Community-Based Youth Action Research on Climate Identities of Colour and Inclusive
Climate Spaces with YMCA's C-Vert Plus Program

Salma Tihani, Faculty of Education, McGill University,
Montreal

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ABSTRACT

Our current approaches and systems acting on climate change are limiting our ability to engage youth as meaningful participants in climate action. This is due, in part, to our failure to embed intersectionality, community, justice-oriented thinking and collaborative relationships between youth of colour in the transformation of community climate spaces. These systems and histories of oppression have played a significant role in how racialized communities bear a disproportionate burden of climate disasters and affect how racialized youth navigate climate spaces and take action on environmental challenges (White, 2011; Tuana, 2019). This participatory study addresses these challenges by creating a youth climate identity lab called "Evergreen Youth Lab" to support and understand climate activists of colour in their climate journeys. Through collaboration with the YMCA C-Vert program, eight youth activists of colour between the ages of 16 and 25 participate in a series of five workshops themed around Monica Sharma's work on Radical Transformational Leadership. Using arts-based methods, youth explored their identities, passions and methods of taking action on climate. Using community participatory research methodologies and the Evergreen Youth Lab created a space for the participants to explore their identities and take action on climate. The stories and complexity of data around racialization were meaningful due to the use of arts-based methods and an informal learning space to discuss and reflect. This research concludes that youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program have a unique connection to sustainability issues and inherently understand climate justice through their experiences as racial minorities. Given the intersectional nature of the climate crisis, more research needs to be done to understand the stories of youth of colour within climate movements.

Keywords: racialized youth; youth activists; community-based participatory research; youth

Nos approches et systèmes actuels d'action sur le changement climatique limitent notre capacité à promouvoir l'intersectionnalité, la communauté, la pensée axée sur la justice et les relations de collaboration entre les jeunes de couleur pour surmonter les obstacles auxquels ils sont confrontés et jouer un rôle actif dans la transformation des espaces climatiques communautaires. Ces systèmes et ces histoires d'oppression ont joué un rôle important dans la façon dont les communautés racialisées portent un fardeau disproportionné des catastrophes climatiques et affectent la façon dont les jeunes racialisés naviguent dans les espaces climatiques et agissent sur les défis environnementaux (White, 2011; Tuana, 2019). Cette étude participative aborde ces défis par la création d'un laboratoire d'identité climatique pour les jeunes appelé "Evergreen Youth Lab" pour soutenir et comprendre les activistes climatiques de couleur dans leurs voyages climatiques. En collaboration avec le programme C-Vert du YMCA, huit jeunes activistes de couleur âgés de 16 à 25 ans ont participé à une série de cinq ateliers axés sur le travail de Monica Sharma sur le leadership transformationnel radical. À l'aide de méthodes artistiques, les jeunes ont exploré leurs propres identités, leurs passions et leurs méthodes d'action sur le climat. L'utilisation de méthodologies de recherche participative communautaire et la création du laboratoire des jeunes Evergreen ont permis aux participants d'explorer leurs propres identités et d'agir sur le climat. Toutes les histoires et la complexité des données relatives à la racialisation ont pris tout leur sens grâce à l'utilisation de méthodes artistiques et à l'existence d'un espace d'apprentissage informel pour discuter et réfléchir. Cette recherche conclut que les jeunes

activistes de couleur participant au programme C-Vert ont un lien unique avec les

questions de durabilité et comprennent intrinsèquement la justice climatique à travers leurs

expériences en tant que minorités raciales. Étant donné la nature intersectionnelle de la

crise climatique, d'autres recherches doivent être menées pour comprendre les histoires

des jeunes de couleur au sein des mouvements climatiques.

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1.   Introduction

1.2 Background, Motivation and Positionality

In this study, I explore the stories of youth activists of colour through their climate passions. As I explore their experiences, my own journey into topics like identity, ethnicity, and sustainability guides the themes I'm investigating. It's important to note that my background as a youth of colour and activist plays a significant role in shaping this research. In this introduction, I'll share how my personal experiences influence the decisions I've made regarding the study's design, questions, and methods. Embedded within critical race theory is the crucial recognition of one's positionality in research, as it inherently influences how I perceive, interpret, and engage with the subjects and issues at hand. This heightened awareness of my identity— as a youth of colour, a woman, a child of immigrants, and a climate advocate—deeply informs the essence of my research approach, underscoring its distinctive viewpoint and dimension. Notably, scholars such as Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) underscore how researchers' perspectives are inherently linked to their social identities, thereby shaping their lens through which they analyze social phenomena.

As a child, I was often quiet and observant. While I enjoyed watching people interact, expressing myself verbally was a challenge, making social situations difficult. I often channeled my expressions through artistic forms, spending time alone thinking and crafting how I felt. This introspective nature led me to question where I truly belonged, especially due to my cultural background. Through painting, I found ways to express my thoughts, emotions, and perspectives. As I grew older, art became a medium to showcase my love for nature and my deep connection to my Indigenous Amazigh roots, originating in Northern Africa. The threads of my artistic expressions and my activist endeavors interlace seamlessly with my research narrative. Scholars such as Bell Hooks, in "Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom"

(Routledge, 1994), elucidate how personal experiences and creative outlets deeply influence

educators and researchers, significantly impacting their capacity to delve into subjects and foster

transformative learning experiences.

