Seed Stories: A Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Urban Recreation Practitioners in Garden, Recreation, and Community Places

by

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Abstract

This paper-based dissertation draws upon wonders grafted from a prior narrative inquiry into my experiences as a recreation researcher-practitioner in multiple community gardens. Drawing upon my grafted wonders of how do recreation practitioners learn to live in relationally ethical ways (Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018) alongside the people and places they work, I designed a research project in which I narratively inquired into the experiences of two recreation practitioners as they worked alongside urban Indigenous peoples in a community garden project. As we lived alongside (Clandinin, 2013) each other in a community garden project we continually inquired into who we were and who we were becoming as people who practice. As we shared stories of what guided us, what had been planted in us, and how we wanted to live as people who practiced we continually composed spaces to rethink who we were and how we were storied as recreation practitioners.

Narrative inquiry is both a research methodology and a way of understanding experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In this research I lived alongside participants over one garden season at River Ravine Garden. Multiple times each week I accompanied gardeners and practitioners out to the garden and partook in daily garden activities. During the garden season I composed field notes and had many informal conversations in the garden. The two participants in my study, Margaret and Clark, also wrote weekly reflective journals, which they shared and often conversed about with me. We also engaged in several recorded and transcribed research conversations in the months and years that followed the garden season. By drawing on these diverse field texts I composed a narrative account for each participant, which I shared and negotiated with them.

Often in recreation practice the diverse lives of practitioners are silenced as notions of professional competence in relation to achieving program outcomes and benefits sit at the fore (Samdahl, 2016). This research makes a significant contribution to the field of recreation and leisure studies by shifting grand narratives of recreation practice by thinking with practitioners as they compose their lives. By thinking with practitioners as they compose their lives on storied landscapes, this research shows how ethical responses are negotiated in the living as lives come together, and not in the predetermined telling of how practitioners should respond. I argue that the narrow focus on the technical aspects of practice (e.g., professional competence and programming outcomes) silences the relational aspects of practice (i.e., narrative experiences of whole lives, personal and professional, coming together with an attention to who we are and how both lives are shaped in the encounter).

As you read this dissertation it is important to note what holds this dissertation together are puzzles around learning to live in relationally ethical ways in recreation practice. They are methodological puzzles of what reflexive work needs to be continually done so recreation practitioners can live alongside community members in more wakeful ways. They are puzzles of rethinking what matters in recreation discourse when notions of professional competence and programming outcomes/benefits silence the living and building of friendship/relation. And they are puzzles that inquire into how place(s) shape the practice of recreation workers as they negotiate how to live relationally with the people they come alongside in the places they work.

Preface

This dissertation is an original work by Michael Dubnewick. The research project, of which this dissertation is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places", Study ID Pro00063201, approved May 16, 2016.

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Dedication

For the educators in my life

Thank you for opening possibilities

Acknowledgements

When I left home many years ago I was not sure what an undergraduate degree was, or what a graduate degree was, I just kind of signed up. And I continued to sign up after each degree ended. And as each degree ended, I felt more at home with living in academic places and who I was becoming in academic places. There are many people to thank for this.

I want to thank the members of my doctoral committee for making me feel at home throughout the process: Drs. Tara-Leigh McHugh, Jean Clandinin, Sean Lessard, Vera Caine, Donna Goodwin, and Cheryl Craig. To my supervisory committee: Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh, thank you for your openness when we first met and your continued support in the years that followed. Dr. Jean Clandinin, your guidance over the many years has shaped me in good ways, thank you for slowly coming alongside in the moments when I needed it the most. Dr. Sean Lessard, I will always be grateful to the supportive words you have shared throughout, thank you my friend. To Drs. Vera Caine, Donna Goodwin, and Cheryl Craig, your thoughtful responses have left me with many wonders.

To all the gardeners I have gardened alongside at River Ravine Garden. I truly appreciate your warm embraces. I found so much joy in gardening alongside each of you. Specifically, I want to thank the land owners of River Ravine Garden and everyone at the social services agencies who welcomed me each week. Clark, your willingness to share and reflect has taught me much about what it means to be a caring person, thank you. Margaret, your living as a pillar always reminded me to be wakeful to how I am rooting myself, thank you. Lastly, Johnny, you are an amazing guide and friend. Your teachings live within me.

The Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development has been a true academic homeplace for me over the years. To all the wonderful people I have met at the

Research Issues Table you have inspired me in countless ways, you were the family that found me in Edmonton. Among the many people at the table, I want to thank Elaine Laberge, Sumer Seiki, Cindy Swanson, and Joanne Farmer, each of you has shaped my work and practice. To Dr. Janice Huber, thank you for nurturing spaces in which I found comfort in speaking. To Dr. Karen Fox, thank you for introducing me to graduate studies. Big Jay, since sitting together at graduate student orientation many years ago you have been like a brother to me, our talks and laughs remind me that friendship lives in academic places.

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To my family. Mom, your encouragement, support, and love always has a way of finding me even across a distance. Jay, going home to pizza, hugs, and talking football is something that I truly cherish. Jazz you are my definition of a funny, loving dog. To the little ball of fur that sits on my lap, Bella, thank you for slowing me down each time I sit down. Also, to my father, thank you for teaching me how to live as a caring person.

Finally, to beautiful Claire. With each uproot of our lives our love has never wilted. A thank you does not capture how grateful I am for your patience and love over the many years.

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MENU

Menu

As I write this menu (or introduction/roadmap) to my doctoral research I am reminded of how I framed my Master's research as an *amuse-bouche*. An amuse-bouche is an offering from the chef, a small taste of what is to come. What I placed on the table at that time were wonderings around the limited ways recreation and leisure researchers go about understanding gardening or leisure activities. As I travelled among three community gardens I sensed that grand narratives[1] of what gardening was limited our understandings of how people lived in community (Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013). I wondered how my familial stories of gardening lived in certain places that held different stories of gardening. As I crossed the many fences and stepped into each garden, I awakened to the stories I was telling and living of what gardening was and could be in my life and each place I visited. From this work we (Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013) wrote:

> As Michael placed himself in the midst of the Heritage garden and moved between his memories of gardening as a child and his experiences at Eco garden, he became aware of the spatio-temporal rhythms of gardening mediated by meta-narratives surrounding garden practices. In the Eco and Heritage gardens Michael's familial stories of gardening were interrupted and overlaid with new rhythms and narratives of gardening situated in green, healthy communities. The disruptions of Michael's stories across sites evoked a sense of unease for him, as his stories were not congruent with the stories of either site. Simply stated, the social expectations of gardening, narrated by the community and larger societal institutions (e.g. City of Edmonton, 2012), influenced how Michael could garden

[1] The use of grand narratives is borrowed from Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Clandinin and Connelly explained that grand narratives are the stories that are so pervasive and taken for granted that they become "the" way, or the unquestioned way, of looking at things.

> and how he was supported (or not supported) in community processes. By attending to disruptions, Michael noticed the larger social, cultural and institutional narratives surrounding each garden site by resisting, picking up and overlaying narratives alongside his. Grafting his experiences as well as of others alongside of meta-narratives about gardening unsettled his (our) understanding of leisure. (p. 421)

As I gardened alongside people, listened to stories shared, and narratively inquired into my own experiences of gardening, I experienced tensions towards how grand narratives that reduced lived experience to broad activity labels obscured the multiple ways people related to and understood gardening in their lives. In many ways what I placed on the table at that time was a wonder, a hopeful opening, and reminder that gardening is not just gardening, and the many stories and experiences of gardening need to be attended to in recreation and leisure research.

As I placed this wonder around needing to attend to the many stories and experiences of gardening on the table, I also placed it alongside my lived tensions of how do I as a researcher-practitioner support, and not silence, the many ways people relate to and live in gardens. As I lived the role "gardener-in-residence" in an urban community garden project during my Master's research I lived tensions in how I connected to the people in the neighbourhood, and if the garden project was being lived as a place of connection or Eurocentric intervention. In this writing (Dubnewick, 2016) I inquired into my pace and the intentional shifts I attempted to live out as I tried to reimagine my relations as a person who was given the label "gardener-in-residence". As I come back to how I framed my work as an amuse-bouche I think about those experiences during my Master's as learnings that lingered with me. They were learnings around the multiplicity of gardening and leisure in people's lives, and how recreation practitioners and researchers attend to that multiplicity and diversity of lives in garden places.

I open my introduction by looking backwards not to trace a linear sequence of my work so far or demonstrate a smooth trajectory, rather, I do so knowing that the reverberations of past experiences sit within my living now as I come to this writing (Clandinin, Lessard, & Caine, 2012). It was in those past experiences as I moved among gardens, carried buckets until hands reddened, and found moments to sit alongside others that I began to notice the *puzzles I was living* as a person who practiced in recreation as I searched for some semblance of being a person who cared. As those moments lingered with me then and now, I can more clearly state that what holds my dissertation together are puzzles around how to live relationally as a person who cared in recreation practice.

What is recreation and leisure?

Among recreation and leisure studies researchers it is commonly accepted that many definitions of leisure[2] exist. Explorations around the multiple meanings of sport, recreation, and physical activity also exist in the research literature (see McHugh, Coppola, & Sinclair, 2013). Nevertheless, Fox and Klaiber (2006) argued that Eurocentric understandings of leisure are still pervasive and privileged over other understandings of leisure. Leisure is commonly associated and operationalized in terms of an activity or set of activities (e.g., gardening), a particular setting (e.g., a garden), a specific time period (e.g., not in dichotomy to work but different from work time, relatively freely chosen time), and/or a state-of-mind (e.g., deep immersion, flow, enjoyment, relaxation) (Rossman & Schlatter, 2008).

[2] In recreation and leisure studies, leisure is often defined differently than recreation. In this section I will focus primarily on how leisure is defined. Recreation is often subsumed under the heading of leisure and conceptualized as the "institutionalized form of leisure that is manipulated to accomplish socially desirable goals and objectives" (Rossman & Schlatter, 2008, p. 11).

In writing these concepts that underpin conceptualizations of leisure I revisit a text that was introduced to me during an undergraduate recreation program-planning course. In this course I was introduced to Rossman and Schlatter's (2008) text *Recreation programming: Designing leisure experiences*. In their book they stated, "Leisure is an experience most likely to occur during freely chosen interactions characterized by a high degree of personal engagement that is motivated by the intrinsic satisfaction that is expected to result" (p. 6). While I did not memorize that definition, I did remember leaving that course with an understanding that a recreation programmer is an "experience facilitator" and an "activity provider" (Parr & Lashua, 2004). I left that course being told a good or competent recreation practitioner designed/facilitated leisure experiences in which participants felt they had freedom, were thoroughly engaged, and left intrinsically satisfied. As Parr and Lashua (2004) described:

> In this context, the job of a leisure services practitioner is to provide an array of products and services (activities, spaces, etc.), from which consumers choose those that best meet their needs. In turn, "…the consumer role reinforces the recipient' s reliance on professionals to program services and meet their leisure needs" (Glover, 2001, p. 3). However, this approach may serve to disconnect leisure from its potential to mean much more in the lives of humans and the societies in which they live. It does this, in part, by limiting discourse about leisure and its relation to leisure services to discussions of effective and efficient management of activities and spaces. (p. 14)

At the time of the course I did not understand how definitions of leisure shaped how I understood my practice as a recreation researcher-practitioner. Nor did I understand how definitions shaped and were shaped by policy documents (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015; Sport for Life, 2017) that often pushed for outcome-based recreation programming. Within the grand

narratives in recreation programming, as highlighted in these writings, was the undercurrent that recreation practitioners were mere providers of a service and *what mattered* was their professional competence tied to programming outcomes and objectives. In reading Parr and Lashua's work (2004) I think about what possibilities exist if our discussions open around what leisure is and what matters in the practice of recreation practitioners. As I think with their call, I am reminded of the importance of attending to experience and how lives are continually negotiated in the midst of work landscapes. By attending to experience, potential openings exist for practitioners to restory who they are and are becoming, and how they are storied within the landscapes they work.

What is practice?

So far I have referred to the term recreation practice, or the practice of recreation practitioners, on numerous occasions. Yet, I have not clearly stated what recreation practice is, that is, what is practice and how it is conceptualized in this work. In the previous section, I briefly outlined how leisure is commonly defined, and how such definitions position the practice of recreation practitioners as providers of activities and leisure-like experiences. While the effective and efficient management of activities and spaces is an integral part of what recreation practitioners do, it is not how practice is defined in this inquiry. My understanding of practice comes from the work of Clandinin, Caine, Estefan, Huber, Murphy, and Steeves (2015) who pulled from Goldberg (2013). Goldberg (2013) described practice as:

> Something you choose to do on a regular basis with no vision of an outcome; the aim is not improvement, not getting somewhere. You do it because you do it… That's ultimately what practice is: arriving at the front—and back door—of yourself. You set up

> to do something consistently over a long period of time—and simply watch what happens with no idea of good or bad, gain or loss. No applause—and no criticism. (p. 41)

For Goldberg, practice is something you continually do, despite resistance, and by doing practice you further understand how you are rooting that something in your life. Practice is "something that will settle your life, make it real, build a good foundation. Not well-being, but the *ground of being*" (Goldberg, 2013, p. 45).

As Clandinin et al. (2015) turned to Goldberg's (2013) work to define practice, they did so thinking alongside their ontological commitments to experience and how that was rooting into their lives as they navigated their work landscapes as narrative inquirers. In their writing they explored, "How might individuals practice their ontological commitments in their research lives? What might the practices of a practice situated in a commitment to experience look like?" (Clandinin et al., 2015, p. 23). Their stories of experience support me as I puzzle over how might individuals (Margaret, Clark, and myself) practice a commitment to experience in their practice as recreation practitioners. My goal is not to provide a recipe or manual to follow, rather, like Clandinin et al. (2015), my aim is to show the ongoing negotiations that occur as people navigate their commitments as they root their practice in their everyday lives and workplaces.

Setting the table

While I have briefly mapped out how my research puzzle was situated in my continued stories of experiences, it is important to note that my inquiry extends beyond the wonders I am/was living and is grafted alongside the lives of two-early career recreation practitioners (Margaret and Clark) as I lived alongside them in a community garden project. What follows is a paper-based dissertation that narratively inquires (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) into the puzzles

around how people (myself, Margaret, and Clark) negotiated living relationally in recreation practice alongside the people in River Ravine Garden, alongside me in the research (paper 1), alongside their rooting of practice (paper 2), and alongside the places we lived and worked (paper 3). While each paper can be read as a stand alone account the reader should sense that each paper is embedded within a larger dissertation that inquires into how lives are composed in the practice of recreation practice. To further situate the reader, this dissertation also includes an introductory section that takes the reader alongside my own narrative beginnings and into discussions around narrative ways of understanding experience. Lastly, narrative accounts for each participant are intentionally placed within this document in ways that ask the reader to begin and think with their experiences first. Given the paper-based format, some aspects of this writing may repeat previously stated, and/or referenced material. I hope you as a reader understand that this is not to repeat statements but to ensure each section can be taken individually, yet at the same time contribute to the whole.

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INTRODUCTION

Narrative beginnings

Methodological commitments: A narrative view of experience

The story fragment and inquiry that follows shows how I interacted with participants in communities within a programmed activity (i.e., gardening). This storied interaction extends to the broader social and cultural milieus in which my life was structured as an inner city recreation researcher-practitioner. In doing so this inquiry follows the continuous process of negotiating and renegotiating my identity, my *stories to live by* (Connelly, & Clandinin, 1999). In Connelly and Clandinin's (1999) meta-level unpacking of the experiences of several teacher and school administrators' they conceptualized *stories to live by* as narrative way to understand the links between knowledge, context and identity. They explained *stories to live by* as a narrative conception of identity, which takes shape, changes, and/or solidifies depending on life situations and contexts. This narrative conceptualization of identity stemmed from the interrelationships of their previous research into *personal practical knowledge* (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988) and *professional knowledge landscapes* (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

Connelly and Clandinin's (1988) initial work around teacher thinking and school reform led to the notion of *personal practical knowledge*. Troubled with how teachers were historically positioned and understood within school reform as mere implementers of curriculum materials within larger societal structures, Connelly and Clandinin showed how teachers (and to a lesser extent, students) are active holders and expressers of knowledge. They defined *personal practical knowledge* as:

> A term designed to capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons. Personal practical knowledge is in the

> teacher's past experience, in the teacher's present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found in the person's practice. It is, for any one teacher, a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation. (p. 25)

As this definition shows, teachers are knowers of their situations, in which they draw upon all their experiences (personal and professional) in order to make sense of and act in present situations.

While *personal practical knowledge* focused inward into teacher thinking, Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) metaphor of *professional knowledge landscapes* shifted outward to the complex professional contexts in which teachers lived. Thus, the metaphor of professional contexts as a knowledge landscape highlights the "notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, p. 4). Using the metaphor of a conduit Clandinin and Connelly described how abstract knowledge filled with moral judgments and prescriptions for action are funneled down to teachers with little room for sustained discussion. In their work they outline two distinct places on the professional knowledge landscape. The first place is the out-of-classroom place, which is a place of imposed prescriptions where a theory-driven view of practice suggests a type of sacred story[3] (Crites, 1971) on the professional context. They name the theory-driven practice story as having the quality of a sacred story because it is unquestioned by those who are positioned within the story. The other place on the landscape that Clandinin and Connelly explain is the in-classroom place. This is what they generally call a safe place, a

[3] Crites (1971) described *sacred stories* as stories that people live in. They are stories that are projected upon the total horizon and have a particular way of informing the story of which peoples lives are lived and told.

place behind closed doors "where teachers are free to live stories of practice" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). As Clandinin and Connelly (1998) explained, "to enter a professional knowledge landscape is to enter a place of story" (p. 151). For example, a story of a school may be positioned as one of being innovative in its research and practice, or a story of a garden in a community may be one of gentrification/success amidst urban decline (e.g., see Glover, 2003). In each of these examples one can see when one steps into the knowledge landscape one steps into a complex web of stories and narrative histories that live in that place and shape professional practices in the present and future.

While Connelly and Clandinin's (1999) work is primarily situated in the field of teacher education and curriculum inquiry, their work extends and is relevant across all 'relational professions.' In these grand stories of relational professions Connelly and Clandinin (1999) state, that "relationship is, too, an abstraction that can be taught and, indeed is taught in teaching and nursing" (p. 85). I suggest the field of recreation, leisure, and physical activity similarly sits with these abstractions of relationship, as recreation therapists, programmers, coaches, practitioners and others in the field negotiate grand narratives of how they should relate to participants, activity, and the milieu in which everyday practice is situated. Although my focus here is on the tensions that recreation workers may experience from prescribed narratives on *professional knowledge landscapes* in relation to their identities, it is equally important to note that not all people experience tensions from prescribed narratives around how they should practice as recreation practitioners. For example, if the stories of a garden align with who a person is and wants to become, they may find comfort in who they are expected to be and how they are expected to practice.

I shift now to situate you, the reader, toward my own experiences as a recreation researcher-practitioner in an inner city community garden[4]. I was well into the gardening season at Circle community garden as the gardener-in-residence. I had an established rhythm to my involvement. This rhythm was largely shaped by early conversations with colleagues in the community who spoke to the garden as a place of access to fresh foods and beauty amidst the concrete. In most succinct terms I describe my established itinerary of movement as follows: Arrive at 9:00 a.m. every Monday and Friday, open the lock, lift a small section of the fence that surrounded the garden to make it feel welcoming, re-adjust the community garden sign and rain barrels that inevitable fell over since my last visit, check for weeds, pick what was ready or inform others that things could be eaten, grab the two 16 litre buckets, walk to the auto-body shop on the now well worn down path, fill the buckets with water, journey back on the hardened path with buckets anchored in grasp, arrive back at the garden to gently pour the water into each of the raised beds, repeat watering process until all beds complete, once all that is done take a seat at the garden's bench till 11:00 a.m. or noon, reluctantly lock up the garden before biking back home. It was in moments of disruption to my itinerary of movements that I was able to question my relation to the garden, the community, the people, and the social milieus I was in dialogue with. For the purpose of this introduction I am interested in reflecting upon one of the moments I experienced that dismantled my itinerary and asked me to be wakeful to my continually shifting identity as a researcher-practitioner in relation to inner city and Indigenous peoples.

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[4] Pseudonyms have been used for identifying people and places. The terms Circle community garden, Circle garden, Circle community and Circle are used throughout the writing. The terms Circle community garden and Circle garden are used interchangeably to refer to physical practice and program of gardening in the inner city. When Circle or Circle community is referred to it is in reference to the community in which the garden is located and the wider community in which the garden and myself are nested.

Numerous narrative scholars have commented on the impact of time and distance in regard to the unpacking or inquiry process of narrative accounts[5] (Clandinin, 2013). Caine, Estefan, and Clandinin (2013) remind us that in narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) there is no beginning or end point of inquiry, rather they state that they, and we as narrative inquirers, are always in the midst of storied lives on storied landscapes. This understanding that we are living stories contends that our inquiries begin long before contact and long before we craft a research proposal or pull together ethics. Beginning autobiographically, narrative inquiry situates our inquiries in personal experiences with intergenerational, institutional and cultural stories that circulate in and fill spaces between people. These relational in-between[6] spaces act as a fundamental ingredient for which narrative inquiries may attend. This type of relational understanding would inquire into my "itinerary of movements" in four directions (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) and attentive to place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). *Inward* to my internal conditions and hopes as a young, white, urban academic struggling to relate to the community outside of familiar frames. *Outward* to the social narratives of Indigenous peoples in urban places and the helping narratives that sat between the people, community and I. *Backward* to my beginnings with the garden, gardening and the historical underpinnings of organized garden movements in Canada and with Indigenous peoples. And *forward* to a wondering of my relation with the community and the possibilities of gardening

[5] Clandinin (2013) described the term narrative account as a way for narrative inquirers to "give an account, an accounting, a representation of the unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they become visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared" (p. 132). This process of writing and negotiating the accounts with participants strives to be morally responsible to the lives of who we each are and are becoming.

[6] Caine et al. (2013) describe this relational in-between space as a place composed between people where we can discover new ways of knowing and being. This space in narrative inquiry is necessitated upon the acknowledgement of interdependence so that we, as researchers, can wonder with "sensitivity to the conditions around which we *become with* each other" (p. 580).

with the community in that place. In other writings I have delved deeper into these tensions I encountered as the "gardener-in-residence" at Circle community garden (see Dubnewick, 2016). However, in this piece my interest is in slowing down and wondering how the stories I have and continue to live, in particular those storied experiences at Circle community, are working on me now (Basso, 1996) as I begin another research project in the community. Thus, in many ways this writing may be seen as a commitment to wandering with and wondering alongside the relational ethics[7] of narrative inquiry.

I write this piece as a purposeful *for now* piece. A writing that at some point may be crumpled up and stashed away. Not so much because it deserves to be there or that there is nothing to learn from, sit with, or re-visit, more so because the content, my stories to live by, are not fixed or all explaining but a continuously interactive process (Dewey, 1938). This ontological commitment to a narrative view of experience positions experience as "lived in the midst, as always unfolding over time, in diverse social contexts and place, and as co-composed in relation" (Caine et al., 2013, p. 575). Such an understanding shifts the purpose of inquiry away from transcendental origins where the ideal is to "generate an exclusively faithful representation of reality independent of the knower," to inquiry as transactional in its origins where the "regulative ideal for inquiry is to generate a new relation between a human being and her environment—her life, community, world" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 39). Thus, this *for now* piece that one day may leave my grasp and find the trash, is a commitment to the continual

[7] Relational ethics and responsibilities in narrative inquiry were first framed alongside the ethics of friendship, in that relationships are formed and there is a narrative unity of lives in the research process (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Such an understanding heightens how we care for and respect each other's stories as we inquire into them as researchers. As Coles (1989) explains, as people share stories with us we, as researchers, shape what we hear from our vantage and our interpretations have the potential to rupture the stories people are living and telling. It is this responsibility for each other's stories to which we must continually attend.

process of writing my self into existence to ask and awaken to who I am becoming as I work with inner city and Indigenous peoples as a doctoral researcher.

As I begin to wander with and wonder alongside one of my storied experiences at Circle community garden my goal is not to create a plan for action that I can refer to as I step into the midst of another garden program with the community. Rather, my intention is to "map out possible plotlines, hint at that array of possibilities…[knowing that] all [I] can say is that this is how, inquirers and participants, are living and telling the stories *for now*" (Downey & Clandinin, 2010, p. 394, *emphasis added*). This *for now* quality of narrative inquiry grounds uncertainty as essential and expected. This *for now* quality resonates with the work of Crites (1971), who stated that our relations to situations are dependent upon how we make sense of the past and future by our present lives. In highlighting the position of tentativeness in narrative inquiry I hope you, the reader, keep this in mind as a *for now* piece that purposefully plays with the uncertainty between situations experienced. In doing so this introduction will support my, and hopefully your, wonderings about the possible plotlines and relational ethics that may exist as when entering into research relationships and being in the field in new places.

In an effort to inquire into my own stories to live by as a researcher-practitioner this writing follows one day working within an inner city community garden during my master's research. I have chosen to come back to this story fragment, as it is a moment that has sat with me over the years. This experience has continually encouraged me to question how I understand my identity as an early career recreation scholar and practitioner working with inner city and Indigenous peoples. While my aim is inquire into the details and particulars of one experience[8],

[8] This process of inquiring into lived and told stories through the three dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, sociality, and place is what researchers in narrative inquiry term

I also aim to attend the whole of a life lived. Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, and Huber (2016) explain that this balancing of representation between the particularities and the whole of a life is essential as we attempt to not privilege one text over another in our final research texts. As I share particulars into my experience at Circle community garden it could be all too easy to see myself as a young researcher-practitioner attempting to do good in a community I am not accustomed, while only marginally noticing the multiple ways in which I navigate what, Lugones (1987) refers to as, the numerous worlds in which I live, travel, and compose who I am becoming. As Georgakopoulou (2006) explained, by shifting between the particulars and entirety of a life there is the potential to think big with small stories; small stories can enable the move from the "lived and told to the messier business of living and telling" (p. 129).

With the focus of this introduction is on a story fragment I believe it is necessary to explain how story is positioned within narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The oft-cited work of Connelly and Clandinin (2006) best explains how story is situated as narrative inquirers study experience as a narrative phenomenon:

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which his or her experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomena studied in

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retelling. This idea of *retelling* is intimately connected to the concept of *reliving* in narrative inquiry. *Reliving* speaks to the transactional nature of narrative inquiry. As we *retell* (or inquire into) stories, potential openings are made for growth, shift, and change to the stories we live and tell, thus giving potentials for *reliving* a life story from a different place, space, and time (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

> inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomena. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomena under study. (p. 477)

As the above quote demonstrates, narrative inquiry is seen as both phenomenon and methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). A narrative view of experience entails that experience is a storied phenomena. By adopting a narrative view of experience, narrative inquirers argue that experience (and thus our inquiries) is composed and lived over time, formed in relation, as always in the midst, across contexts, time, and place. As Clandinin (2013) explained, "experience is seen as a narrative composition; that is, experience itself is an embodied narrative life composition. Narrative is not, as some would have it, merely an analytical or representational device" (p. 38). Thomas King's (2005) short statement explains this best, "the truth about stories is that that's all we are" (p. 153). This understanding of experience resonates with many yet, there are also differences (see Carr, 1986; Coles, 1989; Crites, 1987; Okri, 1997 to name a few).

It is important to highlight that understanding experience as a narrative phenomenon is only part of what we do as narrative inquirers. As researchers we need to go beyond the living and telling of stories and inquire into narratives. Dewey's (1938) theory of experience acts as the philosophical underpinnings to Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) conception of narrative inquiry. Narrative inquirers often cite Deweyan inspired criteria of temporality, sociality, and situation as they inquire into experiences. Temporality refers to attending to the interrelatedness of past, present, and future of people, places, and things to show how our storied experiences are always in the making (*for now* type quality). Sociality explores the personal (inward to our feelings,

hopes, desires and moral dispositions) and social (outward to the social and cultural milieux) conditions of which people's experiences and situations are unfolding. Lastly, place (or places) refer to the specific concrete, topological, physical places where our experiences occur. This last dimension of place was not initially developed from Clandinin and Connelly's reading of Dewey, rather their attentiveness to place came from other researchers such as Basso (1996) and Marmon Silko (1996). Together this three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, sociality, and place guide how we inquire into experiences of research participants, as well as our own stories and the unfolding that becomes part of our research projects. As Indigenous scholars Battiste and Henderson (2000) explain, it is important to inquire into stories, as all stories do not explain, instead stories focus on a process of knowing. This piece, like many other narrative inquiries, is a process of knowing and opening up possibilities to who I am and who I am becoming, specifically as a recreation researcher-practitioner.

Narrative beginnings: Looking forward by looking back

Many scholars have commented on the importance of attending to our autobiographies. For example, Carr (1986) explained that while autobiographies commonly look to the past, they are equally concerned with how a person searches for coherence in the present and future by their relations to past experiences. Others, such as Clandinin and Connelly (2000), have spoken to how inquiry into telling of past stories leads to the possibilities of retellings where we can remake our selves and nurture new research understandings that have the potential to lead to a better world. Further, these beginning narrative inquiries act as a way of writing ourselves into the research and allow us to be more wakeful to how we understand our experiences as we begin to justify and frame our research puzzles. Through inquiring into one of my experiences at Circle community garden I begin to imagine myself in relation to Circle community in a loving and

playful way that is wakeful to the complexity of their lives, and mine in relation to theirs. The experience I am about to share has stalked me over years, beginning in my master's research and continuing as I engage in my doctoral work. It is Basso's (1996) conversation with Nick Thompson that reminds me of the power of stories in shaping individuals and bringing about lasting personal and social change:

> They go to work on your mind and make you think about life. Maybe you've not been acting right… It's like an arrow, they say. Sometimes it just bounces off—it's too soft and you don't think about anything. But when it's strong it goes in deep and starts working on your mind right away… That story is working on you now. You keep thinking about it. That story is changing you now, making you want to live right. That story is making you want to replace yourself… If you live wrong, you will hear the names and see the places in your mind. They keep on stalking you, even if you go across oceans. The names of all these places are good. They make you remember how to live right, so you want to replace yourself again. (p. 58-59)

As I read and re-read Basso's conversation with Nick Thompson I am drawn back to my experience in Circle community garden and how this particular teaching I am about to share stalked me to this day, always reminding me to live right. Even now this story stalks me as each week I go back to the community in which this experience took place. I see the place where the garden once stood. I see the colourful raised garden beds now several blocks over. I see the familiar faces of people I met along the way. As I engage in my doctoral work in the same community but with a different garden project, I am continually reminded to live and research right as the story continues to work on me now.

Positioning and identity in place

My early beginnings with Circle garden were full of unease; my itinerary of movements haunted me at that time as I moved forward in the space. In that time and space I acknowledged how I moved counter to the community in many ways, my productive pace and focus on the outcomes and aesthetics of the community garden made me question my relation to the community. To move beyond the garden's confines was to attend and step into unease; one could argue the garden became my comfortable white circle. My inability to shift and playfully attend to the world around me is highlighted in my strict adherence to my itinerary of movements. This inability to lovingly "world-travel" (Lugones, 1987) in this inner city place, and at the same time feeling as if my productive presence did no harm, currently puts me at unease as I travel back to how I remember myself in that world. I wonder now how my white, male productive presence shaped the community and how my daily involvement stood upon dominant narratives of the assumed benefits of inner city revitalization that floated within the city of Edmonton and elsewhere.

I also wonder how my movements, in complete disregard to the community, may have mirrored colonial practices that situate the white settler in a hierarchical position to Indigenous peoples. In many ways my involvement with the Circle garden and community was predicated upon what Rifkin (2013) described as *settler common sense*, which he described as:

> The apparent absence of struggle among incommensurate claims to sovereignty over one's space of occupancy, and an attendant impression of one's dwelling in that place as itself having no inherent political dimension or as not conditioned on state action,

> provides nonnatives with a "ready made" background against which to register opportunities for agency and for interactions with their surroundings. (p. 14)

This type of access for settlers to spaces enabled as ready made, allows settler occupancy and everyday practices to occur without referring to Indigenous peoples or how white sovereignty circumscribes Indigenous sovereignty. My assumed benefits of gardening served to obscure the *active involvement* and *daily formative ways* of colonial occupancy (Rifkin, 2013), and my position within the community as a researcher and gardener-in-residence secured my continued involvement and interaction. Given the complex layers of institutional, historical, and cultural support that shaped how I practiced at Circle, I rarely questioned my actions and how I was located in the Circle community. Within this privileged position I did not always wander with the people and wonder who I was and who we were becoming together, or how my presence, even after leaving, shaped the landscape. As I lived on the Circle landscape and became wakeful to the stories I was composing of who I was and who I was becoming as a researcher-practitioner at Circle garden, the silences and disjunctures between me and the many community members was visible in my field texts[9]. During that time I wrote of feeling like I forced my way in (Dubnewick, 2016). I wrote of how the garden helped me in justifying how I settled, and continued to return to that place, without feeling as if I had to consult, ask, or collaborate with the people in the community. Silences and disjunctures are important field texts. The silences and disjunctures reflect and can show the ongoing and historical relations of colonialism.

