Mothers with Lower-Incomes and Community Programming: Illuminating Narratives of Access and Experience in Kitchener

by

Kristin Masson

A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfilment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Recreation and Leisure Studies

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2016

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be electronically available to the public.

Abstract

While motherhood is a wonderful experience full of love and joy, it continues to involve tremendous amounts of change in all areas of a new mother's life. While leisure activities, such as the ones offered at community supported programs, may help to improve mothers' experiences, many mothers still do not participate. Furthermore, literature was needed to better illuminate the complexities of mothers' experiences of gaining awareness and access to community supported programming, specifically recognizing the intersectionality of class and gender. Thus this socialist feminist narrative inquiry sought to create opportunities for social change by illuminating the gendered and classed experiences of mothers while gaining awareness, access, and experiencing community supported programming. Through the use of unstructured life story interviews, notions of gendered expectations, patriarchy, class, and inequality were brought to the forefront and questioned. Through this exploration, this research also discussed the possible transformations and changes that the mothers interviewed thought would improve their experiences.

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my participants. I am so grateful to have met you and honoured that you trusted me with your stories and experiences. My work truly would not have been possible with out each of you and your time.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Lisbeth Berbary for knowing just how to build me back up, the oxford commas, and the incredible insight she brought each and every day. She allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction and continually challenged me to think critically and look for how I could raise the bar. Her support and feedback has helped me create something I am extremely proud of. Thank you Lisbeth.

I would also like to thank my supervisory committee, Heather Mair and Diana Parry. Without their expertise and input, I would not have been able to fine-tune my work, and really hone in on what my research needed to express.

I must also express my profound gratitude to my husband, Adam Frye, for providing me with such tremendous support. Thank you for encouraging me with your pep talks, being my on-call editor, and providing me with an endless supply of coffee. This has not been an easy process, but your love and support has helped get me where I am today.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents. Thank you for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study. You have always allowed me the opportunity and freedom to peruse my passions, and for that I will always be grateful.

Table of Contents

<center>**Chapter 1 - Introduction**</center>

Introduction

       A woman entering motherhood can experience a tremendous amount of changes in all aspects of life. Nelson (2009) suggested this transition involves "…changes in her bodily appearance and functions, her emotions and psychology, her sleep and work schedules, the tasks she performs, her social circle, her sense of self, her sexuality and the roles she plays" (Nelson, 2009, p. 12). Mulcahy and Parry (2011) discussed the isolation, boredom, and lack of leisure along with several other factors experienced that added to a mother's perception of stress and lower overall wellbeing. However, while mother's are experiencing lower levels of wellbeing, it has also been found that participation in community supported programming such as parenting groups can counter stress by providing support through educational and social networking opportunities (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). This study will recognize the complexity of intersecting social categories that influence programming experiences of mothers. Recognizing that the incidence of lower income households in the Kitchener area was significant, this study chose to focus on interrogating and questioning notions of gender and class specifically. Thus, this research aimed to promote justice and well-being. This was done by focusing on eliminating systems of oppression by unearthing how gendered expectations, patriarchy, and class were experienced by mothers with lower incomes as they gained awareness and access to community supported programming.

       Warner (2005) uses the term "Age of anxiety" to describe Western culture's push for women to be both mothers and workers. As a result, women experience a constant pressure to preform, to strive for perfect selflessness, and to maintain a work-family balance (Warner, 2005). Mothers are taking on more responsibility, as they are no longer just raising a healthy child but

<center>1</center>

are now expected to raise the "most all around perfect adult possible" making this work-family balance increasingly challenging (Warner, 2005, p. 36). This age of anxiety has made mothers feel judged; basing their self worth around how well their child succeeds. They also expressed feelings of anxiety, fear, worry, and guilt, while trying to create this work-family balance (Warner, 2005, p. 5). This culture of motherhood along with the anxiety, increased responsibility, and decreased support networks experienced by mothers may negatively impact wellbeing. While there are several factors that make the transition to motherhood challenging, research has also explored ways to increase the potential wellbeing of mothers during this time.

In particular, research has found several factors that play a critical role in shaping women's experience of overall wellbeing during their transition to motherhood. For instance, access to social support from partnerships is essential in maintaining wellbeing (Sevon, 2011). Partner support in particular has been shown to decrease feelings of social isolation and postpartum depression. Yet in a review of past scholarship, trends had shown that more women were choosing to live single lifestyles, and there was a growing separation between marriage and mothering (Arendell, 2000). This lack of a partner continues to be an important consideration because spousal support continues to be protective against these experiences of lower wellbeing in more recent trends (Sevon, 2011).

Another trend impacting motherhood and the social support crucial in maintaining wellbeing, is the increase of geographical distance between mothers and their extended family (Posmontier & Horowitz, 2004). This separates them from the support that their extended family would have provided them in the past (Posmontier & Horowitz, 2004). This support is a vital factor, as more women are beginning to participate in the paid labour market and are choosing to return to work faster after giving birth (Gaudet, Cooke, & Jacob, 2011). Guadet et al. (2011) has

suggested this early transition back into the labour market may be due to the implications on women's individual life courses associated with breaks in employment for childbearing and caregiving. For instance, pregnancy and parental leave may impact equity in employment, long-term economic wellbeing, maintenance of human capital and professional mobility, and eventual retirement (Gaudet et al., 2011). Thus, women are not staying at home during childrearing nearly as long as past generations have. The experience of becoming a new mother results in a loss of informal support and a potential need for accessible formal support programming. Thus, this research considered community supported programming as a possible source of support for mothers, as they provide educational and social networking opportunities.

Research that has explored these trends and experiences of lower wellbeing among mothers, and leisure research specifically, has found that social leisure activities can aid in developing social support networks for mothers, ultimately easing women through the transition to motherhood (Parry, Glover, & Mulcahy, 2013). More specifically, past research has found that forming relationships with other mothers can decrease feelings of isolation, as well as, improve mental health among new mothers (Mauthner, 1999). While there are a number of informal and formal support opportunities for mothers, parenting groups specifically can ease a woman's transition to motherhood (Hanna, Edgecombe, Jackson, & Newman, 2002).

Parenting groups are synonymous with many other titles such as; mother's groups, playgroups, mums-and-tots, baby-and-me and so forth are organized groups of mothers who have come together and participate in programing often aimed at educational, social networking and skill development opportunities, on a regular or semi-regular basis (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011; Mulcahy, Parry,& Glover, 2010). The participation in parenting groups has been suggested to improve mother's social support, access to resources, and overall wellbeing (Dentea & Moren-

3

Cross, 2005; Fieldan & Gallagher, 2008). Mulcahy and Parry (2011) explored the beneficial

qualities of participating in such groups further and suggested that access to structured postnatal

programs through the Public Health Agency of Canada would assist in the formation of mothers

(or parents) groups to help ease their transition to parenthood (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011). To

expand on this gap in the literature, the intersection of social categories of class and gender were

taken specifically into consideration in this research. The consideration of class and gender is

important because while these parenting programs have been suggested as beneficial for mothers

in past research, not all mothers may experience them equally. For instance, current socio-

economic position may influence a woman's access to and participation in community supported

programming for mothers.

While research has found that community supported programming can ease the transition

to motherhood, further research was needed to shed light on the ways in which these programs

are accessed and experienced. In particular, to support and encourage equity within community

programing, research needed utilize the relational thinking emphasized in intersectionality and

question the intersecting social categories and their relation in the formation of power,

oppressions, and other social inequalities. Specifically, the complex inequalities experienced

from class and socio economic status were brought to the forefront of the discussion. Thus, this

research has begun a discussion of how to better serve and reach mothers who could benefit from

community supported programs. However, other social categories such as race and sexuality

were clearly relevant in the experiences of community programs and further research should

explore these mutually constructing categories.

In line with the socialist feminist lens utilized, this research recognized that capitalism

and patriarchy do not work in isolation but rather together, creating distinct forms of oppression.

This understanding was used to emphasize the impact patriarchy and capitalism had on mothers and community programming in Kitchener, Ontario. As such, this study questioned notions of gendered expectations, patriarchy, class, and complex inequalities in order to provide opportunities for change that may support a more socially just community.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this socialist feminist narrative inquiry was to create opportunities for social change by illuminating narratives of how mothers with lower incomes gain awareness, access, and subsequently experience community supported programming for new mothers in the Kitchener, Ontario.

Research Questions

The research questions proposed for this study connect directly to the purpose statement and are as follows:

1. What experiences do mothers with lower incomes have during the process of gaining awareness and access to community supported programs in Kitchener?
2. What are the experiences of mothers after gaining access to participation in such community programs in Kitchener?
3. What are possible transformations that might occur to improve mother's experiences in community programs in Kitchener?

To better answer these questions, a detailed understanding of what community supports are available for mothers is necessary. Thus, the following sections will discuss policies and social benefits put in place by the government that may impact mothers and their awareness, access, and experience of community supported programs. This discussion will also provide

further rationale for why this study focuses on the experiences of mothers with lower incomes, critically exploring programs and specifically addresses intersections of motherhood and class.

Mothers and Social Programming

The previous discussion provides a glimpse of the culture of motherhood within North America. It explores the current National political sphere to provide context of the impact policies and programming have on mothers in the Kitchener area. In particular, this section will review general Canadian policies around maternity, and those policies specific to mothers with lower socio-economic status. Outlining these policies will illuminate the challenges and inequalities mothers with lower incomes may experience in Canada. Following this, an exploration of programs offered in Kitchener, Ontario narrows the focus on what community supports are available to mothers.

social benefits and policy. Canada has several social benefits and policies that are available to support families through their transition to raising a new baby. For instance, pregnancy leave provides pregnant employees the right to take up to 17 weeks off work, unpaid, due to the inability to work from pregnancy or recently giving birth (Ontario Ministry of Labour, 2015). In addition to pregnancy leave, Canada offers parental leave to either biological or adoptive parents. This benefit gives a parent the right to take up to 35 weeks, shared, off work (Government of Canada, 2014). The average calculated amount of income received from parental benefits is 55% of the insurable weekly earnings, up to a maximum of $48,600 (Government of Canada, 2014). However, Employment Insurance requires any applicant to have worked 600 insurable hours at their current place of employment in order to receive benefits (Bohnert & Robson, 2010). To further assist families with financial strain, Canada also offers the Canada Child Tax benefit, a tax-free monthly payment for eligible families to help with the cost

of raising children under the age of 18 (Government of Canada, 2014). While these benefits are the first form of financial support provided to new families, the culmination of these benefits may still not be enough to meet some families' basic needs.

For families that need additional assistance the government of Canada also offers the Family Supplement benefit. This allows low-income families (those under a family net income of $25,961) to receive up to 80% of their weekly insurable income within 28 days of application approval (Government of Canada, 2014). The weekly benefits received are calculated using the parents' records of employment and the amount paid based on weekly insurable earnings (Government of Canada, 2014). While these programs are in place to aid families in their transition, the decisions around whether or not to utilize these programs remain complex based on their implications.

These policies and social benefits put forth by the government are found to have varying impacts on families. For example, families in a study by Schuster, Chung, Elliott, Garfield, Vestal, & Klein (2009) reported both positive and negative effects of social benefits. This may be due to the financial strain placed on families during this period (Bohnert & Robson, 2010). For instance, coverage of parental leave, as well as, access to childcare can have a large impact on the decisions families make regarding when to work (Bohnert & Robson, 2010). While the government does offer the Transition Universal Childcare benefit, providing $100 per child to help with childcare fees, the decisions regarding whether or not to use some benefits becomes a balancing act (Government of Canada, 2014). Therefore, high coverage with parental leave combined with high access to childcare allows for maximum choice in deciding how to balance work. However, for families with lower coverage from parental leave, parents tend to take

shorter leave and return quicker (usually women) to the paid labour market, this adds an increased need for more childcare (Bohnert & Robson, 2010).

For families raising a child with a disability, these decisions become even more complex. The Child Disability benefit provides an additional tax-free benefit for families raising a child with prolonged impairment of mental or physical function (Government of Canada, 2014). However, the additional resources needed places pressure to return to work, and the return to work places additional pressure for more resources and may further strain a family.

While the social benefits and policies offered in Canada seem to be an attractive system, by international comparison, other countries such as France offer more accessible parental benefits (Bohnert & Robson, 2010). New mothers in Canada are being discharged from hospitals earlier (exact time is dependent on the hospital) and into smaller support systems than previous generations (Warner, 2005). Unlike France, which provides benefits toward postpartum nanny services, in Canada the parents are the sole caregivers for the baby, and often it is the mother that takes on the majority of this responsibility (Warner, 2005).

After reviewing national policy, it appears that despite the positive intentions, these policies may not be beneficial or easily accessed by all mothers. These complex experiences of government policy impact the access of programming for mothers and new mothers with lower incomes especially. This study will now look at a deeper discussion of Kitchener allowing for a more narrowed exploration of these suggested social programs and what is available to mothers in this region.

Kitchener, Ontario. The city of Kitchener, Ontario is an excellent area to explore awareness, access, and experience of community supported programming for new mothers with

lower incomes based on the cultural and unique economic changes happening throughout the region. Traditionally, the City of Kitchener is a diverse, multicultural community, which has relied heavily on the economic impact of the manufacturing industry (Kitchner-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA, 2011). For instance, in the 2011 stats Canada survey, the manufacturing industry was reported as having the highest employment rate in Kitchener with 20 percent of respondents indicating this was the industry they worked in (Government of Canada, 2011). To put this into context, the next highest rate of employment by industry was retail trade at 11 percent (Government of Canada, 2011). While the median total income for the Kitchener-Waterloo region is $82,160, lone parent families in Kitchener are nearly half this at $41,440. Even further, 11.8 percent of the Kitchener population qualifies as low income. This means a family household has a total income of $27,000 or less (Government of Canada, 2011). This number refers to the sum of incomes of all members of a household, minus the federal, provincial, and territorial income taxes paid (Government of Canada, 2011). As such, Kitchener was an excellent area to explore experiences of mother's with lower income.

Recently, Kitchener has aimed to re-energize its downtown core, focusing on investing heavily in the development of establishing a new school of Pharmacy and Health Sciences campus in partnership with the University of Waterloo. As well, Kitchener is redefining its identity by installing a new rapid transit system, and recruiting global innovation brands such as Google to join its downtown core. These additions will foster rapid innovation for not only the upper class but will make the city more accessible and affordable to people of all incomes in the region. Ideally, the city hopes these additions will provide potential health providers, economic benefits, and diversify the local economy (City of Kitchener, 2014).

The need for this progress is highlighted by a recent study in which Downtown Kitchener and the surrounding areas were found to be at a higher risk of several major factors of child and family wellbeing. Firstly, families were at risk of not having disposable income, meaning they were less likely to have money left over for savings and buying extras after paying for necessities like housing or hydro (The Region of Waterloo Social Services, 2010). Secondly, children in this area were at risk of scoring low on childhood development of early learning tools (The Region of Waterloo Social Services, 2010). This translates to children showing less preparedness for school and may suggest further government supported programming is needed. Lastly, families were at risk of experiencing less cohesion within families and their community (The Region of Waterloo Social Services, 2010). This finding highlights the lack of social support and network development needed for higher levels of wellbeing among new mothers. These trends align with the need for government supported social programming in order to build social networks and increase the overall wellbeing of new mothers.

Kitchener has several government-supported programs such as those offered at the Early Years Center, which is provided through funding given by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The programs offered at this center create opportunities for social networking and community support for parents and caregivers (Early Years in Waterloo Region, 2005). It is described as, "a place where parents and caregivers can get answers to questions, information about programs and services that are available for young children, and an opportunity to connect with other parents and caregivers in the community" (Early Years in Waterloo Region, 2005). While most programs are provided at no cost to the participants, there are some that require a fee and not all programs are offered at all three locations. These constraints may limit choices for mothers with lower incomes who traditionally have limited time and transportation options (Early Years in

Waterloo Region, 2005). While the Early Years Center in Kitchener is a prevalent option, there are also other programs available to new mothers in the region.

Similar to The Early Years Centre in Kitchener, other local organizations provide programs that focus on specific trends in the region including mothers new to Canada, mothers involved in substance use, and mothers with lower-incomes. Specifically, the regional Planned Parenthood organization aims to "help families make the right choice by being well informed and supported" (PPWR Waterloo Region, 2014). They offer support for all areas of the pre and postnatal process. Additionally the Planned Parenthood Waterloo Region provides support for mothers and parents that are new to Canada and families living with lower-income (PPWR Waterloo Region, 2014). The Moving Forward programs offered through the House of Friendship provide programming focused on women parenting young children that are involved with alcohol or drug use (House of Friendship, n.d.). This program provides counselling, education regarding parenting and substance use, and recovery group opportunities (House of Friendship, n.d.). However, these programs are not the only initiatives that Kitchener has offered to new mothers.

In partnership with these programs, child-care subsidies are offered in order to assist families with the financial burden of childcare fees in the entire city of Kitchener. The amount of subsidy a family receives is determined using that family's net adjusted income (Waterloo Region Social Services, 2010). To be more selective for families in greater need of assistance, families with a net adjusted income of $20,000.00 or more must also pay a parent contribution to the childcare provider (Waterloo Region Social Services, 2010). These programs offered to local families attempt to provide support for new parents, however, the awareness of these programs

and their accessibility for parents, and mothers with low incomes especially, is not clear in past literature.

While Canada does have programs available to support new mothers, Mulchay and Parry (2011) illustrated how some mothers just do not participate in them, instead they try to negotiate their position in an informal group of mothers. Mulcahy and Parry's (2011) findings illuminated how these government programs are being missed by some mothers, and all but one of the women talked of their desire for social support and identified their lack of knowledge of these programs and their accessibility. As such, this research aimed to illuminate mothers' awareness, access, and experiences of these programs in order to provide an opportunity for change both within this region and in the larger context of Canadian policy.

Illuminating these often-silenced narratives begins a discussion on the changes that may help to improve experiences and engagement with community supported programs, especially for those mothers living on low incomes. Now that an introduction to motherhood, a political, and a local context has been explored, the next chapter will utilize a feminist lens to further contextualize the culture of motherhood. Aspects of wellbeing and social support will be discussed in order to develop an understanding of the meanings and experiences formed around mothering and participation in community supported programs.

