2011a, p. A4)	Criticizing landowner for noncompliance	Rules and regulations; authority	Domestic Civic
2011	The plan aims to protect the rural character of the region and address topics related to economic, environmental, and social sustainability, said area director Joe Burnett. The document also supports limits to growth in rural areas, recognizes the desire of residents to support local agriculture and local food production, and emphasizes the importance of groundwater protection. (Anonymous, 2011, p. 1)	Justifying plan for land use, compromise	Planning for economic, environmental and social sustainability	Domestic Civic Green Market Industrial
2012	Members were in agreement the optimum use for the land deeded to Delta would be for farming that is free of toxins and genetically modified crops. The environment committee encouraged the expansion of the Earthwise Society's farm at the site as well as organic, small-plot production to enhance biodiversity and encourage local food production (Gyarmati, 2012b, p. 3)	Proposing land use for farming	Small scale, biodiversity	Domestic Green

Figure 22

Configurations of orders of worth over time: Local Government



As evident in Figure 22 above, local governments consistently evoked frames, situated in specific orders of worth that were initially consistent with their construction of reality, namely: domestic, green, industrial and market. As time progressed however, local governments were primarily in the position of having to justify their decisions, and did so by strategically expanding their repertoire by evoking civic orders of worth that were initially inconsistent with their arguments. By the end of the dataset, local government was evoking the full range of market, industrial, civic, green, and domestic orders of worth, interestingly in order to justify their position of having to justify all decisions pertaining to land use, a position that tended towards the economic value of land, and remained relatively consistent from the beginning of the dataset.

Developers and Business

As mentioned previously, apart from a discussion in 1987 regarding the justification of using land for a landfill, developers and business do not really enter the debate in a meaningful way until 2000. Initially, this entry is based less on justifying an action, and more on being criticized for taking the self-interested action of beginning to grade a site for a potential golf course, prior to obtaining requisite approvals. After this, however, while the *market* order of worth is deployed, often to justify proposing a compromise, and is increasingly sparse, often in conjunction with *domestic* or *inspired* orders of worth. In many cases, the *market* or *industrial* orders of worth are entirely absent, and instead, *domestic, green, fame* and even *civic* orders of worth are mobilized to justify development. Table 19 on pages 156-157 identifies the various orders of worth evoked by developers and business over time.

Table 19

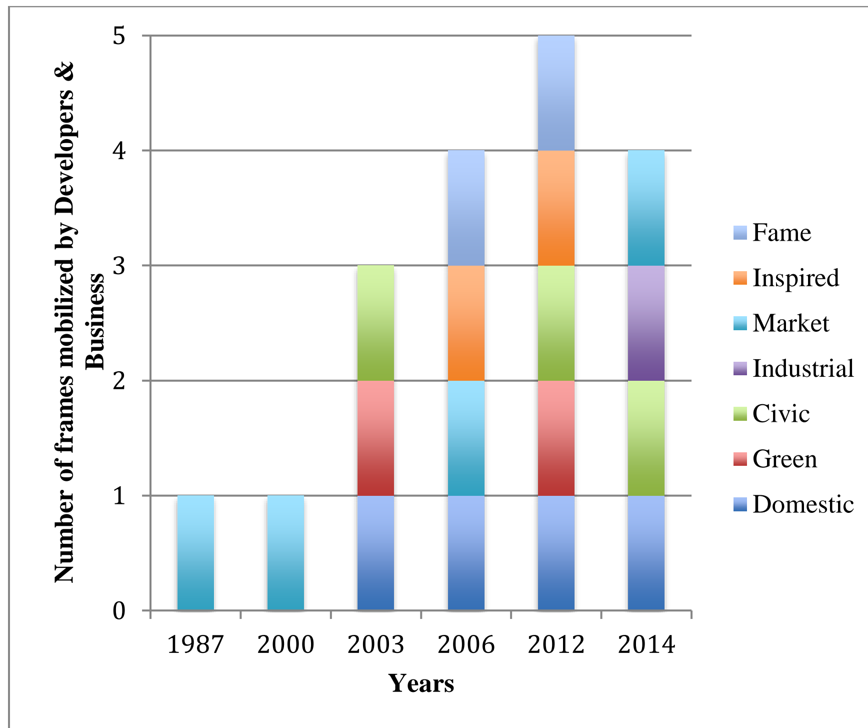
Orders of worth invoked by developers and business.

Year	Data Segment	Primary Action	Justification	Corresponding Orders of Worth
1987	West explained that aside from increasing the potential life of the site by decreasing the volume of waste being landfilled, the compost could be used as topsoil and cut operating costs (Belanger, 1987, p. A5)	Justification of continuing to use land for landfill	Cut operating costs	Market
2000	A numbered company headed by three Cambridge men…has already started to grade the site for a golf course and driving range. But to go ahead with the project they need an amendment from the region, which classifies the site as prime agricultural land that does not allow recreational development. (Caldwell, 2000, p. B03)	Prematurely grading site for development	Opportunistic action	Market
2003	I think what's catching on is the fact that communities are recognizing green roof infrastructure has a potential role to play here to make our cities better places to live, in terms of delivering things like green space, local food production opportunities, energy efficiency, cleaner air, cleaner water (Rhodes, 2003, p. B3)	Justification for green roof technology	Better cities, local food, clean air and water	Domestic Civic Green
2006	He suggests blurring that arbitrary line that segregates land uses and pits farmers against residents and developers against farmland preservationists (Ransford, 2006, p. L1)	Compromise	Blurring arbitrary line Creativity	Inspired
2006	He talks about promoting small-scale, intensive agricultural production that is attractive to younger farmers who are willing to forge a direct producer-consumer relationship in the local community, perhaps at organic farmers' markets in mixed-use transit-oriented neighborhoods--re-engineered suburban areas that become real places (Ransford, 2006, p. L1)	Compromising with land use for development and farming	Consumer-producer relationships, "re-engineered" suburban areas	Domestic Market Inspired
2006	One of their proposals, which they termed revolutionary, focused on allowing some residential development on ALR land in the area to produce financial benefits that could be applied to enhancing other agricultural land to make it more productive. These kinds of logical trade-offs move us away from the absolutes that have done little to foster smarter growth in our region. (Ransford, 2006, p. L1)	Justifying development by proposing compromise of development on ALR	Financial benefits to make other farmland productive, trade offs, buzzword "smart growth"	Market Fame
2012	The largest piece of land is set aside for community trust farming, creating a valuable, community-controlled agricultural asset which supports a new generation of farmer and ensures local food production. Farming will occur at various scales, including community gardens and public allotment gardens and multi-acre farms growing produce for local markets (Gyarmati, 2012a, p. 3)	Justifying development by proposing compromise of development on ALR	Local food production, community gardens	Domestic

2012	The plan would also see areas set aside for public open space and greenways, natural habitat, a market square and a farming school. The latest proposal follows the principles of new urbanism and agricultural urbanism (Gyarmati, 2012a, p. 3)	Justifying development by proposing compromise of development on ALR	Natural habitat, public space, new urbanism, creativity	Civic Green Inspired
2012	According to a sustainability assessment by the Century Group, the community-based farming envisioned can provide a regional model for other agricultural land adjacent to or within urbanized areas (Gyarmati, 2012a, p. 3)	Justifying development by identifying novelty and creativity of plan	Model for others, example, renown	Fame
2014	According to the Century Group, activating the large parcel of farmland with a $9-million agricultural fund solves historic irrigation and drainage issues, and for the first time makes the site reliable and economically viable farmland (Gyarmati, 2014, p. A1)	Justifying development by funding upgrades to farmland	Making farmland economically viable	Market Industrial
2014	"Southlands Community farm with its enhancements will increase local food production, protect farmland, make land available to farmers and create opportunities for community interaction" the company states. "the hope is to bring agricultural production into the hands of the community, where relationships are created between how, where and who grows the food in the local community (Gyarmati, 2014, p. A1)	Justifying development by articulating benefits of local food	Benefits of local food production	Domestic Civic

Figure 23

Configurations of orders of worth over time: Developers and business



Arguably the most dramatic shift is visible in the orders of worth evoked by developers and business, as visible in Figure 23 above. At the outset, developers and business evoked frames that were consistent with their views of the value of land as primarily economic, drawing on market orders of worth at the start of the dataset. As time progressed however, developers and business strategically expanded their repertoire by evoking the most expansive set of orders of worth including: domestic, green, civic, industrial, market, inspired and fame. In 2003 and 2013, the market order of worth is altogether absent. Despite the overall shift in the orders of worth mobilized, the underlying valuation of land from the perspective of developers and business remained connected to its economic value, albeit with consideration for alternate land use.