[9] Field texts are the records and writings (i.e., field notes, researcher journals, transcripts, photographs) by researchers and participants. Clandinin (2013) described field texts as "co-compositions that are reflective of the experiences of researchers and participants, and they need to be understood as such—that is, as telling and showing those aspects of experience that the relationship allows" (p. 46).

My reason for speaking to this tenuous relation of a researcher-practitioner living in distant ways is not to paint a grief-stricken portrait of someone who has noticed his harms and is/has learnt from them (Smith 2014), before jumping back into another research relationship with the community. Rather, I write out of fear and hope. My fear is similar to Lugones (1987) who spoke that she is, "seriously scared to get stuck in a 'world' that constructs [her in an unplayful] way. A world that [she has] no escape from and in which [she] cannot be playful" (p. 15). My fear is that I cannot imagine or sustain my self as a playful type of person who can come with loving eyes and travel alongside the worlds of the people and places with whom I am in a research relationship. I fear that the small moments where I was playful, where I did move beyond my itinerary and wander lovingly with people in the community, will be a forgotten. I fear that these moments that sustain me on landscapes as I imagine who I am becoming as a researcher will be lost. My hope is that I continue to be and become wakeful to my own stories to live by so I can live in more playful and caring ways.

Lessard (2014) wrote to his fear in response to his connection to home-places in his stories. He described home-places as places that stretch beyond geographical boundaries to include an embodied sense of knowing oneself and the memories in that place. As explained by Lessard, each person's home-places have a way of sustaining him/her by providing pathways to travel back to a place that holds early memories and comforts around who we see ourselves becoming. The fear that Lessard spoke to was in response to forgetting our pathways back to our home-places, and knowing that when these pathways disappear so do the memories that sustained us. This attention to place that Lessard spoke of is a way I ease my fears, and remind myself of the hope that exists. I see and feel hope by knowing myself as playful in home-places as I remind myself of numerous days in the garden at my grandma's home where I quietly

learned from my father. It is this attention to place and how it can sustain that gives me hope, knowing I have pathways back to remind myself of stories and places where I was, and am, playful and loving. This ability to travel allows me to embrace, what Lugones speaks of as, memories of self and how I can see a double-sidedness to self in and across worlds. Thus my reason for portraying my unplayful itinerary-like self is to place it alongside and with a playful self. Knowing that I can willingly travel outside of the garden to different worlds in the hopes of allowing my self to inhabit oneself differently, in multiple ways and with openness, now and in the future.

As I began the weeding stage of my itinerary a group of three Indigenous peoples were walking by the garden. In my usual routine I acknowledged with a quick glance and quiet hello. It was a routine I had adapted over time that centered on my unease to move beyond the boundaries of my position and the garden, and my early learnings that joyful hellos may be met with profane replies. As the group came alongside the garden's fence the women asked if she could get some vegetables, with a particular emphasis on the carrots. Caught off guard by the request I scrambled around in the garden. I knew the carrots were still in their infancy as I had previously been thinning them before her request. Faltering, I hastily ripped some leafy greens till my hands were full, picked up the batch of carrots that I had thinned and made my way through the opening in the fence. With disappointment draped across my face I showed her the tiny carrots. Her response was as if looking in a mirror, "That's it?" I somberly explained yes for now, and went back into the garden to get more leafy greens. As I picked some more, her one male friend began to yell "Silas! Silas!" His voice echoed in the landscape as he looked directly at me. Startled I did not know what to do; he continued to repeat the words, louder and louder. After several more repetitions I took a couple steps toward him and in an attempt to clarify I

responded, "My name is Michael…" His reply a bellowing "New York!" as if proclaiming that was my name, then stating "I am Silas!" Still in a state of shock, I cautiously replied "Hi Silas" and made my way across the fence line to give him some leafy greens. As I went to hand him the greens he stated, "Look at me, I am a person." His tone was not forceful, more so I felt it as an affirming of a relation. I lifted the brim of my hat and noticed the face of this gentle man. After a couple of seconds his body latched onto my own with a wail of agony, I stood stiff, an unknowing support. As he clung to my stiffened frame his bellows of loss of family and friends dropped my heart as I was reminded of a father who I missed. My eyes were reddened as he stepped back and looked at me as I shared a similar story of loss.

My role as "gardener-in-residence" shaped my being in Circle. As a young recreation practitioner and graduate student in the field of recreation, I bumped up with dominant institutional narratives of being a provider of some service, activity, or some sort of knowledge base within my field and in that place. In this instance I understood myself as positioned within the community as the provider, or at the very least a facilitator/gatekeeper, of a recreation/garden program. It was in this position that I had a clear role of what I was facilitating, and, maybe more importantly as Samdahl (2016) explains, a clear cut-off of what I was not responsible for as a recreation practitioner. My cut off literally and metaphorically was at the garden's gate. I was surrounded by helping narratives that inclusively stated the need to support and provide provisions for those on the margins. I found discomfort living within narratives that placed me as a provider and the people I was working with as deficit. These helping narratives shifted my sense of relation to the people in the garden at that time and how I constructed who I was and who I was working with were. At that time, and now, I was negotiating grand narratives in recreation programming that state one of the "distinguishing factor[s] at the heart of the

recreation profession is a belief in direct intervention for the sake of enhancing someone else's recreation experience" (Samdahl, 2016, p. 9). Like Samdahl, I believe general recreation practitioners' programs and understanding of the lives in recreation programs may be different if the central element of intervention is removed. Samdahl specifically made this call to broaden the narrow focus of recreation research from the narrow focus on programming and programming interventions to understanding how recreation is experienced beyond interventionist and place confined understandings. As a result Samdahl was interested in engaging with the myriad of places and ways where recreation and leisure are engaged in and woven into the fabric of people's lives (e.g., everyday life and ordinary activities like cooking at home per se).

Like Samdahl (2016) I am drawn to disrupt the interventionist undertones that situate much of recreation programming in research and practice but for different reasons. My reasons largely sit within the ontological commitments as a narrative inquirer. As both Caine and Lessard (in Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016) share through their own experiences in their research projects, "without the shift from intervention, it is not possible to imagine a way forward that would allow us to work within narrative inquiry" (p. 83). Lessard described his negotiations around the pressures to "just get started" on a fix and serve wellness program for Aboriginal youth, while Caine described how she navigated a research relationship with a community service agency that was looking to create a program to interrupt the sexual exploitation of children and youth. In each project, both researchers bumped up against how they were positioned as expert knowledge holders and how the participants they would be working with would be positioned as fixed subjects with no input to intervention. For both researchers, the relational responsibilities to begin with, and listen to, the youth took precedence to ensure

their life making and stories guided the process that was to come. As previously stated, this co-composition and moving forward alongside participants would not be possible if interventionist stories guided the relational space between researchers and participants. It was during my time at Circle garden where I navigated similar tensions of how to work outside interventionist ideas of research and practice.

Looking back it is unsurprising that when given the chance to give back with the request for vegetables, I scrounged up all I could wishing I could have given what they had requested. The act of providing food for community members placed as "in-need," sat comfortably within the institutional narratives I was grounded in and the productive rhythms I knew. It was Silas's statement to look at him as a person that shook me from this pattern and reminded me of my desires to move beyond the garden and my constructed (and negotiated) self in that place. My desires to listen and share with people emerged; a desire to open the space between people, between Silas and I, with uncertainty so that the relational space that sat between us was not pre-established, assumed or already understood. Him the urban Indigenous stereotypes—me the young, white urban professional stereotypes. Rather, I wanted to traverse the literal and metaphorical boundaries of the garden that obstructed my knowing of another person's life and attend to, what Downey and Clandinin (2010) refer to as the uncertainty that lived between our lived and told stories.

Playing with and across dominant narratives that establish boundaries is not easy. As Nelson (1984) conceptualizes, I was attempting to negotiate *counterstories* that permitted me to resist judgments based in essentialized categories of difference. While my push then and now to resist categorizing of people, I reside with Nelson in knowing that resisting to work within pre-established labels of people and communities does not, in itself, stop injustice. As Nelson

explains, for counter stories to take root they need to be shared and in dialogue with the communities for which they are becoming a part. This writing at some level hopes to attend to the multiple worlds I am becoming part of and share the negotiations I have experienced as part of the dialogue, from home places, to urban places, and academic places. One way of writing myself into these worlds is to acknowledge the growing literature in the field of recreation, sport, and physical culture that focuses on working with Indigenous peoples and communities from a strengths perspective (see Lavellee & Levesque, 2013; McHugh, Coppola, Holt, & Anderson, 2015; Parashak & Thompson, 2014). In other worlds it may be in recognizing and sharing all the stories of the community I work in, as places where artists live, writers write, mothers and fathers exist, and people educate and guide others.

As I looked up to Silas his body latched on to mine as he spoke to recent family loss and suicide. I was reminded of my own family histories that sat on the edges of my being in that space. I was reminded of a father who struggled with mental health and took his life a year prior. I was reminded how important it was for me to never create a relational space between my father and I that was pre-constructed, assumed, or did not let me see him as a person in whole ways. Further, I am reminded of how difficult it has been for me since his passing, as relational spaces have been immediately filled, and negotiated, with dominant stories of a son whose father committed suicide. Like Silas's call to look at him as a person, I similarly hoped that my relations with people after my father's passing went beyond the generalizable and fixed understanding of who I was and played with the uncertainty of who we may become together. It is here that I ask the reader to slow down and think how the structures of our being as researchers and within our fields of practice can obstruct knowing another's life, and even our own. Further, I implore that we begin and end with people's storied lives on storied landscapes in order not to

overwrite the very lives we are inquiring into. As a result our research inquiries will acknowledge that uncertainty always sits between people, who we are, and who we are becoming together, or to take note from Silas, to look at me and look at others as persons living in complex worlds.

Can you help me…: From intervening to relational ethics

"Can you help me?" he says

I rummage my mind for an answer

Not wanting to play the white savior

I solemnly say, "No."

"Can you help me?" he says

Confident in my interpretation

I assure myself I cannot help him

I answer again, "No."

"Can you help me?" he says, voice raising

I am pretty sure I can't

I don't want to assume money or food

Still grieving I answer, "No."

"Can you help me?" he says, in the same tone

I waver in his persistence

What is he asking me for?

I reply, "I am not sure I can."

"Can you help me?" he says, with a flicker for more

I cannot think anew

I struggle with the lens that I view

I reply, "maybe."

"Can you help me?" he says, eyes focused in

Encouragement fills the air

Responsibility trips my imagination

I answer, "I don't think I can."

"Can you help me?" he says, voice raising again

Thoughts on privilege

Obscure my relation

I inquire, "maybe…?"

"Can you help me?" he says, in a wail

Our bodies close

I sense I need to change

I play, "sure."

"Can you help me?" he says, even louder

I do not understand

Willing to trust

I answer, "yes."

"Can you help me…" he repeats, less question-like

I rummage my mind for an answer

Knowing he will lead

This time my voice more alive and willing to explore.

He threw my hat to the side and in a sweeping motion lifted his arm to the West. His arm lay in the direction of the garden, my mind wandered to the garden, the vegetables, and the gift of food and family. He again looked in my direction. From his gaze I knew I was not opening myself to the dialogue he was presenting, he moved his hand again in the same direction. I struggled looking in the distance beside him. His hand slowly wavered upwards as my eyes became fixated on the garden fence and the construction that surrounded the garden. I felt myself searching for what meaning or conversation I was now a part of. He put his arm down again as he looked at me, there was a mutual sense that I was lost as I absently looked to him to affirm what was happening. He slowly turned and sat on the curb beside the garden. Following his lead I sat beside. In that moment I had a driving desire to explain my research and reason for

being in the community. As I began to explain why I was there he promptly shouted, "I am Silas!" I tried to keep explaining before he yelled again, this time, "New York." At this time I was still unsure of myself and my relation to Silas, but knew my reasons for being there need not singularly guide our relation going forward.

While I ask others to sit with uncertainty in a loving and caring way, I do not want you, the reader, to read this as a simplistic process or one that I have mastered similar to some sort of self-help or revelation type narrative. I want the reader to sit with uncertainty as an already/always type process that begins and ends with the heart, that does not leave or begin in a sequence of moments but is already/always in the space between people and always in the process of becoming. In my experience with Silas I already had some construction of how I imagined our relation becoming that was situated in long embodied relations of colonial oppression. The intergenerational reverberations of colonialism that surely touched this man also lingered in who I saw myself becoming in Circle and how I imagined Silas and I becoming together. Yet when I resonated with Silas in the loss of family our relation opened with the possibilities to be otherwise (Greene, 1995). It was in the small fragment that I was able to rethink my relation to Silas beyond historical narratives of colonizer-colonized and play with layers of stories lived and told that sat between us and in this place.

In the above narrative account, I use a process of parallel poetry to show and play with how this uncertain between space was already and always evolving. Ely (2007) states that parallel poetry is to write "not as unknown, all knowing forces but as people who share our stances, methods, feelings, biases, reasoning, successes, and failures…to level the field of power relations between the researchers and audience " (p. 578). This type of narrative representation supports me in forming a dialogue that shares what lived and told stories lingered within me as

Silas asked me the simple, yet loaded question, “Can you help me?” His simple question posed to me on each occasion pushed me to wonder and continually reconstruct the air that sat between us and made me question what floated there as social, cultural and institutional narratives clouded my view of what he may be asking in that time and space. At that time I felt that saying no was the “right” thing. I internally applauded myself for not being the provider or assuming I knew what was best or good for him, especially considering my bias toward recreation and food based programs as something that had the potential to “help” or sustain life in different ways. Albeit I understood that gardening and leisure was supported within specific Eurocentric frames and values that do not reflect all those who are involved (Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013). My getting to maybe, and even yes, was an inward looking process as he asked me the question, “Can you help me?” I was pushed to wonder with him what he meant by help in this time and place. I was put in a precarious position of playing with a helping narrative in new and different ways. In many ways the writing of my experience alongside Silas as parallel poetry highlights my shift from playing with protectionist attitudes of care that sit in perceived needs to opening up to a relational ethics as co-composed with Silas. Thus, this small exchange has acted as a crucial opening for me to think about ethics as dialectical, and in relation to and with the people we work with at the everyday ordinary level (Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016).

Similar to Steeves (2006), I held and continue to hold a strong distaste for helping or saving type narratives that are grounded in interventionists’ care. I am reminded to how my father was storied before and after his suicide, and how I was storied after his passing, within these helping narratives and how these narratives inherently place people in a position of need, of being less than, unable or in despair, and slotted into an already known position. Steeves argued, “when we give a fixed script we learn nothing because everything is deemed to be known” (p.

113). I did not want to place a pathological frame and fixed script on to Silas when he asked me the question. However, within my distaste to even consider if I could "help" I immediately closed out other possibilities of what help meant or could have meant to him and between us. His persistent and ever changing 'push yourself' tone lovingly asked me to think otherwise and in relation with him and ask myself who I was in relation at that moment with him. As confidence grew between us that I was moving beyond fixed scripts of each other, Silas swung his arms in the air. No words emanated from his mouth. I struggled to hear and take in the motions. Confused by the gesture I attempted to push myself beyond my own frame, I could not. The uncertainty at the time pushed me to ask for answers as I looked to him. I knew there were none to give. I let the experience work on me in different ways in this time and space to think how do I listen carefully to people and possibilities not for answers but to think with the story and experience in multiple ways knowing that the stories are always working on us (Basso, 1996).

The sentiment to learn from and allow stories to continue to work on you over time and with uncertainty resonates with what Lessard (as cited in Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016) spoke to as *sideways teachings*.

> Looking-listening sideways to the stories means to try to see beyond what might be noticed and look for the lessons from what might not be aware in the present (i.e., the silences can tell a story or the teachings that come at a later time when you reflect; it is not a direct answer to my query). (p. 211)

On that day I was reminded how difficult it was for me to let go of my research puzzle and question, to explain why I was there, and hence what it was I wanted to/could hear and see. As Clandinin et al. (2016) explain, learning to listen sideways is not an easy task, it asks to have a

certain wakefulness[10] to the stories we live by and an ability to let go of the singularities that guide our relations (e.g., my research puzzle) so we can lose ourselves in the lives of our participants and the relationships we form over time.

Narrative embrace

I borrow the term narrative embrace from the work of Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) who described what they meant by turning toward, or embracing, narrative inquiry. They wrote:

> How fully the researcher embraces narrative inquiry is indicated by how far he or she turns in her or his thinking and action across what we call here the four turns toward narrative. The four include the following: (1) a change in the relationship between the person conducting the research and the person participating as the subject (the relationship between the researcher and the researched), (2) a move from the use of number toward the use of words as data, (3) a change from a focus on the general and universal toward the local and specific, and finally (4) a widening in acceptance of alternative epistemologies or ways of knowing. Those who most fully embrace narrative inquiry are those who, like Clandinin and Connelly (2000), simultaneously embrace narrative as a method for research and narrative as the phenomenon of study. For narrative inquirers both the stories and the humans are continuously visible in the study. (p. 7)

[10] Clandinin and Connelly (2000) speak of *wakefulness* as an essential component of narrative inquiries. They describe *wakefulness* as a type of ongoing reflection where we continually question the stories we are living and telling in relation to our research puzzles, participants, and field experiences. Pulling from the work of Greene (1995), it is argued that a certain level of wide awakeness allows one to be part of and better understand the uncertainties of our participants lives, as well as our own.

As I thought about my own embrace of narrative inquiry I thought alongside the work of other narrative inquirers, like Schaefer, Lessard, Panko, and Polsfult (2015), who wrote about their experiences as they turned towards embracing narrative inquiry. In their writing they reflected on how they negotiated each of the four narrative turns outlined by Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) in their practice as teachers and teacher educators. As I read their work, I began to think of the moments in which I more fully embraced narrative inquiry, and what that embrace meant for me. As I write now on what this narrative embrace means for me, I think with my time alongside Silas and how my turn towards a narrative embrace was located in slowing down with the lives that became enmeshed with that of my own, and allowing our lives to become enmeshed.

With a certain sense of comfort I sat on the curb with Silas for a short while before he pulled me up and made his way to the auto body shop where he sat on the stoop of the shop's front door. I took a seat a couple inches over not wanting to block the entire entrance. Within several minutes of sitting down the receptionist asked us to move, I attempted to lift the arm of Silas in an effort to respect her wishes, he immediately pulled his arm back confirming his place at the door. Moments later a male worker came to the door and told us that we must move. I obliged and stood up and took a couple steps away, Silas did not move an inch. The man left saying he would be calling the police as he had a business to run. I continued to stand hoping that Silas would follow suit. After a couple minutes I knew he would not. A fear arose in me of what was to come, how would I negotiate the events that were bound to follow from this interaction. Again I took a seat beside him not wanting to leave him and the situation, all the while contesting my decision to stay. It was not long until the two policemen showed up and made their way out of their car and over to us.

As they closed in, it became evident that I, a young white male, was not viewed as the source of the problem. As if I did not exist they asked Silas to move or be escorted from the spot. Again he did not budge. They looked to me and asked me if I was volunteering to pick up needles in the area. I was appalled by the question and the difference in how we were treated as we both sat in the same space of 'disruption.' In a short tone, I pointed to the nearby garden and explained that I was working with the garden. Content with my answer and position within the community they picked up Silas from the stoop and walked him closer to their vehicle. They stopped midway as they turned to Silas and stated, "You smell a little fresh," before looking to me and asking how long I had been with him and if I had knowledge if he had been drinking. Firmly beside Silas I stated I had been here since the morning and that I did not know. They asked for my ID and I hesitated before I gave it over. They then asked Silas for his, he calmly replied, "I ain't got none." It did not suffice as one of the officers began to frisk his pockets for some sort of identification, finally coming out with a piece of paper. With Silas's paper and my ID in hand he made his way to the vehicle as the other cop continued to probe me without any regard to Silas, his presence cloaked on the landscape. As the cop arrived back on the scene he asked me how I knew the man. I did not know how to answer and just wanted the situation to end. Abruptly I answered, "He is like family." They stared at me confused by my answer and unwillingness to talk before stating they needed to take him in. I responded that I would take him into the community services building across the street. Again my answer seemed to suffice and they slowly left the area.

Silas's disposition after the incident with the police did not seem to change his rhythm or being in that specific space and time. I, on the other hand, held a strong inner desire to get him to the community services building so that a similar encounter would not occur again. Standing

beside him I held him upright as we slowly made our way to the building, a step or two every minute. A distance that would usually take me a minute or two went well into an hour as I walked beside Silas to the community services building. I struggled to keep him in my desired direction as his steps wavered on. At one point he fell backwards onto the hard alley surface and laid comfortably still for a short while. At this point the police had made their way back and sat in their car looking in our direction. I noticed them and sensed that they were gladly willing to step in. I turned back to Silas in the hopes they would leave, which after a lengthy period they did. Crouching beside Silas he pulled me closer and I knelt beside him. He turned his body and looked to me before gently grabbing my shoulder to bring me even closer to him. Situated over him he lifted his arm, palm open with fingers tightly held together, he struck me across the chest and shoulder. My body absorbed the contact with an invigorating feel. I continued to look at him; his eyes were full of love, care, and a determined focus. I could not make sense of the instance but I felt an intimate and growing connection to Silas. Still positioned over him he struck my chest again. I was pulled closer; again he lifted his arm but this time he made contact with his palm on my upper jaw while the rest of his hand was placed behind and around my ear. The exchange instilled strength and energy in my body and shook my glasses; he provided another jolt. With a subtle smile and nod of his head he looked at me as if it was my time to return the connection. I hesitated as an uncomfortability with returning the physicality arose in me. I lifted my hand and limply beat his chest. His smile widened, his look invited another. Again my hand flopped across his chest with nowhere near the same vigor. He grasped the back of my neck with a fatherly like affection and slowly pulled himself up. Together we made our way to the steps of the community services building and took a seat amidst some of the other people in the community. Quietly I sat within the group feeling as if Silas opened a place for me within the

community that sat outside the garden's gates. After sitting he signaled we go to the old brick building nearby. Upon our arrival I learned this was his home. With reception and security in place Silas went up, as I sat at the building entrance. He came back down, showered and shirt off, pointing to the lightened skin on his chest and at me before we sat against the wall of the building under the daytime sun. Knowing I had to leave I forced a goodbye to which he yelled "New York" as I turned and made my way back to the garden to lock it up before heading home, wondering if I would see him again next week.

As I go back to my experience with Silas I give some concluding thoughts that I carry forward as I wander back to the Circle community and work with, and in, a different garden project. As I wondered alongside this experience and began to write and unpack this story fragment an underlying sentiment drove me as I wandered with it. This underlying sentiment sat around my fear of constructing myself, and being constructed by others, as an unplayful researcher and friend when I am in the field. Although much of this writing refers to the telling of a story in the past, what is equally important is how I make sense of that story fragment in the present and how the ways in which I plot that understanding *for now* shape where I might be able to go from here. As I look forward with this in mind I am forced to revisit the fear that started this inquiry, and wonder what possibilities and openings occurred in the inquiry process. It was through sharing fragments with members of response communities that I was able to see myself in that time and space with Silas and, for now, as wakeful to the stories I live by (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999). I was able to play with what Yuknavitch (2016) spoke to as the "misfit myth," which speaks to the ability we have to endlessly re-invent our selves even as we do not know how to live amidst certain moments. For me, that endless re-invention includes, learning to live

with and understanding how I plot points that stretch to familial rememberings of my father and my own mental health, and my growing up in a working class family foreign to academia.

As I look over the story fragment I have shared, what has become hopeful, is an acknowledging and nurturing of the wakefulness into my own stories to live by (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The stories I have shared have provided pathways back to remind myself of how I was full of loving perception and relational care, and as someone willing to notice when his stories to live by became in tension to the people and places he encountered. This may be remembered best in my literal and metaphorical commitment to stay alongside Silas in moments such as when the police arrived and my response, in my attempt to return a physical gesture and sitting silently at the stoop of his home. In each of these moments a wide awakeness (Greene, 1995) to my own stories to live by opened me to notice how I was negotiating my becoming as playful and loving person who practiced. What becomes of interest for me as a narrative inquirer is my response, or my ability to sit with and inquire into these moments of tension. It is by inquiring into these moments narrative inquirers are able to demonstrate the transactional foundations of narrative inquiry where the meanings do not precede the encounter but arise from the lived experiences between a person and his/her environment, community, and world (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

Like the many stories in the edited book by Metcalfe-Chenail (2016), at the heart of my writing is the many imaginings of how to be "in this together" as people, and as researchers, practitioners and participants. In Metcalfe-Chenail's book we are given a glimpse into fifteen stories that people have lived out around their understanding of their relations with, or as, Indigenous peoples and communities. We are also given a glimpse into their embodied imaginings of looking forward to what these complex relations might look like in the future. As a

reader of each of these short stories I was able to imaginatively place myself with the stories shared, feel their tensions, their pains, their shifted understandings, and their longings to be in and live out relations differently. Sarbin (2004) explains this connection with story and heightened moral consciousness has the potential to produce action and identity change through the concrete "doing" of imagining that occurs when we feel with stories. I can only hope the story I have shared and the inquiry into it produces similar sentiments to what I felt as I read the aforementioned stories.

The writing of this narrative beginning (or autobiographical narrative inquiry) has supported a research process that attempts to awaken to the stories I live by as I make clear my research puzzle and justifications. However, I must remember that my narrative identities, and the comfort in which I carry myself in one place does not just seamlessly travel across all places and situations (Lessard, 2014). I cannot assume who I was becoming alongside Silas in the Circle garden landscape will travel with the same certainty and conviction as I live in a new research project. At a certain level it is the uncertainty that allows narrative inquiries to unfold. At a personal level I know I will be reminded by the words of Silas, which, as Basso (1996) explains, hit me like an arrow and stalk me to this day, that I am—"New York!"—The one who is too filled and congested to live in the relational spaces that are co-composed between people, events, and places.

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Research Puzzle

A personal justification

Picture a young, white, affluent male working as a "gardener-in-residence" with an inner city social service agency. His movements differ from the flow that surrounds him; pick, turn, weed, water, sweep, cut, hoe is the productive rhythm he knows. His relation to the large urban Indigenous population and homeless community is primarily situated through his position as community garden coordinator. For many in the community, he is known as "one of those nice guys" or the "one who is growing dirt." His simultaneous struggle to connect with members in the community while also negotiating dominant stories of what it means to be a recreation practitioner of a local food project for those labeled "in need," places him in tension with his own stories to live by. His past experiential base as a son of a father who took his own life, a nephew of alcoholism, and someone at one time diagnosed as depressive asks him to wonder about narratives of need and the relational shifts that occur within the unique contexts (e.g., recreation and food) in which they occur. How is his involvement understood in the community, and outside of it, as intergenerational reverberations of colonization still reside, and how is he (re)storying himself and the people in the community he is working in, especially in relation to recreation and food projects for urban Indigenous peoples?

I share this image, a reflection of my personal experience, to highlight the personal justifications behind my doctoral work; that is, a desire to reimagine my relations and roles as an recreation practitioner with the large homeless and Indigenous populations with whom I work. I also wonder as to how other early career recreation practitioners working with Indigenous people navigate their tensions as they work in such communities. My doctoral research narratively

inquires into the experiences of recreation practitioners as they negotiate their practice as they work alongside urban Indigenous peoples and homeless populations in a garden project. Said another way, I am interested in the stories recreation practitioners live and tell as they provide recreation opportunities with, and for, Indigenous peoples on urban landscapes. For the remainder of this chapter I will focus on the social/theoretical and practical justifications of this project, and outline the research assumptions that guide my work.

A social/theoretical justification

The health/social inequalities pertaining to Indigenous peoples in Canada is regularly reported and well understood (see National Collaborative Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2013 document as one example). While statistics on inequality provide a basis for rekindling conversations around the injustices pertaining to the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada, scholars such as Smith (1999) have highlighted that representations matter as they give the "impression of 'the truth'" (p. 35). As Smith notes, writing is dangerous, it can reinforce a singular narrative, essentialize a culture, and comes with a contextual history. Thus, when inquiries begin through representations such as the one I have at the outset of this paragraph I, as an academic and person of privileged positions, potentially reinforce my position within the colonial structure as an expert to issues and those 'in need.' Such a failure to identify or failure to *love* (as conceptualized by Lugones, 1987) with people allows myself, as a privileged researcher and practitioner, to search for separateness in how I understand others and myself in my inquiry.

I will take a moment here to go back to the tensions I experienced in my practitioner story to clarify what I mean. To *love* the people of the inner city community was difficult for me in my early experiences at the garden. I struggled to see past dominant representations in my role

as a recreation practitioner. I was entangled in understanding the people and community within their socio-economic conditions, that is, people with high poverty levels, homelessness, drug addictions, suicide, low education, and issues with health. A community garden in the inner city was also storied in ways that enmeshed me. Access to good fresh local food, potential preventative medicine to physical and social ills, greenery and sustainability amidst the concrete, an important familial and cultural practice all came from stories of gardening that I knew. At many levels it felt like a seamless fit to the problems that were present(ed). However, as Lugones (1987) explains and consistent with what I experienced in my early tensions at the garden:

> We are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood and without this understanding we are not intelligible, we do not make sense, we are not solid, visible, integrated, we are lacking. So travelling to each other's "worlds" would enable us to *be* through *loving* each other. (p. 8)

I use Lugones's work to demonstrate how, as a recreation practitioner in the inner city, I was dependent on others to be understood in whole ways, as they were also dependent upon me. This type of interdependence of understanding of each other in each other's worlds shifts how we frame inquiries in the communities in which we become a part. While the socio-economic conditions are still prevalent as recreation professionals have conversations of working alongside Indigenous peoples, the shift asks us as researchers and practitioners to stop regarding Indigenous participants as oppressed and see them as actual and whole people (Freire, 1996).

Up to this point I have argued that recreation researchers-practitioners need to move beyond grand narratives of how we conceptualize and work with inner city Indigenous peoples to get at a more loving practice of recreation programming. Numerous scholars exploring

'wholistic' conceptualizations of physical activity, sport, and recreation[11] have called for this shift in moving away from a deficit and problem-based lens to a more strength-based approach when working with Indigenous peoples (Lavallee & Levesque, 2013; Parashak & Thompson, 2014). Lavallee and Levesque's (2013) integrated indigenous-ecological model provides one conceptual framework to support recreation practitioners' experiences of facilitating food-based recreation programs. The integrated indigenous-ecological model provides an entry point to understand how recreation practitioners navigate bicultural ways of knowing (i.e., through western and Indigenous eyes) as they facilitate programs. This model may help in identifying how the leverage points (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, community, policy, mother earth, and all of creation) for recreation programming are negotiated and understood by recreation-practitioners as they provide wholistic programs for Indigenous peoples.

Much of the work in the area of sport, recreation, and physical activity and Indigenous peoples has concentrated on the stories of Indigenous peoples as they compose and negotiate space for their practices in different ways, often in disconnect to dominant discourses of sport, recreation, and physical activity (see Forsyth & Heine, 2008; McHugh, Coppola, Holt, & Anderson, 2015; Thompson, Gifford, & Thorpe, 2000; Yuen & Pedlar, 2009). Within the field of recreation, leisure, and physical activity it is common for research to focus on the participants' experiences of their physical practices. Allison and Hibbler (2004) argue that this focus on participants' experiences has often led to a non-critical and non-reflexive stance by recreation practitioners and academics working with marginalized populations, as the assumed "will to serve" tends to thwart critical reflection of our role in the meaning making process.

[11] Many Indigenous peoples do not distinguish between sport, physical activity, recreation and leisure (Canadian Heritage, 2005).

In Lashua and Fox's (2006) notable article, the authors autoethnographically inquired into how their understandings of leisure, as scholar-practitioners, were changed as they engaged with music composed by Indigenous youth. Rossi and Rynne's (2014) more recent article highlighted notions of "white guilt" that are negotiated by practitioners and participants alike when providing physical activity programs. Rossi and Rynne explained that recreation-based welfare programs have the potential to render Indigenous people as passive victims of injustice, yet sport programs may be one way to develop human capacity and relationship building potential. Rossi and Rynne's argued that when physical activity programming is justified and deemed successful through Eurocentric measurements (e.g., health) participants in programs are not seen from a position of strength nor do they have right to take responsibility. Rather, practitioners and recreation service providers (organizations) are positioned in the giving of rights and opportunities. If recreation practitioners are not seen as an integral part of the meaning making process and development of recreation programs in Indigenous communities, research and practice will continue to see itself as independent from the people it works with. Ultimately leaving the impact and stories of recreation practitioners on their lives and communities unexplored and likely irrelevant to the enhancement of recreation programs.