Chapter 2 – Foundations in Theory and Literature

Having contextualized the cultural and political aspects regarding mothering and community supported programming, it is important to develop a theoretical framework in which to better analyze and understand the literature in the field. This study applied feminism and major tenets of socialist feminism throughout the research process. Thus, literature from various disciplines will be discussed in order to unpack the meanings of key feminist concepts in relation to motherhood. Following this discussion of feminism, discipline specific literature will be explored in order to highlight how feminism has impacted leisure research in the past. Finally, literature will be discussed regarding mothering, wellbeing, and leisure. These foundations in theory and literature will culminate to identify the gap in the literature this inquiry aimed to bring to light. It became clear that further exploration to illuminated the complexity of mother's experiences of different intersections, such as class and gender would help to better understand access and experience of community supported programming.

Theoretical Framework: Feminism

A feminist lens informed by major tenets of socialist feminism guided this study. Feminism can be understood as "a set of practices and perspectives that affirms differences among women and promotes women's interests, health, and safety, locally and abroad" (Devault & Gross, 2012, p. 207). Furthermore, the overall aim of feminism and that of this research is to "promote justice and the well-being of all women" (Devault & Gross, 2012, p. 207). Additionally, hooks (2000) emphasized that feminism is not just for women, rather it is for everyone, as it is a movement focused on eliminating sexism and sexist exploitation and oppressions. Feminist research, then, aims to trouble claims of knowledge from those who are

privileged, and emphasize the unique and situated experiences of each voice as a valued source of knowledge (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

While these principles of feminism are used throughout this study, major tenets of socialist feminism will better situate the methodology used and will narrow the lens used to analysis this research. This is important, as hooks (2000) has suggested that there is no single feminism, but rather there are "as many types of feminisms as there are women." (p. ix). As such, this study specifically utilized feminist perspectives, which aimed to expose differences in power relations, authority, and exclusion, and sought to illuminate experiences of empowerment (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Furthermore, concepts of patriarchy, gendered expectations, and inequality within the culture of motherhood were brought to the forefront of this study.

tenets of socialist feminism. The feminist lens used throughout this paper was informed by major tenets of socialist feminism. Socialist feminism is a branch of feminism focusing on both the public and private spheres of women's lives. It is a two-pronged theory expanding ideas of both liberal and Marxist feminism. Marxist feminism suggests that class oppression is the primary source of inequality for women. Whereas, liberal feminism argues that patriarchy is the primary root of oppression for women. Principles of socialist feminism work to specify that neither Marxist feminism nor liberal feminism are the sole source of inequality but rather capitalism, as well as patriarchy work together in order to create distinct forms of oppression and privilege. This brings to light the complexity of gender inequality by recognizing intersecting and differential patterns of class, racial, and gender disadvantages (Lorber, 2012). Through this framework, the following section emphasizes the impact of patriarchy, class, and gender on the experiences of motherhood.

Contextualizing Motherhood within Feminism

Mothering is a complex term often used to describe the socially constructed understandings, beliefs, and values associated with being a mother. Therefore, it is ideals that are created and reinforced by society and culture rather than something biologically innate. Traditionally, this performance of mothering is fulfilled through acts of nurturing and caring for the children. Motherhood is then a patriarchal institution, where male defined, socially constructed expectations of mothers are formed (O'reilly, 2010). The act of mothering on the other hand, is based on the mother's relationship with her children and defined by the unique qualities and practices of each mother (O'reilly, 2010). While experiences of mothering are thus personal, they are still influenced by the expectations guided by the beliefs and values set out by the patriarchal institution of motherhood (O'reilly, 2010). For instance, a mother's duties, responsibilities, and standards of mothering are often guided by socially constructed practices of motherhood. However, it is important to recognize the complexity of mothering and motherhood, as the meanings of these terms and experiences are influenced by multiple discourses not just patriarchy. As mothers resist and re-establish patriarchal discourse, new meanings of motherhood are produced.

Motherhood can be understood as a socially mandated institution, as participation in this experience is expected of women. Mothering can be viewed as a primary identity for adult women, entwined with the feminine accomplishment of gender (Arendell, 2000, Christopher, 2012). In other words, motherhood is linked to notions of femininity and connected to the achievement of a women's gender identity. Often, womanhood and motherhood become so entwined they can be used synonymously in society (O'reilly, 2010). When looking at the policies and attitudes society has, motherhood plays a significant role in achievement of a

women's gender identity, in that by becoming a mother you can achieve more criteria to achieve the woman identity (O'reilly, 2010). This is reflective of the pronatalist ideals that can frame experiences of motherhood.

"Pronatalism is the promotion of reproduction whether by direct policies, such as child subsidies, or indirect influences, such as cultural celebrations of motherhood and childbearing" (O'reilly, 2010, p. 1028). For instance, in the past the government reinforced and encouraged reproduction of the family through the media, suggesting it was a women's natural purpose in life. This encouragement of natural reproduction are social and cultural messages regarding a woman's sex roles, family norms, and even feminism (O'reilly, 2010). Today we see this pronatalism in government subsidies, tax benefits, and celebrations such as Mother's day. These pronatalist ideals promote the nuclear family, with the traditional stay-at-home mother, who cares for her family and employed husband in a suburban home. These social and cultural messages of pronatalism can be widespread and unavoidable, and at times, can limit autonomy and self determination (O'reilly, 2010). In this sense motherhood is a expectation for women, and often those who are childless, voluntarily or not, are viewed as "other". Voluntary childlessness is stigmatized as selfish, while involuntary childlessness can experience pity (O'reilly, 2010). Again, these understandings regarding pronatalism, motherhood, and childlessness are all affected by multiple discourses, complicating the individual meanings made regarding the experiences of mothering and should be further explored.

In an effort to further explore motherhood, the following section will discuss major tenets of socialist feminism as it relates to motherhood. This theoretical framework has guided the following discussion to unpack the roles patriarchy, gendered expectations, and class play in the different experiences of privilege and oppression among women and mothers specifically. Since

this study utilized major tenets of socialist feminist theory, class has also been discussed in order to illuminate the complexity of the inequality of intersecting statuses recognizing that inequalities are not experienced in isolation. Within socialist feminist theory, race is also recognized as a mutually constructing category, however, for the depth of this research project class and gender were kept as the focus of analysis.

       patriarchy. Patriarchy refers to the assumption that men are superior to women and should possess power over women and the family (hooks, 2000). Notions of patriarchy are often associated with elements of "male-dominated, male-identified, and male-centered character" (Johnson, 2004, p. 29). These notions are institutionalized and thus are not reduced to a single individual. Patriarchy is a system in which people participate by sharing understandings and relationships (Johnson, 2004). For mothers, patriarchy is not created and experienced by one person alone but rather it is seen within the family structure, learned from one generation, and taught to the next. Johnson (2004) defines it as "a set of symbols and ideas that make up a culture embodied by everything from content of everyday conversation to literature and film" (p. 29). Through this system standards of masculinity are set, entwined with manhood, and is accepted as the norm, while womanhood and standards of femininity are placed in a marginal position of "other" (Johnson, 2004, p. 29).

       When looking deeper into patriarchal culture, core values of power and domination are exposed, as a patriarchal society is by its nature an oppressive. For mothers specifically, a patriarchal society reinforces and perpetuates specific definition and ideals of the role of mother and establishes their hierarchical position in the family. Johnson (2004) states that "… people who grow up with and live in it will tend to accept, identify with, and participate in [gender oppression] as 'normal'" (p. 26). Thus, this system of power becomes the norm and for this

system to be oppressive, it only requires people to do nothing (Johnson, 2004). In fact, while many men dislike participating in patriarchy, they may not even recognize when they perpetuate this norm and often are not ready to give up the benefits gained from its existence (hooks, 2000).

Patriarchal society creates values and norms aligned with ideals of the ideal family, and a male-centered authority. For example, traditional family units are households based on close kinship relations, with clear gendered divisions of labour, in which the father is often viewed as the breadwinner and the mother as the primary caregiver (Freysinger et al., 2013). However, these social structures are hierarchical in which mothering and other characteristics associated with femaleness, such as domestic work become devalued. The hierarchical nature, values, and norms developed in a patriarchal culture, suggests expectations of what social life should be for women.

gendered expectations. Patriarchal society is associated with expectations of how to act, dress, speak, and behave, and many of these expectations are gender specific. This study understands gender as socially constructed in which individuals engage in a performance of a body. This then suggests that gender is not innate or a biologically determined given following binaries such as male/female. Feminist research has moved away from understandings of gender as biologically determined male or female based on anatomic structure and instead believes that gender and sex can be defined along a continuum (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 125). Gender as a socially constructed status is achieved through "a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine 'natures'" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126). In other words, gender is something that men and women do. These doings are up for change based on the expectations the culture around us "expects" the bodies to do. Using a socialist feminist lens will ask this

research to view the maternal role as a social construction and activities associated with mothering as gendered expectations of women. Thus, this research recognized the complexity of gendered inequalities and the intersecting and differential patterns of social categories such as gender and class while exploring the mothers and community supported programming.

For mothers specifically, gendered expectations of "good mothering" are learned within a socially constructed space. Nelson (2009) refers to this space as the culture of motherhood where norms and expectations are passed along from generation to generation, historically and culturally often revolving around notions of selflessness and ethic of care for family. Women themselves are often main perpetuators of these norms, continuously repeating expectations of motherhood until they become understood as "taken for granted" Truth (Miller & Brown, 2005). Miller and Brown (2005) discussed how many cultural and social practices have reinforced gender ideologies that ultimately teach women how to behave. Within Western society ideologies of motherhood are entwined with expectations of intense mothering, "this motherhood mandate declares that mothering is exclusive, wholly child centered, emotionally involving, and time-consuming" (Arendell, 2000, p. 1194).These gendered expectations often emphasize how women ought to fulfill the role of "the good mother." There are expectations placed on women around sexuality, to be hetero and married, to be seen as the central figure within the family structure, and to provide emotional and physical care to the family (May, 2008). But these expectations of "good mothering" go deeper, providing guidelines for appropriate maternal behaviour, such as inherent goodness, unwavering love, and duty bound presence (O'reilly, 2010). This role normalizes expectations of self-sacrifice and accessibility of the mother to all members of the family at all times and is viewed as an integral component of women's moral development within a patriarchal culture (Miller & Brown, 2005). Miller and Brown (2005) refer

19

to this as the "ethic of care" where mothers are expected to provide for their families before

fulfilling their own needs. Mothers that meet these expectations of motherhood achieve the

"good mother" identity, receiving social approval (O'reilly, 2010). Thus, when women transition

in to motherhood, taking on the caregiver role is strongly emphasized in our patriarchal culture

and can lead to the mother feeling guilt or failure when she does not meet these expectations.

Notions of gender and mothering are therefore socially constructed; yet even with social

constructions come tangible realities, especially when dominant ideologies perceive gender as

fixed or innate. Looking at traditional notions of motherhood we see society ascribe a woman to

a role centered on being the mother and wife, whose main function was of childrearing and

family nurturing (Freysinger et al., 2013). Domestic tasks and family were emphasized while

educational attainment was not deemed as necessary (Warner, 2005). Prior to the twentieth

century the majority of women would internalize these roles and perpetuate these values through

generations in an attempt to mimic the ideal family (Freysinger, Shaw, Henderson, & Bialeschki,

2013). However, these gendered expectations are complex and mothers will have varying

experiences of them. In order to understand the experiences of the women in this study it is

important to recognize that these gendered expectations may or may not dictate their lives. By

placing a socialist feminist lens on the literature gendered expectations were exposed when

illuminating the stories of awareness, access, and experience of programming for mothers.

complex inequality. Beyond the need to interrogate gendered expectations, this inquiry

recognized the unique intersections of multiple social categories such as gender, race, and class

within the lived experiences of mothers in Kitchener. Social categories and their intersections

play out as systems of power within the lives of individuals in any given community (Dill,

McLaughlin, & Nieves, 2007). For instance, various biological, social and cultural categories

such as gender, class, race, sexual orientation etc. interact on multiple levels in order to impact and structure ones social identity (Watson & Scraton, 2013). These simultaneous interactions may contribute to systemic injustice and social inequalities, and double or triple jeopardy (Watson & Scraton, 2013). This "double jeopardy hypothesis" suggests that two or more sources of social disadvantage may interact at once, to produce especially problematic outcomes (Beal, 2008). While Beale (2008) originally discussed the negative economic implication of double jeopardy regarding women of colour, their hypothesis sees maleness, whiteness, and wealth as independent advantages. Thus, this study viewed being a woman and having lower economic-status as social disadvantages creating links to systems of oppression. Though class and gender were the focus of this study, race and whiteness specifically was viewed as a distinct social advantage when observing access to and experience of community programming in the diverse city of Kitchener, Ontario. Interconnections between class and gender, and complex inequalities were brought to the forefront of this research in order to provide opportunities for justice and change for mothers that are unaware and unable to access parenting programs.

      class. This inquiry, then, was specifically interested in the double jeopardy connected to the interconnections of class and motherhood. The socialist feminist lens draws heavily on the notions of class structure within any given community and provides a framework with which to interrogate these intersections. In the boundaries of this study, class was explored in relation to new mothers, and the impact it had on their access to community supported parenting programs. How does one then define class? Class can be understood as relational, suggesting that people exist within social relations and thus class is based on "qualitative social relations, which define such relative positions" (Wright, 1979, p. 7). Often research relies on theorist Karl Marx's "means of productions theory" to explain these relations. Within this perspective, we live in a

capitalist society in which class is structured based on one's ability to control the means of production (Wright, 1979). Those who are considered lower class workers, the proletariat, do not own the means of production and therefore do not have the means with which to accumulate wealth (Wright, 1979). Those who are in charge of the workers and therefore "own" the means of production are able to appropriate surplus from the labour and therefore become the bourgeoisie, or upper class (Wright, 1979). These relations to both different class positions, and to the established or dominant means of production within a specific historical and local culture, then play out in the lived experiences of individuals as individuals establish themselves within a hierarchical structure of wealth in the Canadian political structure.

With this definition, this study then understands class as something that is embodied subjectively. Like gender, individuals express class through their daily lives in their personal behavior, the way they talk, dress, etc. However, it is a dynamic state, in which class and wealth are struggled for and achieved. This understanding is crucial in exploring mothers with lower incomes as it will have an impact on their values, beliefs, and behaviour.

Gillies (2007) found that the mothers she interviewed all struggled to achieve financial stability on a low income. Financial instability within the family is reflected in the decisions made around material considerations and necessities, often acting as a source of anxiety and effort (Gillies, 2007). Financial strain on a family is tightly linked to struggles of access, and insecurity. For instance, the access and decisions made around childcare are often influenced by financial instability for families with lower income (Gillies, 2007). Class can influence mothers to prioritize differently from the dominant expectations around "good mothering". Such things as being at home for their children, participating in community programming, etc. are often prioritized lower due to financial instability. As a result, this system of power allows for

judgements of the balance of paid/unpaid labour between the different classes to develop. This then suggests that expectations and judgements are dependent on values, norms, and beliefs as well as economic need (Gillies, 2007). Families on a low income encounter experiences with instability and precariousness in other aspects of their lives as well. For instance, with out a stable inflow of disposable income, mothers may struggle to find safe, reliable, quality daycare, while those from high income households have greater access to high quality, stable childcare (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). This may force mothers with lower incomes to either rely on family for child care, or leave the paid work force to stay home with their children. This begins to illustrate how people with lower socioeconomic position have less power and control over their own circumstances.

Within Canada there are several factors that the government considers when discussing and researching class and socio-economic status. Primarily current income is a major factor that influences a woman's economic wellbeing, however, such things as assets, debts, and net worth must also be considered (Government of Canada, 2013). Canadian women on average receive a lower total income than men and this income situation can vary depending on family status as well. For instance, female lone-parent families have the lowest total income of all family types in Canada (Government of Canada, 2013). Furthermore, as noted earlier the incidence of low income households in the Kitchener area were significant. When families on low incomes apply for subsidies the family must provide proof that they receive below a certain income to qualify. For example, the child-care subsidy discussed early requires families to earn a net income of $20,000 (Waterloo Region Social Services, 2010). This income constrains mother's access to parenting programs that offer the educational and social leisure that research has been found to benefit their overall wellbeing.

While studying mothers with lower income families then both gender and class become relevant to provide more complex pictures of their lived experiences. In particular, it is important to not only recognize that class may influence these participant's experiences with community supported programing, but also to expose relations of class that may exist in order to work towards re-structuring those relations to better support a more socially just community. Therefore, the basic relational nature of class should be interrogated to show how modes of wealth, and access to community programming are experienced in the lives of mothers in KW. Exposing these relational intersections brought to light issues of oppression apart from and in conjunction with motherhood and community access in KW.

Feminism, Leisure, and Motherhood

The use of feminism specifically within the leisure literature has focused on unpacking culturally constructed meanings of gender and leisure, and the power relations associated with gender. Leisure research has explored gendered differences in such things as leisure participation, leisure meanings, and leisure time (Shaw, 1999). Research on leisure and gender has exposed gender stereotypes within leisure activities, the nature of gendered constraints to leisure, and how leisure affects and is affected by ideologies and gendered power relations (Shaw, 1999). An understanding of what leisure means and how it has been used in feminist perspectives is necessary in order to understand and define the space that new mothers have available to them through the community supported parenting programs.

leisure literature through a feminist lens. There has been large debate on the definition of leisure. Most often research defines it by describing what it is not, rather than what it is (Aitchison, 2003). For instance, leisure is not work or paid employment, and it is not household chores or childrearing. Iwasaki and Mannel (2000) have defined leisure as a coping strategy for

both everyday life stressors and major life crises, such as the transition to motherhood. Research that understands leisure as a coping strategy suggests that participation in leisure activities provides companionship, an escape from stress, and a decrease in negative moods. However, when Sullivan, (2013) explored the experience of leisure among mothers, she found that there were significant external changes to a mother's leisure and thus women were reporting that their participation in leisure activities was not leading to increased intrinsic value. Additionally, the mothers were not participating in "self leisure" but rather they would only participate in leisure that focused on the baby and that would benefit their family. This suggests that for leisure to be a coping strategy for mothers, participation in specifically intrinsically motivated leisure pursuits are necessary.

