

**Children and Youth's Relationships to Foodscapes: Re-imaging Saskatoon School  
Gardening and Food Security**

by

Shereen Kukha-Bryson  
B.Soc.Sci., University of Ottawa, 2011

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

in the Department of Anthropology

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University of Victoria

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**Supervisory Committee**

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**Supervisor**

Dr. Peter H. Stephenson (Department of Anthropology)  
**Departmental Member**

## Abstract

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Canadian urban food security discourses have been explored by academics, local community organizations, practitioners (e.g., health and education) with the intention of understanding the histories and impacts of food insecurity and co-creating long-lasting solutions. In various urban centres, community initiatives and educational institutions have been collaborating on school gardening programs as a way to address food insecurity. Central to these conversations and projects have been how to make more inclusive spaces for people to share their own complex and diverse perspectives of food security—based on their local foodscapes (matrix of relationships between people, place, and food) and cultural worldviews. Pervasive power structures and narratives, however, have privileged certain voices over others and there are limited inquiries into cultural perceptions of food security.

Children's and youth's own experiences and contributions to the discussion on foodscapes and food security have been marginalized, resulting in a knowledge gap of how young people situate and represent themselves. This research project works to amplify young people's narratives surrounding their multifaceted relationships to foodscapes within three school gardens located in Treaty Six Territory (Saskatoon, SK). The aim is to make space for the fulsome perspectives and solutions that children and youth offer, as social change agents, towards food security discourses.

Adopting a community-based approach, I collaborated with Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan (AITC-SK), the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD), children, youth, and their guardians. Co-participants involved in the project included eleven children (between the ages of five and twelve) and seven adults who were connected to the three school gardens. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks rooted in narrative analysis, thematic analysis, and visual participatory action research (VPAR) methodologies, this project practiced meaning-making, which was both collaborative and

interdisciplinary. The participating young people used digital cameras to take photographs during four garden workshops facilitated from July to September, 2013. In addition to the workshops, I conducted unstructured interviews with each adult co-participant that contributed to understandings on how children and youth interact with diverse foodways.

Children and youth co-participants' voices, shared in this study, add to current conversations on Saskatoon food security issues—namely the focus on cultural acceptability and accessibility to food. Their oral and visual narratives shed insight into how to re-imagine and expand dominant food security concepts—*cultural acceptability* and *access*—to foster inclusive foodscapes. Culturally acceptable foods for young co-participants, for example, was not limited to food products but to cultural relationships infusing foodscapes. Children and youth also blurred boundaries existing in Saskatoon community garden dichotomies of private and public, which had the potential to challenge hegemonic neoliberal views around access. School gardening and food ideologies—steeped in educators' and program coordinators' worldviews—were broadened by young people as they reflected upon their garden-based foodways. The inclusion of more children's and youth's perspectives on how food security is conceptualized, experienced, and addressed can be used to build greater resiliency in urban school gardening initiatives. By supporting genuine participation of young people in decision-making, alternative actions towards social change can be implemented.

## Table of Contents

<b>Supervisory Committee .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Acknowledgments .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Dedication .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>Chapter One: Introduction – It All Starts with a Seed .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Chapter Overview .....	1
Scope and Significance of Research .....	1
Research Problem .....	5
Purpose of Project .....	5
Context and Positioning Myself: Saskatoon School Gardens.....	7
Colonial Relationships with Food in Saskatchewan and Saskatoon.....	7
Food Insecurity in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan .....	9
Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan’s Greenscapades and Summer Garden Program.....	11
Description of Place: Three School Gardens .....	13
Theoretical Framework: Review of Literature .....	17
Food Security .....	18
Foodscapes .....	23
School Gardening.....	25
Child and Youth Engagement.....	28
Organization of Thesis .....	31
<b>Chapter Two: <i>How</i> Narratives are Shared through Methodological Processes .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Chapter Overview .....	33
Section One: Methodological Framework .....	34
Cultural Safety .....	34
Community-based Research .....	36
Narrative Inquiry.....	37
Visual Participatory Action Research .....	39
Section Two: Ethical Protocols in Working with Children and Youth .....	42
Shifting Role: Changing from Summer Garden Program Coordinator to Researcher .....	43
Cultural Protocols .....	44
Anonymity in Visual Research .....	45
Section Three: Research Procedures and Data Collection.....	46

Consultation and other Ethical Channels .....	46
Seeking Interested Co-participants: Recruitment .....	49
“Tell Your Story”: Interviews.....	51
Garden Workshops and Visual Explorations.....	52
Section Four: Making Sense of Narratives and Sharing Knowledges .....	70
Analysis and Theoretical Influences .....	70
Co-participants’ Oral Narratives and Analysis.....	74
Co-participants’ Visual Narratives and Analysis.....	75
Impact of Process rather than Product .....	77
Dissemination: Who will <i>Listen to</i> and <i>Witness</i> these Voices? .....	80
Chapter Summary .....	81
<b>Chapter Three: Children and Youth Re-imagining Food Security Concepts of</b>	
<b><i>Cultural Acceptability and Access</i>.....</b>	<b>82</b>
Chapter Overview .....	82
Section One: Introduction and Histories.....	83
Child Agency and Hegemonies: .....	84
Food Security and Hegemonies .....	86
Section Two: Cultural Acceptability – Food and Relationships.....	88
Nature and Culture Divide .....	89
Children’s and Youth’s Different Relationalities to Foodscapes .....	91
Sense of Place: Community of Storied Plants, Insects, and Spirituality .....	92
Playful Transfer of Knowledges .....	106
Access: Breaking Boundaries for Food Access .....	113
Social Access to Food: Dispelling the Little Red Hen Mentality .....	114
Physical Access to Food: Contrasting Understandings of <i>Community</i> Gardening. ....	122
Chapter Summary .....	130
<b>Chapter Four: Reflections, Recommendations, Limitations, and Future Research</b>	
<b>.....</b>	<b>131</b>
Chapter Overview .....	131
Section One: Project’s Conclusions.....	132
Research Significance: The <i>Roots</i> of the Matter.....	132
Concluding Remarks on Methodology .....	134
Concluding Remarks on Cultural Acceptability .....	136
Concluding Remarks on Access: .....	137
Section Two: Recommendations for Community Partners .....	139
2.1: Cultural Safety Recommendation.....	139
2.2: Participatory Evaluation Recommendation .....	140
2.3: Fostering Sense of Place Recommendation.....	140
2.4: Celebrating a Playful Transfer of Knowledge Recommendation.....	141
2.5: Social Access Recommendation.....	141
2.6: Physical Access Recommendation .....	142
Section Three: Research Limitations and Future Research Possibilities.....	142
Self-reflexivity and Food Sovereignty.....	143

Multilocality and Foodscapes .....	145
Time Constraints and Longitudinal Research.....	146
Section Four: Reflections and Prose .....	148
A Growing Season of Relationships .....	148
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>153</b>
Appendix A: Executive Summary and Recommendations for Community Partners.....	179
Appendix B: Certificate of Approval of Ethics .....	194
Appendix C: Letter Seeking Consultation with Schools .....	195
Appendix D: Recruitment Flyer.....	196
Appendix E: Informed Consent and Written Assent Form – Children and Youth.....	197
Appendix F: Informed Consent Form – Parents Giving Permission for Child and Youth Participation .....	200
Appendix G: Informed Consent Form – Parents and Caregivers .....	208
Appendix H: Photo Release Form – Children and Youth.....	216
Appendix I: Informed Consent Form – Other Community Members .....	218
Appendix J: Interview Topics and Questions for Adult Co-Participants .....	224
Appendix K: Garden Workshop Agenda.....	226
Appendix L: Focus Group Topics and Questions for Children and Youth Co-Participants .....	227
Appendix M: Mind Map of Thematic Analysis.....	230

## List of Figures

Figure 1, Confederation Park Garden, Digital Photograph, Rainbow Panda, 2013 .....	13
Figure 2, Mayfair Garden, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013 .....	14
Figure 3, Westmount Garden, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013.....	16
Figure 4, Blueberry, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013 .....	53
Figure 5, Blueberry Muffin, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013.....	53
Figure 6, Saskatoon Berry Tarts, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013 .....	56
Figure 7, Salad Prep, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013.....	57
Figure 8, Strawberry Photo Shoot, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013 .....	60
Figure 9, Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Edited on Window's Photo Editor, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013.....	61
Figure 10, Butterfly's Flight, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013 .....	63
Figure 11, Butterfly's Rest, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013.....	64
Figure 12, Dandelion Paintbrush, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013 .....	65
Figure 13, Scrapbook, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013.....	66
Figure 14, Scrapbook, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013.....	66
Figure 15, 1980's Sunflower, Digital Photograph, Edited on Window's Photo Editor, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013 .....	80
Figure 16, Inquiry of Grasshopper, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013 .....	94
Figure 17, Grasshopper on Hand, Digital Photograph Shereen, 2013 .....	94
Figure 18, Oak Leaf, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013 .....	96
Figure 19, Dianthus Flowers, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013 .....	98
Figure 20, Marigold Flowers, Digital Photograph, Aiden, 2013 .....	99
Figure 21, Saskatoon Berry Blur, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013 .....	102
Figure 22, Saskatoon Berry Harvest, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013 .....	102
Figure 23, Chokecherry Close-up, Digital Photograph, Jacob, 2013 .....	104
Figure 24, Soup, Digital Photograph, Jen, 2013 .....	104
Figure 25, Circle of Courage, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013.....	110
Figure 26, Dill, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013 .....	111
Figure 27, Pea Valley, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013 .....	111

Figure 28, Haskap Memory, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013 .....	119
Figure 29, Spaghetti Feast, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013 .....	120
Figure 30, Watering, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013 .....	122
Figure 31, String Boundary, Digital Photograph, Aiden, 2013 .....	127
Figure 32, Carrot Rows, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013.....	127
Figure 33, Bean Forest, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013.....	128
Figure 34, Spring Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Zachary, 2013 .....	148
Figure 35, Summer Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013 .....	150
Figure 36, Autumn Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013 .....	151

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research to all of the young gardeners, food producers, harvesters, and caregivers of plant communities. Your passions, empathy, creativity, knowledges, and dedication has provided me with hope for our current and future foodscapes. You have taught me what it means to courageously engage on this earth and for that, I will be forever grateful.

## Abbreviations

AITC-SK: Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan

CBR: Community-based Research

CFS: Community Food Security

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations Agency)

SGP: Summer Garden Program

SPSD: Saskatoon Public School Division

VPAR: Visual Participatory Action Research

## Glossary

Child Agency: Advocates, working towards a widespread recognition of child agency in research, have argued how “children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes” (James and Prout 1997, 8). Co-participants continuously demonstrated their agency as social actors in their foodscapes, actively shaping how food was produced and distributed.

Collaboration: Encompasses community-researcher partnerships that share decision-making and problem solving responsibilities while co-operating in the production of gardening initiatives that recognize all participants as valuable contributors and knowledge-holders (Osher and Osher 2002). Collaboration is built upon culturally appropriate, respectful, and inclusive relationships.

Community: A matrix of interconnected social relationships within Saskatoon’s urban landscapes, which are constantly being produced and re-produced.

Community Garden: Collective places for people to grow plants that have multiple manifestations, which “embody a range of interpretations...whether a garden is envisioned and created as a play area for children, or as a working area for the supplemental provision of food has important implications for how social relationships are formed.”(Kurtz 2001, 667). Community gardens in Saskatoon are gathering spaces with varying purposes that can evoke tensions.

Community Food Security: Explores food security from a social justice lens, aiming to connect *all* community members to healthy, safe, and culturally acceptable foods through sustainable food systems that promote self-reliance and equitable access (Slater 2007, 2).

Cultural Safety: Paraphrasing Jessica Ball (2007), cultural safety is not a fact or entity but an outcome that emerges through engagement in four major processes. The first process includes the provision of cross-cultural programs that challenge power imbalances deeply rooted in colonial legacies. The second process refers to the need for practitioners, policy makers, and institutions to be self-reflexive and situate their knowledge in the cultural contexts that shape them. Thirdly, culturally safe practices depend on open and collaborative relationships with communities. The fourth process is to ensure inclusivity through a constant vigilance of proper cultural protocol and etiquette.

Food security: “When all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO 2003). Food security depends on having reliable food supplies to distribute to people that are also personally and culturally relevant (Riches 2002).

Food sovereignty: When people in communities have decision-making power and control over how and what food is grown, distributed, marketed, and prepared (Hansen 2011). In the context of food sovereignty, land, water, soil, and seeds are collectively owned by community members who engage in sustainable food production. The food grown must therefore reflect diverse cultural identities. It should also be directly linked to particular ecological and cultural contexts rather than solely reliant on market relationships (Wiebe and Wipf 2011).

Foodscares: Is a term used to express the interconnected relationships between place, people, and food. It speaks of the agency of food to shape and transform different cultural contexts. Foodscares includes *all* interactions with foods within particular geographical spaces and social systems (Mikkelsen 2011). Saskatoon has a unique foodscape, where negotiations are continuously being made between large agro-businesses and local food initiatives like community gardens (Wiebe and Wipf 2011).

Foodways: Refers to the holistic intersections of food with cultural processes that shapes and is shaped by communities. As stated by Erika Derkas in the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Food Issues*, “Conceptually, foodways are a network of activities and systems that include physical, social, communicative, cultural, as well as economic, spiritual, and aesthetic values and, thus, deeply inform ideas of personhood and nationhood” (2015).

Funds of Knowledge: Defined as “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge” (Moll et al. 2005) that people embody. In the context of education and youth engagement, the concept guides educators to acknowledge, harness, and include multiple skills and knowledges young people carry from their lives *outside* of the classroom.

Grand Narrative: Culturally constructed narratives that have been universalized and made invisible by institutions of power (Andrews 2004; Foucault 1972). Their role in shaping discourses and making sense of various phenomena is reflected in how food security is engaged with by multiple stakeholders. In this paper, I refer to grand narratives in relation to neoliberalism and how neoliberal discourses receives power from the naturalizing forces of dominant narratives.

Household Food Security: Focuses on the household-level (families, individuals, and children) with an emphasis on economic determinants of food insecurity such as household income, employment status, assistance programs, and other financial considerations (Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner 2016).

Indigenous Food Sovereignty: Supports the need for Indigenous peoples to nurture “long-standing sacred responsibilities to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, lands and animals that provide us with our food” (D. Morrison 2011, 100). Indigenous food sovereignty fosters connections to cultural growing, harvesting, plant management, fishing, hunting, preparing, and distribution of foods within their ancestral territories. It challenges colonial policies and destructive neoliberal development projects that prevent

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples from practicing their traditional food practices (People's Food Sovereignty Forum 2009).

Knowledge: Embodied teachings, experiences, performance, and learnings that are constantly in the making and situated in cultural worldviews. Through the process of gardening, cooking, storytelling, and creating visual narratives, co-participants illustrated what and how they come to know.

Narratives: Signify stories that are event-centred, linking experiences of a particular time(s) and place(s) (Blizard and Schuster 2007; Mattingly and Lawlor 2000). Narratives highlight connections between “past and future – between people and place, among people whose opinions diverge” (Cruikshank 1998, 2).

Narrative Inquiry: Is a multifaceted methodological approach exploring the construction of stories—oral, life histories, poetry, performance, digital stories, etc.—and the experiences embedded in the narratives. Narrative inquiry embodies the assumption that, “people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience” (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, 2).

Neoliberalism: Refers to political economical ideologies founded on the belief that the market economy is essential to individual freedoms and well-being. Neoliberal solutions to social issues such as food insecurity is to promote economic growth, privatization, and *develop* foodscapes (Allen and Guthman 2006; Cotoi 2011). Neoliberal states commonly support a devolution where local communities are responsible for food security challenges rather than the government (Riches and Silvasti 2014).

Plant Mentorship: Is both the stewardship and education of different plant communities by children and youth. Co-participants who have been cultivating their school gardens for multiple years play significant roles in advocating for the well-being of plants, as well as teaching others about plant life. I was first introduced to this term while attending the 2014

National Children and Youth Garden Symposium upon which plant mentor was used to describe educators and botanical garden coordinators.

School Garden: Encompasses all places and activities of plant growing occurring on school property and/or growing spaces cared for by people from a school community. In this project, the three school gardens are outdoor places located on the school-yard and ultimately maintained through the work of young people, staff, and local residents.

Visual Participatory Action Research (VPAR): Methodological framework that combines participatory action practices with visual methodologies to conduct applied research that involve participants as co-researchers (A. Clark 2010, 2011; Luttrell and Chalfen 2010; Thomson 2008). Aline Gubrium, Krista Harper, and Marty Otanez (2015) introduce VPAR as: “a new “participatory turn” of collaborative and community-based research...visual and digital media technologies present us with new ways to work alongside communities to produce and communicate our research collaboratively” (2015, 15).

## **Chapter One: Introduction – It All Starts with a Seed**

### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter will contextualize the research by outlining the issue—urban food security and school gardening in Treaty Six Territory (Saskatoon, SK)—and multivocal contributions from different knowledge producing agents (academia, community organizations, government, and local community members). In addition, theoretical and conceptual frameworks shaping this study’s knowledge production are outlined. Overall, readers will learn more about the strengths of school gardening initiatives when children and youth voices are meaningfully included and represented through empowering experiences.

### **Scope and Significance of Research**

Saskatoon’s, and to a greater extent Saskatchewan’s, foodscapes (matrix of relationships between people, place, and food) have been undergoing constant transformations—colonial histories and processes of marginalization, urbanization, political climates favouring neoliberal practices, and economic booms and busts—which have affected food security and how communities relate to growing food (E. Burke 2004; Carter 1989; Grosso and Crewe 2004; Hansen 2011; Mackenzie 2004; McKay and Prokop 2007; Mcleod 2009; Novek and Nichols 2008; Silver et al. 2006; Woods 2003). In 2014, approximately 11.8 % of Saskatoon households experienced food insecurity with one in six children and youth impacted across Saskatchewan (Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner

2016). The high number of children and youth living with food insecurity has motivated people to take action.

Urban food security discourse in Saskatoon and Canada have been explored by academics, local community organizations and practitioners (e.g., health and education) with the intention of understanding the history and impact of food insecurity and co-creating long-lasting solutions. In various urban centres there are community initiatives and educational institutions that are collaborating on school gardening programs as a way to address food insecurity experienced by children, youth, and families (Carlsson 2010; Fairholm 1998; Hayes-Conroy 2010). Central to these conversations and projects are how to make more inclusive spaces for people to share their complex and diverse perspectives of food security—based on local foodscapes (matrix of relationships between people, place, and food) and cultural worldviews (Saul and Curtis 2013). Pervasive power structures and narratives, however, have privileged certain voices over others (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Bradley and Herrera 2016; Elliott et al., 2012; Hammond, Hesterman, and Knaus 2015; Slocum 2006).

Children's and youth's own experiences and contributions to discussion on foodscapes and food security have been marginalized, resulting in a knowledge gap of how young people situate and represent themselves (Engler-Stringer, Schaefer, and Ridalls 2016; Hammond, Hesterman, and Knaus 2015; James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad 2009). This research project works to both elicit and share young people's narratives surrounding their multifaceted relationships to foodscapes within three school gardens located in Treaty Six Territory. The aim is to make space for fulsome perspectives and solutions children and youth offer, as agents of social change, towards food security discourses.

I adopted a community-based research (CBR) approach and collaborated with Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan (AITC-SK), the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD), children, youth, and their guardians. *Co-participants* (term referring to the collaborative nature of this project where all people involved contributed knowledges) involved in the project included eleven children (between the ages of five and twelve) and seven adults who were connected to three school gardens: Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools. I drew upon theoretical frameworks rooted in narrative analysis (Bishop 2012; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Stanley and Temple 2008; Striano 2012), thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2008; Guest, MacQueen, and Namey 2012; Schutt 2012), and visual participatory action research (VPAR) (A. Clark 2010, 2011; Gubrium, Harper, and Otanez 2015; Luttrell and Chalfen 2010; Thomson 2008) methodologies of analysis. This project practiced meaning-making that was both collaborative and interdisciplinary. Through our engagement in VPAR, participating young people used digital cameras to make photographs during four garden workshops facilitated from July to September, 2013. In addition to workshops, I conducted unstructured interviews (spanning from thirty to ninety minutes) with each adult co-participant contributing to a more holistic understanding on how children and youth interact with diverse foodways (the holistic intersections of food with cultural processes that shapes and is shaped by communities).

The process of interacting with different child-centered methods (Thomson 2008) helped empower young people to elaborate on their knowledge and relationships at play in the gardens. With camera in hand, children and youth favoured taking photographs of experiences rather than static objects, with many crawling under bushes, following roaming

insects. Findings from co-participants' photographs and storytelling demonstrated social dimensions of school garden foodscapes. Producing, harvesting, distributing, preparing, and eating food were interconnected with social circles, as well as plant and animal communities. When expressed by these children and youth, diverse relationalities evoked unique concepts and solutions that challenged dominant approaches.

Children and youth co-participants' voices, shared in this study, add to current conversations on Saskatoon food security issues—namely narratives shed insight into how to re-imagine and expand dominant food security concepts (FAO 2003; Hammelman and Hayes-Conroy 2015)—*cultural acceptability* and *access*. Culturally acceptable food for young co-participants, for example, was not limited to food products but to cultural relationships infusing foodscapes. Co-participants valued aesthetics (colourful flowers), wild zones (food forests), and perennial storied plants (e.g., lilies, strawberries, etc.), contrasting with prominent *western* beliefs that high-yields and production are the goal of food gardens. To young people, the garden's intrinsic value was not based on its produce (result), but in the memories and stories continuously made in place. Plants at every stage were entities of wonder to photograph and discuss as summer progressed.

In regards to the taken-for-granted constructs around access and food security, participating children and youth blurred boundaries existing in Saskatoon community garden dichotomies of private and public, which had the potential to challenge hegemonic neoliberal views. In addition, the taken-for-granted assumptions on school gardening practices—steeped in educators' and program coordinators' worldviews—were broadened by young people as they reflected on garden-based foodways. The inclusion of children's

and youth's perspectives on how food security is conceptualized, experienced, and addressed can be used to build greater resiliency in urban school gardening initiatives.

### **Research Problem**

My research focused specifically on the following questions:

- 1) How are children's and youth's relationships with growing food fostered in Saskatoon? For example, who is involved in transferring knowledge on gardening with children and youth (e.g., family members, friends, schools and community programs)?
- 2) How are culturally diverse ways of understanding and growing food included in school-yard gardening initiatives? More specifically, how are Indigenous worldviews included in Saskatoon's children and youth garden projects?
- 3) Do children and youth engagement in creating garden programs and discussions on growing food, empower young people in making significant choices on how they and communities can grow accessible local foods?
- 4) How can children's and youth's voices be included in Saskatoon's community organizations' conversations about growing food and ensuring community well-being through food security?

### **Purpose of Project**

The objectives of this project were multifold. As mentioned above, the primary goal was to amplify children's and youth's experiences, narratives, and knowledges of growing

food using visual methods, e.g., photography, to co-create a project. By providing a platform elevating young people's holistic and complex relationships to their foodscapes, I aimed to provide young people with a (sometimes rare) opportunity to make decisions on how to implement social change with regard to growing food in their communities. The study focused on the social agency children and youth have in their communities and how knowledge gathered from participants can meaningfully contribute to addressing concerns, central to a number of community organizations in Saskatoon, over food security.

Secondly, an objective of this community-based project was to support school gardening and other food security initiatives in Saskatoon by producing recommendations. A report (see Appendix A) outlines recommendations for community organizations and collaborators to further explore. The sharing of narratives and perspectives, offered by co-participants in this thesis, with different agencies was intended to spread awareness of the significance of child and youth engagement in programming. AITC-SK staff members and teachers will also be able to use the research product to procure funding or apply for grants from sponsors. This will ensure sustainability and expansion of school gardening projects (e.g., Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools) in Saskatchewan.

Lastly, on a broader scale, this thesis project was conducted in order to contribute to discussions on how school gardening programs can be supported and sustained in inner-city neighbourhoods across Canada and to strengthen local food security movements. National concerns regarding an increasing number of people, who do not have access to culturally acceptable, safe, and healthy foods (Engler-Stringer 2011, 136-137), is growing (Food Banks Canada 2016; Tarasuk and Beaton 2015; Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner

2016). While literature on food security and sovereignty across Canada is expanding (Novek and Nichols 2008; Riches 2002; Wittman, Desmarais, and Wiebe 2011; Woods 2003), there exists a gap in knowledge on how children and youth engagement in local food growing practices can be incorporated into discourses (Grosso and Crewe 2004). This project can be used to fill gaps in the literature in areas such as food justice, children and youth education, environmental studies, community building, and cultural and visual anthropology.

### **Context and Positioning Myself: Saskatoon School Gardens**

Treaty Six Territory (Saskatoon, SK) and community partners involved in food security initiatives have tremendously shaped how I perceive foodscapes in urban centres. As a way to situate readers within this diverse and complex social world(s), it is necessary to explore histories, people, and places that are inseparable from this overarching narrative. I will outline: 1) colonial relationships with food in Saskatchewan and Saskatoon; 2) food insecurity in Saskatoon; 3) AITC-SK's Greenscapades program; and 4) a description of place—three school gardens.

#### Colonial Relationships with Food in Saskatchewan and Saskatoon

Indigenous peoples living on the prairies since time immemorial have a deep history to the landscape through harvesting, foraging, growing, plant management, hunting and fishing for food (Mackenzie 2004; McMillan and Yellowhorn 2004; Turner 2005). Different cultural communities—e.g., Dakota, Nakota, Lakota, Nēhiyawak (Cree), Dene,

Nahkawiniwak (Saulteaux), and Métis—dwelling in what is now called Saskatchewan, have diverse ontologies and epistemologies relating to foodways (McLeod 2009; Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre 2009). Expansive Indigenous knowledge on local biodiversity, plant use and technologies are integral to Indigenous food sovereignty movements in which communities are revitalizing cultural connection to foodscapes and challenging colonial policies limiting these relationships (Elliott et al. 2012; Lawrence 2009; D. Morrison 2011). Literature on First Nations' and Métis historical realities with regards to treaties, agriculture, assimilative policies and urbanization teaches how food may be experienced in Saskatoon (Carter 1990; Chartrand, Logan, and Daniels 2006; Daschuk 2013; Mosby 2013; Savage 2012; Tobias 1991; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2012). By exploring research that focuses on local Indigenous foodscapes, I am better able to contextualize how colonial processes have transformed Saskatoon food security and gardening projects with children and youth.

Multigenerational trauma from systematic racism and cultural genocide continues to be felt by families within current food systems (Bradley and Herrera 2016; Cidro et al. 2015; Côté 2016). In Saskatchewan urban centres, Indigenous communities are strengthening culturally rich and diverse ways of knowing—especially surrounding decolonization, healing, and reconciliation (Peters and Anderson 2013; Silver et al. 2006). There are, however, obstacles for inner-city residents such as poverty, food deserts, health challenges, and unemployment directly linked to processes of social and racial exclusion alienating particular cultural communities from dominant culture (E. Burke 2004; Meili 2012). Food insecurity is reproduced within this cycle of marginalization. Local community initiatives working to address these realities—community gardens, food banks,

health centres, drop-in children and youth programming, etc.—need to embed culturally relevant perspectives and practices as a way to contribute to decolonization processes.

### Food Insecurity in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

In 2009, while working with Saskatoon's Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op (CNYC) in their greenhouse, I was first introduced to local efforts in linking young people to growing food. Under the tutorage of an experienced community gardener and social justice advocate, we embarked with youth on gardening and aquaponic ventures (a practice that relies on the symbiotic relationship between plants, water, and aqua animals for food production). While listening to youth and staff narratives on lived realities, I learned about issues Saskatoon communities were experiencing with regards to foodscapes.

The learning journey continued when I was hired by AITC-SK in 2011 and worked for nearly five years as a school gardening coordinator. I was humbled and honoured to work with children, youth, school staff, food producers and other community organizations demonstrating a wealth of knowledge, innovation, creativity, and resiliency. The energy dedicated towards connecting communities with rich stories and experiences of food altered my life's path. I listened to voices with lived experiences of food insecurity in Saskatoon and social justice implications (e.g., poverty, race, etc.) became clearer.

Food insecurity, as manifested in the city of Saskatoon, is situated more densely in particular geographic areas (e.g., inner-city neighbourhoods) where larger numbers of families are categorized as lower income (Grosso and Crewe 2004; V. Morrison 2011; Woods 2003). Geographical barriers in inner-city areas that contribute to food insecurity

are the lack of supermarkets near households. *Food desert* is a metaphor used frequently in academia when discussing places that are void of grocery stores (Raja, Ma, and Yadav 2008; Walker et al. 2010).

Food deserts are endemic in prairie, inner-city neighbourhoods. Families living in these area have limited food options such as convenience stores and other places with less variety and higher costs (Engler-Stringer and Harder 2011; Leete, Bania, and Sparks-Ibanga 2011; Novek and Nichols 2008, 2010). For example, Ryan Meili, a Saskatoon physician and politician, shares the life story of Don. Don, who is living with diabetes, is a father of three teenage sons. While he is knowledgeable on which foods should be eaten as a diabetic, he finds healthy food unattainable when trying to support his sons while on a limited budget. Meili mentions how, in Don's neighbourhood,

There used to be two full grocery stores; both have now closed...There are convenience stores and a Giant Tiger discount store that carry some groceries, but these are dominated by pre-packaged foods and junk food like pop and chips. Fresh produce is limited and expensive, as are whole grain foods and fresh meat. Feeding three grown teenage boys food they'll eat while following a strict diabetic diet is simply beyond Don's means. (Meili 2012, 62-63)

Challenges faced by people like Don have led community members to collectively develop local, innovative solutions (Engler-Stringer 2011; Enger-Stringer and Harder 2011; Grosso and Crewe 2004; Kouri Research 2013; Woods 2003). Multiple urban gardening projects are being fostered by community members, community schools, and organizations who wish to engage and empower children and youth. Food security issues have been addressed through community initiatives supported by local families, educators and organizations such as, Child Hunger and Education Program (CHEP), CNYC and

Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre, all of whom have created community and/or school garden programs in Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods. The importance of actively including children and youth in local initiatives that support growing, distributing, and eating food in urban settings has been recognized by these agencies. One organization in particular, AITC-SK, has been working extensively with elementary and high schools across Saskatchewan and supporting the construction of indoor and outdoor school gardens.

#### Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan's Greenscapades and Summer Garden Program

AITC-SK is a charity-based organization whose vision and mandate is to connect children and youth across the province with agricultural education through hands-on programs promoting awareness on food production. AITC-SK was founded in 1997 and continues to provide elementary and high schools with presentations, materials, and programs that can be linked to the Saskatchewan curriculum ([www.aitc.sk.ca](http://www.aitc.sk.ca)). Co-workers place an emphasis on fostering a balanced approach to agriculture where an array of perspectives and practices are included such as smaller-scale food production located on school sites. AITC-SK's Greenscapades and Summer Garden Program (SGP), for example, are outdoor gardening initiatives, which inspired the emergence of this thesis project.

When I became involved with AITC-SK and their Greenscapades Program in 2011, I was hired as a coordinator for SGP. I was fortunate to continue working with a number of school communities on garden and agriculture-based education until August, 2016. Initially, the school gardening team and myself collaborated with five community schools

located in core Saskatoon neighbourhoods to build and maintain school-yard learning gardens. Since then, students, teachers, parents, and AITC-SK staff have been working together throughout the years to design and implement gardens.

Children and youth who dropped in to engage in the gardens and SGP were mostly between the ages of five and twelve. Most attended the school where the school gardens were located and had been involved in spring garden workbees—building raised garden beds, moving wheelbarrows of soil and mulch, and transplanting seedlings and fruit trees. Children and youth, who participated in caring for their garden over the summer months, shaped how the programming was developed. Their collective and individual narratives on diverse connections to cultural landscapes and life experiences taught me how important it is to include children's and youth's worldviews on food.