The theoretical contributions of this work will add to the limited literature around how recreation practitioners negotiate their stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) on professional knowledge landscapes (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), specifically with recreation programs. Given the limited research in the area of recreation and physical practice that examines practitioners' stories of experience in relation to the programs and participants with whom they work, I draw upon the field of education and curriculum inquiry.

A practical justification

As I travel back to my initial experiences in the Circle garden, one of my wonders was how to imagine and understand my relation (and others' relations) with people I work alongside. My wonder goes beyond the confines of a recreation program or fenced off garden to wonder how are we understood and how do we understand each other as Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in loving ways. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report (2015) states:

> Whether one is First Nations, Inuit, Métis, a descendant of European settlers, a member of a minority group that suffered historical discrimination in Canada, or a new Canadian, we all inherit both the benefits and obligations of Canada. We are all Treaty people who share responsibility for taking action on reconciliation. (p. 11)

This understanding that we are all "Treaty people" opens up the conversation to begin to ask what are our roles and responsibilities (as academics, recreation practitioners, and people) to be in relation, and what might those relations look like. The implications should be and are far more profound than wondering about professional conduct as recreation practitioners in communities. The implications are found in the practices and sharing of stories of how we relate to each other, understand each other, are understood by each other, and how we might become together. Basso's (1996) research eloquently explains the power of sharing stories as he explains how stories are always working on us, changing us, and making "us want to live right" (p. 59). Thus, in sharing stories of living in relation we are opening potential to live better and more loving lives together.

Living alongside

This research inquires into the lives of two recreation practitioners (as well as my own) as we take part in a garden project facilitated for the large homeless and urban Indigenous population that reside in the community. Participants were identified through personal contact as I volunteered in the garden project. The criteria for participation were any person who is positioned to support ongoing recreation (primarily the garden project) programs in the inner city. This narrative inquiry begins by *living alongside* participants. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) outlined two possible starting points for narrative inquirers. The first is beginning with *telling stories*. By beginning with *telling stories* narrative inquirers converse with participants in an effort to listen to and share stories of experience. *Living alongside* participants is the other beginning point for narrative inquirers. This beginning consists of coming alongside participants in their day-to-day lives and contexts. I was a participant-observer in the garden (and other recreation services) twice a week for three years each May to September (~15-20 hours each week) and conducted several conversational style interviews with each participant to obtain in-depth information over a two-year period. I created narrative accounts for each participant around how they story their lives as recreation practitioners in relation to how they are storying their practice as their lives entwine with the people and place they are working alongside. Clandinin (2013) describes narrative accounts[12] as a type of interim research text[13]. Interim research texts are a way that narrative inquirers pull together their field texts (or data) around

[12] Narrative accounting is a process of writing that allows the researcher to give an account of the "unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they became visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132).
[13] Clandinin and Connelly (2000) describe interim research texts as the "texts situated in the spaces between field texts and final, published research texts" (p. 133). Interim texts can take on many forms and serve different purpose within the inquiry. Interim texts within this document were closer to research texts and shared primarily after Michael lived alongside in the field (i.e., negotiating of narrative accounts). Other types of interim texts were shared throughout, such as the emails between Clark and Michael, however, they are less visible in these texts and were intended to facilitate ongoing and more thoughtful conversations.

their research puzzle prior to final research texts. In this research, field texts consist of a researcher journal, which contained my notes from in the field, participant journals, which contained notes and thoughts from their time at the garden, and transcripts of recorded conversations. Interim texts, or narrative accounts, act as a way to pull together the multiple field texts[14] and are a way to engage in further discussions over the constructed representations of experience between participant and researcher. The narrative accounts created were shared and negotiated with participants before creating final research texts[15].

Following the work of Lessard (2014) I worked, gardened, and researched alongside a Traditional Knowledge Keeper within the community. Having spent the last two years in the garden I developed relationships with many of the gardeners. One gardener, in particular, acted as a guide for me in, and with, the community. This Indigenous man, who at the time was without a home, guided me in, and through, the garden each week. His actions and words continually prompted me to wonder how I composed my own stories of becoming as an academic and recreation practitioner in relation to Indigenous peoples and the world. The moments between him and I that are shared in this dissertation were also shared with him. Below I share an excerpt of one of the many everyday teachings carried out in the garden that I have shared with him.

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[14] Field texts are the records and writings (i.e., field notes, researcher journals, transcripts, photographs) by researchers and participants. Clandinin (2013) described field texts as "co-compositions that are reflective of the experiences of researchers and participants, and they need to be understood as such—that is, as telling and showing those aspects of experience that the relationship allows" (p. 46).

[15] Final research texts are the texts we make visible to public audiences. This may be in the form of dissertations, articles, presentations, etc. In these texts Clandinin (2013) explains that "whoever the audience is for research texts is, all research texts need to reflect temporality, sociality, and place….Only through attending to all dimensions can we see the disruptions, interruptions, silences, gaps, and incoherences in participants' and our shared experiences" (p. 50).

As I picked up the debris left behind from the harvest I made my way to the empty rows in the garden to put their nutrients back in the soil. Immediately as I hit the empty row I began scattering my harvested stalks among the many dried ones lying in the dirt. In near disappoint one of the gardeners, also carrying debris in hand, looked to me and said, "don't be lazy." At that moment I did not think I was doing too much wrong, surely the owner would be around later with his machinery to spread them down what seemed like endless amounts of long empty rows. As I looked up, the gardener was now a good forty to fifty feet ahead of me. Slowly he began unraveling the garden debris he was carrying. One-by-one he ripped off pieces and threw them to the soil where no previous garden matter was placed or footmarks led to. As I walked to catch up with my dwindled pile in hand I heard him say in the distance "this soil needs and deserves love and care too—it all does." I thought back to the moment where I dropped my debris at the beginning of the row and how much care and resources were already there, their nutrients already slowly seeping in to the soil. Yet I did not look up to see the vast land that sat empty in front of me, invisible to me and uncared for by many, including myself, amongst us. Rather, I rested on the assumption that others and the resources we had in place would later distribute the garden matter where it needed to be. Yet here was a community member who was currently without a home, at least a home in they way I knew of one, walking down the long rows making sure all the land was cared for and loved. I followed with garden debris in hand scattering the teachings and nutrients to the land that was once dormant to me, now wondering what else I may have missed.

I share this story to show the impact this man has had on my research, practice, and life. Our relation over the years largely allowed me to feel grounded in and with the community, and, like Lessard (2014) in his relation to Elder Isabelle Kootenay, it is this relation that "speaks to me as I

think about the research, the methodology, and finding an ethical place that grounds my work in the relational" (p. 38).

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PAPER 1

The centrality of reflexivity through narrative beginnings: Towards living reconciliation

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Abstract

Autobiographical narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) is an approach with a specific set of methodological commitments that guide research practice, yet its place and position within the work on reflexive practice is lost or misrepresented. Reflexivity in the form of autobiographical narrative inquiries comes out of the relational ontological commitments of narrative inquiry. By inquiring into Michael's (the first author) experience as a researcher-practitioner the purpose of this article is to show how reflexivity, in the form of narrative beginnings, is situated in the ongoing stream of experience. It provides narrative inquirers with avenues to make clear their research justifications/puzzles, become wakeful and open in their inquiries, and support shifts in relational knowing and being. By looking back and noticing the ways stories work on us, rather than us on them, this research explores the reverberations of past experiences and the ripples that carry forward into our future inquiries.

Keywords: Narrative inquiry; Autobiographical narrative inquiry; Reflexivity; Methodological commitments; Recreation; Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples relations

Introduction

> Now as we are in the midst of working with the youth and their families, we stand, look backward and inward, and see that each project recursively elaborates the ones that came before. The reverberations of previously lived stories alongside participants from earlier studies come into our current life living, telling and retelling. The stories of the youth who left school early shaped our stories at the time but also continue to shape our stories as we live our retold stories into the future. Our retold stories shape our reliving as we imagine and live out our current study. The stories of the youth who left school early mingle with ours and allow us to newly imagine this becoming conversational space in light of the echoes left behind by those who came before. The reverberations stretch across, and through, lives. (Clandinin, Lessard, & Caine, 2012, p. 23)

We open with the final words of Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard's (2012) paper that explored how resonant reverberations from prior research shaped further inquiries as it offers us, the authors, a place to locate our experienced past as essential to the inquiry process. Like Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard, Michael (the primary author) is pulled back to his narrative beginnings as he is reminded how previous experiences shape ongoing experiences and shape who he is, and who he is becoming, as he begins to negotiate a new inquiry. Within this article Michael reflects on the reverberations experienced from prior research engagements across several community garden projects, as he now seeks to understand his experiences and the experiences of two other recreation practitioners as they facilitate food-based recreation programs for inner city and Indigenous peoples. Our intent in this writing is not to explain the results of this research project but to demonstrate the role narrative beginnings (or autobiographical narrative inquiries) have in shaping narrative inquiries (as defined by Clandinin

& Connelly, 2000). In narrative inquiry, narrative beginnings are the beginning of the self-facing, the autobiographical inquiry that keep us each asking who we are in each research study.

Reflexivity is commonly discussed as an essential and defining feature of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Given the centrality of reflexivity with qualitative research, it is essential to focus on *how* to do and incorporate reflexivity as part of our research. Finlay's (2002) work outlined five approaches to doing reflexive work that have competing and complementing accounts towards rationale, aims, functions, and practices of reflexive work. Those five variants were mapped out as reflexivity as: (1) introspection, (2) intersubjective reflection, (3) mutual collaboration, (4) social critique, and (5) discursive deconstruction. In previous writing Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) mapped out the borderlands of narrative inquiry amidst other paradigms that have interests in narratives and experience. While Clandinin and Rosiek's (2007) previous work provided clarity on the positioning of the philosophical positioning of experience and narrative, the positioning of reflexivity in the form of narrative beginnings was not their focus. Often lost or misrepresented within the work on reflexive practice is the place and position of autobiographical narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as an approach with a specific set of methodological commitments that guide research practice. Reflexivity in the form of autobiographical narrative inquiries comes out of the relational ontological commitments of narrative inquiry.

As narrative inquirers, we are increasingly aware that researchers are interested in understanding what it is we do and how reflexive practice, specifically in relation to narrative beginnings, is situated in narrative inquiry. In this article we hope to make clear how narrative beginnings are situated in the relational ontological commitments of narrative inquiry to provide much needed clarity around the rationale, aims, and functions of reflexivity through ongoing

process of inquiring into our autobiographical narratives. In clarifying the centrality of reflexivity in autobiographical narrative inquiry, we are aware that we are not absent from this text and true to our methodological commitments this piece begins and ends in the stream of Michael's experience and his continual artistry of composing a life.

Narrative beginnings: Early engagements

Michael lives in intergenerational familial stories of growing up in a family of chefs where food was always a way to bring people together. He lives in sociocultural and historical stories that place him as distant and privileged from Indigenous peoples in Canada as a white settler. He lives in institutional stories of recreation, leisure, and physical activity that shape his knowing of the benefits of such activities and what it means to be a competent or good recreation practitioner. It is important to note that while we live by personal stories of who we are and who we are becoming, we also live in stories that shape our livings and tellings (Okri, 1997). Thus in the telling of our storied lives we also tell of the storied landscapes that weave in and out of our lives and are part of our embodied knowing. With that in mind we shift to a moment that Michael experienced that has reverberated in him for many years:

> *As I began the weeding stage of my itinerary a group of three Indigenous peoples were walking by the garden. In my usual routine I acknowledged with a quick glance and quiet hello. It was a routine I had adapted over time that centered on my unease to move beyond the boundaries of my position and the garden, and my early learning that joyful hellos may be met with profane replies. As the group came alongside the garden's fence the woman asked if she could have some vegetables, particularly some carrots. Caught off guard by the request I scrambled around in the garden. I knew the carrots were still in*

their infancy as I had previously been thinning them before her request. Faltering, I hastily ripped some greens till my hands were full, picked up the batch of carrots that I had thinned and made my way through the crevasse in the fence. With disappointment draped across my face I showed her the tiny carrots. Her response was as if looking in a mirror, "That's it?" I somberly explained yes for now, and went back into the garden to get more leafy greens. As I picked some more, her one male friend began to yell "Silas! Silas!" His voice echoed through the landscape as he looked directly at me. Startled I did not know what to do; he continued to repeat the words, louder and louder. After several more repetitions I took a couple steps toward him and, in an attempt to clarify, I responded, "My name is Michael…" His reply a bellowing "New York!" as if proclaiming that was my name, then stating, "I am Silas!"[16] *Still in a state of shock, I cautiously replied "Hi Silas" and made my way across the fence line to give him some greens. As I went to hand him the greens he stated, "Look at me, I am a person." His tone was not forceful, more so I felt it as an affirming of a relation. I lifted the brim of my hat and noticed the face of this gentle man. After a couple of seconds his body latched onto my own with a wail of agony, I stood stiff, an inattentive support. As he clung to my stiffened frame his bellows of loss of family and friends dropped my heart as I was reminded of a father who I missed. My eyes were reddened as he stepped back and looked at me as I shared a similar story of loss.*

By this point, Michael was well into the gardening season at the inner city Circle community garden as the gardener-in-residence (community garden coordinator). He had an established rhythm to his involvement. His established itinerary was as follows: Arrive at 9:00

[16] Pseudonyms have been used throughout to protect the identity and confidentiality of people and places.

a.m. every Monday and Friday, open the lock, lift small section of the fence to make garden feel welcoming, re-adjust community garden sign and rain barrels that inevitably fell over since last visit, weed, harvest or inform others of harvest, grab two 16 litre buckets, walk to auto-body shop on well-worn path, fill buckets with water, journey back with buckets anchored in grasp, gently pour water into each raised beds, repeat watering process until all beds watered, once all that is done take a seat at the garden's bench till 11:00 a.m. or noon, reluctantly lock up garden before biking home. It was in moments of disruption to his itinerary, such as his initial interaction with Silas, that he was able to rethink his relation to the garden, community, people, and social milieus with whom he was in dialogue.

In many ways this experience of disruption has stalked Michael over the years and has prompted him to continually wonder, "Who am I?" as a researcher-practitioner and "How am I storied?" by the participants in his research and the people he crosses paths with. It is these reverberating questions that ask him to go back to his narrative beginnings as he imagines ways forward as he takes part in a different garden project with new participants. It is Basso's (1996) conversation with Nick Thompson that is called up as the haunting of the moment with Silas is brought back. That moment in which Michael was named and storied as "New York" sits deep within him as he wonders how he was positioned then and how that shapes who he is becoming now as a recreation researcher-practitioner in the making. It is the stalking of that experience that has led Michael to this inquiry, and it is Basso's work that helps us think about the reverberations and the ways stories work on us:

> They go to work on your mind and make you think about life. Maybe you've not been acting right… It's like an arrow, they say. Sometimes it just bounces off—it's too soft and you don't think about anything. But when it's strong it goes in deep and starts

> working on your mind right away… That story is working on you now. You keep thinking about it. That story is changing you now, making you want to live right. That story is making you want to replace yourself… If you live wrong, you will hear the names and see the places in your mind. They keep on stalking you, even if you go across oceans. The names of all these places are good. They make you remember how to live right, so you want to replace yourself again. (p. 58-59)

As researchers we read Basso's conversation with Nick Thompson and are drawn back to thinking, how do their words help us understand reflexivity in research? For us, it is their words that remind us that reflexivity is not so much a statement of our position and/or our relations, rather, reflexivity is situated in our ongoing streams of experience. In other words, as we look back at our storied experiences, through narrative beginnings, it is our present and future that is being reminded to live right. Even now this moment stalks Michael, as each week he goes back to the community in which his experience took place. He sees the place where the garden once stood. He sees the colorful raised garden beds now relocated several blocks over. He sees the familiar faces of people he met along the way, and reminds himself to wonder who they are, who he is, and how are we constructing each other's worlds[17]. As narrative inquirers, we argue that autobiographical narrative beginnings allow us to "awaken to how we position ourselves in relation to future participants and to how we frame our research puzzle" (Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016, p. 26). With those words in mind, we inquired into Michael's experiences to demonstrate how reflexivity into narrative beginnings shapes narrative inquiries.

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[17] The use and conception of *worlds* in this article comes from the work of Lugones (1987). Lugones conceives of *worlds* as a description of experience, of the places we inhabit and imagine as communities and persons. It is in our travelling to each others worlds and/or knowing oneself differently in other worlds that we have the flexibility to shift our constructions of life with other constructions of life.

Methodological commitments

A narrative view of experience

With the focus of this article on a storied fragment it is necessary to explain how story is positioned within narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Connelly and Clandinin (2006) best explains how story is situated as narrative inquirers study experience as a narrative phenomenon:

> Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which his or her experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomena studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomena. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomena under study. (p. 477)

Narrative inquiry is both phenomenon and methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). A narrative view of experience entails that experience is a storied phenomena. Thomas King's (2005) short statement explains this best, "the truth about stories is that that's all we are" (p. 153). This understanding of story resonates with many (see Carr, 1986; Coles, 1989; Crites, 1971; Okri, 1997 to name a few). It is important to highlight that understanding experience as a

narrative phenomenon is only part of what we do as narrative inquirers. As researchers we need to go beyond the living and telling of stories and inquire into narratives.

As noted, narrative inquiries must go beyond the *living* and *telling* and inquire into the lived and told stories (Clandinin, 2013). This inquiry into our lived and told stories is what narrative inquirers call the *retelling*. Inherent in the *retelling* is the understanding that stories are not fixed entities that stagnantly sit there, but our stories are always in the making, multiple, open to possibility, and for now (Downey & Clandinin, 2010). The inquiry into our narrative beginnings highlights the transactional underpinnings of narrative inquiry where the regulative ideal is to "generate a new relation between a human being and her environment" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 39), which is supported through the *retelling* and ultimately in the *reliving*. This concept of *retelling* is intimately connected to the concept of *reliving* in narrative inquiry. *Reliving* speaks to the transactional nature of narrative inquiry. As we *retell* (or inquire into) storied experience, potential openings are made to shift and change the stories we live and tell, thus giving potentials for *reliving* a life story from a different place, context, and time (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As we begin to inquire into Michael's narrative beginnings at Circle garden we do so knowing that such an inquiry intentionally asks Michael to rethink and ultimately relive his relation to the stories he is living by[18], and his relation to the people, places, and events that make up his ongoing research around gardening and recreation programming with Indigenous peoples. From this vantage, narrative beginnings (meaning, the interplay between living, telling, retelling, and reliving) shape inquiries at an ontological level, where our everyday lived realities and relations shift alongside the inquiry process.

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[18] *Stories to live by* is a way to narratively conceptualize identity. It is a term to "understand how knowledge, context, and identity are linked and can be understood narratively" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 4).

Narrative beginnings and shaping an inquiry

We shift now from explaining *how* autobiographical narrative inquiry is situated within the relational ontological commitments of narrative inquiry to explaining *why* it is we inquire into our narrative beginnings in narrative inquiry, and what such inquiries provide. What follows is a brief sketch that explains the importance of doing autobiographical work in narrative inquiry and how such inquiries are essential to the relational ontology that precedes narrative inquiry research.

Making clear our research puzzle and justifications

As narrative inquirers attempt to name their research puzzles (or research questions) and imagine their research projects, they must answer the pertinent questions of so what and who cares. As Clandinin (2013) explains, it is through the writing of narrative beginnings "each of us comes to understand, to name, our research personal, practical, and social justifications. This work shapes our research puzzles and identifies key narrative concepts and terms" (p. 89). While this article only provides a brief glimpse into Michael's narrative beginnings we can begin to see some of the key narrative concepts and terms that may be relevant to Michael's work. In his sharing we see how tensions is a key term, it is his experienced tensions as a recreation practitioner as he engages with diverse participants, place, and activity (i.e., gardening) that is being pulled forward as he imagines his forthcoming research relations. Michael feels those tensions now as he thinks of how he was named in Circle garden as "New York", how he understood his role as a provider of a program/activity, and how gardeners were positioned. These understandings that came from his experienced life are pulled through his work now to

better situate his research interests around how recreation practitioners experience the facilitation of programs alongside Indigenous peoples.

As we continue to think alongside Michael's experiences as a researcher-practitioner in the inner city we are also better positioned to justify his work at several levels. First, Michael's personal justification is pulled forward as he understands this as an inquiry that will help him understand his dis-ease as he works in the inner city and travels to the worlds of those who have been marginalized. Second, his practical justifications become clearer as he shares his desires to understand relations between non-Indigenous recreation practitioners working with Indigenous peoples within a specific world of practice (i.e. recreation). This practical justification leaves him with puzzles and uncertainties about the ways in which early career recreation practitioners negotiate an ethical practice alongside institutional and social narratives of recreation programming that are commonly deficit-based (Paraschak & Thompson, 2014; Rossi & Rynne, 2014). Lastly, Michael's social/theoretical justifications are made visible as he thinks about shifting identities, of recreation practitioners and participants, as they shape and are shaped by the landscapes and relations within which they live and work. The theoretical justifications of his work sit within his contributions of conceptualizing identity as *stories to live by* (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) in recreation. This complements Michael's social justification of exploring what it means to be and live as a Treaty Person in Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015). It was through the continual process of writing his self into and part of the inquiry (Richardson, 1994) that Michael was able to better articulate and justify his work, as well as understand his relation to the phenomenon upon which he was studying.

Supporting wakefulness and openness

While we acknowledge that being able to articulate our research puzzle and justifications is important for all researchers, we also contend that is only a small portion of what is experienced when narrative inquirers speak of how narrative beginnings shape an inquiry. What often characterizes narrative beginnings is its role in supporting the living out of a wakeful inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Greene, 1995). As Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, and Huber (2016) describe, "wakefulness is not something we can live in the abstract; it is a way of living that is grounded in experience" (p. 207). Wakefulness, from this perspective ascribes itself within the ontological and epistemological commitments of narrative inquiry in that it is situated in an ongoing attentiveness to the storied experiences of who we are and who we are becoming, as we become together. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have often remarked, an understanding of human experience begins and must return to the stream of experience of a particular human's life. Given these commitments that frame our understanding of experience we go back to Michael's storied experience to show how wakefulness is supported through narrative beginnings.

As we step back into the stream of Michael's experienced life he pauses as he remembers himself as the gardener-in-residence at that time in Circle garden. He remembers now how he was named "New York" on that day, or how on days prior he was known as "One of those nice guys" or "The kid who was growing dirt". As he slows down and thinks about how he was storied on that inner city landscape he sees now that he was stepping into the midst of a storied landscape. The Circle community was a place with a narrative past; the people who lived in the community had storied experiences about people like Michael. Michael too held stories of that inner city place and of the people he would be working with long before his physical arrival on that landscape. As his initial telling suggests, he was in many ways inattentive to how he entered

into a landscape layered with ongoing social, cultural, familial, institutional, and linguistic narratives of how he was positioned, and how he was positioning the people and the community.

The process of narratively inquiring into Michael's own experiences supports a process of becoming wakeful to the stories in which he lived. It also supports the process of imagining forward to how he enters into the midst of new and ongoing relational inquiries in and with the community. Such a process encourages Michael to think about the stories he tells of Indigenous peoples living in the inner city, and of gardening and recreation programming in such place. It also encourages him to consider how deficit-based recreation program models position the people in the community, and how he is positioned much like other relational practitioners in the when he steps into the field. Narrative beginnings ask us to wonder in these many directions of who we are and who we are becoming in relation so we can be wakeful to our stories with a sense of them being *for now*. This *for now* understanding not only places our life making within a continuous stream of experience, but it creates a sense of openness to the stories we are living and telling as *for now*, and not fixed. In other words we have the endless ability to re-invent or re-know our selves, and our relations, even amidst the stories we are living, telling, have been told or not told (Yuknavitch, 2016). By inquiring into Michael's experiences we opened spaces for Michael to question dominant stories of gardening and recreation programming with inner city and Indigenous peoples, we asked him to think about the multiplicity of lives people live (both himself and people in the community), and we were always reminded these stories were for now and always open to being seen as otherwise (Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016; Greene, 1995).

Shifts in relational knowing

What situates autobiographical narrative inquiry from other forms of researcher or methodology reflexivity is that the regulative ideal of such an inquiry sits in the pragmatic philosophy of John Dewey. As Clandinin & Rosiek (2007) state the transactional foundations of narrative inquiry ask that the "regulative ideal for inquiry is to generate a new relation between a human being and her environment—her life, community, world" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 39). As Rosiek (2013) further explains, inquiries from this vantage must add to and sit within the continuing stream of experience and the subsequent evaluation of such an inquiry is in the change it brings to our streams of experience. These transactional underpinnings to narrative inquiry hold deep implications to how reflexive practice and narrative beginnings are positioned within an inquiry. Freeman's (2007) writing best explains how even though autobiographical narrative inquiries often look to the past, they are equally situated in how we make meaning of our present and future lives. As stated by Freeman (2007):

> Writing of the personal past…is instead a product of the present and the interests, needs, and wishes that attend it. This present, however—along with the self whose present it is—is itself transformed in and through the process. Indeed, in a distinct sense, a new self is fashioned…What this suggests is that there is a dialectical relationship not only between the past and present but between past, present, and future: Even in the midst of my present engagement with the past, I am moving into the future, giving form and meaning to the self-to-be. (p. 137-138)

As Freeman states narrative beginnings transform present and future possibilities for experience. It is important to note that the reason we partake in such inquiries is not to predict or guide future actions, but to continually compose our selves in the present with an openness and wakefulness to possibilities for shifted relational knowing's in our future. For Michael, that meant becoming

wakeful to how he was storying and being storied by the community and people he was working with as a researcher-practitioner, while realizing that these relations are always in the process of becoming.

While a considerable amount of our attention has focused on how self-facing inquiries open spaces for researchers to continually re-present themselves within their lives as researchers, practitioners, and people, we want to make clear that such inquiries are not positioned as esoteric academic endeavours. We hope that throughout our writing we have made clear that there is a relational commitment or relational accountability (Wilson, 2001) when we take time to slow down through narrative beginnings. As narrative inquirers, we take this time prior, during, and after working with participants so that we can fulfill our relational obligations to the people with whom we work. By being attentive to how we story ourselves, our research phenomena, and our participants that are part of our study, we are better positioned to build respectful, trusting, and reciprocal relations with our to-be and/or current participants. More specifically, we become wakeful not only to how we story our own lives as researcher, but we are better positioned to hear, see, notice, and feel how our participants are storying their lives and our relations with them. In many ways if we do not know what our stories are as researchers we may never know if the story we tell is only our story of them or if it is a shared composition of lives in the making. As Coles (1989) reminds us, people tell us their stories, we are in a privileged position to interpret and share their stories, and we also have the ability to disrupt or overwrite their stories. We must remember that "their story, yours, mine—it's what we all carry with us on this trip we take, and we owe it to each other to respect our stories and learn from them" (Coles, 1989, p. 31). As narrative inquirers we read Coles words as narrated by his supervisor Dr. Ludwig, as a

reminder that at the deepest level narrative beginnings allow us to attend ethically to our participants and care for their stories, and ours, as our lives are in the making.

Retelling Michael's experience at Circle garden

Before we narratively inquire into the storied experience of Michael as he interacted with the Indigenous group at the garden we want to first share the words of Mabel McKay as she spoke to Greg Sarris (1993). Her words are a reminder to how story is positioned in narrative inquiry, in speaking to Sarris, Mabel said "Don't ask me what it means the story…life will teach you about it the way it teaches you about life" (p. 194). As Sarris explains, and Mabel McKay eloquently states, story and the meanings associated with a story are not fixed, nor should they be in our research, rather stories come in and out of our lives in relational ways as we continuously compose our lives—they work on us. With this knowing in mind, when we think back to the opening story that Michael shared we understand that the story itself stands. Part of our inquiry into the experience is not in the deconstruction of his storied experience to illuminate a fixed meaning, understanding, or lesson of that experience but in understanding the many stories that it sits among as Michael composes his life as it is lived (Downey & Clandinin, 2010).

As Michael thinks back to that day at the garden he is often troubled with how he was positioned in the community and how he positioned and knew himself in the community under the label "gardener-in-residence". In other writings Michael has spoken to how that label shifted his rhythm and knowing of what it meant to be a good practitioner, often with his practitioner itinerary guiding each movement and producing a specific type of space (Dubnewick, 2016). As he sits with that experience now he is drawn back to a prior experience he had with a community garden coordinator who was positioned with a similar label. The setting of the community

garden in which he worked and researched alongside the garden coordinator was much different than the garden he coordinated in the inner city. As Michael travels back to the garden he is reminded of where it was located, adjacent to a school in a quiet area. The silence of the garden was only momentarily disrupted throughout the day by the school bell and youth that followed or the occasional train in the distance. He remembers the hardened dirt between in-ground plots, the strings that made boundaries and gates around some gardens, and the visible difference between two parts of the garden. One part filled with a variety of vegetables that he knew well having grown up in a family with Ukrainian heritage in Alberta, Canada. He knew the taste of the rainbow chard, the smell of the tomato vines when you brushed your hands through them, and the day-to-day thrill of watching beans grow. The other part of the garden did not hold the same resonances; his ancestral knowledge could no longer guide him. He had to bend down to read the labels, often needing to squint to read the small English letters beneath the Asian characters he could not interpret. The rows were nowhere near as ordered, and the varieties planted were much less, and harvested and reseeded what seemed like every month. It was early on in his time there that it had been shared with him that the Asian gardeners who gardened alongside many of the white professionals had been storied as "guerilla gardeners" who planted everywhere and had a very different sense of gardening. He wondered how their lives and way of gardening fit into the story of the garden as he found himself in that place. This wondering of how they negotiated their lives and way of gardening, and ultimately being, in that place pushed Michael to come to the garden at sporadic points within the weeks as he hoped to find moments where he could garden alongside the "guerilla gardeners". He hoped to he could travel to their worlds of gardening and see them with new eyes as the gardening season went along.

As we think within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space of temporality, sociality, and place we are given a glimpse[19] into how Michael is continually composing his life as a researcher-practitioner across the numerous landscapes he lives and visits. Travelling back to Michael's past experiences in a different garden, we begin to see how Michael is negotiating a sense of coherence alongside his researcher-practitioner identity and his relations (Carr, 1986). This sense of coherence, as Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin (2013) explain, is not so much about ordering our stories in a chronological way, but in "sitting with stories, with each other, as we seek to compose ourselves in relation" (p. 579). From Michael's opening experience at the inner city Circle garden and his remembered time at a different community garden we begin to feel the tensions Michael was experiencing as he was composing who he was as the gardener-in-residence. We can feel how his living of institutional stories of what it meant to coordinate and run a garden in the inner city sat in tension with his stories of caring for the many lives that lived on that landscape. We see this in how Michael diligently kept up with his itinerary, and in the moment the Aboriginal woman asked for some carrots. In her request for carrots Michael scrounged up all he could as the act of providing food for community members placed as "in-need," sat comfortably within the institutional narratives Michael was grounded in and the productive rhythms he knew. Embedded within her response of "That's it…" were stories of not fulfilling the idea of what it meant to be a good and caring practitioner. We understand this now at the basic level of providing food, and even deeper in the sense that all Michael had attended to, up until this moment, was the idea of the provisions of food and activity (content of garden

[19] Given the focus and space restrictions of this article, we suggest that if readers are interested in more detailed accounts of how other narrative inquirers have inquired into the stories they are living and telling they read the proceeding autobiographical narrative inquiries (see Caine, 2010; Cardinal, 2011; Casey & Schaefer, 2016; Dubnewick, 2017; Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013; Huber, Li, Murphy, Nelson, & Young, 2014; Saleh, Menon, & Clandinin, 2014)

programming) and not the lives or community he was in relation with. All he could give and was willing to give were carrots, as in her words “That’s it”. It was Silas’s statement to look at him as a person that shook him from this pattern and reminded him of his deep desires to willingly move beyond the garden and his constructed (and deeply negotiated) self in that place. His deep desires to listen and share with people emerged; a desire to open the space between people, between Silas and himself, with uncertainty so that the relational space that sat between them was not pre-established, assumed or already understood. Silas the urban Indigenous stereotypes—Michael the young, white urban professional stereotypes. Rather, Michael wanted to traverse the literal and metaphorical boundaries of the garden that obstructed his knowing of another person’s life and attend to, what Downey and Clandinin (2010) refer to as, the uncertainty that live between our lived and told stories.