Figure 1.1. My Favourite Place by Salma Tihani, April 2020.

Working with youth, educating and learning about sustainability challenges motivated me

to take more direct action with my local community. As an environmental activist, I have had the

opportunity of mobilizing communities to understand the urgency of the climate crisis through

my work and make connections with justice-oriented work. My commitment to the students and

youth I work with—as well as their environmental future—inspires me to act and work

passionately as an advocate for social justice.

Being a female activist of colour encourages me to lead by example for marginalized youth

within climate and learning spaces because of their minority identities. As a first-generation

Canadian, I saw first-hand the experiences of discrimination towards newcomers, while I was

also told of struggles from the homeland. Throughout my studies, I grappled with the idea of

power imbalances and began reevaluating my identity and role within my local community. I continued to express my connection to my Indigenous Amazigh background through art, infusing symbolism into my work to tell my story and convey its significance. My upbringing, life experiences, and active involvement as a first-generation Canadian and an individual from a racialized background significantly configure my ontological orientation and perceptual sensibilities. This heightened self-awareness which has been explored through the use of art resonates with scholars like Patricia Hill Collins, whose work "Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment" (2000) accentuates the transformative potential of acknowledging one's standpoint, particularly for researchers from historically marginalized groups, in amplifying counter-narratives and unveiling previously obscured dimensions within research.

Figure 1.2. Heal by Salma Tihani, April 2021.

I continue my work in environmental spaces by using my artistic skills and privileges to volunteer for climate justice education, action and mobilization efforts. As a young female of colour, I have found it difficult to feel seen or heard in climate spaces. Despite these challenges, I've used art as a means to make my voice heard and to inspire other young people to engage with climate protection. My experiences within climate spaces, combined with my understanding of the marginalization of people of colour within society, led me to investigate how youth of colour perceive themselves as activists in climate spaces. As I navigate the trajectory of my research, my positionality yields a dual effect. Firstly, it imparts a reflexive stance that amplifies the authenticity and depth of my engagement with research participants and their narratives. Secondly, the combination of my lived experiences and perspectives serves as a potential conduit for establishing rapport and engendering trust with participants, thereby fostering candid and multifaceted discussions. This resonance finds kinship with the notion of "positioned subjectivity" in qualitative research, as championed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), wherein the researcher's identity is underscored as a source of potential bias and an invaluable asset.

This research explores participant identities in relation to their climate activism. Identity plays a big role in how we approach situations, including the design, methodological approach, questioning and analysis of data in research (Charmaz, 2006). Identifying as a youth of colour, a woman, a daughter of immigrants, and a climate activist plays an important role in how I interact with climate work, climate spaces and the following research. Some of the approaches and motivations were previously discussed; they can give a glimpse of how closely this research is tied to my own experiences of activism and identity exploration within climate spaces. The participant's description in this study could extend to me as a researcher, since I am a youth of colour who engages in climate activism.

1.2 Significance of The Study

Youth are increasingly concerned with the ongoing challenges climate change presents, yet many believe they have no control over reducing the threat of climate crises in their futures (Lee et al., 2020). Youth today are experiencing the effects of severe climate change first-hand, and these changes are distributed unevenly between the marginalized and privileged (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward, 2018). Youth of colour are often reluctant to voice their opinions or participate in learning about climate and environment, despite growing evidence of how racialized communities will bear a disproportionate burden of the impacts of these crises (White, 2011; Tuana, 2019). To address the relative invisibility of youth of colour in action on climate and environment, we must see climate and social justice crises as intersectional in nature: challenges that must be addressed simultaneously (Johnson, 2020). Providing appropriate tools and relevant support to youth of colour can offer them the skills and confidence to understand and act on the challenges of global climate change.

Within their communities, youth of colour actively drive climate action, even as they bear a disproportionate burden of environmental challenges. This underscores their pivotal role in propelling the broader social movement toward transformation.

Youth of colour provide a unique perspective on climate action and sustainable futures. Climate identities are fundamental in participation and the driving force of climate movements (Kowasch et al., 2021). Kowasch (2021) explains that "civic engagement and mobilization thus depend on confidence in the effectiveness of participation and beliefs about one's capacity to become actively involved" (p. 2). Youth climate identities of colour are strongly tied to the ideas of justice and restoring power for the disenfranchised and those affected by the climate crisis in unjust ways (Kowasch et al., 2021). However, the stories and voices of youth activists of colour lack mainstream attention and inclusion in climate spaces. The current spaces do not allow those

voices to challenge systems and call out injustices and lack of inclusivity; community spaces can allow youth of colour to understand their identities and stories (Hopkins, 2013; Scott & Tenneti, 2021). However, community climate spaces are still not inclusive to racialized youth despite the radical climate leadership of youth of colour (Gilliam, 2021).