For example, during SGP's first year, a grade two class at Westmount Community School drew a map on how their dream school garden would look. Elaborate illustrations were drawn of corn mazes twisting around raised beds containing flowers, vegetables and fruit they had a personal connection to, such as star fruit, apples, sunflowers, and pumpkins. Feedback and suggestions on what they wished to learn and do in the garden helped create an open dialogue within the program. Each school garden embodied distinct histories and relationships that influenced how community members transformed a school-yard into a foodscape.

### Description of Place: Three School Gardens

Humans and other-than-human-beings who have dwelled in these garden places, have infused the landscape with meaning, stories and memories creating a profound sense of place. This has become apparent when conducting research with children and youth who have cared for their garden for three years. Narratives are closely tied to particular trees, shrubs, wasps' nests, holes in the grass or fossils embedded in stone steps. In order to contextualize practices and social matrices formed in these places, further elaboration is needed on the school gardens involved in this project.

#### 1) Confederation Park Community School:



**Figure 1, Confederation Park Garden, Digital Photograph, Rainbow Panda, 2013**

Confederation Park Community School is nestled in a residential area, located near the outskirts of the western portion of the city. The building is surrounded by a public park decorated with pathways, hills and a grassy field used for sporting events. Prior to 2011,

the green space adjacent to the school consisted solely of grass until the Confederation Park's Community Coordinator collaborated with the school body, AITC-SK, and other community partners to create a thriving school garden (see Figure 1). Young people worked to infuse the land with new meaning as they planted berry shrubs/trees in the food forest and drilled screws into wooden, raised beds. Currently, the garden encompasses a radiating sun design of raised beds, an edible perennial food forest, an outdoor classroom space, and a growing community garden.

The community garden, for example, was formed because of great interest and involvement of local families (a number of people who had recently immigrated to Canada) and individuals in growing food. Confederation Park's Community Coordinator worked with community members to dig garden plots. Suddenly, the place was teeming with garden-related activities and culturally diverse worldviews on how to grow food.

2) Mayfair Community School:



**Figure 2, Mayfair Garden, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**

Mayfair is one of Saskatoon's oldest neighbourhoods, formally becoming part of the city in 1911. Garden-making processes are not novel to Mayfair Community School. Historical narratives shared by one teacher who grew up in the neighbourhood and whose father attended Mayfair, reveals how the school "has come full circle" (Terri, pers. comm., June, 2013) in growing food. When an old photo resurfaced, for example, of this educator's father as a child, the image revealed a surprising vista of the school-yard. Instead of a grassy lawn in the background, the front of the towering brick school exhibited a hedge fence and a vegetable garden maintained by a caretaker and his family who lived on school property. As expressed in our interview, Terri shared her plans for the future:

Our school hits their 100-year-anniversary in 2018 and I still have visions of people who came here in the 50's, walking up here to this building... and seeing this incredible garden in front of their school. And I somehow want to be a part of making that summer's garden the most successful garden we have ever seen to give it to those people as a gift. (pers. comm., June, 2013)

Mayfair Community School's foodscape is in constant flux, depending on diverse understandings of specific locations co-existing in the vicinity. Perceived boundaries enclosing the garden continued to expand as I began engaging children and youth in the neighbourhood. I learned that the garden was not solely comprised of raised beds and a circle garden plot (see Figure 2), but also of fruit tree saplings planted along the edge, herbs growing vertically in a wooden pallet, and native plants growing around the school sign. Children and youth were also aware of saskatoon berry bushes, planted by the city, along the western peripheral fence of their school-yard. These berries became a regular source of

food during the summer. Extensive knowledge challenged rigid beliefs on what defines a school garden.

3) Westmount Community School:



**Figure 3, Westmount Garden, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013**

Westmount Community School, located in a neighbourhood, originally built in the 1880's, is situated in an inner-city core of Saskatoon where towering elm trees line streets and character homes reveal different historical waves of settlement. The school, founded in 1913, is an imposing collegiate-gothic brick building with turrets and towers (Westmount Local Area Plan Committee 2011). Similar to Confederation Park, Westmount Community School has expansive green spaces used for community gardening, events such as "Movie in the Park", skating, and cooling off in a paddling pool. A strong sense of place and community, as well as the lack of nearby grocery stores, has led to the transformation of the school-yard into a food garden and outdoor classroom.

Educators, who wanted more hands-on, outdoor learning experiences around gardening and nutrition for children and youth, embraced the school garden initiative. In 2011, the Senior Functional Academics program built raised garden beds while younger grades were responsible for filling the beds with topsoil and transplanting seedlings. The garden continues to expand with more raised beds, a circular native plant garden, a row of fruit shrubs, and a stone “circle of courage” outdoor classroom.

As a way to ensure the garden is locally sustainable, teachers, parents, and grandparents (e.g., attending EAL courses), have taken initiative in coordinating garden care during summer holidays. A core group of children, however, have proven to be an annual backbone of garden care during July and August. Their presence in the garden and dedication to plants extends past programming hours of the SGP. These families are integral to the bounty later shared with the rest of the school through a nutrition program.

### **Theoretical Framework: Review of Literature**

Originally, I had visions of conducting a community-based anthropological research endeavor that would bring wholly new and unique knowledges to the discipline. I hoped to offer methodologies and findings that would be transformative in strengthening dialogue amongst young people and urban food security initiatives. Instead, I was immediately humbled, by the immense gathering of researchers, educators, and grassroots organizations that had already placed their energies into growing knowledge and exploring infinite ways younger people could relate to food. Engaging with the abundance of related literature provided my own research with historical, cultural, and ethical roots. I received

immense guidance from the interwoven foliage of interdisciplinary considerations, which shaped my own inquiries. The theoretical frameworks, which nourished my research are described in four thematic sections: 1) food security; 2) foodscapes; 3) school gardening; and 4) child and youth engagement.

### Food Security

Food security initiatives in Canada are widely varied in scope and mission but embody similar tensions arising from shared experience of navigating neoliberal systems promoting privatization, individualism, and the primacy of mainstream markets to address social problems (Allen and Guthman 2006; Aptekar 2015; Hayes-Conroy 2010; Jarosz 2014; Pudup 2008; Riches 2002). How these grand movements of political and economic discourse are negotiated by food programs is highly contextual, based on cultural epistemologies and ontologies of people animating these foodscapes (Sonnino, Marsden, and Moragues-Faus 2016). Children and youth with whom I worked, illustrated relationships existing within and *beyond* boundaries of neoliberal paradigms regarding food production and distribution. While immersion of communities within dominant structures shapes how foodscapes are established, there remains agency and creativity resulting in initiatives working towards alternative realities (Hayward 2012). Two major types of food security frameworks—household food security and community food security—display different approaches to insecurity dilemmas.

- 1) Food insecurity's strong presence in households:

In Canada, studies have been conducted measuring the strong presence of food insecurity in provinces and territories (Health Canada 2012b; Wittman, Desmarais, and Wiebe 2011). In 2014, a research project conducted by the PROOF initiative gathered information on food security and discovered that over four million people and approximately 12% of all households in Canada were food insecure (Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner 2016). Children and youth under the age of eighteen were especially vulnerable to food insecurity. In 2014, about 17.2% of all children (one in six children) were impacted by food insecurity. The disturbingly high percentage of young people who are intimately acquainted with hunger and food uncertainty has been commonly linked to their *dependency* on caregivers to provide food (Haering and Syed 2009; James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad 2009). Contributing to food insecurity in households are a wide range of factors such as poverty, race, barriers towards accessing formal education, unemployment or underemployment, lack of adequate housing, health challenges and social/cultural exclusion (Grosso 2003; Meili 2012; V. Morrison 2011; Slocum and Saldanha 2013; Woods 2003).

There have been efforts by Health Canada to measure whether a household is food insecure through surveys—“Household Food Security Survey Module”. This 18 question survey aims to discern if, “at times during the previous year, these households were uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money for food” (Health Canada 2012a). Food security statistics have been generated by this survey to describe local and national foodscapes. While a useful tool, these household surveys may be limited in including all

experiences and in whether the complexities of communities' lived realities are being properly encapsulated.

2) Community food security:

Community Food Security (CFS) grew into prominence during the 1990's, building upon a changing global climate on food justice and sovereignty (Carlsson 2010; Hamm and Bellows 2003). La Via Campesina (<https://viacampesina.org>) was emerging as a powerful advocate for local communities regaining autonomy over food systems. CFS adopted from these movements, and consequently incorporated elements of self-sufficiency, sustainability, social justice, and community wellness into food security rhetoric (Gottlieb and Fisher 1996). CFS is thus interpreted as a situation, "when all community residents obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for all" (Slater 2007, 2). Liesel Carlsson (2010), researching food production and school gardening in Nova Scotia, argued that CFS objectives are met in gardening programs when young people and others from the community are invited to participate in food systems that are frequently alienating to those who experience systemic marginalization in urban centres (47). Food injustices in cities have been perpetuated partly by the presence of neoliberal narratives reproduced within different food initiatives.

3) Grand narratives' role in food security and neoliberal discourses:

Food security and neoliberal discourses explored in this thesis, and the language or actions that permeates them, are heavily influenced by circulating grand narratives. Discourses are described by Linda Wood and Rolf Kroger as "talk" that discursively

construct social worlds and influence action (2000). Michel Foucault elaborates on the power implications of discourses:

[i]n every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality... speech is no mere verbalisation of conflict and systems of domination, but that it is the very object of man's conflicts. (1972, 216)

A predominant force responsible for shaping and, to some extent, controlling discourses are grand narratives. For the purpose of my research, grand narratives are understood to be narratives that have been naturalized and elevated by institutions (e.g., religion, government, education) to have “universal applicability” (Andrews 2004, 11). These narratives have been used to connect histories, individuals, and experiences together, aiming to make sense of seemingly isolated entities through an overarching framework (Bamberg and Andrews 2004; Stephenson 2005; Tsing 2005). For example, a grand narrative embedded in different neoliberal discourses is one of classical liberalism, which is centred on individualism, resisting state-intervention in economies, personal freedoms, and market competition (Peters 2001). In the context of food security, the grand narratives in neoliberal discourses have been formative in how current food initiatives have been imagined in urban spaces.

#### 4) Neoliberalism, urban food security, and food banks:

To address the lack of access to food, organizations have established centrally located food banks. Food banks have been undergoing public scrutiny over whether a charitable food bank model has been reducing food insecurity (Meili 2012; Riches 2002;

Saul and Curtis 2013). Introduced to Canadian cities in the 1980's, food banks were originally developed as an emergency and temporary solution to a food crises. As food insecurity increased, food banks became firmly engrained in urban centres. The donation of food to food bank centres is predominately provided by local communities allowing other sectors (e.g., governmental) to be less accountable in ensuring all families are food secure (Riches 2002; Tarasuk et al. 2014).

Neoliberalism has generally led to a chronic downloading of responsibility for food security from the state to local community and non-profit organizations (Allen and Guthman 2006; Johnston and Baker 2005; Riches and Silvasti 2014). It has been smaller institutions in urban centres who have developed food councils and initiatives. Jessica Hayes-Conroy (2010) point to the inevitable gaps formed in food security domains when neoliberal states pass over responsibility (e.g., financial) of social and community programming to local services.

To situate dominant food security discourses in Saskatoon, so they do not become "ideological doctrines of disembodied scientific objectivity" (Haraway 1998, 576), it is important to acknowledge the role of corporations—major authors in circulating discourses—in funding local community food initiatives. In Saskatchewan, the private sector has contributed towards numerous community-based programs, events, and organizations. The implications of this has been commented on by Patricia Allen and Julie Guthman (2006) who observes how these relationships reinforce neoliberal food systems that are articulated in different spaces (e.g., schools, community gardens, food community centres, etc.). Community members involved in alternative food movements and food

sovereignty endeavors caution how complete reliance on these funding sources because of the potential for different voices to be silenced or undermined (Hayes-Conroy 2010).

For instance, the reliance on food as charity has often resulted in people who visit the food bank to experience further stigmatization and social marginalization (Engler-Stringer 2006; Theriault and Yadlowski 2000). A growing resistance, from food justice advocates, against the traditional food bank model has led to the growth of community food centres, emphasizing empowerment, learning and knowledge-sharing such as school garden foodscapes (Engler-Stringer 2006; Tarasuk 2001).

### Foodscapes

The concept of foodscapes emerged with Arjun Appadurai's theoretical framework on global flows and the significance of scapes—e.g., ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, ideoscapes—which describe how different “perspectival constructs” overlap and establish unique contexts among agents such as families, neighbourhoods, schools, cities, nations and global communities (Appadurai 1990, 296). The intersections of different scapes shaping one another are processes of interest to a number of researchers. For example, Rick Dolphijn (2004) explored how the fluid and permeating presence of food in different landscapes—or foodscapes—was articulated in identity-making practices, feminism, state-form, health, and other connected discourses. Critically examining foodscapes have connected researchers to multivocality existing within places of food and eating.

- 1) Children and youth foodscapes:

A special focus has been placed on children's and youth's diverse understandings of their foodscapes, as well as dynamic roles in transforming how they connect with food and place. Research projects collaborating with young people have inquired into how people interact with their school's food cultures, namely how: food dichotomies are engrained in school and home contexts (Brembeck et al. 2013; Osowski, Göranson, and Fjellström 2012); the gendering of food meanings (Ludvigsen and Scott 2009); cultural perceptions on *healthy* food for students (Bradley and Herrera 2016; Karrebæk 2012); and overarching power structures that try to create healthy, docile children and youth bodies (Brembeck and Johansson 2010; Roos 2002). Underlying these studies is the recognition that children and youth frequently negotiate local food ontologies and how their foodscapes are experienced spatially, socially, and conceptually.

Culturally constructed food dichotomies persist in children and youth foodscapes, shaping how food is conceptualized. Dominant binaries—e.g., adult and children food behaviours and healthy and unhealthy foods—are reflections of hegemonic discourse being produced and reproduced in particular contexts (Brembeck et al. 2013; Brembeck and Johansson 2010; Karrebæk 2012). Adults, elevated to the knowledge keepers of healthy food, carry a responsibility to teach children who would otherwise, supposedly, only desire unhealthy foods. These rigid dichotomies have divided those foods frequently provided to young people with the assumption young people will prefer foodstuffs that are *kid-friendly* versus more health conscious nutrition (Ludvigsen and Scott 2009).

In her chapter titled, "Children's 'Becoming' in Frontiering Foodscapes" (2009), Helene Brembeck explores food dichotomies further by researching foodscapes and recently immigrated families. She learned how children pushed past these rigid parameters

and acted like antennas shaping what foodstuffs were eaten at home based on new food experiences. Children and youth foodscapes are constantly in flux as young people engage in their environment and play significant roles in affecting how food is given meaning. Foodscapes examined in this research pertain mostly to urban gardens and relationships in place.

### School Gardening

With a growing disconnect between people and food systems resulting in greater food insecurity and health challenges, urban community organizations in Saskatchewan have turned to gardening (Grosso and Crewe 2004; Kouri 2013). Ensuring that garden space, equipment, and knowledge are easily accessible to local families, urban gardens have manifested in the form of community gardens, food bank gardens, rooftop gardens, local greenhouses, medicine wheel gardens and school gardens. Researchers who advocate for urban gardens, have linked their presence in communities as a catalyst for social change (Johnston and Baker 2004). For example, Yolanda Hansen highlights how community gardens in Saskatchewan resulted in “active participation” (2011, 156) amongst involved groups, their gardens as a site of intersectionality between politics, economic systems, health, and cultural ways of knowing.

#### 1) Gardens as neoliberal or counter neoliberal projects:

In contrast to the majority of contemporary literature, Mary Beth Pudup challenges romanticism associated with gardens in her article, “It takes a Garden: Cultivating Citizen-

Subjects in Organized Garden Projects” (2008). She argues how organized garden projects have historically and contemporarily been used as a form of restructuring for individuals and spaces in a way that resonates with neoliberal ideologies. She draws connection within the United States where:

School gardens and city garden plots at the turn of the twentieth century, for example, typically were organized by upper and middle class reformers to achieve the moral, cultural and esthetic uplift of poor and working class people, many of them foreign born immigrants and their children, who were becoming a ubiquitous presence in urban areas and, in the eyes of reformers, a threat to social order and national identity. (Pudup 2008, 1230)

Garden projects have been perceived as a solution to social issues such as unemployment, *at-risk* children and youth, rehabilitation for people in the criminal justice system and food insecurity. Pudup commented on how the state’s accountability to people, who are experiencing processes of marginalization, lessens when these projects instead depend on individuals to self-evolve (2008). Asymmetrical power relations embedded in these initiatives have been addressed using more community-based and participatory methods when building gardens.

Gardening projects in cities have been developed by communities with the hope of creating a sense of belonging and including a multiplicity of cultural foodways. For example, the Stop Community Food Centre in Toronto has a strong narrative surrounding *callaloo*, a leafy green, in which a community gardener by the name of Herman witnessed other gardeners pulling plants they understood to be weeds. Herman explained how what is disdainfully called pigweed (*Amaranthus retroflexus*) by some gardeners is actually an important nutritious food in places like Jamaica, India, and Trinidad (Saul and Curtis

2013). His eagerness to share *callaloo* altered how people gardening in the same space understood weeds and how “one person’s weed, it seems, is another delicacy. In fact, as I’m beginning to realize, food is never just food” (Saul and Curtis 2013, 61). This resonated deeply with a number of co-participants when reflecting on food in the garden.

## 2) Holism of school gardening:

Garden-based education among children and youth has been experiencing a resurgence in a number of settings where outdoor classrooms and school gardens have become fixtures within the fabric of learning communities. School gardens have been linked to community well-being and the enhancement of social capital because of its ability to create a social space for people to gather and collectively work on food growing projects (Baker 2004; Biberstein and Daalderop 2008; Hoffman, Knight, and Wallach 2007; Kingsley and Townsend 2006; Lekies et al. 2007). School gardens are said to improve: the health of children and youth (Ahmed et al. 2011; Armstrong 2000); reconnect them with the natural world (Blair 2009; Evergreen 2000; Liddicoat et al. 2007); provide hands-on learning experiences for students (Edible Schoolyard 2017; Grosso and Crewe 2004); strengthen ties between school and community agencies (Langhout, Rappaport, and Simmons 2002); as well as support food security and sovereignty movements (Bowker and Tearle 2007; Hansen 2011). In addition, school gardens are often applauded as projects that actively empower children and youth to participate in initiatives that determine how food is grown in their communities (Carlsson 2010; Greggie 2003; Grosso and Crewe 2003; Lekies et al. 2007).

Children and youth gardening projects enhance self-esteem and identity-making as younger generations work together to grow foodstuffs for their families and schools

(Greggie 2003; Hoffman, Knight, and Wallach 2007; Jennings 2006; Wilson et al. 2007). A growing sense of collective pride in their gardens and cultural knowledges surrounding plant use and management, are strengthened through an intergenerational transfer of understanding with regard to connection to landscapes (Lawrence 2009). Children and youth engagement is thus encouraged in various gardening programs that support meaningful participation in food production practices.

### Child and Youth Engagement

Children and youth engagement is understood as the active involvement in community initiatives and events offered in places such as schools, health or social organizations, cultural centres, and community gardens. Engagement also reflects collaboration in the creation of initiatives where children and youth exercise decision-making power in building local programs that address challenges existing throughout their communities (Alderson 2001; Hart 1992; Miller 2009). As a way to ensure this research process was meaningful to communities involved, it was essential that an emphasis be placed on child and youth engagement within these three school gardens. Children's and youth's choices made in a garden context (e.g., how their garden is designed, what plants are grown, how the food is shared), different ways of knowing (e.g., which plants are culturally perceived to be a food, medicine, weeds, and art), as well as the skills learned (e.g., how to plant a cherry tree, harvest lettuce, make garden vegetable soup) are important for community organizations to consider when growing food with children and youth.

Without meaningful engagement with children and youth in a garden context, their social agency may not be honoured, further marginalizing young people in their communities.

1) Children and youth as social agents:

Interdisciplinary theoretical approaches to researching children and youth have been shifting away from a perception that young people can be accurately represented by adult voices and instead recognize that children and youth are social and cultural actors who have their own knowledges and experiences (Barker and Weller 2003; Chesworth 2016; Christensen 2004; Christensen and James 2000; Christensen and Prout 2002; Donovan 2016; Esser et al. 2016; Hart 1992; Lekies et al. 2007; Malone 2013; L. Mitchell 2006; Orellana 2008). Children's and youth's agency in their foodscapes as cultural knowledge holders and sense-makers is integral as they embody vast awareness of food practices circulating and share new insights into how the topic of food security can be reframed. This relates to a prominent theory in child education around *funds of knowledge* (Moll 2015), which demands educators recognize that young people maintain a web of knowledges connected to activities occurring in all facets of their life (e.g., home, extra-curricular activities, etc.). Taken-for-granted assumptions that children are incompetent informants who are adults-in-training have been challenged by researchers who acknowledge children's agency in constructing meaning, engaging with research (James and Prout 1997; Luttrell 2010; Thomson 2008).

The importance of incorporating reflexivity, open dialogue, and being aware of complex power relations existing between children and adult community members, are necessary when conducting research with young participants (Christensen 2004; Christensen and Prout 2002, 478, 489; L. Mitchell 2006). Researchers working in fields

such as childhood studies, anthropology, and sociology have worked to deconstruct homogeneous notions of children and adults, conscious of the intersectionalities influencing these categories such as gender, age, cultural heritage, and socio-economic status (Barker and Weller 2003, 209-213; James and Prout 2015).

2) The many manifestations of genuine child and youth participation:

Genuine participation of children and youth in community initiatives is complicated by embedded power relationships and diverse intersectionalities interacting in different contexts. A prominent theoretical model to gauge young people's participation is "the ladder of participation" (Hart 1992, 8). Created for UNICEF, this model advocates for children and youth to play active roles in their community so they can become responsible, democratic citizens. Child and youth participation is significant as a way to support the democracy project promoted by UNICEF's mandate (1992, 3-7).

While criticized as essentialist and linear, this report has impacted conversations surrounding child and youth engagement (Alderson 2001, 145-146; Lekies et al. 2007). Starting from the bottom rung of the ladder, child participation is gauged as: 1) manipulation; 2) decoration; 3) tokenism; 4) assigned but informed; 5) consulted and informed; 6) adult-initiated, shared decisions with children; 7) child-initiated and directed; and 8) child-initiated, sharing decisions with adults (Hart 1992:, 9-14). An example of manipulation in garden programs would be if adult garden coordinators use children's voices, art, and stories to promote the program without consulting with children involved. If school garden projects aspire to be child-centered and supportive of young people's engagement, they need to be sensitive to power relations since empowerment occurs when younger people's voices are respected by other community stakeholders.

In the context of my research, child and youth empowerment refers to processes in which young people are able to share diverse life experiences and narratives in a context that provides inclusive space for social action (Hayward 2013). Jennings et al. (2006) elaborates on *critical youth empowerment*, the concept describing processes occurring in individuals, families, organizations and communities where skills are enhanced and young people mutually provide support to “effect change, improve their collective well-being, and strengthen intra- and inter-organizational networks and linkages to improve or maintain the quality of community life” (2006, 33-34).

### **Organization of Thesis**

The following chapters explore in greater detail how children’s and youth’s relationships to their school garden foodscapes contribute towards food security discourses. Embedded throughout this thesis paper are italicized narrative and conversation excerpts stemming from garden workshop field notes and audio recordings. The stories and dialogues work to describe the experiential nature of fieldwork in a school garden.

Chapter Two illustrates how child and youth engagement and empowerment evoke narratives on foodscapes. Particular attention will be directed towards cultural safety, CBR, VPAR methodologies (photo-making and interpreting, scrapbooking, and painting), and analysis processes (narrative and thematic analysis), which elicit diverse oral and visual narratives. By researching alongside co-participants, utilizing child-centered research methods, embedded power imbalances between adult researcher and child participant are disrupted to make space for a more collaborative approach.

Chapter Three discusses research findings and significance in greater detail. This chapter aims to argue the relevance of this research in contributing to communities' collective effort to develop inclusive food initiatives. Valuable teachings offered through co-participants' narratives will be presented in the context of food security and school garden foodscapes in Saskatoon. In particular, concepts of cultural acceptability and food access are explored using different lenses revealing cultural foodways. This section will amplify how co-participants' narratives demonstrate the potential to challenge or enrich current practices and conversations formulated by other institutions.

Lastly, Chapter Four concludes with research recommendations and practical implications of this research for people engaged in fields including, but not limited to, food education, food justice (including security and sovereignty) and anthropological inquiry into foodways. This chapter will also outline research limitations and future research opportunities in learning how younger generations can further participate in taking action towards food security.

## **Chapter Two: *How* Narratives are Shared through Methodological Processes**

### **Chapter Overview**

The methodological processes in community collaboration, exploring co-participants' knowledge, analysis, and dissemination will be explained in greater detail within this chapter. Section one commences with an overview of the methodological foundations grounding this study. To contextualize why these frameworks were selected, I write in section two about the ethical complexities in conducting research with young people, which continue to resurface throughout this paper.

Section three outlines the consultation and recruitment stages of the fieldwork, followed by descriptions of qualitative methods used such as interviews, participatory garden workshops, and focus groups. A key thread connecting the various methodologies was the emphasis on facilitating space for co-participants to feel empowered to express their relationships to foodscapes.

In section four, I describe how the analysis of oral and visual narratives revolved around analytical practices that aimed to encourage co-participants' interpretations of their own voices. In addition, this section includes how I drew on thematic and narrative analysis, blending two distinct fields. The chapter ends with information on dissemination and how research findings will be distributed among community partners to contribute towards school gardening efforts in Saskatoon.

## **Section One: Methodological Framework**

Anthropology has embraced its interdisciplinary nature with permeable and fluid boundaries that encourage a flow of information from multiple academic paradigms (Knauff 2006). Methodologies practiced in my CBR were selected in accordance to theoretical strands rooted in different epistemic domains. The seed of my research germinated and grew from four core frameworks that I (and other community collaborators) had agreed served the purpose of this inquiry. I wanted my “topics, analytic frameworks, and epistemological perspectives... cross-mapped in creative new ways” (Knauff 2006, 410) by picking and choosing different elements from: 1) cultural safety; 2) CBR; 3) Narrative Inquiry; and 4) VPAR. This section describes how those predominate theoretical foundations offered tools and ideas on how to shape my research process.

### Cultural Safety

Cultural safety protocols helped me make space for community engagement by practicing self-reflexivity and cultural inclusion. Historically, Maori nurses in New Zealand-Aotearoa spearheaded cultural safety in the 1980’s. Irihapeti Ramsden, a midwife, nurse, educator and prominent community member, desired to challenge power imbalances evident amongst non-Indigenous nurses and Maori service recipients. Maori communities, experiencing poor standards of health, insisted on better health service delivery and access (Brascoupé and Waters 2009; Durey 2010; Hughes and Gray 2003). Resistance existed from nurses taught in a context that normalized colonial attitudes espousing that “people should be nursed “regardless” of colour or creed” (Papps and

Ramsden 1996, 493). The cultural safety approach has now moved beyond health literature into the social realm. Culturally safe practices encourage practitioners and policy makers to recognize and honor cultural differences. The concept of cultural safety extends beyond cultural sensitivity and competency by actively exploring and challenging complex power relations.

To elaborate, research that is culturally safe works towards offering experiences that facilitate the development of researcher self-knowledge and reflexivity. All people are culture-bearers. Researchers need to reflect on the assumptions and biases their cultural context promotes. This hopefully resists culturally unsafe mentalities and structures produced in one's discipline (Browne et al. 2009; Dick et al. 2009; Fulcher 2002).

Literature on cultural safety methods aided me specifically in learning how to engage in community-based collaborations where participating children, youth and other community partners felt safe to represent their narratives. Building collaborative relationships amongst researchers and communities helped facilitate dissemination processes that fostered trust and self-determination (Blackstock 2008; Brascoupé and Waters 2009; MacArthur, Rawana, and Brownlee 2011; Narayan 2002). More specifically, active input from co-participants grounded work in the cultural contexts of community collaborators necessary when working on CBR (Hanrahan 2009; McKay and Prokop 2007).

### Community-based Research

In general, my thesis was founded on qualitative CBR, focusing on ongoing collaboration throughout the project. Luke Lassiter outlines how collaboration encompasses community-researcher partnerships that share in decision-making responsibilities and involve participants in the entire research process (2008). I was inspired by this theoretical paradigm, which acknowledged how all participants are valuable contributors and knowledge-holders (Osher and Osher 2002) and argues for a shift in ethnography that reconfigures researcher-participant relationships to be more collaborative (Holmes and Marcus 2008; Rappaport 2008; Schensul, Berg, and Williamson 2008). It was thus important to weave culturally appropriate and respectful relationships into the very fabric of this research (Grimwood et al. 2012). A means to ensure these relationalities were nurtured was to base the research upon relevant issues arising from the communities with whom I worked.

The project was rooted in continual dialogue between community members—children, youth, family members, school communities, non-profit organizations and interested individuals—and myself. Consultation sessions, interviews and garden workshops were hosted. Participants aided in deciding what would be included in the study, how the information would be gathered and analyzed, and who would view their project. One primary objective of adopting a CBR approach was for the research to be practical and useful in the promotion of community wellness through gardening initiatives. I struggled, however, on defining *community* within the context of my research.

The people I cooperated with embodied diverse identities and experiences that were not bounded to a single group. Instead, there were complex relationships constantly in the

making. I shifted away from a communitarian understanding of community defined as a social space where people share histories, cultural practices, norms, values and/or languages (B. Anderson 1983; Rose 1999). In keeping with the pattern of continuously transforming foodscapes in Saskatoon, I drew upon a fluid definition of community as “networks of affiliation between people and responsibilities according to those relationships” (Jacobs 2001, 304). Since I did not want to inadvertently disempower community members by omitting ideas and narratives inconsistent with the majority, I included a number of different participatory methods to support multivocality.

### Narrative Inquiry

A key theoretical foundation informing how co-participants’ voices were interpreted in this thesis was narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is a multifaceted methodological approach exploring the construction of stories—oral, life histories, poetry, performance, digital stories, etc.—and the experiences embedded in narratives. Anthropologists have delved into narrative inquiry to better understand cultural contexts upon which stories are entrenched, linking storytellers with complex, ever-changing cultural identities and worldviews (Cruikshank 1998, 138-140; Mattingly and Lawlor 2000). Narratives are relational acts, intertwined within a matrix of relationships immersing people in multiple perceptions that may both diverge and harmonize with collective understandings (Mattingly and Lawlor 2000; Seaton 2008). Narrative researchers are not detached from stories but reshape participant’s narratives into new collaborative narratives, which include epistemologies and ontologies of the researcher.

1) Theoretical considerations on understanding narratives:

Narrative theorists have been heavily influenced by interpretive, constructionist and post-positive theories when defining units of analysis (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). Rigid dichotomized fixtures have dominated conversations surrounding narratives resulting in tensions amongst different narrative theorists. For example, constructed binaries such as fiction versus non-fiction and oral versus text, delimit narratives into bounded entities and products (Cruikshank 2006; Gubrium and Holstein 2009; Striano 2012). The claim that narratives are straight-forward and coherent with easily discernable characters, plot arcs and resolutions have been challenged by authors interested in “narrative practice” and “narrative engagement” (Bamberg 2012, 204).

Narrative practice and engagement recognize that stories are alive, continuously changing and illuminate the jumble of temporalities, topics, events, and emotions (Phelan 2009; Striano 2012; Young 1997). Emphasis is on deep historical processes and the making of analytical objects, therefore replacing knowledge producing questions from *what* to *how* (J. W. Scott 2001; Trouillot 1995). By removing imaginary shackles of narrative essentialism, the field opens to a world filled with significant narrative-making processes.