Concluding thoughts

As we write this article we are reminded that it has been nearly five years since Michael’s storied experience at Circle garden. He thinks to how he is greeted now as he goes back to the community, a deep smile sits on his face as he thinks of the many moments when he goes to meet the gardeners in the community and the shouts of, “Hey, it’s Mike” as he comes within view. He knows in those moments that those stories that sat within him many years ago still sit with him today. As Basso (1996) reminds Michael, those stories are always working on him and asking him to live right. As we attempt to pull together the loose strands of this article we hope that is has become more clear that narrative beginnings are more than just methodological reflexivity at play, but also are part of the continual artistry of composing a life, one that is composed in and of our relations.

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NARRATIVE ACCOUNTS

Clark & Margaret's Narrative Accounts

Prelude to Clark's narrative account

> The term *narrative account*, or perhaps *narrative accounting*, allows us to give an account, an accounting, a representation of the unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they became visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared. In our use of the term *narrative account* we strive for a sense of being morally responsible to each other and to our negotiated relationships as well as to our negotiated texts. We work toward a sense of mutuality and co-composition in what we write. (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132)

What follows is Clark's narrative account. The writing of Clark's narrative account came from the several months that Clark and I spent together working in the River Ravine Garden Project during the summer of 2016. During this time I wrote field notes in my researcher journal, had formal taped conversations and informal garden conversations with Clark. Clark also kept a researcher journal during this time, which he shared with me each week and I briefly wrote back. This research journal was part of his practicum degree requirements as the Garden Activities Coordinator at River Ravine. As I began to write Clark's narrative account, my audience, or whom I was writing to, weighed heavily on my mind. I have purposefully chosen to write this account to Clark. I do so as it was through Clark's journal writing, and my own, that his and my life became most visible to the places where our stories intersected. I hope each reader of Clark's narrative account understands the intentionality in this shift toward mutual vulnerability and co-composition.

Clark, what follows is your narrative account, of my and your life coming together as we lived alongside each other at River Ravine Gardens and elsewhere. As I wrote this I often came

back to your journals, and my own notes, and those quiet times we had in the garden where we found five or ten minutes to talk amongst the weeds or by the garden shed. Among the many things we shared I kept coming back to certain conversations. Those being when we talked about places, such as the garden and the inner city, when we talked about people in our lives who taught us, such as family and mentors, and when we shared who we wanted to be as people who also practice. Thus, these threads around *places in our work, educators in our lives,* and *imagined identities* structure your narrative account as I think about our experiences of coming together and working alongside inner city residents and Indigenous peoples in a community garden project.

Introduction

We had been introduced months prior via an email. I knew your name, Clark, and that you would be doing your practicum as the Garden Activities Coordinator at River Ravine Garden. The sun at this point seemed to sit in the sky longer, there was no snow left on the ground, and things were already beginning to feel dry. It was my second year now being part of the River Ravine Garden project. The season's change was a signal that I would now be leaving the university and making my way to the inner city as part of my field research. This year also signalled that I would be asking recreation practitioners to be part of my study. From that early introductory email (March 1, 2016), I was already thinking of you as a potential participant. I knew very little about you at the time other than you were an undergraduate student working towards a degree in kinesiology with a specialization in physical activity, health, and sport performance. I knew that part of the final requirements of your degree was a four-month practicum component in your field to offer practical application in regard to your specialization, and that is about it. As I think of the season's change as a reminder of the transitions I make each

year from the university to the inner city, I am also reminded of how your placement was framed as a transition from university to work or field practice.

As I think back to the day in which I met you I remember being excited to meet. I imagined that I would meet you in the inner city like many of the other workers in the community. We would stand outside the social services building, open the door to the van for community members to come out to the garden, and when full or all quieted down we would make the thirty-minute or so drive from the inner city to River Ravine Garden. As I made my way to the edge of the downtown core and to the community services building I was surprised not to see you amongst the other gardeners, workers, and community members. As the other workers informed me, we would meet up with you at River Ravine Garden, as you would be facilitating garden activities out there every day from now on, not only with our inner city group but also with other organizations that came out to River Ravine Garden. And so that is what happened, I met you at the garden several times each week over the next couple of months.

Threads around *places in our work*

Inner City

What I did not know at the time was that in the weeks prior to my arrival you had spent several weeks working in the inner city. I am pulled back to a journal of yours at the end of the garden year as you recollect your thoughts about those initial weeks working in the inner city.

> I admit that, to some degree, I was a bit apprehensive about the first few weeks of my practicum. Especially when my agency supervisor informed me that I would be spending the majority of my time in the inner city alternating between [two inner city social services sites]. I remember feeling overwhelmed with the sights of the inebriated and

dishevelled individuals that lined the interior and exterior facilities. I also recall the sights of the stained concrete, littered streets, and needles that filled the back alleys and [the garden] (where we gardened every Thursday mornings[20]). I recall the smell of alcohol, urine, body odour, and feces that lingered throughout those buildings and arriving home everyday with my clothes tainted with that foulness. I recall the sound of hysteria from addicts, alcoholics, or those affected by a mental illness that echoed in the drop-ins and the vulgarity that became the vernacular of the inner city. Finally, I remember feeling fear, often for no reason at all. I didn't like that environment as it was grim and bred hopelessness. Some of my initial duties in the inner city were to learn about the programs and services offered by the several agencies as well as spend time in the drop-ins (where community members gathered to eat meals and participate in various activities). I didn't particularly enjoy the idea of interacting with individuals who were intoxicated and incomprehensible and had an unpleasant odour. My supervisor said it was part of relationship building but I also knew that building relationships took time. He [my supervisor] had been there for 3 or 4 years so many of the individuals recognized him and knew him by name. I knew it wasn't realistic to attain that level of popularity amongst the inner city community, especially since I would be spending most of my time at the [River Ravine Garden] but I continued to be a presence by helping serve lunches and assisting with some of [the agencies] more popular programs like the collective kitchen and the pet food bank. But it was the discussions with staff, mentors, and the annual memorial for the homeless when my attitude towards the community started to change. But most of all, it was an effortful awareness that afforded me with the compassion to

[20] Different from River Ravine Garden. This garden was located in the inner city.

> think of the “why”, “how” and “who”. After all, one of the reasons I chose this practicum was to understand and to put to rest some of those stereotypes that had been passed down to me from an early age. (Clark, research journal, August 4, 2016)

When I first read this journal entry in August 2016, nearing the end of your practicum, I was immediately reminded of my first few weeks working in the inner city several years ago and the tensions towards the place I was working in. Your journal fragment reminded me of my first few weeks when I began working in the inner city on a new community garden project as the gardener-in-residence during my Master’s research (Dubnewick, 2016). I vividly recall those overwhelming feelings of which you wrote and spoke about. I remember feeling fear for no reason. I remember bringing my bigger and better bike lock. I remember after my first couple of days there I decided to wear a brimmed hat so it was easier for me to avoid eye contact and conversation. I remember keeping primarily to the garden and only wandering into the social services building when necessary. I remember the difficulty of building relationships in that place. I too was told it was part of relationship building and I too saw the ease with which other workers were known and interacted with by people in the community. Most of all I remember not being able to *lovingly world travel* to the worlds of the people and place I was working in (Lugones, 1987). Clark, what I mean by this is I viewed the inner city and people who lived there in what Lugones would call an arrogant way.

As we sat down months after you wrote and I read your journal, we spoke of your tensions towards working in the inner city at that time of transition as you moved from university to inner city places for your practicum. The smells, sights, and sounds were all part of your experience there. As we began to speak about the inner city in that first formal recorded conversation after the garden season, you shared with me that you had spent the last fifteen years

living in more affluent suburb communities just outside of the city, and only for a short five year period in your twenties did you live near downtown when you first went to university. You explained that during your time living in the city, and stretching forward to now, you "never really made [your] way down to that small section of Edmonton, that part of Edmonton that is you know, coined or termed the inner city" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). Your life as you explained went through different places when you lived in the city, such as crossing the river towards the university, and working at the grocery store near your home.

You explained that your knowing of the inner city was through the few times that you and your father drove through the streets of the inner city as a youth and you saw glimpses of the people and what the place was like. You explained how in these glimpses of the inner city you remembered seeing people on the streets without homes, bottles on the ground, shopping carts on corners, and generally a different level of maintenance or upkeep to the neighbourhood. You remarked how when you passed through the inner city as a youth that "it was interesting it was always the same individuals, I mean the same culture, same group of people that (in reference to Indigenous peoples)… yeah, that, were always so…I mean, but I never questioned it [at that time]" (Clarke, research conversation, November, 2, 2016). As you shared your stories with me of passing through inner city places I was again transported back to my own experiences with inner city places. I too rarely ventured to inner city places throughout my life. As a child growing up in Calgary, I recall my father driving us through downtown east village as we made our way to the zoo or Chinatown. I remember seeing many people on the streets with shelters that looked much different than the home in which I lived in. I also remember when my family would bike along the Bow River, we would cross the bridge to get on the other side of river when we neared the part of Calgary that was storied in similar ways to the neighbourhood you worked in in

Edmonton. As I listened to you share your memories with me during that conversation I sensed that the way you once knew and viewed the inner city neighbourhood that you worked in did not sit comfortably with the life you were wanting to live now.

As we talked further about your relation with the inner city, you shared two particular moments with me. One you had shared with me at the garden (Michael, research journal, June 17, 2016) many months prior to this recorded conversation (November, 2, 2016), however, it came up in both conversations. When you first shared this moment with me on June 17, 2016 we were quietly weeding together and we were talking about the many gardeners and people we were getting to know. You began to share with me one particular encounter you recently had in the inner city with an Indigenous man. You spoke to how you intentionally took time to sit with this man you met on the street playing piano. He shared parts of his life, of losing his parents at a young age, of foster homes, and of residential schools. The second moment you shared with me occurred first in one of your journals (May 16, 2016), which we later discussed during our research conversation on June 17, 2016. In your journal your wrote:

> Friday afternoon was the annual homeless memorial for the 15 women and 35 men that passed away in 2015. Although several members of the attendees at the memorial were staff and dignitaries, there was also a good turnout of community members as well. As I looked around the tear filled room, while a woman sang Amazing Grace, I saw community members consoling one another. I witnessed this once again while the piper for the Police Service played Amazing Grace during the placing of single roses at the homeless memorial statue in front of the building. It was then that I realized how strong some of the bonds between community members were and just how vital these

> relationships were in providing the much needed support and understanding amongst each other. (Clark, research journal, May 16, 2016)

As your practicum progressed, and even as we sat down after the garden season was over, this moment was vital for you as you were shifting how you viewed the inner city and the people who resided there. You explained that these interactions with people who lived and worked in the inner city as vital not only towards the way you think, but also the way you "want to think, and the way [you] want to see" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). Thus, as I read your journals early in the spring and as I sat down with you after the garden season I began to notice how you were telling a story of yourself as a recreation practitioner who wanted to live and connect beyond passing labels of places and people. This story of yourself as a person willing to listen and re-story allowed you to sit at ease with the Indigenous man playing piano and see the strong bonds that are woven in the inner city during the annual homeless memorial.

River Ravine Garden

While you never had any prior gardening experience you spoke to how you thought about River Ravine Garden even before your practicum began. At one level you explained how the idea of having a garden always intrigued you. You had always wanted to plant and tend to a garden at home with your daughter, so this place and practicum was a place to learn how to care for a garden so one day you could possibly garden at home. At another level, you spoke to how you did not want to work in an office. Movement, being outdoors, and the flexibility of the position seemed to fit the life you were living and wanting to live.

Only weeks into your practicum and garden season you began thinking about the importance of places to healing, therapy, and the lives of the people who lived in the inner city.

As I write this now I think about how you were pulled into this conversation around place and healing and how it resonated with you. In your position description, it was clear that supporting mental health by caring for the land and each other was the primary goal of River Ravine Garden. Given this guiding goal of River Ravine Garden you often worked alongside recreation therapists and other health sector professionals whose focus revolved around mental health. Further, in your training and professional development in the inner city you also spoke to being introduced to a TED Talk by Johann Hari (2015) and how he spoke about how place and connection mattered (i.e., the social environment we live in) when thinking about mental health and addictions. Lastly, you had conversations with people who came out to the garden. Some of these conversations with gardeners occurred nearly every day, such as the one woman who often commented on how much she appreciated leaving the noise of the inner city for the quiet of River Ravine Garden.

In thinking back to conversations around healing and place, I am reminded of one particular conversation that occurred in the van on our way up to River Ravine Garden. I shared this story with you on that day, and I share a shortened version of it shortly here too (Michael, research journal, June 22, 2016). It began as we all piled into the van in the inner city. The van was very full on this day and one of the gardeners who regularly came barely made it to the van before we left. As she scrambled into the van and buckled her seatbelt with heavy breaths, she said she was so happy that we did not leave without her on that day as it was very important for her to be at the garden. She continued to explain that it was the tenth anniversary since her dad had passed, and that she needed to be at the garden. Another woman extended her hand and others shared many warm thoughts were with her in that moment. For her, she described being at

River Ravine Garden as making sure the day would be a good one, and that her and her father would be honoured.

When this woman shared her story of her father's passing it resonated deeply with me. As you know my father died by suicide several years ago. In those years since he passed I often found comfort in gardening at River Ravine Garden. Sometimes that was through a sincere how are you doing, other times I was being reminded of the joy my father and I shared when we picked up our shovels and harvested the first potatoes of the year. For me, the story of River Ravine Garden as a healing place gave me comfort and ease, as it was a story of gardening that I lived out. While this story of gardening and the place of River Ravine Garden as healing may not have been your initial story when you came to the garden, I sensed over the season you found deep resonances with the stories of what guided River Ravine Garden. It was a story of gardening you identified with, and was a story you wanted to further pursue as you eagerly applied for and received a job as a recreation therapy assistant for when your practicum was set to finish in September 2016. Yet at the same time those initial stories of gardening at River Ravine Garden were not silenced for you. You enjoyed what you described as, "receiving an education" from the community members as they shared their knowledge of gardening and cooking with you throughout the summer, and you felt confident in having a garden of your own (Clark, research journal, August 4, 2016). You also described how friendship and physical activity/movement in a natural environment was very much part of what River Ravine Garden was about (Clark, research journal, July 10, 2016). Taken together, the many stories of what gardening was at River Ravine Garden, yours and the institutional ones that guided the gardens vision, complemented each other in ways that supported what you were wanting to do and who you were wanting to become in that place.

Threads around *educators in our lives*

As we spoke about the inner city and the people who lived in the area you said, "my understanding was what my dad told me… It was never about the historical perspective as to why they (in reference to Indigenous peoples) were there. He didn't know any of that. So there's so much lack of education and then just passing on those stereotypes to me" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). You explained that your father had been taught that Indigenous peoples who lived in the inner city in precarious housing situations, and/or struggled with addictions, were a reflection of individualized life choices with little acknowledgment of the structural inequalities that disproportionately disadvantaged specific groups in our society. As we sat together in the garden on numerous occasions speaking about your father's teachings that sat in your living, you spoke to how you knew there must be more to the narrative that it was purely their choices and actions that led to their current life situations. Clark, as you reminded me throughout our conversations at River Ravine Garden and elsewhere, these stories were, as suggest by Okri (1997), deeply embedded early on for you. As you thought about your father's teachings more and more, and the reverberations that came from them in your life, you were always searching for more complete, whole, and socially just explanations. I sensed that you were not comfortable with the teachings that had been passed down to your father, and then to you. These tensions towards how you were being educated in your life pulled at you well before you began your practicum at River Ravine Garden. For example, as you went about your undergraduate degree in kinesiology, sport, and recreation you intentionally engaged in readings and projects that shared differing stories of Indigenous peoples in Canada, especially in relation in to sport.

One of these moments of searching to shift and supplement how you were educated around Indigenous peoples and Canada was in the writing and research into an undergraduate recreation/sport history paper on Tom Longboat, a celebrated Indigenous athlete. I recall you speaking of this paper in our conversations, how the stories you read opened up questions around sport and how sport is labeled as the epitome of meritocracy. I also remember you speaking to how the stories in "They Came for the Children" (TRC, 2012) filled in those historical voids in knowing another's life as you learned of the atrocities of residential schools, and how children and culture were stripped from the lives and land of Indigenous peoples in Canada. As we sat down during one of our conversations you highlighted how your fourteen-year gap in going back to university had shaped the way you saw the world. You worked jobs that you described did not mentally challenge or ask you to be critical to how people were positioned and society was structured. It was during this time of going back to university you had to "re-learn how to learn," to think critically and notice how/when you were formulating a judgment or opinion and to consider the basis of the claim. As you explained, "it (in reference to university and particularly sociology) totally opened my eyes and made me question so many things, and even though I might not know the answer, I know that my initial thoughts aren't necessarily the correct answer…there's a better explanation for this" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). During those summer months as you completed your practicum at River Ravine Garden I sensed there was a certain level of coherence as you searched for different teachings and received an education from the people and workers in the community.

As you spoke to the shifts you were seeing and wanting to see, you pulled me into your relations with your father. You shared how power and knowledge was negotiated in the living of your family structure. As you shared about your family, specifically your father, I slowly began

to hear stories of you as a son. As a son, you wondered how to talk to your father about specific teachings, and how to shift the flow of knowledge from father to son. On one of our days at River Ravine Garden (Michael, research journal, June 28, 2016) we talked about your father's teachings. As we did you wondered, "how am I supposed to tell my father, what you have been thinking, what you have been sharing is wrong, that something is not right, your story is incomplete." While you willingly attempted to shift your teachings around the Indigenous peoples in Canada through university work and conversations with people in the garden and other inner city places, I felt you held a further responsibility in making sure your family was also knowledgeable about residential schools and the lives of people you had met in your work. As we met up after the garden season and your practicum you informed me that you "had to educate [your] dad about residential schools, about trauma, about why and how [Indigenous peoples] are in these places" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). As you shared this with me during our conversation you began to explain more of why you needed to discuss such histories with your father. As you did this you stretched outward to thinking how he was positioned not only in your family but in the communities and people he worked with. You thought about how his position as an authority figure, as someone with experience on job sites, was to perpetuate and pass down such knowledge of Indigenous peoples to the lives of others, and ultimately in the shaping of the world in which we all live.

As you spoke of your father and your desires to think and see in new ways I always felt your daughter sitting on the peripheries of our conversations and your becoming. It warmed my heart as you named her as a compassionate and caring child, as someone who would never use labels and who was a critical thinker. She was someone who was not caught up in cell phones and stereotypes. In learning of her life, I also learned of yours and how you positioned yourself

as a father. You deeply cared about what and how she was educated on matters of Indigenous peoples and settler relations. You had hoped the curriculum in schools had attended to this in better ways then you remembered as a child so she had a more complex picture and understanding. You also saw yourself as part of this conversation as you spoke to yourself as an educator and father in her life. This became more evident as you were introduced to historical perspectives and conversed with community members and mentors in the city centre. As you shifted your own stories you reminded me of the temporal and familial stretch that sat in such shifts. When we sat down you shared that "once I did realize what some of these issues were, I thought it was very important for me to educate her as well. So that she doesn't grow up with these potential stereotypes…" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016).

As you shared these words with me, other stories you shared of you and your daughter became clearer. I could now see you in the park with your daughter. Walking together, side-by-side, you ask her of her day, she tells you some stories that her friends at school told her based on supposed facts. You ask her, are there any other explanations besides what they may have told you? You both talk and ask each other, does that even make sense? Is there a more whole or better explanation of this? You both think about what other information or stories may be out there that may not be in your current conversation. And as you walk in the vast park with endless trails of grass you both explore the endless directions and stories that may make up what was just shared. And as I picture this moment with you and your daughter that you described to me I think of my relations, with learners, family, and people I walk alongside. How will I ask them, and myself, to be wakeful to the stories we are told, what we may be perpetuating and what we may be missing as we walk forward together.

As I wonder about how my voice speaks in this world as I step alongside people as they negotiate their relations I could not get that image of you and your daughter walking together in wakeful ways. I wondered about the many people in my life that walked alongside me and opened spaces to be wakeful. One was my father. He was a father much like you, who walked beside me and asked me to care. I will share an image for now and leave it at that (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Michael and his father

Another was Johnny Lee. He is an Indigenous teacher who helped guide my journey of becoming wakeful in those early moments of working in the inner city and with Indigenous peoples. You, Clark, also met him at the garden. He is an Indigenous man who has lived in Edmonton and the inner city for many years. I want to share with you an experience we had together:

As I picked up the debris left behind from the harvest I made my way to the empty rows in the garden to put their nutrients back in the soil. Immediately as I hit the empty row I began scattering my harvested stalks among the many dried ones lying in the dirt. In near disappointment Johnny, also carrying debris in hand, looked to me and said, “don’t be lazy.” At that moment I did not think I was doing too much wrong, surely the land steward/farmer would be around later with his machinery to spread them down what seemed like endless amounts of long empty rows. As I looked up, Johnny was now a good forty to fifty feet ahead of me. Slowly he began unraveling the garden debris he was carrying. One-by-one he ripped off pieces and threw them to the soil where no previous garden matter was placed or footmarks led to. As I walked to catch up with my dwindled pile in hand I heard him say in the distance “this soil needs and deserves love and care too—it all does.” I thought back to the moment where I dropped my debris at the beginning of the row and how much care and resources were already there, their nutrients already slowly seeping in to the soil. Yet I did not look up to see the vast land that sat empty in front of me, invisible to me and uncared for by many, including myself, amongst us. Rather, I rested on the assumption that others and the resources we had in place would later distribute the garden matter where it needed to be. Yet here was a community member who was currently without a home, at least a home in they way I knew of one, walking down the long rows making sure all the land was cared for and loved. I followed with garden debris in hand scattering the teachings and nutrients to the land that was once dormant to me, now wondering what else I may have missed. (Michael, field texts, June 29, 2015)

Clark, as I think back to you, to the tensions you carried from stories passed down to you early on. I know and see you as an educator, like Johnny and my father were for me. As I sit here now reflecting on our days together and imagining you walking alongside your daughter and having conversation with your father I am again asked how will I come alongside family, friends, and people I meet and support spaces in which we think about educators in our lives and where I may even be positioned as one, and what responsibilities that may hold.

Threads around *imagined identities*

Sensitive and caring were two words in which you, Clark, used to describe yourself. Sensitive and caring were also how others described you to me when your name came up in conversations at River Ravine Garden. They are also words that I would use to describe you. However, you shared with me that "it is very difficult sometimes to be a caring person" as the Garden Activities Coordinator at River Ravine Garden and now in your role with a large health services organization (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). These tensions of being and becoming a caring practitioner came up in many ways for you; below I highlight a couple moments that sat deeply with me.

"Who is ready to work!?"

One of these moments sat in the echoed words, "Who is ready to work!?" They were words the gardeners and I would hear on nearly every visit to River Ravine Garden. The words, "Who is ready to work!?" often enthusiastically came from you, Clark, as we all would be finishing up our bagged lunches and conversations under the shade tent at the picnic tables. For the most part, you often got us started on the work that needed to be done at the garden. For me, the words "Who is ready to work!?" were almost always a welcome shift as I loved to contribute

in such a productive and physical way. Those words, while enthusiastically shared and loved by many, may also be seen as a key bumping point in your role as the Garden Activities Coordinator. They were in many ways a signal and reminder of your role, and how that incorporated managing others as the authority or leader, making sure the garden was kept to a certain standard, and that things just got done.

It was in one of your early journal entries that I became more wakeful to these tensions you were experiencing as the Garden Activities Coordinator. For you, Clark, this position required "adopting a new mindset and becoming comfortable in managing others" (Clark, research journal, May 29, 2016). This mindset of managing others and being the authority or leader was something that you described as foreign to how you had been previously positioned on the work landscape. You shared that in past places of work you had often held a subordinate role. However, in this practicum position you felt you had a different level of accountability to the many organizations you were involved with. You knew of River Ravine Garden's vision as a place where people could come together and find healing and acceptance through friendship in a holistic and nature-based environment. You also knew, through your position description as the Garden Activities Coordinator, you were to be the person to instruct and properly maintain the garden alongside the many community members who would be coming out to River Ravine Garden. The tensions of maintaining the vision of the garden as a place of coming together while also balancing what needed to be done for the maintenance and upkeep of the garden weighed heavily on your being.

"Who is ready to work!?" While often heard so enthusiastically by me, now carries a different tone. As I think of your enthusiastic call, I am reminded of the white board on the shed that listed all the things that needed to be done for the week. Some weeks it read: 1st: pick green

beans in shade or weed for ½ hour…2nd: harvest potatoes cucumbers, or green beans for food bank…3rd: harvest for yourself any of potatoes, cucumbers, beets (4 per person unless for agency), carrots, green beans, swiss chard, kale, bouquet of flowers or herbs. As I continue to think with your call, I also think towards what puzzles you were negotiating around what a successful day was at the garden and what meant for you to successfully fulfill your role as Garden Activities Coordinator.

In reflecting on one day (Clark, research journal, June 6, 2016) in which you, Clark, worked with a group of youth as part of an inner city social services agency program you remarked to it as a "success". On that day you had all enjoyed a walk in the forest with many laughs as you skipped rocks from the rivers bank while still coming back to the garden at the end of the day to diligently weed the corn for the final half hour. It was in your next week's journal and through conversations with workers and mentors that you began reflecting on success and how that may look, feel, and be different from your location as the Garden Activities Coordinator to that of the people you were working with at the garden (Clark, research journal, June 13, 2016). Clark, in reflection you wrote that, "if volunteers, or community members, aren't motivated and dedicated in completing these [daily garden] tasks or aren't working efficiently, I feel that I, as well as the volunteers, have failed" (Clark, research journal, June 13, 2016). These pressures to get work done in your role as Garden Activities Coordinator sits with me now as I again think back to the enthusiastic request at the start of each garden day, "Who is ready to work!?"

As I think with your experiences at River Ravine Garden, I am again pulled back to my own experiences working in the inner city as a gardener-in-residence several years ago. As I transport myself back to that time and the writings I did thereafter around how I negotiated my

role and rhythm (Dubnewick, 2016), “success” was so deeply tied to getting stuff done, and of being productive in the western sense that I knew. A successful day for me, at that time, was making sure all the raised beds were watered, weeds were picked, and that I clearly coordinated with kitchen staff what was needed to be and could be harvested. It was rare when these tasks were not completed as it drove my being and interactions in the community. I often left the garden with strained shoulders and reddened palms from carrying heavy buckets of water back and forth between the garden and the distant water source. Over time I slowed my pace, and began to leave the garden with open ears and an open heart as I listened to residents of the community.

I too at that time began reflecting on what success was to me and how my engagement may shift as a practitioner if I shifted my sense of success alongside the people in the community I worked with. I began to slow down, sit, listen, and talk to more of the people around me. My accountability seemed to broaden at this time as I began thinking beyond the activity, task, and program outcomes, towards the community and people I was working with. I as you so eloquently stated was beginning “to think about WHO I was working with in the garden” (Clark, research journal, June 13, 2016, capitals in original). Clark, as I think back to our conversations around how it was difficult for you to be caring in your role as Garden Activities Coordinator I began to see that caring for you was to think about *who* you were working with, listening to them, connecting to them, and responding in ways that respected them.

A wonder posed on your last practicum day…

Clark, when I think back to the numerous days we spent together over the summer there is one day that I am always reminded of. It was the last day of your practicum. Everyone at the

garden knew this. We had been speaking about it for weeks. I am sure others had wonders similar to mine around how we would miss you there and what the garden would be like once you were gone. We knew you had one last two-week course to finish before you had all your requirements for graduation and that you would be back for harvest days. We also knew you had a job lined up in health services as a recreation therapy assistant for that fall. Just like any other day when we arrived to the garden we were met by your smiles. Our vans pulled up and you opened the sliding doors saying hello to each one of us by name. It seemed like everyone in the van simultaneously shouted your name once those doors opened. As we all got our hellos you positioned the stepping stool at the door so several of the community members could better brace themselves as they got out. Once we all piled out and brought over the food and drinks to the tables we all, as usual, sat down and ate our lunches before doing some work in the garden.

As I go back to my field texts and recall that day it was a small moment at the end of the day that I am reminded of. Our work in the garden was winding down, everyone had gathered under the shade tent and at the picnic tables for your last day celebration. While sweets and desserts were usually present at the garden, this time we had a cake. Your agency supervisor quieted everyone down and gave a small thank you speech to you while you cut a piece for everyone at the garden. As he ended his speech hooting and hollering ensued. I remember looking to you and seeing so much joy in your face as everyone was cheering you on, and slowly the cheers turned to a chorus of voices yelling, “Speech! Speech!” Your voice held a heartfelt jitter as you stood up and faced everyone. You reminded us that what you learned most and what you will miss most is the friendships and people you had connected to in this place as part of your practicum. You spoke to yourself as being lucky and privileged to have been there. As you

ended your speech you looked towards several of the community members and quietly finished. It was a very heartfelt moment for me and I think for you and for others.

As it quieted down after all the cake was eaten, it was a signal that our day at River Ravine Garden would be ending soon. As I began to pack up the van, I watched several gardeners come up to you for a hug before making their way to the van. Later, when I got in the van everyone asked each other if they got a hug, with many replying that they did too. Over the years of my working in the inner city I had not seen many hugs with the residents, especially from workers. As I saw you hug many of them I was reminded of a worker I worked alongside in my first year of my Master's when I was the gardener-in-residence for an inner city community garden project. I remember her working alongside me one day and a resident came into the garden. The community member came up to the worker and they embraced for what seemed like forever as I stood there. As they released she said thank you and was on her way. I felt such compassion and care in that moment. I will always remember how that moment opened up how I imagined I would like to and could be as a practitioner. Here again, now many years later, I saw a similar expression as you, Clark, hugged the many community members before all of you went on your way.

As each gardener said goodbye and made their way to the vans it was your agency supervisor and I standing there with you in those final moments. As we stood there you said to us, "I am not sure what I did in my role, if the garden would be any different had I not been here, I feel I didn't do anything" (Michael, field texts, August 2, 2016).

As you placed that wonder before us I remember looking to your supervisor, I could feel the question had deep resonances around your impact, if you shaped the garden program in good

ways, if you fulfilled your role as the Garden Activities Coordinator, and if you reciprocated back to the program and people with whom you were working. I also experienced tensions of my own as you asked us this question. It pushed me to think deeply with how friendship, caring, and reciprocity is situated when we are known as recreation practitioners, and how those values may bump with differing measurements of what a good or successful recreation program and practitioner looks like. As you posed this wonder we wondered with you. Our answers were slow at the time. Your agency supervisor went first, he reminded you to just think about the weeds and how few there were. This was true, and we all knew he meant much more. I cannot quite remember what words I gave outside of knowing I gave a quiet assurance that you did much.

Clark, as we sat down months later for a research conversation I wanted to know more about how you experienced that day. When I asked you about that final couple of weeks you shared:

> It just tore me up. I was almost in tears the last few days. Even just when I came back after my final course for a couple days and how some of the members were just so excited to see me. They came out of that van and yelled my name. I was like, 'oh wow, I've only been gone for a little over a week and this is the reception I get'. It was fantastic, what an amazing feeling it was to see that these people cared for me that much. I don't even…all I did…I didn't give them anything, or it didn't feel like I had. All I did was just listen to them. We just had that one thing in common and just sat together. It was the friendship... Definitely the food is a big component of it, but, in the end it all comes down to those social interactions, those relationships, those friendships. This is what I think is lacking in a lot of these programs. We have got to some how find a better way to facilitate those relationships. (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016)

As I sat down with you, Clark, we were both months removed from being at River Ravine Garden. You had begun your new position with a large health services agency, and both you and I were negotiating different work landscapes than the one we had together at River Ravine Garden. I felt those experiences of building relationships, friendships, and caring for each other was stretching forward with you now in your new position. As we talked about those last weeks at the garden and how important building caring relationships was to you, you shared once again how difficult it was to be caring person, but this time on your new work landscape.

As I think about your continued life making now, I think back to this one question that an Indigenous woman asked me at River Ravine Garden. We were both admiring the sunflowers quietly from the picnic tables, and she turned to me and said, “Can you get seeds from the sunflowers here [River Ravine Garden] to plant in the inner city?” At the time, I answered with a simple yes. Now I wonder about the travelling that takes place.