Farmers

Of all the actor categories weighing in on the debate regarding land use, arguably it is farmers and their livelihoods that are at stake with discussions pertaining to preservation versus urbanization of farmland. Interestingly however, they are largely absent from the majority of the discussion and cease to join public debates within this format after the year 2000. When they are a voice in this dataset, they are primarily concerned with the impact surrounding development and urbanization is having on their day to day operations, criticizing local government for not addressing issues such as storm water runoff, pollution and flooding which impact their livelihood. Proportionately, farmers mobilize the *market* order of worth the most. Table 20 on page 160 identifies the various orders of worth evoked by farmers over time.

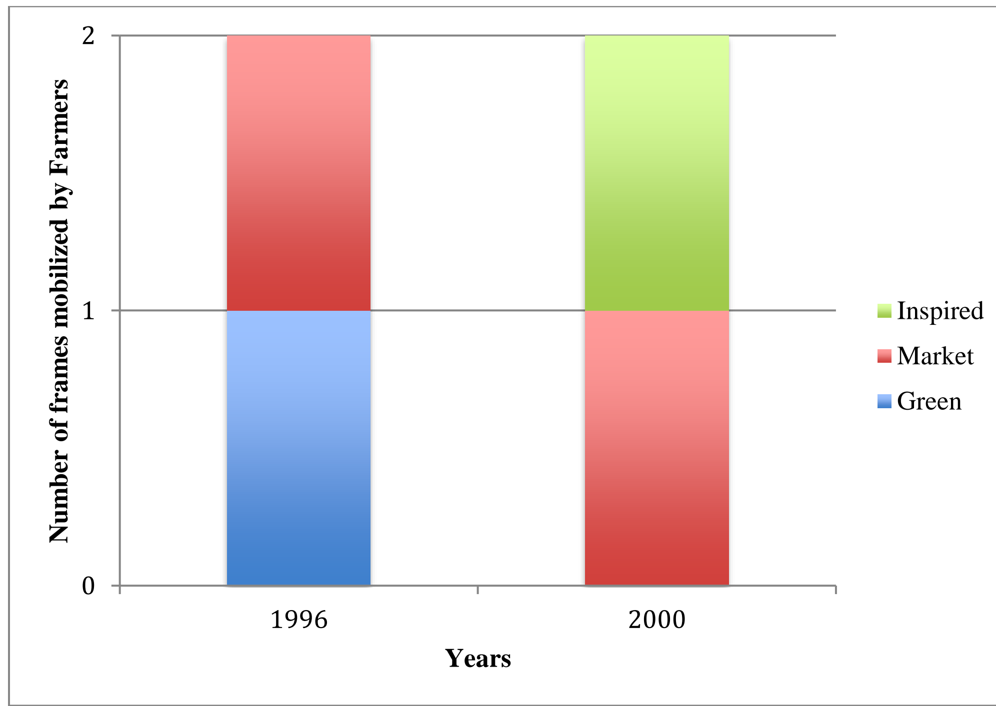
Table 20

Orders of worth invoked by farmers.

Year	Data Segment	Primary Action	Justification	Corresponding Orders of Worth
1996	Farmers on the Peninsula pay the highest irrigation rate in the province - $2.25 per 1000 gallons. That rate adds roughly l$1000 a hectare to local farmers' operating costs making it hard to compete with farmers elsewhere in the province who have access to lakes and other cheap sources of water that aren't municipally operated (Danard, 1996, p. 1)	Criticizing municipal water supply arrangement	Cost and competitiveness	Market
1996	Pendray points out that much more than farmers' incomes are at stake. If Peninsula farms fail, the area could lose its rural nature and fall prey to development (Danard, 1996, p. 1)	Justifying importance of farms	Vulnerability to development, loss of nature	Green
2000	The agricultural value is very high, with the rich black soils yielding about 18 tons per acre for a total of about 612 tons. Last year's crop value was $240,000 (Nienaber, 2000, p. A17)	Risk of losing farmland to urbanization	Monetary value of agricultural production	Market
2000	As I have spent countless hours over the last seven years dealing with this challenge, I constantly remind myself farming is a business (Nienaber, 2000, p. A17)	Identifying issues such as pollution, water run off impacting farms	Farming is a business	Market
2000	I have seen a wide range of emotions. With the high level of frustration spanning over several years, people's emotions have become resentful hostile and argumentative (Nienaber, 2000, p. A17)	Frustration over farms flooding due to urbanization and development	Emotional impact	Inspired

Figure 24

Configurations of orders of worth over time: Farmers



As evident in the previously presented data and in Figure 24 above, farmers were the least represented actor in this dataset, despite their undeniable connection to land. While only present in two years of data, farmers maintained a close connection to the market order of worth when framing their criticisms, and occasionally drew from green and inspired orders of worth to express their plight.

As alluded to at the start of this section, the theoretical dynamics that appear to undergird this topic are closely connected to concepts underlying the framing literature. According to a number of studies, the ability of framing to "…define problems, diagnose causes, [and] make moral judgements" (Kuypers, 2009, p. 182), "imbues framing with the powerful ability to 'transform meanings and define a range of acceptable behaviour'" (Giorgi et al., 2015, p. 11). With regards to framing struggles, settlements and

institutional change, studies are mostly related to field-level stability and change (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014). A number of studies identify framing contests, when "the framing of one group is often rebutted or challenged by frames of other groups", as a process by which shared meanings within an institutional field are contested, eventually leading to a precarious settlement or "fragile truce" within which one frame comes to dominate due to the work of skilled actors.

This is not dissimilar to the economies of worth perspective, which is arguably more nuanced in that, as mentioned previously, it is assumed that actors are "active…and the social world does not appear as a place of domination suffered passively and unconsciously but more like a space intersected by a multitude of disputes, critiques, disagreements and attempts to produce fragile local agreements" (Jagd, 2011, pp. 345–346). Boltanski and Thévenot's framework presumes that, "social order is negotiated on an ongoing basis…[with] the harmonious arrangement of things and persons…always 'up for grabs'. [Stability] requires deliberate efforts aimed at resolving disputes and achieving compromise" (Patriotta et al., 2011, p. 1806), making the orders of worth framework more enabling and amenable to change than constraining (Cloutier & Langley, 2013). This tendency towards stability and achieving compromise, or 'settlement' according to the framing literature, is observable in my data as the term *urban agriculture* becomes commonplace. Furthermore, unlike in previous topics within which actors are present, the four groups of actors that remain in the orbit of this topic engage *with* each other, in attempts to sway decisions in accordance with their own versions of reality.

In mobilizing the orders of worth perspective, my data provides an avenue to overcome a key critique of existing framing research, which is its tendency to "reify what

are essentially dynamic and socially situated processes of meaning construction in terms of packaged outputs and relatively stable meaning systems" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 183). In equating the seven orders of worth as the cultural underpinnings from which frames are constructed, I was able to show how each set of actors began by mobilizing frames that were grounded in familiar orders of worth. After having to repeatedly criticize and/or justify their position in relation to land use over the years through interaction with one another, each group of actors (apart from farmers) eventually incorporated unfamiliar orders of worth into their repertoires. This also occurred over the period within which the term *urban agriculture* arose as a potential compromise or settlement.

In relation to culture and framing, Giorgi and colleagues (2015) critique presentation of "frames as stable packages of meanings that can at most be pitted one against the other" is in favour of exploring "[a] more processual view of framing that emphasizes its construction and re-construction in a given context" (p. 13). This topic provides a view into the construction and reconstruction of frames, situated in orders of worth. Interestingly, while all actors (apart from farmers) tend towards incorporating unfamiliar frames, they also tend towards a similar configuration of orders of worth from which they structure their respective criticisms and or/justifications. This tendency is interestingly also in alignment with the broader cultural discourse pertaining to *local food* in general.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

My motivation for this research has been to understand the processes of meaning change that occur in association with processes of cultural and institutional change. While the notion that meaning change is an important element of institutional change has been widely explored (e.g. Cornelissen & Werner, 2014; DiMaggio et al., 2013; Hardy & Maguire, 2010; Hardy & Philips, 1999; Li et al., 2016; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), we have little understanding of the precise mechanism by which meaning change occurs. My study uses the precision of topic modelling analysis to access the symbolic and ideational realm of institutions and analytically describe the shifts in "domains of meaning" (Lawrence, 1999) that occur as institutional change unfolds. My research question is: how does language mediate processes of institutional change?