Our existing methods and strategies for addressing climate change are constraining our capacity to encourage open conversations within the community and foster collaborative connections among youth of color. These connections are vital for overcoming the challenges they encounter and empowering them to play an active part in reshaping communal climate initiatives. Addressing these barriers is essential for sustainability transitions. Too often, current approaches fail to meaningfully engage with youth of colour on sustainability challenges, social justice and inclusion. To support the diverse forms of collective storytelling, we must create new learning spaces where community engagement, climate identity, and sustainability inclusivity can occur. Limited research has investigated how racialized youth experience and act on climate crises.

1.3   Research Goals

This participatory study aimed to create an inclusive and interactive space for youth of colour to explore their identities, stories, and journeys in climate activism. Through this goal the idea of creating a youth climate identity lab was the method of engagement that I chose to create to support climate activists of colour in their climate journeys and inspire action. The lab sought to help youth uncover their climate stories and piloted ways that a community-based sustainability program could support youth of colour with an intentional focus on intersectionality and climate justice. This was achieved through a partnership between staff and youth at The YMCA's C-Vert and C-Vert plus programs and myself as a researcher at McGill.

The YMCA's C-Vert and C-Vert plus are urban ecology and eco-citizenship programs that aim to engage with youth in environmental leadership through community projects. In this partnership, we recruited participants from the C-Vert program to workshop and facilitated a space for discussion and self-discovery on the topic of youth activists of colour. The lab offered an opportunity to document and share the experiences of climate activists of colour. As a conclusion, we co-created a toolkit to engage and include climate activists of colour in climate spaces.

Specific research questions we explored through this study are:

● How do youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program understand and relate to issues of sustainability and climate justice?

● How do youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program see themselves in climate spaces (spaces where climate advocacy and action take place)?

● How do informal spaces and arts-based methodologies help support youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program for the climate?

To address these questions, I conducted two related activities: (1) group workshopping around climate justice, youth activism, and intersectional identities and (2) co-creating a wrap-up toolkit to summarize and tell participants' stories and inform future youth leadership initiatives. I explore both of these activities in detail in the sections that follow.

1.4 Thesis Walk-through

The thesis has been divided into five chapters to explore various research steps.

In Chapter one, I have explored how my identities, motivations and experiences shape the conceptualization of my research. I discuss the significance of youth activism of colour in

climate spaces to conceptualize and set the tone for questioning. In this section, I explain the study's goals while listing the research's guiding questions.

Chapter Two will explore our current understanding of the experiences of youth of colour in environmental and climate activism. To understand these experiences, I will unpack topics of intersectionality, climate justice, racial and climate privileges, and youth activism. These topics will help provide a historical and current context to the various components that affect youth activism of colour and how that can shape the participants' experiences in this research.

In Chapter Three, I will discuss the foundations of my methodology and research design. In this section, I uncover the literature on the methodology centered around community-based participatory research (CBPR) and youth participatory action research (YPAR). This will also include dissecting the literature around arts-based methodologies (ABM) and participatory visual methodologies (PVM) to use various methods within my workshopping spaces to uncover

in-depth and personal storytelling. This preliminary research will lead to a discussion of how these foundations led to the participatory design of the Evergreen Youth Lab. To set the framework of the workshops and how themes were created, I used Monica Sharma's work on transformational leadership (2017) as a reference. I also explain the procedures to recruit participants, co-create the workshops and collect data.

Chapter Four will explore the stories and outcomes of the research. I gathered stories, art pieces and images from the research questions outlined above throughout the workshops. I discuss and analyze the data through a thematic approach that ties back to the literature in

Chapter Two. An explanation of the transformation, thoughts, emotions and lessons learnt from the participants, as well as my reflective process as a researcher and facilitator, will also be featured in this section.

Chapter Five concludes the implications of the research. I use reflective discussions held during meetings with C-Vert and their team. Using these discussions, I analyze some reflections from creating the toolkit as a summative project on the Evergreen Youth Lab experience. To conclude this section, I uncover the study's limitations, allowing me to explore the future possibilities for a similar project.

2.   Climate Identities, Justice and Privilege

Today's youth experience extreme stress, anxiety and instability due to climate change. A study conducted by Galway and Field (2023), a majority of Canadian youth respondents, accounting for over 56%, experience negative emotions when confronted with climate change challenges. Among these youth, the reported emotions include "fear (66%), sadness (65%), anxiety (63%), helplessness (58%), and powerlessness (56%)" (p. 3). Of the respondents in the study, "37% reported that their feelings about climate change negatively affect daily life at least moderately" (Galway and Field, 2023, p. 3). It is evident that climate change significantly impacts the lives and well-being of youth today. Moreover, youth of colour experience these stressors and more due to the systems that marginalize people of colour.

This chapter will uncover our current understanding of topics around identities, justice and privilege in environmental spaces. The literature around intersectionality, identities and justice topics will allow the research to explore these topics within the context of activism among youth of colour within environmental spaces. Understanding the experiences of minorities and marginalized people in environmentalism is key to unpacking privilege and recognizing how current systems can oppress and limit action from people of colour and youth. The chapter covers three sections: the first looks at the foundations of intersectionality and justice in environmentalism; the second looks at how identities play an important role in understanding one's positioning and privilege within climate spaces; the third looks at how we understand the histories, ideologies and systems built around race and age privileges in climate spaces.

Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) is a lens used in this research that reminds us that multiple identity pieces and diverse structures are inherently linked. By incorporating intersectionality into the examination of identities, we gain a comprehensive understanding of how various aspects of an individual's identity interact and influence their experiences in the

world. This contextualization sheds light on how individuals navigate different spaces and reveals the presence or absence of privilege they may hold in specific contexts. Using intersectionality as a lens in evaluating environmentalism will create a more holistic way of understanding and taking action on sustainability challenges (Mikulewicz, Caretta, Sultana, & JW Crawford, 2023). Sustainability challenges are inherently intersectional with other social systems in place, as will be discussed in further detail in this chapter.

Unpacking how individuals with complex identities interact with environmentalism and their experiences of privilege is better understood with an intersectional lens. In the discussion around identities, it can be difficult to isolate race when other identities, such as gender, class, religion, sexuality, etc., closely interplay with how one individual will take action and where they feel safe. I do emphasize race as a key identity piece on how individuals take action on climate because there are deep histories of segregation, colonization and apartheid that still permeate the ways we treat and marginalize people of colour in mainstream systems and climate work. I also emphasized youth activism and young age as an identity piece that affects action and transformation towards urgent solutions for climate progress. Having the compound identities of being a youth of colour provides an even more unique perspective and method of taking action on climate.

2.1 Intersectional Environmentalism and Justice

Intersectionality is a lens used in this research to ground and understand how youth of colour navigate their identities and climate spaces. Leah Thomas, the author who coined the term intersectional environmentalism (IE), explains that "intersectionality is a framework that can be applied to environmentalism to accomplish the goal of environmental justice: the fair treatment of all people, regardless of identity, in regard to their environment" (2022, p. 37). The IE

movement advocates for climate justice and approaches environmental protection by empowering people historically oppressed or excluded from activism, action and decision-making (Thomas, 2022). Environmental/climate justice movements have risen from the struggles of those historically marginalized and affected unequally by climate challenges (Allen, Daro & Holland, 2007). As Nagel (2012) notes, "the central idea behind climate justice is the recognition that 'climate change does not affect everyone equally, nor does everyone respond uniformly to climate change'" (p. 468).

The emergence of climate justice and intersectionality have been shaped by the voices of the struggles of black and indigenous people who have faced racial and cultural discrimination. Indeed, climate change does not affect everyone equally, because of a person's privilege which unfolds in multiple identities of life (ie. your country of birth, class, gender, etc.). People such as Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) paved the way for intersectionality to become a framework to understand that overlapping identities and privileges affect a person's experiences within different systems. The concept of intersectionality allows us to identify which privileges (or conversely, which forms of marginalization) affect people in relation to climate change, how people can respond, and their capacity to take action on climate change (Mikulewicz, Caretta, Sultana, & JW Crawford, 2023). Thus, the ideas of IE and climate justice are ways to work toward understanding environmental liberation (Thomas, 2022).

2.2   The Role of Identities in Environmentalism

Identities play a key role in understanding why people feel attached to the work that they do and why they do the work they do. Identities in this study refers to the characteristics, interests and qualities that define a person and distinguish them from others (Jenkins, 2014). Identity is a multifaceted and complex concept that includes various elements, such as gender,

race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, nationality, social class, sexual orientation, and much more (Berry et al., 2016; Hall, 1996). These elements interact with each other to form an ever-evolving individual identity (Jenkins, 2014). Identities are a gateway to understanding people's motivations, emotions and a sense of empathy toward one another. They can also affect individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and power in society (Hall, 1996). In this study, it is important to understand identity because it allows us to understand how participants perceive themselves and others, as well as their relationships with others, and social movements. I am particularly interested in how race, environmental attachment and age affect how climate activists of colour feel, interact, and find passion within climate spaces. Identities are powerful and can characterize a person's privilege and how they navigate situations, spaces and conversations. Within society, there is a hierarchy of identities, and each individual will possess degrees of power based on various identities intersecting and compounding to create unique experiences of discrimination and oppression (Crenshaw, 1991). Johnson (2017)'s work on power and privilege explores these hierarchies and explains how various identities (such as race, gender, sexuality, and ability) intersect to create unequal distributions of power and privilege through societal institutions such as education, the media, and the legal system. An individual's privilege and position will influence their values, points of view and will shape their understanding of environmentalism (Owen, Videras, & Wu, 2010). Similar identities often link community ties; as individuals, we will feel comfortable in communities with similar experiences, appearances, and values. There is evidence that individuals are more likely to associate with others who are like them, what researchers call homophily. McPherson et al. (2001) discuss several studies that show that individuals with similar demographic characteristics associated with each other (Owen, Videras, & Wu, 2010, p. 467).