Michael Bamberg writes about this shift:

When people engage in storytelling — whether they are about whole lives or a moment that is captured in four seconds... whether these stories are about others or whether they topicalize/thematize moments of the life of the speaker (as in self-disclosures), whether they are fictional or not — when engaging in storytelling, people point indexically to how they anchor their position from where they want to be understood. (2012, 207)

The narrative turn in qualitative research has positioned people's narratives centrally as points of entry to multiple social worlds and individual selves. Keeping close to these principles, this paper invites readers to experience co-participants' stories phenomenologically with the hopes of transporting people to the school gardens. Embedded in the body of the thesis are personal accounts of the garden workshops (italicized to distinguish them from other text) that reflect my field notes, audio recordings, and visceral memories when working with children and youth in a garden setting.

2) Narratives as a child-centered methodology:

Narrative inquiry, as a child-centered approach within research, explores young people's experiences and meaning-making processes. Adult researchers have depended on children's and youth's stories in order to relate to different realities (Blizard and Schuster 2007; A. Burke 2012; A. Clark 2005). The process of listening—an action that is multi-method, participatory, reflexive and adaptable—is vital for child-adult communication in research (Clark and Moss 2001). Garden workshops were arranged as a space for co-participants to feel supported sharing their narratives through the process of active listening practices while encouraging other forms of communication that were not text-oriented.

### Visual Participatory Action Research

VPAR combines participatory action practices with visual methodologies to create applied anthropological research that involve participants as co-researchers who contribute towards social justice issues (Guillemin and Drew 2010; Luttrell and Chalfen 2010). Paulo Freire, an influential philosopher on education and critical pedagogies, advocated for civic

participation from community members who were chronically silenced (2005). He pushed for more genuine dialogue and *participation* between people. His works influenced visual researchers to root their work in community engagement and empowerment (Castleden, Garvin, and Huu-ay-aht First Nation 2008; Flores 2004; Strack, Magill, and McDonagh 2004; Wang 1999). Editors of the book, *Participatory Visual and Digital Research in Action*, introduce VPAR as a movement where,

We have moved beyond the “literary turn” and reflexivity for reflexivity’s sake to a new “participatory turn” of collaborative and community-based research...visual and digital media technologies present us with new ways to work alongside communities to produce and communicate our research collaboratively. (Gubrium, Harper, and Otanez 2015, 15)

Knowledge-holders and experts in VPAR are participants and collaborators who challenge asymmetrical power structures present in traditional models, namely, researcher/teacher as expert and participant/student as informant.

#### 1) Visual methodologies and young people:

VPAR has been growing increasingly popular for applied research intent on engaging with young people in their daily lives. Academic communities exploring child and youth experiences in their social worlds, have often turned to visual culture and its expression by young people (Larson 1999; L. Mitchell 2006; Rudkin and Davis 2007; Aitken and Wingate 1993; Wilson et al. 2007). When first designing the study, I was inspired by researchers who engaged children and youth in every stage: capturing images; negotiating power relations surrounding photograph or video recording; interpreting visual content; editing; and dissemination. Similar to narrative inquiry, photography and video recording have been perceived as child-centered approaches that provide dynamic ways

children and youth can represent their social realities, cultural heritages and relationships with multiple local and global processes (Didkowsky et al. 2010; L. Mitchell 2006).

For example, previous to our fieldwork in 2013, I had witnessed powerful encounters when children and youth examined their garden through the lens of a camera. One of SGP's activities was a photo scavenger hunt using disposable cameras, digital cameras or even mobile phones. The initial intention was to develop children's and youth's visual awareness of plants within their school gardens—using a national geographic-style of photo-taking. The scavenger list I distributed to everyone omitted, however, the gardeners themselves. This was immediately remedied by young people who focused on image-making of each other engaging *with* plant communities. The camera became another instrument of play and images produced were rich with meaning.

I quickly learned that visual materials do not speak for themselves and cannot be isolated from a holistic range of circulating knowledge (Bal 2003; El Refaie 2010; Henley 1998; Prosser 1998; Radley 2010). Photographs, contextualized by young people's narratives, are threaded together to provide a depiction of one's life in process, rather than as a single snapshot. Through the process of interpreting images, both co-participants and researchers play a role in shaping, understanding and constructing meanings on visual narratives. VPAR has thus been used to address the crisis of representation by providing opportunities for participants to represent their voice.

## 2) Exploring voice:

Critics, however, demonstrate that despite academic vigour surrounding the concept of *voice* and making space for marginalized voices, there is limited research on

how to negotiate ethical tensions with adult researchers partially or wholly representing and disseminating children and youth narratives (Christensen and Prout 2002). The so-called singular *pure* voice emerging from visual methodologies should be understood as a continuously shifting means of expression that change according to the researcher's way of knowing (Chalfen, Sherman, and Rich 2010; Galman 2009; Lorenz 2010; Luttrell 2010; Thomson 2008; Yates 2010). In this research project, participants' engagement in visual methods conveyed complex and diverse dialogues with partial representations of themselves and foodscapes that were then reshaped by my ontologies and epistemologies. A dynamism of voices signified my responsibility to dig deeper during interpretation and analysis stages and reflect on which kind of voices I was trying to evoke.

Pat Thomson (2008) summarizes Mark Hadfield and Kaye Haw's (2001), and Madeleine Arnot and Diane Reay's (2007) voice categories: 1) authoritative; 2) critical; 3) therapeutic; 4) consumer; and 5) pedagogic. She argues how voices are sought or produced by researchers for different purposes. In three school gardens, children's and youth's voices were interpreted within a critical framework—subverting harmful stereotypes, colonial institutions and mind sets (Thomson 2008). This type of voice challenges hegemonic ways of knowing food security by providing space for marginalized knowledge producers.

## **Section Two: Ethical Protocols in Working with Children and Youth**

I facilitated research, which aimed to co-create culturally safe(r) spaces that foster empowering experiences for young people to share narratives. This was contingent on ongoing ethical considerations. The dual-role complexities I embodied, as well as

culturally diverse narratives I planned to amplify, called for a rigorous ethical process, rooted in cultural safety principles (Ball 2007; Human Research Ethics Office 2008; James and Prout 1997; Thomson 2008). Below describes how I navigated ethical protocols.

### Shifting Role: Changing from Summer Garden Program Coordinator to Researcher

Literature supports that resistance or at least awareness of power dynamics will arise from demonstrations of self-reflexivity and recognition that people are all culture-bearers (McEldowney and Connor 2011; Pon 2009). Personally, I identify as a middle-class woman with settler roots and a mix of French and Kurdish cultural heritages. I was born and raised on Treaty Six Territory and had developed relationships with research participants prior to 2013's fieldwork. I had the opportunity to work alongside students, parents, grandparents, teachers, volunteers and other community initiatives, for a number of years. I did so, however, as someone hired by an external organization (AITC-SK). By previously holding a paid position as SGP coordinator (2011-2012), who did not reside in participating school garden neighbourhoods, there were serious power implications in this study.

While relationships strengthened because of my consistent engagement with three school communities over the years, children and youth attendees initially perceived me as an educator, particularly since programming occurred on their school's premises. For example, those who had not yet learned my name, called me teacher, revealing underlying power dynamics between us. As the program progressed, relations transformed and play became central to our interactions. SGP participants began inviting me to play as they ran

through the sprinkler, celebrated birthday parties on tree stumps, had wheelbarrow races, and searched for worms. Despite this, the dichotomy of adult and child persisted as I remained in a supervisory role, responsible for safety leading me to restrict certain activities if deemed potentially harmful. Power imbalances intensified when I returned to their school gardens as a researcher.

When visiting schools to deliver information, young people would rush over and ask who I was again, what the research folders were, why they were being given to certain people and whether there would be a garden program this year? I had a variety of roles constantly in negotiation, unveiling clear and blurred power relations made and re-made by my actions. Was I a stranger, or a person who could include or exclude them from a project, or a garden lady? It proved necessary to be transparent on why I was present in their school community and to implement protocols that considered other cultural ethical systems.

### Cultural Protocols

Respectful relationships between researcher and families are dependent on honouring cultural ontologies, epistemologies and protocols practiced in the community. Understanding and appreciating cultural differences within a community are a step towards encouraging cultural safety (Ball 2007; Brascoupé and Waters 2009; N. Clark et al. 2009; Chouinard and Cousins 2007; Kleinman and Benson 2006). Our gardens were storied places, enriched by culturally diverse families whose foodscapes revealed different ways of relating to growing food. To elaborate, some co-participants self-identified as belonging

to Indigenous, Vietnamese, Mennonite, and Jehovah Witness communities. In asking people to feel culturally safe in sharing their historical and contemporary narratives, it was necessary to highlight, via informed consent forms, how research start dates were flexible so individuals could go through those proper channels consulting with knowledge keepers.

For example, in creating a digital storytelling tutorial, *Kurdish Food*, with the purpose of introducing young co-participants to photo stories, I had to follow my family's cultural protocol. The photographs I selected and words I recorded were used to demonstrate how I incorporate Kurdish food into my identity-making processes. I could not, however, gain access and share these photographs without permission from my father.

My father was born and raised in Sulaymania, Kurdistan, and had cultural knowledge on how visual materials could be respectfully displayed. He explained how I had to be careful when publicly exhibiting photographs taken in Kurdistan, particularly in the private sphere—e.g., photographs of relatives and their home life. I had to seek consent to use certain images prior to making the digital story, pushing me to consider similar space for potential participants. To the best of my knowledge, however, no co-participants (and their caregivers) consulted with knowledge keepers before agreeing to participate.

### Anonymity in Visual Research

The visual nature of the research limited the anonymity of participating young people. Distributed informed consent and photo release forms highlighted how children and youth engaging in the visual art project would have stories, photographs, and videos that revealed identifying information (name, gender, school, and physical appearance).

Caregivers and young people who expressed discomfort about their loss of anonymity could choose to: 1) stop participating at any time during or after the project; 2) participate but ask for all identifying markers to be removed from the final project; and/or 3) share photographs but use pseudonyms selected by the young people themselves.

Conversations between co-participants and myself on ethics and consent has been an ongoing process. In recent months (January to March, 2017), when consulting with the eleven children's and youth's families, final decisions were made regarding representation. Two families asked for varying levels of anonymity in the thesis to ensure young co-participants were not easily distinguishable. In one case, pseudonyms—chosen by the young people—were used, while in the other, all photographs of the co-participants' faces were omitted from the report. The other families, including caregivers and young people, asked for their names and selected photographs to remain unchanged. All adult co-participants also wished for the report to include their real first name.

### **Section Three: Research Procedures and Data Collection**

#### Consultation and other Ethical Channels

Thesis proposal writing occurred mostly at the University of Victoria as I reflected on past SGP narratives and conversations I had with involved community members. I was acutely aware of the distance between the writing process and community input. I was uncomfortable labeling the research as community-based. It became vital that extensive consultation occurred with community partners when I returned to Saskatoon in April, 2012.

In the context of this research project, consultation was a process in which community members and I exchanged ideas and perspectives on the proposed research, as well as reflected on how to best refashion the project to better reflect the needs and interests of people I was approaching. It was also a time when I sought community consent (Dickert and Sugarman 2005), asking AITC-SK and schools' permission to conduct this research. An enthusiastic stream of communication with different agencies therefore commenced during the summer of 2012.

1) Collaboration with AITC-SK:

I first approached AITC-SK with my proposed research project. Sara Shymko (Executive Director) and Jessie Best (Greenscapades Coordinator) met with me on separate occasions in coffee shops. Over food, we talked informally about my primary research questions and methods. Their feedback and suggestions spoke to a need for more research on how young people relate to gardening and ways for supporting school gardening initiatives across the city. They played a large role in identifying fundamental research aims while I was waiting approval from both the University of Victoria and Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD).

2) Collaboration with Saskatoon Public Schools:

Once I received the highly anticipated ethics approval from the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (see Appendix B), I was able to follow local, ethical channels. Since I planned to work on school property and collaborate with school staff and students, I sought ethics approval from SPSPD's Coordinator of Research and Measurement, Dr. Scott Tunison. The ethics application inquired how the proposed research would benefit participating schools and I decided to

include a recommendation section in the conclusion chapter as well as a final report (see Appendix A). SPSD ethics approval was also contingent on three school principals' interest.

Over the winter months of 2013, I sent letters (see Appendix C) and consulted with school communities who outlined focal points to consider in this proposed project. Principals, Community Coordinators, and teachers informed of my research (in-person), met with me to talk in depth about my research questions and its relevance. We met during school hours in various locations—their office, classrooms, school garden, and gymnasiums—and brainstormed how the study could be conducted. While communicating with staff, I learned that SPSD had just recently received funding from private companies like Potash Corporation to allocate towards healthy eating initiatives—e.g., learning kitchens, outdoor classrooms and expanding school gardens. In addition to those funds, individual schools had begun applying for grants to continue a growing momentum on engaging young people in local food practices. My proposed research was seen as a project that would shed light on how children experience such initiatives.

Staff from three schools provided guidance on how conducting research using visual methods could best resonate within their particular learning contexts. During consultation sessions, they shared how the growing cultural diversity of students in community schools has increased interest in how different families understand food and gain access to culturally acceptable foods. It was agreed a visual project, and its strong experiential element, would be more accessible and exciting for young people of different backgrounds.

### Seeking Interested Co-participants: Recruitment

The Saskatoon winter of 2013 was long with snow and ice covering the ground from October to the end of April. At that time, discussions around gardening were wistful and uncertain as everyone was unsure when winter would release its hold on the city. Once milder winds melted the snow into lake-sized puddles, Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools became excited about school gardening initiatives. This signalled to me that it was time to begin recruitment and at the beginning of May I provided information to potential participants. The existing dual-role complications impacted how the recruitment process went with children, youth, and their family members.

#### 1) Power imbalances:

Power-over complexities, between students and myself, created a risk of children and youth feeling pressured to become research participants. I therefore ensured there were multiple safeguards to minimize inducement, coercion and potential harm to participants during recruitment. A third-party recruiter at each school volunteered to assist posting flyers (see Appendix D) and distribute information to children and youth. Recruiters were Community Coordinators and teachers who circulated printing materials to both children and youth who had attended SGP and were between the ages five and fifteen. The age range I proposed was to reflect the age of young people who had participated in the garden program in the past. Those who received an information package (with informed consent forms) took it home to share with their guardians.

Dual-role tensions also extended to adult family members of children and youth. Since 2011, adult family members whose children and youth participated in SGP, have had

differing levels of engagement with the program. For example, there were parents and grandparents who: volunteered weekly in the garden; attended field trips; offered advice and knowledge on growing food; and acted as alarm clocks (waking up their children for morning SGP sessions). Relations with participants' guardians had previously been mitigated by my role as program coordinator, with most of our interactions occurring during programming hours. I was therefore conscious of how they could feel obligated to provide permission for their children and youth to participate in this research. I addressed this potential problem by including: informed consent for children and youth (see Appendix E); parents giving permission for their children and youth (see Appendix F); parents who wished to participate themselves (see Appendix G); and photo release forms (see Appendix H) in the information package given. Lastly, each family had approximately one month to review the information before consent forms were to be signed and returned. This timeframe was provided for families to facilitate going through proper cultural protocols.

2) Other community partners:

Recruitment for adults, such as AITC-SK staff, teachers, and Community Coordinators involved person-to-person conversations as I approached people I knew from past collaborations on SGP. Since power-over relations were less pronounced than with children, youth, and their guardians, I chose not to use a third-party agent during this process. Instead, I would, for example, enter a school lugging folders of informed consent information (See Appendix I), walk down hallways and search for familiar faces. Once stumbling upon someone who had expressed interest during the consultation stage, the forms would be distributed and questions answered. While this recruitment method was

biased as I initially selected people previously engaged in the garden, I did ask participating school Community Coordinators to pass along information to anyone who wished to participate.

### “Tell Your Story”: Interviews

To open up this CBR to other situated knowledges and challenge my embodied ontological and epistemological assumptions (Haraway 1991; Pink 2003), I conducted semi-structured interviews (see Appendix J) with adult participants. Through collaborative efforts, I aimed at producing culturally safe, inclusive interviews allowing for diverse worldviews and with an awareness of power imbalances existing between researcher and participant (Ball 2007; A. Clark 2004; Danby, Ewing, and Thorpe 2011: 76-78).

Once recruitment efforts ended, there were seven adults (educators, AITC-SK employees, and caregivers) who volunteered their time and hearts in discussing topics, which they felt with great passion. Interviewees and I delved into topics that revealed: how their life histories have impacted relationships to their foodscape; how they interact with younger generations and gardening; cultural worldviews surrounding food; and also where we can go from here with regards to food security. The specific questions I asked aimed to support and/or challenge my main claim, how children’ and youth’s relationships to their foodscapes differ from conversations on food security when juxtaposed with hegemonic narratives. I tried, however, to frame questions in an open-ended manner with space for co-participants to talk to the sensitive nature of food security according to their own comfort levels.

Our interviews ranged from fifteen to ninety minutes, often occurring simultaneously with other activities (running local antique markets or baking pies) to fit with busy lives. All of our communications were audio recorded unless asked to be turned off. Dialogue with co-participants provided insight into local processes and memories circulating around Saskatoon foodscapes. Our conversations helped to contextualize how children and youth were being locally engaged within their communities, which I used to complement what was explored during the garden workshops.

#### Garden Workshops and Visual Explorations

*Four young people run through a maze of garden beds as the sun blazes down on their heads. Each have a camera strap around their wrist and can be seen leaning down to take a close-up of nasturtium flowers or guiding their camera skyward to focus on the clouds. Mosquitos hiding in the tall grass swarm as we disturb their rest with our running. We run faster while slapping our arms, trying to elude the insects. One boy asks how he can record a video and I show him what button to press. He then points the camera at me as I dance among the plots, chanting “hey hey ho, mosquitos got to go”.*

*We break for blueberry muffins, which becomes the new subject for a child’s photo. He excitedly asks if there are any blueberry plants and we all rush to the food forest to see if we can find ripening blueberries among the fruit trees and shrubs. Once he spots the distinct berries, he takes a photograph and plans how this will be visually represented. He remarks excitedly how he will insert the photograph of the blueberry plant alongside the image of the muffin, illustrating the connection (see Figure 4 and 5). His eagerness is*

*contagious and suddenly other children are talking about their visions for the visual art project.*

*(Kukha-Bryson, field notes, July, 2013)*



**Figure 4, Blueberry, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**



**Figure 5, Blueberry Muffin, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

The journey into exploring different foodscapes truly began with a gathering of children and youth in three school gardens. After eleven young people (and their guardians) provided consent, I arranged a day to have our first workshops. There were three separate groups, to reflect the three school gardens, each group participating in four garden workshops between July and September. The location and time length of workshops varied as I worked around everyone's schedule but typically sessions were two hours, situated outdoors in their gardens. By running garden workshops over a three months timespan, our project changed along with the ripening plants. Children's and youth's relationships and dialogues with their foodscapes proved to be forever in motion, requiring methodologies that embodied and honoured these processes across place and time (Osowski, Göransson, and Fjellström 2012; Roos 2002).

The garden workshops were significant in co-creating spaces for children and youth to share their experiences and knowledges. Co-participants and I were involved in activities and conversations on growing food supported by cooking, visual methods, making visual art projects, and informal focus groups. All of which generated phenomenological exploration in the school gardens. Sense-making processes of children and youth are heterogeneous and constantly changing (Christensen 2004; Christensen and James 2000; Christensen and Prout 2002), which led me to offer a wide array of activities, hoping everyone would find something they resonated with. Over the course of this project, workshop activities ceased to be separate entities working towards a whole, and instead became interconnected processes, enriching each other.

I can still recall the early days before co-participants and I had met for our first workshop in July. I spent time carefully planning a workshop agenda (see Appendix K),

allocating time slots to each activity with directions on how to address potential challenges. On the first day of Confederation Park's garden workshop, I brought a maxi-sized flip chart with the day's schedule outlined in large writing. The children were patient as I busily filled our meeting, attempting to create artificial boundaries between every activity. However, as stated by Laurie Thorp, "corn seeds, ladybugs, children and pumpkins know nothing of these artificial confines" (2005, 126) and I learned how this pace was restricting for self-expression in the garden. I had automatically adopted a role of teacher or program coordinator with clear outcomes and was humbled to learn alternative ways to engage. In order to understand co-participants' foodscapes, it was imperative that workshops were structured loosely with room for children and youth to shape the sessions themselves. This was most evident when cooking outdoors in the garden.

1) Cooking and eating from the garden:

I reflected on past SGP cooking activities and other community-based kitchen initiatives when planning how to engage co-participants in cooking as a method of participatory research. In Saskatoon, there are kid nutrition programs run by schools, local non-profit organizations, and health services (Henry et al. 2006). While the mandates and objectives may differ, there is an emphasis on connecting young people to food-making practices that are perceived to be healthy and nutritious (Engler-Stringer 2011; Grosso and Crewe 2004; Novek and Nichols 2008).

In 2011, when AITC-SK was piloting SGP, school staff were adamant that community-based programs absolutely required available food for children and youth participants. Running SGP without snacks or meals was, in their opinion, a barrier. The school gardening team, therefore, prioritized the presence of food in the garden. Young

people attending SGP, were interested, however, in more than just eating harvested produce but cooking in the garden as well.

Cooking initiatives continued to be important throughout our research project as two out of the three school groups (Mayfair and Westmount) decided to focus our sessions on preparing meals together. Making food outdoors in garden places extended beyond conventional foodscape boundaries existing in schools, such as lunch rooms, classrooms, and playgrounds (Ludvigsen and Scott 2009; Osowski, Göranzon, and Fjellström 2012; Roos 2002). In relying on a portable cooker stove and oven, our cooking sessions were more flexible and casual. Children and youth utilized any semi-flat surface in the garden to make Saskatoon berry tarts, cut vegetables and filled up wheelbarrows with water for washing (see Figure 6 and 7). Young people voiced how cooking food in the garden reminded them of different food experiences such as camping and backyard barbeques, which elicited storytelling on different yet interdependent foodscapes.



**Figure 6, Saskatoon Berry Tarts, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013**



**Figure 7, Salad Prep, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**

The participatory method of cooking, used to explore foodscapes, was linked to co-participants' past knowledges on preparing food. Their intersectionalities—age, gender, self-identified cultural community—influenced how cooking food was learned. The varying comfort levels with cooking and baking challenged particular young people in participating in the sessions, detracting from feelings of empowerment (Packard 2008). At one garden, the youngest co-participant had limited hands-on experience on preparing food and had little interest in participating. My assumption that there would be a standard knowledge basis on food prep did not acknowledge diverse entry points into these activities. It was through the mentorship from other co-participants, who had more exposure to food-making, that this this particular young person felt open to join the group.

The sociality of cooking was one prominent reason for the activity's popularity among participating young people. For instance, four young people participating at the Westmount garden workshops were eager to cook outdoors and invite friends to the workshops to eat with us. Photographs were taken of the group harvesting colourful

produce, as well as all of us sitting on the grass feasting on the meal. During our second meeting in the garden, children, youth, and I commenced by crouching beside garden beds and harvesting food grown over the weeks. Our social engagements in cooking sessions were shared visually using an eclectic array of visual methods.

2) Engagement with visual participatory action methods:

As stated above, VPAR was an overarching framework I used for the development of methodologies. This section illustrates in detail visual methods used to elicit narratives (Harper 2002): which included: i) photography tutorials; ii) photo-making sessions; and iii) visual art project—e.g., scrapbooks, photo albums, and/or drawings. As a side note, video narratives were also made by co-participant, recording funny clips and general happenings. The videos were not, however, included in the scope of this research project due to lack of parental permission and time constraints.

i) *Photography tutorials:*

Two tutorial videos entitled, *Photography Basics Video 1 and 2*, were produced by myself to introduce young people to digital photography by breaking down photo-making into four comprehensive steps: how to hold a camera, take a steady picture, capture shots from different distances, and use scene modes. The videos were made in collaboration with my brother, Azaad Kukha-Bryson. He assisted in filming some of the clips with a Canon Rebel T4i and editing via Final Cut Pro. Azaad's wide knowledge on videography, such as operating camera equipment and using editing software, was essential. The collaboration with Azaad made apparent photograph and filmmaking composition norms I adhered to

because of my surrounding visual culture (Bal 2003; Guillemen and Drew 2010; Holliday 2000; Walker 2004).

I therefore spent time during the workshops explaining how these videos and photo tips were a reflection of how I saw the world. I tried not to produce tutorials that were rigid and dichotomous, leaving co-participants with the impression that there were such thing as *bad* and *good* photographs (Frith and Harcourt 2007). Co-participants were encouraged to draw upon their own embodied visuality when making images, instead of being constrained by my own pedagogies.

Another reason to be cautious in utilizing tutorials was the possibility that co-participants would perceive me to be skilled in photography when in actuality, I was still a novice (Packard 2008). Power disparities among researcher and participants are exasperated when a researcher takes on the role of expert and privilege their knowledge above people whose perspectives are systematically oppressed (Kaplan 2008). Embodying a teacher persona when working with co-participants on visual research projects can potentially restrict how people express themselves (Hammack 1997; C. Mitchell 2011; L. Mitchell 2006). I was therefore transparent with participants about my lack of experience in photography and excitement to learn alongside them (A. Clark 2010, 119).

ii) *Photo-making sessions:*

*The heat and mosquitos has driven our garden workshop into the nearby gymnasium, doors open for a summer youth program. We splay out in a corner and I set up for our focus group session. One of the co-participants runs into the gym with a small strawberry in his hand and exclaims, “Hey Shereen, take a picture of me eating strawberries” (Some-JDM-Boi, pers. comm., July, 2013), and goes back outside. Another*

*co-participant grabs her camera and joins me. She and I take a stream of photographs of him holding the strawberry in his mouth while he directs what specific shot he wants (see Figure 8). We cannot stop laughing at the silliness of the photoshoot. He urges us to hurry and take the picture before he eats the strawberry. Once he does, we walk over to the strawberry patch located in the edible food forest area to seek more (see Figure 9).*

*(Kukha-Bryson, field notes, July, 2013)*



**Figure 8, Strawberry Photo Shoot, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**



**Figure 9, Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Edited on Window's Photo Editor, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

Our joint exploration into photography within garden places was continuous as the digital camera became an extension of co-participants' hands. Photo sessions occurred whenever inspiration struck, may that be a close-up of an oak leaf or a portrait of everyone in front of simmering spaghetti sauce. Photograph-oriented activities extended throughout our informal focus group conversations, cooking, visual art project, and unstructured play. Before co-participants and I reconvened for the next workshop, I developed their photographs at a local retail store. When the group next met, co-participants spent time reviewing their images and in some cases, editing.

*iii) Photo selection and editing:*

Children and youth routinely selected what photographs they wanted to use in their visual art projects and display to a broader audience. I discussed how their project would be viewed by people beyond the garden group, listing those who would be privy to their

photographs (e.g., Saskatoon school staff, AITC-SK, University of Victoria, etc.). Young people reflected on which photographs they wanted others to view.

I wished to honour different decision-making processes and tried a number of photo selection activities. This included spreading out their photographs on a flat surface and asking children and youth to place them in *yes*, *no*, and *maybe* piles. I changed strategies once the wind proved too strong and instead placed their selected and not selected photographs into envelopes, both of which were available at all workshops. Co-participants continuously changed what images they wished to share as the summer progressed.

Extended beyond photo selection, three co-participants also had the opportunity to edit their photographs on my laptop, using Window's Photo Editor. One of the school gardens is located near a public library and I reserved a room to work with co-participants. Two laptops were brought to the library and children reviewed their uploaded photographs after I briefly went through photo editing *how-to*—highlighting how-to crop, adjust exposure, change colours, and effects. Those who had previous experience with altering images edited their entire photo collection, whereas other children minimally played with their images' settings. The other two garden workshop groups decided that they would rather spend time cooking outdoors, and therefore did not change their photographs on the computer. The majority of children and youth did, however, use their selected photographs to create visual art stories on growing food and garden places.

iv) *Visual art project:*

*A compelling digital story emerging from the garden was created by a young person who wished to document a single butterfly's flight, carefully following a painted lady butterfly. In the three years I had known him, I had never seen him remain so still. We*

*crouched beside him and whispered how to take images of small moving subjects. He patiently answered,*

*Well first of all you get people who won't scare a butterfly away. And then you stay still, step towards it and then snap. Try to take a picture of it flying because you have more chance than when it has landed. If you want to take it when it has landed, the best thing to do is not to take unless the butterfly is not looking at you. 'Cause then it won't see you and then you can take it. (Some-JDM-Boi, pers. comm., 2013)*

*He proceeded to take photographs of the butterfly pollinating, flying, and resting on plants (see Figure 10 and 11). Once the photographs were developed, he inserted them into his photo album—sequence based on the different places the butterfly landed—telling a visual story of the being's journey.*

*(Kukha-Bryson, field notes, July, 2013)*



**Figure 10, Butterfly's Flight, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**



**Figure 11, Butterfly's Rest, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

Picture storybooks have been a significant point of reference in engaging children on the making of a visual art project. The use of visual art to convey a story was a format children and youth were familiar with (Reynolds 2011). Despite a wide range of ages attending workshops, creating visual narratives transcended age categories and illustrated how visual materials can enhance or even replace words. I was drawn to visual storytelling because of its ability to evoke an audience's imagination, as well as unveil author/artist cultural ontologies and epistemologies (Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art 2007; Wyile and Rosenberg 2008, 2-3).

For example, co-participants reframed the visual story parameters for the research project as a way to reflect their stories. During the second garden workshop at Confederation Park, I talked about making visual stories using scrapbooks. While taking out the art supplies and scrapbook papers, one young person informed me that,

I do not really want to tape my photos... I have a photo album, if you bring some when you come back we can, like, put them in order. (Aiden, pers. comm., July, 2013)

His preference to exhibit his photographs in a photo album inspired another co-participant to encase his images in an album. The photographs were placed according to theme and story sequence. I learned later that the two co-participants had past experiences making and interacting with family albums and thus wanted to display their school gardening memories and stories in a similar format.

Co-participants worked with a variety of visual practices—drawing, painting, stamping, flower pressing, and paper constructions—in producing their photo album and/or scrapbook narrative (see Figure 12, 13, and 14). Over the course of the sessions, a number of children and youth enjoyed the processes involved in *doing*, *viewing*, and *telling* the visual narrative, focusing less on the final product. In discerning how they experienced these art-making activities in relation to their garden and growing food, co-participants talked about their images and I learned more about each photographer’s interpretations.



**Figure 12, Dandelion Paintbrush, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**



**Figure 13, Scrapbook, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013**



**Figure 14, Scrapbook, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013**

3) Focus group conversations in the garden:

I complemented visual methods with in-person focus groups, which enhanced understanding of socio-cultural contexts, stories, emotions, and aesthetics attached to images. Focus group methods involve a gathering of people discussing topics introduced

by the facilitator-researcher (J. Scott 2000). Specific topics introduced can be reviewed in Appendix L. As a way to tease out nuances rooted in photos, general questions were asked like: *why did you take this photo?*; and *can you tell us more about what is happening while you took this photograph?*; as well as more specific questions seeking elaborations on how images were meaningful to their stories. Dialogue-making, as shared by Freire in the 1960's, has the potential to break rigid power roles where participant/student becomes researcher/teacher and vice versa (2005). The situation most conducive to storytelling and image interpretations was one in motion, informally conversing as the young people and I moved around the garden. I did this after learning how adopting a conventional researcher personality reduced co-participants' ease in sharing photo narratives.