Leisure has also been defined as a form of resistance for women and groups focusing on developing opportunities for empowerment. Shaw's (2006) discussion of leisure as resistance raises issues of human agency, power, and social and cultural change. In this understanding resistance is not just another benefit or positive aspect of leisure, rather it is complex, grounded in the contexts of leisure environments, practices, and settings (Shaw, 2006). Through claiming the right to leisure and the involvement in specific leisure that is potentially empowering, leisure can be used to produce social change and social transformation (Shaw, 2006). Based on the complicated task of defining what is and is not leisure, without direct discussion with mothers, this study cannot label parenting programs as leisure or not. Thus, this study views parenting programs as a complex space where education and social interaction may or may not present the possibility for mothers to perceive this space as a leisure space. However, this space does provide the opportunity for leisure feelings to be felt and therefore becomes a space of interest to our field's exploration of mother's and their use of free time and perception of leisure.

critical exploration of motherhood. While developing an understanding of the feminist lens that will be utilized through my research process is important, it is also crucial to further contextualize motherhood and community supported programming within the literature. This section critically explores several bodies of literature from various disciplines in order to explore understandings of motherhood and social programming. It begins by reviewing research pertaining to mothers, wellbeing, and the role leisure plays in the lived experiences of mothers. The intersectionalities of class, poverty, and motherhood are then examined, with specific attention given to the uniqueness of this identity and its impact on wellbeing, support, and leisure participation. Finally, literature regarding the relevance of access to such support networks for wellbeing of new mothers and how mothers' experience support networks will be reviewed. Following this, gaps will be identified suggesting the significance of my research.

wellbeing. A major life transition, such as becoming a mother, can take its toll on a mothers' wellbeing. Lee & Gramotenev (2007) discuss how emotional wellbeing and mental health were heavily impacted by such a transition. In addition to reduced emotional and mental wellbeing, new parents, especially mothers, experience lower marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and overall happiness relative to their experience prior to having children (Galatzer-Levy et al., 2011). Furthermore while motherhood is seen as a joyous and happy life event, becoming a mother can still develop conflicting emotions and experiences that may negatively affect overall wellbeing (Galatzer-Levy, Mazursky, Mancini, & Bonanno, 2011). While this transition has its numerous personal benefits, there are several aspects that can negatively impact a mother's wellbeing. Thus the following literature will explore the wellbeing of mothers, demonstrating the need for change.

transitioning to the maternal identity. The transition to motherhood (and the maternal role) encompasses a number of major changes in a women's life (Nelson, 2009). The introduction to motherhood and the role of mother is described by Nelson (2009) as the following:

> The rapid transitions that occur in women's lives, bodies and identities as they journey into motherhood are largely without parallel. A woman entering motherhood can experience changes in her bodily appearance and functions, her emotions and psychology, her sleep and work schedules, the tasks she performs, her social circle, her sense of self, her sexuality and the roles she plays (Nelson, 2009, p. 12).

Furthermore, this transition is a major life change and adjustment associated with new patterns, responsibilities and routines, along with major changes in roles, social context, and a women's biology (Nelson, 2009). Additionally, there is a great deal of identity-work that goes on in the interactions between mothers as they negotiate and articulate profound shifts in their sense of self. Mothers may even experience conflict in their identity work as this culture forces a choice between identities, as their identities of pre-birth and total mother are more incompatible than new mothers expect (Warner, 2005).

Women take on multiple roles when becoming a mother and they must negotiate between their past identities and their new one. The "good mother" identity and gendered expectations previously discussed are represented in popular culture and media. These expectations are internalized by many women and influence their maternal identity formation (Nelson, 2009). In addition to popular culture, mothers rely on peers and other mothers to discuss what it means to

be a mother and explore the meaning of the identity, and work to create compatibility between the "real self" and the "maternal self" (Nelson, 2009).

Feminist scholars such as Nelson (2009) and Warner (2012) discussed the struggle women have while developing a maternal identity while also attempting to maintain other identities. This negotiation posses a challenge, as some women felt they lost a sense of self when transitioning into the maternal role. Some mothers experience a feeling of waste, as the goals promoted and encouraged to women during their youth are contradictory (Warner, 2005). For instance, while educational attainment and developing careers are highly valued and encouraged for women, many new mothers will shift to part-time work, work from home, or leave the paid-labour market altogether, diminishing the value of their educational and career achievements (Gaudet, Cooke, & Jacob, 2011).

postpartum depression. Notwithstanding the affirmative meanings women find while forming and engaging in the maternal role, mothering is often negatively associated with psychological wellbeing, for instance postpartum depression and feelings of depressed mood. Clinical practice has defined major depression by the presence of an accumulation of depressive mood, lack of interest and pleasure in activities, appetite, sleep, feelings of physical agitation, fatigue, and negative emotions (Wisner, Parry, & Piontek, 2002). These feelings are very prevalent to understanding the wellbeing of new mothers as many experience a range of these emotional difficulties following childbirth (Leigh & Milgrom, 2008). Wisner, Parry and Piontek (2002) found that one out of eight new mothers experience postpartum depression. While hormonal decline appears as a major contributor to these feelings, several other factors may predispose women to this condition. Stressful life events, past episodes of depression (not

necessarily to childbearing), and a family history of mood disorders, are all recognized predictors of postpartum depression (Wisner, Parry, & Piontek, 2002).

Some mothers may experience a wide range in depressed moods. For instance many mother experiencing lower moods are experiencing "baby blues" a sad or depressed mood, which continued for varying lengths of time among new mothers following the birth of their infant (Najman, Anderson, Bor, O'Callaghan, & Williams, 2000). Other mothers may experience more severe depression and in severe cases the experience of depressed moods may last for months or even years (Najman et al., 2000). Najam et al. (2008) furthered this research, suggesting that the stress accompanied by the birth of a baby can impact several areas in a mother's life adding to the experiences of lower moods and emotional health. Such areas in life as, family interactions and strain on financial and other forms of resources, as well as having a long-term negative impact on marital satisfaction have all been associated with the experiences of poor emotional wellbeing (Najman et al., 2008).

While in the past research has explored the way some women feel depressed after the birth of their infant, in which the findings highlighted the importance of social contacts between mothers (Mauthner, 1999), further researchhas found that the support a mother receives from other mothers is a significant resource in that may protect against negative feelings (Nelson, 2009). Many women suggest that they feel bored, and occasionally sad because they feel housebound, and trapped, often with little social interaction other than their baby (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011). Thus further exploration is important to understand constraints in order to suggest potential change for community supported programming, allowing them to be more inclusive of mothers that are unaware and unable to access them.

isolation. The experience of isolation is a trend among mothers that often influences their wellbeing. In a study by Parry, Glover and Mulcahy (2012), many women discussed feelings of social isolation in their early experiences of motherhood. The women craved peer interaction but lacked sociable networks and proper support created feelings of loneliness and isolation. Mental health challenges, such as postpartum depression were significantly linked to isolation for some participants, as Parry et al. (2012) found that the women in the study felt obligated to stay home all day with no other adults, and would avoid certain social scenarios because of feelings of being insufficient when comparing themselves to other mothers who "seemed to transition seamlessly" (Parry, Glover, & Mulcahy, 2013, p. 111). These feelings and avoidance of social scenarios thus exacerbate feelings of isolation and depression. Isolation was also linked to perceived access to family support, the Canadian winter, which increases the likelihood of staying inside and not socializing, as well as, the dynamic relationships between spouses, family, other mothers, and friends, which often change after the arrival of the infant (Parry et al., 2012). It is within these relations where mothers can gain support, assurance, knowledge, and resources.

Following this discussion of literature, it becomes apparent that the experience of motherhood and mothering is complex. Wellbeing is heavily impacted due to this rapid transition into the maternal role. Expectations to fulfill the "good mother" role while experiencing role strain make negotiating multiple identities a challenging task. Psychological wellbeing is also impacted, as many mothers still experience depressed moods and even postpartum depression following the birth of their child. It becomes clear that a mothers' wellbeing can be negatively impacted by several factors during this transition. What helps mothers during this time? Leisure literature has answered this question by exploring the role that leisure plays in a woman's experience of mothering and leisure.

mothers and leisure. Literature regarding mothers' wellbeing has sparked further inquiry in how mothers access and experience leisure. There is a considerable amount of literature developed focusing on the ways in which women have experienced in their participation in leisure activities. While leisure can have a great impact on emotional wellbeing, social networking and further participation, women continue to experience barriers to their participation. This contradiction has urged researchers to focus on factors that may constrain mothers from leisure participation. Further explorations, will expose the impact that oppressions, inequalities and lack of inclusion may have on mothers' leisure experiences.

Leisure constraints literature has established that participation in leisure activities is often dependent on the encounter of challenging barriers, or experiences of constraints (Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey, 1993). Constraint research has focused primarily on understanding an individual's leisure choices and where leisure may be influenced by, "factors that may prevent, reduce or modify participation, or may adversely affect the quality or enjoyment of the leisure activities" (Shaw, 1999, p. 274). Research has found participation in organized leisure activities among women is often lower, relative to the participation of men supporting the notion that gender differences in the experience of constraints to leisure participation, (Miller & Brown, 2005).

While participation among women in general is low compared to men, participation among mothers with young children is even lower (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Research has suggested this may be due to a number of cultural and societal constraints experienced by new mothers. For instance, mothers experience limitations to their leisure time due to expectations placed on them to give selflessly to their family (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011). In essence the sense of commitment mothers have to others acts as a constraint to their participation in leisure

activities. Mothers often were found to have lower quality leisure experiences than fathers' leisure, in mothers' leisure is often contaminated with other tasks including childcare (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Miller and Brown (2005) suggested that household norms relating to gender-based time negotiation and ideologies regarding an ethic of care were important determinants of active leisure among women with young children.

Along with cultural and societal constraints, researchers have identified a number of structural constraints to participation in leisure. Many mothers perceive lack of time as a major constraint to leisure participation (Miller & Brown, 2005). This was either due to commitments to children, or to housework and shopping. The findings suggested support feminist views of gendered expectations for mothers, exposing the cultural expectations for mothers to develop an ethic of care. As mentioned previously, this ethic of care expects mothers to place their family's needs before their own. It also may be possible that mothers are feeling this lack of time due to the structure of the family and beliefs and values associated with the maternal role.

Support, or lack there of, can be a large indication of a mother's participation in leisure activities. Access to social support networks may allow mothers to negotiate their leisure constraints (Miller & Brown, 2005). Support can vary from tangible, financial support to spousal and formal support. Social support specifically has been found to foster stability, can help cope with stressful life events - such as having a baby - and has even been indicated to relieve the experience of postpartum depression among mothers (Miller & Brown, 2005). Thus, maintaining support networks is important for a mothers' wellbeing, and has a dramatic impact on their level of leisure time.

support networks. While participation in leisure may benefit mothers, negotiating support networks may aid mothers' wellbeing and access to leisure. Maintaining support networks can have a number of benefits, which help to ease women in their transition to motherhood. Research suggests that parenting groups improve mother's social support, access to resources, and general wellbeing (Drentea & Moren-Cross, 2005; Fieldan & Gallagher, 2008). Forming friendships with other mothers can also decrease isolation and lead to improved mental health (Nelson, 2009). These relationships and support networks can be facilitated through such things as social mothers groups also referred to as mommy-and-me programs, parenting groups, or playgroups (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). These groups often include a number of mothers (and sometimes fathers) that engage in a variety of activities ranging from social and educational activities and develop parenting skills (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010).

Several researchers have explored the intersection of maternal interaction and wellbeing (Nelson, 2009; Mulcahy & Parry, 2011; Parry, Glover, & Mulcahy, 2012). Nelson (2009) discussed the existence of subculture, or a cultural space that has it's own requirements of membership refered to as the 'mother's club' in which the members have shared values, rituals, discourses, and contact between members. This allows for mothers to have a sense of community and connectedness, gain affirmation from other mothers, and exchange knowledge and resources.

Women transitioning into motherhood can develop such support networks in both informal and formal groups. Informal support can be gained through deep platonic relationships and interactions with ones peers. This valuable relationship between mothers can begin as early as the moment the mother learns she is pregnant "…once women are pregnant they start noticing and engaging in what might be called maternal interaction with other mothers and pregnant women" (Nelson, 2009, p. 97). These relationships foster a sense of connection, a common bond

created shared similarities such as having given birth, common experience of love for ones baby and the shared experience of mothering (Nelson, 2009). These networks are highly valued, as a mother is able to gain reassurance and other forms of emotional assistance gained through listening, caring, encouraging, reassuring, and generally avoiding criticism or judgment (Dennis, 2003). They also have been found to provide appraisal assistance, motivation to endure and solve problems and affirming the appropriateness of feelings, experiences, and behaviours (Dennis, 2003). Finally, informational support such as sharing knowledge, resources and mothering strategies can be a benefit of participation in mothers groups (Dennis, 2003; Nelson, 2009).

These platonic relationships can occur at the grassroots level. Mothers groups organized by mothers in the neighbourhood have been found to benefit women by getting them together in order to form relationships and bonds. As well as by providing a place for women to help each other resolve problems and support each other (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). However Mulcahy and Parry (2010) describe how this is not the case for all mothers. Some women describe experiences of "get[ting] left out", "judged", and "gendered" (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). Mothers groups are often homophilis, composed of women who share backgrounds and life experiences. Women in Mulcahy and Parry's (2010) study of mother's groups identified participants as educationally and economically privileged. Furthermore, women who did not share these similarities or those who differed in parenting styles and beliefs were often excluded from the groups, and even judged based on their different parenting styles. Subsequently, these mothers can no longer rely on that peer support, and again may feel isolated. In addition, some mothers may just simply not be aware of the groups or have access to them based on limited social networks (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011). These interactions expose hints of

privilege and exclusion within mothers groups at the grassroots level and demonstrate a call for change.

Apart from informal support through grassroots groups formal programming is another form of support for mothers. Formal support can be developed through such things as publicly organized programming through parenting facilities. Research has suggested that mothers will participate in first-time mother's groups because of the educational information provided, opportunities to increase social support through social networking, confidence building, and reassurance gained (Hanna et al., 2002; Fieldan & Gallagher, 2008). In addition, mothers can gain long-term benefits such as better health, nutrition, parenting skills, maternal self-esteem and on going friendships by participating in these programs (Hannaet al., 2002).

This literature establishes the importance of social interaction between mothers and suggests that while grassroots support may be beneficial to some mothers, others may experience exclusion, judgement and further isolation. On the other hand, community supported programming may be able to provide formal support needed for these mothers. However, this relation is complex. "Mothers' talk … must be both encouraged and facilitated. This is already done, in part, by services like new-mother's groups sponsored by public health offices. However, several of the women who spoke with [Nelson] did not attend such groups" (Nelson, 2009, p. 111). While parenting groups are beneficial, there are mothers that continue to struggle finding and connecting with other mothers in the first place (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011). The problem becomes the cultural expectations, ethic of care, time and economic constraints previously discussed that create barriers for mothers participating in these more formal programs. Therefore, for those excluded from informal groups, formal groups seem to be relevant for increased wellbeing. Since women who would benefit most from these more formal groups often still

experience constraints to their access, it is of upmost importance for inquiry to understand these constraints in order to suggest potential improvements for these programs which will allow them to be more inclusive for the mothers that are unaware and unable to access them. Thus this socialist feminist narrative inquiry collected stories illuminating the narratives of how women with lower income and their experiences around community supported programming for mothers in the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

The relationship between community supported programming and mothers was explored while affirming the differences among mothers and their unique intersectionalities. Researchers must bear in mind that all mothers are not the same, rather they may differ in ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, regional, political and sexual identities and affiliations. These differences may lead to a variety of beliefs, norms, values, and experiences (Nelson, 2009). In order to add to the research discussed earlier class was taken specifically into consideration in this study. There is some research expanding the study of motherhood, as it has explored intersections of minorities, working-class and low-income class definitions, representations and practices (Arendell, 2000). This inquiry further explored such work by specifically acknowledging the ways that class intersects with motherhood and community programming.

Conclusion

Canada provides several policies and social benefits for parents to aid in the transition to motherhood. Such things as pregnancy and parental leave provide some security in their employment along with other supplemental benefits provide financial assistance for low-income families. Specifically, the city of Kitchener has several different parenting programs available for parents and caregivers that may facilitate opportunities for mothers to develop social networks

and parenting skills. As previously discussed in chapter one, these opportunities for social and educational leisure have sparked interest in research.

While there has been a considerable amount of research done developing a better understanding of the wellbeing and leisure participation of mothers, further research needed to address diversity within mothers and their experiences of leisure through community supported programming. As such, this inquiry used a socialist feminist lens to review literature regarding mother's wellbeing during their transition to motherhood, several disadvantages in the way women experience parenthood were exposed. The discussion of role and identity formation highlighted expectations and oppressions present within patriarchal culture. The need for gender equity becomes increasingly relevant when discussing the experiences of postpartum depression and social isolation experienced by mothers when fulfilling societal expectations while performing the "good mother" role. Even inequalities of leisure participation can be seen during the transition to motherhood.

Despite the benefits that leisure participation offers, mothers still experience a number of constraints restricting the access and participation in leisure activities for themselves. As highlighted by Mulcahy and Parry (2011) constraints such as social isolation and ethic of care make developing social support networks challenging. Mulcahy and Parry (2011) highlighted the need for structural postnatal programs offered through the Public Health Agency of Canada, as this would assist in the formation of mothers (or parents) social support helping ease the transition to parenthood (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011).

As such, this inquiry illuminated the ways in which women were or were not gaining awareness of these programs to best serve and reach new mothers. Additionally, researchers should continue to expand literature that focuses on bringing intersectionalities to the forefront.

There is a need for more literature regarding mothers to take such things as class specifically into consideration. These considerations may better illuminate the complexities of mothers' experiences and work toward developing more just community programs. This study, therefore, addressed this gap in the research, through a socialist feminist-informed narrative inquiry, collecting stories illuminating the narratives of how women with lower income gain awareness, access, and subsequently experience community supported programming for new mothers in the city of Kitchener, Ontario.

Chapter 3 – Methodology and Methods

There was a need for further exploration into the community supported programming available for new mothers. Utilizing a socialist feminist lens, my research aimed to "promote justice and well-being of all women," focusing on eliminating systems of oppression by unearthing how gendered expectations, patriarchy, and class are experienced by mothers with low incomes they gain awareness and access to community supported programming. While it is clear that there has been insightful and important research in many areas that inform an understanding of the wellbeing and leisure participation of mothers, there still remains gaps in the literature on the intersections of motherhood and class, particularly within the Kitchener area. A critical review of some of this research revealed potential avenues for capturing a more thorough and complex picture of the ways in which community supported programs are experienced by new mothers with lower socio-economic status.