When it comes to environmentalism as a value that leads to taking action, Owen, Videras and Wu (2010), observe that "that people who live in communities, where the majority of people share their preferences towards environmental protection, are more likely to identify themselves as environmentalists" (p. 467). Environmental behavior is also more likely to align with that of other group members and communities who share similar identities (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016). Action and belonging within climate movements are strongly tied to the community (Schmitt, Mackay, Droogendyk & Payne, 2019), and as such, this activism is motivated by the community ties one has rather than the connection to nature (Schmitt, Mackay, Droogendyk & Payne, 2019). Human relationships and belonging play a crucial role in someone's ability to desire and pursue change (Schmitt, Mackay, Droogendyk & Payne, 2019).

Social identity theory (SIT) helps us understand why we are likely to identify with similar values, emotions, and behaviours based on group membership (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016). This theory posits that other group members can influence us, and differences between group members can become obvious and marginalizing. "As a result, ingroup members assimilate their attitudes and behaviours to ingroup norms and away from outgroup norms" (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016, p. 2–3). An example of SIT can be observed in a study by Tajfel and Turner (1979), where participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups based on their preference for certain abstract paintings. The results showed that even in this minimal group situation, participants showed a preference for their own group and rated their in-group more positively than the out-group.

Surrounding communities and relational groups validate personal identity. We must always consider these communities and how individuals might identify themselves in relation to others around them (Owen, Videras, & Wu, 2010). When it comes to environmentalist ideologies, this

can cause conflicts between group members and can then lead to the detriment of progress or action on climate (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016). These tensions can be complex, especially for people identifying with multiple minority categorizations. The resilience of someone's climate identity can often depend on their community. The sense of community, the strength and power of that community, can determine the privileges of one's climate action. Adger, Barnertt, Chapin III and Ellemor (2011) describe that the disturbance of the sense of community and place within a core identity can often contribute to trauma, worsening health and disorder. As minorities, community and group membership can create a sense of safety, better health and support.

The relevance of cultures and certain identities in relation to environmentalism is a newer topic of interest for researchers, and there is little recognition, especially in climate work, of how these identities shape how individuals take action, deal with trauma and feel a sense of community. As Nagel (2012) notes, "Identities and cultures play a role in vulnerability to or responsibility for causing global climate change. Responses to climate change also have a classed, raced, gendered and nationalist face" (p. 470). Further, Vesley et al. (2021) explain that for minority-identifying people, the complexity of their power and privilege based on their identities becomes more complex in understanding motivation, barriers and ability to take action on climate. Many intersecting identities shape why an individual is attached to being an activist in climate spaces. In the case of climate activism, conversations around identities are often embedded in white-centric views of what it means to be an environmentalist and climate activist. Histories of marginalization, segregation and oppression in North America permeate through climate spaces and live with visual minorities in all the spaces they occupy and work in. Due to white-centric environmentalism, which is the predominant voice of mainstream climate activism and work in the North American context, there continues to be a silencing of minority voices and

attention given to climate justice issues. In this study, race is an identity seen as particularly important in how youth understand their position in various spaces and how they experience the world around them because race has deep traumatic and historical roots in the westernized world. Race is often an easily identifiable and segregating element of an individual's being. Tuana (2019) notes that "there is little attention to racism in climate justice perspectives. (p. 1)" and "there is seldom a richly intersectional perspective. In particular, there is rarely attention to the role of race or racism on issues of climate justice" (p. 2). The concept of climate apartheid is explored within Tuana's (2019) work on race in the Anthropocene.

Apartheid involved deeply held systematic beliefs and dispositions regarding racial superiority that not only impacted individual beliefs and practices but were infused into and supported by the interactions of various social institutions, such as education, labor, and policing, and the practices and dispositions they authorized. This interfusion of beliefs and dispositions with institutions and legal policies played a major role in maintaining the systematic subordination of those who were, by these very dispositions and policies, deemed inferior. Such institutional practices become normalized. They become commonplace and were, and arguably still are, taken for granted, habituated in the ways of the privileged. To appreciate the nature and import of climate change apartheid, then, requires attention to the more subtle, normalized, and often muted ways in which systematic, institutional racism circulates in societies, as well as the ways in which it is impacted by other forms of systemic oppression such as those due to gender, sexuality, or class. Climate apartheid emerges from complex exchanges between racism and environmental exploitation. (pp. 5–6)

Moreover, Rice, Long and Levenda (2021) explain that "in recent years, the term 'climate apartheid' has gained some traction in activist circles to call attention to concerns over the

structural causes, disproportionate impacts, and segregating tendencies of climate change" (p. 627). The authors define climate apartheid "as an emerging system of discrimination, segregation, and violence based on various axes of oppression and privilege (race, class, gender, sexuality) that is produced by the material effects of climate change, but also many responses to the crisis." (Rice, Long & Levenda, 2021, p. 627).

To understand how racial identities shape people's climate passions, attachments and comfort, it is necessary to unpack societal histories of racism and oppression. While the current systems might bury these histories in place, it is to the benefit of the majority to claim ignorance of the connecting lineages of environmental destruction and racism (slavery, apartheid, etc.). An example of the impact this historical erasure can have is found in Allen, Daro, and Holland's (2007) work, where they explain that "Black peoples' actions and inactions are rooted in their experiences of not having the political position to affect decisions that profoundly affect their lives, being treated like objects by doctors and many other professionals who minister to their needs, and having to fit into institutions that provide no respect for their cultural traditions or life experiences" (p. 122). These barriers affect the capacity of racialized people to engage in action and to find climate spaces that are oppressive to racialized people. The authors also explain that:

> "Most of the environmental justice activists we talked with originally had come to environmental justice from a focus on social and racial justice….As already discussed, for activists focusing on social and racial justice, environmental justice is one among many injustices "(Allen, Daro, & Holland, 2007, p. 122).