Prior research identifies three main mechanisms by which language mediates institutional change; discourse, rhetoric and framing. While the three terms have been used interchangeably, they reflect very different assumptions of agency and power. Institutional theories of change that use discourse draw inspiration from Foucault's (1972) assumption that structural dimensions of institutionalized power are embedded in language. As a result, language, through stable and coherent sets of meanings, presents historically situated vocabularies that constitute a particular phenomenon (e.g. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007; Maguire & Hardy, 2009). Meaning change through discourse has ultimately been criticized for its tendency to account for power without accounting for agency (Lok & Willmott, 2006; Suddaby, 2010).

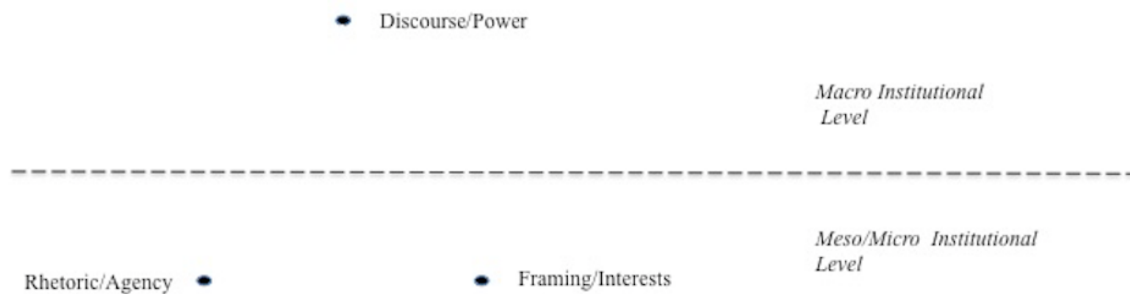
Rhetoric and framing, by contrast are conceptualized as reflecting deliberate and localized efforts of specific actors who use language with the express purpose of

effecting social change – i.e. enrolling stakeholders in an institutional project, persuading consumers, voters and related efforts to use language strategically. Rhetoric and framing, thus, reflect agency without accounting for power (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014; Giorgi et al., 2015). While there is an implicit recognition of important differences between discourse, rhetoric and agency in the literature, the differences have never been made explicit and, in fact, the terms are often used as synonyms for each other. However, the inability to fully articulate the differences between these constructs and their relationship to both agency and power has been recognized as a serious gap in theory that highlight the inability of framing, rhetoric, *or* discourse to predict why some attempts at using rhetoric or framing succeed in inducing change while others do not (Koopmans, 2005).

These are represented pictorially in Figure 25 as simplified ideal types, summarizing how they are presented in the literature.

Figure 25

Ideal-type representations of linguistic mechanisms of institutional change in extant literature



This study demonstrates that it is the interaction between rhetoric, framing *and* discourse through which changes in meaning occur. One of the key expectations I had in applying topic modelling analysis to the empirical context of local food was that, by using the comprehensive breadth and analytic precision of topic modelling, I would be

able to trace shifts in meaning of words to the agency of specific actors in the organizational field. This was, however, not my observation. Instead, I observed macro-level shifts in language and meaning that were, largely, unassociated with specific actors, but which created discursive opportunities for actors to emerge. That is, shifts in macro-level discourse created shifts in the power of certain words or meanings, that agentic actors could take advantage of at a more micro-institutional level. However, the meaning of terms like *local food* was never fully fixed or stable over the course of my study. Rather, the discourse of *local food* kept shifting and creating new discursive opportunities.

Notably, new meaning emerged quickly, actors were involved, and there were instances of discourse, rhetoric *and* framing observed in the dataset. This study also shows, however, that the discursive landscape began to coalesce *well before* strategic action took place; that actors did not use language to create meaning, but were rather *used by* language as they obtained salience; nor did actors define issues, rather attached their interests to emerging salience in meaning. I elaborate each of these observations below.

Meaning emerges quickly

Early in the analysis, this study showed that a new meaning emerged rapidly. In phase one of my analysis, graphs comparing the term frequencies of the terms, *local food* and *local food bank* (see Figure 4, page 73), revealed that throughout the 1980s, 1990s and part of the 2000s, the terms *local food* and *local food bank* were largely synonymous; suggesting that the term *local food* was only "sensible", "realistic" and legitimate" (Koopmans & Statham, 1999) in relation to notions of poverty and hunger, and not in relation to the conditions under which food was grown, let alone politicized. Towards the end of the dataset, *local food* appeared "sensible", "realistic" and "legitimate" outside of

its association with the local food bank, as an entity in and of itself now associated with a method of production that was largely politicized, in contrast to globalization, and outside of the industrial food system.

This suggests that over the 37 years that my dataset encompasses, discursive opportunities were structured whereby *local food* was central to increasingly "salient discourses that [were] alive and [had] momentum at a particular point in time" (Cornelissen & Werner, 2014, p. 210). Moreover, such "salient discourses" allowed for disparate discursive contexts, or topics, associated with: health, farmers, globalization, and land use, to all eventually draw from discursive opportunities structuring around *local food*, as each separate discursive context evolved. Additionally, despite how dissimilar each of the discursive contexts was at the start of the dataset, as time progressed, the topics tended towards more similarity with one another, even though they retained their thematic differences.

This is especially evident when the outputs of the dynamic topic modelling analysis for each of the four topics – health, farmers, globalization and land use – are depicted alongside one another. As mentioned in previous sections, dynamic topic modelling accounts for changes within topics over time. Because the content and meaning of certain collections of documents (e.g. scholarly journals and news articles) are known to change with time, rather than assuming that multiple mentions of the same term are *interchangeable*, dynamic topic modelling accounts for their relatedness, *without* assuming exchangeability (Blei et al., 2003). The output depicted in Table 21 (page 170) depicts the evolution of the top 20 words of topics 5, 8, 4 and 26 over 37 years. What is

most important about the depiction below is the pattern of colours, or words, “hopping” from one conversation, or topic, to the next, shifting discursive contexts as they move.

A few important items to highlight with regards to Table 21 are as follows. The positioning of each of the top 20 words of each topic at every point in time is significant, as the words are sorted from most to less relevant. For example, in looking at the output for Topic 4, *globalization*, the most important word in 1978 is “countries” and the (relatively) least important is “report”, whereas by 2014 the most important word is “food” and the (relatively) least important is “security”. The coloured boxes indicate words that have “hopped” from one topic to another: words that originated in one topic, and were also visible in another topic at a later point in time. It is common for “new” words arriving in a given topic to begin in position 20, and “move” up towards position 1, becoming increasingly relevant to that given topic, as time progresses. For example the term “local” (coded red) arrives in topic 5, health, in 1990 in position 18. By 2000 it has become increasingly more relevant, and moved up to position 2, remaining there for the remainder of the data set, just behind the term, “food”.

In my output, the term “local” also depicts the merits of dynamic topic modelling mentioned above, whereby a term can be interchangeable, without being exchangeable. For example, in Topic 26, *land use*; “local” occurs in position 20, following the terms, “municipal” and “construction”. Later in the dataset, the term “local” ebbs and flows up as far as position 15, back down to 20, and by 2006, it occurs at position 17, following the terms “agricultural” and “local food”. This confirms not only the validity of my model, but also that the context around the use of the term “local” evolved from initially having to do with municipal government and building projects, to eventually becoming

about local food, agriculture and urbanization; still within the context of land development projects.

It is also evident from looking at all the topics and “hopping” words, that at the beginning of the dataset, few words where shared among the topics, suggesting four distinct, separate conversations. By 1986 we begin to see an increasing number of terms beginning to “hop” or cross over to other topics. By 2008 up until the end of the dataset in 2014, all four topics contain the term *local food* (coded dark green) within their top 20 words.

Table 21

Discursive context of health, farmers, globalization and land use over 37 years

FOUR DISTINCT DISCURSIVE CONTEXTS	WORDS BEGIN TO "HOP"; DISCURSIVE CONTEXTS INCREASINGLY INTERTWINED	"LOCAL FOOD" IN ALL TOPICS; NEW MEANING SETTLES
TOPIC 5: HEALTH (RHETORIC)		
TOPIC 8: FARMER (RHETORIC)		
TOPIC 4: GLOBALIZAITON (DISCOURSE)		
TOPIC 26: LAND USE (FRAMING)		

As mentioned at the start of this section, one of the key findings of my study includes finding evidence for discourse, rhetoric, *and* framing as occurring within my dataset. Table 22 below summarizes the findings outlined in Chapter 5.