In order to better capture this picture, this socialist feminist narrative inquiry created opportunities for social change by illuminating narratives of how mothers with lower incomes gain awareness, access, and subsequently experience community supported programming for new mothers in Kitchener, Ontario. This methodology worked to elicit data that would answer my three research questions:

1. What experiences do mothers with lower incomes have during the process of gaining awareness and access to community supported programs in Kitchener?

2. What are the experiences of mothers after gaining access to participation in such community programs in Kitchener?

3. What are possible transformations that might occur to improve mother's experiences in community programs in Kitchener?

Methodology

In utilizing a feminist lens, I sought to illuminate the stories and experiences of mothers that participated in an effort to give voice to women that are not always heard. With this purpose, I used narrative inquiry because it allows women's voices to be brought to the forefront and valued as legitimate sources of knowledge (Devault &Gross, 2007). In this chapter, I will discuss the methodology of narrative inquiry guided by feminist perspectives. I will then review in detail, the process of inquiry that was used for this research.

narrative inquiry. Traditionally narrative inquiry has been defined as a form of qualitative research that focuses on stories of life events and happenings, in which the researcher analyzes them to create, explore, and describe human actions (Polkinghorne, 2003). It is comprised of a temporal sequence of events often creating " a plot in which one event leads to another that affects people and/or their social contexts" (Bold, 2012, p. 30). Narrative inquiry allows for the researcher to produce and contribute to the knowledge of the culture as well as reflect our own understanding of self, others, and the larger worlds within which we live (Polkinghorne, 2003). Narratives collected through this methodology may be spoken or written stories, and may be elicited during fieldwork, in an interview, or naturally in a conversation and may portray a particular event, an extended story of a particular aspect of one's life, or a narrative of one's entire life (Chase, 2005). Utilizing narrative inquiry creates the ability to call up emotional responses, to provide opportunity for people to be open to new ideas, and to create possibilities for future transformation (Chase, 2005). By applying a feminist lens informed by socialist feminist perspectives, this work collected stories that gave voice to the complex intersections of motherhood and class in relation to community programming.

feminist-informed narrative inquiry. Epistemology, theoretical perspective, and methodology all work together to help provide rationale for specific data collection methods to be utilized (Naples, 2003). Thus, I will now further discuss narrative inquiry as it aligns with my social constructionist epistemology and feminist lens. Similar to the tenets underlying feminist research that intend to give voice, narrative inquiry values the unique and situated experiences of each individual and how they story their experiences (Daly, 2007). The point in time and the context in which the narrative was given is unique and a personal narrative is not an exact representation of an event, nor does it speak for the wider world. It is complex, with multiple layers of meanings. Thus, through the use of this methodology, my research does not aim to "copy reality" or show Truth; rather following feminist ideals, complexity of individual's voices are emphasized and each narrative is valued as a legitimate source of knowledge that provides insight into the worlds within which we live (Hesse-Biber, 2007).

Feminist informed narrative inquiry is "interested in women as social actors in their own right and in the subjective meanings that women assigned to events and conditions in their lives" (Chase, 2005, p. 655). Feminist research utilizes narrative inquiry to question the culturally dominant meta-narratives by listening to the often-silenced voices of the marginalized, challenging hegemonic understanding of society, culture, and history. Therefore, through the use of feminist informed narrative inquiry I illuminate the voices of mothers with lower incomes, a non-dominant voice that is often left out of the overarching cultural meta-narratives (Chase, 2005). Through narrative analysis the narrator's point of view can give reason for why telling the story is significant to the research, as well as, it can allow for the lived experience of the participants to be expressed and brought to the forefront (Polkinghorne, 2003). Recognizing this collaborative process of narrative inquiry, this study challenged the traditional power of an

authoritative research that seeks objective Truth and instead recognizes the undeniable co-construction of stories that occurs collaboratively with participant voices throughout data collection, analysis, and representation.

   participants. With this study of motherhood and community programming, I have chosen to specifically focus on the experiences of mothers (of any age), to be drawn from the city of Kitchener. Participants were recruited from community groups or organizations that offered programs and services to parents and specifically mothers. After obtaining approval from the organizations, I recruited two women who identified as being on a low income. The Early Years Center's "Community out Reach Program", was crucial in connecting and reaching out to these mothers. This program gives mothers the opportunity to meet with a Community Outreach worker who assists in connecting mothers with services and resources needed for families. While this community outreach worker did try to connect me with other mothers, many other women she worked with denied participation, as they felt they had "too much on their plate." Therefore, snowball recruitment was a more successful technique for recruitment.

   My original form of recruitment relied heavily on informational flyers as advertisements. I met with and worked with two individuals that worked for a local community program to arrange using their facility as a location for recruitment. The flyers were then given to potential participants and posted on bulletin boards in facilities such as The Early Years Centre. After collecting only two interviews in two months, I found that my original form of recruitment was not effective enough. At this point, I connected with the local food banks, advertising my study using my flyers and I had gone to a local program to introduce myself and my study to potential participants. Additionally, through snowball sampling; a process of purposeful sampling that locates "information-rich key informants" through the networks of those who had already

participated, I was able to connect with other mothers to discuss potential participation (Patton, 1987, p. 56).

After two months, the first two mothers interviewed connected me, via email, to friends and acquaintances of theirs, they believed would be interested in my study. I then utilized email correspondence and phone conversations to discuss my study and arrange an interview time and place with those who were interested. During the four months of data collection I had arranged 6 different interviews. Two participants failed to appear to the interview, one no longer responding to my emails, the other apologizing saying her child had gotten sick and would no longer have the time to participate. In total I had collected four interviews from four mothers in the Kitchener area with varying backgrounds, experiences, family structures and stories.

All four mothers identified as White and were in heterosexual relationships. One mother was in her mid 30's, with one child, an absentee partner and father, and had part-time paid employment. The second, was in her early 20's, had left her current paid employment to run an in-home daycare, living with her partner and only child. This woman's family and mother especially was a main support in her life. The third participant was in her mid 40's, married with 3 children, she had paid employment prior to her first child, but had left this to run an in-home daycare, however, closed the daycare during her second pregnancy for health reasons. Finally, the forth participant, in her late 30's, was married with four children, and had chose to leave her career at the news of her first child. She was originally from Italy and her parents and other relatives were still there. These four mothers were asked to stay for an hour-long interview, however, the majority had so many stories to share that the interviews lasted between 45minutes to two hours. As I was not attempting to prove or disprove a theory, I believe this sample size with rich stories provided enough data to answer my research questions. Mothers interested in

participating in the study were provided with an informational letter and consent form (see Appendix A). Because the study aimed to explore the perspectives of mothers from low-income families that had experienced community supported programming, specific criteria for participants was follows:

1) Identify as a mother

2) Have participated in a local community supported program designed for low-income families in the last 12 months

3) Willing to tell personal stories of access and experience

4) Ability to speak English fluently

These participant qualifiers do not restrict other social categories, however, due to the dominantly white participation in community programs I accessed, my sample all identified as white and were in heterosexual relationships. This suggests that future research should work specifically to identify non-white mothers with lower incomes who clearly are not accessing community programming in order to determine potential barriers to such participation. While collecting data and participants it was apparent that diversity in race was not visible and instead participants present at the programs visited and those who chose to participate were dominantly white. This alludes to the further complication intersecting social categories place on access and experience of community supported programming for mothers. "Race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, nation, ethnicity, and similar categories of analysis are best understood in relational terms rather than in isolation from one another. These mutually constructing categories underlie and shape intersecting systems of power (Collin, 2015, pg 14)." For example, gender and class were found to create several disadvantages in access to programming, but the power relations of race created further inequalities and different barriers to access and participation. Being a women

of colour appears to be a compounding disadvantage to access and participation in the community programs observed in this research and should be further explored.

      data collection: unstructured life story interviews. Life stories were used in this narrative inquiry, focusing on a period of the participants' life, specifically the period of time after having their child (Bold, 2012). This time period included events of gaining awareness and access to parenting programs, as well as participation in these programs. These narratives were collected through the use of an unstructured interview guide. Unstructured interviews typically follow a loosely guided agenda, as they are informal conversations that occur between the interviewer and interviewee that are guided around the relevant topics needed to answer the research questions outlined prior to the interview (Bold, 2012). This allowed for the participants in my study to express their unique narratives. While the interviews for my study were more conversational, they still loosely followed leading questions with potential probes, outlined in the interview guide (Appendix B). This allowed me to have an open conversation with the participants, but start it off in a direction that would elicit relevant information to my study.

      Unstructured life story interviews were fitting for my research, as I was interested in the experiences, emotions, and thoughts regarding the situation of new mothers, which are aspects that can be illuminated through unstructured interviews (Bold, 2012). This aligned well with my study as it supports feminist narrative inquiry ideals, allowing participants control over their own voice rather than the researcher speaking for participants (Chase, 2003). It is important to remember that the narrative analysis and life stories are interpreted and meant to reflect the current historical perspective at that moment and do not reflect experiences across time (Bold, 2012).

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in public yet quite settings. These locations included, a conference room at the University of Waterloo, a quite coffee shop, and the participant's kitchen. As mentioned earlier, the interviews ranged in length of time. While only asked to stay for one hour, the last three interviews lasted at minimum of 45 minutes, one of which lasting 2 hours.

At the beginning of each interview participants were provided with a brief overview of this study and were asked to read and sign the ethical consent form (Appendix A). Following this they were then asked permission to digitally record the interview. At that time, participants were told that at any time the recorder could be turned off and anything she did not wish to have transcribed could be removed. In addition, it was explained that the participants could request to stop the interview at anytime. After gaining approval from each participant, all interviews were recorded on an audio recorder to allow the interview to remain conversational and to aid in the transcription process.

To thank participants for sharing their time and stories with me, after the interview session I gave a choice of a $10 gift card to either a coffee shop or a grocery store. In addition, to thank any organizations for assisting me recruit participants or any other of my research endeavours, I will share my final thesis with the organization and its staff.

data analysis. Once the interviews had been conducted and recoded on audiotapes, I proceeded to transcribe the audio recordings into word documents utilizing Microsoft word processor. Documents containing all interview details such as the participants contact information, description, and interview time were created to help organization. This document

also included the participant's audio recording and the participants' codes later used in the analysis process.

During transcription I utilized procedural and analytic journals. This involved making hand-written notes in a separate journal, labeling each note with the interview and line numbers. These notes consisted of any interpretations, and thoughts I had, as well as highlighting any sections of text that stood out to me and why. These journals allowed me to document my process of moving from data to analysis fluently. In addition, it gave me the freedom to refer back to my original thoughts and better recall the steps I took later in the writing process.

The transcripts were then printed and colour coded according to each participant. Each transcript was given a different colour by tracing a line in marker along the margin of the transcripts. While colour coding was utilized for each individual participant to remain organized and have the ability to trace transcripts back to the original participant, the individuality of participants was let go at this point and the data was looked at in its totality. Following McCormack's (2004) methods, the transcripts were then read several times using "active listening." The first two times I read them in their entirety, this allowed me to get an initial understanding of what the participants had shared. During this initial reading it was crucial to try to restrict the insertion of my personal interpretations of the data. Following this I read them again and began to look for the larger or shared themes and concepts the participants shared as well as any stories that stood out to me.

As such, I began to look for stories within the transcripts, highlighting sections, direct quotes, and unique stories that repeated and were shared across all transcripts in my analytic journal. I then read through the transcripts looking for data and repetitive themes in relation to my research questions. It is important to emphasize that my study did not attempt to generalize

data across different situations or speak a Truth, but instead represented the complex counter-stories of women's experiences that added new voices to the already established meta-narratives around motherhood. Therefore, any identified themes were then deconstructed to contextualize the data in more complex narratives. To do this, I read through the transcripts again writing notes in the margins similar to sentence-by-sentence coding. After each transcript had been coded I cut up the transcripts, separating them based on elements that addressed my research questions and re-storying elements (descriptions, background, themes). I separated the transcripts piece by piece on my living room floor, putting them with shared concepts, themes, or stories together shown in Appendix D.

I was then able to see emerging themes and concepts such as "Internet Use," "Transportation," and "Looking for Something." Occasionally, a shared theme such as "Internet Use" would have contradicting stories; these stories were still kept together as it showed the complexity of these experiences. Also, some stories and pieces of transcript involved multiple themes simultaneously. Thus that piece of transcript was placed in between the two themes, demonstrating that it overlapped both. This sorting process went through numerous revisions, as I would step away from the groupings, and come back with fresh eyes rearranging some of the transcripts again. Throughout this process I considered my research questions. Finally, I had five major stories to tell: The Internet, Transportation and Getting Around, Building a Community, Financial Justification and Potential Transformations, as well as a collection of transcript that offered background and descriptions useful for my narrative constructions. Each major theme was then organized by sub themes. For instance, "Internet Use" had several sub-themes: Search Engines, Facebook, Communication, and Lack of the Internet. These subthemes, were developed to help me ensure all themes and concepts were incorporated in the data representations.

I then began to compare my groupings with the current literature to allow me to see what was supportive of past literature, what was contrasting, and what was newly emerging. With the use of my analytic journals this process allowed me to begin to formulate my interpretations of the data, themes and emerging concepts. To end the stage of my thematic analysis, I then used these comparisons to the literature to picture what my narratives needed to express.

representation. Once my data had been collected and analyzed using methods previously discussed, I considered how to best represent the data. Thus, Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) was used throughout the representation process. This method of representation suited my feminist perspective and narrative methodology as its purpose was to provide representations that were "conversational, multi-vocal, and critical" (Parry & Johnson, 2007). Additionally, CAP does not seek to represent a Truth, but rather contextualize multiple truths allowing it to have a variety of representations such as, poems, fiction, creative non-fiction, narratives, performances, and ethno-screenplays, etc. (Parry & Johnson, 2007). I believe that each of the participants in the study had a unique and complex experience to share, thus, the use of CAP aligned well. The use of CAP allowed a better representation of the unique complexities of mother's experience within my study (Parry & Johnson, 2007).

representation. Once my data had been collected and analyzed using methods previously discussed, I considered how to best represent the data. Thus, Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) was used throughout the representation process. This method of representation suited my feminist perspective and narrative methodology as its purpose was to provide representations that were "conversational, multi-vocal, and critical" (Parry & Johnson, 2007, p. 124). Additionally, CAP does not seek to represent a Truth, but rather contextualize multiple truths allowing it to have a variety of representations such as, poems, fiction, creative non-fiction, narratives,

performances, and ethno-screenplays, etc. (Parry & Johnson, 2007). I believe that each of the participants in the study had a unique and complex experience to share, thus, the use of CAP aligned well. The use of CAP allowed these stories to be juxtaposed, comparing the uniqueness of experiences while showing their contrast in a single story for context.

During the analysis process I collected pieces of transcript that were reflective of shared themes, concepts, and stories. These sorted pieces of transcript were then used to move from my thematic analysis to the creation of my representation. I outlined the narratives using both the participant's transcripts and my own narrative voice, similar to storyboarding. To stay as close to my data as possible, I physically took these pieces of transcript and taped them to a white board, making my own personal notes in marker along the side to piece together the narratives shown in Appendix E. This helped to increase the trustworthiness of my research. This was done for each of the major themes outlined from my analysis, such as "Internet Use." I organized as many relevant pieces of the transcript as possible into the narrative storyboard while still maintaining a story line that flowed. Thus, the findings presented are not a verbatim explanation given by the participants, but rather a collection of elements from several participants, re-expressed in a chronological story developed to best highlight data related to my research questions. These storyboards where then recorded onto a word document listing the piece of transcript, participant colour code and line number, and context for the creation of the narrative. This context refers to the pieces of transcript pulled out for descriptions and background information that would assist in the story telling process. Following this, I went through and added text, like "Kim adjusts Lucas's snow suite and tucks him into a blanket in his stroller" to blend the pieces of transcript together and create a single, flowing narrative story (McCormack, 2004).

Re-storying my data involved forming one main character, Kim and supporting characters, such as Carolyn, another mother Kim befriends. Characters were not comprised of one particular participant, rather each character was based upon the voices and stories expressed across several of the participants. Each of these characters were constructed using a combination of stories, experiences, and personalities of all of the participants. In the character description of Kim, all details were selected from the notes taken of all the overt observations made during each interview and background transcripts collected. For instance, her height and weight is based on the average from all of the participants, her hair is reflective of one participant, while her clothing is similar to another's. Even personality characteristics come from transcripts and observations made during interviews, such as Kim's willingness to share photos of her children. This allowed the construction of these characters to remain fictional and not reflective of one individual participant yet remain close to the data and reflective of the shared experiences of all four participants.

For instance, throughout data analysis, each of the participants in my research had explicit stories and feelings of being a first time mother. Although each mother had a unique and valuable story to share regarding their first experiences of mothering and motherhood, there were still shared concepts and feelings that emerged. To capture these voices, I went through the data and constructed a character that would highlight this perspective. In this example that character is Kim, a mother of two, who was experiencing community programs for the first time. Kim is composed of all four participants in my research and expressed the day in the life of a mother with lower income, in Kitchener, gaining awareness, accessing, and experiencing community supported programming. All the mothers spoke of gradually needing to connect with other mothers following the birth of their child. Kim allowed me to explore and better illustrate the

participants desire to engage in the culture of motherhood for the first time. I used her character to make experiences of the adjustment of a new role, identity, and gendered expectations more explicit and highlight stories of my participants that work to answer my research questions. As mentioned above, I also included other characters within the script. Secondary characters such as Carolyn and Beth were constructed using other shared concepts and feelings among the mothers that were contrasting of the character Kim. For instance, Beth is created from the shared stories and concepts that reflected when the mothers chose not to participate in the community supported programming, the feelings developed around the re-inscription of "good mothering" and participation in programming. In addition, other characters were developed with the main purpose of providing context, detail, and supplement the main character's stories. These characters were constructed using the data collected from the interviews. For instance, in the stories told by the mothers interviewed, there were people they interacted with, such as a bus driver, or class instructor. These characters, their script, and actions were based on the stories told by the mothers.