This is a common experience amongst racialized folks in the North American context

because of the daily injustices that affect their safety, well-being and success. White counterparts might have less to worry about regarding justice due to their racial privilege and might prioritize crises such as the climate.

Moreover, immigration identities within the Canadian context serve as a compelling prism through which to apprehend the diverse spectrum of youth engagement in climate activism. This facet acquires particular significance in light of the recognition that an environmentalist identity, often underscored within climate activism narratives, can inadvertently bypass the multifaceted intersections of identity that influence the extent of an individual's participation, the presence of barriers, or even the imposition of limitations upon their climate advocacy endeavors (Kitcheil, Kempton, Holland, & Tesch, 2000). Immigration identities, wield a profound impact on how youth navigate the realm of climate activism. The complex amalgamation of cultural heritage, familial heritage, and the immigration journey coalesces to shape a distinctly personalized prism through which climate issues are apprehended. The narratives of newcomers to Canada, often entailing struggles, aspirations, and a sense of striving for a better future, invariably infuse their climate activism endeavors with a nuanced fervor that bridges global concerns with local engagement. This phenomenon resonates with the concept of "transnational environmentalism," wherein immigrant communities intertwine their heritage with climate action, mobilizing efforts across national boundaries (Tarrow 2005). Yet, the immigration experience is not homogenous, marked by a myriad of nuances that influence the nature of engagement. Societal adaptations, reconfiguration of cultural norms, and the negotiation of new identities contribute to the multi-layered calculus of climate activism participation. This aligns with Fielding and Hornsey's perspective on the fluidity of identities, as immigration continually shapes and reshapes one's sense of self (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016).

Moreover, the spatiality of engagement is intrinsically intertwined with immigration identities. The socio-geographical networks established within immigrant communities can serve as centers for collective climate action. These localized centers of action may provide a safe and nurturing ecosystem for participation, often enhancing the visibility of engagement initiatives. Studies by Brulle and Pellow (2006) have highlighted the significance of localized networks in fostering environmental activism. Conversely, for those from immigrant backgrounds who reside in areas less receptive to climate activism or hold differing norms, the extent of engagement may be modulated by socio-cultural pressures or perceptual barriers, thus accentuating the influence of immigration identities. Research by Axon (2020) underscores the impact of socio-cultural factors on environmental behaviors and activism within marginalized communities.

Understanding an environmentalist identity often overlooks a variation of other intersectional identities that can cause someone to either take action, have barriers, or limit engagement in climate activism (Kitcheil, Kempton, Holland and Tesch, 2000). The multi-dimensionality of climate identities will affect how people engage, where they engage, the safety of their actions and the visibility of that engagement. It is also important to recognize that identities are not fixed and are always changing (Fielding & Hornsey, 2016).

2.3   Race and Age-Related Privileges in Climate Spaces

Currently, there is limited literature on the concept of environmental privilege, regardless of its ability to explain how humans can be affected by climate change depending on their identities (Argüelles, 2021). Environmental Privilege (EP) is described as "a form of privilege linked to other types of inequalities such as race and class that confers to certain populations socially constructed advantages in relation to environmental access, management, and control" (Argüelles, 2021, p. 651). The history of including justice and privilege discussions within

climate spaces came from concerns about environmental racism in the late 1980s (Stivers, 2016).

Justice and privilege within climate are primarily understood through the lenses of race and class because those are the mechanisms that have built inequality within society (Argüelles, 2021). Race is a key identity piece to understanding how intersectional climate issues are and the intersectionality of inequalities that permeate climate spaces. Allen, Daro and Holland (2007) explain that "Race matters not only in how environmental justice activists have come to understand environmental problems but also in how they understand themselves in relation to those problems" (p. 114). Pulido (1998) expresses that current environmentalist movements have racist natures and roots, and non-white people have had to consciously put in the effort to deconstruct these structures in place that marginalize them. This can affect their access and participation in climate movements and put an unjust burden on people of colour (Pulido,1998; Allen, Daro & Holland, 2007).

Histories of white supremacy, colonization, apartheid and segregation can be traced into climate movements because they permeate the systems built off the exploitation of people of colour and indigenous folks (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021). The mainstream climate movement has been appropriated since the 1970s by white middle-class people and continues to remain dominated and seen as a white person's activism (Argüelles, 2021). Participation in environmental spaces has been predominantly white, and these movements have neglected the concerns of communities and colour and justice-oriented issues (Argüelles, 2021; Stapleton, 2020). Due to this misrepresentation and occupation of climate spaces, the climate movement continues to uphold systems of oppression of people of colour and those less privileged (Rice, Long & Levenda, 2021). In the mainstream climate spaces, the climate is seen as an economic and political issue to adapt and protect current structures not

benefitting people of colour, rather than dismantling them (Rice, Long & Levenda, 2021). Systemic racism continues to permeate society and directly affects the responses to protect people of colour who are disproportionately affected by climate change (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021). Even within climate movements, people of colour tend to be left unheard and marginalized (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021). An example of the marginalization of people of colour within mainstream climate spaces is the story of Vanessa Nakate.