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Prelude to Margaret's narrative account

> The term *narrative account*, or perhaps *narrative accounting*, allows us to give an account, an accounting, a representation of the unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they became visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared. In our use of the term *narrative account* we strive for a sense of being morally responsible to each other and to our negotiated relationships as well as to our negotiated texts. We work toward a sense of mutuality and co-composition in what we write. (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132)

What follows is Margaret's narrative account. The writing of Margaret's narrative account came from the several months that Margaret and I spent together working in the River Ravine Garden Project during the summer of 2016 and the months that followed. During this time I wrote field notes in my researcher journal, had formal taped conversations and informal garden conversations with Margaret. Margaret also kept a researcher journal during this time, which she shared with me periodically. I introduced the option of weekly journals to Margaret as a place for personal reflection and as a way for me to have more nuanced understandings into her experiences. During the garden season, and in the many days afterwards Margaret and I often shared poems and writings with each other. As we began to share poems, writings, and art works with each other we began to learn how we both viewed such forms of expression as ways to share little bits of ourselves and of our souls with each other. As I write this narrative account of Margaret's life, and my life, coming together at River Ravine Garden I wanted to continue this mutual sharing, thus I have chosen to write this account to Margaret.

Margaret, what follows is your narrative account, of my and your life coming together as we lived alongside each other at River Ravine Gardens and elsewhere. As I began to write this I

often came back to the annal you drew, or creative life depiction. As I did so I reminded myself of what sat at the centre of your life, I kept reminding myself how you lived your life and walked with such convictions, and I kept reminding myself how the pillar of faith was so central to who you are and who you are becoming. While I have structured this narrative account around pillars of *faith, place*, and *practice* (practice includes pillars of *community development, social justice,* and *environmental stewardship*) I hope you get the sense that your faith sat at the heart of each pillar as our lives came together when we worked alongside urban residents and Indigenous peoples in a community garden project.

Introduction

Margaret, I begin this account by sharing an experience I had at the start of the garden season. It was a moment in which I was asked a question by Jodi, an Indigenous woman, around who I was and what brought me to the garden to do my research. I share this as you asked me a similar question. I also asked you many questions about who you were as a person who practiced their faith as gardener during the many months we worked and sat alongside each other.

It was a couple weeks into the garden season (Michael, research journal, June 14, 2016) and by this time I had gardened alongside Jodi for several garden days in a row. She had shared where she was from, about her family, of leaving her community, and of moments in her life. Our growing comfort in being around one another often lead to us making jokes as we moved between more intimate conversation and garden tasks. By this time I was accustomed to hearing her words, “I am with him” after Clark, the Garden Activities coordinator, shared what garden tasks needed to be done for the day.

This day was no different (June 14, 2016). Clark gathered us and explained we would be planting cucumber seeds. He brought us to the edge of the recently worked soil where five acres of River Ravine Gardens sat before us, and many acres beyond that, and began to show us how to plant the seeds. As he did so he showed us how to plunge our thumbs into the soil to where our first joint was located. As he said this, he stuck his thumb into the soil to show us the rough depth, and then explained how the person working with us would place one or two cucumber seeds into the hole. The first person would then cover the seeds before moving on to make another thumb-sized hole a certain distance away. Within seconds of receiving our instructions and learning that we would be working in pairs I had heard the familiar words from Jodi, "I am with him," which set us on our way.

Without hesitation Jodi collected a large handful of seeds from Clark and prompted us to get started. We found a point about a quarter of the way down the row, marked our started position with a shovel and began. I crouched down, pushed my thumb into the ground, Jodi placed a couple of seeds in the hole, I covered it, and we moved on. Wanting to make sure I went down the right depth and provided adequate spacing I moved with some caution during those first couple of seeds that she and I planted. As Jodi and I kept moving at my very calculated pace she teased at me in a humorous tone, "Wow, you are pretty slow moving for how young you are." Knowing her humour, and our relation, I gave a short laugh and quickened my pace to see if she could keep up. I frantically jabbed my thumb into the soil, Jodi quickly tossed a seed or two in and I carelessly covered the seeds while trying to start a new hole before she had her seeds ready. As I moved at a feverish pace Jodi kept up with ease, always reminding me that she was done her portion well before I was done mine. Eventually we slowed down as our laughter subsided.

As things quieted down between Jodi and me she asked me how and why I got involved at River Ravine Garden with my research. Before I answered she asked, “Is your family rich? Did they donate? Are you Christian?” I was taken aback by the questions. I had shared parts of my life with her, shaped primarily around my experiences as a student and a researcher. Now, faced with her questions, I, rather ineloquently, began to explain how I wanted to work beyond injustices and think through how to be more respectful and harmonious as a person in the recreation profession when working with Indigenous peoples. I shared how I felt disconnected from the urban community where I worked in my prior research when I was involved as a coordinator for a community garden project (Dubnewick, 2016). Jodi did not say much as I spoke and as we slowly continued to plant our cucumber seeds. I continued to share stories of my family, of gardening and food at home, and of my father’s passing and how gardening often brought me back to those familial relations and practices. Jodi continued to ask me if my involvement was for mental health reasons. That, too, was part of my story and how and why I came to the garden. As Jodi asked these questions around who I was and my journey to River Ravine Garden I was asked to think about what questions I was living and what stories I was telling of myself and my relation to the people I was now working with. When she asked that question I also wonder now what stories she was telling of me at this time. I also wonder how in the asking of those questions how she was beginning to open up a dialogue around the stories she had of me, as she did I think about those moments Jodi and I share amidst our laughter as times when we began to compose stories together.

As I sit here now, many months removed from that day planting cucumber seeds at River Ravine Garden and the questions asked of me from Jodi I think about you, Margaret. I think about how you asked questions to share who I was, what guided me as person, and who we were

becoming as we worked alongside each other at River Ravine Garden, and elsewhere, for the many days to follow. As I write, I remind myself of the relational commitments I made to you as a researcher, and friend, to *listen* to what guides you, and what stories you are living as a person who also practices.

Pillar of *faith*

As I come back to this relational commitment to listen I am reminded of the first day we went to River Ravine Garden together (May 24, 2016). Like the many days that followed we met in a centrally located part of the city, loaded up the vans, all the gardeners piled in and we made the thirty minute or so journey to the edges of the city where River Ravine Garden was located. On this day many introductions occurred; some involved exchanging names for the first time; others involved welcoming hugs and hearty hellos after not seeing each other over the winter months. For you, Margaret, we exchanged names before beginning the day's garden task. As the usual pattern, Clark introduced what we would be doing and guided us along. On this day we planted watermelon seeds. It seemed as if we gravitated together as we ended up at the end of the line and were placed in charge of covering the recently planted seeds with a row cover.

Over the next hour or so our conversation went back and forth with ease as we lifted the row cover over each hoop and secured the cover edges with dirt. During this time we shared our love for food and gardening, and our self-proclaimed "nerd statuses" as students. As we got about halfway down the long row you asked with a similar air of ease if I was a Christian and of my faith. I remember taking a moment before I answered. I had rarely if ever been asked such a question and I was unsure of how to respond. I reminded myself of my previous year at River Ravine Garden. During the year prior I met Johnny, an Indigenous man, who acted as an Elder,

guide, or Traditional Knowledge Holder for me during my research. Early on, as I got to know and learn beside Johnny, I learned of his strong Christian faith. As you asked me the question, "Are you Christian?" I was reminded of how Johnny was teaching me how to listen and open my heart to many teachings. As I hesitated to answer you Margaret, I pulled from my experiences with Johnny around opening my heart and listening. Taking my time I replied "…No, but I listen…" (Michael, research journal, May 24, 2016). With a certain sincerity and calmness to your voice you, Margaret, responded that you loved my response. I remember feeling much comfort in that moment knowing that doors would not be closed by my response and that we could work toward building a relational space going forward that was open to listening and co-creating a world together. Now, as I travel back to that day I am reminded of my relational commitments to you, Margaret, to not only listen but also to lovingly stretch myself to your world, and share my world with you, as our lives came together at River Ravine Garden (Lugones, 1987).

Margaret, it was during this first day at the garden that I began to learn how important your Christian faith was to you and how you live your life as a strong pillar of Christian faith. Several weeks later we sat down for our first formal research conversation (June 29, 2016). On this day we were not going to River Ravine Garden. We planned to meet at the end of your shift at the Christian-based social services agencies building where you worked as the Community Garden Facilitator Intern. We had previously agreed to go to a nearby café we both enjoyed for our conversation that would centre around drawing a visual life depiction, annal, chronicle, or type of life timeline. I had a plethora of papers, markers, pens, and pencil crayons jammed into my backpack in the hopes that it would help facilitate composing the annal. As your shift ended you came out of the building pushing your bike. The bike looked like it had been ridden many

miles with many different feet pushing its pedals and hands placed on its bars. Similarly, your shirt showed a different type of lived in wear. The floral button up blouse was of a kind not regularly seen in malls and reminded me of something given by a friend, family member, or found at a local consignment store. Your hair sat naturally well passed your shoulders, its waves unblemished by chemical products. As I remember this image of you, Margaret, I remember my nerves on that specific day.

Once we arrived at the nearby café we got a couple of drinks and found a space at a long picnic-style table. I pulled out the drawing supplies and began to explain my experiences with creating annals in the past. Without hesitation you began by drawing a cross and, as we ended our conversation nearly two hours later, you returned to the cross. You returned to the metaphor that began your sharing. You spoke to how your faith was the soil that grounds you in this world, and in this soil rise the seeds of your life and all life, and it is in that soil that you grow and are nurtured. As we began and ended around the pillar of faith, I learned of the many moments throughout your life that grounded you and were part of your faith walk. You shared how you grew up in a Christian family and of the values your father and mother introduced to you around equality, justice, and love. You shared your experiences of living in a country in West Africa as a child and the learnings you pulled from those times. You shared how at the age of nine you were baptized. At that time you deeply knew your faith was your own, and that your life purpose was orientated and focused on God. You shared moments of tension that brought you away from your core beliefs and values as you negotiated friendships as a youth. You shared more recent places that brought coherences in your life in relation to strengthening your connections with God. As you did this you shared of your time working a local café where your relations there with friends allowed you to understand what community was for you and what just practices and the shifts

that came from these encounters (i.e. plant-based diet). You also shared current places as you spoke to your schooling at a Christian-based University. As you drew and spoke, I began to hear more fully how all these moments you shared of your life were directed towards being more coherent with God. As you explained moments, I understood that no one moment was *the* moment that steadied your faith but that each, and all you do, is a continual process in search for this coherence. Over the following months I listened and sensed how being at River Ravine Garden was only on the surface a summer internship. I sensed your time at River Ravine Garden was part of your ongoing and continual process of composing coherence in how you lived you life as a strong pillar of Christian faith.

Margaret, when you asked me about my faith and in sharing your annal you opened me to the life you were living in a way that I felt I was now a part of it. As our lives continued to stay close in the months following our time at River Ravine Garden it was your words during one of our conversations (research conversation, April 31, 2017) that I kept pulling myself back to as I thought about you. As I listened to the recording and read the transcripts over and over I found myself transported back to that day where we sat together in a corner of a different café talking about the importance of faith in your life. In my listening over and over, I pull your words here to make a found poem from what you shared.

One of my gifts

Steadiness of faith

At the forefront of everything I do

It is the biggest part of my life

When I am detracted

I become lesser

I become less of who I am supposed to be

I believe in God

I believe he gives us vocations

I know that my passions come from God

That is what I know

I am able to

And want to

Be coherent in listening and being present with God

-Pillar of faith, found poem (research conversation, April 31, 2017)

As I share this poem from your words from our conversation, I return to what I wrote about in the introduction when Jodi asked me how and why I got involved at River Ravine

Garden. As I think back to Jodi's question I stretch myself to wonder how you would answer her question. As I do so, I go back to our first day at the garden (May 24, 2016). Our day was winding down at River Ravine Garden and everyone was beginning to find a seat in the van. I squeezed my way into a seat near the back of the van and began talking to the gardeners I knew. As the van skidded down the gravel roads I quietly overheard you talking with Jodi. The two of you sat in the back of the van. The bench style seating of the van allowed you to sit close as you leaned in towards each other. Your conversation was quiet, a kind of sharing of testimonies. I wonder now if she asked you a similar question to the one asked of me.

Pillar of *place*

Margaret, when I first began my research in 2015 I sat down with an Inner City Recreation and Wellness Program Coordinator to talk about the possibilities of getting involved as a researcher in some of their food-based recreation programs. As we sat down over a coffee, in a university building, he shared several projects ongoing at that time. There were two community gardens that were located in the urban centre and one garden that was more rural (i.e., River Ravine Garden). As he explained the River Ravine Garden project, I began imagining what that place would be like. The physical footprint of the garden, where it was located, the food produced and donated (over 50 000lbs of vegetables) sat in stark contrast to the many community and home gardens I had been involved with before. My gardening experiences consisted of gardening at home with my family either at my grandmother's house as a child or at the many centrally located community gardens I got involved with in Edmonton when I moved here for school. In these gardens I could easily grab a watering can, fill it from a nearby hose or rain barrel, and water the entire garden in an hour or two.

As I think of my first visit at River Ravine Garden I am reminded of the change in scenery that occurred as I stepped into the van in the urban neighbourhood with the many gardeners who consistently went out each week and drove to the garden. I shifted from buildings acting as wind blocks to overgrown bushes and trees now strategically shifting the patterns of the wind. The road went from packed asphalt to bumpier less traversed gravel roads as we got further from the highway and closer to River Ravine Garden. And as I stepped out of the van on those early days of being at River Ravine Garden, and still when I go now, I am reminded of the silence that opened my ears. There was no hum of automobiles or sirens in the background that asked me to selectively listen. When a train occasionally rolled by in the distance the gardeners all collectively took notice of the length of the train before quiet set in once again. As I think about the shift in scenery and place that occurred when I gardened at River Ravine Garden, I also think about other shifts I was imagining when I began my research with River Ravine Garden. As I travel back to those early moments when the recreation coordinator warmly welcomed my involvement at River Ravine Garden I recall my hopes that the place of River Ravine Garden would support a process where I could live the building of stronger and more respectful relations with the people who lived in the urban neighbourhood.

As I share my early imaginings of River Ravine Garden I think about yours, Margaret, and how you were introduced to the garden and what imaginings you may have had. You told me a close friend introduced you to River Ravine Garden and to the possibility of a summer internship with a Christian-based social service agency. Your friend, who I also knew from my year prior at the garden, had been involved with River Ravine Garden in a position similar to the one that you eventually began. I pull from a journal entry you wrote during the garden season

(July 1, 2016) as it best explains your early imaginings as they become entwined alongside your living at River Ravine Garden:

> Today I have been thinking about idealism in relation to the garden. The thought that has been circulating in my mind is somewhat hopeless: If not at [River Ravine Garden] then where? …[River Ravine Garden], being the enriching sanctuary that it is, cannot even block the hatefulness of blatant and/or engrained sexism and racism. I, in no way, felt "let down" by [River Ravine Garden's] inability to do this completely (for realistically, what place ever can), but more saddened and slightly hopeless. I suppose I come to [River Ravine Garden] each time with this fresh joy, this idealistic dream that all is well there. So when the first sexist or racist comment is made, my illusion is shattered. Perhaps this is a good thing. I don't want to hold on to false illusions so I may be ignorant to the truth. I would never want us at [River Ravine Garden] to pretend that it is a certain type of sanctuary that it is not, for we could be missing the incredible experience of the sanctuary that it *is*. Maybe the sanctuary that it *is* is a dynamic and vivid place, where discriminatory comments are inevitably made but quickly resolved and forgiven to continue the good work of the land and of relationships. As I write this, this vision of a sanctuary is actually more hopeful than the one I had before, because it realistically mirrors the "real world" while combining lovely and idealistic values like heartfelt forgiveness and inclusive acceptance…So then I wonder as a recreation worker of sorts, how do I help build this dynamic sanctuary vision at [River Ravine Garden]? Perhaps through listening with humility and resolving with peace. Maybe by assuring that all work done at the garden is inclusive and collaborative, and realizing the incredible uniqueness and life context of each individual, to be able to work *with* them to bring

> about equality and empowerment for themselves and in our shared relationships. I think continuing to create sanctuary at [River Ravine Garden] is both a passive and engaged affair. It involves the reworking of shared ideas and values, and the ongoing cultivation of the natural and relational beauty that already exists so vividly. (Margaret, research journal, July 1, 2016, *underline and italics* in original).

Margaret, as I began outlining this narrative account, I kept coming back to this early entry in your research journal. As I read and re-read this excerpt from your research journal, images flooded my mind of that fresh joy that sat so deeply within you as we visited River Ravine Garden each week. As I picture this, I picture you, Margaret, taking your shoes and socks off before stepping in between the rows of endless vegetables. As you stepped between the rows I remember how you always wiggled your toes and sank into the earth within those first couple of steps. I picture the many moments I turned to you as we worked within the rows of spinach. With your mouth stuffed with leafy greens, you looked at me and the other gardeners, and with the widest of smiles say, "Mon ami, my friends." I also am reminded how when I asked you of your weekend your response was that you had "spent all weekend dreaming of being back in the garden" (Michael, field texts, June 22, 2016). As I came back to that journal excerpt I am reminded of that fresh joy that you, Margaret, carried as we began each day at River Ravine Garden.

At the water well

You ask for a hand

A gardener remarks:

"Sometimes we just need a man"

I quiet

Weeks prior you shared this to me:

Turning the other cheek or offering one's cheek

Does not mean to take a hit or to be walked over

But to return a face so that they know of their un-humility

You respond to her remark

I turn the water wells knob

Feeling the release in pressure

We move forward, knowing you asked for other reasons.

-Illusions shattered and shifted puzzles#1[21]*, found poem (Michael, field texts, August 16, 2016)*

[21] Margaret, I have intentionally placed this found poem within the writing in a way that disrupts the flow of the writings. I do so as I hope to mirror how these moments came up as you experienced them at River Ravine Garden. I also hope that through their placement it shows how you continually re-strung the building of sanctuary at River Ravine Garden.

As I go back to your journal excerpt (July 1, 2016), I also think about the idealistic dream or image you had of what River Ravine Garden was and what processes it may support. As I learned in later conversations (August 8, 2016; April 31, 2017) your connection to the church nurtured roots in how you associated with gardens, and in particular River Ravine Garden. As I asked you questions (research conversation, April 31, 2017) around the relation between gardening and your faith, I was gently pulled in to a conversation around how the Bible began in a garden. You shared how gardens for you were Edenic places where things are plentiful, abundant, and perfect. You also shared the shifts that occurred in the Garden of Eden as the "real world" also became more apparent. Margaret, you described how "for [you, Margaret], being at the garden [in reference to River Ravine Garden] it just brings [you] way back to the roots of what goodness and Christianity is" (research conversation, April 31, 2017). As you shared this with me you continued to describe River Ravine Garden as a "sanctuary," in the mould of how the Kingdom of Heaven or original Garden of Eden worked. Your understanding of sanctuary was that those who have been marginalized get and have the most, while those who have been privileged, like you and myself, are prioritized after.

A verbal spat ensues

Each begins to question

The others' commitments to their faith

It quickly plays out before all our eyes

Standing with your supervisor at the end of the day

The moment comes up in conversation

Reminders that they had and were coming from thoughtful places

-Illusions shattered and shifted puzzles #2[22]*, found poem (Michael, field texts, August 12, 2016)*

While you spoke of gardens in a specific way I sensed that River Ravine Garden was a special place for you. I learned this through seeing those joyful moments of you at the garden, but also from when I asked you during one of our conversations about the two other gardens you helped facilitate in your role. You explained how "it [was] definitely different between the gardens, [River Ravine Garden and two other gardens in the urban centre], in terms of personal feelings and knowing the feelings of them [the gardens] within the community" (research conversation, August 8, 2016). As you shared this with me, you explained how one of the gardens at the nearby school was known as a "garden of disappointment" for some people as there was a history of vegetables being stolen after the many months that gardeners would diligently tend the plants. While you explained how you also loved the urban located gardens, you shared how River Ravine Garden was different in whom it served and why it started. As I began to listen more closely to what made River Ravine Garden special for you and the many gardeners who came out, you explained that:

[22] Margaret, I have intentionally placed this found poem within the writing in a way that disrupts the flow of the writings. I do so as I hope to mirror how these moments came up as you experienced them at River Ravine Garden. I also hope that through their placement it shows how you continually re-strung the building of sanctuary at River Ravine Garden.

> River Ravine Garden is cool because it is super intentional, on [the land stewards' or owners'] part, on the part of the people there, and the whole atmosphere of why it was started in the first place. It [River Ravine Garden] is about providing a space for people who maybe otherwise would not have the space to rest, to enjoy gardening, to spend time with other people, or whatever they need as a facilitation of self-care. I like to think of it [River Ravine Garden] as a sanctuary. A sanctuary can be different; it does not always have to be Notre Dame sanctuary, right? …It [River Ravine Garden] is a sanctuary because it gives the freedom for personal sanctuary for everyone and it just is a sanctuary because it intentionally provides that space…As much as it [River Ravine Garden] is a sanctuary you still have to facilitate that sanctuary and allow that to be a place for everyone and for yourself as well. I definitely feel that [River Ravine Garden] is something I am doing for other people. It does happen to pay me back too because I love it so much. (research conversation, August 8, 2016)

While I had been part of River Ravine Garden since 2015, the year prior to your arrival, the intentionality of the garden as a place for many workers, land stewards, and gardeners to connect with their faith was rarely visible to me. As I worked with you, Margaret, I felt that I began to listen in a different direction, or as Sean Lessard has explained I began looking-listening sideways (Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016). In our time together it was through the slow and intimate work of tending to the soil at River Ravine Garden where I was able to begin to look past what initially sat in my mind and notice the lessons and teachings I was not aware of at that moment. For me, that meant noticing how River Ravine Garden was a place to connect and live as a strong Christian for you, and others. As I write this I am reminded of one

moment I felt as if I was beginning to look-listen sideways, it is a moment that may also resonate for you.

It was Egon's first day at River Ravine Garden. I introduced myself early on and, as we learned each other's names, we began some of the day's garden tasks. As the day finished Egon and I walked together amongst the rows of vegetables. Most gardeners had already made their way back to the picnic tables to refill their water bottles and/or to clean up before we left. As Egon and I quietly walked down the row, he shared how the garden was calming, healing, and quiet. He shared how he could not find this in the city and how it was so hard to connect there, but here, at River Ravine Garden, "it is beautiful you can hear God" (Michael, field texts, June 10, 2016).

I remember Egon's words vividly from that day and as I do I am pulled to a conversation that you, Margaret, and I had as we reflected upon the garden season. You explained how your time at River Ravine Garden was:

> Surreal because you don't often get those experiences in a place…but the garden [in reference to River Ravine Garden] it was a place that just cultivated heaven near-ness. It just had the ability to bring that because of all the good things that were set out in order to allow justice to prevail, love to be plentiful, and good food and nutrition to be there too. That was really powerful for me and I still think about it. I would love to be able to cultivate that myself in the future. Whether that is being part of [River Ravine Garden] in another way or bringing what I learned from [River Ravine Garden] and that idea [of sanctuary] into other roles that I will have, or places I will be. (research conversation, April 31, 2017)

As I listen to the tape of our conversation and read the transcription from that day, I wonder how these experiences at River Ravine Garden temporally stretch forward with you now. I sense that River Ravine Garden is a place that sits deep within your heart; it was a place in which you described yourself as being part of the ongoing building of sanctuary.

Pillars of *practice*

Margaret, when you imagined beginning your internship with the social services agency and with River Ravine Garden as the Community Garden Facilitator you shared how you were interested in "putting what was in [your] head into play" (research conversation, August 8, 2016). As you spoke about how the internship was intentional for you in linking and supporting key pillars of practice in your life around community development, social justice, and environmental stewardship. In this section of your narrative account I speak to each pillar of your practice, knowing that each is grounded in your pillar of faith.

Living as a facilitator of community development

Margaret, you described your dad as your "bff" (best friend forever) and mentor in your life. As we talked about what community development was for you and how that pillar lived out in your life you came back to your father (research conversation, April 31, 2017). You described your father as someone who was intentional in bringing about community wherever he was, and well beyond the defined walls of the church. As you explained this to me you painted a portrait in my mind of how your father, you, and your family, went about that in your daily lives: A barbeque is organized by your father, but not organized to check the box that a monthly social event has occurred, to make himself feel good, or because he likes to barbeque. What sits in the mind and heart of your father as he facilitates the barbeque is the question, is this barbeque

actually bringing people closer together? As you described, he wonders is the barbeque supporting "the health, the social awareness of each person, the growth of each person, and the developing of networks for when people are ill or unwell that there is actually support" (research conversation, April 31, 2017). As he walks around the barbeque conversing with people, I have this portrait in my mind of your father as a facilitator of caring and more loving communal relations. As this image of your father facilitating a barbeque based in the ideal that all should be nourished, cared for, and met where they are, I picture you, Margaret, living these teachings as you facilitated relations at River Ravine Garden. As you shared experiences alongside your father you described how you "don't think programs should be implemented for the sake of saying they are implemented, but that they are actually helpful and they are actually bringing people closer together" (research conversation, April 31, 2017).

I sensed you carried your father's teachings as you lived your life as a person who practiced at River Ravine Garden. It was his teachings, and your being as a strong Christian person that asked you to think about River Ravine Garden and gardening differently, as a place where people come together to build stronger relations. Margaret you wrote of this:

> Last Friday, I recently realized, was the first time that I felt as though community members of the [social service agency] were coming out to [River Ravine Garden] not to garden per se (or as a priority) but to spend time with me and the others. Although I am sure the garden as a living organism of peace was still in all of our minds, I remembered that the garden is also a tool for enabling conversations and building community. Somehow it's easier to express thoughts (especially troubled thoughts) when your hands are busy weeding carrots and the only possible interruption is the potential impending thunderstorm. (Margaret, research journal, June 21, 2016)

Margaret, while you had a clear love for the activity and process of gardening, as did many of the gardeners who came out, there was the deeper thread of building relations and supporting one another that often brought people, including you, back to River Ravine Garden. Like your father you understood the relevancy of the garden as tied to its ability to strengthen the lives of the people and relations within it. As you lived your father's teachings around community development you understood your role at River Ravine Garden not so much in terms of coordinating a garden or a recreation program, but as a facilitator of loving and caring relationships with people and the land in a specific place.

Living social justice and knowing privilege

As we sat down during our first conversation (June, 29, 2016) and you drew your annal, I learned that you had spent five years living in a country in West Africa as a child. You described these early years of your life as shaping how you understood poverty, race, and cultural differences. It was in a later conversation that I learned just how much your experiences in West Africa had shaped you. As we talked about how you negotiated power imbalances in your role at River Ravine Garden you came back to your time in Africa and shared with me:

> Because of my time in Africa I have become very very aware of my whiteness, my own whiteness, and that being a dominant power thing… that [your whiteness] is one of the first things that jumps to my mind as I think about power imbalance as it was something that was so real for me. When I was living over there I experienced a sense of me having a lot of privilege and also being treated like an alien. Being a little preschool kid no one wanted to play with me because I was white. People had never seen a white kid before and they were like what is this thing. So I just played by myself. Things like that have

> obviously shaped me and gave me a very aware, maybe hyper aware, sense of that side of my privilege. (research conversation, August 8, 2016)

As I travelled with you to your early learnings as a child living in a country in West Africa I felt you carried forward these experiences to your practice at River Ravine Garden. You were wakeful to your difference, and you were also wakeful to how the people you were working alongside now who lived in the urban area were oppressed based on their difference. As I worked alongside you at River Ravine Garden it was the small gestures and interactions that I remember most in terms of how you, Margaret, looked beyond deficit labels that were often placed upon people to see everyone as equal and with loving eyes. I am reminded how you documented who was in the van as we made our way from the urban neighbourhood to River Ravine Garden each week. As we all piled into the van, you took a quick look around counting the number of people and gently announce "5 friends" or "5 gardeners" before jotting that into your logbook.

These words and labels of who you were, who I was, and who the community members were, mattered to you, for you we were all gardeners and friends. To you I was Michael the gardener and friend, and while you also knew me as a researcher and PhD student, you and I opened the door for possibilities to know each other beyond labels that were commonly tied to who we were. You intentionally wanted to know about each person, and where they were in their life journeys. As you lived beyond labels when building relationships, you also explained how it was "weird to live in between" as you negotiated who you were in the community (research conversation, August 8, 2016). As you said this on that day, I think now towards how you negotiated living beyond the label of your position and how I named you in my research (i.e., recreation practitioner). You lived "in between" as a friend, gardener, learner, facilitator, and

person of faith in ways that intentionally shifted how you interacted and who you were at River Ravine Garden. What follows is a moment in which you, I, and a gardener went for a walk in the woods and I noticed how you went about travelling with loving eyes and living beyond predetermined labels in your relations (Michael, research journal, August 12, 2016).

Although her skin tone often diminished her story, Suzanne was a woman who self identified as Indigenous. I often accompanied her when she went for walks into the old growth forest over the years and I quickly learned these were healing walks. As we stepped from that defined boundary of the garden's edge into the overgrown forest, Suzanne's voice often changed. As we stepped into the bush, as Suzanne so affectionately named it, she reminded me that the trail in would always be marked by Mary, or her Grandmothers. As Suzanne said this she bent down and, with a small paring knife in hand, cut the stem of a marigold. As we went deeper into the bush I learned more and more as we foraged. Suzanne shared stories of her family and, at times, I felt as if she was talking to me as if I was her son. In those moments I felt as if I was her son. While I knew of her and our relation in this way, she was also known as "a disruptor or nuisance." Prior to your arrival she had been asked to not partake in activities organized by the social services agency you worked with and from my conversations with you, Margaret, you knew her from these stories. One day Suzanne came to River Ravine Garden with a different group and you, her, and I went for a walk in the bush together. I vividly remember this one moment as we slowly made our way back to the garden after sitting by the river. Suzanne began identifying plants, and told of how she foraged to make tea, to heal and cleanse. Margaret, when you asked her about rose hips, she began to share more. In that moment I felt as if she spoke to you as a daughter, and, as she did, I felt you listening deeply to her as you travelled to her world. As we reentered the edges of the garden I remember the quiet that sat between the three of us.

You asked that I take a picture of you as we moved from the covered bush into the clearing that was River Ravine Garden. I am not sure why you asked me to take the picture on that day and in that moment, but I suspected that you, like I, felt something meaningful occurred. While that moment was captured in an image, what has become captured in my mind is the reminder that living socially just relations for you, Margaret, meant that, "everyone deserves to be noticed, cared for, and nourished" (research conversation, April 31, 2017).

Living as an environmental steward

The other day

My dad asked

Where, when, and why

I became so passionate about environmental stuff

Even so far to go to school for it

I am not sure when, where, and how that all happened

I know that it came from God

(research conversation, August 8, 2016)

Environmental stewardship

Sometimes it's hard to explain to others within my faith circles

Even my brother asked

Why would you care when people are starving?

I just see our world as so interconnected

People are starving because

Of drought, unsustainable farming practices, topsoil being destroyed, carbon emissions

To say that not caring for the environment

Is not an inherent part of communities being destroyed

Or social justice not being implemented

It's insane

I just think there is an inherent need for creation to be cared for.

God has given me a gift

Of understanding how to care for the planet

The planet itself is good as God in the beginning said it was good

We are to steward it as if it is good and not destroy it

I just have that real love for creation

I see how it intersects with my faith

I love the earth because I love God.

(research conversation, April 31, 2017)

I am struck between the connection between people and the land

Experienced at River Ravine Garden

This refuge and revitalization

Not only intended to be received by the gardeners

But re-gifted to the earth itself

It is a collaborative and living project

Between the gardeners and the earth

We work and breathe life into the garden

And it works and breathes life into us.

(Margaret, research journal, June 21, 2016)

Margaret, as I stitched together these poems from words and written accounts from our time together I am reminded how important it was for you to steward good relations with the earth, and thus your creator. I sensed that being at River Ravine Garden was special in that it was a place in which those thoughts you had hoped to put into practice, came to fruition. As you, Margaret, gardened alongside the many gardeners who came to River Ravine Garden I felt that the living of reciprocity and stewardship through gardening (being cared by while at the same time caring for the land) stretched metaphorically inward to warm your heart. Those experiences, as you explained many months after being in the garden (research conversation, April 31, 2017),

continued to replay in your mind as you looked to facilitate this type of sanctuary elsewhere, where just community development not only resided in the care for people but in the care for the earth.