As mentioned above, the participants interviewed were all White and heterosexual, and therefore the characters constructed do not vary in race and sexuality. The data collected from this research was not able to represent this diversity, but further research should look to explore these social categories to better illuminate the complex disadvantages of intersections.

The participants told a wide variety of stories. Some were shared, others contradictory, and others isolated and unique. With this in mind, while building the narrative I attempted to emphasize this multiplicity, showing the messiness and complexity of the data. This is representative of how people do not experience issues within a vacuum, but rather these experiences are overlapping and interrelated (Berbary L. A., 2011). In order to demonstrate these

complexities, this day-in-the-life narrative aims to evoke how the mother's experiences were complex, overlapped, differed, and mimicked each other's.

After the narrative was completed, I looked to my favourite pieces of literature to provide guidelines for the quality of my storytelling. Through this process I developed criteria for judging my work. There needed to be a clear voice, helping to narrate the story. In addition to a voice, the inclusion of details and description needed to be interwoven into the plot to provide background and help the reader connect with the story. Most importantly, I looked to see if my representation engaged the reader and if it evoked emotion. In addition to impact, the narrative needed to contribute something toward social change and transformations. After multiple revisions, I believe this representation meets these criteria and is reflective of a well written narrative. These standards of evaluation are similar to those discussed by Berbary (2015). In this discussion, CAP evaluation considers the representations substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, expression of reality as well as new considerations of rigorous data collection, relevance of CAP use, and genre props (Berbary L. , 2015).

subjectivity. Considering the role of the researcher I played in this process and re-storying in narrative inquiry, illuminating my subjectivity was critical to research. Due to the fact that this research process did not aim to tell a Truth, rather it was subjective, I had to recognize both the similarities and differences between the researcher and the participants. I am not a mother, nor have I ever experienced motherhood personally, apart from being raised by my mother, and thus I cannot speak of and about mothering, and the culture and experience of motherhood from personal experience. As Nelson (2009) discusses, there are some mothers that will not like or feel comfortable if I discuss motherhood in an authoritative manner. Thus, it was important for me to acknowledge that there is some knowledge, some claim to authority and

power that is solely maternal and that only someone who has experienced motherhood can speak of and truly understand (Nelson, 2009). To account for this, I closely relied on the transcripts to illuminate the participant's voices, as it was the participants themselves that were the experts of their experiences discussed. I also had to acknowledge several privileges that I possess. I am White, raised in a middle class family, I am well educated, and I am the researcher, to name a few. Such characteristics could have impacted the power relations between myself the researcher, and the participants, the researched. It also may have impacted the questions asked and the words that I used during the interview and may influence what the participants say. How I look, act, and sound could have all reflected in what the participants saw and receive from me (Charmaz, 2004).

Another important consideration in the research process is the role that I played in collecting, analyzing and representing the data. As unstructured interviews resemble informal conversation, I think it was important for me to be completely upfront with my participants, informing them of my own background, history and research interests, with the intention of creating trust and open conversations. As I used a narrative approach, it was also important to note that narrative researchers may view themselves as narrators, finding ways to present the ideas and interpretations gathered from the narratives they studied. As previously mentioned, I viewed and valued the participants as the experts, thus the research was a collaborative process. I believe that the knowledge from both the participants and myself are valuable in the creation of this narrative inquiry.

trustworthiness. Throughout the process of data collection, I kept personal journals, recording my feedback and feelings about the information collected. Prior to interviewing I began journaling allowing me to reflect on my personal experiences, or lack there of, my

54

assumptions and any biases I could of had. These journals incorporated my personal reflections

about my position as a child-less, middle-class researcher studying mothers with lower incomes.

This was important within this feminist research, because it was necessary to recognize the

presence of my own feelings and address how they may impact my analysis and representation

of the data in order to reduce the power dynamic that may occur. As I wrote up my

representation, I gained familiarity with the interviews by reading and re-reading them in their

entirety. Because my representation was written from the participants' viewpoints, it was crucial

that the language I used matched their language, that the topics they discussed are grounded

specifically in my data, and that the actions I represent are part of the experiences they relay. As

such I checked my trustworthiness by re-visiting interviews, making sure my representation

aligned with my data, and re-visiting my coding categories to make sure my representation

explored those themes that are relevant to the participants' experiences. In addition to the use of

personal journals, following my analysis I also provided the participants with an opportunity to

provide feedback as a method of increasing trustworthiness. This entailed providing participants

with a copy of my narratives via email and inviting them to inform me if they or the stories they

were connected to had been misrepresented in anyway. However, this follow-up did not develop

much feedback. One participant had moved and was no longer staying in contact. Two others did

not respond to my outreach. The forth mother did receive a rough copy of my representation,

responding saying she enjoyed reading it, and thanked me for sharing it. This lack of feedback is

not due to lack of interest but rather may be reflective of their busy lives due to things such as

major time constraints and limited resources.

     ethical considerations. This study met ethical protocol first by receiving approval

through the University of Waterloo's Office of Research Ethics. Following strict ethical

considerations such as informed consent, participants right to withdraw from the study and anonymity, can also safeguard ethical protocol. To receive proper informed consent all participants were informed of any potential risks through an informational letter and were asked to read and sign a consent form. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point in this informational letter. Ethical standards of confidentiality of information were upheld for all participants, and organizations discussed in interviews. I remained aware of the sensitive issues that the study could have raised for the participants. For instance, in the discussion of access to programming, mothers may express hurt feelings and frustrations with experiences of poverty, and gender restrictions. This did occur with two of the mothers, where they expressed their frustrations with their partner and their disappointment due to their experiences with poverty. I had responded by giving them a judgment free space to open up in, encouraging them to say what they felt, relating where I could, but mostly just listening. Both times the mothers seemed to respond positively to this, continuing on with the conversation. While it was fortunate that none of the discussions ever became too upsetting, participants were reminded that they could stop the interview at any time. If needed, I would provide information for counseling services such as the Carizon Family and Community Services program, as this program offers several parenting groups and programs but also counseling services in the Kitchener area.

Chapter 4 - Representation

Literature has identified the need for further research of awareness, access, and experience of community supported programming among mothers with lower incomes. This feminist-informed narrative inquiry addressed this gap in the literature by interviewing four mothers using unstructured life store interviews. In order to best capture their stories and experiences elicited during these interviews, I chose to use Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) to represent my data. This style of analytic practice allowed my representation to be multi-vocal, illuminating the complex non-dominant voices of mothers with lower incomes. This narrative is used in order to answer my research questions which describes the experiences of mothers with lower income while gaining awareness, access, and participation in community supported programming in Kitchener, Ontario. The aim is to capture "a day in the life…" of one mothers, while reflecting various experiences described by the mothers interviewed. In order for better storytelling, I use several techniques to depict changes in the story such as:

- "Quotations" are used to convey conversations and statements verbally expressed.

- *Italics* is representative of internal thoughts that the main character Kim has throughout her day.

- **`Bolded other font`** is used to represent that an electronic conversation is occurring. This exchange also centered to better illustrate that it is separate from the narration.

These various forms of script were utilized to more easily transition between narration, internal thoughts, verbally spoken word, and electronic communications experienced by the main character Kim.

Kim is home with her two sons on a Saturday afternoon. She has wavy, light brown hair that is parted slightly to the left and pulled into a loose ponytail with a bit of frizz and sweeping side

bangs falling loose from the elastic. Her brown eyes pop from behind her full, dark lashes. She is

wearing a slightly wrinkled, baggy u-neck t-shirt with blue and white stripes that comes down to

the pockets of her size 8 blue jeans. She is White (or of European descent) and her clear

complexion appears pale from the long winter spent indoors. The darkness under her eyes

suggest that she is tired. Yet her welcoming smile and the kindness in her eyes make her

approachable and friendly. She has two children, Derek, 4 years and Lucas, 7 months and loves

to tell people, even strangers, about them. She carries pictures of play-time and birthday parties

on her phone for easy reference to boost about how great they are. She stopped working as a

personal support care worker when she had Derek and decided to stay at home to spend more

time with her son in his early years, with help from her husband in the evenings. Kim describes

her husband as very involved in raising their children, however, being a self-employed plumber

forces him to work long and unpredictable hours.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

As she finishes folding the laundry at the kitchen table, Kim looks lovingly over at her youngest son, Lucas, falling in and out of sleep in his play pen while Derek sits beside his brother as he plays with blocks. Kim begins to think to herself, *okay, I think it's about time we get out of the house.* As she pushes Derek's pile of school notices, flyers and drawings aside to clear another space for the folded clothes, a flyer catches her eye. It is for a child development fair hosted at a local community center. This reminds her of the last time she had taken the kids on a community outing to the library. She had thought it would be a great free resource and maybe relaxing and fun. But as usual, as soon as they arrived Derek was so thrilled and overwhelmed that he stormed the library in excitement, ripping books down from the shelves. She remembers how embarrassed she felt while chasing down Derek and trying to put the books back, all the while holding Lucas, a newborn at the time, in her arms.

Grabbing her husband's favorite blue work button down from the laundry basket, she folds it thinking, *I think we'll skip the library today but maybe there is something else out there where Derek can be a little less destructive. It's been too long for the three of us to be trapped in this house. Between figuring out how these boys tick; their schedules, temperament, and my hormones, I just haven't felt like myself. But I think I'm starting to get my bearings.* Just seven months earlier her first thoughts had been, *Oh my god! Who is this little person?* And the thought of how far she has come makes her chuckle.

She was no longer folding laundry, but instead was holding this flyer letting her mind wander into her past. A lot had changed for Kim since having Derek. Kim was a personal support care worker, friend, and wife but now is a MOM. Being a good mother to her children

was always important to her. Her maternity leave had given her time with her children, but that time ended too quickly. *I don't want to miss anything and I want to be there while they grow up.* She thought back to when she had returned to work after having Derek as she plucks the blue and white sock from the basket and folds it into its match. *Leaving him was horrible. Ugh, I'd leave a screaming, sad baby, work all day, then come home with just enough time to feed him, and put him to bed. I felt horrible.* Kim decided to leave her job and start a daycare at home. This decision is working out well for her family allowing her to spend more time with her boys and still be able to afford necessities.

She hears Derek's blocks crumble into a pile in front of him and chuckles at his persistence as he begins to rebuild. Glancing at the mirror on the nearing wall, she looks at her reflection, beginning to recognize the new person staring back at her. Out loud, she says back at her reflection, "Okay mommy, what do we do today? Where can we go that I can be mommy AND Kim?" She remembers a mother, whose daughter attends her daycare, recommending some sort of Facebook group online and settles in at her computer.

She opens the Facebook page. *Oh! It's kinda like a buy and sell sort of thing in Kitchener.* Scrolling through the conversation, she notices that other mothers were asking questions like, where is the winter carnival held? *Oh that was last weekend! That would have been fun.* There were even general questions about the community, where to find certain things, and questions asking advice. *Well okay. It seems like I can just ask.* She begins to type.

> **I have a 7 month old and a 4 year old what are some things that we can do?**

ENTER.

Oh and uhh…

> **I was looking for maybe a mom's group?**

ENTER.

Derek's blocks crash again, startling Lucas awake. Kim walks through a minefield of toys, pats Derek on the head, gently lifts Lucas out of the play pen to soothe him, then hears from the laptop.

BLEUP.

> **Hi fellow mum! There are several things that you can do. But if you're looking for a group, I would suggest checking out the First Phase Centre! Good Luck, Kate**

With a quick Google search of the First Phase Centre, she sits back in her chair with Lucas cradled in one arm, looking at the facility website. *This place sounds fantastic. Wow, I don't know how I would have found this if someone didn't recommend it to me. There has to be a better way to get the word out!* She looks back down at the flyer Derek had brought home. She had only seen one other, it had been during her last trip to the food bank. It was amongst dozens of other flyers for roommates, lost pets, and even old job postings. *At least this one is current, I think the one at the food bank was already a year old, what good is that? I would have jumped all over that if it were up to date. Better yet, make a flyer that informs me of all my resources! What they should do is post it in the paper so moms don't have to rely on the Internet. OH!!... or on the clinic and grocery store bulletin boards! I'm there already!* She reads further discovering that this class requires one adult per infant to participate. *Oh, I can't go if I have both of the boys. I guess maybe I can get a baby sitter. Ugh, no I can't, that costs too much. The girls down the street might let me pay them in pizza, I have coupons.* With a quick search of the bus schedule and a call to the babysitters, Kim begins to arrange everything for Derek to be babysat while she

and Lucas venture out of the house the next day. Sitting back up, and quickly running mentally through her to do list, suddenly she is interrupted by Derek's calls for "Mom."

<center>***</center>

Kim adjusts Lucas's snow suit and tucks him into a blanket in his stroller as they wait at the bus stop. Kim sees the bus from down the road and thinks to herself, *Ugh, I wish I didn't have to leave Derek with a sitter but it's nice not having both boys to worry about.* She looks over at the other mom waiting with her stroller. *The driver's not going to let us both on.* The bus stops and doors open to a crowded bus. The other mom backs her stroller onto the bus and she makes her way out of sight. "Sorry no more room, wait for the next bus." The bus driver says. "I need to be somewhere!" Kim says pleadingly and filling with frustration. "There's too many strollers, sorry, next bus." The doors close and the bus moves on. *Not again. Maybe I should just walk? At least it's in Kitchener.* With the stroller, baby, and what felt like a metric ton of stuff in her baby bag, the hour it would take would feel very long for her. It would be physically exhausting. *It's so cold out here, trying to push this stroller all the way there in snow will be impossible.* Often met with a similar situation, Kim often only participated in programming within the heart of Kitchener—the closer to her home the better. And even though sometimes it felt like too much to even walk within the heart of the city, her desire to be a "good mom" often beat out her exhaustion and struggle. *Maybe we should just stay home? No. I shouldn't be a lazy mom, it'll be good for him.* She reaches back down, touching Lucas's face, ensuring he isn't getting too cold. *I'll just wait, there will be another bus in 10 minutes.*

<center>***</center>

Oh finally! She climbs onto the bus and pulls the stroller in carefully, looking over her shoulder to see if the reserved seating is clear. *Oh good they're moving, I won't have to ask.* Inserting her change for the bus, she is reminded of her weekly budget. *Well there goes three of my $20 for the week. Maybe I can use the transfer to get back, otherwise it'll be $6. Ugh last month I needed to take the bus so much it cut into the grocery budget.* Her stomach grumbled, reminding her of the last time her husband hadn't been paid for a plumbing job and they had to go with a little less. She sets the seat up and locks the stroller in place as the bus pulls off. "Ohhh your baby is adorable!" a lady says from over her shoulder. Kim looks over at her, "Oh thanks." *But leave me alone now.* The women persists, "So was he natural or did you have invetro-fertilization?" *WHAT! This really isn't any of your business.* "Umm, that's personal…" The woman just smiles and says, "Oh, I'm sorry, I was just curious. My cousin looks about your age, but since she's a bit older, she's started looking into invetro." "Oh ok. Umm no he's natural." "Oh wow, well congratulations!" "Thanks." "Are you a single mom?" *Wow again with the inappropriate questions!* "No." *Why does the bus have to be like this? Can't everyone just be respectful, like that man quietly reading and keeping to himself?* She stared straight ahead and made herself look busy fidgeting with Lucas's snow suit again, hoping that would stop anyone from talking to her for the rest of the ride.

<center>***</center>

"Next stop Weber" says the P.A. on the bus. Kim gathers her things and prepares for a fast exit onto the downtown streets of Kitchener. Noticing a group of smokers on the corner of the street, she keeps a cautious eye on Lucas. *They're everywhere! How do I protect my kids from harmful smoke, if they're everywhere?* She starts walking down the noisy street, passing little shops and people as she goes. A man sitting on the ground with a small cup raised, tilts it towards her and quietly asks, "Spare change?" *I'm not working. I get very little from the government as it is. I'm sorry that you are in a worse position than I am, I really am, but I don't*

<center>60</center>

have money for you. Kim quickens her step and lowers her gaze. *I'm not a millionaire. People don't realize that. Just because I have two kids doesn't mean I have a lot of money to support them. In fact, I have less money because I have twice the expenses. I wish this class was on a different bus route. In fact, I wish this class offered bus tokens too.* She is reminded of a class her friend had told her about when she first had Derek. Her friend was given bus tokens and healthy snacks when she participated. *That would be just one less concern and so informative with things that are actually useful to me, like budget friendly meal planning. Oh I really would have appreciated that!* As she reaches the entrance she looks for the accessibility button. *Ugh, I forgot they don't have that here.* She starts shifting her bags from one arm to an awkward position on her stroller, swings it around, and begins to reverse into the doors, using her body to push it open. As she pulls the stroller through the doorway, the door begins to slip and she catches it before it collides with the stroller and jostles Lucas. However, this sudden shift causes her bag to topple over and trinkets scatter everywhere. "Seriously!" she says in frustration as she crouches down to gather her things. *It's hard enough getting here and now I have to deal with this. It looks like I'm going to have to hold him the entire time with my bags because they don't even allow strollers.* She gives the "No strollers beyond this point" sign a dirty look, gathers her bag, purse, and Lucas while continuing down the hall in search of the crafts room.

<div align="center">***</div>

Getting to the playroom, Kim plops Lucas on the floor with all of the other infants and takes a look around. Toys are in every corner, infants and toddlers playing amongst them. Mothers are grouped together in deep conversation. No one approaches her and after a few minutes, Kim thinks to herself *GAAHH I don't know what to do here!* Her eyes trail from the group of mothers chatting, to her son sitting on the carpet, alone. *Oh and no one's playing with Lucas. The other moms must come here often, they're all friends.* She she never finds it easy joining already existing social groups and walking into this room of chatting moms, Kim's face flushes and feelings of awkwardness and anxiety come over her. Unsure of what to expect, she anxiously questions herself. *I wonder if they'll have snacks. Was I supposed to bring something? No… if anything they have some sort of snack schedule planned out.* Brightly coloured mobiles and toys are everywhere. *Ok, so I guess we go here.* Looking at the toys and activities, she suddenly realizes there might be a cost to the program. *Was I supposed to register for this?! I don't have any cash on me, what if there's a fee?* A rush of panic and embarrassment floods her body. A staff member makes her way around the room introducing herself and instructing the moms to guide their children as needed. Lucas is digging his fingers into the carpet and pulling up fibers. "OHH I don't think you can eat that!*"* she says pulling his hand from his mouth and placing a soft teddy into his hands, *Oh no! Did anyone see that! People are going to think I'm some inattentive mother that lets her child crawl in the dirt and eat anything! I'm not a bad mom.* "He'll be ok, mine has done it before and has never gotten sick." A woman chimes in from a few feet to her left with a warm smile. Kim looks over at her son, double checking he's not thinking about having another snack and then back to the woman. "Thanks, I swear I feed him things other than carpet at home. I'm Kim this is my youngest Lucas." "Hi, I'm Carolyn this is my son Nathan." They sit for a time, watching their babies crawl, with the noise of laughter filling the room.