> ". . . in January 2020, Ugandan youth climate activist Vanessa Nakate was cropped out of photos depicting her and other young climate activists – all of whom are white – at the World Economic Forum . . . Hence, BIPoC tend to be marginalized in organizations of the climate movement, while their inclusion is tokenary, and/or cloaked in 'victimhood.' The cropping of BIPoC activists from photos can be seen as a 'metaphorical crop-out' of BIPoC from the mainstream narrative of climate change and its solutions." (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021, pp. 15–16).

The cropping and implicit messaging of who are the climate actors and who is a priority is also a message of who is heard and who is valued. The exclusion of people of colour who are currently directly dealing with the impacts of environmental change is problematic because the solutions and priorities will not reflect the diverse values and priorities of people of colour (Griffith & Bevan, 2014). People of colour are environmental stewards of climate solutions, protections and knowledge, yet they are actively excluded from climate spaces. It is important to recognize that "the first environmental activists were indigenous peoples resisting imperialism and colonization (Figueroa Helland & Lindgren, 2016), struggling to maintain land rights, self-

determine and live in relationship with past and future generations (MRG, 2019). However, tragically, although indigenous peoples globally pre-serve 80% of all remaining plants and animals and are fundamental to global sustainability (Gurria, 2017), they are the most likely to be killed for their activism (MRG, 2019). (Griffith & Bevan, 2021, p. 101). There is an emotional and physical toll of dealing with racism embedded in society, expecially in North America, for people of colour, yet they are the groups of people who lead significant climate solutions (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021; Griffith & Bevan, 2021)

Stapleton (2020) affirms that racism and white privilege are the climate movement's sore spots and that the failure to reach a better, healthier, and livable climate is due to the failure to include voices of colour. Tackling white privilege is necessary for tackling climate justice (Rice, Long & Levenda, 2021). White people often overlook the responsibility of transforming systems of oppression, tackling white privilege and structural justice (Stivers, 2016). "The next step is for whites to own up to their advantage and privilege and work in solidarity with communities of colour to promote climate justice through equitable development" (Stivers, 2016, p. 168). The least that could take place is to address the exclusion of people of colour and actively include them in implementing and creating climate solutions (Abimbola, Aikins, Makhesi-Wilkinson & Roberts, 2021). Being a person of colour has shown to be a marginalizing factor in participating in climate spaces in meaningful ways. Coupled with other less privileged identities, this can lead a climate activist to have more barriers to taking action on climate progress.

Racialized environmentalism differs, and the causes, solutions and language used will differ in minority and privileged populations (Hare, 1970). The lived experience of racialized and white folks with the climate crisis differs, so the needs and approaches should also differ (Hare, 1970). Racialized communities are concerned with the inaction around climate justice and

the inability to integrate these ideologies within systems of colonialism, capitalism and industrialization (Whyte, 2019). The contrast between white and racialized experiences with the environment brings about a conversation about climate justice. Racialized people are some of the most affected communities by climate disasters. Being a racial minority creates a barrier to being included in decision-making, discussions and access to climate-space funds, while being a youth also presents another barrier to inclusion. In order to holistically address inclusion and our challenges in sustainability, we need people of colour in all organizations and levels of action and leadership roles (Lammy & Bapna, 2021). Moreover, we need more young people of colour to infiltrate those spaces to upscale the racialized voice (Lammy & Bapna, 2021). Youth of colour are at a crossroads of climate injustice and are the driving forces for standing up for just, sustainable futures (The Climate Reality Project, 2021).

When it comes to youth as a minority identity, they are often categorized as changemakers and social movement shapers due to the ways they pursue social change. These categorizations can be attributed to their age and marginalization from being unable to vote, lack of economic opportunities, feeling unheard and being unable to take formal political action on issues such as climate (Haugestad, Skauge, Kunst & Power, 2021). Other explanations include the perceived threat of climate change on their futures, which sparks feelings of unfairness andfrustration, which can then channel into action against injustices (Haugestad, Skauge, Kunst & Power, 2021).