Words that should be shared with you…

Margaret, as I end this narrative account I want to share some words that I believe should be shared with you. They were words that were shared with me during a day at River Ravine Garden (June, 17, 2016). It was nearing the end of our day at the garden and a group of us made our way to the multiple rows of spinach. You, Margaret, informed us that the social services agency had asked for several pounds of spinach for that evening. By this time the spinach was in full growth as leaves spewed out the edges of the neat rows. With knife in hand I hastily grabbed a large handful of spinach and cut a couple inches above the roots before passing the handful to one of the other gardeners to bag. I quickly moved along, cutting handful after handful, hoping to fill the large clear garbage bag to the brim. As I hastily cut handful after handful I did not mind seeing a couple leaves be left behind as scraps. With the large bag full and the quota met the group begins walking back to put the spinach in the van. As I walk with the group back to the van we notice that you are still in the row where we had first begun cutting the spinach. Margaret, you were crouched down with your reusable mesh bag in hand, and were slowly making your way up the row collecting all the spinach leaves that we missed. As I looked to another gardener, he remarked to me that we "need more people like her [you, Margaret] in the world" (Michael, researcher journal, June, 17, 2016).

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PAPER 2

A narrative inquiry into becoming attentive to relational ethics in recreation practice

A version of this chapter will be submitted as: Dubnewick, M. J., Lessard, S., Clandinin, D. J., & McHugh, T. -L. A narrative inquiry into becoming attentive to relational ethics in recreation practice.

Abstract

This article narratively inquires into the experiences of the first author and two recreation practitioners he worked alongside as they became wakeful to their relations as non-Indigenous people living alongside Indigenous peoples in a community garden project. The experiences shared highlight how they negotiated notions of professional competence tied to outcomes of programming, and how such narrow stories silenced the relational aspects of their practice. By inquiring into the experiences of each recreation practitioner, the purpose of this inquiry is to show how they made sense of living ethically in the field as a relational practice and how that shifted their relations in a community garden project.

Keywords: *Relational ethics; Ethical space; non-Indigenous and Indigenous relations; Recreation programming; Narrative inquiry*

Introduction: Locating the research in Michael's shifting stories of experience

As I picked up the debris left behind from the harvest, I made my way to the empty rows in the garden to put their nutrients back in the soil. Immediately as I hit the empty row I began scattering my harvested stalks among the many dried ones lying in the dirt. In near disappointment Johnny, also carrying debris in hand, looked to me and said, "Don't be lazy." At that moment I did not think I was doing too much wrong, surely the land steward/farmer would be around later with his machinery to spread them down what seemed like endless amounts of long empty rows. As I looked up, Johnny was now a good forty to fifty feet ahead of me. Slowly he began unraveling the garden debris he was carrying. One-by-one he ripped off pieces and threw them to the soil where no previous garden matter was placed or to where footmarks led. As I walked to catch up with my dwindled pile in hand I heard him say in the distance "This soil needs and deserves love and care too—it all does." I thought back to the moment where I dropped my debris at the beginning of the row and how much care and resources were already there, their nutrients already slowly seeping in to the soil. Yet I did not look up to see the vast land that sat empty in front of me, invisible to me and uncared for by many. Rather, I rested on the assumption that others and the resources in place would later distribute the garden matter where it needed to be. Yet here was an Indigenous community member who was currently without a home, at least a home in they way I knew of one, walking down the long rows making sure all the land was cared for and loved. I followed with garden debris in hand scattering the teachings and nutrients to the land that was once dormant to me, now wondering what else I may have missed. (Michael, field text, June 29, 2015)

To begin this writing we, the authors, want to locate this work in the puzzles Michael was living as a non-Indigenous researcher-practitioner as he began his research living alongside two recreation practitioners in a community garden project. To do this, we think with a teaching as Michael gardened alongside Johnny, a Traditional Knowledge Holder or guide in Michael's research at River Ravine Garden[23]. As Michael thinks with this teaching he is transported back three years prior to when he first became involved in several community garden projects within the city. One of which (Circle garden) was located near the city centre where a high proportion of Indigenous peoples live.

As Michael metaphorically transports himself back to those early interactions he is reminded of how he lived the plotline of gardener-in-residence. He is reminded of his entanglement between being a "competent" recreation practitioner and living productive rhythms that directed his attention toward the technical aspects of diligently managing a garden (Dubnewick, 2016). He is reminded of his inability to lovingly "world-travel" in that time and place (Lugones, 1987), while at the same time feeling as if his productive presence did no harm. The single story (Adichie, 2009) that Michael had lived and told[24] was that of a content/activity deliverer (i.e., gardening) of predetermined outcomes (Galipeau & Giles, 2014). Within this privileged position Michael acknowledges that he did not always wonder with the people and wonder who he was and who he was becoming together with the people in the community. Nor

[23] Pseudonyms are used throughout. River Ravine Garden is a rurally located 5-acre garden organized by the land owners and several social services agencies.

[24] Clandinin (2013) explained that in narrative inquiry the concepts of living, telling, retelling, and reliving have particular meanings. Clandinin stated that, "We understand that people *live* out stories and *tell* stories of their living. Narrative inquirers come alongside participants…we call this process of coming alongside participants and then inquiring into the lived and told stories *retelling* stories. Because we see that we are changed as we retell our lived and told stories, we may begin to *relive* our stories" (p. 34).

was he wakeful to how his presence, even after leaving, left marks on that landscape. The silences and disjuncture between Michael, the recreation practitioner, and the many people in the community was a field text in itself that reflected the historical and ongoing reverberations of colonialism that placed the relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples as always in the making. As Michael is reminded of how he passed through the urban community at that time, he feels dis-ease (Lugones, 1987) in this moment as he travels back to how he remembers himself in that world. In Johnny's words to Michael to not be lazy and open himself to different relational responsibilities, Michael was reminded of the dis-ease of past experiences and his hopes for living otherwise as a recreation practitioner.

Okri's (1997) work reminds us that Michael was (then and now) living in stories. He was living in stories that emphasized how community gardening could support the health and wellbeing of communities through better access to foods (Corrigan, 2011; Mundel & Chapman, 2010). He was living in stories that placed urban gardening as a sustainable practice (Holland, 2004). He was living in stories that highlighted how communal gardening can grow community (Glover, Parry, & Shinew, 2005). As Michael lived on the Circle and River Ravine landscape he lived within these aforementioned plotlines—he felt it in his movements, which (at times) were in complete disregard to his relational responsibilities and may have mirrored colonial practices that situated the white settler in a hierarchical position to Indigenous peoples. In many ways Michael's involvement with Circle and River Ravine Garden was predicated upon what Rifkin (2013) described as *settler common sense*, which he described as:

> The apparent absence of struggle among incommensurate claims to sovereignty over one's space of occupancy, and an attendant impression of one's dwelling in that place as itself having no inherent political dimension or as not conditioned on state action,

> provides nonnatives with a "ready made" background against which to register opportunities for agency and for interactions with their surroundings. (p. 14)

The assumed benefits of recreation and gardening (McNamee, Sheridan, & Buswell, 2000) served to obscure the *active involvement* and *daily formative ways* of colonial occupancy and what relational responsibilities sat in Michael's view (Rifkin, 2013). As Michael comes back to that moment with Johnny he is reminded of the story he was living, and living in. It was a fast, efficient story, predicated on getting stuff done, and ensuring the outcomes for the day and overall garden program were being met. As Johnny asked Michael to look up from his dwindling pile, Michael now lives with the story as a reminder to think about what matters as he lives the role of recreation researcher-practitioner. For Johnny, what mattered was that all his relations were fully cared for. For Michael, now, those teachings are part of his story of what matters as a recreation researcher-practitioner.

The reason we, the authors, shift back to this tenuous relation is not to paint a grief-stricken portrait of someone who has noticed his harms and is/has learnt from them (Smith 2014). Rather, it is to share fears and hopes of engaging in what it means to be alongside and live in relationally ethical ways as Michael looks to be more coherent in his present and future as living with an ethics of care as a practitioner-researcher-person (Carr, 1986; Noddings, 1984). As we come back to Johnny's teaching around love and care with garden debris, Michael is reminded of Bateson's (1994) work which prompts the reader to soften their gaze to notice what is at the edges or peripheries of their vision. In many ways as Johnny asked Michael to look up to the vast land before him, Johnny was reminding Michael to soften his gaze, shift his attention, and notice what was on the edges of his view. As Michael stood with dwindled debris in hand he was asked to think about his pace or *settler common sense*. As he did so he wondered if he was

attentive and wakeful to the ongoing lives of the people he was gardening alongside and the land he was in relation with.

Living in relationally ethical ways: What do we mean by this?

As we think with Michael's story alongside Johnny, it prompts us to slow down and think about what it means for Michael to live in relationally ethical ways as person who practices in recreation work in community gardens. As Lovelock (2017) explained, discussions around ethics in recreation and leisure studies have always occurred but they have often been implicit in how academics study and think about programming. Within this silent undercurrent of ethics in the field of leisure, the focus has primarily been around maximizing opportunities for recreation and leisure, and ensuring that benefits of recreation are obtained through practitioner competence (Parr & Lashua, 2004; Rossman & Schlatter, 2008). While our desire is not to discredit the value of thinking ethically about issues of access, participation, and professional competence, we do hope to make clear this is not the only way to think ethically about recreation practice nor is it how we situate our work. Similar to Estefan, Caine, and Clandinin (2016) we feel tensions around how the lives of practitioners and participants are attended to when the narrow focus on the technical aspects of practice (e.g., professional competence and programming outcomes) silences the relational aspects of practice (i.e., narrative experiences of whole lives, personal and professional, coming together with an attention to who we are and how both lives are shaped in the encounter). Thus, when we come to the question of what does it mean to live in relationally ethical ways as a recreation practitioner, our direction shifts towards the relationships between people, and the responsiveness that occurs in these encounters as two or more lives come together in the meeting place of a recreation program.

Our thinking about what it means to live in relationally ethical ways is theoretically tied to the methodological commitments of narrative inquiry as outlined by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Early on in their work, Connelly and Clandinin (1988) highlighted how the fundamental ethical issues they experienced in research differed from what concerned university ethics boards. As they developed close relationships with teachers and practitioners they drew on MacIntyre's (1981) concept of narrative unity as a way to speak about the ethical responsibilities that occur when lives intertwine. Over time further clarifications occurred in narrative inquiry about what is meant by living in relationally ethical ways. As Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) wrote:

> Sometimes when we speak of relational ethics, our audiences understand what we mean as only the relational between inquirer and participant, something that can be understood by the term "relationship." Indeed this is part of what we mean. However it is only part of what we mean by a relational ethics in narrative inquiry. To speak of the relational as somehow equivalent to a relationship between persons is not enough. By using the term "relational" we stretch past the relationship, not excluding the individual relationship but including it within the relational, to encompass questions of ontology, a way of understanding what and how we know is always dependent on the ways that knowledge and knower are deeply contextual, always embedded one with the other. Such a relational ontology requires that we undertake research with an understanding of relational ethics that call us to larger questions of who we are in relation with participants but also who we are in relation with the larger world or worlds that people, including us as researchers, inhabit. (p. 20)

While Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) conceptualized relational ethics within the methodological commitments of narrative inquiry, we believe that their understanding of ethics also has value in recreation practice as practitioners negotiate who they are as their lives intertwine with those of the people they work with.

This understanding of living ethically builds on the work of Bergum and Dossetor (2005) who described relational ethics as a:

> Practice ethic [that] looks at the way persons *are* with one another in various roles: as healthcare practitioner, patient, team member, teacher, student, parent, neighbor, as well as friend. Such a focus attends to both who one is, as well as what one is and what one does, as we live ethical action moment by moment. (p. 3, *emphasis in original*).

As Bergum and Doessetor explained, these relational in-between[25] spaces, where we ask who we are with each other, act as fundamental ingredients for which ethical knowledge and understanding is developed. It is important to note that relational ethics deviates from normative ethical theories that focus on universal principles of right/wrong actions/responses, to the "notion that relationships are the location for ethical action, and thus are the source of ethical questions and concerns as well as ethical understandings" (Bergum & Dossetor, p. 7). As we state this we want to make clear that this writing is not to provide a prescriptive approach around how to design, implement, and live out ethical recreation programs. Rather, our wonders sit in the relations between people and the land as we each learn to live relational ethics in practice. By

[25] Caine et al. (2013) describe this relational in-between space as a place composed between people where we can discover new ways of knowing and being. This space in narrative inquiry is necessitated upon the acknowledgement of interdependence so that we, as researchers and practitioners, can wonder with "sensitivity to the conditions around which we *become with* each other" (p. 580).

sharing these experiences we hope this work supports not only the authors and the participants ongoing learning around how to live relational ethics in practice, but also prompts you, the reader, to inquire into what living ethically means for your in your practice.

While we state this conceptually, Michael's puzzles around living relational ethics in practice came from his early childhood experiences alongside his father. As Michael writes this he is drawn back to his familial experiences as a way to provide a more whole understanding of who he was as he was becoming alongside Johnny and the two recreation practitioners, Clark and Margaret, who were part of his study at River Ravine Garden. It was Michael's family who first taught him to be attentive to his relations in mutually responsive ways. Stretching back to his early childhood he recalls moments of disruption when his knowing of another person was asked and/or forced to shift. Michael thinks back to the multiple occasions in his childhood where he saw his father care for a close family member as they struggled with addictions, seemingly never leaving their side, nor ever placing them as a person needing-to-be-fixed. Michael remembers how those lessons on how to care and be with someone continued to live within him as he sat by his father in similar ways as his father struggled with his own mental health before the end of his life. These early experiences shaped how Michael understands relational ethics as (1) an everyday practice, (2) grounded in commitment to being with, (3) attentive to the wholeness of a person, and (4) knowing that we (ourselves and others) are always in the midst of becoming. In the years Michael lived alongside his father he was reminded that if he can suspend his judgments as he sits quietly with the people he cares for (i.e., a family member or a program participant) he may be able to know more of their worlds, and how they co-compose each other's worlds (Lugones, 1987). Michael also learned that if he came with arrogant eyes and perceived someone as a person in-need-of-fixing, he could no longer see the

wholeness of who they were or who he was, as both identities became fixed, slotted, and known (Steeves, 2006).

The sentiment of attending to relations between people as the place of ethical action is not a new thought. Scholars have long spoken to the necessity of being accountable to your relations in research and practice (Bergum & Dossetor, 2005; Clandinin, Caine, & Huber, 2016; Coles, 1989; Lugones, 1987; Noddings, 1984; Sarris, 1993). Caine and Lessard (in Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, & Huber, 2016) shared two examples of how relational approaches often sit in tension to interventionist (or technical) approaches that begin with problems and outcomes in mind. Lessard described his negotiations around the pressures to "just get started" on a fix-and-serve wellness program for Aboriginal youth. While Caine described how she navigated a research relationship with a community service agency that was looking to create a program to interrupt the sexual exploitation of youth. In each project, both researchers bumped up against how they were positioned as expert knowledge holders and how the participants they would be working with would be positioned as fixed subjects with no input to intervention. For both researchers, the relational responsibilities to begin with and listen to the youth took precedence. As previously stated, this co-composition and moving forward alongside participants would not be possible if interventionist stories guided the relational space between practitioners and participants. From this vantage, ethical knowledge and ethical ways forward do not precede the encounter rather it is developed in relationships.

As we write about relational ethics we understand the power of our sharing is not in the telling of what it is, but in the showing of how recreation practitioners lived their lives as they engaged with who they were, and who they were becoming, as they became in relation to the people and places within which they worked. By sharing experiences, the purpose of this writing

is to support people (practitioners and researchers) as they learn to live relational ethics in practice. Prior to shifting our attention to the experiences of Michael living alongside Clark and Margaret, we share how our positioning as narrative inquirers shaped our research project.

Relational commitments as narrative inquirers

This writing is a narrative inquiry (as defined by Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) into the experiences of two recreation practitioners[26] as they facilitated a community garden program in a large urban centre. As part of this research, Michael located himself in the field over two garden seasons (May to September 2015 and 2016). During Michael's first year at River Ravine Garden he resided in the garden twice a week for about four to six hours each visit. For Michael, this time was instrumental to build relationships with community members and the many social services agencies and workers involved with River Ravine Garden (see Blodgett et al., 2010; Scherer, Koch, & Holt, 2016 for further discussion on relationship building in recreation/sport). By residing in the garden over this time, Michael was better able to hear and feel not only how he was living questions of what it meant to live ethically as a researcher-practitioner, but he also began to wonder how other practitioners negotiate their practice. At the beginning of Michael's second season at River Ravine Garden his attention shifted from inquiring into his own experiences[27] to narratively inquiring into the experiences of two early-career recreation practitioners, Clark and Margaret, who were part River Ravine Garden. During this time Michael

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[26] Both recreation practitioners were enrolled as undergraduate students at the beginning of this research. Clark's involvement with the program was part of his practicum requirements for his degree. Margaret's involvement was as a summer student intern with a local faith-based social service agency.

[27] As Dubnewick, Clandinin, Lessard, & McHugh (2018) explained, in narrative inquiry, narrative beginnings are the beginning of the self-facing that keep researchers asking who we are in our study to support a process in which we may live in more wakeful ways alongside our participants.

continued to be involved in the garden on a weekly basis as a researcher-practitioner. He wrote field notes (data) through detailed research journals, and he had informal and formal recorded conversations[28] with Margaret and Clark. Participants also wrote weekly journals of their own experiences. From these varied field texts, narrative accounts were negotiated with each participant. Narrative accounting is a process of writing that allows the researcher to give an account of the "unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they became visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132). Following the writing of narrative accounts, Michael shared and negotiated the accounts with Margaret and Clark. As he sat down with each participant, Michael worked towards building a sense of mutuality in the text (and relation) as he asked if the accounts comfortably represented who they were and who they were becoming as Michael and their lives came together. What follows is a weaving of Clark and Margaret's experiences in relation to Michael's research wonders around how practitioners negotiate living in relationally ethical ways when working alongside Indigenous peoples in recreation programs.

While we, the authors, state that this writing narratively inquires into the experiences of two participants we are reminded of the teachings that Coles (1989) outlined as he sat alongside his mentor Dr. Ludwig. In sitting with Dr. Ludwig, Coles (1989) was continually reminded that as "active listeners we give shape to what we hear, make over their [participants'] stories into something of our own" (p. 19). As narrative inquirers, we come back to these words knowing that our research is less about objectively describing the experiences of the two recreation practitioners and more around inquiring into how their lives intertwined with that of Michael's as each shaped wonders around how to live out ethical relations with the people they gardened

[28] Informal and formal research conversations occurred through the 2016 garden season and continued into early 2018.

alongside. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explained, narrative inquiry is a relational research methodology in which our work is not a study of the other, but a study of the experience of researcher and participant in relation. Our methodological commitments as narrative inquirers is directed towards a relational knowing and being, where the intertwining of lives sits at the heart of the inquiry (Caine, Estefan, & Clandinin, 2013). With that, we shift to thinking with the stories (Morris, 2002) of Clark and Margaret.

Moments of becoming attentive to ethical space in recreation practice

Clark's narrative account[29]: Passing and shifting stories

Clark, you explained that your knowing of the community you worked with was through the few times that you and your father drove through the streets of the inner city as a youth, and you saw glimpses of the people and what the place was like. You explained how in these glimpses you remembered seeing people on the streets without homes, bottles on the ground, shopping carts on corners, and generally a different level of maintenance to the neighbourhood. When we sat down together, you remarked how when you passed through the neighbourhood as a youth that "it was interesting it was always the same individuals, I mean the same culture, same group of people that (in reference to Indigenous peoples)… yeah, that, were always so…I mean, but I never questioned it [at that time]" (Clark, research conversation, November, 2, 2016). As you shared your stories with me of passing through inner city places I was again transported back to my own experiences with inner city places. I too rarely ventured to inner city places throughout my life. As a child growing up in Calgary, I recall my father driving us

[29] What follows is a brief passage from Clark's larger narrative account. These accounts were written to the participants and this is reflected in writing style.

through downtown east village as we made our way to the zoo or Chinatown. I remember seeing many people on the streets with shelters that looked much different than the home in which I lived. I also remember when my family would bike along the Bow River, we would cross the bridge to be on the other side of river when we neared the part of Calgary that was storied in similar ways to the neighbourhood you worked in.

As we talked further about your relation with the inner city, you shared two particular shifting moments with me. One you had shared with me at River Ravine Garden (Michael, research journal, June 17, 2016) many months prior to this recorded conversation (November, 2, 2016); however, it came up in both conversations. When you first shared this moment we were quietly weeding together and talking about the many gardeners and people we were getting to know. You began to share one particular encounter you recently had in the inner city with an Indigenous man. You spoke to how you intentionally took time to sit with this man you met on the street playing piano. He shared parts of his life, of losing his parents at a young age, of foster homes, and of residential schools. The second moment occurred earlier in the garden season, in your journal you wrote:

> *Friday afternoon was the annual homeless memorial for the 15 women and 35 men that passed away in 2015. Although several members of the attendees at the memorial were staff and dignitaries, there was also a good turnout of community members as well. As I looked around the tear filled room, while a woman sang Amazing Grace, I saw community members consoling one another. I witnessed this once again while the piper for the Police Service played Amazing Grace during the placing of single roses at the homeless memorial statue in front of the*

> *building. It was then that I realized how strong some of the bonds between community members were and just how vital these relationships were in providing the much needed support and understanding amongst each other. (Clark, research journal, May 16, 2016)*

As your practicum progressed, and even as we sat down after the garden season was over, these moments were vital for you as you were shifting how you viewed the inner city and the people who resided there. You explained that these interactions with people who lived and worked in the inner city as vital not only towards the way you think, but also the way you "want to think, and the way [you] want to see" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). As I lived alongside you over the many days, months, and years to follow I began to notice how you were retelling a story of yourself as a recreation practitioner/person who wanted to live and connect beyond passing labels of places and people. This story of yourself as a person willing to listen and re-story passed down stories allowed you to sit at ease with the Indigenous man playing piano and see the strong bonds that are woven in the urban neighbourhood during the annual homeless memorial.

As Michael and Clark's lives intertwined over the garden season, and the many months that followed, they often puzzled over what Michael would now call *passing stories*. Passing stories are the institutional, societal, and familial stories that were passed down to them. They are stories often shared from a distance and filled with settler common sense (Rifkin, 2013). They do not come from lived experience and are not co-composed in relation, they are stories that are lived and told *in-passing* of an other (person and place). Passing stories come from glimpses out of car windows as a child and they come from glimpses on bikes from the other side of the river.

In certain places and times these glimpses or passing stories pass as acceptable and are unquestioned, even in their partiality. As Clark and Michael shared of their lives they both were troubled with how such stories and knowledge passed and lived within them. They were troubled with how these passing stories shaped how they lived in relation with the people in the community.

As Clark began working in the community during his practicum he shared many tensions to his early engagements there. The smells, the sights, and sounds of working in the urban core often brought him dis-ease (Lugones, 1987) as he travelled to that place. Clark also explained his dis-ease in his ability to work beyond the partial stories that were passed down and lived within him. As Clark explained he wanted to dwell in, and know, different and more complex stories. As Clark worked towards this openness in shifting the stories he was living and telling he shared more whole stories of himself with Michael. As Michael listened he learned stories of Clark's childhood and how his father's teachings and his early glimpses shaped how he initially imagined his identity and relations with people in the community. As Michael listened, he began to feel Clark's tensions beyond just a professional identity of recreation practitioner charged with implementing a garden program. He began to learn of Clark as a father, son, and as a person who hoped to shift stories in his family. As Michael listened, he began to hear what questions Clark was living as he wondered how to speak with his dad about the societal teachings that he lived, knew, and passed on.

As Michael listened to stories that stretched back in Clark's life he also learned of stories that stretched forward. Clark talked about his daughter and what experiences he was sharing with her. Clark shared how he hoped his daughter would have more complex understandings of Indigenous-settler relations and urban neighborhoods, beyond the stories he had once been told.

The stories that once passed in Clark's life about the neighbourhood he worked within and the people who lived there no longer passed as his life became enmeshed with the lives of people at River Ravine Garden. For Clark, what mattered now in his work was knowing and thinking about "WHO [he] was working with" (Clark, research journal, June 13, 2016, capitals in original). As Clark explained months after the gardening season at River Ravine Garden, "It was the friendship…definitely the food is a big component of [the garden program], but, in the end it all comes down to those social interactions, those relationships, those friendships" (Clark, research conversation, November 2, 2016). As Michael sat with Clark months after his practicum, he was attentive to how Clark became, and was becoming, someone different in the lives of gardeners, his family, and in his own life. As I think about Clark's shifts, I think about the words of Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) who commented on their own shifting relationships as they worked alongside Aboriginal youth:

> We were attentive to how we had become otherwise in the stories of the youth. We had become characters in their stories, not researchers who knew them only within the context of a research project, but they now knew us as people in their lives, characters in the stories they told about their lives, about who they were and were becoming. And we recognized they too had become people in our lives, characters in the stories we told of being and becoming researchers. We became awakened in new more palpable ways to these shifting relationships…We recognized that we became, are becoming, someone different, someone otherwise, in the lives of participants and in our lives. We know relational ethics in an embodied sense when we feel, as Basso (1996) helped us see, the participants and their stories are working on us now, are changing us. (p. 183)

Much like the experiences of Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard, I sensed that Clark's experiences at River Ravine Garden were working on him and changing him. He was a different someone in the lives of gardeners and his own than when his position at River Ravine Garden had initially begun. As I state this I am reminded of how Clark was more than just another summer recreation intern in the lives of many of the gardeners. Clark was a friend to many of them, and was a person they needed to receive a hug from on his last days of working at River Ravine Garden. It was in these moments of giving and receiving hugs, of sitting alongside a man playing piano, of taking part in the annual homeless memorial that Clark learned to shift passing labels of who he was and was becoming alongside the people he worked. As I think with how Clark was learning to be and become a recreation practitioner, I also think towards how Clark was/is a character in my life of being and becoming a caring researcher-practitioner.

Margaret's narrative account[30]: A kind of sharing of testimonies

> *It was a couple weeks into the garden season (Michael, research journal, June 14, 2016) and by this time I (Michael) had gardened alongside Jodi, an Indigenous gardener, for several garden days in a row. She had shared where she was from, about her family, of leaving her community, and of moments in her life. Our growing comfort in being with one another often lead to us making jokes as we moved between more intimate conversation and garden tasks. By this time I was accustomed to hearing her words, "I am with him" after Clark, the Garden Activities coordinator, shared what garden tasks needed to be done for the day.*

[30] What follows is a brief passage from Margaret's larger narrative account. These accounts were written to the participants and this is reflected in writing style.

This day was no different (June 14, 2016) Clark gathered us and explained we would be planting cucumber seeds. Seconds after Clark's explanation Jodi chose to work with me. As things quieted down Jodi asked me how and why I got involved at River Ravine Garden with my research. Before I answered she asked, "Is your family rich? Did they donate? Are you Christian?" I was taken aback by the questions. I had shared parts of my life with her, shaped primarily around my experiences as a student and a researcher. Now, faced with her questions, I, rather ineloquently, began to explain more of myself beyond just my researcher identity. Jodi did not say much as I spoke and as we slowly continued to plant our cucumber seeds. I continued to share stories of my family, of gardening and food at home, and of my father's passing and how gardening often brought me back to those familial relations and practices.

As I sit here now, many months removed from that day planting cucumber seeds with Jodi at River Ravine Garden I think about you, Margaret. I think about how you asked me a similar question of the first day we met (May 24, 2016). As we got about halfway down the long row you asked with a similar air of ease if I was a Christian and of my faith. I remember taking a moment before I answered. I reminded myself of my previous year at River Ravine Garden. During the year prior I met Johnny, an Indigenous man, who acted as a guide or Traditional Knowledge Holder for me during my research. Early on, as I got to learn beside Johnny, I learned of his strong Christian faith. As you asked me the question, "Are you Christian?" I was reminded of how Johnny was teaching me how to listen and open my heart to many teachings. As I hesitated to answer you Margaret, I pulled from my experiences with Johnny around opening my heart and listening. Taking my time I replied "…No, but I listen…" (Michael, research

journal, May 24, 2016). Margaret, it was during this first day at River Ravine Garden that I began to learn how important your Christian faith was to you and how you live your life as a strong pillar of Christian faith.

As I share this moment from our conversation I return to what I wrote about in the introduction when Jodi asked me how and why I got involved at River Ravine Garden. As I think back to Jodi's question I stretch myself to wonder how you would answer her question. As I do so, I go back to our first day at the garden (May 24, 2016). Our day was winding down at River Ravine Garden and everyone was beginning to find a seat in the van. I squeezed my way into a seat near the back of the van and began talking with some of the gardeners. As the van skidded down the gravel roads I overheard you talking with Jodi. The two of you sat in the back of the van. The bench style seating of the van allowed you to sit close as you leaned in towards each other. Your conversation was quiet, a kind of sharing of testimonies. I wonder now if she asked you a similar question to the one asked of me.

"Are you Christian?" These were words asked of Michael by both Margaret and Jodi as he lived his research at River Ravine Garden. As Michael metaphorically transports himself back to these moments he now wonders how important such questions were for opening a conversational space where each of us could continually ask who we were and were becoming. They were questions that asked him who he was, what guided his relation, and how they may be and become together at River Ravine Garden. In his relation with Jodi, Michael felt compelled to share, in his relation with Margaret he felt compelled to listen. As Michael listened to Margaret he quickly learned how Margaret's living as a strong pillar of Christian faith situated her practice at River Ravine Garden in ways well beyond a summer internship.

As Michael listened alongside Margaret, he learned how she was negotiating coherence as she lived her faith while at the same time living the role of recreation practitioner. As Margaret pushed plotlines of living the role of recreation practitioner as a person of faith, she also shared with Michael how she was living her practice as a friend. As Michael pulls from Margaret's negotiation as friend, he is reminded of how, at the start of each garden day, Margaret welcomed each gardener into the van; before leaving the urban neighbourhood to travel to River Ravine Garden Margaret always announced "6 friends" or "10 friends" as she filled in her program logbook. As Michael inquired into these moments of how she lived as a friend in her practice she remarked how it was "weird to live in between" as friend and practitioner (Margaret, research conversation, August 8, 2016). As we, the authors, think with Margaret's expressed tension we wonder if her tension sat in the shifted relational responsibilities that occur when we know our practice beyond technical relations. When living a plotline as a friend, questions such as the ones posed by Jodi to Michael and Margaret, call forth different relational responsibilities when the relational space is composed as a space of friendship (in juxtaposition to service/content deliverer). In those moments as they lived as friends, mutual vulnerability lived between their lives as Margaret shared what seemed like a quiet testimony. As Margaret shared her journey to the garden and how she got there with Jodi they were also opening a relational space to wonder where they may be able to go from here, as friends. While our attention is focused on Margaret's negotiation of relational space as a friend we are pulled to Huber, Clandinin, and Huber's (2006) writing to further clarify what shifts occur when people consult the same consciousness in their work and research as they do with friendship. In their work they showed how when wakeful as a friend, people (practitioners and researchers) become attentive to how diverse lives are unfolding in schools. As we think with Margaret we see how she too was

wakeful as a friend as she attended to how lives (hers and theirs) were unfolding together at River Ravine Garden.

Learnings as Michael lived alongside: Living beyond labels

As we, the authors, sit with the experiences of Michael living alongside Margaret and Clark we are reminded by Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) to continually linger in the relational spaces where we negotiate who we are and are becoming in each other's lives, moments such as those shared between Clark and the man playing piano, Margaret and Jodi as they sat in the van, and Michael and Johnny as they gardened. In these moments of living in relational spaces we see how each of our complexities was brought forth so our lives were not reduced to labels of practitioner, researcher, and participant. In these moments ethical spaces were opened so we each could understand who we were and were becoming despite our differences that held the possibilities to define us as separate from each other. It is through these everyday ethical actions of shifting familial stories, asking and sharing what guides our practice, and noticing what sits on the peripheries of our vision/practice that we each began to live new and more complex stories of who we were and who we may be in relation with each other.

For us, as we sat with Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard's (2018) work and engaged with the research in recreation and leisure studies we could feel, read, and hear tensions from researchers as they inquired into challenges of what it means to live in relationally ethical ways in recreation programming. For some researchers their attentiveness turned towards the tensions experienced between normative/mainstream recreation, sport, and physical activity programming/policy and the lives of Indigenous participants (Forsyth & Heine, 2008; Lashua & Fox, 2006; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013; McHugh, 2011; Paraschak, 2013). Other research highlighted the tensions

experienced when deficit, problem-based, or acultural programming guided the relation between Indigenous peoples and practitioners/policy makers (Galipeau & Giles, 2014; Giles & Darroch, 2014; Paraschak & Thompson, 2014; Rossi & Rynne, 2014; Schaefer, Lessard, & Lewis, 2017). While not explicitly stated within each of these writings, as readers we sensed that each author(s) was prompting their audience to think deeply about how people's ongoing life making is sustained in the meeting place of a recreation program.