This is nice! Look at him learning how to socialize! He starts crawling out of her lap and into Carolyn's. *Haha what a goof! None of the other children are social like my little guy!* Comparing Lucas to the other children Kim thinks, *actually I think he's crawling the best in the group.* Kim watched, noticing the differences in milestones the children were at. A few were

walking, others still crawling like her son. Wanting to start a conversation but not knowing where to start, the feeling of anxiety begins to creep up from the pit of her stomach. *Its never been easy to socialize but I should try.* She prompts herself just enough to ask a question, breaking the ice. "So is your son walking yet?" *We all have babies here around the same age, at least we have that in common, right.* "Oh, well almost! He's pulling himself up and can stand while hanging onto things. He'll get there." Carolyn trails off as she guides Kim's son off her lap and back to the play area. *I love this, he's like a little person, my baby is his own person!* "How old is he?" Carolyn asks. "Oh seven months." Kim smiles at her successful attempt to interact with another mom. *This is great! A bit surface level I guess but still nice to be talking to an actual adult!* Kim asks, "So, I haven't been here before, how does this program work? How did you hear about it" Carolyn smiles and begins to explain, "Oh, a friend asked me to come with her to this place. But sometimes I see flyers or I talk to some professionals that will recommend other programs." She continues, "Ohh and sometimes there are things in the community newspaper. It's called the parent child guidebook. The local post will have a lot there too." Kim looks over to Lucas to check on him while saying, "Oh ok, that seems easy enough." Carolyn nods and adds, "the only downfall is it doesn't really keep you in the loop with day-to-day things and other mothers." Kim became curious, and looked to Carolyn to elaborate. "Ugh, there was one time, I hadn't been able to see details posted online about a class and showed up to a regularly scheduled class. Unfortunately, that day they were having a pink themed day. Everyone was wearing pink shirts and bright accessories and all their babies were dressed up too. Standing there in my blue tee and jeans all I thought was I DIDN'T KNOW! I felt so deflated and isolated. Kim nods understanding the feeling and says, "I don't like missing out on that stuff either." Carolyn shifts her son to guide his attention back to the jumping gym that he had lost interest in and continues, "You know what, I'm meeting up with some of my 'mamma friends' tonight. It's at a close friend's home. Her name is Beth and I'm sure she'd love to have a new face. Would you like to come?" With the dread of finding a sitter again, Kim replies, "I'd love to but would it be possible to bring Lucas and his brother Derek?" A smile stretches across Carolyn's face, "Of course! I can grab you on my way."

<center>***</center>

Kim and Carolyn arrive at her friend Beth's house, children in tow.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

A women wearing a t-shirt, knee length shorts, and thick wool socks answers the door. "Hi!", she says, a sense of urgency comes washing out of the doors. Carolyn asks, "Hey Beth! How are you? Can you hold him for a minute? I haven't been able to run to the washroom in … well too long." Chuckling, Beth tucks a falling strand of hair behind her ear, grabs Nathan from Carolyn's arms, and gestures towards the stairs to the washroom. "Hi, I'm Beth, you must be Carolyn's friend, Kim? Welcome." she says. Beth's daughter comes bouncing down the stairs, excited at the prospect of someone new. They both bring the children into the living room where there are toys all set up for them. They settle around the kitchen table, lined with a vibrant coloured plastic tablecloth. Kim notices the organized chaos of Beth's house. *It's homie, maybe a little messy, but lovely.*

Beth brings over a glass of water and sits down across from Kim. "Thanks for having me over. Carolyn told me it's a parenting group you've formed?" Kim inquires. "Well ya, this is basically it, this is my home, it's messy but I'm fine with that, others will stop in. We met in our church life group. We get together and socialize, chat, do themed discussions, like parenting or marriage, and it's grown since people like yourself have joined us!" Beth explains, an warm

<center>62</center>

smile growing on her face. "We make it a point each week to share about our lives. We celebrate together, support each other, and commiserate during the hard times. We help each other where we can, like babysitting, moving, or whatever." *Now that's the kind of group connection and friendship I'm looking for.* "Oh that sounds wonderful!" Kim exhaled in relief. "Oh absolutely, the kids are more than welcome and they usually just play off to the side there. But this isn't for their benefit. It's for ours. As a new mom, I found I needed somebody else to talk to who was an adult. Who had similar experiences, similar enough to me that we could relate to 'my kids are driving me crazy and remind me that I'm not a bad mom for thinking that, for letting them have chips for a snack or having a messy home." Kim smiled and nodded in agreement, "Oh, I know I'm not super mom, sometimes I need help but I still feel like people are watching me, waiting for me to make a mistake." "Exactly!" Beth began to laugh. "So yes. You're more than welcome to come in the future, it's up to you."

<center>***</center>

The night was coming to a close, Carolyn had drop Kim and the children off at their home and Kim was now putting her sleepy boys to bed. *That was great! It was free, I got a bit of a break and connected with some really great mamas.* For Blair it was worth all the costs of going, and while she flicked her sons' bedroom light off she smiled knowing she would be meeting up with that group again.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to illuminate the stories and experiences of how mothers from lower income families gain awareness, access, and subsequently experience community supported programming in Kitchener, Ontario. In order to better understand these stories and experiences previous chapters explored literature in this area. This discussion highlighted the continued challenges of motherhood, which involves tremendous amounts of change in all areas of a new mother's life during the transition to motherhood. While some literature indicated that leisure activities, such as the ones offered at community supported programs, might help to improve the wellbeing and social support of mothers, many mothers still do not participate. Furthermore, literature was needed to better illuminate the complexities of mothers' experiences of gaining awareness and access to community supported programming, specifically within the Kitchener region. In order to address this gap in the literature, a socialist feminist lens was applied to this narrative inquiry. This lens brought notions of gender and class to the forefront to provide opportunities for equity through social change.

The following section will look to discuss the findings of this narrative inquiry, expanding on the narratives with interpretations of how these findings fit with the literature in the area. This discussion will first address the ways in which the mothers gained awareness and access of programming and the significance these findings play. Thus, such things as the Internet, social networking, and public transportation etc. will be discussed in relation to the literature in order to explain how these interpretations answer my first research question; what experiences do mothers with lower incomes have during the process of gaining awareness and access to community parenting programs in Kitchener? In order to further answer my second research question; what are the experiences of mothers after gaining access to participation? The

findings from the narratives of the participants will then be compared to literature. Finally, what possible transformations that might occur to improve mother's experiences in community programs in Kitchener will be answered and expanded. The findings to this research question developed a discussion around implications for practice, ultimately addressing my third research question, and providing insight into how to create more socially just opportunities regarding community supported programming.

Ready, Set, Look

For many of the mothers, the process of gaining awareness of community supported programming began with a desire to reach out and a feeling of readiness for social interaction with peers following several months after having the baby. This ultimately motivated the mothers to gain awareness of community supported programs. This supports Parry, Glover, and Mulcahy's (2012) findings, as they discussed this desire for social interaction among new mothers. They found that mothers craved peer interaction, however, often lacked sociable networks and proper support that ultimately fostered feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Nelson (2009) discussed the struggle women have when developing their new maternal identity while maintaining other identities. This identity of "mommy" is what West and Zimmerman (1987) describe as "socially guided perceptual, and interactional activities that cast a particular image." Based on these gendered expectations, the activities, language, and doings of mothering is an expression of femininity and participation in these expectations is done to achieve gender identity. Thus it is the women that often take on this identity of "mommy". My study uses this knowledge to better understand the identity work associated with becoming a mother. My findings suggested that the mothers' desired a place where both identities of "mommy" and the identity they had before the baby was born, could co-exist. This "mommy"

65

identity is composed of socially constructed expectations, such as the maternal or "good mother" identity, in which women are expected to be the primary caregivers of the family, are responsible for the majority of domestic work, and be inherently good and selfless, placing their family needs before their own (Nelson, 2009; Miller & Brown, 2005). These expectations are internalized by many women and influence their maternal selves (Nelson, 2009). The mothers in my study were in search of a location where they could negotiate their identities of both pre and post baby. Nelson (2009) have discussed this identity-work among new mothers as a phase of negotiation and experiences of profound shifts in a mother's sense of self. O'reilly's (2010) work further supports the significant shift in their identity and was supported by this study which found that the mothers I interviewed were motivated to find a place, a group, anything in which they could negotiate and accept both identities of mother and person rather than feel their new identity was a cause of stress. In addition to being a place for mothers to negotiate their identities, these community-supported programs were also a place the mothers were able to develop a better relationship and sense of their baby.

In addition to motivation, the participants discussed the process of gaining awareness as a process of actively looking for information, connections, and resources. This process involved using a variety of resources such as social media like Facebook groups, peers, and professionals. These resources connected the mothers in my study to information and social support that aided in their awareness of community supported programming. This demonstrates how a mother's opportunity for community programming was reliant on their access to such things as a social network of peers. That is to say, the process of gaining awareness involved the mothers' participation in looking for information, resources, and ways of access, rather than an effortless, ease of access. This is no surprise, as several studies have suggested social connections and the

networks formed in programming offered to parents can improve a mother's social support, resources, and general wellbeing. However, Mulcahy and Parry's (2011) exploration of first time mothers making social connections found limited social networks left the mothers in their study unaware of the possible groups and programming available to them. As a way of negotiating the limited social networks, mothers are turning to other resources, such as the Internet, in order to connect with other mothers.

When attempting to access or increase awareness of community supported programming, the mothers' active search often involved the Internet. In particular, many mothers interviewed noted their use of Facebook and email correspondence specifically facilitated better awareness by fostering networks and connections to resources. This is similar to Parry, Glover and Mulcahy's (2012) research, which identified Momstown.ca as an effective resource for mothers to connect and build deep, platonic relationships with other mothers. In contrast, the mothers I interviewed mainly discussed these Facebook groups as a resource for information rather than building deep relations. Further expanding on past literature, this research illuminated how the use of the Internet and search engines specifically, also allowed mothers to gain awareness of potential programs, resources, information, and scheduling providing opportunities to avoid isolation. However, this access was highly controlled by the mothers' socioeconomic status. This begins to illuminate the complexity of class and gendered inequalities experienced by mothers. Lorber (2012) discusses similar disadvantages by recognizing the intersecting and differential patterns of class, race, and gender. This is consistent with the findings from my study, as the lack of access to a computer and the Internet due to a family's lower wage and a mother's role as primary caregiver illustrated these complex disadvantages of class and gender. These

intersections of inequality resulted in feelings of less awareness of programming, and further isolation and exclusion.

In other words, while the Internet can help to connect mothers, reducing feelings of isolation, the lack of Internet will have the opposite effect. This was very relevant to the mothers interviewed as the socially constructed gendered expectations of mothering often left them feeling housebound and isolated. This in combination with socioeconomic disadvantages experienced such as limited time and money highlights the complexity of multiple oppressions. This is described as double jeopardy (Watson & Scraton, 2013), as the combination of both gendered expectations and disadvantages due to class restricted access to the Internet and subsequently programming.

The Internet was not the only form in which the mother's gained awareness of programming. Many of the mother's relied on word of mouth, expressing their family members and friends as major sources for recommendations of resources and programming available to them. However, some also utilized the peers and social networks that were developed in programming and groups. These sources were especially important to the character who did not have access to a computer or the Internet. Social feminist theory would suggest this is due to the accumulated disadvantages from gendered and classed social positions. As a result of the oppressions from these social categories, she had to be more reliant on free and easily accessible sources.

In addition to the use of the Internet, mothers also used a variety of networks to gain awareness and access to community programming. Support networks of friends and family played a crucial role for the mother's access to community supported programming in my study.

These findings were consistent with Miller and Brown's (2005) research, which found that social networks, similar to my participant's friends and family, allowed mothers to negotiate their leisure constraints and thus the mothers' access to community supported programming. When looking deeper at these connections, my research found that using a network of professionals, and staff of community supported programming was a useful tool in gaining awareness and access to leisure and programming as well. This theme furthers our understanding of how various social networks can be useful tools in the process of gaining awareness and access for mothers.

While childcare may also provide a support to mothers, the economic and gender implications associated with this form of support is limiting. For instance, many of the mothers expressed their inability to meet the expenses of childcare for their children. Instead, they sought alternative ways of caring for their child while balancing work, such as paying babysitters with pizza, and creating their own at home daycare. In addition to economic restraints, the gendered expectations placed on mothers to stay home and fulfill the primary caregiver roles creates additional issues for accessing childcare. Mothers expressed struggling to fulfill the expectation of the "super mom" identity in which a mother can do it all. Community supported programming seems to offer the missing support mothers need, as many mothers described how they used these facilities to get a break, and have a second pair of hands.

Negotiating Restricted Access

Past literature has discussed the barriers and constraints to leisure participation and subsequently participation in programming among mothers with young children (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Miller & Brown, 2005). For instance, one of the largest barriers experienced, was a limitation on leisure time due to an ethic of care—the process of constantly giving selflessly and

being accessible to family needs before attending to self needs (Mulcahy & Parry, 2011; Nelson, 2009). This sense of commitment to the family limited the access to programming for the mothers in my study as well. While the research supports this past literature, as mothers did experience barriers of time, an ethic of care, and access, occasionally mothers were able to negotiate these barriers to participation. When they were able to participate in programming they often discussed the programs as a leisure experience, offering them social interaction and educational resources.

In addition, the mothers I interviewed expressed the role transportation plays in access to community programming. Many of the mothers discussed their ability to utilize various forms of transportation as a major determinant to access to programming. This is supportive of past literature, which found that mothers perceive a lack of time as a major constraint to leisure participation (Miller & Brown, 2005). Thus, it is no surprise methods of transportation such as walking and using the bus were restricted based on the time, distance, and physical effort associated among the mothers in my study. Access to walking as a form of transportation was also constrained by the weather, as snow, temperature, and discomfort restrict the mothers' access. This is similar to Parry et al. (2012), which discussed how the Canadian winter increased the likelihood of mother's staying inside and not socializing. Ultimately the opportunity cost associated with walking was too high for mothers with lower incomes and those must rely on other forms of transportation or stop participation.

Thus, the bus and public transportation is a more accessible form of transportation. While this method of transportation connects community programming to mothers more than walking, there are still significant constraints to access that mothers with lower incomes must negotiate before accessing. Again, time, location, and the bus schedule may limit a mothers' access. Not

70

all mothers live close to a bus route, have flexible schedules, or have time to spare waiting for the bus. In addition, the cost of the bus limits transportation. Similar to Brown et al. (2001), perceived constraints such as lack of money, limits the mothers' ability to access programming and transportation. However, this research also found that the experience of culture itself on the bus could limit or negatively impact the process of accessing programming because the bus seems to create its own culture that fostered intrusions into personal space and instilled feelings of vulnerability among mothers with lower incomes while using the bus.

This vulnerability illustrates that parenting can go beyond the home environment. Not only were mothers exposed to intrusions of personal space, but their behaviour was also being observed by the public. When utilizing public space such as the bus, mothers are engaging in public acts that are observed by others. This supports Friedman's (2012) research on surveillance of parenting; the observation of mothering styles and behaviours, made possible do to a mother's reliance on public resources like the bus system. These observations create opportunity to judge their parenting style, and critique what is deemed to be "good mothering". Friedman (2012) further discussed parenting in the public sphere, suggesting that parents with lower incomes were held to a higher parenting standard than those parents with higher incomes. This because mothers with lower incomes are forced to parent in the public eye to use public resource, while mothers with more disposable income can afford to parent in privacy, by using a personal vehicle or even leaving the child at home with a sitter. This exposes mothers with lower incomes to be critiqued against expectations of "good mothering" more often.

As briefly mentioned above, to avoid parenting surveillance or intrusions of personal space, the use of a personal vehicle can be used. However, the cost associated with owning one's own vehicle made access very limited. As such, relying on family, friends, or a spouse are more

realistic and accessible options. This aligns with studies that discuss the importance of family and spousal support for new mothers, as spousal and family support has been found to be protective against experiences of lower wellbeing (Sevon, 2011; Nelson, 2009). The mothers not only rely on their family for social support but also tangible support such as getting around, ultimately easing access to programming. Similar to Sevon's research (2011) for many of the mothers, their own mother was a major source of support. While for some mothers, partner support was in abundance and positive, others did not receive this support. Sevon's (2011) research suggests that those who are not receiving this abundance of spousal/partner support may experience further feelings of isolation and post partum depression.

While community supported programming could assist with these feelings of isolation, lack of disposable income restricts access to community programming. Cost and expenses associated with program fees, supplies, and bus fares were sometimes perceived as constraining by the mothers in this study. Again, this is consistent with Miller & Brown's (2005) research of constraints to leisure participation. This study of mothers' participation in leisure activities found mothers who perceived a lack of money would not participate in leisure activities with a cost associated with it. Again this is a result of the mothers striving to fulfill their ethic of care expectation. The mothers did not participate in activities they wanted to in order to save money for their family. The mothers in my study also met this ethic of care by remaining accessible to their family members as much as possible, instead of participating. However, many of the mothers interviewed discussed a process of justification for certain expenses. For instance, the small cost of a program targeting mothers with multiples (twins, triplets, etc.) was perceived as highly valuable to one of the mothers. In this case, the mother found a way to fulfill her own needs rather than again fulfilling the ethic of care expectation. Other considerations that helped

mothers justify participation were, the benefits to the baby, while the benefits for themselves were secondary. This again, reflects the ethic of care produced within the patriarchal society and perpetuated through media, peers, and between generations (Nelson, 2009). The expectation of the ethic of care was very visible in the stories of my participants, as they expressed feeling like they should and were expected to be selfless; always placing their children's needs before their own (Miller, Brown, 2005).