Some children and youth displayed self-consciousness when I tried to formalize our workshops and interview people. Power-relations were amplified by the presence of the audio recorder held between us whenever photographers were asked to talk about their images or visual art projects. Suddenly I morphed from co-explorer to outside observer, which was equally unfamiliar to my previous roles. Charlotte Davies, in her book, *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*, elaborates on the importance of breaking down perceived distinctions between researcher and participants, emphasizing how we are all interconnected (2008). Barbara Tedlock also analyzes the compulsion of researchers to maintain distance in fieldwork:

During participant observation, ethnographers move back and forth between being emotionally engaged participants and coolly dispassionate observers of the lives of others. This strange procedure is not only emotionally upsetting but morally suspect in that ethnographers carefully establish intimate human relationships and then depersonalize them. (1991, 69)

In order to subvert the so-called objective gaze aiming for transcendence, researchers must engage in empathetic relationships and enable participants to represent themselves (Tamas 2009). I learned how halting the flow of our workshops to ask questions, detracted from younger people's storytelling. Integrating focus groups into the ever moving rhythm of the garden workshops became a powerful tool in evoking shared narratives on growing, harvesting, and eating food. For example, focus group questions were asked while pulling a wagon of young people across the garden or whenever the group had a moment of pause. Some of our best conversations occurred in the strangest of places: resting in the shade of the school building, eating bowls of garden veggie soup on tree stumps, sitting on the edge of our garden beds, or even while everyone was hiding in the shed to escape a rain shower. The group discussions enabled co-participants to build upon the other as they described garden experiences and perspectives. Life stories immersed us in multiple perceptions of foodscapes that both diverged and harmonized with collective understandings of school gardening.

An example of this was when I asked three young people *who* taught them how to garden and a person piped up that it was their mother who first introduced them to plants. Suddenly, everyone started talking at once about the different ways their mom was involved in gardening experiences. I listened in fascination as people built upon each other's reflections and dialogue grew momentum. This did not, however, signify that different stories were not heard. One other person interjected how it was actually his grandmother who knew how to grow food, thereby inspiring the discussion to take a new direction. Narratives and storytelling are relational acts, intertwined within a matrix of

relationships (Mattingly and Lawlor 2000; Seaton 2008) as revealed by these focus group sagas.

*i) Focus group topic of food security:*

Over the course of the summer, focus group topics spanned from inquiries into family history of food production, cultural significance of food, experiences they have had through their involvement in AITC-SK's SGP, and food security in their communities. Food insecurity is lived in a number of communities in Saskatoon and the three neighbourhoods, where the school gardens thrive, were no exception. Sensitive and sometimes triggering concept of food insecurity (e.g., anxiety regarding food access, societal stigma and discrimination) led me to design the focus groups in a way that alleviated the risk of targeting or alienating co-participants (Connell et al. 2005).

The questions I asked were general and did not require young people to share their own personal experiences surrounding food security, though some did. For example, questions directed towards the group included: *how would you explain hunger to someone who has never been hungry?; do you believe Saskatoon is a place where families can grow food?; do you think it can be easy or difficult for some people to get food in the city?; and can you think of places (in or outside the city) where there is food or a lack of food?* By focusing on Saskatoon as a whole, children and youth reflected on their observations and experiences on hunger and food access without necessarily feeling pressured to share narratives that would make them feel vulnerable and uncomfortable.

I also made a conscious decision not to use the overly use the words *food security* in the focus groups to avoid lack of clarity using an “adult-generated conceptualization” (Fram et al. 2011, 1114). Terminologies used in the literature (e.g., poverty, national food

policy, right to food, development, etc.) are loaded and jargon-heavy concepts not always accessible for young people. For instance, when discussing food security with middle-years students during my years working at AITC-SK, the word food *security* led people to interpret it in the context of food safety and food shortages due to conflict and war. This pushed me to think outside the food security box and describe its many facets in less abstract ways. Similarly, due to the wide age range of co-participants in the project, I did not want to exclude people from group discussions by using exclusive, theoretical language. It was during the analysis stage of the study that I saw parallels between young people's narratives and alternative food relationships that I interpreted as disrupting hegemonic food security discourses.

#### **Section Four: Making Sense of Narratives and Sharing Knowledges**

##### Analysis and Theoretical Influences

I initially disliked using the word *analysis* to describe the process of exploring and interpreting knowledges shared by co-participants. The term seemed to remove the researcher from the subjective and personal sense-making practices utilized when discerning concepts, relations, and themes from research. I attempted to reconcile with the practice of analysis by looking to scholars who have eschewed the positivist paradigm, exploring more collaborative, relational, and reflexive practices (Galman 2009; Hultman, Taguchi, and Tqse 2010; Luttrell 2010; Paulus, Woodside, and Ziegler 2010; Stanley and Temple 2008). Anthropological research has relied on a multitude of quantitative and qualitative theoretical models of analysis with more researchers adapting a blending

approach to honour the complexity of the social worlds they work with (Knauft 2006; La Jevic and Springgay 2008; Mason 2005; Pink 2003).

In order to seek understanding from the abundant stories shared, I used a plurality of analytical approaches, teasing out threads of narrative analysis, thematic analysis, and VPAR to fashion a patchwork quilt of their colourful stories on local foodscapes. As a self-proclaimed seamstress-researcher, I tried to snip stories into neat squares and sew them into a harmonious quilt. I quickly learned, however, that a number of narratives refused to be separated from others or became flat and lifeless when cut. I had to balance drawing connections and themes from their stories while simultaneously acknowledging the distinctness and complexities of their foodscapes.

Wendy Luttrell (2010) struggled with similar challenges when conducting participatory image-based research with youth in the United States. She had designed the project so young participants could represent their identities in school-home life through photography. She discovered how, “it would not do justice to the children’s agency... in their images to collapse meaning of their photographs into any single theoretical framework” (231). I used her approach as a way to devise an analysis process that was inclusive of multivocal interpretations. In addition to VPAR (discussed above), predominant theoretical trends embedded in understanding co-participants’ foodscapes emerged from narrative and thematic analysis.

- 1) Narrative analysis:

The lens influencing how I engaged with co-participants’ narratives originated from narrative inquiry paradigms. In order to interlace the varied narratives, I simultaneously

relied on both my and co-participants' interpretations. Benjamin Crabtree and William Miller describe interpretation as a,

Complex and dynamic craft, with as much creative artistry as technical exactitude... an abundance of patient plodding, fortitude, and discipline. There are many changing rhythms; multiple steps; moments of jubilation, revelation, and exasperation. . . . The dance of interpretation is a dance for two, but those two are often multiple and frequently changing, and there is always an audience, even if it is not always visible. (1999, 128–129)

In interpreting narratives and trying to place them in relation to others, this painstakingly cautious dance commenced with myself immersing in the data. I transcribed the focus group conversation and interviews, repeatedly listened to garden workshop audio recordings, and reviewed visual materials and fieldwork notes. Instead of drowning an overwhelming academic demise in the hours of recordings and pages of transcripts, I was supported by the methods utilized by different narrative researchers. The emphasis on the relationalities of stories and storytelling (Mattingly and Lawlor 2000; Seaton 2008; Spector-Mersel 2010) along with the belief that narratives embody social worlds (Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Gubrium and Holstein 2012; Stanley and Temple 2008) was used to discern themes and connect co-participants' knowledge to our research questions.

For the ethical considerations of narrative analysis, I had to continuously recognize how a narrative's vitality stemmed from relationships between the storyteller, listener or audience, and characters within the story. Narrative analysts have challenged perceptions that stories can be pure objects of study expressed in a social vacuum, unchanged by the context in which they are shared (Bishop 2012). This was exemplified by AITC-SK staff's narratives on classroom gardens and how closely tied they were to children and youth who interacted with these gardens on a daily basis, teachers who embodied diverse teaching

philosophies, and parents who played major roles in supporting particular foods within households.

Narrative analysis of co-participants' relationships embedded in stories thus examined characters (both human and non-human) mentioned. Researchers utilizing narrative analysis frequently code participant stories by plot, setting, characters, and actions (Bamberg 2012). I noticed that children's and youth's relations to others (characters) permeated the majority of narratives in the school gardens (setting) and guided the larger story I produced around food security (plot).

## 2) Thematic analysis:

Connected to evident characters resurfacing in co-participants' oral and visual narratives, related thematic trends were depicted using thematic analytical analysis. A compelling argument by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2008) persuade readers about the strengths of a thematic approach to analysis in fostering a flexible and experientially-driven process. I wanted a project that was fluid in scope and methodology (based on consultation and co-participant interest) and tried not having rigid, pre-existing theoretical structures, which could limit research possibilities. This meant, however, that the analysis stage was one of discovery and uncertainty—not having strong hypotheses on what would emerge. It was not until I was reviewing audio, written, and visual content that I began to discern (and develop) thematic trends and relationships.

Thematic analysis offers a discursive process honouring rich details of co-participants' narratives while also making sense of perceived thematic patterns (Donovan 2016). Thematic analysis' foundation rests on a practice of immersing oneself in the research data—coding and designing themes based on a researcher's theoretical

assumptions and research questions (Braun and Clarke 2008; Guest, MacQueen, and Namey 2012). The bare branches of my four research questions suddenly bloomed with numerous codes and over fifty themes were revisited, reshuffled, and reinterpreted. I used XMind software to visually represent key thematic strands (see Appendix M). Over the course of many months, I learned how different narratives related (or diverged) from one another by organizing themes in a way that supported an emerging story on how children and youth contribute towards food security discourses.

Analytical frameworks discussed above were blended and used differently depending on whether the narratives were *oral* or *visual*. More specifically, I relied on both narrative and thematic analysis for 1) oral communication—informal conversations, focus groups, interviews—and VPAR methods for analysis of 2) visual communication—photographs and visual art projects.

### Co-participants' Oral Narratives and Analysis

Narrative analysis of oral communications revealed a matrix of social relations, the points in which they interconnected were sources of rich information on who were the main players in co-participants' foodscapes. To divide narratives into smaller units of analysis has been criticized as reductionist (Barton 2004; Striano 2012), supporting the assumption that stories are contained entities. I found, however, defining imaginary concepts within partial and constantly changing narratives aided in making sense of the knowledges. Based on the belief that stories “offer an epistemological portal through which experiences can

be viewed and interpreted” (Connelly and Clandinin 2006, as cited in Clandinin 2013, 13), it was useful to sort out which characters or places were more visible or invisible in stories.

In addition to using narrative analysis on character and setting, I also explored co-participants oral narratives using thematic analysis. Before fieldwork started, interview and focus group questions were created during the consultation stage. Consultants and I thought of themes that were relevant such as *family history*, *mentorship*, and *rural vs urban food experiences*. Initial thematic concepts were not, however, always applicable. I shifted approaches and focused on grounding the themes in the interviews and informal focus groups, seeking new and unexpected themes based on comparisons and commonalities. For example, an overwhelmingly prominent thematic consideration was how young people’s relationships to food security was interdependent to their sense of place. This theme became especially apparent when analyzing co-participants’ images.

### Co-participants’ Visual Narratives and Analysis

Visual anthropologists have been instrumental in shifting how visual materials are analyzed in contemporary research. Critics of visual essentialism, belief that visual expressions clearly represent themselves, visual researcher argue that the process of image-making embodies diverse cultural visualities, impacting the meaning and interpretation of participants’ photographs, videos, artwork, etc. (Bal 2003; Walker 2004). Visual materiality cannot be separated from the process of making, power-relationships, partiality of narratives, and surrounding cultural contexts (Holliday 2000; Pink 2003; Radley 2010). This movement away from positivist analytical methods effected how I worked with children’s and youth’s images. Visual narratives produced in the school gardens were

co-explored by the participants and myself to learn more of the inter-subjectivities of their stories. I applied visual participatory methodologies of analysis (Johnson 2008; Luttrell 2010; Yates 2010) to co-participants' visual narratives and how they relate to their local foodscapes.

VPAR teaches the necessity of involving young people in the interpretation and analysis of visual materials, which I witnessed firsthand during a SGP session in 2012. Children and youth had planned a celebration event, inviting family members and friends to the garden. Large neon poster boards were propped between the mazes of wooden raised beds. Photographs of the summer (garden bake sales, rainy day paper-making, and horse-drawn wagon ride through a family farm) were haphazardly taped to the posters. Families circulated the garden, admiring the photographs and asking questions about the activities captured in the images. I was drawn to their extensive conversations and the stories told. In reviewing photographs with loved ones, emotions were tangible (excitement, humour, confusion, pride) and memories of the experience were diverse. The powerful impression of a photographer's own sense-making was something I wanted to include in our 2013 garden workshops.

Co-participants and I engaged in ongoing reflection of their images and visual art projects. This steered our analysis activities in which young people played pertinent roles. Initial inquiry commenced during the second workshop at all three school garden locations. Co-participants regarded their newly developed photographs and were asked to select the images they wished to include in their final visual art project. This spurred a flurry of activity as children and youth shuffled through their images and exclaimed on *who* was in the photo, *what* memories it evoked, and aesthetics of the pictures' compositions. Once

chosen, children and youth transformed their visual materials into photo albums or scrapbooks that further layered meaning,

The participatory nature in reviewing photographs directed how I analyzed their narratives as a whole. Applying their comments and stories to better comprehend visual materials, I produced themes connecting the different school gardening communities. This process was difficult as I tried to reconcile the participatory model with my role as primary disseminator. Gauntlett and Holzwarth (2006), demonstrate the role visual researchers have in projects such as mine. They counter how VPAR's emphasis on participants' own sense-making does not make social scientists obsolete. Instead, visual researchers,

[n]eed to *listen* to what is said overall and then come back in at the end and develop conclusions and theory, based on an overview of all that has been created and recorded. So, to put it simply, you can do an analysis of the whole but you shouldn't be trying to analyse each creative artefact because that is better done by the person who made it.(87)

I therefore relied on the co-participants' conversations and interpretations to produce an overarching narrative on food security discussed in Chapter Three.

### Impact of Process rather than Product

It is significant to add, however, that not all co-participants desired to reflect on their visual stories or even make an art project (e.g., photo books). A few children and youth decided not to work further with their developed pictures, finding the process in exploring the garden with digital cameras to be more rewarding than the project's outcome.

*Sitting on the warm stone steps leading up the school doors I wait in eager anticipation for the great reveal. Envelopes of developed images rest beside me. The first person to arrive runs up and down the steps before catching his breath and plopping down to see what I am holding. I pass him his photographs (taken during the last two garden workshops). In the daily agenda, I have scheduled an hour for us to look over their pictures and select which ones they wished to use (or not use) in their visual art project. He begins to flip through the glossy images, rapidly making two growing piles:*

*Noah: This one, and this one.*

*Shereen: Why are you choosing these photos Noah?*

*Noah: These are all the photos I took...I took lots.*

*Shereen: And let's see the ones you didn't choose... why didn't you choose these?*

*Noah: Because I didn't want to choose these.*

*(audio recording, pers. comm., August, 2013)*

This particular response was echoed by other young people when looking through their photographs. At first, I felt disheartened that everyone did not have a readymade monologue exploring the deeper meaning into why they chose certain images over others. Enthusiasm directed towards *processes* of image-making, however, illustrated how experiential sessions in photographing in the garden were at times more powerful as a method than formal self-analysis and review (van Dienderen 2007; Guilleman and Drew 2010; Paulus, Woodside, and Ziegler 2010). The process led to innovative activities I had not previously considered—such as taking blog-like videos, constructing a funny mask to wear during photoshoots, or harvesting dandelions to use as paintbrushes.

In addition to the creative process of producing stories listed above, co-participants also continuously returned to narratives and re-envisioned them within the visual art project in new ways. As mentioned earlier, young people at one of the schools, for example, spent an afternoon editing their photographs using Window's Photo Editor. Whether they had previous editing experiences, playing with photographs bolstered confidence. The transformational power of photo editing evoked creative re-framings on what stories the pictures encompassed. The process of changing an image's colours, e.g., to black and white (see Figure 15), added meaning that was included in the images' titles. This was a helpful reminder that genuine participation of children and youth in research (Hart 1992) must include sense-making methodologies that reflect different ways of knowing and are initiated by young people themselves.

At the end of the summer, all developed photographs and visual art projects, along with a USB with digital files of their images and videos, were returned to co-participants. I asked each young person to take final photographs of their scrapbook or photo album for me to include in the written report. In this context, the process of reviewing photographs, video, and artworks produced over three months did evoke excitement and memories. I witnessed their eagerness, especially in reviewing video clips, which showed me how dissemination could be more interactive and meaningful.



**Figure 15, 1980's Sunflower, Digital Photograph, Edited on Window's Photo Editor, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

Dissemination: Who will *Listen to* and *Witness* these Voices?

The rich and meaningful stories, detailed in this thesis paper, were not written to rest patiently as static words and photographs, dependent on readers to act upon teachings and recommendations added (Robb 2014). Co-participants who worked tirelessly in the garden workshops are primary consultants who I plan to meet with and discuss future ways to share their knowledges. As previously agreed upon, all associated schools will be provided with a newsletter, highlighting the main findings of the research. SPSD and AITC-SK will also receive an executive summary of our research project's recommendations (see Appendix A). Lastly, upon the completion of my M.A., I will complete a community-based post-grad project.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> To visually display narratives, I plan to seek permission from co-participants to present their work in a digital storytelling format using photographs, video, and audio clips (created and shared in accordance to the informed consent forms and University of

## Chapter Summary

The methodological practices described above have been particularly useful in fostering culturally safer and more empowering spaces for co-participants to share narratives. The question of *how* to elicit children and youth participation in food security conversations was addressed via cultural safety, CBR, narrative inquiry, and VPAR approaches that work to alleviate power imbalances and honour the agency of co-participants in making sense of their own realities.

Diverse analytical styles were selected according to how I categorized narratives—oral (narrative and thematic analysis) and visual (VPAR and thematic analysis). Regarding the interviews, focus groups, and oral storytelling, I drew predominantly from my own role as researcher to identify themes and tie them within the larger thesis narrative. Whereas editing and analysing visual materials was more participatory, encouraging dialogue between co-participants and myself on photo selection and interpretation. Dissemination will continue with involved community partners and co-participants, after the written thesis is complete, with hopes to co-produce a digital story to showcase children's and youth's narratives.

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Victoria's HREB guidelines). By producing a multi-sensorial project for audiences to engage and *listen to* children's and youth's narratives on foodscapes, conversations will continue on how relationships are articulated in school gardens and ways forward to co-create lasting change.

### **Chapter Three: Children and Youth Re-imagining Food Security Concepts of *Cultural Acceptability and Access***

#### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter expresses the knowledges selected and shared by co-participants during the research project. As previously mentioned in Chapter Two, in order to seek understanding of the abundant stories shared, I used a multi-method analysis, namely narrative, thematic and VPAR. These modes of academic discovery resulted in this section's major claims, which will be presented alongside co-participants' voices.

The research was committed to making space for children's and youth's voices, and their varied stories—orally and visually transmitted during the garden workshops. This research will also introduce readers to innovative ways to perceive food security concepts and ultimately re-imagine local food initiatives. The descriptions of the stories, elicited within the three Saskatoon school gardens, by eleven children and youth, as well as the seven adult co-participant educators and caregivers, will be woven together to support fulsome worldviews that both challenge and add to current conversations on food security.

I begin in section one of this chapter by outlining how food security concepts cease to be wholly relevant when compared to the ways young people frame their lived experiences with food. As a way to provide alternatives narratives to dominant food security constructs, I selected two commonly used terms, cultural acceptability (section two) and access (section three). I will guide readers through co-participants' culturally rich opinions and dialogues using the above terms as thematic domains to deconstruct and re-create. The chapter ends with a synthesis on what was discussed.

## **Section One: Introduction and Histories**

Foodscales are constantly in flux and movement. How one experiences food security may change multiple times throughout a year, dependent on multiple processes such as weather, available food spaces, employment, and health (Haering and Syed 2009; Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner 2016; Vozoris and Tarasuk 2003). Through this research project I learned how the neatly packaged definition on food security, provided by different governmental (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2006; Health Canada 2007; Roshanafshar and Hawkins 2015) and non-governmental organizations (Committee on World Food Security 2014; Food Banks Canada 2016), did not always represent how people interpreted their own food security. For example, the understanding that food security is, “when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO 2003), becomes tangled, diverse, and partial when learning from co-participants on their understandings of local food security.

School gardens at Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools were created in part to provide access to fresh vegetables and fruits to families in the community and as a way to address the epidemic of food desert neighbourhoods in Saskatoon’s core (E. Burke 2004; V. Morrison 2011; Peters and McCreary 2008; Woods 2003). Children and youth often selected seeds based on their personal and cultural food preferences. The food was routinely harvested and eaten in the garden, at home, and/or at school. Knowledge on growing food was shared through the gardening process by teachers, family caregivers, community gardeners, and program coordinators. What was not always formally acknowledged, were the teachings and opinions of the young people on food

access and food systems. The narratives explored further, in the below sections, by co-participants were firmly entrenched in the context of our garden workshops. While perceptions held by the children and youth will have undoubtedly changed according to new experiences, it is vital to collect these fluid stories in order to learn how younger generations are interacting with food security topics and hegemonic narratives.

#### Child Agency and Hegemonies:

At the risk of *othering* participating children and youth (James and Prout 2015, 212) by distinguishing their ways of knowing from hegemonic discourses, I wish to elaborate on theories of child agency in navigating neoliberal worlds. To argue that the eleven young people's food perspectives were completely separate from surrounding hegemonies ignores the socio-political context young people were immersed in. Co-participants were all raised in Canada and therefore had some shared experiences interacting within dominant micro-level and macro-level food systems (e.g., consumption patterns, urban foodscapes) (Hayward 2010, 3). A teacher I interviewed elaborates how food knowledges are shaped by different systems:

I think first it's odd in Saskatchewan that... there is a generation, like my grandparents, [who] were certainly part of that where growing food is what you did to survive and if you didn't grow food to survive, you were dead. It was hard to get food in the middle of winter, you had to do that, growing your own and keeping it. And now we rely so much on this commercial food system that we developed that you can live anywhere and get food anywhere. It may be expensive, it may be hard to come by, and maybe hard to get to, depending on where you live... We grow tons of food in this province. But it is all commercially done. I don't think that many kids have that connection to you think of a farm, well there is a combine or a tractor and it goes out and brings the wheat in, then it's made into bread... That kind of larger connection does not always come

through so this is a way for kids to understand that, yeah there is actually work involved in getting food. (Brad, pers. comm, June, 2013)

Young people were not, however, passive players moved by these structural forces. They were active contributors in shaping the foodscapes according to a relational praxis (Wihstutz 2016) that fostered creative autonomies in thinking outside (in addition to inside) of a neoliberal backdrop.

Florian Esser et al. critically examines how agency has been conceptualized in academia—something that all individuals innately have—and counters that “agency is found in practice with a whole network of different human and non-human actors, and is distributed among these” (2016, 9). Agency is redefined as relational and not performed uniformly by each child. In the three school gardens, co-participants practiced agency in multiple forms that were interconnected with the relationships circulating their social worlds.

For example, when children (not participating in the project) joined our garden workshops at Westmount, I told them that unfortunately I did not have extra cameras for them to use. I explained that the photo-making was intended only for the people I had permission to work with (my intention was to practice ethical research). One co-participant, however, immediately passed over her camera, scrapbooking supplies, and developed photographs for the newcomers to use. She then asked me if that was alright—unveiling power relations between us that intertwined with her expressions of agency. Within this web of relational agency, she prioritized social inclusion in the garden while also acknowledging the restrictions I had placed. Dominant discourses are influential but not sole contributors towards decision-making.

### Food Security and Hegemonies

Growing food resonates with diverse ways of knowing, and is enriched with lived histories and cultural worldviews, which guide how food is experienced. Anthropological theorists have emphasized the necessity to situate relationships in their research and learn culturally entangled historical and political processes (Fairhead and Leach 1996; Haraway 1988; J. W. Scott 2001). By discerning the taken-for-granted assumptions on discourses like food production, researchers are able to dismantle hegemonic categories that have been elevated to the universal by grand narratives (Fabian 1983; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013; Slocum 2006; Trouillot 1995; Wiebe et al. 2011). Researchers exploring how food insecurity is experienced by families have illustrated how perspectives on culturally acceptable foods and access are not homogeneous and rigid but heterogeneous and changing (Hammelman and Hayes-Conroy 2015; James, Kjörholt, and Tingstad 2009; Panelli and Tipa 2008). These lessons are especially crucial for conversations on food security, which I will unpack in order to better understand food ideologies rooted in agencies working with young people and gardening projects.

Historicizing and critically examining food security in Canada reveals key underlying western cultural assumptions emerging from scholarship, policies, and health regions (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013; Sonnino, Marsden, and Moragues-Faus 2016). Food security was first formally presented as an approach to international food challenges—e.g., the world food crisis of the 1970's when grain markets were impacted and mass global hunger seemed imminent (Shaw 2007). Narratives emerging from key

players' discussions on an international stage (e.g., Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - FAO and World Bank - WB) was that food should be a basic human right. The solution to food shortages was to draw upon current economic and agricultural systems to address food insecurity and redistribute food (FAO 2003).

There are pervasive neoliberal models of development persisting in food security discussions that have shaped initiatives in Canada (Allen and Guthman 2006; Hayes-Conroy 2010). For example, as mentioned by Nicholas Vozoris and Valerie Tarasuk (2003), there is currently more research being produced on measuring household and individual income's impact on food insecurity than on social and psychological impacts. The complex realities of people living with food insecurity have been regularly reduced to *objective* and quantifiable factors such as food intake and financial status (Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner 2016). Questions of cultural relevancy in food security have been disconcertedly omitted from the majority of literature.

It has only been under the aegis of community food security discourses that culture has seriously been considered (Gottlieb and Fisher 1996; Haering and Syed 2009; Rocha and Liberato 2013). Josie Steeves describes that, "for a population to be food secure, they must have healthful and *culturally acceptable* food available to them, the means to have *access* to sufficient food, and the knowledge to choose and prepare nutritious foods" (2015, 178, italics added). While a step in the right direction, that statement, like many others, have elements I found problematic after working alongside co-participants. Seemingly straightforward at first, when I dug into how different words were interpreted by institutions, I learned how such terminologies risked silencing other perspectives and were inherently limiting and exclusive.

In summary, the following two sections—“Cultural Acceptability” and “Food Access”—reveal dominant cultural discourses that continue to be responsible for persisting taken-for-granted paradigms in food security. By exploring how co-participants relate to their foodscapes through these thematic lenses, I will reframe how these cultural constructs can be more inclusive and make space for lived realities of young people working in urban school gardens. Multifaceted oral and visual narratives expressed by children and youth co-participants offer creative ways of transforming food security initiatives to be more reflective of a plurality of cultural relationships to food. As a way to honour the wealth of knowledge shared in this project, I will highlight different stories below with special attention to alternative ways of knowing food.

### **Section Two: Cultural Acceptability – Food and Relationships**

In the 1980’s and 90’s, national efforts to expand and situate food security to specific regions, households, and individuals resulted in a shift towards including terms like *acceptability*, *appropriateness* and *preference* to food security agendas. How communities felt and interacted with different foods became more relevant to policy-makers. It was during this time that cultural considerations was explored in greater detail (Holt-Giménez 2011; Jarosz 2014; Kouri Research 2013). The ways in which these inquiries have altered food security programs on the ground in Canada have remained unclear. Authors, Colleen Hammelman and Allison Hayes-Conroy (2015), are critical about the lack of information available of cultural foodways in food security discourses with the concern that “the continual call for cultural acceptability without specification

threatens a watering down of the concept” (39). The limited amount of space made for discussing culturally acceptable foodways is linked to strong dualities imposed on food.

### Nature and Culture Divide

One general assumption arising is how cultural and biological stories around food can be separated—belief of a *nature* and *culture* divide reduces food to an inanimate object of analysis. This perception supports that cultural expression of food can be cleaved from what is deemed natural and scientific, reinforcing the culture versus nature dichotomy (Fieldhouse 1995; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013). Western biomedical epistemological and ontological assumptions are perpetuated through knowledge production processes surrounding food that has runs the risk of fueling colonial mentalities (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Bradley and Herrera 2016; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013). Philippe Descola and Gisli Pálsson write about this dualism, exploring theological and historical roots of the division of culture from natural experiences (1996).

In the case of this research project, I found it interesting how culture is framed within food security definitions. Cultural processes are listed as an add-on to the many other considerations around food and ignores the inherently cultural nature of how communities come to understand foodscapes (Rocha and Liberato 2013). In most of the literature, food security is divided into distinguishable parts that regularly separates the concept of cultural acceptability from ideas of *health* and *nutritious* (Bradley and Herrera 2016). This ignores the wholly cultural production of scientific black boxes around health (Latour 1999; Scrinis 2013).

In western nutrition and health scholarship, healthy foods are based on a cultural practice of dividing food into smaller biological entities. Within these worldviews, food's intrinsic value depends on the nutrients, calories, and colours, which are assembled into different categories (e.g., food groups in nutrition guides) that are positioned in hierarchical models (Bradley and Liberato; Dowler et al. 2010; Pollan 2007; Scrinis 2013; Slocum 2013). Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy acknowledge how the dialogue between food security and *hegemonic nutrition* rhetoric has mutually produced biological truths around the natural essence of food. They quote that the discourse,

[p]retends to know food from *nowhere*, while being applicable *everywhere*; its disembodied objectivity not only attempts to universalize the richness of regional cultures and the complexities of the human-food-environment relationship, but it also feigns sensitivity to place and the epistemologies of location by incorporating them into its calculable logic. For example, the notable attention currently given to “cultural appropriateness” among nutrition practitioners... at first seems to contradict hegemonic nutrition's decontextualized nature. Yet, when we take a look at what cultural appropriateness has come to mean, we often find superficial praxis – e.g., altering BMI recommendations for certain ethnic groups, or including a wider range of “ethnic” foods in healthy eating guides. Culture is not central to the goals of hegemonic nutrition; it is an after fact, “stirred back in” to the reductionist food batter. (2013, 2, italics added)

These divisive tendencies in relating to food are in danger of erasing complex relationalities circulating foodscapes (Punch et al. 2009; Sonnino, Marsden, and Moragues-Faus 2016). Cultural nuances are perceived to be layered upon the foodstuffs—adding value but still exclusive from the physical existence of food parts. Food insecurity is not a disembodied global crisis but is experienced and interacted with by people on the ground. Perceiving food as a static object of analysis that fuels human bodies omits the rich social life interconnected with food. For example, a common framing of cultural foods in food

security sources is for people to have access to food they prefer reflecting cultural identities (Baker 2004; Bonnekesen 2010; Hammelman and Hayes-Conroy 2015).

Since I self-identify as Kurdish, culturally acceptable foods would therefore include *mastow* (mixture of plain yogurt and water), *yaprak* (stuffed vegetables with rice filling), and *tashreeb* (naan layered in a tomato-based stew). I would argue that these foods in of themselves are not primary to my cultural identity. It is the shared experience of family meals, sitting on a blanket on the floor in the family room, gathered in a circle, passing around the *mastow* and being urged by my uncle to eat more. The memories and emotional feelings emerging from those foods are more relevant to my sense of cultural self.

#### Children's and Youth's Different Relationalities to Foodscapes

By understanding how culturally acceptable food is interpreted by children and youth in the research, the focus shifted from an abstract construct to concrete, lived, food realities. Foodstuffs were broadened to encompass a holistic web of relationships connecting landscape, other-than-human beings, and human communities. Oral and visual narratives of co-participants delved into the cultural landscape, revealing underlying worldviews that oriented each person within their foodscape.

Within each school garden, young people and I did not explicitly talk about how culture shapes understanding but instead shared narratives, which had cultural teachings infused within. Culture ceased to be a static object of research and became a fluid process. Themes emerging from the narratives that linked to cultural relationships were how: gardening connects to 1) sense of place; and 2) playful transfer of knowledges.