As we find our way into this ongoing conversation, we do so wondering what was learned as Michael lived alongside Margaret and Clark as they turned towards each other with wonders of how to live ethically in practice. While Michael inquired into their experiences, he was attentive to how they lived within dominant narratives in recreation that state one of the "distinguishing factor[s] at the heart of the recreation profession is a belief in direct intervention for the sake of enhancing someone else's recreation experience" (Samdahl, 2016, p. 9). As they each lived within interventionist narratives, often tied to the health and wellness outcomes of the people they were working with, Michael was attentive to how Margaret and Clark lived their practice beyond the label of interventionist. They lived as friends, as father, as learners. As each (Michael, Margaret, and Clark) negotiated their identities and practice beyond labels, we noticed that openings occurred to live relational ethics in practice. Meaning, the relational space was not seen as fixed or defined but open to co-composition as lives came together.

As we conclude this writing we hope to make clear that practitioners knowledge and experience should not be discounted in the search for developing ethical approaches to programming in recreation. Like Bergum and Dossetor (2005) argued, we believe that relationships are where ethical moments are enacted and where significant insights can be found. We see this through the inquiry into Clark and Margaret's experiences at River Ravine Garden.

We also experienced this as readers as we read Metcalfe-Chenail's (2016) book. In this book we were given a glimpse into fifteen stories that people have lived around their understanding of their relations with, or as, Indigenous peoples in communities. As readers of each of these chapters we were able to imaginatively place ourselves with the stories shared, feel their tensions, their pains, their shifted understandings, and their longings to be in and part of living relations differently at an everyday ethical level. As we read these stories, and lived with the stories of Michael, Clark, and Margaret we found hope in laying our stories alongside each others. More importantly, we found hope in knowing that the many puzzles around how to be "in this together" mattered. If we are to support inquiries (as researchers and practitioners) into what does it mean to be alongside, and live in relationally ethical ways, we must become attentive to what unacknowledged stories we have, and how that frames what matters in our field of practice. If what matters is measured outcomes, questions around practitioner competence or fixing-people-up, we may never hear the everyday negotiations of being "in this together". From our eyes, it is those stories of who we are and are becoming as lives come together that matter.

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PAPER 3

Significance of place in the lives of recreation practitioners

Abstract

This paper is a narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) into the experiences of two recreation practitioners, Margaret and Clark, as well as the first author, as they each learned how to live in relationally ethical ways in recreation practice. By drawing on the field texts of the first author as he participated in a community garden project as a researcher-practitioner over two years, this paper shows that place matters when contemplating how lives come together in recreation practice. The purpose of this paper is to show that place is more than a simple backdrop for human interactions and activities, place shapes the fabric of our relational space. Place shapes who we are and are becoming, particularly when it is understood simultaneously with temporality and sociality (i.e., a narrative understanding of place). An attentiveness and recognition is needed in recreation research towards the significance of place. Without an attentiveness towards the ways in which place shapes how lives are lived, researchers will continue to perpetuate the notion that place does not matter with our research, practice, and lives of people we come alongside.

Keywords: *Place; Landscapes; Relational ethics; Recreation practitioners; Recreation and leisure; Narrative inquiry*

Introduction: Places we work harden the hearts of practitioners

It was called a "Walk With Me: A Social Justice Walk" organized and guided by Johnny. As I look back at the event description and my research journal from that day, I am reminded of how Johnny lived as a guide for many non-Indigenous people, including myself, as he shared his experiential narrative knowledge of the many places and social services in that specific urban neighbourhood. By the time of this event, I had known Johnny for well over a year. We met at a community garden project, River Ravine Garden[31], a site that was integral to my doctoral research. By this time he had agreed to be, and acted as, a guide, mentor, or Traditional Knowledge Holder within my research that narratively inquired (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) into the experiences of two recreation practitioners who facilitated recreation, specifically garden programs, alongside Indigenous peoples in an urban neighbourhood. As Johnny organized the "Walk With Me," he invited, and introduced, me as a friend.

As I return in my memory to that day alongside Johnny, I am reminded of the cool fall air that nipped at my face as I met Johnny outside of the library before we went in to meet the people who would be walking with us. As greetings finished amongst the many people who came, Johnny began the walk. I quickly learned that this walk would not be like other walks that were often guided by practitioners who worked in the community. In those walks participants were often informed of, and received details around, the services and programs that were offered in the area. Rather, Johnny informed us that this walk would not be following that script, a script that was literally rolled up in his hand. Rather, it would begin and end in his stories of experiences of the many places we would be visiting together. For Johnny, this shift was

[31] Pseudonyms are used throughout. River Ravine Garden is a rurally located 5-acre garden organized by the land owners and several social services agencies.

intentional and invitational. Intentional, in that Johnny wanted to share beyond the familiar, single stories (Adichie, 2009) of homelessness, addiction, and poverty in relation to urban Indigenous peoples. Invitational, in that Johnny was creating a conversational space to share more complex stories of who he was and was becoming, while also opening spaces for participants on the walk (including me) to engage with who they are and who they are becoming in the worlds in which they/I am a part. Thus, our walk began attentive to experience and full of possibilities for participants to have moments to resist[32].

Johnny spoke of places he called home, of places where he had slept, of places where he had his first drop-in experience, and of places he experienced as sterile, uninviting, and oppressive as a result of gentrification. As I walked between buildings and through alleyways Johnny shared his stories of experience I would not have known if I walked in those places by myself. My stories of these particular places were interrupted during these moments I walked alongside Johnny. As we stood in what I saw as an empty parking lot, I learned that it was a place where Johnny knew that good people and good food could be found. As we stood outside of one of the social services buildings, Johnny informed me that it was a special place as it was one of the first places in the city that supported the gathering of Indigenous peoples without fear of reprisal.

As we continued up the street from that special place of gathering for Johnny, and for many others, we paused at another building on the corner of a small, yet well foot-trafficked, four-way-stop intersection. Like the last building we stood in front of, I had been there many

[32] Resistance in this sentence comes from the work of Clandinin, Caine, Estefan, Huber, Murphy, & Steeves (2015) who wrote, "we see resistance as akin to a moment Arendt (1978) might call a moment to stop and think; a moment where it might be possible to interrupt, to allow us to imagine otherwise, a moment to create something new" (p. 33). Resistance from this vantage is the possibility of interrupting what is ongoing.

times before, as each week over the summer months Johnny, I, and many others met at the building before travelling to River Ravine Garden. However, unlike the last building, I knew of more tenuous stories of Johnny's gathering in that place. As the group stood on the corner looking towards the older repurposed building, people shared about their occupations and one person asked Johnny what they can do in their profession, and perhaps in each of our professions, as they attempt to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the Calls to Action[33] (2015). I vividly remember how Johnny paused as he looked at the building and at the group of us, a group comprised of affluent white professionals. He calmly turned to each of us and began to explain how deep histories of racism sit in places, like the building that stood behind him, and these histories still live and continue to be composed in such places. As Johnny looked at each of us, his voice now more somber than his usual jovial tone, he reminded us that the "Places we work harden the hearts of practitioners." With that reminder, Johnny prompted us to keep walking with him, and, in that moment, I felt as if I was running just to keep up with him.

The places we work harden the hearts of practitioners. I recounted those words over and over as we continued walking, hoping I would not forget, knowing I needed more time to digest the meanings that lived within those words. Johnny's answer to a wonder posed was not a simple answer. He did not provide a recipe, manual, or maxims to follow. In many ways, at that time, I felt as if I clamored for a more linear and sequential guide to follow. Yet, as I sit in my office now, I am thankful to the ways in which Johnny guided me on that day and on many others. His teachings, as I heard them, invited me to self-face and continually inquire into who I am and who I am becoming in the particular places I live and work. As I digest his teachings they continue to

[33] The TRC was one component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement aimed at informing all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools.

nudge into me as I ask myself, “Is my heart hardening as I live and work on landscapes as a recreation researcher-practitioner”? As I feel this nudge, I am reminded of what Johnny was calling me to be attentive to on the “Walk With Me.” With script at his side, he was not telling me of places or services, rather, he was sharing his experiences and inviting us to share our own. As he shared, in this experiential way, I see he was asking me to be more attentive to his ongoing life, and each of our ongoing lives, and who we were becoming in relation as we all walked together. It was in sharp contrast to what I, and other walkers, expected. I expected to learn more around the structure of institutions and organizations, and details around services and programs. I only had a partial and limited understanding of what services were offered in the urban neighbourhood. Yet, what I learned was I had even more of a partial and limited understanding of the many diverse lives being composed within these places.

As I share this moment alongside Johnny, I do so knowing it acts as a teaching that I come back to as I narratively inquire into my, as well as two early-career recreation practitioners, experiences as we each learned how to live in relationally ethical ways in our practice. Living in relationally ethical ways in this writing is developed from the relational responsibilities and ontological commitments of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Understandings of what it means to be alongside, and live in relationally ethical ways were further developed in Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) who wrote that living in relationally ethical ways necessitates living and being in “particular ways; to live so that both we and participants ask: ‘What are we doing here?’” (p. 23). Such an approach focuses not only on the relationship between researcher-participant, but towards questions of “who we are in relation with participants but also who we are in relation with the larger world or worlds that people, including us as researchers, inhabit” (p. 20). Prior to thinking with the experiences of my participants, it is

important to first locate this paper in the puzzles I was living as an early career researcher-practitioner. In doing so I hope to be more wakeful to my own stories of what it means to learn to live in relationally ethical ways, while also being better positioned to attend to the stories my participants were composing within particular landscapes.

Places where my heart hardened

Johnny's words reminded me to remember the many gardens in which I have been a part (Dubnewick, 2016; Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013). Specifically, I am reminded of one of the community garden places (Circle) where I felt my heart hardened. As I recollect memories (Crites, 1971) of living in that place, I experience renewed attentiveness to place in how lives came together. The garden in which I worked as gardener-in-residence is positioned within a short walk from the social services building. It was a site complete with looming fence and a lock-and-chain to which only a few workers knew the combination. By the end of season the path that was visible to the discerning eye was not one between the hub of the social services building and the garden. Albeit footmarks were present, rather, it was between the garden and a nearby watering source. It was a path that had been outlined and walked prior to my time there, and which had hardened and become more visible during my brief visit.

Now, several years removed from working as the gardener-in-residence, I am more attentive to place and how place shapes the lives of early-career recreation practitioners, like myself, as they negotiate their identities, or stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), in recreation practice. As I make sense of this identity-making in my experiences, I come to Brenda Rossow-Kimball's dissertation (2014) which narratively inquired into the experiences of three men labeled with intellectual disabilities as they lived out stories of retirement. As I think with

Rossow-Kimball's work, I am drawn back to her writings of being invited, by two participants, to their home garden. As she arrived at their home, she scanned their yard, unsure of the location of the garden, before the participants informed her that it was right in front of her. As Rossow-Kimball narratively inquired into her experiences of viewing their garden amidst weeds and crabgrass, she makes visible how her view of their garden was framed by the places she had lived and through her professional knowledge around what would be deemed "a good garden." As Rossow-Kimball (chapter written in Clandinin, Caine, & Lessard, 2018) writes:

> Suddenly, I realize that years of institutionalization has not only affected people with disabilities, but it has affected me as well. We so often speak of the effects of institutionalization on people with disabilities, but often fail to address how institutionalization has continued to carry itself forward in paradigmatic thinking and how we ["experts"] support/address/teach others…the men have unknowingly asked me to attend to my own stories, this time those of institutionalization. (p. 53).

As Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) responded to Rossow-Kimball's chapter they were pulled in by her slow awakenings (Greene, 1995) to the ways in which she negotiated and travelled beyond grand narratives that held narrow constructions of people labeled with intellectual deficits, specifically in regards to what competency looks like in a garden. It was these slow awakenings that Rossow-Kimball lived, and continues to live, around attending to her own narratives, as well as dominant societal narratives, and how they worked on her that allowed to her to engage in relationally ethical ways. Ways in which she was attentive to the competing story her participants were composing as she willingly travelled to their worlds (Lugones, 1987).

Like Clandinin, Caine, and Lessard (2018) I come to Rossow-Kimball's work and see resonances between her self-facing awakenings and mine, as Johnny prompted me to think about how places harden the hearts of practitioners. Through Johnny's words and Rossow-Kimball's awakenings, I am reminded of my slow awakenings as I worked as a gardener-in-residence in an urban neighbourhood. I am reminded of how I was introduced to the garden project and how that shaped how I initially came to construct the people I would be working with, who I was in that place, and how I imagined our lives coming together. It was during my first visit to the garden that one worker informed me of the intentions behind the garden project as a site that would support healthy eating, provide greenery amidst the concrete, and encourage a more healthy and productive form of engagement. As I began my role as gardener-in-residence I saw myself being responsible for achieving this vision of the garden; in many ways it enveloped my being and becoming in that place. It took me many weeks and months to slowly awaken to how I was living within dominant social narratives (Okri, 1997) of what it meant to be a "healthy and productive" person in society and how leisure programming, such as the garden, was often storied as a method to facilitate such desired outcomes (Schaefer, Lessard, & Lewis, 2017). These narratives shaped who I was, and who I was becoming there. It shaped my initial desires to get people in the neighbourhood to travel to my world (as opposed to travelling to their worlds). I propped open the garden gate as wide as I could and made sure the garden sign was visible to onlookers who sat at the nearby social services building. In those first few weeks I remember how people would walk by and not-so-gently remind me of my naivety as they referred to me as "One of those nice guys" and "The kid growing dirt."

I paused in those moments as I awakened (or was forced to awaken) to how I was being storied on that landscape. As that memory flickers in my mind, I remember that sinking feeling

when I was referred to as "One of those nice guys" and "The kid growing dirt." With each opening of the garden gate and every bucket filled, I felt the path literally and metaphorically harden beneath my feet, and, as Johnny reminded me, in my heart. I remember questioning what I was doing in that place and time. Was I seen as a person just trying to fix them up? Was I coming with arrogant perception[34] (Lugones, 1987) and seeing them as people in need? This was not how I imagined and hoped how our lives would come together in the garden project.

My stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) of who I was and was becoming came from moments as I gardened at my grandmother's each summer as a child. As I write, memories of the small garden in the backyard of my grandmother's urban home in Calgary return. It was a place of stability, home, and coming together for me as a child. Each weekend over the summer months my family and I travelled the short distance from our home to my grandmother's home. Each time we arrived I knew I would cut the grass with the well-used push mower, my brother would trim the grass edges with the 'whipper-snipper', and my mother and father would tend to the garden and other house chores as my grandma and aunt sat outside with us. My 'chores' aspect of cutting the grass, and subsequently tending to the garden, usually did not take long given the small size of the yard and garden. Somehow, though, I always remember our stays beginning well before lunch and extending well beyond dinner hours. I also remember how the seasonal ebbs and flows of the raspberry bushes brought our lives (my grandmother and I) together. In the months when bees swarmed the little protruding flowers and hardened fruits, our lives (my grandmother and I), while very close, had some distance as I kicked balls, ran through sprinklers, and played with my brother. As the fruits reddened, our lives and bodies

[34] Building on the work of Frye (1983), Lugones (1987) described arrogant perception as "the failure to identify with persons that one views arrogantly or has come to see as the products of arrogant perception…we fail to identify with them—fail to love them—in this particularly deep way" (p. 4).

became closer—I was near with enamel colander in-hand and, when needed, I squeezed between bushes to get at fruits in the middle of the dense thickets. Once done, I squeezed out with a patchwork of scrapes from the thorns. The specificity of that place, of the season's change, of the raspberry bushes flowering and fruiting, brought our lives together in ways in which I knew myself, and was known as, helpful, caring, and attentive (see figure 2). As I entered into the role of gardener-in-residence I came embodying stories from home-places in which I knew myself as a helpful, caring, and attentive person. I searched for this type of narrative coherence[35] (Carr, 1986) in my life as a recreation practitioner, as a researcher, and as a person as I travelled to new geographic places. Even as I physically travelled to new and unfamiliar places I felt these stories of who I was in garden places, in home places, working on me and reminding me to live in certain ways (Basso, 1996).

Figure 2. Grandmother's garden and raspberry bushes

[35] Narrative coherence in Carr's (1986) work is situated around the constant effort and negotiation people encounter in making sense of their lives. Narrative coherence is an achievement, rather than something taken for granted.

As I lived in new and unfamiliar garden places as a gardener-in-residence I often found myself unable to live out my recollected stories. Continuously weeding, watering, and making sure a certain level of upkeep was maintained was, at times, storied differently in that place. At my grandmother's garden my productive pace was seen as helpful, caring, and attentive to each other and what needed to be done. I quickly learned that some storied my pace, in the urban neighbourhood, in different ways. Being storied as "One of those nice guys" and "The kid growing dirt" hinted at a history of inattentiveness by professionals based on assumptions of what was needed for the wellbeing of the community (Noddings, 2005) and the unquestioned good of recreation programming (Allison & Hibbler, 2004). As I reflect back on my experiences, I recognize I was still attempting to live out stories as a helpful, caring, and attentive person who practiced in my family's garden as I slowly awakened to how I was being storied. As I did, I slowed my pace, tended to sage that was transplanted by community members, and sat with community members on the sundrenched walls of the community services building. It was in those moments where my pace changed that I began to think about what being helpful, caring, and attentive means in different places.

As I continue to reflect upon Johnny's teaching on how places harden the hearts of practitioners I often think about how his response asked me to not only self-face but to be wakeful to the layered landscapes[36] in which I live and work and how it shapes my practice. His teachings asked me to make visible how place, especially institutionalized places, can shape the way lives are lived and what negotiations must occur to create openings around how one may

[36] Drawing on the metaphor of stratified layers of landforms (i.e., the layering of different materials over time) Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, and Huber (2016) developed a narrative understanding of landscapes as layered. They described that, "this understanding of landscapes reflects an understanding of patterns of change and development that are visible in plotline; in this way continuity and interactions are central" to our understanding of place (p. 59).

live beyond prescribed narratives of professional practice. While I have largely focused on my experiences, I engaged in autobiographical narrative inquiry so I am more wakeful to the lives of the two recreation practitioners who are part of my study and how place shaped the ways they lived as they worked at River Ravine Garden. The purpose of this paper is to show that place is more than a simple backdrop for human interactions and activities, place shapes the fabric of our relational space. The remainder of this paper will narratively inquire into the experiences of two early-career recreation practitioners[37] and their experiences of learning to live in relational ethical ways in particular place(s). Prior to inquiring into the experiences of Margaret and Clark, the two participants in my research, it is important to define narrative inquiry and how place is understood in this writing.

Coming to this research narratively

Narrative inquiry

> Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progress in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20)

Narrative inquiry is the study of experience understood narratively (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Living as a narrative inquirer requires living as a relational inquirer in which I

[37] Margaret and Clark, the two recreation practitioners who were part of my study, were both university students at the time of this research. Clark's involvement was part of his final practicum requirements for his degree. Margaret's involvement was as a summer student intern with a local faith-based social service agency.

come alongside participants, that is, I enter into their worlds (Lugones, 1987), listen to the stories of experience we each are living, and telling as we live alongside each other over time and in place(s). As narrative inquirers, we inquire into the experiences we, as well as our participants, are living and telling. This process of coming alongside and inquiring into our lived and told experiences in narrative inquiry is known as retelling. By retelling, or inquiring into our storied experiences, our hopes as narrative inquirers is that we make possible new ways of composing who we are and who we are becoming in the landscapes in which we are a part. As Clandinin (2013) explained, "As we retell or inquire into stories, we may begin to relive the retold stories. We restory ourselves and perhaps begin to shift the institutional, social, and cultural narratives in which we are embedded" (p. 34). When I live alongside participants in this particular way my focus is not on producing representations of reality independent from the stories Margaret and Clark are living and telling. Rather, my intentions as a narrative inquirer are to come together in collaborative ways, ways in which we, both researcher and participants, may "generate a new relation between a human being and her environment—her life, community, world" (Rosiek & Clandinin, 2007, p. 39), ways in which we do not feel our hearts hardening in the places we work. In this way narrative inquiry begins and ends in experience.

This attentiveness and respect for ordinary lived experience (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007) that underpins narrative inquiry is one reason why many researchers, including myself, are drawn to narrative inquiry. For example, Clandinin's (1985) early research in education, while not explicitly named narrative inquiry at the time, emphasized that teachers come to their practice embodying knowledge (i.e., all life experience) and do not just reproduce mandated curriculum. From this vantage point, Connelly and Clandinin (1988) stressed that there is power and potential in thinking with teacher's narratives of experience when working towards school

reform, as opposed to dismissing their ongoing life making within school landscapes. As I think of my research in narrative ways I do so knowing it allows me to attend to the diverse lives of Margaret and Clark (and myself) beyond the simple narratives of experience of each of us as practitioners (or practitioner-researchers) who are just providers of recreation programs (Galipeau & Giles, 2014).

Negotiating entry with lingering reverberations

In 2015 I began my inquiry and entered into the field. While the garden I once worked at as the gardener-in-residence no longer existed, my experiences in that place still lingered within me (Clandinin, Lessard, & Caine, 2012) as I went back to the same neighbourhood. As I began this research I desired to move in slower ways and with different purpose/research puzzles. During my first year I negotiated my involvement with two urban social service agency recreation coordinators in the neighbourhood, and the landowners who organized the River Ravine Garden project. With their permissions I met the gardeners (community members) outside a social services building two times each week and found a place in the 15-passenger van to travel to River Ravine Garden with them as a gardener and researcher-in-the-making. During this first year, my intentions were to build relations with the many people involved, and slowly make clear my research puzzle and intentions for the upcoming summer. As I gardened alongside many people, I learned how River Ravine Garden got started. I learned how the land had been farmed for multiple generations and, more recently (spring 2011), River Ravine Garden was established. I learned how the landowners imagined the place of River Ravine Garden as a place of hope and healing for all who came, especially for those who had been pushed to the margins. During this time I also began to inquire into my own stories I was living and telling as a researcher-practitioner with hopes I could live in more caring ways at River Ravine Garden.

During my second year I began narratively inquiring into the experiences of two-early career recreation practitioners, Clark and Margaret. I was puzzling over how recreation practitioners negotiate their practice in relationally ethical ways. Further, it was clear that there was little research that attended to the experiences of recreation practitioners as they worked/lived alongside participants in programs. As I began my second year at River Ravine Garden I informed the social service agencies, landowners, and gardeners of my intended research and held a small, informal gathering at River Ravine Garden to explain my research intentions around narratively inquiring into the experiences of recreation practitioners as they negotiate relational aspects of their work at the garden. Shortly after, Margaret and Clark approached me as potential participants. As a researcher-practitioner I wrote field notes (data), had informal and formal recorded conversations[38] with Margaret and Clark. Participants also wrote weekly journals of their own experiences. From these varied field texts, narrative accounts[39] were co-composed and negotiated with each participant. It was from these accounts that the significance of place in the lives of Margaret and Clark became most visible, specifically in terms of how place shaped how each came to understand who they were and who they were becoming.

The commonplace of place

Place is important for many researchers in the social sciences, including recreation and leisure studies. However, as Smale (2006) noted, conceptualizations of place in recreation and

[38] Informal and formal research conversations occurred through the 2016 garden season and continued into early 2018.

[39] Narrative accounting is a process of writing that allows the researcher to give an account of the "unfolding of lives of both participants and researchers, at least as they became visible in those times and places where our stories intersected and were shared" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 132). Following the writing of narrative accounts, I shared and negotiated the accounts with Margaret and Clark.

leisure research have often lacked depth and nuance. Smale states that a broad argument can be made that most research in recreation and leisure is inattentive to place and is aspatial. In this section I briefly outline the ways in which narrative inquirers have defined place in their research and the implications such definitions have on research inquiries. Place is conceptualized in narrative inquiry as one of the three dimensions of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The purpose of this section is not to provide an exhaustive account of the literature that conceptualizes place (see Creswell, 2004; Jones, 2009; Massey, 2005 for more detailed accounts in geography). Rather, it is to make clear how place is conceptualized in this writing. Like Booth (2015), I am aware that how one conceptualizes place in research matters, given the implications it has to what/how we are attentive in our ongoing inquiries.

Narrative inquirers are attentive to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), which provides a conceptual framework where the commonplaces of temporality, sociality, and place are simultaneously explored. In this writing I am particularly attentive to the commonplace of place. As Clandinin and Connelly (1990, 2000) continually refined definitions of narrative inquiry as a methodology, the links between place and experience also developed. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) stated:

> By place we mean the specific concrete, physical, and topological boundaries of place where the inquiry and events take place. The key to this commonplace is the importance of recognizing that all events take place some place. This is a troubling aspect of narrative inquiry for some because researchers often wish to escape the limitations of place in the interests of generalizability. Yet, for narrative inquiry, the specificity of location is crucial. (p. 480-481)

From this understanding of place, the particularities of place(s) matter and place(s) is seen as a meaningful aspect of experience. Place is more than a simple backdrop for human interactions and activities, place shapes who we are and are becoming, particularly when it is understood simultaneously with temporality and sociality. This continued turn toward place in narrative inquiry acknowledges how home places such as my grandmother's garden shaped me over time and in particular relationships. Further, it acknowledges how institutional places such as universities and social service agencies have shaped me over time in different relationships.

Marmon Silko (1996) asks her readers to think about how we comprehend landscapes and our relations to place. Silko's words act as a caution to how landscapes are often understood:

> A portion of territory the eye can comprehend in a single view does not correctly describe the relationships between human being and his or her surroundings. This assumes the viewer is somehow outside or separate from the territory she or he surveys. Viewers are as much part of the landscape as the boulders they stand on. (p. 27)

As I sit with Silko's words it becomes easier to see how Margaret, Clark, and I were/are part of landscapes; we did not just live on landscapes or places, rather the landscapes and our becoming were entangled. As Clandinin, Caine, Lessard, and Huber (2016) wrote, "the landscape, composed of cultural, institutional, linguistic, political, economic, and social plotlines, is shaped by and shapes experience over time; lives and landscapes are interwoven" (p. 59).

Narrative ways of understanding place highlights that place, in its particularity, matters. I dwell in the places where Margaret's, Clark's, and my life came together; I dwell in the urban streets outside of social service buildings; I dwell in the fields of River Ravine Garden and the old growth forest that was nestled nearby; I dwell in those moments of movement when

practitioners and community members piled into vans and travelled in-between urban and rural garden places (and vice versa) multiple times each week. As I dwell with, and inquire into, the experiences of Margaret and Clark, I am attentive to the subtle (and at times not so subtle) ways that place(s) shapes who we each are and are becoming. As I dwell in these moments it is important, as a narrative inquirer, to situate these puzzles in experience. What follows is a weaving of Clark and Margaret's experiences in relation to my puzzles around how place(s) shapes the living of relational aspects of their work in recreation practice.

Pausing to attend to how place shaped relational aspects in recreation practice

Margaret's narrative account[40]: A place where her shoes came off

As I think of our visits to River Ravine Garden I am reminded of the change in scenery that occurred as we stepped into the van in the urban neighbourhood with the many gardeners who travelled to the garden each week. There was a shift from buildings acting as wind blocks to overgrown bushes and trees now strategically shifting the patterns of the wind. The road went from packed asphalt to bumpier less traversed gravel roads as we got further from the highway and closer to River Ravine Garden. And as I stepped out of the van on our days at River Ravine Garden I am reminded of the silence that opened my ears. There was no hum of automobiles or sirens in the background that asked me to selectively listen. When a train occasionally rolled by in the distance the gardeners all collectively took notice of the length of the train before quiet set in once again. As I picture River Ravine Garden, I picture you, Margaret, taking your shoes and socks off before stepping in between the rows of endless vegetables. As you stepped

[40] What follows is a brief passage from Margaret's larger narrative account. These accounts were written to the participants and this is reflected in writing style.

between the rows I remember how you always wiggled your toes and sank into the earth within those first couple of steps. I picture the many moments I turned to you as we worked within the rows of spinach. With your mouth stuffed with leafy greens, you looked at me and the other gardeners, and with the widest of smiles say, "Mon amies, my friends." As I think about the shift in scenery and place that occurred when we gardened at River Ravine Garden, I also think about the shifts in your/our practice. As I do I am reminded of one moment, which I share below.

Although her skin tone often diminished her story, Suzanne was a woman who self identified as Aboriginal. I often accompanied her when she went for walks into the old growth forest over the years and I quickly learned these were healing walks. As we stepped from that defined boundary of the garden's edge into the overgrown old growth forest, Suzanne's voice often changed. As we stepped into the bush, as Suzanne so affectionately named it, she reminded me to be wakeful to what marked the trailhead. As Suzanne said this she would bend down and, with a small paring knife in hand, cut the stem of what looked like a marigold, while reminding me to notice Mary, and her grandmothers. As we went deeper into the bush I learned more and more as we foraged. Suzanne shared stories of her family and, at times, I felt as if she was talking to me as if I was her son. In those moments I felt as if I was her son. While I knew of her and our relation in this way, she was also storied as "a disruptor or nuisance." Prior to your (Margaret) arrival she had been asked to not partake in activities organized by the faith-based social services agency you worked with and from my conversations with you, Margaret, you knew her from these stories. One day Suzanne came to River Ravine Garden with a different group and you, Suzanne, and I went for a walk in the bush

together. This moment has become etched in my mind. As we slowly made our way back to the garden after sitting by the river, Suzanne began identifying plants, and told of how she foraged to make tea, to heal, and cleanse. Margaret, when you asked her about rose hips, she began to share more. In that moment I felt as if she spoke to you as a daughter, and, as she did, I felt you listening deeply to her as you travelled to her world (Lugones, 1987). As we reentered the edges of the garden I remember the quiet that sat between the three of us. You asked that I take a picture as we moved from the covered bush into the clearing that was River Ravine Garden. I am not sure why you asked me to take the picture on that day and in that moment, but I suspected that you, like I, felt something meaningful occurred, when we travelled with her into the bush. While that moment was captured in an image, what has become captured in my mind now is how world-travelling, (Lugones, 1987) and shifts in practice, are so deeply tied to place.

Each time my bare feet now touch between rows of vegetables and I feel the heat that sears my soles, I am reminded of images of Margaret as she wiggled her toes to sink that little inch deeper to the point where the soil was calming and cool to touch. As I remind myself of that bodily sensation and image of Margaret, I am reminded of how River Ravine Garden was a place where Margaret's shoes *could* come off. At a very physical level, River Ravine Garden was a different place within Margaret's practice. While she facilitated/coordinated several other gardens in the urban neighbourhood around the faith-based social services building in which she worked, they were not places where she could take her shoes off. The raised beds atop asphalt and well-trodden grass did not invite one to sink ones toes in to feel the cool beneath, or go for walks in the woods.

While the physical geography shifted how she practiced, the stories-so-far of these urban places as they entangled with the stories-so-far of Margaret's living also shifted how she was becoming as a person who practiced (Massey, 2005). Margaret explained in a research conversation how many community members storied the gardens located in urban settings as "gardens of disappointment" over the years. As I listened to how these garden places were storied by community members and within Margaret's work, I began to sense how this shifted how Margaret knew herself in these places. While Margaret never expressed dis-ease or discomfort in her travelling between urban and rural places in her practice, it was clear that place mattered in how her relations were sustained and formed.

I am reminded of the day that Margaret, Suzanne, and I went for a walk in the bush. It is a moment I often come back to as it reminds me how place(s), the landscapes we are part of, both silence and make visible particular aspects of who we are and are becoming. As I come back to that moment I think about how Suzanne was storied in urban places and at the faith-based social services building that Margaret worked as someone who may disrupt peace. As I think about how Suzanne was storied on that landscape, I am reminded of a moment at the beginning of the garden season as both Margaret and I negotiated what to do. Suzanne had showed up at the building to come to the garden. Her presence did not surprise me as she often travelled with us to River Ravine Garden the year prior. Prior to leaving the urban area, Margaret informed me that she had been told that Suzanne was not supposed to come out with our group. As Margaret shared this with me I remember the dis-ease in her voice of viewing Suzanne in such a way, and not allowing her to come with us to River Ravine Garden. She wondered if it would be okay if Suzanne came, if she may get in trouble, and if other gardeners would be fine with Suzanne coming with us. Partly to ease Margaret, and partly because I enjoyed being

around Suzanne and knew how meaningful that place was for Suzanne, I offered to sit in the back of the van with her and that all would be good as we would likely go for a long walk in the bush together. That is what happened on that day.