Table 22

Summary of findings for Topics 5, 8, 4 and 26

Topic Type	Topic Number	Theme	Theoretical Abstraction	Use of Language for Meaning Change
Actor Topics	5	Health	Professional Expansion	Rhetoric
	8	Farmers	Oppositional Identity	Rhetoric
Issue Topics	4	Globalization	Problematization	Discourse
	26	Land Use	Justification	Framing

A stylized version of Table 21 found in Figure 26 (page 174) presents further evidence of how each topic uses discourse, rhetoric or framing within each discursive context. Figure 26 (page 174) was created by identifying a list of all the words that "hop" to other topics (all the coloured words) in Table 21 (page 170). In total there were 21 words that "hopped":

- Food
- Development
- Local food
- Health
- Farmers
- Industry
- Products
- Small
- Agriculture
- Land
- Consumers
- Security
- Foods
- Local
- Locally
- Community
- Grown
- Fresh
- Farm
- Markets
- Agricultural

An alluvial plot was developed in order to visualize only the movement of the "hopping" words. To reduce complexity, this plot "forced" the above words into topics within which they were most relevant at each year of the dataset. This means that unlike Table 21 (page 170) previously, a word can only exist in one topic at one particular time. It is critical to note however, that in Figure 26 (page 174) it may appear that some words do not move to other topics, however this interpretation is incorrect. What it means is that *despite* moving to other topics, the word remained most relevant to the topic that has "kept" it.

The most identifiable feature of Figure 26 (page 174) is that at the start of the time period, only three topics appear to contain words and topic 4, globalization, is empty. By the final few years of the dataset however, topic 4 contains 3 words: consumers, industry, and health. Another notable feature of the figure below is that words appear to "hop" amongst topics using five different mechanisms, outlined in Table 23, page 173.

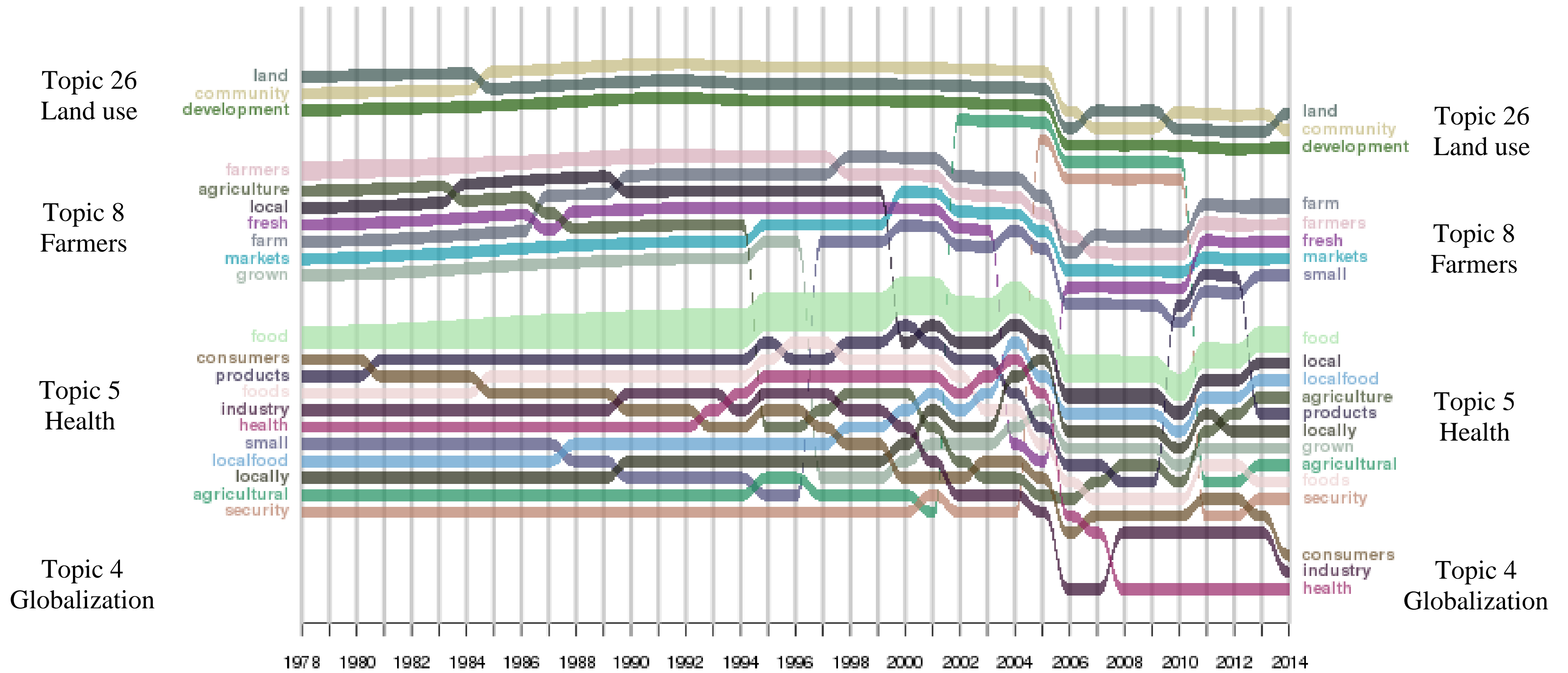
Table 23

Mechanisms by which words "hop"

Mechanism	Description	Example
Push	Words that originate in one topic and move to another, without returning	"Health" out of topic 5
Pull	Words that originate in another topic and move into a second, remaining there	"Health" into topic 4
Lend	Words that originate in one topic and move to another topic, eventually return to the topic of origin	"Fresh" out of topic 8, returns to topic 8
Borrow	Words that originate in another topic and move into a second, eventually returning to the topic of origin	"Fresh" arrives in topic 5, returns to topic of origin
Keep	Words that remain relevant to one topic, do not make significant moves to another topic	"Community" remains in topic 26

Figure 26

Stylized Discursive Context of Local Food: Alluvial plot of words that "hop" between topics



Combining the mechanisms by which words appear to move between topics, the actual words that "hop" and the topics they hop to and from, is especially illuminating with regards to how the various topics evolved within the wider discursive context of *local food*. Table 24 below shows stark differences between the topics characterized as actor topics and those characterized as issue topics, as well as the topics that were identified as containing discourse, rhetoric, and framing.

Table 24

"Hopping" words, discourse, rhetoric and framing among topics 5, 8, 4, and 26

Topic Type	Topic Theme	Discourse Rhetoric Framing	Word hopping mechanisms				
			Push	Pull	Lend	Borrow	Keep
Actor Topics	5 Health	rhetoric	consumers industry health small	local agriculture grown	products agricultural security	fresh	food foods local food locally
	8 Farmers	rhetoric	agriculture local grown	small	fresh	products	farmers farm market
Issue Topics	4 Globalization	discourse	Ø	consumers industry health	Ø	Ø	Ø
	26 Land use	framing	Ø	Ø	Ø	agricultural security	land community development

Actor Topics

Taken together, the above analyses show that neither rhetoric nor framing is as agentic or as highly strategic as it is theorized to be. Instead, in their best efforts, actors' use of language is embroiled in a dynamic of variation, selection and reproduction, consistent with Koopmans (2005) definition of actors whereby:

> [Actors do not possess] supranatural faculties…namely the ability to make reliable predictions of the outcomes of imaginary future interactions under conditions of limited

information and fundamental uncertainty about how other actors will respond…[Rather]… the process of strategic choice need not be as planned as the conscious verb "making" suggest. Probably more often that not, different groups of [actors] simply try different strategies until one of them finds a successful recipe for action that provokes favourable responses from actors in the environment. One may call this "making" opportunities, but "stumbling on" opportunities is sometimes at least as accurate a description (Koopmans, 2005, p. 28).

In conceptualizing this study, I was anticipating the discovery of actors as presented in the framing literature, whereby activists, farmers, and large globalized retailers, for example, would deploy frames that were consistent with their identities and interests, and engage in contentious interactions in the public arena, enrolling various stakeholders and framing *local food* as positively or negatively based on their relative strategic intent. My key findings, however, suggest that contrary to conventional wisdom, actors did not use language to create meaning. Rather, actor salience emerged from the discursive context, meaning that actors in fact, emerged from language.