Sense of Place: Community of Storied Plants, Insects, and Spirituality

School gardening practices evoke strong relationships to place, connected through children's and youths' engagement with plants, trees, stones, water, and the other beings sharing the space (Blizard and Schuster 2007; Orellana 2008). A relationship to the land may be collectively shared or particular to individual community members, resulting in manifold interactions and meanings attached to place (Basso 1996; Thornton 2008). Relationships between place and food are deeply interconnected as people dwell in landscapes, impacting how food is understood (Turner 2005).

Foodscares are interacted with and created through deep relationalities of food and place. Individual and community narratives on food are fashioned by the places where food is grown, purchased, prepared, and/or consumed (Brembeck and Johansson 2010; Mikkelsen 2011; Panelli and Tipa 2009). Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie (2015) elaborate on *critical place inquiry* and the all-consuming embodied power of place in shaping individual researchers, participants, and communities:

Landscapes are not simply cultural texts... their materiality must be understood through the body as we encounter these environments through sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touch and other sensual experiences... This is important for critical place inquiry certainly, as we understand experiences of and in place as embodied and sensual: that it is not just who we 'meet' in place in terms of social and cultural influences, but also that who we are and how we are is influenced by land and the nonhuman. (42)

The children and youth embodied narratives related to their cultural sense of place in growing food. Photographs illustrated intimate and diverse situated knowledges co-participants shared regarding the school garden and memories embedded in place. Namely,

children and youth connected to food through their social relationalities with other-than-human-beings (insects and plants). Close-up images of butterflies pollinating or wide-angle pictures of garden beds (taken from a higher vantage point that increased my heart rate) demonstrated how place meaning is in continuous dialogue with gardeners who experience these places summer after summer. This section will outline how cultural relationships to foodscapes were fostered.

1) Other-than-human beings in the garden:

*Early one morning at a school garden, Noah and I were quietly following a grasshopper as it jumped around the grassy expanse. No matter how carefully we treaded, the insect was always one jump ahead of us. Noah used his camera to zoom in with the hopes of catching a closer, detailed look of the grasshopper. We were brainstorming theories as to why the grasshopper jumped high and had the ability to camouflage in the garden. Without thinking I offered how, “maybe it is so birds don’t see them when they are hunting”. Noah became even more motivated to catch the insect so he could place it in a safe haven. After some time crawling on the grass, the elusive creature was at last caught. Noah brought him to the tangle of corn and tomato plants, offering the grasshopper refuge from hungry birds.*

*(Kukha-Bryson, field notes, August, 2013)*

Culturally steeped perceptions of certain animals (e.g., mosquitos, grasshoppers, and ants being categorized as *pests*) were less rigid in the school garden setting. Noah developed a relationship with the grasshopper (see Figure 16 and 17) while I was worrying

about the safety of the plants from an insect known to devastate crops. After watching the grasshopper on the corn, Noah tried to move it back to the grass:

He is right there. Jump. I want you to jump. He looks afraid...cause if a bird comes and spots him, well if a bird spots him, let's shoo the bird away. (pers. comm., August, 2013)



**Figure 16, Inquiry of Grasshopper, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013**



**Figure 17, Grasshopper on Hand, Digital Photograph Shereen, 2013**

Other-than-human beings present in the school gardens were made visible through the engagement and interest demonstrated by co-participants. Each individual young person had a distinct relationship with different beings, but there appeared to be a collective sense of inquiry. Whether the animal was identified as a crow, bumblebee, wasp, or earthworm, they were not ignored by co-participants. Instead, any sighting was broadcasted to everyone in the vicinity and stories on past or current experiences with the beings were communicated. Interactions with other-than-human beings were key in fostering places young people wanted to regularly visit over the course of the growing period. This supported food security by nurturing relationships in place and motivating people to return to beloved spaces where food is grown.

The opportunity to not only observe but understand the complex lives of animals by sharing foodscapes with them was groundbreaking for some young people. Learning, unlearning, and relearning cultural assumptions on how to relate to beings who thrive in school gardens ( Hultman, Lenz Taguchi, and Tqse 2010; Laaksoharju, Rappe, and Kaivola 2012) challenged a couple co-participants. The fear and discomfort of insects demonstrated, however, were allayed by older co-participants who mentored the group in insect and plant symbiotic well-being. The garden workshops built upon human and non-human relationships already in negotiation, through a continuum of experience occurring from the beginning of SGP in 2011. These moments of co-existence firmly entrenched foodscapes into co-participants' social lives, once again situating food from nowhere to somewhere.

Memories in place were evoked during another garden workshop when three co-participants and I were harvesting Saskatoon berries. The group walked past an oak tree and would not have known to stop if Julie had not interjected,

Have you ever seen a baby caterpillar? On the trees on the other side there are these little dots about outside the leaf, they are little circles like this but attached. We did not know what they were. My friend and I, on our sleepover, we looked at it, and we saw a tiny little fuzzy thing that had hatched...it wasn't moving yet but it was so tiny and some were purple. (pers. comm., July, 2013)

Julie and her friend's exploration of the school garden's resident oak tree animated our garden workshop. Everyone walked over to the tree and peered at the protruding red spots suspiciously. I heard the sound of cameras being turned on, and suddenly each co-participant was taking close-up images of the leaves. Julie's photograph (see Figure 18) was taken with her body leaning towards the tree, illustrating an intimate gaze towards the eggs.



**Figure 18, Oak Leaf, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**

2) Plants with a presence:

In addition to non-human animals, plant communities were valued by co-participants, deepening bonds to food produced, and introduced new ways to define the plant-human relationship in terms of food security. Frequently making invisible the living nature of food, discourses on food security have used noun-oriented language that promotes food as a finished product rather than a process infused with verb dynamism (Cadieux 2013; Cidro et al. 2015; Comaroff 2010; Health Canada 2007; Kimmerer 2013). At Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools, food came to include the ability to visit the plants themselves as a way to holistically understand their stories. In these contexts, the intrinsic value of plants was not solely related to the food produced but to the relationships formed between plants and gardeners who mutually relied on each other. Botanist and Indigenous scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer beautifully describes these interactions:

In a garden, food arises from partnership. If I don't pick rocks and pull weeds, I'm not fulfilling my end of the bargain. I can do these things with my handy opposable thumbs and capacity to use tools, to shovel manure. But I can no more create a tomato or embroider a trellis in beans than I can turn lead into gold. That is the plant's responsibility and their gifts: animating the inanimate. Now *there* is a gift. People often ask me what one thing I would recommend to restore relationship between land and people. My answer is almost always, "Plant a garden." It's good for the health of the earth and it's good for the health of people. A garden is a nursery for nurturing connection, the soil for cultivation of practical reverence. And its power goes far beyond the garden gate – once you develop a relationship with a little patch of earth, it becomes a seed itself. Something essential happens in a vegetable garden. It's a place where if you can't say "I love you" out loud, you can say it in seeds. And the land will reciprocate, in beans. (2013, 126)

i) *For the love of flowers:*

Each school garden had unique plant communities growing which reflected the interests and passions of the local young gardeners. At Westmount, co-participants continuously replanted vegetables—carrots and dill—to replace food they harvested. The seeds were not always placed in the raised beds but planted on the ground within the rock circle or in the compost bin. Young people made special effort to recall where these rogue seeds were located and water them at each garden session.

Confederation Park had brightly coloured pansies, daisies, pink dahlias, orange marigolds, crimson nasturtiums and light purple flowers on a borage shrub. I had initially been uncertain about the purpose of planting non-edible flowers (especially annual flowers) in school gardens. The children’s decision, however, to plant, regularly visit, and photograph these flowers (see Figure 19 and 20) illustrated how plants were honoured beyond the food they provided.



**Figure 19, Dianthus Flowers, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**



**Figure 20, Marigold Flowers, Digital Photograph, Aiden, 2013**

Another example of this was at the Mayfair garden. Co-participants particularly spent time interacting with the shrubs and fruit trees along the fences on the peripheral edges of the school garden. Watering cans were carried over to the saplings along with the ever popular hose painstakingly stretched as far as it would go. The fruit (e.g., berries) and flowers were the focal points for storytelling engagement.

This sentiment was echoed by a former staff member of AITC-SK who coordinated a number of school gardening programs. I had asked her about any advice she might have to educators who are working alongside children and youth in gardens:

I think people start to understand life more as an intrinsic thing, that it has intrinsic value rather than “I am just producing food”. That has always been my goal in the programs we run, that it is not just about “how many tomatoes can this garden produce”. It is never, never that. We have never, never asked that in a single survey, not even once...never about yield, never about efficiency, never about output. You know it is always been geared towards what have you learned through this process and how has this process been for you. And so, for me, I know that in some ways that does not directly reflect with the food system that we live in. The food system that we live in is so concerned about output, so

concerned about yield, and so concerned about efficiency, but I think our programs, like Little Green Thumbs, the outdoor garden programs, together I really like how they give root for another thing to happen. (Adrienne, pers. comm., September, 2013)

Deeper learning opportunities for young people arose through engagement with plant communities who defied all odds to survive the Saskatchewan winter year after year, the unsung heroes of food security and food systems.

ii) *Returning wonders: perennials and berries:*

The life force of these gardens was strengthened by the presence of perennials, which acted like pillars, supporting the relational foundation in place. A parent involved in this research shared a garden joke in passing, which really reverberated with how I understand plants in school gardening. Her and I were sitting down for tea and chatting about the plants growing in her backyard. When I asked whether she grew any flowers such as dahlias, she laughed and admitted that in her opinion,

Annuals are the Brittany Spears of the plant world. (Lori, pers. comm., August, 2013)

The fleeting life span of a number of plants (Saskatoon being in the hardiness zone 3b) made perennial plants more desirable for their resilience in the extreme prairie climate.

In the context of school gardens, perennials—often native to Saskatchewan—offered children and youth the opportunity to develop long-lasting relationships with plants that miraculously re-emerged every spring. Beloved plants returning year after year deepened stories—cultural memories of past encounters clinging to cherry tree saplings, a rhubarb stalk, and tart haskap berries, which gifted us with afternoon snacks. These plants were the strongest teachers in food literacy for the people who regularly engaged in the

gardens. Berry shrubs, for example, evoked narratives on berry harvesting, jam-making, and gift-giving.

Saskatoon berries are intricately connected to cultural identities of communities (e.g., Métis, First Nations, and settlers) living along the South Saskatchewan River on Treaty Six Territory. The name Saskatoon is rooted in the *nêhiyawêwin* word for saskatoon berries, *misâskwatômin*. Wild bushes populate the riverbanks where, during the months of July and August, families can be found rustling through the thickets, picking the small globes. While the school gardens were situated a distance from the river, children and youth volunteered stories revealing the significance of saskatoons to multiple foodscapes.

The presence of the native food plants in children's and youth's lives was one based on experiential practices of harvesting in accessible urban green spaces. For instance, along the outside fence of Mayfair Community School's field, mature saskatoon berry bushes tangled with other local plants and gifted the neighbourhood with their fruit. Co-participants and I would begin each garden workshop walking with great anticipation to see whether the berries were the dusky blue and purple that signified its readiness. Figure 21 shows the ripening berries taken by Julie, who assisted the younger co-participants with berry picking, chatting about the various delicious creations that are a quintessential comfort food—saskatoon berry jams, syrups, pies, and tarts. In hearing this, another co-participant suggested we make a pie out of the berries collected and Figure 22 showcases Julie's photo of our bounty collected for the dessert. Our engagement with the storied plant facilitated a shared food-making experience that revealed the value of having access to perennial bushes rather than solely the berry products.



**Figure 21, Saskatoon Berry Blur, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**



**Figure 22, Saskatoon Berry Harvest, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**

At another garden, across the street from Westmount, a beloved chokecherry tree resided, offering gifts to those who were lucky enough to walk by when the berries have ripened. Branches laden with berries trail close to the ground allowing young people to harvest. I had been introduced to the tree in 2011 by one of the SGP participants and the tree has played a significant role in our activities and teachings. Chokecherries are

indigenous to the prairie landscape and have been harvested for generations by communities who use the plant as medicine, tea, and food.

In August while making garden soup, a young boy who had been the greatest spokesperson for chokecherries at his school, asked if everyone present could check on the tree. He had been harvesting food to add to the soup, and wanted to see whether the berries were ripe. While peering up through the leaves to find berries, Mathew acknowledged that this was,

The best choke cherry tree... every summer we see them finished. Every time they are black when we go. (pers. comm., August, 2013)

His older brother Jacob held his camera inches away from a chokecherry cradled in his younger brother's palm and took a photograph with blurred lines—a black round smudge resting in a hand (see Figure 23).

The two brothers then collectively counted how many berries they had, setting aside fifteen berries for the soup. While walking back with our berry treasures, I asked Mathew about how he learned of the chokecherry tree. He talked about his Kokum and how she taught him about the healing properties of the plant—e.g., helps with coughs and colds. I nodded and everyone proceeded to eat them by the handfuls, saving a couple to be the healthy secret ingredient in our soup. His other sibling took a photo of the soup and included the image in her visual art project (see Figure 24). The intergenerational transfer of knowledge on spirituality was pivotal in his relationships to food.



**Figure 23, Chokecherry Close-up, Digital Photograph, Jacob, 2013**



**Figure 24, Soup, Digital Photograph, Jen, 2013**

3) Spiritual relationships in place:

Closely tied with topics on healing were meaning-making practices shaped by co-participants' spiritual lens. While I did not directly ask questions about spiritual worldviews, participating children and youth occasionally shared theological philosophies

and affiliations. Dawn Morrison, writing on Indigenous food sovereignty, teaches how foodscapes should not be alienated from the spiritual relationships and practices embodied by individuals and communities (2011). These connections have diverse and unique expressions through creation stories and daily food decisions that were revealed by co-participants.

During the first garden workshop session at each school, I asked the question, *where does your food come from?* One young person eagerly answered,

Our food comes from Jesus. (Mathew, pers. comm., July, 2013)

Upon further inquiry, he talked about how he learned this teaching from bible camp that he and his siblings attended that summer. The confident and matter-of-fact way he understood food's creation was echoed by two other co-participants who belonged to a close-knit Christian faith community. They had, in part, been encouraged to garden by their family in order to be closer to the sacred since the natural world was created by God. In spending time outside, growing food, these young people were strengthening their spiritual relationships.

Different co-participants' awareness on how spirituality shapes food superseded my own narrow approach as both an individual and researcher. My personal academic journey within socio-cultural anthropology introduced me to diverse relationships communities have with the sacred and yet, I was initially surprised to learn of co-participants' faith ties to their food. Their narratives further eschewed the nature and culture divide and challenged my tendencies to isolate food from the sacred. I became more open to different knowledge systems through this research experience.

### Playful Transfer of Knowledges

In anthropological domains, human knowledges are explored within the framing of these questions: *how and what do people know?*; *how do people come to know?*; and *whose knowledges are privileged above others?* (Cohen 2011; Fabian 2012). Knowledges are explained as situated and embodied—flowing and constantly in flux (Haraway 1988). The power structures dictating which cultural knowledges are naturalized over others, perpetuate the myth that select hegemonic knowledges are objective and not tethered to subjective knowledge producers (Tsing 2005). In regard to food security, the Committee of World Food Security (which is made up of multiple stakeholders including small-scale farmers and youth) has attempted to challenge the assumption that food knowledges can be de-contextualized (Committee of World Food Security 2014). The constructed hierarchy of whose cultural knowledge is listened to ultimately impacts food systems and author Molly Anderson argues instead “that forms of knowledge generation, transmission, and access must be participatory, multi-actor, iterative, and transparent in order to build food security resilience” (2015, 543).

#### 1) Silence and marginalization of young people’s knowledges:

Children’s and youth’s cultural knowledges on food are silent within a number of official food security documents developed by governmental and academic institutions (Engler-Stringer, Schaefer, and Ridalls 2016; Fram et al. 2011; Genuis et al. 2014; Hammond, Hesterman, and Knaus 2015). Information about young people commonly emerges when highlighting national/regional statistics about which age demographics are living with food insecurity (Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner 2016). While the numbers are

indeed disturbing on how many children and youth lack access to food (may access be blocked for reasons economic, social, health, physical, political, etc.), young people's actual experiences of food security are not always included. Rather, the younger generations are reduced to data about *vulnerable populations*, framed more as victims of a food system than active players (Haering and Syed 2009; Widome et al. 2009). Prevention and intervention efforts on food insecurity reinforce these beliefs and focus primarily on outreach with caregivers and educators who are then expected to engage young people in food literacy and programming.

Freire outlined how dialectic relationships between students and educators are necessary to overcome educational paradigms in which the educator has ultimate authority (2005). Rather than a *banking* style of education where students are seen as empty vessels to be filled with a teacher's knowledge, he supports a participatory form of education (Freire 2005: 80). He elaborates how teachers "must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world. "Problem-posing" education, responding to the essence of consciousness—*intentionality*—" (Freire 2005, 79). Through open and critical communication with children and youth around topics such as food security, young people can contribute their knowledges towards the building of innovative and creative solutions that are culturally relevant.

While visiting a northern Saskatchewan community during the winter months of 2014, I had the pleasure of meeting young people who described how their community celebrated Indigenous foodways. In addition to their great experiences growing food in and out of the classroom, students were annually acknowledged for their trapping, hunting, and

fishing knowledges by being crowned either *trapper queen* or *king*. I considered deeply how their narratives related to my own experiences in Saskatoon where there are Indigenous food sovereignty practices fostered by families, neighbourhoods, organizations, and educational centres—many of which emphasize the importance of younger generations sustaining relationships with food.

In exploring how narrow concepts of cultural acceptability can be broadened in relation to young people's food knowledges, it is vital for other food security players to recognize *how* knowledge is transferred instead of paying attention solely to the content. Growing food is co-dependent on the transfer of knowledges. The intricate social nature of knowledge sharing infuses foodscapes with relationship dynamics that were highlighted by co-participants. The ways in which teachings and stories were generated by co-participants were primarily through engagement in play.

2) Plant awareness and the *garden express*:

*With the help of two young people, we pulled open the creaking metal shed and peered into the dark. Once our eyes adjusted to the gloom I stepped back with a gasp. The shed was packed floor to ceiling with gardening supplies, each precariously balanced on top of the other. One of the co-participants started to pull everything out in order to access the coveted wheelbarrow and yard cart crammed in the back of the shed. Belying the more conventional usages for these wheeled pieces of equipment, the young people envisioned a different potential.*

*In previous years, the wheelbarrow had served as a kiddie pool or shelter away from the hot sun. The most favoured use, however, was imagining the wheelbarrow and yard carts as garden express trains. This was a game invented by participants of the SGP*

*where the conductor pulled passengers around the garden and visited different garden attractions, some of which are displayed in Figure 25, 26, and 27. On that particular day (first garden workshop at Westmount), co-participants were framing their photo-making session and decided to engage with photography while on the garden express:*

*Shereen: Hello welcome to garden express. Please pay me in carrots. Thank you. We will now commence garden express, please be careful.*

*Mathew: Hey take a picture of me.*

*Shereen: To your left we have tomato jungle, is full with big juicy tomatoes. Does anyone see a tomato in tomato jungle?*

*Jen: Yup, little small ones.*

*Shereen: Awesome. Oh no the big ant king is coming. We have to hurry. We are now entering onion city. Does anyone see where the onions are? How can you tell those are onions?*

*Anna: By eating them.*

*Mathew: Dill!*

*Jen: Mmm it tastes good.*

*Shereen: We are now leaving dill to the circle garden, we now have some turbulence and we are entering flower valley.*

*Mathew: Everyone say cheese.*

*All: Cheese.*

*Shereen: We missed circle town, the circle of rocks that is your outdoor classroom. We have to go faster.*

*Anna: Woah woah woah!*

*Shereen: We are now taking on two other passengers. Let's keep on going.*

*Anna: Now we are going to pea valley...look at the little peas.*

*Shereen: Oh my gosh, collect everything you can.*

*Jen: But not everything.*

*Anna: I feel like we are doing a tour on a farm.*

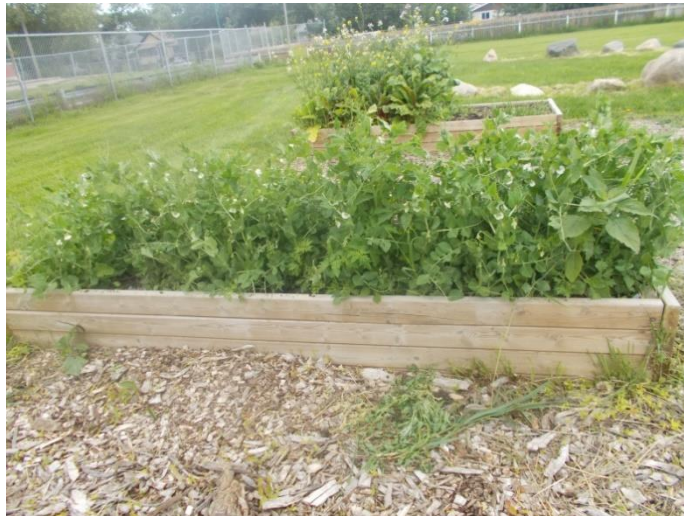
*(audio recording, pers. comm., July, 2013)*



**Figure 25, Circle of Courage, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013**



**Figure 26, Dill, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013**



**Figure 27, Pea Valley, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013**

How the concept of play is understood and defined in disciplines like anthropology and education is linked to cultural context where the practice of play is expressed (Anthamattena, Wee, and Korris 2012; Chesworth 2016; Schwartzman 1978). For the purpose of my research, I looked to literature exploring how children's play in school gardens is indivisible from their funds of knowledges (Chesworth 2016; Karabon 2016;

Stanley 2011). During the garden express, co-participants used the game to demonstrate their knowledges on what was growing in raised beds. One young person in particular followed the wagon with her camera, video recording the game with commentary. Every time I mentioned different produce, she would rush over to the plant's location and whisper the name, showcasing her knowledge to the audience.

### 3) Knowledge and virtual playscapes:

What I learned through these interactions was how play provided young people with space to connect garden practices with important processes in their home life. As described by Catherine Burke (2008), "the space and place of children's play is, and always has been, a rich cultural landscape, infused with meaning that children make for themselves out of materials and sites that occupy them" (24). A garden program's strength relies in its ability to cultivate interests belonging to children. This was especially essential to prioritize during the garden workshop. The detailed workshop agenda I developed, based on my own funds of knowledge, was challenged by the ontologies of co-participants who taught me new and exciting ways of knowing.

*We are munching on our garden bounty as I worriedly look at the three co-participants, interpreting their silence as a lack of engagement with the activities planned. It was the second morning in the garden and the young people and I were ready for a break after preparing a salad and saskatoon berry tarts. Throughout the session, I could sense discomfort from some of the young participants who were unfamiliar with the garden (having not previously participated in the SGP).*

*My heart continues to sink when Zachary pulls out his phone and begins to play Minecraft, attracting the attention of others. I interpret this decision as further evidence of*

*disengagement and am about to end the workshop for the day when he starts to talk about his Minecraft garden. Showing me the plants he is growing, we talk in depth about his virtual crops of wheat and what steps were followed to grow grain—storing and sowing seeds, watering, fertilizing, harvesting and baking bread. Another young person who is passionate about the world of Minecraft joins the conversation and they have an animate discussion as to why certain plants grow easier in the game than others.*

*(Kukha-Bryson, field notes, August, 2013)*

My belief that playing video games in the garden meant there was decreased interest changed after listening to co-participants' stories. Experiences intertwined in multiple scapes (e.g., media cultures) and generated complex intersectionalities of relationships to growing food. I learned from co-participants that virtual gardening in Minecraft was a playscape that drew meaning from gardening foodscapes and vice versa. As a researcher and program coordinator, it was vital that I honour young people's funds of knowledge, even if I initially thought it was not relevant to the activity at hand.

### **Access: Breaking Boundaries for Food Access**

In its broadest sense, the concept of food access refers to a community's ability to directly connect to food. Initially, FAO had been concerned mainly with availability of food due to food shortages and market crises. This changed in the 1980's when it was observed how local communities may have a wide selection of foodstuffs available but do not have ready access (Jarosz 2014; Shaw 2007). This was due to marginalizing factors such as colonial policies, financial constraints, food deserts, social stigmas, and political

sanctions (DuPuis, Harrison, and Goodman 2011; Holt-Gimenez 2011; Leete, Bania, and Sparks-Ibanga 2011; Skinner, Pratley, and Burnett 2016; Woods 2003). There is less insight, however, on how access can be experienced and defined differently by children and youth (Hammond, Hesterman, and Knaus 2015).

Co-participants had unique and varied perspectives on food security that forced me to challenge my preconceived notions of access in Saskatoon. Based on my previous work with the school garden communities, I was partially aware how food insecurity was experienced by a number of students and was prepared for these conversations to be difficult. Co-participants' were more interested, however, in talking about ways to move forward and to re-contemplate their garden.

I argue in this section that food security grand narratives that emphasize neoliberal versions of access are countered in the school gardens. Narratives illustrate how economic access is only one of many interdependent processes involved in food relationalities. Through the examination of younger generations' interactions with food access in public places, I learned how co-participants instead prioritized: 1) social access—*who* was able to interact and eat in the garden—and 2) land access—how garden *boundaries* should be more permeable and inclusive.

### Social Access to Food: Dispelling the Little Red Hen Mentality

Through my work with AITC-SK, I traveled across the province providing agriculture and garden outreach programming to elementary schools. The primary aim was to start conversations about how food was connected to different plants and food

production practices in the province. A favourite of educators and students was grinding wheat in a floury flurry to make bannock. The sensorial experience of touching the sticky dough, smelling the whole wheat flour, tasting the bannock, and listening to food narratives supported a more engaging learning environment. Before students and I began baking, I often situated the activity in a story.

I am standing in front of a classroom with a large storybook clutched in my hands and thirty pairs of eyes directed towards me. Flour is still floating in the air and children are crunching on kernels of wheat. I clear my throat and begin to set the stage for storytime. *As you taste the wheat kernels, we are going to learn what delicious foods can be made from wheat. Has anyone read the Little Red Hen?* A number of young people begin nodding and recalling the popular children's story. The teacher laughs and asks for everyone's attention while I open up the large book cover. "Once upon a time, a cat, and a dog, and a mouse, and the little red hen all lived together in a cozy little house..." (Galdone 2003).

I have read this book countless times until the message has become rote, my focus being more on student participation and learning moments. This time, however, I experience an unsettling instant with one of the book's key teachings. During the little red hen's rant at the end of the story, I finally hear the problematic assumption emerging from her words: "all by myself I planted the wheat, I tended the wheat, I cut the wheat, I took the wheat to the mill to be ground into flour. All by myself I gathered the sticks, I built the fire, I mixed the cake. And all by myself I am going to eat it" (Galdone 2003).

The little red hen decided the lack of assistance in growing the wheat and baking the cake justified her decision to exclude the cat, dog, and mouse from eating the finished

product. Their disinterest in cooperating meant the right to food was revoked. My mind began whirring and I felt as if I awoke from a dream. I realized how much this story's taken-for-granted mentality reduced the complexities of foodscapes. It ignored questions such as: whose voices (e.g., cat, dog, mouse) are marginalized?; who (red hen) is defining concepts such as participation and hard work?; could a lack of engagement be due to invisible barriers?; and was this experience empowering the other characters to grow and produce food? I finish the narrative and want to apologize to the students for reinforcing these ideas of food access. It was not until conducting this research that I learned alternative concepts, from co-participants, on communities' right to food.

1) Neoliberal constructions of access:

The message within the *Little Red Hen* contributes to the body of pervasive narratives that teaches how food access is contingent on displays of hard work and/or transaction (gardening labour, money, volunteering, etc.). Graham Riches and Tiina Silvasti reflect on the economic frameworks propelling food rights discourse in more affluent nations. They argue that, "In the prevailing food system the right to food is provided by money in the market place. If the consumer, for one reason or another, lacks money, she or he loses the right to food... When citizens are made to be consumers, rights are easily made to be business transactions or contractual agreements (Silvasti, 2008)" (2014, 9).

In accordance to this mode of thinking, only those who pay for plots, plant, maintain, or help harvest are legitimate in accessing the food within community gardens (Hayes-Conroy 2010; Pudup 2008). Families or individuals who have not been financially

or temporally involved may experience barriers in eating the produce due to external pressures (gatekeepers in the garden) or feelings of alienation. This is emphasized by a teacher participating in this research project. In particular, she talked to the monetary cost associated with belonging to certain foodscapes, may it be community supported agriculture or community gardens. She worried that pervasive capitalist paradigms could restrict access to food:

I was just reading about neoliberalism yesterday so I sort of want to call it neoliberalism or capitalism, the managerial kind of way that we go about organizing our society that seems natural... but it's just because we think that it's the way that it has to be... they [people involved in a community supported agricultural initiative] felt like a member because they had to pay to be a member of it. So that is where their belonging came from. It wasn't because they spent any time there but it was because they had a financial stake in that produce for that year. So that is an interesting way to think how people come to a particular sense of belonging as well. It is strange in the way that our urban society is structured is around money. So for some people to feel like they have access is to pay... and if you didn't pay for it [community garden plots], if it was just assigned, you might just let it go to weed and like "oh well, I didn't pay for it. (Audrey, pers. comm., September, 2013)

The overarching message in the *Little Red Hen* was reinforced (albeit differently) in the three school gardens by a number of educators and program coordinators—myself included. We affirmed the young gardeners, who were regularly present and dedicated to the space, wanting to celebrate those who volunteered their time. Since the garden was grown primarily for and by the local learning community, the emphasis was on engaging students during the spring and summer. Classrooms were invited to use the garden and eat produce as long as a portion of the abundance was saved for nutrition programs and harvest meals. In two of the schools, other social networks beyond the school community were secondary to the strategic plan in food access. Dynamics shifted once summer holidays

commenced and people dispersed. Staff left for a much needed break and local families became the primary caregivers of garden spaces. I witnessed children and youth working to move away from exclusive practices, challenging neoliberal views on access and opening the garden to wider social circles.

2) Gardens as socialscapes:

The majority of stories told by young people revolved around family members, covering topics such as family farms and gardens, grandparents' food production practices, siblings' personal taste preferences, and family knowledges on growing food. The importance of social inclusion stemmed partly from the group norms co-created during SGP. To illustrate, at Mayfair, family groups would attend and help with gardening tasks over the summer. One co-participant's photograph (see Figure 28) revealed the integral role her family played in the garden. The previous week, the SGP Leader had asked for some children to plant a haskap seedling. Unfortunately, the only available site was occupied by a rotting tree trunk. The co-participant's mom, attending that day, volunteered to work alongside three other children and chip away at the stump. After two exhausting hours, the seedling was planted. This social memory was captured in photograph, during a garden workshop, to remember the presence of her mother in the garden.



**Figure 28, Haskap Memory, Digital Photograph, Julie, 2013**

Children and youth co-participants also placed precedence on welcoming people to enjoy the space and produce throughout this project's garden workshops. For example, one afternoon at Westmount, co-participants and I were preparing to make garden spaghetti when I heard running footsteps across the park. Suddenly a group of young people rushed into the garden. Our small collection of five people swelled into a gathering of thirteen as cousins, siblings, and good friends were attracted to the activity. I was hyper aware of which photos, voices, and stories could not be shared in this project due to lack of consent, but did not want to prevent the flow of people into the garden. Co-participants explained what they were doing and initiated a harvesting blitz with those who had recently arrived. I added more spaghetti noodles to the pot (they were mysteriously disappearing and tossed against the shed to see if the noodles would stick). Cameras were passed around for newcomers to take photographs of the garden and each other. Plastic bags were also distributed so children and youth could carry harvested produce home. The session ended

with a feast of spaghetti (see Figure 29) and future plans to make cookies during the next workshop to celebrate a participating gardener's birthday.