Along with expectations, the process of gaining access to community programming is influenced by the mothers' perceptions of the programs themselves. Many of the mothers did not participate in certain programs because they assumed they were inaccessible due to membership fees or would not meet their needs. Furthermore, the mothers were discouraged from attending programming if they perceived the environment to be unsuitable for them or their child. This is supported by discussions of gendered expectations on mothers regarding socially constructed ideas of "good mothering" (Christopher, 2012; Nelson, 2009). Again, the complexity of the mothers' intersecting and differential social categories is prevelant. Their lower income influenced their perceptions of available options combined with their attempt to meet sociatal expectations of "good mothering" by only choosing programs they percieve to be beneficial to the children. This colminates in experiences of multiple, complex inequalities when accessing community programming.

Building Experience

Past literature has suggested that the participation in parenting groups may improve mother's social support, access to resources, and overall wellbeing (Dentea & Moren-Cross, 2005; Fieldan & Gallagher, 2008). This study supported this finding because mothers described community supported programming as a place where they gained peer support, resources, and

knowledge through the fostered connections formed through regular participation. Furthermore, after gaining access to parenting programs, many of the mothers experienced the formation of platonic relationships and subsequently peer support. Nelson (2009) discussed how once pregnant, women begin to interact in maternal interaction with other mothers and pregnant women. This holds true for the mothers interviewed, as many experienced sharing, comparing, and reassuring during participation in community supported programming. For instance, similar to Nelson (2009), tangible support through shared knowledge and information, developed among the mothers through sharing strategies, stories, and advice. This is also comparable to the explorations of networks by Dennis (2003), which described them as providing a mother with reassurance and other forms of emotional assistance gained through listening, caring, encouraging, reassuring, and generally avoiding criticism or judgment. Furthermore, the mothers also engaged in comparing with other mothers.

This process of comparing was experienced as both positive and negative. For instance, sometimes mothers expressed the social benefits of comparing their children's development, utilizing these talking points as ice-breakers. However, other times, mothers expressed these comparisons as a reflection of their mothering abilities. This is a reflection of the age of anxiety, in which mothers feel judged; basing their self worth around how well their child succeeds while striving to meeting gendered expectations of mothering and maintaining a work life balance (Warner, 2005). This is also consistent with Parry, Glover, & Mulcahy's (2013) findings, which illuminated how mothers would feel insufficient in social situations because they perceived other mothers to transition flawlessly. However, the participants in my study found the comparing process more productive and beneficial. Instead they would share parenting techniques, taking advice, and use the comparisons of their child's development to stay informed. Even more, they

found these comparisons to be a great conversation starter at community programming. While mothers did discuss a desire for more structured programming to foster relationships more easily, the process comparing and sharing with peers was a useful icebreaker. Finally, mothers also encountered feelings of reassurance when participating in community programming. Similar to research on mothers with private relationships with other mothers, these community supported programs fostered relationships between mothers where they could gain emotional assistance through reassurance (Dennis, 2003). Ultimately this eases the transition to motherhood for the mothers and relieves feelings of doubt and anxiety.

The environment created from these programs and groups fosters opportunities of comparing, sharing, and reassuring amongst mothers, allowing a sense of acceptance and honesty. As such, they were able to resist against the previously discussed gendered expectations placed on them around mothering. Past research has discussed expectations to fulfill the "good mother" identity and inability to fulfill these expectations fosters judgment of mothers (Nelson 2009). However, similar to Nelson's (2009) suggestions, community supported programming and the relationships that reached beyond these programs, helped the mothers in this study avoid criticism and judgment. A study by Trussel and Mair (2010) suggested that the creation of a judgement free space would allow for opportunities to address social inequalities and systems of oppression. Seeking out leisure that is respectful of privacy yet simultaneously provides the mothers with the feeling of community, could evoke feelings of acceptance (Trussel & Mair, 2010). This is seen in Beth's description of acceptance with her church group. These relationships further support Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover's study (2010) which described mother groups in general as a place for women to help each other resolve problems and support each other (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010).

However, in past literature some mothers groups were also described as "homophilis"; meaning the mothers participating in these mothers groups shared similar backgrounds, experiences, and even parenting techniques (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). This resulted in experiences of getting left out, judged, and gendered by mothers that did not share similarities with the group (Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). Similarly, some experiences shared by the mothers in this research expressed feelings of further exclusions and isolation when trying to participate in community supported programming. However, this only occurred when the mothers felt that there were pre-established groups and relationships among the mothers at activities. This begins to demonstrate the complexity of building relationships through community supported programming.

For those mothers who participated in programming and did not sense a pre-established group existed, often the relationships bonded mothers who shared values, rituals, and discourses, reflective of a mother's club. Nelson (2009) discussed this as the existence of a subculture, or a cultural space that has its own requirements of membership refered to as the "mother's club." These relationships resulted in feelings of community cohesion among the mothers I interviewed. Some mothers relied on these relationships for social interaction, advice, and reassurance. As a result, mothers created social networks in which they could rely on for peer support for mothering and work life balance.

As an alternative to participation in actual programming, the mothers also used the facility simply for a physical space to host grassroots level groups. These mommy groups have been found to benefit mothers by allowing them to build relationships, and bond with neighbors, creating a tight knit community of mothers geographically close together. It also has been known to provide a place for mothers to help each other resolve problems and gain mutual support

(Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover, 2010). Similar to Mulcahy, Parry, & Glover's, (2010) research, access to such grassroots groups seemed to be influenced by education and economic privilege. Complex inequalities of class and gender contribute to systems of oppression, as some mothers in this study felt that their socio economic positions limited their ability to create these grassroots groups. Disposable money and expectations around hosting, such as cleaning, and providing food and snacks, deterred some mothers from choosing to host their own groups. Instead they sought power neutral locations in which their socio economic positions and gender were not prevalent such as an unstructured meeting area at a local parenting facility. The community supported programs that the mothers utilized were often free and thus inviting to a variety of parents with varying disposable incomes. This may suggest why some mothers in this study utilized community supported programs to host their own group meet ups instead of within their own homes. However, this was not experienced by all of the participants. Some mothers preferred hosting at their home, and were able to resist these expectations of hosting.

Resistance is the challenging of systems of power by an oppressed group or individual (Shaw, 2006). Despite intention, the outcome of resistance can create feelings of empowerment amongst the group or woman that is oppressed. Intention however, can occur on a continuum, in that there are varying levels of intention to resist. Hosting at their own home gave some mothers a feeling of empowerment, as they resisted by refusing to stress over cleaning, cooking, and other hosting etiquette mandates. This study supports Shaw's (2006) claim that unintentional acts can be considered resistant if they create experiences of empowerment of challenge dominant norms and power. The mothers in my study did show a level of intentionality in their actions allowing them to, in their own way, resist the gendered norms and expectations placed upon them.

Transformations

This research illuminated the ways in which mothers with lower incomes gained awareness, access, and subsequently experience community supported programming in Kitchener, Ontario. Furthermore, in order to provide opportunity for change that supports a more socially just society, this research also gave voice to the non-dominant narratives of potential changes and transformations the mothers would like to see. As such, the potential transformations and changes unearthed in these interviews will be used to guide a discussion of the implications for this research. To do this, such things as advertising of programs, clearer, more accessible information, and program structure will be discussed.

Community supported programming needs to be better advertised, reaching a wider variety of locations and people. Many of the participants expressed feeling unaware of all their options due to the limited advertising of potential opportunities. As a result, some mothers had expressed knowing very little to none about certain programs, leading to their lack of participation. If they did know about a program, the mothers often attributed their knowledge to their own effort in seeking the information out.

The mothers believed that they were unique in that many of their peers would not put the effort into learning about all of their potential options, nor would they be able to. Instead, all of the mothers recommended better advertising. Such things as flyers are a simple, low cost form of advertisement that could be used for community supported programming. However, the mothers suggested that more of these flyers should be posted and more importantly, they should be maintained, up-to-date, and placed in locations that would better reach mothers, such as grocery stores, food banks, and medical clinics. Even further, the newspaper was suggested as a convenient way to reach the mothers to better inform them.

Many mothers also expressed a desire for all the information they would need to be organized and grouped together in a package that they could get right when they had their baby in the hospital or clinic. They desired easier access to information. The mothers believed that they would have benefitted most from receiving information about any programs, community resources, and health information right at the beginning. Furthermore, the mothers suggested that the best way to reach all mothers would be providing a simple package while they were having their check-up right after having the baby. Again, this package would include; potential programming in the area, class descriptions and schedules, transportation information, community resources available to them, health information for post partum care, and even simple things like coupons.

Participants also expressed that simply hearing of an available program was not enough. Instead they expressed needing clearer, more accessible information and outlines regarding the details of the programs accessible to them. Many expressed feeling ill-informed. For instance, often the mothers expressed having heard of a program, but knew nothing about it. They expressed wanting easy access to information such as scheduling, membership fees, and activity descriptions. The lack of this information resulted in the mothers not participating or feeling the program was not suitable for them. As such, they perceived the program was not for them, cost money, and therefore could not afford it or wouldn't meet their needs. Therefore, they suggested creating something, such as a document, with everything they would need to know about different programs and activities. This would include such things as what, when, and where activities were offered, how to access it, and what were the expectations of the activities, themselves, and their children.

Additionally, this study would suggest that community supported programs are not consistent in the experiences they offer to mothers. While, sometimes programs and activities foster deep platonic relationships, social support, and feelings of connectedness, other times it can create feelings of isolation and further exclusion. Furthermore, while it is not the intention of the program to exclude those with lower incomes, such things as membership fees, poor locations, and inaccessible times can discourage and even prevent mothers from participating. Many of the mothers expressed not being able to participate in certain activities due to the cost of membership or the expense of transportation. Others expressed exclusion from programming due to inaccessible locations from limited bus routes. Even further, many mothers discussed their lack of participation in programming once they returned to work, as the majority of activities they desired access to, were only available during regular working hours.

One mother described a program, which is no longer offered, as a solution. This program offered ease of access as it took place in the downtown core of Kitchener, along several bus routes. It was provided at no expense and offered nutritious snacks and bus tokens to remove any barriers of cost to participation. This program was only experienced by one participant, however, all of the mothers suggested aspects similar to this program for potential changes that would better their experiences.

Furthermore, the mothers expressed feelings of exclusion when attempting to develop social networks. While many of the mothers expressed a desire to build relationships and gain social support through these programs, occasionally, when accessing a new program, they perceived pre-established groups within the activity. As a result, the mothers expressed feeling awkward, excluded, and further isolated. Instead, they believe that offering more structure within

activities and programs, as well as ice-breakers guided by a program director would aid in the introduction into new activities and social networks.

The following is a condensed list, comprised of the suggestions for potential transformations the mothers interviewed would like to see, in order to improve the experiences of gaining awareness, access, subsequent experience of community supported programing in Kitchener:

- Better advertisement for resources and specifically community programming available to parents.
    - o Easy to access via paper/flyers, convenient locations, and up-to-date
- One-stop-shop information package
    - o Containing informative flyers, pamphlets, and descriptions of available resources.
    - o Could be provided in the hospital after delivery or any clinic during maternal check-ups after having the baby.
- Program descriptions
    - o Providing paper copies of the monthly schedule, any associated costs (if any), and better descriptions of the activities.
    - o Descriptions of facility policies readily accessible, such as parking, childcare, and program expectations.
- Maintain free programs and activities.
- Consider location of facility
    - o Bus routes and safe areas were major concerns.
- Accessible times offering programs.

- Before and after work hours.

- Programs and activities that are designed with families with lower wages in mind
  - Providing nutritious snacks and bus tokens
  - Education and skill development opportunities

Indeed, small scale changes need to occur in order for social justice to begin gaining momentum. However, significant changes of social structures and institutions of power need to occur in order for equity to be experienced on a macro level. In recent years, families and paid work have experienced tremendous change, for instance, while paid work by women has increased, so has family instability (Bianchi S. , 2011). Families are experiencing numerous dilemmas, "For low-income women, many of whom are single parents, the work-family dilemma is how to care adequately for children and work enough hours to support them financially. (Bianchi S. , 2011, p. 16)" This instability and lack of quality care create significant struggles for reasonable family life and family's economic well-being (Bianchi S. , 2011). I believe it is necessary to find a sustainable way to increase the living wage for Canadians. The living wage should provide enough income for basic necessities of life and allow families to live comfortably. Families in the middle-lower income distribution are more likely to struggle financially, be more time stretched, and less able to afford care for children during their absence for such things as work.

Families with lower incomes also need accessible, quality childcare (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Creating policies that better support mothers with low incomes gain access to childcare could begin to enable participation in the paid workforce among mothers. In time, this could promote prosperity for families with lower incomes, and gender equity within the paid work field. Social change for families is complex, as different families need different things. Some

need assurance and safeguards for employment and money, others need more work and more money (Bianchi S. , 2011). With this in mind, "solutions must focus on family and workplaces but also the institutions that support healthy working families-schools, childcare centres, after school programs, the medical care system, and support systems for elder care. (Bianchi S. , 2011, p. 16)" These higher level ideas of social change would begin to develop a more socially just community for mothers with lower incomes.

It is also important to further develop the discussion of experiences of motherhood. Illuminating the reality that motherhood and class can open up opportunities for change and a more socially just community. Motherhood is complex and messy. While it is controlled and guided by patriarchal power, there is also joy and love in the the relationships built between mothers and their children. Within this study, there was tremendous amount of identity work and gendered expectations that often developed new struggles and oppression amongst the mothers. This study aimed to question these notions of gender and the institution of motherhood to help promote equity within the experiences of mothering and community supported programs.

Researchers must also bear in mind that all mothers are not the same, rather they may differ in ethnic, religious, socioeconomic, regional, political and sexual identities and affiliations. As such, consideration must be made to possible transformations regarding the intersection of motherhood and class. While the labour market conditions, living wage, and other social trends may influence the experiences of mothers with lower incomes, government spending is also very important to consider. Higher government spending on family and social benefits are associated with lower child poverty rates (O'reilly, 2010). With this knowledge, it becomes important to promote government support and the revaluation of qualifiers for government support. It is important to revaluate this because often the middle to lower income distribution are more likely

to earn too much to qualify for government assistance yet, not earn enough to afford certain necessities such as quality child care (Bianchi S. , 2011). Consideration for these transformations on a macro and micro level will help to provide opportunities for social change and equity within the community.

Future Research

Upon conducting this research, it became apparent that other issues needed to be addressed. For instance, this research focused on mothers with lower incomes. Though the criteria did not specify any race, ethnicity, sexuality etc., upon reaching out, and seeking participants, the silence of race, ethnicity, and sexuality other than white and heterosexual became louder and louder, as the only mothers observed at programming and the only mothers that reached out identified as heterosexual, White women. This dominance of white heterosexual participants demonstrates how these intersections construct disadvantages and privilege in access and participation to community programming. To better promote opportunities for a socially just community, further research should look to unpack these silent voices and seek to unearth the systems of power in relation to social categories of race and sexuality within the awareness, access, and experience of community programming.

Another narrative that is missing from this research is that of men. While society places several gendered expectations on women in the family and as a mother, there are also socially constructed gendered expectations placed on men. These expectations should be brought to the forefront to better illuminate the stories of access and experience among men in community supported programming—and in particular the experiences of single fathers who are often excluded from parenting groups perceived as "mother-only" space. The ideal man, as constructed by dominant discourse is strong, the breadwinner in the family, and dominantly in the work and

public sphere. However, as mentioned in the narratives earlier, male participation in caregiving of children is increasing. Further research should be done to unpack these complexities.

Conclusion

Past literature regarding mothering and community programming has highlighted the continued challenges of motherhood associated with emotional, physical, social, psychological, and financial changes that women experienced in all areas of their life when transitioning into motherhood. Current trends around mothering, and work have created numerous challenging gendered expectations resulting in an age of anxiety. However, these challenges do no occur in isolation and further disadvantages occur when experiencing intersections of social categories such as class and socioeconomic status. While some research has indicated that leisure activities may help to improve equity of access and experience of community supported programming, many mothers are constrained from participation, which ultimately makes it very challenging to develop such things as social support networks; something that is highly valuable to a mother's wellbeing. While literature has begun to create a dialogue around this, this research has chosen to further expand on the knowledge regarding mothering and community programming. More specifically, this study took gender and socio economic status directly into consideration. Thus, using a social feminist narrative inquiry, narratives illuminated the experiences of the process of gaining awareness, access, and subsequent experience of community supported programs by mothers with lower incomes.

Notions of gendered expectations, patriarchy, class, and inequality were brought to the forefront of my research and questioned in order to provide opportunities for change that could support a more socially just community and expand knowledge that may support programs to better reach and serve mothers. The mothers in my study told stories of utilizing the Internet,

social networks, and professionals to gain awareness of available community programming. However, issues were exposed when socio economic status and gender were considered. Disposable income made awareness through computers and the Internet challenging, and limited options for programming due to associated costs such as membership fees, transportation, and childcare. Furthermore, the consideration of gender illuminated issues of patriarchy and gendered expectations of motherhood. During the process of gaining awareness of community programming, the mothers interviewed expressed these notions when discussing their need to negotiate their new maternal identities that limited their ability to see themselves outside of their new identity as mother. Instead, mothers mostly identified with the maternal role, fulfilling expectations to be the primary caregiver, self sacrificing and always available for her family.

The mothers interviewed also discussed their use of such things as the Internet, public transportation, and peer support to access community supported programming. Although this helped the mothers gain access to some programming, inequalities of gendered and class still arose. Thus, when using a social feminist lens, it became clear that access to transportation, and programs were restricted by location, time, and costs of resources. In addition, the mothers intersecting social categories of class and gender created some experiences of vulnerability to intrusion to their private life and exposure to unsafe areas when accessing public transportation or various walking routes. This discussion of class and gender also illuminated the significant role of social networks play in the experience of programming. This discussion explored how mothers gained peer support, resources and knowledge when participating in community programming. However, issues of gender are still prevalent, as the mothers discussed their feelings of gendered expectations around mothering. Through the development of community cohesion and social support, the mothers also expressed their negotiations and ability to cope

with these expectations. The culmination of class and gender thus created a complex system of disadvantage, which influenced the mothers' experiences of gaining awareness, access and their subsequent experience of community programming. Thus it is clear that change must take place in order to counteract the disadvantages discussed above. Therefore, the basic relational nature of class, gender, and other social categories should be interrogated. This questioning will begin to work towards re-structuring relations of power and oppression to better support a more socially just community.