While it was unsurprising that farmers were notable and encompassed within a topic in and of themselves, finding farmers to be the last to adopt the term *local food* is rather unexpected. Furthermore, finding an entire topic coalescing around public health professionals as key advocates for *local food* was unanticipated, let alone finding dieticians and nutritionists re-imagining the boundaries of their professional influence to include food production. Public health professionals were driving the rhetoric and subsequent framing that spread through to the other discursive contexts, and the rhetoric that farmers constructed later, to align their interests to

a shifting Discourse, further suggests that actors emerged from language, as opposed to actively and strategically manipulating language and meaning in order to foster self-interested change.

The mechanisms underlying the construction of these actors' identities included pushing, pulling, lending, borrowing and keeping key words that constituted the vocabulary containing the meaning of *local food*. This is particularly evident when accounting for the importance of time in my analysis, and the longitudinal nature of this study. It is only through analysing the breadth and depth of this data that I was able to discern where words that eventually constituted the vocabulary of "local food" emerged, and when and how others assumed that vocabulary. It was only evident after considering timing that public health professionals appeared to introduce a number of terms that eventually spread through the other topics. Unexpectedly, the actor topic consisting of farmers was the last to adopt the term "local food" in 2008, which had been initially introduced within globalization discourse 30 years prior, in 1978.

Issue Topics

Further examination of issue topics finds that actors also do not define issues; rather actors attempt to attach their interests to emerging salience in meaning. For example, within the two issue topics the only mechanism relevant to Globalization was "pull"; whereas Land Use engaged with "pull", "borrow" and "keep" implying a highly strategic attachment to the salient discourses of the time in order to justify actions. This is most evident in the topic pertaining to Land Use, whereby justifications evolved to encompass various aspects of local food – as evident in "borrowing" the terms *agriculture* and *security* – even though key actors did not evolve in their intent with respect to how land should be used – as evidenced in "keeping" the terms: *land*, *community* and *development*. Timing and the breadth and depth of my dataset is also important to note with regards to findings pertaining to issue topics. Both issue topics, Globalization and Land Use, "pull" and "borrow" terms constituting the vocabulary of *local food*

relatively late in the dataset, arguably when meanings pertaining to local food have settled. This provides further evidence that the discursive landscape pertaining to local food begins to coalesce well before strategic action begins, suggesting that neither rhetoric nor framing is as agentic as it is theorized to be, but is instead employed after vocabularies pertaining to broader

With regards to constraints in methodology, it is important to note that all methodological approaches contain limitations. While it is true that the scope of this data is exceptionally large in scale, and contains the potential to gloss over actors (although despite this, key actors were shown to emerge), it is also true that more traditional approaches to studying social change and shifts in meaning that begin by identifying issues and/or actors as a starting point are also vulnerable to bias and findings that are skewed towards agency. For example, interviews, by default will reveal agency that actors attribute to *their* actions. This is not an insignificant source of bias, as "influential" actors, in recalling their perceived impact on the field, are more likely to present a coherent post-hoc narrative of how events unfolded and were connected over time, within which their own actions exhibit a logical influence on changes in their respective areas. Similarly, when studies are constructed around instances of conflict, they are more likely to find conflict as critical to institutional change. For example, Hoffman's (1999) study, while critical in moving our understanding of institutional fields beyond markets or technologies, is predicated on fields as issues comprised of competing institutions. Moreover, if institutional change is primarily explored under the assumption of actors seeking legitimacy for some form of change, it is unsurprising that actors seeking legitimacy and their ensuing struggles will be found as essential to processes of institutional change, as in studies of institutional entrepreneurship (e.g. Battilana et al., 2009).

My research also seeks to understand institutional change and institutionalization as I seek to understand shifts in meaning over time. This is closely aligned with the origins of institutional theory primarily concerned with the infusion of meaning and value. While actors were found to arise and play a key role in how local food was institutionalized, or infused with meaning over time, it was not in the way that extant literature would suggest.

This deviation from what is expected is not merely an artefact of the methodology employed in my study. Firstly, actors were found; secondly the dynamics of issues and conflicts were evident, albeit in trace amounts and the very end of my dataset, well after local food had an established meaning. This speaks to the difference between *inf*using with meaning and using meaning, a distinction – likely two sides of the same coin – which has not been explored in the literature. Furthermore, a recent publication by Kraatz and colleagues (2020) articulates the need for harkening back to the early foundations of institutional theory within which, Scott (1987 p. 494) referring to the early work of Selznick (1957) states, "institutionalization refers to this adaptive process: 'In what is perhaps its most significant meaning, 'to institutionalize' is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand' (Selznick, 1957: 17)".

Ultimately, in reference to my methodology, in seeking meaning, I was able to find meaning by using a methodological approach that could elucidate the process of meaning construction (or meaning infusion) over time, as well as, arguably find a tipping point after which the infusion of meaning could switch to the use of an established meaning or vocabulary, the latter of which is more consistent with contemporary approaches to studying institutional change in which issues, conflict and agency are more prevalent. It is not to say that actors were absent, but I argue that the point at which they were in a position to "take the ball and run with it" occurred much later in the process of institutional change than extant literature would suggest.

Therefore, discourses that have settled can then be utilized resources by “strategic” actors. A critical implication of the above findings is what this means for how discursive opportunity structures are conceptualized.

Discursive Opportunity Structure

Koopmans & Statham (1999) originally introduced the construct of discursive opportunity structures in response to criticism levelled against political opportunity structure, which focuses on aspects of the political environment such as institutional structures and power relations, at the expense of culture’s impact on the success (or failure) of social movements (Fuentes, 2015; Koopmans, 1999; Koopmans & Statham, 1999; Sainsbury, 2004). Identifying the gap between the construct of political opportunity structures which are unable to account for “the ways in which social movements mobilize symbolic resources to advance their cause”, and the framing perspective, for which that is a particular strength, Koopmans and Statham (1999) articulate the construct of discursive opportunity structure:

> between these two domains, a common ground has developed where both perspectives refer to political-cultural or symbolic external constraints and facilitators of social movement mobilization. We propose to denote this set of variables by the term, discursive opportunity structure, which may be seen as determining which ideas are considered “sensible”, which constructions of reality are seen as “realistic” and which claims are held as “legitimate” within a certain polity at a specific time. (p. 228)

Koopmans & Olzak (2004) focus on connecting the concept of discursive opportunity structure to that of resonance, and elaborate on the definition of discursive opportunity to include “aspects of public discourse that determine a message’s chance of diffusion in the public sphere” (p. 202).

Acknowledging similarities between constructs related to discursive opportunity structures such as frame resonance (Snow & Benford, 1988) and discursive fields (Steinberg,

1999), both of which contain the notions of aligning frames to a broader culture or hegemonic discourse, McCammon (2013) defines discursive opportunity structures as "…a conceptual tool to understand which social movement frames have the greatest capacity to mobilize existing and new recruits, to convince the public of a movement's demands, and to persuade authorities to alter policy and practices in line with the movement's agenda (p. 371)". She goes on to specify that "discursive opportunity structures reveal that cultural elements in the broader environment facilitate and constrain successful social movement framing" (p. 371).

Ferree (2003) delineates the concepts of frames, ideologies and discursive opportunity structure, defining the latter as, "institutionally anchored ways of thinking that provide a gradient of relative political acceptability to specific packages of ideas" (p. 309) which is "structured, both in the sense of having pattern and form and in the sense of being anchored in key political institutions" (p. 308). She goes on to conceptually disentangle structure and agency by specifying that, "comparisons of similar frames in different contexts help to separate the role of such structured discourses (the gradient of opportunity) from agency (the strategic choices made among available frames)" (p. 309). Therefore, comparing the effects that discursive opportunity structure has on feminist framing of abortion in the United States and Germany, Ferree (2003) finds that framing that appears radical in one context, is resonant with hegemonic or mainstream discourse in another. She argues that frames that are strategically chosen due to their resonance with discursive opportunity structures (owing to their anchoring in existing power relations) may be effective; however resonance comes at the cost of not only downplaying the needs of groups that are marginalized by hegemonic discourse, but also potentially laying the groundwork for future cooptation (Ferree, 2003). Ferree (2003) clarifies:

> Like resonance, radicalism is an interaction between discursive opportunity and the frames that are chosen, but it is oppositional rather than supportive in nature. Just who is radical depends on the discursive context in which they speak. This context differs by time and place, which explains the apparent paradox that some radical ideas of the past now seem commonplace (and vice versa). (p. 339).