It is the preceding day, as outlined in the narrative account, in which Margaret, Suzanne, and I walked together in the bush that I come back to now. It was a moment in which I felt lives became more visible, as stories shifted around who we were, how we were known, and how our lives came together as we walked alongside each other in the bush. In that place, in the bush, we were no longer just the singular stories that were told of us as nuisances or workers. Rather, in that place more complex stories of who we were and who we were becoming became visible. Much like my "Walk With Me" alongside Johnny, our walk in the bush was full of resistance. As Margaret and Suzanne talked, I felt conversational spaces open as each of them interrupted the singular ways in which they had been storied as they shared and acknowledged more complex stories of who they were and were becoming. In the bush Suzanne's knowledge and memories came to the fore. She shared of growing up in rural places, of gardening and foraging, of familial teachings passed down, and of living as a proud mother. In those moments, Margaret also shared of living as a daughter, as a pillar of Christian faith, and as a person wanting to learn how to live in more just ways with the earth. I did not talk much on that walk I mostly listened. I listened to how the silences in that place, in the bush, were openings to say more and share more of who they were and who they were becoming. In that quiet place of the bush, it was as if what was shared would not fall upon deaf ears, or be muffled by the sounds of streets, or things that needed to be done. As I think about River Ravine Garden, the bush, and the urban located social services building, I am reminded that place(s) shapes the fabric of our relational space.

As I think of the many places in which her (our) practice was located, I wonder if we could have come alongside Suzanne as learners and friends in urban places. Amidst the multiple understandings of how we know ourselves, how we know others, and how we each together are expected to live in particular ways in particular places the possibilities to live otherwise seemed more precarious. In recollecting that moment as we walked so closely alongside Suzanne, I am also reminded of how paths changed when the gardeners, Margaret, and I arrived back at the faith-based social services building after our time at River Ravine Garden. In those moments when we returned, Margaret and I would immediately head up the metal staircase at the back entrance of the building to unload and properly store the vegetables in the kitchen. While our (Margaret and I) path brought us into the building through the back entrance, for the many gardeners who once sat and gardened so closely beside us, their lives entered through the front doors to sit down for a coffee, water, and to talk. As I lived alongside Margaret and think with her/our experiences I am reminded that place contributes to our vulnerability as practitioners (Caine & Lavoie, 2011), place shapes if our shoes can come off (or stay on), and in this way place shapes how we imagine/live relations beyond technical relations that so often story who we are and what we are doing in our work.

Clark's narrative account[41]: Place(s) of (dis)comfort

> *The sun at this point seemed to sit in the sky longer, there was no snow left on the ground, and things were already beginning to feel dry. The season's change was a signal for me that my attentiveness would shift back to living in the field and travelling to the urban centre and River Ravine Garden. Prior to meeting, I knew very little about you,*

[41] What follows is a brief passage from Clark's larger narrative account. These accounts were written to the participants and this is reflected in writing style.

Clark, other than you were an undergraduate student working towards a degree in kinesiology with a specialization in physical activity, health, and sport performance. I knew that part of the final requirements of your degree was a four-month practicum component in your field to offer practical application in regard to your specialization, and that is about it. As I think of the season's change as a reminder of the transitions I make each year from the university to field work, I am also reminded of how your placement as the Garden Activities Coordinator was framed as a transition from university to work or field practice.

As I think back to the day in which I met you I remember being excited to meet. I imagined that I would meet you at the social services building like many of the other workers in the community. However, upon arrival I was informed that we would meet at River Ravine Garden, as you would be facilitating garden activities out there every day from now on, not only with our group but also with other organizations/groups that came out to River Ravine Garden. What I did not know at the time was that in the weeks prior to my arrival you had spent several weeks working in the urban neighbourhood. I am pulled back to a journal of yours at the end of the garden year as you recollect your thoughts about those initial weeks working at the urban social services buildings. It was in those early weeks you described feeling apprehensive and overwhelmed with the sights, sounds, and smells of the buildings you worked in, and you wondered how you would build relationships in such unfamiliar places.

Clark and I developed a close relationship over many days at River Ravine Garden and in the months that followed. As our friendship developed I heard stories of early moments during his practicum, of his tensions as he lived in urban social services buildings/places as a worker.

As Clark shared his experiences he talked about the sights, sounds, smells, and his discomfort around living in these places. He also shared familial stories of how he knew of these places prior to his arrival; they were stories that were also etched into me. They were stories that sat in deep contrast to the stories that Johnny lived and shared during the "Walk With Me". They were not stories of belonging and gathering. Rather, they were stories of discomfort in dwelling and struggles to see beyond labels.

While shifts did, and continue to occur, in Clark's practice these early places in his practicum, between the walls of social services buildings, were often not the places where Clark spoke of imagining and seeing possibilities of reaching across his autobiographical boundaries and coming with loving perception (Lugones, 1987). As I think with Clark and how tension-filled it was for him to live within the institutional walls of the place he worked, I am reminded of a moment in Kubota's (2017) work as she lived alongside three men experiencing homelessness. In Kubota's writing, she shares a moment of seeing one of her participants sitting outside a busy train station with his head down. In that moment she shares how she contemplated if it would be okay to talk to him. She wondered about the consequences of greeting him in that place and at that time, and if this was what he wanted to share. As Kubota made her decision on which direction to go, she shared how in that moment she puzzled over how she may, perhaps, "push him into the category of 'a homeless person' and make him feel powerless, which might have changed the fabric of the relational space" (2017, p. 294). As I think with Kubota's work it propels me to think about the significance of place—where lives meet matters in terms of how we are known and how lives may come together. For Clark, he deeply wanted to move beyond labels of who he was and who the people were with whom which he was coming alongside. Clark described wanting to live as a 'caring person' in his practice, which meant living as a

friend, seeing people in their strength and multiplicity (Paraschak & Thompson, 2014), and coming with what Lugones (1987) would call loving perception.

While Clark's imaginations of who he was and who he was working alongside felt bounded to labels as he worked within the walls of a social services building, at River Ravine Garden Clark described living in more narratively coherent ways as a caring person (Carr, 1986). The vast land and open rows seemed to act as an invitation to Clark to sit closely with community members in ways that remind me how the raspberry bushes brought my life closer with my grandmother's. Clark's love for movement, activity, and being outdoors that often sits at the heart of recreation/sport programming provided pathways for Clark to move with ease, comfort, and a sense of belonging at River Ravine Garden. It also opened pathways for Clark to ensure that River Ravine Garden was a place of belonging for all the people who came out. Through small everyday gestures of always greeting us as we stepped out of the van, of welcoming us each by name, and of showing new gardeners around. In those moments as he was attentive to how others felt welcomed at the garden, I wondered how past experiences of place had shaped how he was living at River Ravine Garden. I thought about his discomfort of working within the institutional walls of social services buildings, and I was also reminded of how he spoke to university landscapes as places he never quite felt like he belonged as a mature student. Much like how I carried the raspberry bushes and my grandmother's garden into my practice, Clark carried his own place-based experiences of who he was and was becoming into his own practice.

Discussion: Significance of place for practitioners who are learning to live relationally

This writing is about attending to experience and how place(s) shaped the lives of Margaret, Clark, and myself as we each negotiated how to live in relationally ethical ways in recreation practice. As I inquired into the significance of place in the lives of Margaret, Clark, and my life as we learned to be and become recreational practitioners, I was drawn to work by scholars in other disciplines who had been attentive to how place shapes our becoming. For example, in education, Lessard's (2014) work alongside Aboriginal youth highlighted tensions around what knowledge and identities were valued as youth navigated home and school curriculum-making worlds. In nursing, Peter (2002) historically deconstructed how place (e.g., home, community, and hospital) is one of the most significant factors that affects the delivery of care, development of relations, and negotiation of power in nursing practice. Within my own field of recreation and leisure, Forsyth and Heine (2008) demonstrated how standardized places of recreation/sport constrain how Aboriginal youth experienced accessing programming. As I engaged with each of these writings, they each taught me something about how lives come together and how place shapes, and is part of, our co-becoming together.

As Coppola and McHugh (2018) commented it may not be the activities (e.g., gardening) themselves that support positive engagements and/or outcomes, but the interactions and relations that occur between participants and practitioners. The stories shared by Margaret and Clark highlight the various ways in which place shapes the fabric of relational spaces. Thus, it is vitally important to explore how relations are developed and sustained with an attentiveness to how place is part of how lives are composed, as they are co-composed. A continued attentiveness is needed in recreation and leisure studies around the significance of place, beyond notions of place as a backdrop for our activities (Smale 2006; Stokowski, 2002), towards understandings around how place(s) shapes who we are, how we are known, and how lives come together. As Tuck and

McKenzie (2015) explained, “turning towards place necessitates acknowledgment and reparations based on these histories: of settler colonialism, capitalism, and of Cartesian and (post)modern separations of mind from body, body from land” (p. 635). If we see our identities and practice as independent from the landscapes we live and work, we will never understand how we are part of (and complicit in) the landscapes that are hardening the hearts of practitioners. As I turn towards place I do so hoping to live in wakeful ways, in ways that I do not silence place-based histories or how place is part of and shapes how we co-become together.

Concluding thoughts: The mobility of place

> It is these places I have left, but as Rushdie (1981) described carrying the sea by which he was born to every new place, so, too, do I carry the strawberry fields, the river, the hills, and the stories with me always. Place holds memory and defines who I am, and place invokes memory. (Caine, 2010, p. 1305)

As I conclude this writing thinking with the many places that shaped how this inquiry unfolded, Caine’s words remind me that there is a temporal stretch to place as it lives within our storied memories and our ongoing lives. As I continued to live alongside Clark and Margaret in the many months and years that followed our summer at River Ravine Garden I began to more fully understand what Caine was articulating around when she said, she carried the “strawberry fields, the rivers, the hills, and the stories with her always”. As Bawaka Country et al. (2016) stated, “place/space may be understood as more than living with(in) the physical landscape, it has a certain mobility; it embodies and travels with the academic researchers as they return home” (p. 465). Like those researchers, the open fields of River Ravine Garden, the trails of the bush, and the walls of urban buildings travel with me as I return home and continue on with my

research program within new landscapes. As I do, I think about Johnny, I think about his teachings and how I am still learning to live relationally in practice; I continue to ask myself "Is my heart hardening as I live and work on landscapes as a recreation researcher-practitioner"? Those places also travel with Margaret as she finishes her degree and wonders how she may continue to live as a strong pillar of Christian faith in all aspects of her life. Lastly, those places continue to travel with Clark as he negotiates how to live as a caring practitioner within a large health services division as a recreation therapy assistant.

As I think about Margaret and Clark's continued life making now, I think back to when a gardener asked me a question at River Ravine Garden. We were both admiring the sunflowers quietly from the picnic tables, and she turned to me and said, "Can you get seeds from the sunflowers here [River Ravine Garden] to plant in the inner city?" At the time, I answered with a simple yes. If I were sitting with her now, I am not sure I could answer with the same conviction. I now wonder about the travelling that takes place.

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CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Concluding thoughts

I opened this dissertation with a menu (or roadmap) of sorts. As I end this writing I am drawn back to thinking with how I began this writing and research. As I previously wrote, resonant reverberations from my Master's research left me with many lingering puzzles. As I finished my Master's, I remember some of the lingering threads that sat on my palate. One of the many threads or flavours that sat on my palate was around how I lived, and was living, in relationally ethical ways as a recreation researcher-practitioner. As I think with how those lingering puzzles continued to linger within me as I began my doctoral research, I now wonder what lingers sit on my palate as I find ways to wrap up this writing. Prior to thinking with these lingering threads I provide a brief discussion of the papers that developed from my experiences as a doctoral researcher.

Paper one—The centrality of reflexivity through narrative beginnings: Towards living reconciliation

In paper one I (along with my co-authors Jean Clandinin, Sean Lessard, and Tara-Leigh McHugh) outline how narrative beginnings (or autobiographical narrative inquiries) are situated in the ontological commitments of narrative inquiry. In this writing I provided clarity around what it is narrative inquirers do by showing how and why narrative inquirers engage in the process of inquiring into their own stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) before, during, and after their research. By showing and inquiring into this process, we demonstrated how reflexivity through narrative beginnings begins and ends in our continued streams of experience. In this way, this paper deepens our understanding of what reflexivity (through narrative beginnings) is in narrative inquiry by demonstrating how our everyday lived realities

and relations (present and future) shift as we inquire into our past experiences in relation to particular research phenomena.

This paper engaged with a specific moment experienced during my Master's research as my life met with that of Silas's and his friends. It was a moment in which I stepped, or was pulled, from the boundaries of the garden I worked in and my position as gardener-in-residence. As I reflected on my engagement with Silas on that day, I was able to slow down and think about who I was at that time, how I may have been storied in their lives, and what stories we were negotiating as we attempted to compose our lives together. In coming back to this moment I was reminded of how our interactions that day shaped my living in the present, and made me, as Basso (1996) explained, want to live right.

As I inquired into this moment by engaging with how it continues to sit in my present and future living, I outlined how these processes of reflexivity through narrative beginnings supported me in (a) making clear my research puzzle and justifications, (b) becoming wakeful, and (c) opened shifts in relational knowing and being. This writing supported me as I reconnected to hopes and wonders of how to live in relationally ethical ways as a researcher-practitioner in recreation. Through the writing I reconnected with puzzles that mattered to me, becoming more aware of what the puzzles were, and began to imagine how I could live in more respectful, responsive, reciprocal, and mutual ways alongside participants and gardeners in my research.

Paper two—Becoming attentive to ethical space in recreation practice: Settler shifts around living ethically

As I began this paper I often came back to the moments where I lived alongside the two participants in my study, Margaret and Clark, and how our lives came together. As I did so, I was reminded by the many moments at River Ravine Garden where Clark, Margaret, and I would find a quiet moment where we each could come together to talk about *what mattered*. In these moments as I stood with Clark beside the garden shed or down the long row, or as I picked weeds with Margaret, we often talked about how we were negotiating relations or developing friendships in our respective roles. While I am aware that these conversations were shaped by my own research puzzles of how to live more relationally in recreation practice when working alongside Indigenous peoples, I sensed that building and sustaining relations beyond technical relations at River Ravine Garden mattered to them too as our lives came together. As we co-composed stories of *what mattered* to us as people who practice beyond our technical roles and responsibilities I was often reminded of what stories mattered in recreation scholarship and practice.

As I travelled back to academic places during fall and winter months my attention shifted away from Margaret and Clark and more towards the literature in my field. I was reminded of the literature that cited the benefits of recreation and I read policy documents (Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015; Sport for Life, 2017) that often pushed for outcome-based recreation programming. Within the grand narratives in recreation programming, as highlighted in these writings, was the undercurrent that recreation practitioners were mere providers of a service and *what mattered* was their professional competence tied to programming outcomes and objectives. Those everyday negotiations of building relations, of living as friends and moving beyond technical relations, that Clark, Margaret, and I each lived at River Ravine Garden were silenced within the dominant narratives of what mattered in recreation practice. As I reflect on

this paper, I, like Estefan, Caine, and Clandinin (2016), am asking the reader to think about what matters in our respective fields of practice, how that is lived in the life of practitioners, and to turn our attentiveness to the relational aspects of our work if we are to support the living of relational ethics in recreation practice and research.

Paper three—The significance of place for living relational ethics in recreation practice

Throughout much of my research I have been cognizant of place, and how shifts in place shift our understandings. While I have been cognizant of my travelling between places and how activity (i.e., gardening) meaning changes across place, time, and context (Dubnewick, Fox, & Clandinin, 2013), I had yet to slow down and inquire into how place(s) shape the living of relational ethics in recreation practice. The purpose of this article was to do that—slow down and inquire into how place(s) shaped the living of a relational practice in recreation in the lives of Margaret, Clark, and myself.

This began with a teaching shared by Johnny, a guide in my research, who shared that the "places we work harden our hearts." As my writing thinks with this teaching shared by Johnny, I inquire into moments and everyday practices that occurred in specific geographical places in the lives of Margaret, Clark, and myself, as we were co-composing stories of how to live in relational ways as practitioners. This writing attends to and recognizes the places in which these negotiations occurred; between institutional walls of urban social service agencies, in the travelling to/from academic places, in vans that moved us from urban to rural and back, and in a garden places. As this writing shows the landscapes we are part of shapes how our lives come together as recreation workers and community members. I argue an attentiveness and recognition is needed in recreation research towards the role of place and how place(s) shapes who we are,

how we are known, and how our lives come together. Or said another way, the places we live, work, and our lives come together shape how our relations and who/how we become as we become together.

How recreation practice can be thought of narratively

The establishment of recreation and leisure studies programs in the 1950s and 1960s across North America is often linked to demonstrating the value, or worth, of recreation and leisure organizations as an essential public service. Given the fields beginnings tied to demonstrating the value of programming, it is not surprising that research focused on the benefits of recreation, outcomes and assessments of programming, and best practices for practitioners to follow when designing and implementing programs. Even today, especially given concerns around budget allocations, policy documents and research prominently highlights the benefits of recreation (see Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, 2015). While the field of recreation and leisure studies is considerably more nuanced now, what I found to be noticeable is how the study of recreation and recreation practice (i.e., the practice of recreation practitioners) is continually drawn away from experience in favour of research that focuses on indicators and outcomes of programming.

This work shows how a narrative understanding of recreation practice can contribute to the field of recreation and leisure studies by demonstrating new possibilities for understanding recreation practice. A narrative understanding of recreation practice entails that experience is understood as composed and lived over time, formed in relation, as always in the midst, across contexts, time, and place (Clandinin, 2013). By working from a narrative understanding of experience, inquiries into the practice of recreation practitioners do not look to reduce the lives

of practitioner to notions of professional competence, rather, they are attentive to the experiences of practitioners as they negotiate their identities in the midst of their work landscapes. As I lived alongside Clark and Margaret, I worked to attend to the wholeness of their lives as they negotiated who they were and who they were becoming at River Ravine Garden. As we became attentive to each other's experiences, we shaped possibilities around what mattered in our practice and how we may be able to story ourselves within the places we work in fitting, and hopefully more sustaining ways.

Lingering threads: Tastes that remain

Always in the process of becoming wakeful

The first thread that I will think with is around the methodological puzzles that continue to linger in regards to the ongoing work that needs to be done towards living in wakeful ways alongside participants and community members. I am reminded of one moment at River Ravine Garden during the start of my second garden season. That day felt like a reunion of sorts for me as we began to gather again. As we gathered, one garden organizer and I began to talk. She began to share how other researchers were wanting "in" and were asking if they could conduct research around the garden and speak with some of the people who came to River Ravine Garden. Tensions were shared around how they wanted to be engaged as researchers. As these tensions were shared, she turned to me as we stood in the middle of a row slowly picking weeds and said I was "Doing research the right way." She explained what she meant by this, as she hoped others would build relations and live alongside in the garden.

I was storied by her as the person "Doing research the right kind of way." From our conversation I realized I could provide definitions of what doing research the right kind of way

looks like. I could provide steps and checklists of what to do as a community-based researcher. While such reflections can be beneficial, the certainty of such statements and checklists leaves me with many tensions. As I reflect on her words now, from a different time and place, I do so thinking with how they linger forward with me into the future. As I sit with her words now, they linger with me in different, yet similar, ways to how I was storied by some during my Master's as the "kid growing dirt" or "one of those nice guys." Different in that my internal processing or digesting of how I was storied felt much different. Similar in that both responses continually ask me to pause and think about who I am and who I am becoming as a researcher. They ask me to question if I am doing research the right kind of way as my life becomes entwined with the particularities of people and places. I am reminded that doing research the right kind of way is not so much a checklist but a continual process of negotiating who we are and who we are becoming as our lives come together. I am reminded that the potential in this research, and in many narrative inquiries, is not just in what we have done, showed, or argued but in attending to the ongoing living of participants and inquirers and how they were each shaped in the process. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) pointed out, neither researcher nor participant leaves a narrative inquiry unchanged.

How does my voice speak in this world

The second thread or flavor that lingers with me is how does my voice speak in the worlds in which I am a part of. By this I mean how do I live within, negotiate, and am complicit in the grand narratives within the field of recreation and leisure studies that so often look to legitimize our field through the reiteration of the outcomes and benefits of recreation, sport, and physical activity (Rossman & Schlatter, 2008). These grand narratives of what matters and how we justify our practice (i.e., benefits and outcomes of programming often tied to health) shapes

lives in programs and how people (practitioners and participants) are storied in programs. As I think about how these grand narratives shape lives, I think about Clark and what he shared with me on his last day of his practicum as he said, "I am not sure what I did in my role, if the garden would be any different had I not been here, I feel I didn't do anything." Clark's words continue to linger with me and leave me with puzzles around the direction of the field of recreation and leisure when we justify and explain what we do, and what matters in our practice. I wonder now if Clark felt he had to assess who he was, and what he did in his role as Garden Activities Coordinator through outcome and benefit measurements. As I think with Clark (and Margaret and Johnny) I feel responsibilities towards being intentional in how my voice speaks in the worlds in which I am a part of as a researcher and recreation practitioner educator. As I feel this nudge of responsibility from living alongside the participants in my research, I am left lingering threads that ask am I being attentive to experience and how lives are being composed in the places I live and work. By sharing such experiences of practice I hope readers of this work also feel nudges to wonder otherwise about who practitioners are, and what it is they do in recreation practice.

Attentive to place

Another lingering thread is around the significance of place in the lives of people. It was during this work that I became more attentive to the landscapes of which I was part. I became wakeful to how I storied urban landscapes, and how I was storied in such landscapes. I also became wakeful to different ways of living and practicing in places when I could come with loving perception (Lugones, 1987). As I came alongside Margaret and Clark I slowly began to hear how important place was in their lives as people who practiced. It was clear that as each entered into new landscapes negotiations occurred towards who they were and who they were

becoming as people who were positioned as recreation practitioners. As I met with Margaret and Clark many months after our time at River Ravine Garden it was clear that the place of River Ravine Garden was working on each of us in different ways as we each negotiated new landscapes.

As I think about the place of River Ravine Garden I return to a moment with Clark, a moment several months after our time at River Ravine Garden. Clark had invited my partner and I over for a dinner at his place with his girlfriend. As Clark and I talked at his dining room table, we talked about how he was negotiating a new working landscape. He described the large health services building, and the recreation therapy program that he was involved with. He looked at me and said how it was so different from River Ravine Garden and how he wondered if he would/could stay. As he shared with me I was reminded of the ease and comfort in which he moved between the rows of vegetables and conversed with the many gardeners at River Ravine Garden. As he shared about how he was experiencing this new place, I wondered how he was negotiating and sustaining himself on this new landscape.

As Clark placed these wonders of negotiating who he is and is becoming as he entered into new landscapes before me, I now think about the shifts that are on my horizon as my research takes me from the University of Alberta and River Ravine Garden to McGill University and working alongside Kahnawake youth. As these shifts in place occur I am reminded to be wakeful to how I enter into the midst of landscapes in which I am visitor. I am also reminded to not forget the places that have, and continue, to shape who I am and who I am becoming as a researcher.

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APPENDICIES

Notification of Approval

Date:	May 16, 2016
Study ID:	Pro00063201
Principal Investigator:	Michael Dubnewick
Study Supervisor:	Tara-Leigh McHugh
Study Title:	Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places
Approval Expiry Date:	Monday, May 15, 2017

	Approval Date	Approved Document
Approved Consent Form:	5/16/2016	Consent Form Practitioner, Dubnewick.docx
	5/16/2016	Consent Form Institutional, Dubnewick.docx
	5/16/2016	Release of Photograph, Dubnewick.docx

Sponsor/Funding Agency:	SSHRC - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council	SSHRC

Thank you for submitting the above study to the Research Ethics Board 1. Your application has been reviewed and approved on behalf of the committee.

A renewal report must be submitted next year prior to the expiry of this approval if your study still requires ethics approval. If you do not renew on or before the renewal expiry date, you will have to re-submit an ethics application.

Approval by the Research Ethics Board does not encompass authorization to access the staff, students, facilities or resources of local institutions for the purposes of the research.

Sincerely,

Anne Malena, PhD
Chair, Research Ethics Board 1

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system).

Information Letter (Practitioners)

Study Title: Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places

Research Investigator:
Michael Dubnewick
[redacted]
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2H9
[redacted]

Supervisor:
Tara-Leigh McHugh
[redacted]
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB, T6G 2H9
[redacted]

Background & Purpose

My name is Michael Dubnewick and I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta. My research focuses on the experiences of recreation practitioners as they facilitate recreation programs for inner city and Aboriginal peoples, like the community garden. I am interested in learning what meaning gardening, food, and recreation has in your life and the role it has in the community. There has been little research exploring how recreation practitioners negotiate their personal and professional knowledge in inner city and Aboriginal communities. Your stories of facilitating involvement in the garden and community are important for improving recreation programming. The results of this study will be used in support of my thesis. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada fund this project.

Study Procedures

Being part of this study involves meeting 8-10 times over the next couple of garden seasons (2016 & 2017). Each conversation should last about an hour. All conversations will be done before October 2017. In these talks we will talk about your experiences in the garden and stories of recreation programming, physical activity and food in your life. We will schedule these talks at a time and place that works for you. If you agree, I will audio-record and type out our conversations. I will also take notes of our time together while we are in the garden. These notes will add details that are missed during our conversations (e.g., descriptions of setting). I may also ask you to share personal objects or take pictures as well. We may talk about these objects or pictures when we sit down together. If you agree, some of these pictures may be published in my thesis, in academic journals, and used in conference presentations.

Throughout the garden season I would like to share what I have wrote from our conversations and notes I have taken. As an important participant in this research, I am asking that you help decide what stories you think should be included in the research and how they should be told. Everything you share with me will not be shared with anyone else unless you give me permission to share. When you

have approved and accepted the written accounts you are agreeing to their use in public publications. You are free to request that I do not publish specific stories. I will respect your request without question. Unless negotiated with myself, you will not be able to withdraw stories from the research once you have agreed that I can use them in publication. The stories that come from our time together will be presented at conferences and published in my thesis and academic journals.

Benefits & Risk

There are no financial or direct gains by participating in this study. You may find sharing and reflecting upon stories of your personal and professional practice rewarding to your development as a recreation practitioner. There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study. It is possible that you may feel vulnerable or distressed as you recall experiences in your life and as a recreation worker in the inner city. If you are uncomfortable with any question or conversation you have the right to not answer, ask that we change topics, or ask that we end the conversation entirely and meet at another time. You are not obligated to answer any question. Asking to change topics or end a conversation will not have any consequences to you or the research project.

Voluntary Participation

You do not have to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. If you decide to withdraw, we will only use the stories you have agreed and accepted upon to be published. Otherwise, all data will be deleted unless permission has been given to use the stories that have already been shared. There will be no penalty or harm to you if you decide to withdraw.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

Your privacy and confidentiality is extremely important to me and I will protect it at all times throughout the research. Pseudonyms will be used for all places and people, including you, to protect all involved. All data will be securely locked and encrypted. Only my supervisor and myself will have access to the data. The data will be kept for a minimum of five years following completion of project. We may use the data from this study in future research, but if we do this it will have to be approved by a Research Ethics Board. The University of Alberta Research Ethics Board has approved this research. If you have concerns about this study contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615. This office has no direct involvement with this project.

Thank you for consideration of this request. Your experiences are important to this research. If you have any questions please ask me or contact my supervisor Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh. Our contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Michael Dubnewick

Information Letter (Organizations)

Study Title: Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places

My name is Michael Dubnewick and I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta. My research focuses on the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners as they facilitate recreation programs, like the community garden project. I am interested in the stories practitioners tell of their involvement in food-based practices and recreation across place and the impact these activities have on their lives and others. Your community organization is an important site for many community members.

By providing consent for this study to take place you are allowing me to take part in the community garden project and possibly other recreation services tied to your organization. I will be inquiring into the lives of two to three recreation practitioners over the duration of two years (2016 to October 2017). I will have formal research conversations and participate alongside the participants in this study as they engage in food-based and other recreation programs. The stories that come from my time involved will be presented at conferences and published in journals and my thesis. These stories will focus directly on the individual experiences of practitioners to understand their lives and is not an assessment of your community organization or program. The privacy and confidentiality of your community organization is extremely important to me and I will protect it at all times throughout the research. Pseudonyms will be used for all people and places involved in the research.

There are no financial or direct gains by allowing me to partake in your programs. There are minimal foreseen risks to my involvement in your organization. You do not have to allow me to access to your community programs. You have the right to ask me to withdraw from your organizations programs and sites at any time without consequence. The University of Alberta Research Ethics Board has approved this research. If you have concerns about this study contact the Research Ethics Office at [redacted]. This office has no direct involvement with this project.

Thank you for consideration of this request. Your community is important to this research. If you have any questions please ask me or contact my supervisor Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh. Our contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Michael Dubnewick

Information Letter (Gardeners)

Study Title: Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places

My name is Michael Dubnewick and I am a PhD student at the University of Alberta. My research focuses on the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners as they facilitate recreation programs, like the community garden project. I am interested in the stories workers tell of their involvement in food-based practices and recreation across place and the impact these activities have on their lives and others.

Part of my researcher is to be a participant and observer in the garden. After our day in the garden I will write notes on the events that occurred during our time in the garden. Most of the notes will be reminders for me of what occurred and how (e.g., we thinned carrots as a group for three hours, and there was lots of discussion around carrot recipes). My observations and notes are not a direct assessment of you or the garden project. My focus is on the individual experiences of recreation workers who are part of the garden project and have agreed to take part in this study. The stories collected from recreation workers involved will be published as part of my thesis, in academic journals and at conferences. The privacy and confidentiality of you and the community is extremely important to me and I will protect it at all times throughout the research. Pseudonyms will be used for all people and places involved in the research.

There are minimal foreseen risks to my involvement in the garden. My involvement should not effect your participation and access to the garden and other recreation programs offered. The University of Alberta Research Ethics Board has approved this research. If you have concerns about this study contact the Research Ethics Office at [redacted]. This office has no direct involvement with this project.

Thank you for allowing me to garden and work alongside you in the community. Your continued involvement is important to the community. If you have any questions please ask me or contact my supervisor Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh. Our contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Michael Dubnewick

Consent Form (Practitioners)

My name is _____. I agree to participate in the research study entitled "Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places." I understand that Michael Dubnewick will carry out this research. Michael is a graduate student from the University of Alberta.

I have been informed that Michael will be a participant observer in the garden. We will engage in tape-recorded and typed out research conversations 8-10 times from 2016 to October 2017. In these conversations we will share our experiences of the garden and recreation programming in our lives and for those involved.

I am aware that this research will be made public. It will be published in his thesis, journals and presented at conferences. I understand the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council fund this research. I have been informed that my anonymity as well as the anonymity of others and the garden will be respected. All material collected will be kept private to ensure confidentiality. I understand that there are no financial or direct gains by participating in this study. I am aware of the risks of being involved in this study. I understand that I may feel vulnerable or distressed in sharing certain experiences with Michael. I understand I am not obligated to answer any questions. I feel comfortable in telling Michael this should the situation arise.

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and to clarify concerns about this inquiry. I know that I have the right to not participate. I know I can withdraw from the research at any time. In that event, any data that has been collected to that point will only be used if I previously gave consent. I feel comfortable in talking with Michael about this possibility if it should arise. If I have any more questions, I have been told who to contact. I have been provided with two consent form copies, one to be signed and returned to the researcher, and one for me to keep. By signing this I agree to take part in this study.

_____ _____

Participant's Name Date

_____

Participant's Signature

_____ _____

Researcher's Name Date

_____

Researcher's Signature

Consent Form (Organizations)

My name is _____ and I represent _____
I agree to allow Michael Dubnewick to participate in the garden project for his research entitled "Seed stories: A narrative inquiry into the experiences of inner city recreation practitioners in garden, recreation, and community places." I understand that Michael Dubnewick will carry out this research. Michael is a graduate student from the University of Alberta.

I understand that Michael will be a participant observer in the garden. I have been informed that he will write field notes of his participation. I have been informed that he will be inquiring into the lives of two to three people who are part of the garden project. I understand that his research is not a direct inquiry into our organization. I understand that I am consenting for Michael to be on site for the garden project and/or other recreation programs. I understand it is one site of many sites. I have been informed that Michael will focus on the lives of people as they experience recreation services.

I am aware that this research will be made public. It will be published in journals and presented at conferences. I have been informed that the anonymity of people, the garden, and other organizations will be respected. All material collected will be kept private to ensure confidentiality.

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and to clarify concerns about this inquiry. I know that I have the right to not allow Michael to participate in our programs. I can ask him to withdraw from the site at any time without consequence before October 31, 2017. I feel comfortable in talking with Michael about this possibility if it should arise. If I have any more questions, I have been told who to contact. I have been provided with two consent form copies, one to be signed and returned to the researcher, and one for me to keep.

_____
Person's Name Organization's Name

_____ _____
Person's Signature Date

_____ _____
Researcher's Name Date

_____
Researcher's Signature