References

Aitchison, C. C. (2003). Gender and leisure theory. In C. C. Aitfhison, *Gender and leisure: Social and cultural perspectives* (pp. 8-38). London: Routledge.

Arendell, T. (2000). Conceiving and investigating motherhood: The decade's scholarship. *Journal of Marriage and Family , 62* (4), 1192-1207.

Barnett, R. C., & Baruch, G. K. (1985). Women's Involvement in Multpile Roles and Psychological Distress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology , 49* (1), 135-145.

Beal, F. (2008). Double jeopardy: To be black and female. *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism, 8(2), 166-176 , 8* (2), 166-176.

Berbary, L. A. (2015). Creative Analytic Practices: Onto-episto-theoretical Attachments, Uses, and Constructions within Humanist Qualitative Leisure Research. *International Leisure Review*, 27-54.

Berbary, L. A. (2011). Poststructural Writerly Representations: Screenplay as Creative Analytic Practice. *Qualitative Inquiry , 17* (2), 186-196.

Bianchi, S. M., & Milkie, M. A. (2011). Changing Families, Changing Workplaces. *The Future of Children, 21*(2), 15-36.

Bianchi, S. M., & Milkie, M. A. (2010). Work and Family Research in the First Decade of the 21st Century. *Journal of Marriage and Family , 72* (3), 705-725.

Blackford, H. (2004). Playground panopticism: Ring-around-the-chilren, a pocketful of women. *Childhood , 11* (2), 227-249.

Bohnert, N., & Robson, J. (2010). *A Comparative Literature Review of Parental Leave Policies Final Report.* SRDC.

Bold, C. (2012). *Using Narrative in Research.* London: sage.

Brown, P. R., Brown, W. J., Miller, Y. D., & Hansen, V. (2001). Perceived constraints and social

    support for active leisure among mothers with young children. *Leisure Sciences , 23*,

    131-144.

Campbell, R., & Wasco, S. M. (2000). Feminist Approaches to Social Science: Epistemological

    and Methodological Tenets. *American Journal of Community Psychology , 28* (6), 773-

    791.

Charmaz, K. (2004). Premises, Principles, and Practices in Qualitative Research: Revisiting the

    Foundations. *Qualitative Health Research , 14* (7), 976-993.

Chase, S. E. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. K. Denzin, &

    Y. S. Lincoln, *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 651-679).

    Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chase, S. E. (2003). Taking Narrative Seriously: Consequences for Method and Theory in

    Interview Studies. In Y. S. Lincoln, & N. K. Denzie, *Turning Points in Qualitative*

    Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief (pp. 273-296). Walnut Creek, CA: AltMira

    Press.

Christopher, K. (2012). Extensive Mothering: Employed Mothers' Constructions of the Good

    Mother. *Gender & Society , 26* (1), 73-96.

City of Kitchener. (2014). *Downtown Re-Energization*. Retrieved 05 2012 from Kitchener:

    http://www.kitchener.ca/en/businessinkitchener/BuildingADynamicDowntown.asp

Collin, P. H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas. *The Annual Review of Sociology*

    (41), 1-20.

Connelly, M. F., & Clandinin, J. D. (1990). Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry.

    Educational Researcher , 2-14.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). Data Analysis and Reproduction. In J. W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Amoung Five Approaches* (pp. 147-176). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Critcher, C. (2006). A Touch of Class. In C. Rojek, S. M. Shaw, & A. J. Veal, *A Handbook of Leisure Studies* (pp. 271-287). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Daly, K. (2007). 5 Methodology: Links among ontological assumptions, theory. In *Qualitative Methods for Family Studies and Human Development* (pp. 94-100). Thousan Oaks, CA: Sage.

Davis, C., Sloan, M., & Tang, C. (2011). Role occupancy, quality, and psychological distress among Caucasian and African American women. *Affilia , 26* (1), 72-82.

Dennis, C.-L. (2003). Peer Support within a Health Care Context: A Conceptual Analysis. *Instituational Journal of Nursin Studies , 40*, 321-332.

Devault, M. L., & Gross, G. (2012). Feminist qualitative interviewing. In S. Hesse-Biber, *The handbook of feminist reesarch: Theory and praxis* (pp. 206-236). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dill, B. T., McLaughlin, A. E., & Nieves, A. D. (2007). Future Directions of Feminist Research: Intersectionality. In S. N. Hesse-Biber, *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis* (pp. 629-637). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Drentea, P., & Moren-Cross, J. .. (2005). Social capital and social support on the web: the case of an internet mother site. *Sociology of health & illness , 27* (7), 920-943.

Early Years in Waterloo Region. (2005). *Early Years in the Waterloo Region*. Retrieved 04 22, 2014 from Early Years Ontario: http://www.earlyyearsinfo.ca/

Friedman, D. (2012). Parenting in Public: Family shelter and public assistance. New York: Columbia University Press.

Fielden, J. M., & Gallagher, L. M. (2008). Building social capital in first-time parents through a group-parenting program: A questionnaire survey. *International journal of nursing studies , 45* (3), 406-417.

Freysinger, V. J., Shaw, S. M., Henderson, K. A., & Bialeschki, M. D. (2013). Many Voices: Historical Perspectives on Women's Leisure. In V. J. Freysinger, S. M. Shaw, K. A. Henderson, & M. D. Bialeschki, *Leisure, Women, and Gender* (pp. 27-50). PA: Venture Publishing, Inc.

Frisby, W. (2013). The Politics of taking Action: Women, Poverty, and Leisure-Access Policy. In V. J. Freysinger, S. M. Shaw, K. A. Henderson, & M. D. Bialeschki, *Leisure, Women and Gender* (pp. 409-424). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.

Galatzer-Levy, I. R., Mazursky, H., Mancini, A. D., & Bonanno, G. A. (2011). What we don't expect when expecting: evidence for heterogeneity in subjective well-being in response to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology , 25* (3), 384-392.

Gallagher, R. W., Hobfoll, S. E., Ritter, C., & Lavin, J. (1997). Marriage, Intimate Support and Depression during Pregnancy A Study of Inner-City Women. *Journal of health psychology , 2* (4), 457-469.

Gaudet, S., Cooke, M., & Jacob, J. (2011). Working after childbirth: A lifecourse transition analysis of Canadian women from the 1970s to the 2000s. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie , 48* (2), 153-180.

Gillies, V. (2007). Marginalised Mothers: Exploring working-class experiences of parenting. New York: Routledge.

Goldstein, L. H., Diener, M. L., & Mangeldorf, C. S. (1996). Maternal Characteristics and Social

    Support Across the Transitopm to Motherhood: Association With Menternal Behavior.

    Journal of Family Psychology , 10 (1), 60-71.

Government of Canada. (2014, 01 02). *Employment Insurance Maternity and Parental Benefits*.

    Retrieved 04 12, 2014 from Service Canada:

    http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/types/maternity_parental.shtml#eligible

Government of Canada. (2011). *NHS Profile, Kitchener, CY, Ontario, 2011*. Retrieved 10 18,

    2014 from Statistics Canada: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-

    pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3530013&Data=Count&Search

    Text=Kitchener%20-%20Cambridge%20-

    %20Waterloo&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&Custom=

Government of Canada. (2013, 05 13). *Statistics Canada*. Retrieved 07 17, 2014 from Economic

    Well-being: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11388-eng.htm

Hanna, B. A., Edgecombe, G., Jackson, C. A., & Newman, S. (2002). The Importance of First-

    time Parent GGroups for New Parents. *Nursing and Health Sciences , 4*, 209-214.

Hesse-Biber, S. (2007). Feminist Research. In S. Hesse-Biber (Ed.), *Handbook of Feminist*

    Research: Theory and Praxis (pp. 1-22).

hooks, b. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. London: Pluto Press.

House of Friendship. (n.d.). *Moving Forward*. Retrieved 04 22, 2014 from House of Friendship:

    http://www.houseoffriendship.org/program_addiction_movingforward.php

Iwasaki, Y., & Mannell, R. (2000). Hierarchical Dimensions of Leisure Stress Coping. *Leisure*

    Sciences , 22, 163-181.

Jackson, E. (1988). Leisure Constraints: A Survey of Past Research. *Leisure Sciences , 10* (3), 203-215.

Jackson, E., Crawford, D., & Godbey, G. (1993). Negotiation of Leisure Constraint. *Leisure Sciences , 15*, 1-11.

Johnson, A. G. (2004). Patriarchy, the System. In G. Kirk, & M. Okazawa-Rey, *Women's lives: Multicultura; perspectives* (Vol. 3, pp. 25-32). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Kitchner-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA. (2011). *Fast Facts About Kitchener.* Retrieved 05 2014 from Kitchener:

http://www.kitchener.ca/en/insidecityhall/resources/2011_01_Fast_Facts.pdf

Lee, C., & Gramotnev, H. (2007). Life Transitions and Mental Health in a National Cohort of Young Australian Women. *Developmental Psychology , 43* (4), 877-888.

Leigh, B., & Milgrom, J. (2008). Risk Factors for Antenatal Depression, Postnatal Depression and Parenting Stress. *BMC Psychiatry , 8* (24), 1-11.

Lorber, J. (2001). The variety of feminisms and their contributions to gender equality. In J. Lorber, *Gender inequalities: Feminist theories and politics* (2nd ed., pp. 1-20). Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Mauthner, N. S. (1999). Feeling Low and Feeling Really Bad About Feeling Low: Women's Experiences of Motherhood and Postpartum Depression. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne , 40* (2), 143-161.

Mauthner, N. S. (1995). Postnatal Depression: The Significance of Social Contacts Between Mothers. Women's Studies International Forum , 18 (3), 311-323.

May, V. (2008). On Being a 'Good' Mother: The Moral Presentation of Self in Written Life Stories. Sociology, 42(3), 470-486.

McCormack, C. (2004). Storying Stories: A Narrative Approach to In-depth Interview Conversations. *Social Research Methodology , 7* (3), 219-236.

Miller, T. (2007). "Is this what motherhood is all about?" Weaving experiences and discourse through transition to first-time motherhood. *Gender and Society , 21* (3), 337-358.

Miller, Y. D., & Brown, W. J. (2005). Determinants of active leisure for women with young children - An "ethic of care" prevails. *Leisure Sciences* , 405-420.

Mulcahy, C. M., & Parry, D. C. (2011). Awakenings: A performance text about first time mothers making connections. *International Review of Qualitative Research , 4* (4), 335-352.

Mulcahy, C. M., Parry, D. C., & Glover, T. D. (2010). Play-group politics: A critical social capital exploration of exclusion and conformity in mothers groups. *Leisure Studies , 29* (1), 3-27.

Najman, J. M., Anderson, M. J., Bor, W., O'Callaghan, M. J., & Williams, G. M. (2000). Postnatal Depression - Myth and Reality: Maternal Depression Before and After the Birth of a Child. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol , 35*, 19-27.

Nelson, F. (2009). *In the other room: Entering the culture of motherhood.* Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Ollerenshaw, J., & Creswell, J. W. (2002). Narrative Reseach: A Comparison of Two Restorying Data Analysis Approaches. *Qualitative Inquiry , 8* (3), 329-347.

Osofsky, H. J., Osofsky, J. D., Culp, R., Krantz, K., Litt, K., & Tobiasen, J. (1985). Transition to Parenthood: Risk Factors for Parents and Infants. Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynacology , 4, 303-315.

O'reilly, A. (2010). Encyclodepia of motherhood. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE

    Publications.

Parry, D. C., Glover, T. D., & Mulcahy, C. M. (2013). From "stroller-stralker" to "momancer":

    Courting friends through a social networking site for mothers. *Journal of Leisure*

    Research , 45 (1), 23-46.

Parry, D., & Johnson, C. (2007). Contextualizing Leisure Research to Encompass Complexity in

    Lived Leisure Experiences: The Need for Creative Analytic Practice. *Leisure Science ,*

    29, 119-130.

Patton, M. Q. (1987). Designing Qualitative Evaluations. In *How to Use Qualitative Methods in*

    Evaluation (pp. 44-70). Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Polkinghorne, D. (2003). Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis. In J. A. Hatch, & R.

    Wisniewski (Eds.), *Life History and Narrative* (pp. 5-24). Washington, DC: The Falmer

    Press.

Posmontier, B., & Horowitz, J. (2004). Postpartum Practices and Depression Prevalences:

    Technocentric and Ethnokinship Cultural Perspectives. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*

    , 15 (1), 34-43.

PPWR Waterloo Region. (2014). *Panned Parenthood Waterloo Region*. Retrieved 04 22, 2014

    from http://ppwr.on.ca

Ruble, D. N., Brooks-Gunn, J., Fleming, A. S., Fitzmaurice, G., Strangor, C., & Deutsch, F.

    (1990). Transition to Motherhood and the Self: Measurement, Stability, and Change.

    Journal of Personality and Social Psychology , 58 (3), 450-463.

Sevon, E. (2011). 'My Life Has Changed, but His Life Hasn't': Making Sense of the Gendering of

    Parenthood During the Transition to Mothood. *Feminism & Psychology , 22* (1), 60-80.

Shaw, S. (1999). Gender and leisure. *Leisure studies: Prospects for the twenty-first century* ,

    271-281.

Shaw, S. (2006). Ressistance. In C. Rojek, S. Shaw, & A. J. Veal, *A Handbook of Leisure Studies*

    (pp. 533-545). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian.

Sullivan, A.-M. (2013). Becoming a mother: Where does leisure fit? In V. J. Freysinger, S. M.

    Shaw, K. A. Henderson, & M. D. Bialeschki, *Leisure, women and gender* (pp. 297-310).

    State College , PA.

The Region of Waterloo Social Services. (2010). *Child Wellbeing Dashboard for Waterloo*

    Region. Retrieved 05 2014 from The Region of Waterloo Social Services:

    http://socialservices.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/childrensServices/child-wellbeing-

    dashboard-home.asp

Thompson , L. (1992). Feminist Methodology for Family Studies. *Journal of Marriage and*

    Family , 54 (1), 3-18.

Trussel, D., & Mair, H. (2010). Seeking Judgement Free Spaces: Poverty, leisure and social

    inclusion. Journal of Leisure Research, 42(4), 513.

Van Manen, M. (1997). 1 Human Science. In *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for*

    an action sensitive pedagogy (pp. 1-30). London, ON: Althouse Press.

Warner, J. (2005). *Perfect madness: Motherhood in the age of anxiety.* New York: Penguin

    Group Inc,.

Waterloo Region Social Services. (2010). *Child Care Subsidy: Information for Parents and*

    Guardians. Retrieved 04 22, 2014 from www.socialservices/regionofwaterloo.ca

Watson, B., & Scraton, S. J. (2013). Leisure Studies and Intersectionality. *Leisure Studies , 32* (1), 35-47.

Wearing, B. (1990). Beyond the ideology of motherhood: Leisure as resistance. *Journal of sociology , 26* (1), 36-58.

Wearing, B. (1998). Leisure if Good for Society and the Individual: Functionalist Theories. In B. Wearing, *Leisure and Feminist Theory* (pp. 1-21). London: Sage.

Wisner, K. L., Parry, B. L., & Piontek, C. M. (2002). Postpartum Depression. *The New England* Journal of Medicine , 347 (3), 194-199.

Wright, E. O. (1979). Class Structure and Income Determination. Academic Press, 9-10.

Zelkowitz, P. (1996). Childbearing and Women's Mental Health. *Transcultural Psychiatry , 33* (4), 391-412.

Appendix A

Consent of Participation

By signing this consent form, you are not waiving you legal rights of releasing the investigator or involved institution from their legal and professional responsibilities.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study being conducted by Kristin Masson of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo, under the supervision of Dr. Lisbeth Berbary. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time by advising the researcher of this decision.

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee. I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this study, I may contact the Office of Resaerch Ethics at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in the study.

_____

Print Name

_____

Signature of Participant

_____

Date

_____

Witnessed

Unstructured Interview Guide
    Research Questions:
1. What experiences do women from lower income families have during the process of gaining awareness and access to community programs in KW?
2. What are the experiences of women after gaining access to participation in such community programs in Kitchener?
3. What are possible transformations that might occur to improve women's experiences in community programs in Kitchener?
    Lead off questions:
Tell me about when you first learned about some of the different parenting programs in Kitchener.

Take me through how you came to participate in these programs.

Tell me what you would like to be different about these programs?

What changes could be made to make women's experiences better?

Topics to probe:

How did you learn about programs available to you?

1. Time-frame
2. Sources of information

How did you start participating in this program?

1. Negotiating support (spousal/kin/formal care)
2. Negotiating gendered roles (ethic of care/guilt)
3. Constraints (time/ finances/ support)

What was it like to use these policies?

1. Maternity/ parental leave
2. Subsidies
3. Application process

What is the program like?

1. Activities
2. Socializing
3. Skill development
4. Education

What was you experience of this program?

1. Enjoyment
2. Challenges
3. Effectiveness

Recruitment Poster

MOTHER PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH IN EXPLORING PARENTING PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

I am looking for new mothers to volunteer to take part in a study of awareness, access, and experience of parenting programs in Kitchener.

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to participate in one confidential, one-on-one interview to last about 1 hour.

To show appreciation of your valuable time, each participant will receive a **$10.00 gift card**.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

Kristin Masson

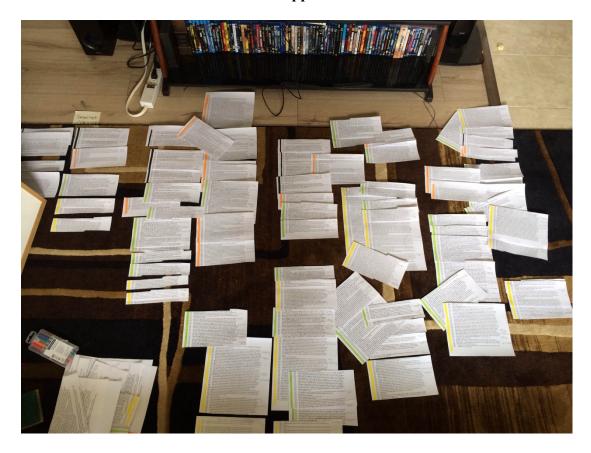Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies

At

519-495-7234   OR

Email: kmasson@uwaterloo.ca

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Committee.

Appendix D