Since Koopmans and Statham's (1999) introduced the construct of discursive opportunity structure it has been expanded in several ways. McCammon and colleagues (2007) characterize discursive opportunity structures as stable or volatile. Stable discursive opportunity structures are identified as such due to frames arising from discourses that are long lived and deeply embedded in the surrounding culture, whereas volatile opportunity structures, while still "critical or highly salient…are beliefs or values that are culturally significant for a shorter period of time or that are deemed important but are just emerging" (McCammon et al., 2007, p. 732). In addition, McCammon and colleagues (2007) also articulate structural differences within a discourse by characterizing it as narrow or broad. Summarizing the work of McCammon and colleagues (2007), Werner & Cornelissen (2014) specify that the "breadth of a discourse…provides a whole system of keywords through which a situation can be reframed", and a narrow opportunity is one within which a "specific discourse offers a more limited set of words and idioms" (p. 1462).

Bröer & Duyvendak (2009) make a case for incorporating emotion into the study of discursive opportunity structure, while Wahlström and Peterson (2006) examine interactions between an "open discursive environment, one that is receptive to activist demands, and a "closed" economic environment in which corporations guard against change.

Examining unsuccessful attempts to redefine the meaning of the 'American Dream' from one that legitimizes American capitalism, to one that challenges it, Fuentes (2015) finds that the

pervasiveness of ‘Americanism’ and capitalism in American political culture, and associated discursive opportunities, constrain and reinterpret any attempts to fundamentally challenge the former.

Motta (2015) and Prause (2018) examine the idea of transnational discursive opportunities across various countries attempting to tease out aspects of the discursive opportunity structure that are valid transnationally, and those that are more nationally relevant. Interestingly, in unrelated studies, Shin (2017) and Tarasova (2017) explore how discursive opportunity structures are employed in pro-nuclear growth and anti-nuclear movements respectively, with Shin (2017) identifying fear as an insufficient frame to challenge the pro-nuclear growth stance in Japan – even post- Fukushima; and Tarasova (2017) finds the importance of considering power when examining or interpreting discursive opportunities. Hess (2019) connects changes in framing to changes in politics, and finds that shifting discourse can be connected to changes in coalition composition, “counterframing, and the evolving challenger-incumbent relationship” (p. 38).

Since Cornelissen and Werner's (2014) inclusion of discursive opportunity structures as a recommendation for future research on framing in the management literature, they have furthered the construct themselves through the study of framing and institutional change. Introducing the mechanisms of frame shifting and frame blending as avenues for instigating institutional change, Werner & Cornelissen (2014) propose relationships between these, and stable and volatile; and broad and narrow discursive opportunity structures. Frame shifting occurs “when actors initiate a shift to such a new frame, they actively question and query existing institutionalized schemas and do so by mobilizing an alternative frame that restructures expectations and experiences and suggests different inferences” (Werner & Cornelissen, 2014, p.

1456). Whereas frame blending is defined as, “the discursive combination of two separate schemas that share some abstract structure, or as the incorporation of words and elements of one schema into that of another” (Werner & Cornelissen, 2014, p. 1456). Ultimately, Werner & Cornelissen (2014) propose that frame shifting is associated with volatile discursive opportunities, frame blending with stable discursive opportunities, and that moderate and radical forms of both, are associated with narrow and broad discursive opportunities, respectively. This is consistent with Bröer & Duyvendak's (2009) observation that a frame can ‘strike a chord’ with the public and affect perceptions of opportunities, “not so much by introducing completely new ideas, but by pulling together existing ideas into a partly new whole” (p. 340).

Discursive opportunity structure has been used to study boundary work among professions (Bucher et al., 2016) and the maintenance of legitimacy through institutional change (Patala et al., 2017). Bucher and collegues (2016) view discursive opportunities as a resource available to professions who can use “events to open up ‘discursive opportunity structures’ and frame events in ways that allow them to defend or contest boundaries and maintain or change their jurisdictions” (p. 499) by employing mechanisms such as issue framing, self-casting, and alter-casting and associating these with the status and centrality within a field. Patala and collegues (2017) seek to investigate the rhetorical strategies utilized by “incumbents to legitimate investments in technologies with divergent trajectories of legitimacy” (p. 2) within the context of investments in non-renewable and renewable technology by energy incumbents. In relation to discursive opportunity structures, their study finds that the broad discursive opportunity structure represented by sustainability discourse, allows for the rhetorical justification of investments in both renewable and non-renewable technologies; owing to the mechanism of frame blending

which allow incumbent firms to align their rhetoric to resonate with, and take advantage of, the sustainability discursive opportunity structure.

Taken together, the studies above suggest that frames arise and confront discursive opportunity structures that can enable and/or constrain the capacity of certain frames to appear "sensible", "realistic" and "legitimate" at a particular time and place, essentially positioning discursive opportunity structures as gatekeepers for institutional change. While part of the original intention of developing the construct of discursive opportunity structure was intended to balance out the agentic aspects of framing research, my study shows that the current conceptualization of discursive opportunity structures may have veered too close to "structure" which is consistent with Werner and Cornelissen's (2014) critique of Koopmans and Statham's (1999) early definition of discursive opportunity structures as "static and objective" (1461). Using Kellogg's (2011) study of institutional change in a hospital setting as an example of "how the broader societal context outside of individuals or organizations can gradually or even suddenly present discursive opportunities", Werner and Cornelissen (2014, p. 1461) argue that such opportunities "emerge at particular points in time…and underpin the success of framing efforts" (1461). Although in Table 21 (page 170) we observe the evolution of words pertaining to *local food* and, more importantly, gaining momentum through each of the topics which contain increasingly similar elements (or combinations of words) by the end of the dataset, my data reveal that the dynamics of discursive opportunity structures are further nuanced beyond underpinning the success of framing efforts.

Owing to its strong attachments to frame resonance as a rationale for interest in discursive opportunity structures, extant literature presents discursive opportunity structures as a metaphorical "bullseye" that actors shoot linguistic "arrows" towards, hoping something will

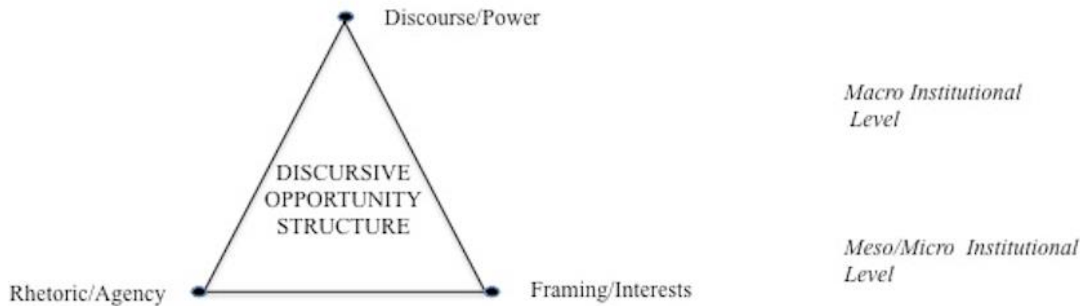
‘stick’ and ultimately facilitate change. This relegates discursive opportunity structures to resources that powerful actors can draw on, or skilfully manipulate, to justify their interests. Furthermore literature that frames discursive opportunity structures as gatekeepers for change, by default position discursive opportunity structures as highly deterministic in their interactions with frames, and reifies the critique associated with framing literature that constructs frames as stable packages of meaning, and presents discursive opportunity structures as stable and rigid “packages of meaning” which sophisticated actors must traverse through and learn to manipulate.