**Figure 29, Spaghetti Feast, Digital Photograph, Shereen, 2013**

For one co-participant, an entire page in their visual art project was dedicated to this day, illustrating the vibrant social landscape of the garden. Seven photographs—of two friends (not participating in the research) and myself—were taped to the paper and organized so each person had their own section. While the art cannot be shared due to the lack of informed consent, the story is an integral piece in countering the dominant neoliberal understanding of food access. Three images depicted us in action, eating spaghetti or pulling weeds, acting as if we were unaware of the camera's presence. The other photographs were close-up portraits of each person smiling big at the camera. By dropping-in, friends and other family members were immediately integrated within the garden's rhythm, despite their months' long absence.

Produce was available not only for those who cared for the gardens, but for anyone who visited the space during or after programming hours. Children and youth were primary decision-makers on how food was used and shared during the summer. Foodstuffs were eaten fresh off the plant, added to a garden meal, saved for other family members, or purposefully untouched so others could eat at a later date. School staff often requested that certain plants remain unharvested until September so the school body could enjoy a harvest meal. Co-participants, aware of the other groups who used the garden, advised others not to pick all of the produce.

### 3) Reciprocity practices in garden engagement:

Diverse practices of social inclusion by co-participants within the school garden foodscapes did not mean, however, there were no systems of reciprocation. Relationships would become tense if someone felt that they did not receive similar treatment from others, especially regarding equitable time doing an activity. The concept of food access once again expanded beyond a focus on receiving foodstuffs, to encompass the equal sharing of *experiences* arising from the process of growing food. For instance, co-participants had strong senses of justice and would push back if people were dominating certain tasks, such as watering with the hose or using the wheelbarrow. A mental record was kept on whose turn it was to use those coveted garden tools.

Figure 30 illustrates these complex social norms of reciprocity where two co-participants are watering the garden. The greater distance between the photographer and the other two children may be due to the desire to avoid the water zone with their digital technology. One co-participant hovers near the hose, waiting until the other person respects

garden protocol and passes on the fun task of spraying the plants (and people). Soon after that photo was taken, everyone was soaked by someone's good aim!



**Figure 30, Watering, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**

The practice of reciprocity contrasted with the morality embedded in the *Little Red Hen* because all co-participants prioritized having equal opportunities for participation in foodscapes. This echoes food justice rhetoric that prioritizes social equity in determining access to growing food (Alkon and Agyeman 2011). If I was to re-imagine the storybook according to the social rules existing in the three school gardens, the main character—little red hen—would not have been the sole person initiating activities but would have made space for the cat, dog, and mouse to choose how they wished to participate.

### Physical Access to Food: Contrasting Understandings of *Community Gardening*

Central to food security discourses is physical accessibility of food for communities and sharing growing space (Baker 2004; Carlsson 2010; Fairholm 1998;

Grosso and Crewe 2004; Walker et al. 2010). Gardening projects in urban centres have become key initiatives by local organizations and neighbourhoods to facilitate access. Gardens serve as animating places where people with diverse foodways can collectively grow produce and harvest from perennial native plants. How particular projects are physically structured (e.g., raised beds, ground plots, rooftops, vertical, food forests) and practiced reflects a multiplicity of approaches and narratives circulating food production (Pudup 2008; Saul and Curtis 2013). Despite the variety of garden projects—embodying unique rationales and protocols—all are often conflated under the banner of *community gardening*, essentializing the heterogeneous nature of these initiatives. Hilda Kurtz challenges the blanket term and encourages a critical inquiry:

Widespread enthusiasm for the benefits of community gardens, however, has been accompanied by a lack of attention to differences between community gardens as physical and social spaces... I argue that the variability in physical and social organization of community gardens contributes to markedly different experiences of fostering community in urban neighborhoods... which urban residents negotiate shared, changing, and sometimes contested meanings of both “community” and “garden”. (2001, 659-660)

In the context of this study, each school garden was initially structured according to staff and coordinator perspectives, in addition to existing spatial characteristics. A common value shared by garden organizers was to ensure the gardens were utilized and sustained for the long-term. It was discovered that this could only be actualized through greater family involvement. For example, one of the participating schools has the largest garden space, leaving plenty of room for the development of both school and community plots.

1) A tale of two garden styles:

To elaborate, after the grassy expanse alongside this school was turned into a blossoming learning garden, the Community School Coordinator invited families in the community to grow food alongside students. Raised beds, built by the young people, were typically planted by classrooms while the ground plots were designated community spaces—one exception being a large plot cared by a public nurse who grew plants for the school's fall harvest celebration. The co-existence of these two gardening approaches—school learning garden and community food garden—resulted in a dynamic social space. Before individuals signed up, the Community Coordinator emphasized the importance of encouraging child and youth's presence and participation in the gardens. This is echoed once again by Kurtz who observed a societal trend in North America where,

Community gardens are often intended to improve the social environment of children as well as adults (Riddell, 1993; Severson 1987), offering them valuable recreational space and activities. Whether formally or informally, many of these gardens are used by adults to mentor children, and to introduce them to natural processes of growth, fruition, and decay, and to social processes of cooperation and collective effort (Keller 1994). (2001, 658)

Tensions arose, however, when different concepts of community coincided—some wishing to adopt a more neoliberal model of gardening with assigned individual garden plots developed solely to produce yield. Children and youth participating in this research had significant re-envisioning on how to spatialize the school gardens resulting in a divide between community and school gardeners. For instance, there were competing visions

surrounding who had access to certain spaces. A couple gardeners, with allocated plots, voiced worry about the presence of young people running near their plants. Concerns over vandalism or carelessness particularly arose when tall corn stalks grown by community gardeners became trampled by hide-and-seek games and cobs of corn were tossed to the ground. People who did not appreciate their produce being wasted or disturbed asked school staff to implement more strict guidelines, thereby enforcing respect for boundaries.

2) Challenging community and private dichotomies:

Co-participants who introduced more fluid and experiential ways to grow food blurred binaries of community and private spaces within the gardens. At one school, seeds were sowed in the raised beds by different classrooms (signs stapled to the wood stating the teacher's name and grade). Over July and August, children and youth enthusiastically watered, weeded, and harvested from *all* of the beds, regardless of which class initially planted the bed. The intention for the school garden to be first and foremost a learning space fostered community, offering open access to interact and explore over the summer months.

*During the second garden workshop, co-participants and I were walking along the border of the school garden. Each ground plot had string wrapped around wooden stakes separating gardens from each other. I watched as the four young people stepped past the boundaries without hesitation. I remained alone at the margins of the school garden, conflicted as to whether I should follow suit. The plots were not formally recognized as private property, but I felt the same wariness as if I was trespassing. I called out to the children who were not experiencing the same paralysis,*

*Shereen: Ok everyone, we were asked not to harvest any food in those gardens. Does anyone know why?*

*Kayleigh: Because it is a private garden.*

*Shereen: What does private garden mean to you?*

*Kayleigh: It means you can't take from it and it is private.*

*Shereen: So what does a community garden mean?*

*Rainbow Panda: It means anyone can take from it.*

*(audio recording, pers. comm., July, 2013)*

The area gardened by community members was perceived to be private whereas the school garden was a community space for anyone to access produce. Sofya Aptekar (2015) demonstrates similar dynamics where ideas of property and land ownership in public gardens manifest through the construction of (or lack of) fences, locks, signage, and surveillance cameras. This impacts who feels included or excluded (214). Co-participants were aware of the restrictions—no harvesting, running through the rows, pulling plants, etc. The water and shed key were only available for adult volunteers or coordinators, reflecting concerns of theft. These protocols and assumptions did not wholly alienate young people from the gardens, the boundaries transformed through their photographs.

All co-participants at the garden took images of community plots, illustrating how these plants and spaces were still included within their foodscapes. How they positioned their bodies and cameras differed greatly from image to image. Some photographs were made by standing tall and tilting the camera down to attain a bird's eye view on rows of beans or carrots (see Figure 31 and 32) while others crawled into the foliage and took an

insect's eye view of bean plants, leaving an impression of a forest (see Figure 33). The intimacy and creativity with which they interacted with the community garden plots illustrated relationalities with plants that transcended boundaries created by adult gardeners.



**Figure 31, String Boundary, Digital Photograph, Aiden, 2013**



**Figure 32, Carrot Rows, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**



**Figure 33, Bean Forest, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

Co-participants offered alternative visions for respectful engagement between school and community garden places. Taking time to build relationships with all plants (regardless of where they are situated) and the landscape that sustained them promoted long-lasting practices that appreciated both plant communities and the families who were growing them. The prioritizing of a shared garden experience challenged private and individualistic gardening models. How young people interacted in the diverse spaces resonated with contemporary research by Aptekar on community gardens that resist neoliberal structures:

It was important to these gardeners that the community garden was easily accessed and welcoming to everyone... Within the garden, the community space vision meant an emphasis on the quality of interactions between people. Growing respectful relationships came before growing food or looking green and lush... Within the parameters of this vision, building of boundaries between individual plots was a physical manifestation of suspicion and lack of civility. Gardeners who believed that the garden should be a community space criticized those who protected their plots with fences and locks... For them, the garden was

first and foremost a public community space where it was unreasonable to expect the same experience as in a private backyard. Some pointed out that people who took the produce might be hungry, or not have access to fresh food. (2015, 219)

Making space for community was important for the majority of young people at the other two schools as well. School-community garden hybrids are unique in that typically, collective gardens in Saskatoon are initiated in parks, unused lots, and individual's yards. One co-participant explained in more detail why it is important to consider school gardens as community-based:

There is enough food for everyone, if anyone is hungry, they can just come and take some. That's why community gardens are pretty much important... you need room for the garden for the roots and stuff, and plants... talk to their school to make a community garden. (Julie, pers. comm., August, 2013)

Julie's suggestion—that public gardens be an initiative of school communities—was a ground breaking solution to support access and availability of gardening space for growing food. Schools that are commonly attached to wide fields, are in good positions to support community gardening initiatives. Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community School gardens were developed in part to ensure the communities living near the garden had access to the fresh produce or culturally relevant food ways. However, in order for people to feel comfortable to dwell in garden places, there needs to be social connections and sense of belonging (Kingsley and Townsend 2006). Once school closed for holidays, it was often the young people participating in the garden program who spearheaded community engagement, thereby strengthening social and land access to food.

## Chapter Summary

To summarize, food security discourses that produce and naturalize constructs on culturally acceptable foods and food access are rooted in hegemonic western and neoliberal ways of knowing that are made more nuanced through children and youth co-participants' complex and diverse perspectives. The histories and pervasive assumptions in food security knowledge producers—e.g., FAO, government, health region, and research institutions—are connected to neoliberal systems, which are consumed by an economic approach to security as well as scientific teachings that reinforces a culture versus nature divide. This ultimately impacts how local community initiatives are structured and implemented.

Pervasive narratives on how food security relates to foodscapes became more nuanced by young co-participants. Culturally diverse oral and visual stories evoked during research garden workshops were disseminated in this chapter to both deconstruct and re-imagine terms like culturally acceptable and access. For example, food ceased to be viewed as a static consumable but instead was interacted with in a way that demonstrated the social life of plants and their produce. Children's and youth's photographs, visual art projects, and oral reflections introduced webs of dynamic connections and relations weaving throughout their foodscapes that engaged with topics around culture and access. This illustrated how younger generations in Saskatoon have important roles to play in strengthening school gardens as places for communities to participate in local food security.

## Chapter Four: Reflections, Recommendations, Limitations, and Future Research

### Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I conclude with four sections describing how a community-based project has amplified co-participants' narratives and engagements in school gardening foodscapes. Research significance is outlined in section one and reinforced by three thematic strands, Methodologies, Cultural Acceptability, and Access. Each theme highlights two primary findings—Methodologies: 1) *cultural safety*; 2) *VPAR*; Cultural Acceptability: 3) *relationships in place*; 4) *playful transfers of knowledge*; and Access: 5) *social access*; and 6) *physical access*.

Knowledges shared by participating young people, as well as current practices within Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools, generated six concluding recommendations that are listed in section two. Stakeholders interested in understanding how food security conversations and school garden foodscapes can be more inclusive and empowering, will have an opportunity to review a synthesis of young people's teachings (also see Appendix A).

Section three reports research limitations and gaps that provide direction for future anthropological and interdisciplinary research on children's and youth's relationships to foodscapes. The research's shortcomings that also left room for additional research are described within three headings: 1) self-reflexivity and food sovereignty; 2) multilocality and foodscapes; and 3) time constraints and longitudinal research.

To honour the narrative foundation of this paper, the thesis closes with section four as a descriptive prose that seeks to detail the rhythm of relationships developed in school gardening places.

### **Section One: Project's Conclusions**

#### Research Significance: The *Roots* of the Matter

This thesis demonstrates the significance of making spaces for co-participants' oral and visual narratives to be evoked and shared—invigorating local school garden foodscapes with cultural relationalities that cultivate the seeds of holistic inclusion and equitable access to food. Hegemonic narratives shaping food security initiatives have silenced and marginalized knowledges and worldviews of young people. This study reveals why it is necessary to challenge dominant assumptions on food security circulating within different institutions. Namely, the disempowering myth that young people (especially those who live in cities) suffer chronic and universal deficiency in knowledge on food production and security (Crooks 1999; Green and Duhn 2015; James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad 2009). Statements like, *children do not know where their food comes from*, or, *children think food only comes from a grocery store*, laments the perceived loss of younger generations' relationships to healthy food and has lasting effects on food security discourses. The dominant theoretical slot (Trouillot 2003) children and youth, in Canadian urban centres, are placed by food security literature, is one of *novice*, *unaware*, or *victim* (Brembeck et al. 2013; Engler-Stringer, Schaefer, and Ridalls 2016; Horton et al. 2013).

This research project cautions against blanket representations on how children and youth are making sense of their foodscapes since it leaves little space for young people to share their array of experiences and knowledges. It does not take into account, for example, those children and youth I worked with who have dedicated themselves to their school garden each year since its development in 2011. The community-based project was an empowering platform to amplify younger generations' narratives regarding strong relationalities situated in the three school gardens located on Treaty Six Territory (Saskatoon, SK).

Garden workshops were initially intended to highlight relationships to foodscapes via image-making (elaborating on how garden programming can be sustained for the long-term) but I was humbled by the creative directions the research took in response to the initiations of co-participants. Fieldwork conducted with eleven children and youth, between the ages of five and twelve, demonstrated expansive, accumulated knowledge and innovative ideas on how to change garden foodscapes. How they envisioned the trajectory of their school gardens and foodscapes in general was different from dominant discourses in food security domains.

Taken-for-granted frameworks embedded in food security conversations have shaped how concepts of culturally acceptable foods (Bradley and Herrera 2016; Hammelman and Hayes-Conroy 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013) and access to food (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Aptekar 2015; Guthman 2011) are articulated in initiatives like school gardens. While food security discourses consist of contrasting or diverging standpoints, depending on numerous processes (history, cultural assumptions, local vs. global), there are powerful ideological influences (Carlsson 2010; Holt-Gimenez

2011; Jarosz 2014; Riches 2002; Sonnino, Marsden, and Moragues-Faus 2016). Neoliberalism and how it is navigated by local communities has expressions that constrict ways food and land (foodscapes) are engaged—for example community garden foodscapes bounded into plots that are the *property* of the gardener (Kurtz 2001). The crux of this research project revolved around illustrating how these concepts, relatively unchallenged by different knowledge producers, have the potential to be resisted by children and youth in school garden foodscapes. As mentioned in the chapter overview, below are three thematic categories (methodology, cultural acceptability, and access) that introduce six key conclusions: 1) cultural safety; 2) VPAR; 3) relationships in place; 4) playful transfers of knowledge; 5) social access; and 6) physical access.

#### Concluding Remarks on Methodology

This research relied on hands-on participatory and CBR methods. I drew from cultural safety (Brascoupé and Waters 2009; Papps and Ramsden 1996), narrative inquiry (Bamberg 2012; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Spector-Mersel 2010; Striano 2012), and VPAR (A. Clark 2010, 2011; Gubrium, Harper, and Otanez 2015; Luttrell 2010; Mitchell 2014; Thomson 2008; Yates 2010) methodologies. The familiarity and confidence young people had with photography, cooking, etc. differed from person to person. Therefore the methods used, in and of themselves, did not ensure empowering experiences and cultural safety. There were some young people (described in Chapter Two) whose age or communication preference taught me how cultural safety was not homogeneously experienced. Rather, as a group, we worked towards making safe (safer) spaces for verbal

and nonverbal voices to be elevated. Co-participants were prominent decision-makers in the research process and guided workshop design to facilitate better contexts for sharing knowledge. Below are two major conclusions—cultural safety and VPAR—emerging from methodological approaches that honour multivocality in research.

1) Cultural safety:

In structuring the research project according to cultural safety principles, the hope was to alleviate power imbalances existing between myself and co-participants. Guided by practices of self-reflexivity, I tried to be intentional about adopting a reflexive position that would assist me in gaining self-knowledge on how my life history and worldview impact the complex weave of relationships formed with children, youth, and families (Brascoupe and Waters, 2009; Yip, 2006). Cultural assumptions I reproduced in the context of facilitating school gardens (elaborated in Chapter Three) revealed how meaningful collaboration with young people occurs only if I and other practitioners are transparent about our cultural ways of knowing. Mainstream ways of knowing food security, stemming from neoliberal and biomedical systems, run the risk of oppressing young people's voices. More specifically, findings from this research suggest that schools interested in starting or strengthening food programs need to recognize privileged or taken-for-granted knowledges surrounding foodways that undervalue other culturally relevant relationships.

2) Visual Participatory Action Research (VPAR):

This research inquiry was not only interested in what children and youth could contribute towards food security topics but *how* co-participants felt empowered to transfer oral and visual stories. Garden workshops were designated spaces and times for stories to be heard and enacted in a variety of ways. For instance, narratives were supported using

multi-sensorial platforms such as visual technologies: digital and disposable cameras, an audio recorder, mobile phones, and Window's Photo Editor, or visual art technologies: scrapbooking, drawing, and painting. Children and youth, as storytellers, were primary decision-makers in how their stories were conveyed, both in content and format. Young people's active contributions via VPAR demonstrated their agency as knowledge holders and craftspeople.

### Concluding Remarks on Cultural Acceptability

Co-participants' narratives reconfigured food, contrasting from the naturalized, culturally-charged scientific models of health and nutrition (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013). Young people placed greater value on the social dynamism of relationships infusing garden places and other-than-human beings. The reductionist understanding of culture highlighted by food security texts (FAO 2003; Haering and Syed 2009), as well as my own ontologies and epistemologies as both a garden facilitator and researcher, was made complex through young people's voices. Cultural acceptability ceased to refer only to the food preferences of individuals but encompassed vibrant relationships surrounding food such as: 1) relationships in place, and 2) playful transfers of knowledge.

#### 1) Relationships in place:

The ability to care and be cared by other-than-human beings was prioritized in the three school gardens. Children and youth illustrated how communities require ecological access to insects and plants in order to grow healthy and respectful relations. For some young people, these relationships were also intimately tied to spiritual teachings and

different cosmologies. Plant life was infused with stories and memories that were sensorial and embodied, tied closely with taste, feel, smell, and aesthetics. Plants with bright flowers, great height, spikey stems, fuzzy leaves, water dew, and thick foliage were greatly engaged with. In addition to a plant's beauty, witnessing the almost miraculous growth of fruit from a single seed, identified food as something alive and not easily dissected into biological units.

2) Playful knowledge transfer:

Within the garden, co-participants' cultural knowledges—e.g., plant mentorship, food skills, and digital technology experiences—were connected to play. Unstructured and flexible explorations resulted in co-participants recognizing plants and food produced as inherently relational. For example, the garden express game had co-participants (and friends) identifying plant communities to each other and explaining why these were meaningful. Knowledge transfer through play was present in each garden foodscape, helping to nurture a general sense of belonging for young people who were less familiar with other foodways or visual storytelling. Co-participants' distinct funds of knowledge (Moll 2015) from other cultural scapes (e.g., virtualscapes and Minecraft) were elicited mainly through playful interactions.

Concluding Remarks on Access:

Co-participants re-interpreted access to be more of a community-based process instead of the neoliberal fixation on individual and economic food access. Children's and youth's decisions predominantly revolved around the integration of their socialscapes into

the garden—actively inviting others to participate in the foodscape. The parameters on *whose* garden the plants belonged to was blurred, reshaping concepts of private property. Since access is a fundamental construct within food security, solutions posed by young people supported the view that food should be grown and accessed by communities in a more flexible and socially-minded system. The final two conclusions include new ways to perceive 1) social access and 2) physical access.

1) Social access:

The oral and visual narratives in this study highlighted how inviting children's and youth's networks into the garden was imperative to full engagement. Whether with grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, elders, friends, teachers, program facilitators, and/or neighbours, gardening came alive when engaged with others. School gardening initiatives were important places of gathering and sharing. Access to food was encouraged by co-participants as something wholly social and not as an individual endeavor.

2) Physical access:

In regards to physical access to foodscapes, negotiations between contrasting community garden models unveiled tensions around land use, in the research. At one of the schools, adult gardeners' fear of vandalism resulted in a delineation of boundaries restricting access. The standard community garden layout—individual plots for each family—differed from the school garden practices reinforced by children and youth in the summer. In accordance to their protocols, raised beds were collectively cared for, as well as harvested. In doing this, young gardeners offered alternatives to the individualistic and private division of food spaces.

## **Section Two: Recommendations for Community Partners**

A core intention in conducting this research was to produce practical suggestions that can be applied by community partners who are working in related fields. The six recommendations listed below are therefore grounded in the context of the communities I collaborated with. It is my hope, however, that they may also be transferrable to other urban school gardening and food security initiatives occurring across Canada.

### 2.1: Cultural Safety Recommendation

To achieve inclusive programming, provide cultural safety training classes for community members involved in school gardening initiatives and consult cultural knowledge keepers for guidance. Presence of cross-cultural narratives in school gardens signifies a need to ground activities in young people's cultural worldviews. Rather than incorporating elements of cultural practice into dominant food security frameworks (e.g., adding ethnic food plants to the garden), teachings and activities emerging from the gardens should be rooted in cultural narratives of children, youth, and families.

An example of this would be for organizers to facilitate a community-wide "appreciative inquiry" (McKay and Prokop 2007, 30) that focuses on strengths instead of weaknesses and asks questions on what food practices participants already have. This strength-based method can be employed in vastly creative ways and create positive spaces where collaborators (children and youth) can be given space to develop year-round

culturally relevant food security programming that is built around gardening, cooking and meal sharing. For instance, seed saving practices guided by different cultural protocols are integral practices for young people to explore.

### 2.2: Participatory Evaluation Recommendation

Develop a vigorous and responsive evaluation process to measure and evaluate how different viewpoints are being honoured over the school-year. By seeking continuous input from children and youth about the relevance of food initiatives, voices will be elevated. By taking the time to understand how students relate to their school gardens, school communities can support long-lasting utilization of garden spaces.

Evaluations on young gardeners' perceptions that are child-oriented, such as visual methods, will better evoke narratives. For instance, the playful process of experimenting with photography and videography is more accessible than text-oriented surveys or questionnaires that assume all are comfortable with written forms of communication. Projects like photo voice, digital storytelling, and participatory videos, occurring alongside young people, can result in content dense feedback, especially if visual materials are made, edited, interpreted, and disseminated by children and youth.

### 2.3: Fostering Sense of Place Recommendation

School gardening initiatives, aiming to encourage enduring participation in gardens with younger generations, should ensure ample entry points for children and youth to work and develop holistic relationships with other-than-human beings. School staff and program

coordinators can attain this by including a daily/weekly routine of connecting classrooms to gardening. More specifically, providing multiple opportunities for young people to explore and learn from local plants and animals will motivate others to make social commitments to foodscapes.

#### 2.4: Celebrating a Playful Transfer of Knowledge Recommendation

A recommendation for practitioners and community initiatives is to hold space within garden and food-based educational programming for young people to connect themselves and others to foodscapes through play. More precisely, adopting an inquiry-based approach, which honours imaginative play, humour, and games that young people may wish to use in teaching or learning about food. As a means for school gardens to be empowering places, activities facilitated should be based on diverse interests and strengths of children and youth participants.

#### 2.5: Social Access Recommendation

To ensure families feel welcome in school gardens, students, along with school staff, should facilitate community events and workshops that bring people together to celebrate the garden. Taking the lead in planning these events, children and youth ought to play major roles in organizing and implementing the gatherings according to their cultural ways of knowing. To illustrate, Confederation Park Community School hosts an annual harvest celebration, inviting all to share in the meal and participate in planned activities—games, wagon rides, and garden tours. Events like these foster stronger relationships to the garden

and an appreciation of the tremendous work conducted by volunteers, community gardeners, and most importantly, young people.

### 2.6: Physical Access Recommendation

I suggest schools and organizations offer more opportunities for students to collaborate with community gardeners on joint projects. To elaborate, younger and older gardeners could create garden zones where everyone in the community is invited to interact with the plants and eat the produce. The presence of clear signage would communicate to the neighbourhood that all are welcome to produce in this designated area (written in multiple languages and represented with pictures for younger visitors).

### **Section Three: Research Limitations and Future Research Possibilities**

Over the years, when gardening with young people, a teaching I have emphasized is the importance of persistence, willingness to try new things, and embracing the uncertainty of growing plants. Making mistakes and experiencing challenges are integral parts of the gardening process. The more I inquire into the world of plants, soil, water, and food, the less I understand. This lesson holds especially true when reflecting on this research project. The limitations I identify below are markers of the ongoing learning journey I embarked on that opened new doors for future research. They include: 1) self-reflexivity and food sovereignty; 2) multilocality and foodscapes; as well as 3) time constraints and longitudinal research.

### Self-reflexivity and Food Sovereignty

#### 1) Limitations:

A limitation of this research was how research questions, methods, and structure were shaped by my way of knowing, which, upon reflection, was heavily influenced by hegemonic knowledges in food security. While my intention was to work towards making safer spaces for children and youth to introduce their unique relationships to foodscapes, my understanding on gardening still informed narratives evoked. My personal and academic journey to decolonize how I understand school gardening and food is ongoing, guided by others who are on parallel paths. An educator I interviewed for this project highlighted her own deliberations in deconstructing cultural assumptions within garden education:

Culturally I am not sure that I know if it [school gardening] has colonial effects. Sometimes there are moments when you are not trying to be oppressive but then at the same time, you are being oppressive without realizing it... Like for me to make such a blanket statement that “everyone should garden in an ideal world”, perhaps that is somewhat oppressive and good thing that I am not the dictator of this world, because then everyone would be gardening. But to me, that is not a bad thing but perhaps that has colonial implications that I am not aware of... My entry point was environmental education, so I want people to be aware of their surroundings and how we use the earth instead of having a relationship to earth. To me that is where gardening comes in but likely there are other cultural teachings that you can still have that same sort of knowledge ... If you are not gardening, but maybe you are hunting or foraging or fishing or like, other ways of gathering food that in my cultural history I am not as aware of. (Audrey, pers. comm., September, 2013)

Her words reflected core principles of *food sovereignty* where communities themselves can control and make decisions regarding foodways that resonate fully with

cultural worldviews and support local sustainable food systems (Desmarais and Wittman 2013; Hansen 2011; Rocha and Liberato 2013; Wittman, Desmarais, and Wiebe 2011).

To better mirror interests of community partners and current food climates in Saskatoon, I examined food security frameworks in relation to school gardening. This approach to food systems offered numerous solutions to safeguarding access and relevance of foods on a global and local level. The drawback of this lens, however, was its limited critical gaze on entrenched power structures that contribute to food injustice and oppression (Alkon and Agyeman 2011; Jarosz 2014; Bradley and Herrera 2016; Riches 2002; Slocum 2006). A suggested way forward is to include knowledges emerging from food sovereignty discourses as a way to inspire new theoretical models in exploring young people's marginalized voices.

## 2) Future research:

The focus on food justice and local communities' agency in changing food systems would take research working with young people along new and interesting paths. Movements that are hugely influential in amplifying young people's perspectives on foodscapes are Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives (Elliott et al. 2012; PEPÁKĪN HÁUTW 2015; Trinidad 2012). Future research projects on children's and youth's relationships to food would benefit from collaborating with communities on the reclaiming and revitalization of Indigenous food systems in urban school gardening settings. There are Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous allies in Saskatoon who are working on rooting gardening, harvesting, and seed saving projects in culturally rich ontologies and epistemologies shared within different Nations (CBC 2015; Thompson 2016). Indigenous food sovereignty, in its multiple forms, challenges dominant settler perspectives on

foodways and calls for access or continued access to ancestral lands where food relationships exist in place (D. Morrison 2011).

### Multilocality and Foodscapes

#### 1) Limitations:

The fieldwork was multi-sited, primarily focused on three school gardens (Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools). The concentrated scope of my community-based project in working with only three places, however, limited the breadth of understanding on other foodscapes. For instance, little attention was spent inquiring into classroom food relationships or children's and youth's home foodscapes. Also, Saskatchewan's prevalent agricultural industry meant a number of co-participants had connections with farming landscapes that I was unfortunately unable to explore within the parameters of the project. Limitations like these revealed potential future research opportunities to travel across the land's storied surface and learn how different foodscapes converge and diverge for young people.

Conversations during focus group and interviews taught me how landscapes refuse to be geographically bound as points on a map. Instead they flow and intersect as partial places in the making, interconnected through relationships (Rodman 1992). Young people's foodscapes were spatially multilocal, linking food to a plurality of locations such as homes, schools, gardens, grocery stores, and restaurants. This research opened up the floodgates to a wealth of multilocal stories.

#### 2) Future research:

Recommendations for future research would be to conduct a qualitative, community-based project on how other foodscapes—e.g., forests, family gardens, farms,—are understood by children and youth in the context of food security or sovereignty. Inquiries into how webs of food landscapes interconnect and shape young people’s realities would add to literature on place-based education and methodology. For example, exploring whether younger generations’ perspectives of foodscapes differ in rural or northern Saskatchewan and how culturally relevant foodways are linked to cultural identities tied to place.

#### Time Constraints and Longitudinal Research

##### 1) Limitations:

CBR requires extensive time allocated to consult, collaborate, and disseminate findings. A limitation of this project was the time constraint in collecting information. Awareness of busy schedules of children and youth co-participants (as well as their caregivers/guardians) led me to arrange for fieldwork to occur during a two-three month timeframe. This unfortunately did not leave a lot of time for co-participants to analyze and disseminate their oral and visual narratives into visual art projects. Instead, the bulk of analysis was performed by myself after the garden workshops were completed. I had initially planned for the analytical and dissemination stages to be fully collaborative (Lassiter 2001, 2008) but experienced challenges that curbed complete participation.

Time restrictions also prevented vigorous exploration into ways in which relationships to foodscapes have changed over time. The temporally narrow scope of the

project only briefly introduced a topic that is forever changing and evolving as co-participants' matrix of relationships shift and transform over the years. Garden sites have altered greatly since 2013, with new people contributing their vision to aesthetics and philosophies of the gardens. Future projects could delve deeper into these changes to better understand whether school gardening improves food security for the long-term.

2) Future research:

Longitudinal research on how (or whether) engagement in school gardens has impacted children's and youth's lives would shed light on child empowerment and civic engagement—answering questions on correlations between gardening and future youth decision-making and practices. To reconnect with students every two-three years, and facilitating qualitative garden workshops using VPAR methods, would build upon previous narratives and visual art projects, as well as addressing emerging issues. With growing concern on climate change and environmental justice, research into how future generations are navigating ecological stressors on foodways will illustrate the integral role young people play.

I have been keen to discover how past co-participants have continued to interact with sustainability and food in their school and home lives since 2013. Questions such as, *how does knowledges on gardening build resilience for future pressures?*, or, *does school gardening inspire change in daily environmental practices for young people?*, could spearhead another project into lived effects of food security initiatives. The intention of school gardening initiatives to foster positive social change—such as inclusive access to food, increased opportunity to garden, and educational support for diverse cultural relationalities—is becoming more urgent in a rapidly changing environmental context.