An Emergent Process Model of Meaning Change

My findings suggest that discursive opportunities are not “something up there” that actors must identify and seize in order to facilitate change. Rather, my research shows that while: (1) there is a powerful Discourse that is prevalent, (2) there are strategic actors aiming to further their interests, and (3) that discursive opportunity structures can represent a resonance between them, conceptualizing discursive opportunities as a grand opportunity for change misses the nuances associated with considering discourse, rhetoric *and* framing. Instead, conceptualizing discursive opportunity structures as a property that emerges from the confluence of power, agency and interests, allows the structuring of discursive opportunities to come into view. As Figure 27 (p. 185) below demonstrates, *changes in the domains of meaning occur by the iterative interaction between macro-level discourse, where language reflects embedded power but not agency, and micro-level framing and rhetoric, where language reflects agency but not power.*

Figure 27

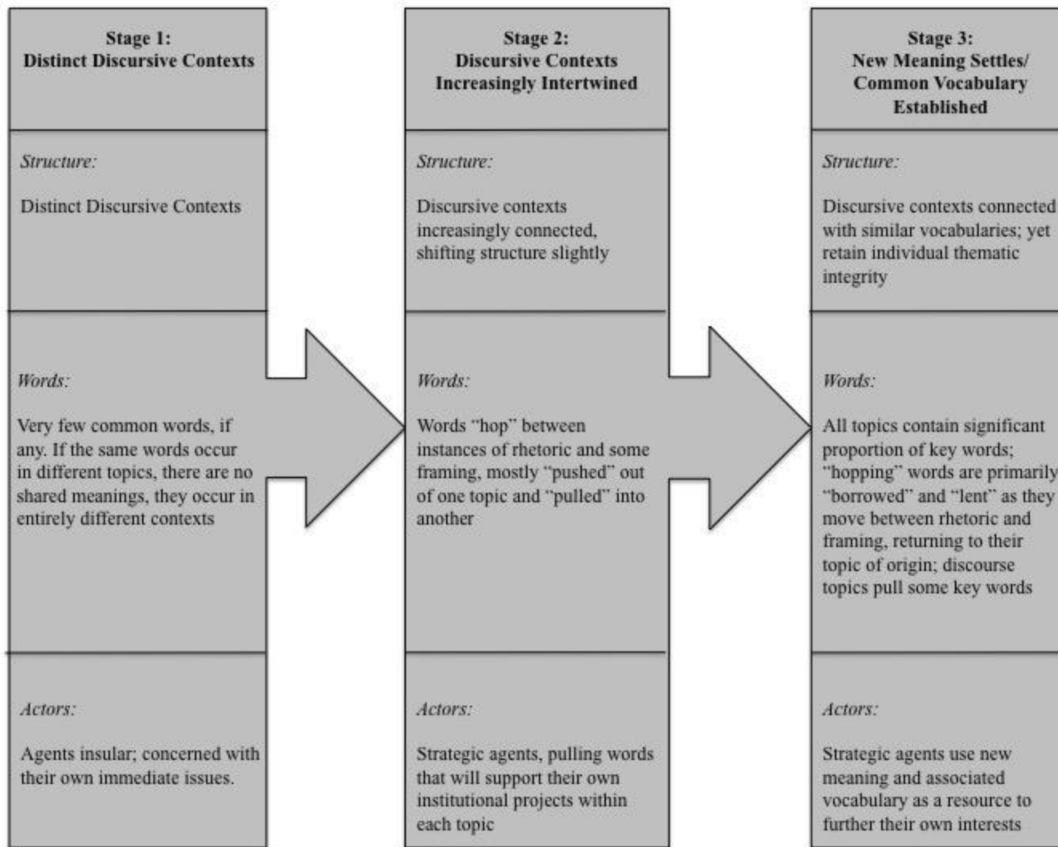
Model of Discursive Opportunity Structure as Emergent Property



All four topics together over the course of the dataset are representative of Discourse (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007) or dominant discourse (Hardy & Maguire, 2016), which my study shows shift over time, through which new meaning emerges. The primary mechanism through which this occurs is through words "hopping" from one topic to another in a number of ways (as outlined in Table 22 p. 171). Here I argue that these hopping words are manifestations of the confluence of three elements, which propagate the emergence of discursive opportunities that propel the emergence of a shared vocabulary and common understanding of *local food*. The three elements are: (1) structure, (2) words, and (3) agency. I propose that the interactions between these three elements evolve over three stages (Figure 28, page 186).

Figure 28

Process Model – Stages of Meaning Emergence



Below I elaborate my model of meaning emergence. It is important to note that while I have included dates for the start and end of each stage which corresponds to changes observed in Table 21 page 170, the shifts in how structure, words and actors reconfigure are more important than the actual starting and ending years of the phases.

Stage 1: Distinct Discursive Contexts 1978-1985

Structure

In this initial stage, the overall structure of the Discourse is represented as four distinct un-connected discursive contexts with no shared vocabularies or meanings.

Words

The disconnection between each discursive context is especially evident when examining the same words in different discursive contexts where they occur alongside different vocabularies, emphasizing that there is no shared meaning. For example in the Farmer topic, the word “local” occurs alongside “fruit”, “potatoes”, “vegetables”; whereas in the Land Use topic, “local” occurs alongside “construction”, “municipal” and “planning”. Similarly, within the topic pertaining to Globalization, the word “development” occurs alongside “international” and “production”, whereas in the Land Use topic, it occurs alongside “community” and “residents”. Finally, within the topic pertaining to health, the word “food” occurs alongside “consumers”, “products”, and “industry”, as opposed to within the Globalization topic where it occurs alongside “world”, “million”, and “countries”.

Furthermore, in considering Figure 26 (page 174), the alluvial plot of the topics, very little change is observed, with some words shifting in relevance within their own topics, but no movement is observed between topics.

Actors

In this stage, actors are primarily concerned with their immediate contexts with an insular focus. For example, the topic pertaining to health is reflective of potential impacts from mergers of food giants in the Canadian context, with public health practitioners primarily focusing on rhetorically constructing their own professional identities to include food production. The topic pertaining to farmers is reflective of the plight of farmers as they contend with their invisibility in relation to an increasingly globalized food system. With respect to Land Use, in this stage this topic highlights the tensions between citizens’ groups and government regarding proposed land development and how land ought to be used, with specific justifications employed by various

actors, which do not overlap. In the absence of a specific actor, the globalization topic is primarily reflecting issues regarding international development and famine.

Stage 2: Topics increasingly intertwined 1986-2006

Structure

This stage begins when topics begin to share words. Structurally, this means that topics are increasingly more connected, and begin to share more words as time progresses.

Words

It is in this stage that we begin to see words "hop" between topics. This is significant, as words not only move between discursive contexts, also between uses of rhetoric, framing and discourse. For example, the word "health" understandably begins in the context pertaining to health rhetoric, and is the first word to "hop" to another topic: globalization discourse. The term "farmers" also understandably begins in the topic pertaining to the rhetorical construction of farmer identity and is then observed "hopping" to the topics pertaining to health rhetoric, and eventually globalization discourse. We observe the term "local" associated with in very different meanings within farmer rhetoric and land use framing topics, and it is also later observed in health rhetoric. Again, unsurprisingly, "fresh" begins in farmer rhetoric and is later observed in health rhetoric, just as the word "markets" also begins in farmer rhetoric and is later observed in health rhetoric. Interestingly, "agricultural" begins in land use framing and is later observed in health rhetoric; while "agriculture" begins in health rhetoric and farmer rhetoric and is later observed in both land use framing and globalization discourse. Surprisingly, "security" begins in land use framing and is later observed in globalization discourse, while the term "food" begins in health rhetoric and globalization discourse, and is later observed in farmer rhetoric and later in land use framing.

In considering Figure 26 (page 174) the alluvial plot, we primarily see words leaving one topic and entering another (e.g. being "pushed" out of one topic and/or "pulled" into another).

Actors

The words mentioned above move between topics and, as a result, move between being utilized in rhetoric, framing, and/or discourse as actors work to further their own institutional projects within each topic. For example, public health professionals in this period are actively engaging in the rhetorical expansion of their professional influence to move beyond nutrition, to include how food is produced. In furthering their agenda, public health professionals as agentic actors are able to draw from the surrounding discursive context, and begin to employ terms such as "farmers", "local" and "markets" to support their immediate purpose.

Farmers also represent agentic actors furthering their own interests, which in this topic means breaking out of the invisibility imposed on them by the effects of an increasingly globalized food system, into constructing their visibility and identity in opposition to elements of a large globalized food system. In order to rhetorically construct their oppositional identity, farmers, like health professionals, begin to engage with words outside of their immediate discursive context. By incorporating words like "food", "grown", "products" and "locally", which are pulled from the rhetoric of public health professionals, farmers contribute to the intertwining of topics, however for the purpose of establishing *their own* identities in order to compete, or rather survive, in the shifting food retail landscape.

As mentioned in previous sections, actors engaging with the issue of land use begin by essentially staying in their various discursive corners, with developers primarily drawing on economic justifications for proposing land development, citizen's groups drawing on civic and domestic justifications in order to protect the land, and governments attempting to justify their decisions, albeit leaning heavily on economic basis for their justifications. Little change is

observed in this topic until later in the dataset when actors, regardless of how they think land ought to be used, draw on increasingly elaborate justifications to uphold their views, which remain unchanged throughout the dataset.

Globalization in this study was not found to contain agentic actors, and rather represents a disembodied discourse pertaining to globalization and food, in this stage, not many words are "pulled" into this discursive context. The words "industry" and "farmers" appear towards the end of this stage, however overall this discursive context remains relatively unchanged.