#### **Section Four: Reflections and Prose**

A garden can be a powerful and evocative place, composed of memories and feelings that are expressed in narrative. I have had the privilege of listening to stories generously and courageously shared by the school garden community over the years. I am ceaselessly inspired by the richness elucidated by people's interactions with plants, trees, water, garden equipment, and other players in the garden experience. Some of the young people's unfettered ability to discuss an array of life experiences motivated me to bare my own heart's passion through story. I conclude this paper with descriptive prose illustrating how, over the past several summers, community relationships in school gardens have grown and regrown in rhythm to the life of plants over the course of Spring (see Figure 34), Summer (See Figure 35), and Autumn (see Figure 36).

#### A Growing Season of Relationships

##### *Spring*



**Figure 34, Spring Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Zachary, 2013**

As seeds germinate and send shoots above the soil, gardeners are tentatively reacquainting themselves with the garden space and one another. Everyone learning how to work together once again while welcoming newcomers or wondering about others who are not present. Soon, plants are sporting *true leaves*, revealing inner designs embodied, whether by twisting and climbing around other plants and growing vibrant purple bean pods, or by developing smooth and shiny fragrant leaves. In the garden, this is the planning period when community members discuss what projects they wish to collaborate. Each school garden has distinct histories and communities involved and therefore produce completely different foodscapes and playscapes.

The stems soon strengthen against the buffeting winds and energy seeking leaves are formed. Akin to the plants, participants involved in school gardens (myself included) seek others to join and help care for raised beds, as well as share in the food, activities, and socializing. Despite weather's furious moods, young people and their families gather in rain, extreme heat, and even storms (not recommended) to play in the garden.

With our collective energy, a number of plants mature over the month of June, flowers begin to blossom and the pollination process is at its height. Relationships developed in the garden extend beyond human-to-human connection and encompass the world of other-than-human beings such as bees, caterpillars, butterflies, and birds. While some young people stop for only a brief moment to point out the lady bug crawling on the corn plant, others will spend time carefully observing and following specific insects and birds around the garden.

*Summer*

**Figure 35, Summer Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Mathew, 2013**

Pollinated flowers transform into colourful fruits and vegetables, vibrant suitcases for seeds. Young people who have been a regular presence in these plants' lives eagerly call others over to raised beds to witness the fledgling pepper or ripening raspberries. Our attention turns to harvesting and cooking alongside the plant communities. The number of garden participants swells with more families arriving back to the city after time away. This is a time fruitful with narratives as a frenzy of food activity elicits memories and teachings learned. Plants produce seeds that will be dispersed by the wind, rain, or a fuzzy sock and we acknowledge that the summer is maturing and the school garden group will soon scatter.

I would be remiss to focus solely on the plants' triumphant life and the gardeners' enjoyment in these school gardens. Growing food has its challenges that help dispel any romanticised versions of school garden stories. Each garden is centrally located in wide open areas, leaving plants and humans alike exposed and vulnerable. A lack of trees and

shade exposes the garden to a hot sun that dries raised beds faster than we can water. The rising temperatures increase ill tempers so arguments and tears are more easily provoked. The water hose, coveted by all, is the main source of disagreements. We leave such days soaked, sun burnt, and zombie-like, our energy zapped.

### *Autumn*



**Figure 36, Autumn Strawberry, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013**

Soon the inevitable occurs as mornings and evenings become cooler and the garden's once lush greenery begins to lighten into gold. Raised beds look a little bare as we harvest with fervour and prepare garden pizzas, soups, and salads. Annuals remain in the garden until the first frost blackens their leaves and we reluctantly pull their roots from the soil. The young people and I are preparing to say farewell for another year. I ruminate over the temporary nature of annual plants and worry about the sustainability of the school gardens (*will there be funding next year?; which community members will lead the*

*program?; and will the children and youth return?*). A number of the program's participants wave goodbye, yelling "see you next summer" and I feel a sense of comfort. The young people are the garden's true perennials, infusing the space with vitality that can only continue to bloom.

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**Appendix A: Executive Summary and Recommendations for Community Partners**

**Children and Youth's Relationships to  
Foodscapes: Re-imagining Saskatoon  
School Gardening and Food Security**

Thesis Executive Summary for Community Partners

Written by: Shereen Kukha-Bryson  
University of Victoria, Victoria, BC  
April, 2017

## Part 1: Executive Summary

### 1.1: Context and Research Questions



**Cranberry Close-Up, Digital Photograph, Some-JDM-Boi, 2013**

Urban food security discourse in Saskatoon and Canada have been explored by academics, governmental bodies, local community organizations and practitioners (e.g., health and education) with the intention of understanding the history and impact of food insecurity and co-creating long-lasting solutions. In the literature, school gardens are applauded as projects that actively empower children and youth to participate in initiatives determining how food is grown in their communities (Carlsson 2010; Greggie 2003; Grosso and Crewe 2003; Lekies et al. 2007). Community initiatives and educational institutions have thus been collaborating on school gardening programs as a way to address food insecurity experienced by children, youth, and families (Carlsson 2010; Fairholm 1998; Hayes-Conroy 2010). Central to these conversations and projects has been how to make more inclusive spaces for people to share different perspectives of food security—based on local foodscapes (matrix of relationships between people, place, and food) and

cultural worldviews (Saul and Curtis 2013). Children's and youth's own experiences and contributions to discussion on foodscapes and food security have been marginalized, resulting in knowledge gaps of how young people situate and represent themselves (Engler-Stringer, Schaefer, and Ridalls 2016; James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad 2009; Hammond, Hesterman, and Knaus 2015).

I adopted a community-based approach and collaborated with Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan (AITC-SK), the Saskatoon Public School Division (SPSD), children, youth, and their guardians. Throughout May to October, 2013, I conducted a research project on Treaty Six Territory (Saskatoon, SK) with eleven children and youth (between the ages of five and twelve) and seven adults. We collaborated on research exploring how children and youth relate to their school gardening foodscapes at Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools. I aimed to provide young people with an opportunity to make decisions on how to enact social change regarding gardening in their communities. The study focused on the social agency children and youth embody and how their oral and visual narratives meaningfully contribute to addressing concerns, central to a number of Saskatoon community organizations, over food security.

My research focused specifically on the following questions:

- 1) How are children's and youth's relationships with growing food fostered in Saskatoon? For example, who is involved in transferring knowledge on gardening with children and youth (e.g., family members, friends, schools, and community programs)?
- 2) How are culturally diverse ways of understanding and growing food included in school gardening initiatives? More specifically, how are Indigenous worldviews included in Saskatoon's children and youth garden projects?
- 3) Are young people empowered, by engaging in the creation of garden programs, to make significant choices on how they and their communities grow accessible foods?

- 4) How can children's and youth's voices be included in Saskatoon community organizations' conversations about growing food and ensuring community well-being through food security?

## 1.2: Methodology



**Photographer Shadows, Digital Photograph, Noah, 2013**

I structured the project according to cultural safety principles (Ball 2012; Blackstock and Trocmé 2005) to alleviate power imbalances existing between myself and co-participants. Guided by self-reflexivity, I adopted a reflexive position that assisted me in gaining self-knowledge on how my life history and worldview impact relationships formed with children, youth, and families (Brascoupé and Waters 2009; Yip 2006). Cultural assumptions I reproduced in the context of facilitating school gardening revealed how meaningful collaboration with young people occurs only if I and other practitioners are transparent about our cultural ways of knowing. Young people's voices run the risk of being oppressed in mainstream understandings of food security stemming from neoliberal and biomedical systems (Allen and Guthman 2006; Guthman, 2008; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2013; Pudup 2008; Slocum 2006). More specifically, this research's

findings suggest that schools, interested in starting or strengthening food programs, need to recognize privileged, naturalized knowledges surrounding foodways that undervalue other culturally relevant relationships.

Methods used with co-participants included qualitative and participatory methodologies. The project was rooted in continual dialogue between community and myself members. Consultation sessions with community partners, semi-structured interviews with adult co-participants, and garden workshops with children and youth co-participants were facilitated. The majority of young people's narratives were evoked during the interactive garden workshops.

From July to September, three groups of participating children and youth gathered in their school gardens to engage in four workshop sessions (approximately two hours long). The garden workshops were significant in co-creating spaces for children and youth to share their experiences and knowledges. Co-participants and I were involved in activities and conversations on growing food supported by: cooking in the garden, using digital cameras to photograph, producing visual art projects, and informal focus groups.

Co-participants reviewed their photographs and selected the images they wished to include in the final visual art project. This spurred a flurry of activity as children and youth shuffled through images and exclaimed on *who* was in the photo, *what* memories it evoked, and aesthetics of the pictures' compositions. Once chosen, children and youth transformed their visual materials into photo albums or scrapbooks that added further meaning.



**Soup, Digital Photograph, Jen, 2013**

### 1.3: Research Findings and Interpretations



**Lily, Digital Photograph, Kayleigh, 2013**

The process of interacting with child-centered methods helped empower young people to elaborate on their knowledge and relationships at play in the gardens. With camera in hand, children and youth favoured taking photographs of experiences rather than

static objects, as many crawling under bushes, following roaming insects. Findings from co-participants' photographs and storytelling demonstrated social dimensions of school gardens. Producing, harvesting, distributing, preparing, and eating food were interconnected with social circles between human, plant, and animal communities. Children and youth's diverse relationalities evoked unique concepts and solutions that have the potential to challenge dominant approaches to food security.

Through the research project I learned how neatly packaged definitions on food security, provided by different governmental (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2006; Health Canada 2007; Roshanafshar and Hawkins 2015) and non-governmental organizations (Committee on World Food Security 2014; Food Banks Canada 2016), did not always represent how people interpreted their own food security. For example, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's statement that food security is, "when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO 2003), becomes tangled, and partial when learning from co-participants. Children's and youth co-participants' voices shed insight into how to re-imagine and expand food security concepts—*cultural acceptability* and *access* (FAO 2003; Hammelman and Hayes-Conroy 2015).

#### 1) *Cultural acceptability*

Culturally acceptable food for young co-participants, for example, was not limited to food *products* but to cultural relationships infusing foodscapes. Co-participants valued other-than-human beings (insects, birds, etc.), aesthetics (colourful flowers), wild zones (food forests), and perennial storied plants (lilies, strawberries, etc.). Prominent *western* beliefs that high-yields and production are the primary goal of food gardens did not represent co-participants' narratives. To young people, the garden's intrinsic value was not based on its produce (result), but in the stories continuously made in place. A sense of place was key in fostering gardens young people wanted to regularly visit over the course of the

growing period. The motivation to return to beloved food production spaces increases local food security.

## 2) *Access*

Regarding constructs around access and food security, participating children and youth had understandings that differed from neoliberal views. For instance, the focus on food access being the sole responsibility of economic factors (e.g., income and employment), was expanded to encompass many other interdependent processes involved in connections to food. Co-participants prioritized: 1) social access—*who* were able to interact and eat in the garden—and 2) land access—how garden *boundaries* should be more permeable and inclusive.

For people to feel comfortable dwelling in garden places, there needs to be social connections and sense of belonging (Kingsley & Townsend 2006). Young people demonstrated how produce was available for anyone who visited the space during or after programming hours (not only those directly involved). The gardens came alive with the presence of grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, elders, friends, teachers, program facilitators, and/or neighbours. Children and youth were primary decision-makers on how food was shared during the summer.

Co-participants also offered alternative visions on physical access to food growing spaces—especially in garden locations that had a hybrid school and community garden serving the wider neighbourhood. Young people differentiated between the individual plot system frequently used in Saskatoon community gardens, identifying this gardening style as *private* whereas the shared garden beds were deemed more *community*-based.

At one school, for example, seeds were sowed in raised beds by different classrooms (signs stapled to the wood stating the teacher's name and grade). Over July and August, however, children and youth enthusiastically watered, weeded, and harvested from *all* of the beds, regardless of which class initially planted the bed. In this, young people blurred boundaries on what is private and public in school gardening places. The inclusion of

children and youth's perspectives on how food security is conceptualized, experienced, and addressed can be used to build greater resiliency in urban school gardening initiatives.



**Bee, Digital Photograph, Anna, 2013**

## **Part 2: Recommendations**

Based on this project's findings rooted in children and youth's knowledges, the last section of this report highlights six recommendations for community partners who wish to continue to sustain school gardening in urban environments.

### **1) 2.1: Cultural Safety Recommendation**

To achieve inclusive programming, provide cultural safety training classes for community members involved in school gardening initiatives and consult cultural knowledge keepers for guidance. Presence of cross-cultural narratives in school gardens signifies a need to ground activities in young people's cultural worldviews. Rather than *incorporating* elements of cultural practice into dominant food security domains (e.g., adding *ethnic* food plants to the garden), teachings and activities emerging from the gardens should be rooted in cultural narratives of children, youth, and families.

An example of this would be for organizers to facilitate a community-wide “appreciative inquiry” (McKay and Prokop 2007, 30) that focuses on strengths instead of weaknesses and asks questions on what food practices participants already have. This strength-based method can be employed in vastly creative ways and create positive spaces where collaborators (children and youth) can be given space to develop year-round culturally relevant food security programming that is built around gardening, cooking and meal sharing. For instance, seed saving according to different cultural protocols are integral practices for young people to explore, which relates to food sovereignty.

### 2) 2.2: Participatory Evaluation Recommendation

Develop a vigorous and responsive evaluation process to measure and evaluate how different viewpoints are being honoured over the school year. Seeking continuous input from children and youth about the relevance of food initiatives will elevate voices. By taking the time to understand how students relate to their school gardens, school communities can support long-lasting utilization of garden spaces.

Evaluations on young gardeners’ perceptions should include child-oriented methods such as visual methods. For instance, the playful process of experimenting with photography and videography is more accessible than text-oriented surveys or questionnaires, which assume all are comfortable with written communication. Photo voice, digital storytelling, and participatory video can result in content dense feedback, especially if visual materials are made, edited, interpreted, and disseminated by children and youth.

### 3) 2.3: Fostering Sense of Place Recommendation

School gardening initiatives, aiming to encourage enduring participation in gardens with younger generations, should ensure ample entry points for children and youth to work and develop holistic relationships with other-than-human beings. School staff and program coordinators can attain this by including a daily/weekly routine of connecting classrooms to gardening. More specifically, providing multiple opportunities for young people to

explore and learn from local plants and animals will motivate others to make social commitments to foodscapes.

#### 4) 2.4: Celebrating a Playful Transfer of Knowledge Recommendation

A recommendation for practitioners and organizations is to hold space within garden and food-based educational programming for young people to connect themselves and others to foodscapes through play. More precisely, adopting an inquiry-based approach, which mobilizes imaginative play, humour, and games which young people use in teaching or learning about food. For school gardens to be empowering places, activities facilitated should be based on diverse interests and strengths of children and youth participants.

#### 5) 2.5: Social Access Recommendation

To ensure families feel welcome in school gardens, students, along with school staff, should facilitate community events and workshops that bring people together to celebrate the garden. Taking the lead in planning these events ought to be children and youth who organize the gatherings according to their cultural ways of knowing. To illustrate, Confederation Park Community School hosts an annual harvest celebration, inviting all to share in the meal and participate in planned activities—games, wagon rides, and garden tours. Events like these foster stronger relationships to the garden and an appreciation of the tremendous work conducted by volunteers, community gardeners, and most importantly, young people.

#### 6) 2.6: Physical Access Recommendation

I suggest schools and organizations offer more opportunities for students to collaborate with community gardeners on joint projects. To elaborate, younger and older gardeners could create garden zones where *everyone* in the community is invited to interact with the plants and eat the produce. The presence of clear signage would communicate to the neighbourhood that all are welcome to produce in this designated area (written in multiple languages and represented with pictures for younger visitors).

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### Part 3: Recommended Resources for Community Partners

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Websites:

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<http://pepakenhautw.com>

## Appendix B: Certificate of Approval of Ethics



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### Certificate of Renewed Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: <u>Shereen Kukha-Bryson</u>	<b>ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER</b> <b>12-331</b>
<u>UVic</u> STATUS: <b>Master's Student</b>	Minimal Risk Review - Delegated
<u>UVic</u> DEPARTMENT: <b>ANTH</b>	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE: 04-Oct-12
SUPERVISOR: <b>Dr. Andrea Walsh</b>	RENEWED ON: 24-Oct-16
	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE: 03-Oct-17
<p><b>PROJECT TITLE: Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives</b></p> <p>RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER Sara <u>Shymko</u>, Collaborator (Agriculture in the Classroom – Saskatchewan)          Adrienne <u>Begg</u>, Collaborator (Agriculture in the Classroom – Saskatchewan)          Jessie Best, Collaborator (Agriculture in the Classroom – Saskatchewan)</p> <p>DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: None</p>	
<b>CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL</b>	
<p>This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.</p> <p><b>Modifications</b>          To make any changes to the approved research procedures in your study, please submit a "Request for Modification" form. You must receive ethics approval before proceeding with your modified protocol.</p> <p><b>Renewals</b>          Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.</p> <p><b>Project Closures</b>          When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.</p>	
<b>Certification</b>	
<p>This certifies that the <u>UVic</u> Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____          Dr. Rachael <u>Scarth</u>          Associate Vice-President Research Operations</p>	

Certificate Issued On: 03-Nov-16

12-331 Kukha-Bryson, Shereen

### Appendix C: Letter Seeking Consultation with Schools



To Whom this May Concern,

I am writing to introduce myself and my research project titled, “Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives”. My name is Shereen Kukha-Bryson and I am currently completing my M.A. in Anthropology through the University of Victoria. You may recognize my name because of my past involvement in your school-yard garden as Agriculture in the Classroom’s 2011 and 2012 Summer Garden Program Leader. After the summer ended, I remained in Saskatoon to begin conducting my thesis research on children’s relationships to growing food. While I will be collaborating with Agriculture in the Classroom staff throughout this project, I am no longer employed by AITC and therefore this research is stemming from my own initiative.

The children and youth I hope to recruit will be those who participated in the 2011-2012 Summer Garden Program at Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community Schools. I chose those three schools because of the great support the school-yard garden program received from the children, youth, staff and other community members. I also miss the students immensely and would love to work with them again. I was hoping to commence my interviews, focus groups, etc. in June, 2013 but am flexible if the dates do not work for your school.

Before I begin researching, I wished to introduce my project and inquire into the potential interest you may have in allowing your school to participate. I recently received ethics approval from the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board, as well as from the Saskatoon Public School Division’s Coordinator of Research and Measurement (Dr. Scott Tunison). The decision whether I can collaborate with your school, however, depends on whether you, other staff members and the students wish to engage in this project.

I have included some of the main points of my research at the end of this email and have also attached three documents that provide detailed information on this research project (thesis proposal, UVIC ethics proposal and interview questions). If there is also a time you would like to arrange a meeting for us to talk in person about the proposed research, please do not hesitate to let me know and I will come by your office.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact me via email or phone. Thank-you so much for your time and I look forward to talking to you in the near future.

Sincerely,  
Shereen Kukha-Bryson  
M.A. Candidate: Department of Anthropology  
University of Victoria



## Appendix E: Informed Consent and Written Assent Form – Children and Youth



### Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives.

**Principal Researcher: Shereen Kukha-Byson**

We want to tell you about a research study we are doing in June and July, 2013. A research study is a way to learn more about something. We would like to find out more about stories and feelings you have about growing food in gardens. You are being asked to join the study because you dropped in to play at the Summer Garden Program last summer.

#### **If you join the study what will happen to you?**

- 1) Meet up with a group of kids to share stories about gardening. I will be asking questions and you will talk about them with one other. For example, I will ask questions like “Does anyone in your family garden?” or “How does planting seeds that will later be food make you feel?” During this group talk I will be using an audiotape to record what all of you are saying. If you do not want the audiotape on, let me know and I will turn it off
- 2) During these meetings, we will brainstorm fun art projects to do with photos. For example, you can choose to make a photo story, activity book and/or a cookbook.
- 3) You will do the project with the other kids. Everyone will have a turn using the camera to take photos of us gardening and talking about gardening.
- 4) Together we will look at the photos and pick those you want to use in the final project. Also, you will put all of the photos into a large art project.

We will be meeting 3 to 4 times over June and July, 2013. Each meeting will be about one hour and a half. Everything will be at your school-yard garden if the weather is nice. If it is cold or raining outside, we will meet at the Mayfair Public Library or Confederation Park Community Center. The days and times we will meet are going to be decided by you and your guardians.

#### **Will any part of the study hurt?**

Some of the questions might make you feel sad or uncomfortable. If you don't want to, you don't have to answer these questions. Or, you can choose to talk about these questions alone with me instead of in a group.

Also, your photos will show other people your face, school, and voice. If you want these pictures to be private, you can choose which pictures are deleted.

### **Will the study help you?**

This study will help you learn how to teach people about gardening by sharing your stories with other kids and adults. You will also learn how to take photos and create a photo story, activity book and/or cookbook.

### **Will the study help others?**

This study might find out things that could help create gardening programs in Saskatoon so more kids can learn how to grow food.

### **Do your parents/guardians know about this study?**

This study was explained to your parents/guardians and they said we could ask you if you want to be in it. You can talk this over with them before you decide.

### **Who will see the information collected about you?**

Different people will see your stories and pictures only if you say this is all right. People who may see your project will be:

- Other kids and adults in this study
- Agriculture in the Classroom staff or groups who give Agriculture in the Classroom money.
- The Saskatoon Public School Division
- Students, families and staff from Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount schools

**You do not have to join this study. It is up to you. You can say okay now and change your mind later. All you have to do is tell us you want to stop. No one will be mad at you if you don't want to be in the study or if you join the study and change your mind later and stop.**

**Before you say yes or no to being in this study, we will answer any questions you have. If you join the study, you can ask questions at any time. Just tell the researcher that you have a question.**

If you have any questions about this study please feel free to contact Shereen Kukha-Bryson at [skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca)

- Yes, I will be in this research study.       No, I don't want to do this.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person obtaining Assent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix F: Informed Consent Form – Parents Giving Permission for Child and Youth Participation



### *Participant Consent Form*

#### **Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives.**

Your children and youth are invited to participate in a study entitled, “Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives”, being conducted by Shereen Kukha-Bryson.

Ms. Kukha-Bryson is a M.A. graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Victoria. She can be contacted by email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca)),

As a graduate student, Ms. Kukha-Bryson is required to conduct research as part of the requirements for completing a Master’s degree in Anthropology. Her research project is under the supervision of Dr. Andrea Walsh. Dr. Walsh may be contacted by email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca)).

#### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the research project is to explore child and youth involvement in Agriculture in the Classroom’s (AITC-Sask) school-yard garden program. I wish to explore whether children and youth gardening programs enables young people to make decisions on how they grow their food as well as provide a space for their voices to be expressed. This project will include working with children and youth (ages 5 to 15) who have been involved in Agriculture in the Classroom garden programs in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Together the children and youth will design and work on a creative project on growing food and gardening. For example, they may choose to create a photo story, cookbook, and/or activity book. This research project aims to invite children and youth, participating in school-yard gardening programs, to share their stories, knowledge, and relationships to growing food. Another focus of the research is to learn how children and youth, who are involved in designing and running gardening programs, produce open spaces for their cultural understandings of food to be shared.

#### **Participants Selection**

Your child is being asked to participate in this study because of his/her past support and involvement with Agriculture in the Classroom’s Summer Garden Program.

#### **How much time is required? When will the research be conducted?**

If your child is interested in participating in the creative project, he/she will be required to attend three to four workshops of 60-90 minutes each. They may drop-in at any time during the workshops and leave whenever they have to. All workshops will be held throughout June and July, 2013. The workshops will be located in the school-yard gardens if weather permits. If not, I will book a room at the Mayfair Public Library or Confederation Park Community Center.

### What is involved?

- a) Workshops will invite reflection and sharing of experiences in regard to local foods in Saskatchewan. In addition, children and youth will develop a collaborative, creative project expressing their relationships with growing food within a school-yard garden context.

Included in the workshops will be:

- Focus groups activities (when a small group of people gather and are led in discussion by a facilitator) consisting of participants invited to talk about their experiences and stories. All experiences your children talk about will be shared in the research project unless requested otherwise. The group discussion will start with Shereen making sure that the participants are comfortable. She will also answer any questions about the research that they might have. Then Shereen will ask questions about growing food in their communities, as well as what challenges and successes they have experiences in regard to accessing local foods in Saskatoon.
- Individual 15 minute interviews (only for those who do not want to share their narratives in a group context).
- The creation of a visual project, including the use of photo, to be determined by participants. Photos will be taken of your child with your permission – SEE PHOTO RELEASE FORM.

\* With your consent, participant conversations will be recorded and activities observed. Notes will also be taken.

We would like to ensure participants wishing to share life histories and experiences connected to one's cultural heritage have enough time to follow cultural protocol and gain permission from knowledge-holders in their community. For example, we acknowledge that sharing First Nations and Metis plant histories and oral narratives might require permission from Elders and community leaders. Exact starting dates will be flexible to allow time for you and your children to seek permission.

If there are concerns regarding audiotaping and the inclusion of knowledges in the final report, please do not hesitate to inform the third-party recruiters and Shereen. All information you do not wish to share will be omitted.

**I hereby acknowledge that my children and youth's narratives will be included in the final written report and/or creative visual project unless specified otherwise during the research project.**

**Inconvenience**

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience by possibly taking time away from professional and private commitments. To minimize this, interview and workshop dates will remain flexible and adjusted to fit the individual schedules of participants

**Potential Risks**

There are some potential, minimal risks by participating in this research. If you decide to engage in a project that will use photo, a lack of anonymity and confidentiality is certain. However, the option to withdraw from the research at any time is permitted with photos and of your child only used if permission is given at the time.

Although sensitive topics may arise (e.g., topics surrounding access to food), sensitive information will not be traceable to particular locations or individuals and participants can ask to leave information out of the final thesis. To prevent or minimize any possible emotional or psychological risks to participants, breaks or the re-scheduling of interviews will be accommodated.

**Benefits**

The potential benefits of your children and youth's participation in this research include the learning of skills surrounding photography, teamwork, and understanding cross-cultural relationships to growing food in Saskatoon. While sharing experiences on growing food, children and youth will develop or sustain a sense of pride in their contributions to the well-being of their community.

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose to refuse or withdraw your child at any time with no consequences or explanation required. If you do withdraw from the study your child's data will only be used if you grant permission.

**Researcher's Relationship with Participants**

Shereen may have a relationship to potential participants as Agriculture in the Classroom's past 2011 or 2012 Summer Garden Program Leader. This relationship or ability to attend future Summer Garden Programs will not be affected in any way if you and your children decide not to become involved with the research. There will be no disadvantages to those who cannot consent, and your child will always be welcome at the Summer Garden Program. However, to help prevent this dual-role power-relationships from influencing your decision or making you feel pressured to participate, the following steps have been taken. The research will occur on separate days of regular programming so you do not have to be concerned that your children are involved in the research during the Summer Garden Program sessions. Also third-party recruiters will be distributing these consent forms and will be available to address any concerns you or your children have with the proposed research project.

Statement of dual-role relationships

*"Your permission for your child's work to be used in the research must be voluntary and I want to assure you that there are no consequences that arise from giving or withholding your permission. In order to avoid any pressure you might feel because I have been your child's Summer Garden Leader, I have asked that all returned consent forms be sent to the third-party*

*recruiter, not to me. They will not reveal the names to me until the beginning of the project in June.*

*I have also informed the Executive Director of Agriculture in the Classroom of my intended research and should you feel that there are pressures or unanticipated consequences as a result of participating or not, you are free to contact Sara Shymko ([sara@aitc.sk.ca](mailto:sara@aitc.sk.ca)). You may also feel free contact my research supervisor, Dr. Andrea Walsh, or the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545) to have your concerns addressed.*

*If you decide to withdraw your consent you are free to do so at any time by notifying the third-party recruiter. If permission is not given or is withdrawn, no narratives, interviews, and photographs regarding your child will be used in the final thesis unless given prior consent.”*

### **On-going Consent**

This research project will occur over two months with on-going consent required for this research to continue. Each month (June and July), you will be provided with a consent form to sign. You will be regularly updated of any changes to the research. Participation throughout the two months is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your child at any time with no consequences.

### **Anonymity**

#### Short Interview

The group-oriented approach of this research may limit anonymity, although every attempt shall be made to maintain it. The research project will consist of both a written and visual component. However, full anonymity can be ensured upon request for individuals who participate in the short 15 minute interviews and who do not want the sharing of personal information. All identifiers will be removed from the final written report such as name, school or community. If there are pieces of information you feel can be directly linked to your child, upon request the information can be omitted or disguised.

#### Workshops

- a) In the written report, I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous. I will provide pseudonyms (concealing identity) for all participants and will also omit any other markers that may identify your child (e.g., school garden attended).
- b) In regard to the creative project, full anonymity will be compromised by the participatory and visual nature of the project. During focus group discussions and the creation of photo taking, your child will not be anonymous. Shereen will facilitate the focus groups. Participants will share with the group, their life experiences in growing food. The photos will be taken by participants to reflect these experiences.

Visual data will be edited together with the children and youth who have the power to omit any photos they do not want in the creative project. With permission, Shereen will include information taken from the participant-selected photos in the written report.

Participants who do not want photos of themselves included in the project are still welcome to participate. Participants who are uncomfortable with a loss of anonymity will have their appearance in photos removed. Lastly, if participants withdraw from the research, their photos

will be omitted unless given prior consent to still use the information in the final report and visual project.

\*See PHOTO RELEASE FORM, to learn more on how the photos will be used in the context of this research.

## **Confidentiality**

### Interviews

Full confidentiality will be ensured for participants who are interviewed. Omitting all identifying markers will protect privacy. Written notes and audiotapes of the interview will be stored securely in Shereen's private residence for a period of three years.

### Workshop

Participants involved in focus groups and photo project, will have their stories, activities, and images displayed within the context of the completed project. For example, if participants choose to take photographs, identifying information of the participants and the location (e.g., specific schools and gardens) will be presented.

In order to address these limits to confidentiality, measures will be taken throughout the research process:

- a) During focus group sessions, if you wish to restrict any information that could be shared in a group setting or fear information would compromise your child's confidentiality, options for either individual interviews or personal information disguised or omitted will be accommodated. These interviews will remain anonymous to minimize any risk of future identification.
- b) The written report will not include information that can be used to identify participants such as names, school attended, and gender. In addition, if there are stories that you do not wish to be included in the report, they will be omitted.
- c) Photographs of your child engaging in the creative project will be displayed both in the academic and public realm. However, any visual materials you or your child do not want shared will be deleted during the editing workshop where participants will select what images, and themes they want included in the final project. Children and youth will be encouraged to play a role in deciding how the data will be portrayed and to whom this project will be shared with.

## **How will data be used in research project?**

Data will be reviewed and used towards the completion of Shereen's M.A. thesis. Agriculture in the Classroom and the Saskatoon Public School Division may also request to use selected information to put in newsletters and reports in order to support school-yard learning gardens in Saskatchewan. (see PHOTO RELEASE FORM)

### Use of Results

It is anticipated that results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:

- Thesis and academic presentations
- Published journal article (e.g., *Urban Education and Children, Youth, and Environment*)
- Executive Summary to be sent to Agriculture in the Classroom
- Newsletter sent to all participating schools and an executive summary will be written for Saskatoon's Public School Division
- Agriculture in the Classroom's Website ([www.aitc.sk.ca](http://www.aitc.sk.ca))
- Final written report and visual project will be sent to all participants who request a copy (see REQUESTING THESIS)

### Future Use of Results

There is a possibility future results may be used for the completion of a PhD or in new materials, i.e., writing of scholarly articles/conference papers. If this occurs, participants will be contacted and a consent form provided with information on how their data will be used. Any new materials can be made available to participants, upon request.