Stage 3: New Meaning Settles, Common Vocabulary Established (2007-2014)

Structure

In this final stage, a common understanding of what constitutes local food has been established across all topics, ultimately implying that local food Discourse now contains some power. All topics now contain the term local food within their top 20 words, showing that it is utilized in instances of in rhetoric, framing, and discourse. Interestingly, however, while each topic moves towards a common meaning structure (or vocabulary) for local food that is representative of the emergence and establishment of a new meaning emerging, each topic continues to maintain integrity with regards to its thematic content as well.

Words

This stage is marked, as mentioned previously, when each topic contains the key term, *local food*. Furthermore, by examining the proportion of words shared among topics, we are able to observe the interconnectedness between topics, which I argue leads to the generation and establishment of a common understanding. The rhetorical expansion of public health practice shares 12 of its top 20 words with the other topics by the end of the dataset, while the rhetorical construction of farmers' identities share 10 of their top 20 words with the other topics by the end

of the dataset, as does the problematization of globalization topic. Finally, the justification of land use shares 6 of its top 20 words with other topics by the end of the dataset.

In considering Figure 26 (page 174) alluvial plot once again, it is in this stage that we see that words are primarily “borrowed” and “lent” as they move between topics and return to their topic of origin.

Actors

Actors within each topic appear to use the term *local food* and its associated vocabulary most strategically in this stage. In previous stages, while agentic actors are acting strategically to further their own institutional projects, it is not until this stage, where local food is established as an entity in its own right, that actors are able to use it strategically to further their own interests.

The clearest example of this degree of the strategic mobilization of local food is in the Land Use topic. Here in considering Figure 26 (page 174) the alluvial plot, the words “land”, “community”, and “development” maintain their relevance to the topic and remain unwavering throughout the dataset. However, as each set of actors begin to draw on increasingly more elaborate justifications for how land ought to be used, over time we see the terms “agricultural” and “security” move into the Land Use topic for a period of time, only to be “returned” shortly thereafter. Paradoxically, this leads to citizens groups, developers, and government all strategically engaging with the same words outside of their discursive contexts, in order to justify their respective – and opposing – stances on how land ought to be used.

Interestingly, the topic pertaining to globalization discourse, whether considering Table 21 (page 170) or Figure 26 (page 174), appears to be much less actively engaged in the movement of words. Here, words appear to percolate into the topic once they gain momentum rather than through active strategic movement by actors.

The Emergence of Meaning and Discursive Opportunity Structures

The dynamic interaction of discourse, rhetoric and framing creates an emerging shift in the meaning of words that is partly structural (power without agency) and partly agency (agency without full power). This is akin to a structuration argument in which both agency and power are muted in their interaction. Finally, this structuring creates opportunity structures that, while they cannot be fully controlled or manipulated, can be exploited by actors for their individual institutional projects. For example, within the actor topic of Health, public health professionals rhetorically expanded, not only their sphere of influence with regards to the boundaries of their profession by including food production within their professional purview, but also rhetorically constructed a bridge between health and local food, which was then repeated over the years, and lent to government agencies to also repeat verbatim. As unexpected actors, the rhetorical construction of public health professionals' connection to local food required a degree of creativity and freedom from structural constraints. Similarly, in the topic pertaining to the rhetorical construction of farmers' identities – also an actor topic – farmers reeling from marginalization and decreased visibility with respect to food production resulting from an increasingly globalized food industry, began to rhetorically construct their identities in opposition to large industrial forms of food production. While oppositional identities are explored by McKendrick and Hannan (2014) within the context of structural factors such as resource partitioning, my qualitative exploration of the topic pertaining to farmer identities yields insight into the rhetorical construction of oppositional identities over time, identifying the rhetorical elements that conglomerate into individual, product and organizational identities, all of which coalesce into the construction of an oppositional identity by farmers. Moreover, unexpectedly farmers were the last to incorporate the term *local food* into the top 20 words of their discursive context. Farmers also exhibit a degree of creativity and freedom from structural

constraints, particularly when evoking tradition and nostalgia in the construction of their identities.

The remaining two topics, categorized as issue topics, consist of Globalization and Land Use. Globalization consists of a disembodied discourse centred on globalization as it evolves from discussions pertaining to food shortages and international aid for African countries, to increasing in abstraction into an international conversation regarding globalization and its impacts. From here the discourse condenses into the North American context with regards to food safety, and finally settles at a national, Canadian locale in reference to food security and *local food*. The progressive localization of globalization through the theoretical engine of problematization occurs primarily through discourse, in the absence of any dominant actors or clear agency, in alignment with previous studies of discourse (e.g. Maguire & Hardy, 2009).

Finally, Land Use presents a particularly interesting topic with regards to actors, frames and alignment with wider cultural norms. A few items are critical to note with regards to this topic. Firstly, all actors identified within this topic, with the exception of farmers, begin in the early parts of the dataset by mobilizing frames associated with orders of worth that are expectedly within their respective purviews. For example, developers initially rely on the *market* order of worth, while citizens groups rely on *domestic* and *green*, and local governments rely on *market* and *industrial* orders of worth to justify their positions. As the data progresses, all actors – again with the exception of farmers – appear to adopt increasingly complex configurations of orders of worth in justifying their positions, to the point where developers are seen using *green*, *civic*, *domestic,* and even *inspired* orders of worth with a notable absence of market and industrial orders of worth in some later years. Similarly, citizens groups also adopt more complexity, and begin to utilize frames that invoke *market* and *industrial* orders of worth,

traditionally associated with economic justifications. Finally, government is also seen expanding the repertoire of the orders of worth they evoke, covering the gamut from *domestic, green, civic, industrial*, and *market*. What is remarkable about this topic is that despite each actor group shifting toward justifications that are seemingly outside of what may be expected, the position that each group is justifying does not change over the 37 years. Citizens groups remain primarily concerned about preserving land and nature. Developers remain primarily interested in developing available land, and governments seem primarily concerned with justifying a myriad of decisions, namely leaning towards development, or some compromise.

An emergent property is defined philosophically as, "a property which arises out of fundamental entities, and yet is novel or irreducible with respect to them" (*Emergent Properties (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)*, 2015). While a philosophical debate regarding the elements constituting an emergent property are beyond the scope of this study, it provides an apt metaphor for the how discursive opportunity structures can be conceptualized as emerging from discourse, rhetoric and agency. Rather than conceptualizing discursive opportunity structures as a single grand opportunity for resonance, I propose that my dataset provides an example of discursive opportunities structuring *each time* a word "hops" between topics in my dataset. It is through the iteration and re-iteration, the capitalization of self interest, and a momentarily stable structure, each time a new word is introduced – pushed, pulled, lent, borrowed, and/or kept within divergent discursive spaces – that a discursive opportunity structure arises and falls, slowly shifting meaning towards a new coherent, stable, historically situated vocabulary, or Discourse (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007). Furthermore, as discursive opportunities are increasingly structured in this way, new actors are recruited, new words are introduced across thematic boundaries, eventually leading to more actors speaking the same way, decreasing in the

variety of words and establishing a narrower Discourse, as evident with *local food*, leading to a discursive opportunity structur*ed.*

In reflecting on other approaches I could have taken to further this research, I could have approached it by combining a more traditional approach with what I have done in this project. Upon identifying the initial 30 topics, and finding one topic coalescing around 'local food advocacy' I could have moved deeper into this topic by hand coding most relevant topics within that theme. I could have then used the articles within this topic to identify any repetitive names or actors that appeared to be most visible and identified them as key informants to interview further. This would have likely provided me with an argument closer to that of institutional entrepreneurs within which powerful agents were identified and ultimately elucidating their various strategies for controlling the narrative surrounding local food.

Similarly, if I had selected the topic pertaining to land use, I could have broadened my data collection to include publicly available documents by key developers, government reports, and citizens groups, as well as key informant interviews to round out the evolving discussion on how practice changed with regards to how land "ought" to be used for development. This would likely provide further insights into how *local food*, once it was 'infused with value' was used to further the agendas of a number of actors. This could lead to insights with regards to institutional pluralism, the employment of rhetoric as a means for institutional change, and/or a process model for framing and discursive opportunity structures.

Ultimately, further research could use the output of the topic model to identify theoretically fruitful areas to explore using a combination of what has already been done, with more traditional methods such as manual coding of a broader range of text, and key informant interviews, in order to dive further into the dynamics of institutionalization and institutional

change. These and other ideas may represent avenues for further research that can further the theoretical contribution of this dissertation.

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