Due to the community-based orientation of this project, Agriculture in the Classroom may wish to use selected data for purposes not anticipated in this research. If this occurs, Agriculture in the Classroom will contact you and your child and send new consent forms and/or photo release forms to participants.

### Storage and Disposal of Data

#### a) Storage

All digital data such as typed field notes and interviews, audiotapes, photographs, and coded data will be safely stored in the researcher's computer and an external hard-drive. Hand written field notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in Shereen's residence. Her completed MA thesis will be stored in the University of Victoria's library and the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.

#### b) Duration of Storage

Data (complete MA thesis, coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and fieldnotes) will be stored for different durations depending on whether participants wish for their information to be destroyed.

- The M.A. thesis, including both a written report and visual project will be stored indefinitely in the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.
- In regard to data collected within the research your permission is required for this information to be stored indefinitely:

I hereby give permission for all pieces of digital and written information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital and written information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely

Circle the types of information that can be stored indefinitely:

Coded data      Photographs      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews      Field Notes

I would like for all of my digital and written information to be destroyed within three years.

c) Disposal of Data

Any information you do not want indefinitely archived will be destroyed within three years after the completion of the study. All digital information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, and transcribed interviews) will be erased from both the computer and the external hard-drive.

d) Agriculture in the Classroom and Storage of Data

Due to the community-based nature of this research, Agriculture in the Classroom may wish to have access to selected pieces of digital information. If consent is provided, select information shall be stored in a password protected computer file within Agriculture in the Classroom's Saskatoon office for three years. After the allotted time, digital information will be deleted.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews) to be securely stored by Agriculture in the Classroom for three years.

Circle the types of information that can be stored:

Coded data      Photographs      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews

**Requesting Thesis**

After the completion of Shereen's thesis, copies will be distributed to all participants. If you would like both a written report and a copy of the visual project, please provide your contact information below.

**Participant's Information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Names of children

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number

\_\_\_\_\_  
School-yard garden my children are involved in

**Contacts**

If you have questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact:

Researcher: Shereen Kukha-Bryson  
Email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca)),

Supervisor: Dr. Andrea Walsh  
Email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca)),

In addition, concerns or the verification of ethical approval for this study can be obtained by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that: you understand the above conditions of your children's participation in this study; you have had the opportunity to have any questions answered by the researchers; and you agree to allow your children to participate in this research project.

---

*Name of Participants (your  
children)*

---

*Signature of parent/guardian*

---

*Date*

## Appendix G: Informed Consent Form – Parents and Caregivers



**University  
of Victoria**

### *Participant Consent Form*

#### **Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives.**

You are invited to participate in a study entitled, “Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives”, being conducted by Shereen Kukha-Bryson.

Ms. Kukha-Bryson is a M.A. graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Victoria. She can be contacted by email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca)).

As a graduate student, Ms. Kukha-Bryson is required to conduct research as part of the requirements for completing a Master’s degree in Anthropology. Her research project is under the supervision of Dr. Andrea Walsh. Dr. Walsh may be contacted by email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca)).

#### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the research project is to explore child and youth involvement in Agriculture in the Classroom’s (AITC-Sask) school-yard garden program. I wish to explore whether children and youth gardening programs enables young people to make decisions on how they grow their food as well as provide a space for their voices to be expressed. This project will include working with children and youth (ages 5 to 15) who have been involved in Agriculture in the Classroom garden programs in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Together the children and youth will design and work on a creative project on growing food and gardening. For example, they may choose to create a photo story, cookbook, and/or activity book. This research project aims to invite children and youth, participating in school-yard gardening programs, to share their stories, knowledge, and relationships to growing food. Another focus of the research is to learn how children and youth, who are involved in designing and running gardening programs, produce open spaces for their cultural understandings of food to be shared.

#### **Participants Selection**

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your support and involvement with Agriculture in the Classroom’s Summer Garden Program.

#### **How much time is required? When will the research be conducted?**

Participation will include one 30-60 minute interview. If you are also interested in supervising your children while they are engaging in the creative project, you will also be required to attend three to four workshops of 60-90 minutes each. You may drop-in at any time during the workshops and leave whenever you have to. All interviews and workshops will be held

throughout June and July, 2013. The workshops will be located in the school-yard gardens if weather permits. If not, I will book a room at the Mayfair Public Library or Confederation Park Community Center. Interviews will be conducted in locations chosen by the participants for their convenience.

Please check one of the boxes below to indicate your interest.

I am interested in being interviewed AND participating in the creative project workshops.

I am only interested in being interviewed.

### **What is involved?**

- a) Interviews will explore personal and family histories, experiences, and relationships to growing food in Saskatoon. Questions will examine experiences growing and/or gathering food with children and youth. Examples of some of the questions I will ask are, “what foods do you grow and eat on a daily basis that are important culturally?” or “what are your perceptions of school-yard gardening in Saskatoon?” With permission, interviews will be audiotaped.
- b) Workshops will invite reflection and sharing of experiences in regard to local foods in Saskatchewan. In addition, children and youth will develop a creative project expressing their relationships to growing food within a school-yard garden context.

Included in the workshops will be:

- Focus groups activities (when a small group of people gather and are led in discussion by a facilitator) consisting of participants invited to talk about experiences and stories. All narratives will be shared in the research project unless requested otherwise. The group discussion will start with me making sure that the participants are comfortable. I will also answer questions about the research that they might have. Then I will ask questions about growing food in their communities, as well as what challenges and successes they have experiences in regard to accessing local foods in cities.
- Individual 15 minute interviews for those who do not want to share their narratives in a group context.
- The creation of a visual project, using photo, to be determined by participants. Photos will be taken of your child with your permission – SEE PHOTO RELEASE FORM.

\* With your consent, participant conversations will be recorded and activities observed. Notes will also be taken.

**IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND THE WORKSHOPS, PLEASE INFORM ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO I CAN INFORM OTHER GUARDIANS HOW MANY OTHER ADULTS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.**

**IT IS ALSO PROTOCOL THAT YOU PROVIDE A RECENT CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK (VULNERABLE SECTOR SEARCH) IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKSHOPS. YOU WILL BE IMMEDIATELY REIMBURSED BY SHEREEN KUKHA-BRYSON.**

We would like to ensure participants wishing to share life histories and experiences connected to one's cultural heritage have enough time to follow cultural protocol and gain permission from knowledge-holders in their community. For example, we acknowledge that sharing First Nations and Metis plant histories and oral narratives might require permission from Elders and community leaders. Exact starting dates are flexible to allow time to seek permission.

If there are concerns regarding audiotaping and the inclusion of information in the final report, please do not hesitate to inform the third-party recruiters and Shereen. All information you do not wish to share will be omitted.

**I hereby acknowledge that my interviews will be included in the final written report and/or creative visual project unless specified otherwise during the research project.**

### **Inconvenience**

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience by possibly taking time away from professional and private commitments. To minimize this, interview and workshop dates will remain flexible and adjusted to fit the individual schedules of participants

### **Potential Risks**

There are some potential, minimal risks by participating in this research. If you decide to engage in a project that will use photo and/or film, a lack of anonymity and confidentiality is certain. However, the option to withdraw from the research at any time is permitted with photos of you only being used if permission is given at the time.

Although sensitive topics may arise (e.g., topics surrounding access to food), this sensitive information will not be traceable to particular locations or individuals and you may ask for certain information to be left out from the final thesis. To prevent or minimize any possible emotional or psychological risks to participants, breaks or the re-scheduling of interviews will be accommodated.

### **Benefits**

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include being involved in a project that will provide valuable information on how to engage children, youth, and families in gardening programs. Society as a whole will benefit from this project by gaining insight into how school-yard gardening programs can be supported and sustained in local neighborhoods. National concerns regarding the increasing number of people who do not have access to culturally appropriate, safe, and healthy foods will also benefit as a result of children and youth's creative involvement with school-yard gardens.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose to refuse or withdraw at any time with no consequences or explanation required. If you do withdraw from the study your data will only be used if you grant permission.

### **Researcher's Relationship with Participants**

Shereen may have a relationship to potential participants as Agriculture in the Classroom's past Summer Garden Leader. This relationship or your children or youth's ability to attend future Summer Garden Programs will not be affected in any way if you decide not to become involved with the research. There will be no disadvantages to those who cannot consent, and your children and youth will always be welcome at the Summer Garden Program. However, to help prevent this dual-role power-relationships from influencing your decision or making you feel pressured to participate, the following steps have been taken. The research will occur on separate days of regular programming so you do not have to worry that you and your children are involved in the research during Summer Garden Program sessions. Also I will be providing the information of a third-party recruitment individual who can help address any concerns you or your children have with the proposed research project.

### Statement of dual-role relationships

*"Your participation in the research must be voluntary and I want to assure you that there are no consequences that arise from giving or withholding your permission. In order to avoid any pressure you might feel because I have been your child's Summer Garden Leader in the past, I have asked that all returned consent forms be sent to the third-party recruiter, not to me. They will not reveal the names to me until the beginning of the project in June.*

*I have also informed the Executive Director of Agriculture in the Classroom of my intended research and should you feel that there are pressures or unanticipated consequences as a result of participating or not, you are free to contact Sara Shymko ([sara@aitc.sk.ca](mailto:sara@aitc.sk.ca)). You may also feel free to contact my research supervisor, Dr. Andrea Walsh, or the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545) to have your concerns addressed.*

*If you decide to withdraw your consent you are free to do so at any time by notifying the third-party recruiter. If permission is not given or is withdrawn, none of your narratives, interviews, and photographs, will be used in the final thesis."*

### **On-going Consent**

This research project will occur over Two months with on-going consent required for this research to continue. Each month (June and July), you will be provided with a consent form to sign. You will be regularly updated of any changes to the research. Participation throughout the two months is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw your child at any time with no consequences.

### **Anonymity**

#### Interview

The group-oriented approach of this research may limit anonymity, although every attempt shall be made to maintain it. Full anonymity can be ensured upon request for individuals who participate in the interviews but do not want the sharing of personal information. All identifiers will be removed from the final, written report such as name and school or community. If there are

pieces of information you feel can be directly linked to yourself, upon request the information can be omitted or disguised.

### Workshops

- a) In the written report, I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous. I will provide pseudonyms (concealing identity) for all participants and will also omit any other markers that may identify you (e.g., school garden attended).
- b) In regard to the creative project component of the research, full anonymity will be compromised by the participatory and visual nature of the project. During focus group discussions and the photo taking, you will not be anonymous. Shereen will facilitate the focus groups. Participants will share with the group, their life experiences with growing food in Saskatoon. The photos will be taken by participants to reflect these experiences.

Visual data will be edited by the children and youth who have the power to omit any photos they do not want in the creative project. With permission, Shereen will include information taken from the participant-selected photos in the written report.

Participants who do not want photos of themselves included in the project are still welcome to participate. Participants who are uncomfortable with a loss of anonymity will have their appearance in photos removed. Lastly, if participants withdraw from the research, their photos will be used if given permission. If consent is not given, photographs will be immediately erased.

\*See PHOTO RELEASE FORM, to learn more on how the photos will be used in the context of this research.

### **Confidentiality**

#### Interviews

Full confidentiality will be ensured for participants who are interviewed. Omitting all identifying markers will protect privacy. Written notes and audiotapes of the interview will be stored securely in Shereen's private residence for a period of three years.

#### Workshop

Participants involved in focus groups and making a visual project, will have their stories, activities, and images displayed within the context of the completed project. For example, if participants choose to take photographs, identifying information of the participants and the location (e.g., specific schools and gardens) will be presented.

In order to address these limits to confidentiality, measures will be taken throughout the research process:

- a) During focus group sessions, if you wish to restrict any information that could be shared in a group setting or fear information would compromise your confidentiality, options for either individual interviews or personal information disguised or omitted will be

accommodated. These interviews will remain anonymous to minimize any risk of future identification.

- b) The written report will not include information that can be used to identify participants such as names, school attended, and gender. In addition, if there are stories that you do not wish to be included in the report, they will be omitted.
- c) Photographs of you engaging in the creative project will be displayed both in the academic and public realm. However, any visual materials you do not want shared will be deleted during the editing workshop where participants will select what images, and themes they want included in the final project. Participants will be encouraged to play a role in deciding how the data will be portrayed and to whom this project will be shared with.

### **How will data be used in research project?**

Data will be reviewed and used towards the completion of Shereen's M.A. thesis. Agriculture in the Classroom and the Saskatoon Public School Division may also request to use selected information in newsletters or reports for the promotion of schoolyard learning gardens in Saskatchewan. (see PHOTO RELEASE FORM)

### **Use of Results**

It is anticipated that results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:

- Thesis and academic presentations
- Published journal article (e.g., *Urban Education and Children, Youth, and Environment*)
- Executive Summary to be sent to Agriculture in the Classroom
- Newsletter sent to all participating schools and an executive summary will be written for Saskatoon's Public School Division
- Agriculture in the Classroom's Website ([www.aipc.sk.ca](http://www.aipc.sk.ca))
- Final written report and visual project will be sent to all participants who request a copy (see REQUESTING THESIS)

### **Future Use of Results**

There is a possibility future results may be used for the completion of a PhD or in new materials, i.e., writing of scholarly articles/conference papers. If this occurs, participants will be contacted and a consent form provided with information on how their data will be used. Any new materials can be made available to participants, upon request.

Due to the community-based orientation of this project, Agriculture in the Classroom (AIPC) may wish to use selected data for purposes not anticipated in this research. If this occurs, Agriculture in the Classroom will contact and send new consent forms and/or photo release forms to participants.

### **Storage and Disposal of Data**

- a) Storage

All digital data such as typed field notes and interviews, audiotapes, photographs, and coded data will be safely stored in the researcher's computer and an external hard-drive stored in a locked cabinet. Hand written field notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in Shereen's residence. Her completed M.A. thesis will be stored in the University of Victoria's library and the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.

b) Duration of Storage

Data (complete M.A. thesis, coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) will be stored for different durations depending on whether participants wish for their information to be destroyed.

- The M.A. thesis, including both a written report and visual project will be stored indefinitely in the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.
- In regard to data collected within the research your permission is required for this information to be stored indefinitely:

I hereby give permission for all pieces of digital and written information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital and written information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely

Circle the types of information that can be stored indefinitely:

Coded data      Photographs      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews

Field Notes

I would like for all of my digital and written information to be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

c) Disposal of Data

Any information you do not want indefinitely archived will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study. All digital information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, and transcribed interviews) will be erased from both the computer and the external hard-drive.

d) Agriculture in the Classroom and Storage of Data

Due to the community-based nature of this research, Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) may wish to have access to selected pieces of digital information. If consent is provided, select information shall be stored in a password protected computer file within Agriculture in the Classroom's Saskatoon office for three years. After the allotted time, digital information will be deleted.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital information (coded data, photos, audiotapes, transcribed interviews) to be securely stored by Agriculture in the Classroom for three years after the study is completed.

Circle the types of information that can be stored:

Coded data      Photographs      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews

### **Requesting Thesis**

After the completion of Shereen's thesis, copies will be distributed to all participants. If you would like both a written report and a copy of the visual project, please provide your contact information below.

### **Participant's Information**

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number

\_\_\_\_\_

School-yard garden I am connected with

### **Contacts**

If you have questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact:

Researcher: Shereen Kukha-Bryson

Email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca))

Supervisor: Dr. Andrea Walsh

Email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca))

In addition, concerns or the verification of ethical approval for this study can be obtained by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that: you understand the above conditions of participation in this study; you have had the opportunity to have any questions answered by the researchers; and you agree to participate in this research project.

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Participant*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Participant*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

## **Appendix H: Photo Release Form – Children and Youth**

### **Photograph Release Form for Parents and Children or Youth**

You and/or your children and youth are invited to share the photographs taken in the context of this M.A. community-based thesis project led by Shereen Kukha-Bryson through the University of Victoria.

During the workshops, your children and youth will be taking photographs of interactions in Greenscapades' school-yard gardens. Shared experiences and group activities will also be captured on camera. In one or two of the workshops, the children and youth will work together on editing photographs by changing or deleting those they do not want to be included in the project.

The photographs will include images, locations, and stories that will limit full anonymity or confidentiality. However, no names will be added to the photographs unless desired by the participants. You as well as your children and youth have complete control over which photographs will be included.

During the workshops, children and youth will be made aware of their decision-making powers to decide when and how information about them will be shared. I will highlight potential formats collected images might use (e.g., short documentary, photo-essay, cookbook) and who might have access to the finished product (e.g., supervisor and committee members, participants, Saskatoon Public School Division, Agriculture in the Classroom and affiliated schools).

Depending on participants' preferences, photographs may be used for the following purposes. Please checkmark what uses of these photographs you are willing to permit.

- Thesis and academic presentations
- Published article
- Executive Summary to be sent to Agriculture in the Classroom and used for communication and promotional purposes for spreading awareness on children and youth school-yard gardening initiatives in Saskatoon
- Newsletter to be sent to all associated schools and an executive summary will be written for Saskatoon's Public School Division
- Agriculture in the Classroom's Website ([www.aitc.sk.ca](http://www.aitc.sk.ca))
- Written report and visual project that will be sent to all participants who wish for a copy

By signing this release form, I understand I am giving permission for my child's photographs to be electronically displayed via the Internet or in a public educational setting (depending on what you check marked above).

You and your children will be notified and consulted about the use of photographs for any purpose other than those listed above.

This release applies to photographic, audio recordings collected as part of the sessions listed on this document only.

By signing this form I acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the above release and agree to be bound therein. I hereby release any and all claims against any person or organization utilizing this material for educational purposes.

Full Name of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of Children and Youth

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix I: Informed Consent Form – Other Community Members



**University  
of Victoria**

### *Participant Consent Form*

#### **Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives.**

You are invited to participate in a study entitled, “Relationships to our Foodscapes: Children and Youth Empowerment and Engagement through Saskatoon School-Yard Garden Initiatives”, being conducted by Shereen Kukha-Bryson.

Ms. Kukha-Bryson is a M.A. graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Victoria. She can be contacted by email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca)).

As a graduate student, Ms. Kukha-Bryson is required to do research as part of the requirements for completing a Master’s degree in Anthropology. Her research project is under the supervision of Dr. Andrea Walsh. Dr. Walsh may be contacted by email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca)).

#### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the research project is to explore child and youth involvement in Agriculture in the Classroom’s (AITC-Sask) school-yard garden program. I wish to explore whether children and youth gardening programs enables young people to make decisions on how they grow their food as well as provide a space for their voices to be expressed. This project will include working with children and youth (ages 5 to 15) who have been involved in Agriculture in the Classroom garden programs in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Together the children and youth will design and work on a creative project on growing food and gardening. For example, they may choose to create a photo story, cookbook, and/or activity book. This research project aims to invite children and youth, participating in school-yard gardening programs, to share their stories, knowledge, and relationships to growing food. Another focus of the research is to learn how children and youth, who are involved in designing and running gardening programs, produce open spaces for their cultural understandings of food to be shared.

#### **Participants Selection**

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your support and involvement with Agriculture in the Classroom’s Summer Garden Program.

#### **How much time is required? When will the research be conducted?**

Participation will include one 30-60 minute interviews. Interviews will be conducted in locations chosen by the participants for their convenience.

#### **What is involved?**

- a) Interviews will explore personal and family histories, experiences, and relationships to growing food in Saskatoon. Questions will examine experiences growing and/or gathering food with children and youth. Examples of some of the questions I will ask are, “what foods do you grow and eat on a daily basis that are important culturally?” or “what are your perceptions of school-yard gardening in Saskatoon?”. With permission, interviews will be audiotaped.

We would like to ensure participants wishing to share life histories and experiences connected to one’s cultural heritage have enough time to follow cultural protocol and gain permission from knowledge-holders in their community. For example, we acknowledge that sharing First Nations and Metis plant histories and oral narratives might require permission from Elders and community leaders. Exact starting dates for interviews are flexible in order to allow time to seek permission.

If there are concerns regarding audiotaping and the inclusion of particular information in the final report, please do not hesitate to inform the third-party recruiters and Shereen. All information you do not wish to share will be omitted.

**I hereby acknowledge that my interviews will be included in the final written report unless specified otherwise during the research project.**

### **Inconvenience**

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience by possibly taking time away from professional and private commitments. To minimize this, interview and workshop dates will remain flexible and adjusted to fit the individual schedules of participants

### **Potential Risks**

There are some potential, minimal risks by participating in this research. Sensitive topics may arise (e.g., topics surrounding access to food), but this sensitive information will not be traceable to particular locations or individuals and you may ask for certain information to be left out from the final thesis. To prevent or minimize any possible emotional or psychological risks to participants, breaks or the re-scheduling of interviews will be accommodated.

### **Benefits**

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include being involved in a project that will provide valuable information on how to involve children, youth, and families in gardening programs. Society as a whole will benefit from this project by gaining insight into how school-yard gardening programs can be supported and sustained in local neighborhoods. National concerns regarding the increasing number of people who do not have access to culturally appropriate, safe, and healthy foods will also benefit as a result of children and youth’s creative involvement with school-yard gardens.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose to refuse or withdraw at any time with no consequences or explanation required. If you do withdraw from the study your data will only be used if you grant permission.

### **Researcher's Relationship with Participants**

Shereen Kukha-Bryson has worked closely with community-members, families, students, and school-yard gardens in your community. You may be familiar with Shereen because of her role as Agriculture in the Classroom's Summer Garden Program Leader in the summer of 2011 and 2012.

### **On-going Consent**

This research project will occur over two months with on-going consent required for this research to continue. Each month (June and July), you will be provided with a consent form to sign. You will be regularly updated of any changes to the research. Participation throughout the two months is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any time with no consequences.

### **Anonymity**

#### Interview

The group-oriented approach of this research may limit anonymity, although every attempt shall be made to maintain it. Full anonymity can be ensured upon request for individuals who participate in the interviews but do not want the sharing of personal information. All identifiers will be removed from the final, written report such as name and school or community. If there are pieces of information you feel can be directly linked to yourself, upon request the information can be omitted or disguised.

### **Confidentiality**

#### Interviews

Full confidentiality will be ensured for participants who are interviewed. Omitting all identifying markers will protect privacy. Written notes and audiotapes of the interview will be stored securely in Shereen's private residence for a period of three years.

### **How will data be used in research project?**

Data will be analyzed and used towards the completion of Shereen's M.A. thesis. Agriculture in the Classroom and the Saskatoon Public School Division may also request to use selected information for inclusion in newsletters or reports for the promotion of schoolyard learning gardens in Saskatchewan. (see PHOTO RELEASE FORM).

### **Use of Results**

It is anticipated that results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:

- Thesis and academic presentations
- Published journal article (e.g., *Urban Education and Children, Youth, and Environment*)
- Executive Summary to be sent to Agriculture in the Classroom

- Newsletter sent to all participating schools and an executive summary will be written for Saskatoon's Public School Division
- Agriculture in the Classroom's Website ([www.aipc.sk.ca](http://www.aipc.sk.ca))
- Final written report and visual project will be sent to all participants who request a copy (see REQUESTING THESIS)

### **Future Use of Results**

There is a possibility future results may be used for the completion of a PhD or in new materials, i.e., writing of scholarly articles/conference papers. If this occurs, participants will be contacted and a consent form provided with information on how your data will be used. Any new materials can be made available to participants, upon request.

Due to the community-based orientation of this project, Agriculture in the Classroom (AIPC) may wish to use selected data for purposes not anticipated in this research. If this occurs, Agriculture in the Classroom will contact and send new consent forms and/or photo release forms to participants.

### **Storage and Disposal of Data**

#### a) Storage

All digital data such as typed field notes and interviews, audiotapes, and coded data will be safely stored in the researcher's computer and an external hard-drive stored in a locked cabinet. Hand written field notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in Shereen's residence. Her completed M.A. thesis will be stored in the University of Victoria's library and the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.

#### b) Duration of Storage

Data (complete M.A. thesis, coded data, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and fieldnotes) will be stored for different durations depending on whether participants wish for their information to be destroyed.

- The M.A. thesis, including both a written report and visual project will be stored indefinitely in the online storage and institutional repository UvicDSpace.
- In regard to data collected within the research your permission is required for this information to be stored indefinitely:

I hereby give permission for all pieces of digital and written information (coded data, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital and written information (coded data, audiotapes, transcribed interviews, and field notes) to be securely stored indefinitely

Circle the types of information that can be stored indefinitely:

Coded data      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews      Field Notes

I would like for all of my digital and written information to be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

c) Disposal of Data

Any information you do not want indefinitely archived will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study. All digital information (coded data, audiotapes, and transcribed interviews) will be erased from both the computer and the external hard-drive.

d) Agriculture in the Classroom and Storage of Data

Due to the community-based nature of this research, Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) may wish to have access to selected pieces of digital information. If consent is provided, select information shall be stored in a password protected computer file within Agriculture in the Classroom's Saskatoon office for three years. After the allotted time, digital information will be deleted.

I hereby give permission for selected pieces of digital information (coded data, audiotapes, transcribed interviews) to be securely stored by Agriculture in the Classroom for three years after the study is completed.

Circle the types of information that can be stored:

Coded data      Audiotapes      Transcribed Interviews

**Requesting Thesis**

After the completion of Shereen's thesis, copies will be distributed to all participants. If you would like both a written report and a copy of the visual project, please provide your contact information below.

**Participant's Information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number

\_\_\_\_\_  
School-yard garden I am connected to

**Contacts**

If you have questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact:

Researcher: Shereen Kukha-Bryson

Email ([skukh075@uvic.ca](mailto:skukh075@uvic.ca))

Supervisor: Dr. Andrea Walsh

Email ([awalsh@uvic.ca](mailto:awalsh@uvic.ca))

In addition, concerns or the verification of ethical approval for this study can be obtained by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Your signature below indicates that: you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and you have had the opportunity to have any questions answered by the researchers

---

*Name of Participant*

---

*Signature of Participant*

---

*Date*

## Appendix J: Interview Topics and Questions for Adult Co-Participants

### Main Topics and Questions for Interviews with:

#### a) Parents and Caregivers

##### Background in growing food

- Where did you grow up?
- Can you describe how place(s) influenced your relationship to food?
- Growing up, did your household or community engage in gardening?
- How did you obtain the majority of your food?
- How has food growing/gathering practices changed since you were young?

##### Teaching younger generations how to garden

- Have your children or youth had the opportunity to learn how food is grown?
- How do you feel about garden programs for your children?
- What (if any) challenges do adults face when trying to engage children and youth in gardening?

##### Culturally different ways of growing food

- What foods do you and your family grow and/or eat in your daily life that is important culturally?
- Why do you have cultural relationships with those foods?
- Do you feel that gardening programs reflect these different relationships? Are your children learning how to grow food in a way that reflects your culture?

#### b) AITC-SK Staff

##### Experiences in working for Agriculture in the Classroom

- In what ways have you been involved in gardening with children and youth?
- Why do you believe children and youth gardening is important in an urban context?
- Based on your experiences, how should a community foster/support child and youth engagement in growing food?
- While working for Agriculture in the Classroom, what are some of your most memorable stories of children and youth engaging in gardening?

### **c) Teachers**

#### How they have included gardening with children and youth in their schools

- How have you engaged your class in gardening and growing food?
- Why did you personally decide to include gardening in your classroom?
- How have children responded to these activities?
- Is there community and school support with these school-yard gardens? (e.g., by support I am referring to people spending extra time helping or others feeling comfortable taking over when you cannot, etc.)

#### Future directions of growing food in Saskatoon schools

- Where would you like to see Saskatoon heading regarding school-yard garden initiatives?
- What do you feel are some of the greatest challenges and/or frustrations with starting and maintaining school-yard gardens in Saskatoon? What do you feel are some of the greatest challenges and/or frustrations with starting and maintaining school-yard gardens with children?

## Appendix K: Garden Workshop Agenda

### Garden Workshop Agenda Draft:

#### Confederation Park, Mayfair, and Westmount Community School Gardens

Facilitated by Shereen Kukha-Bryson

July-September, 2013

Approximately 2 hours/per session

**Attendees:** 4 people (Confederation Park), 3 people (Mayfair), 4 people (Westmount)

**To bring (tech):** Digital Cameras (extra batteries), Laptop, Audio Recorder, USBs,

**To bring:** Consent Forms, First Aid Kit, Snacks, Water, Activity Supplies, Developed Photographs, Scrapbooking Materials,

#### Garden Workshop 1

- Introduction – Icebreaker
- Group Planning (visual art and cooking)
- Snack Break
- Watch Kurdish Digital Story and Camera Tutorials
- Photo-taking Activity
- Wrap-up and Thank-You

#### Garden Workshop 2

- Welcome Circle
- Review Developed Photographs
- Photo-Taking Activity
- Snack Break
- Harvest and Cooking OR Scrapbooking
- Wrap-up and Thank-You

#### Garden Workshop 3

- Welcome Circle
- Review and Select Developed Photographs
- Photo-Taking Activity
- Snack Break
- Harvest and Cooking OR Editing Photographs and Scrapbooking
- Wrap-up and Thank-You

#### Garden Workshop 4

- Welcome Circle
- Review and Select Developed Photographs
- Scrapbooking and Photo Interpretation
- Snack Break
- Harvest and Cooking OR Games
- Closing Circle and Final Thoughts

## **Appendix L: Focus Group Topics and Questions for Children and Youth Co-Participants**

### **Main Topics and Questions for Focus Group with Children and Youth**

#### What do they know about growing food in Saskatoon?

- Where does our food come from?
- Why is food important to us?
- Can anyone tell me what food people can grow in their gardens?
- Can you think of different ways families can get food in Saskatoon?
- Have you ever been to the Saskatoon farmer's market, mini farmer's markets or greenhouses where you can buy plants? Can you tell me why you went (or did not go)?

#### Their personal background in growing food

- Does anyone in your family garden?
- How many have grown food before at home or school or in another program?
- Is there anyone who has gardened or gathered food in a place outside of Saskatoon? Can you tell us more about it?
- Who has taught you how to grow or gather food?

#### How they feel about gardening and growing food

- What does gardening mean to you?
- If you had to take one photo that would best show how you feel about gardening, what would the picture have in it? Can you explain why?
- Is growing food something you feel is important or unimportant? Why is it important/unimportant? Who is it important/unimportant to?

-Have your feelings around gardening changed from the beginning of the summer to right now? Do you think it is easier, difficult, fun, boring, etc.? What can you tell me about why your feelings have changed?

-How does planting seeds that will later become food make you feel?

### Story-telling and sharing their experiences with growing food

-Who has a story they want to share about eating food that they or someone they know grew?

For example:

- Does anyone have a story about the different animals they have seen when working in the garden?
- Has anyone had their plants die because of insects, not enough or too much water, frost, animals, etc.?
- I remember from last summer a lot of you liked berry picking with your families, do you want to share stories about those experiences?
- Has anyone shared their food with other family members or friends?

### Future direction in children and youth gardening

-Do you want to garden next summer? Why or why not?

-Do you know of any programs like this one?

- If you could make a garden that would feed everyone at your school, what would it look like, what would you grow, how would you share the food you have grown, what kind of meals, e.g., lunches, could be made out of the food your garden grows?

### Perceptions on food security

-How would you explain hunger to someone who has never been hungry?

-Do you believe Saskatoon is a place where families can easily grow food? Or do you think it can be difficult for some people to get food in the city?

-Do you think cities are places where there is a lot of food, or can you think of other places where there is a lot of food (e.g., smaller communities, farms, forests, near the coast, etc.?)

Specific inquiries into photograph interpretations

-How would you describe these photographs?

-When you took this picture of a [insert subject], how did you want it to help tell your story?

-How do the photographs and videos of us playing in the garden connect to gardening?

-Can you compare this [insert garden vegetable or fruit] that you picked from your school-yard garden and took a photograph of with the [insert garden vegetable or fruit] that you buy at the grocery store?

### Appendix M: Mind Map of Thematic Analysis