Being a youth and a minority can affect one's engagement and further limit economic and political possibilities. Especially when it comes to the climate crisis, many youth can feel stuck and cheated. As explained above, racial status significantly impacts how people navigate climate spaces and conversations on environmentalism due to the intersectional nature of the crises that

affect racialized folks the most. Racial background is a critical component of a youth's identity and how they navigate relationships with others (Hurtado, Alvarado & Guillermo-Wann, 2016). The significance and recognition of the salience of one's racial identity as a youth allow for increased self-esteem, the development of maturity, academic success and moral reasoning. (Hurtado, Alvarado & Guillermo-Wann, 2016). Youth bring their minority identities wherever they go (White, 2011). In the context of being a youth and student, for instance, being a minority can often bring feelings of being outside of the mainstream and could silence youth from voicing their ideas within educational spaces (White, 2011). Some refer to the process of "acting white" to participate in mainstream educational spaces (White, 2011). Through habitual feelings of being left out in schooling, these "acting white" methods and feeling reluctant to share stories can translate into other social spaces, such as climate movements. White (2011) explains that students of colour, often the sole minority within an educational space, can feel that their voices are excluded and unheard in ways their white counterparts might not understand. Moreover, they feel like the token for advocating and discussing minoritization and discrimination (White, 2011; Sax, 1997). Holding the identity of being a racialized person and a youth can be marginalizing within educational and climate spaces. Understanding the histories behind the oppression of people of colour and youth movements for liberation and climate progress is important. Youth are marginalized because of their social and economic disempowerment. Identities play a key role in climate movements, and for youth, their age fuels feelings of frustration, lack of action and trust towards adults to make changes in their interest (Kowasch, Cruz, Reis, Cricket & Kicker, 2021). Especially when it comes to the climate crisis, many can feel stuck and cheated. As youths, they are perceived by adults, leaders and decision-makers as immature, lacking experience and knowledge and unable (Halstead, Parsons, Dunhill & Parsons, 2021). Moreover,

youth have been labelled as apathetic and unable to tackle climate change issues (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward, 2018). This can be because of the overwhelming nature of intersectional crises that require a myriad of responses and take emotional existential tolls on youth. However, these thoughts fail to recognize that the youth are the adopters and pushers of new and progressive social movements (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward, 2018). Youth are simultaneously juggling the challenge of dealing with the impacts of climate change and managing the responsibility of raising their voices for justice (Kowasch, Cruz, Reis, Cricket & Kicker, 2021).

Young activism as a form of environmental justice activism can challenge mainstream concepts of environmentalist activism because young people frequently address environmental issues at their intersection with the enduring damage of colonial regimes, economic exploitation, the fight for land rights and outdoor spaces, everyday health and safety, and structural racism (Bowman, 2020) (Bowman, Bell & Alexis-Martin, 2021, p. 133).

Despite these unique perspectives on climate change, youth continue to feel and be excluded from decision-making that will directly shape their near future (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward, 2018). Youth deal with issues of tokenism within climate spaces (O'Brien, Selboe & Hayward, 2018). It is important to have people within climate spaces in ways that truly include them in the decision-making process because they will live the majority of their lives harmed by climate change or the systematic effects of climate change (Bowman, Bell & Alexis-Martin, 2021). Supporting, empowering, and uplifting youth climate activists' actions, voices, and ideologies can lead to transformative environmental change (Kowasch, Cruz, Reis, Cricket & Kicker, 2021). As explained above, racial status significantly impacts how youth navigate climate spaces and conversations on environmentalism due to the intersectional nature of the crises that affect racialized folks the most. Racial background is a critical component of a youth's

identity and how they navigate relationships with others (Hurtado, Alvarado & Guillermo-Wann, 2016). The significance and recognition of the salience of one's racial identity as a youth allow for increased self-esteem, the development of maturity, academic success and moral reasoning. (Hurtado, Alvarado & Guillermo-Wann, 2016). Youth bring their racial identities wherever they go (White, 2011). In the context of being a youth and student, for instance, being racialized can often bring feelings of being outside of the mainstream and could silence youth from voicing their ideas within educational spaces (White, 2011). Some refer to the process of "acting white" to participate in mainstream educational spaces (White, 2011). Through habitual feelings of being left out in schooling, these "acting white" methods and feeling reluctant to share stories can translate into other social spaces, such as climate movements. White (2011) explains that students of colour, often the sole minority within an educational space, can feel that their voices are excluded and unheard in ways their white counterparts might not understand. Moreover, they feel like the token for advocating and discussing minoritization and discrimination (White, 2011; Sax, 1997).

The previous section explored our current understandings of environmental privilege to examine how the minoritization of youth of colour plays a significant role in their capacity to take action and motivations behind youth climate activism. Identities play a significant role in how youth of colour view themselves and accept the space they occupy in climate movements. Holding the identity of being a racialized person and a youth can be marginalizing within educational and climate spaces. Understanding the histories behind the oppression of people of colour and youth movements for liberation and climate progress is important.

Understanding these connections between race, age, privilege, justice and climate are key in understanding the stories of the youth activists of colour in this study. Youth activists of

colour provide a meaningful and unique perspective as individuals who face even more barriers

to action on climate. These stories will be further unpacked in the data analysis.

3.   Methodology and Participatory Design

3.1   Methodological Foundations

This chapter will set out the foundations of my research design. I will uncover the inspiration behind the decisions and methods used in the design of my workshops, which led to the collection of data for this research. The approach I have taken to understanding youth experiences is centered around community-based participatory research (CBPR) (Hacker, 2012) and youth participatory action research (YPAR) (Cammarota & Fine, 2008), with arts-based methods (Leavy, 2015) being the vehicle for communicating information and data within the research. In this chapter, I will explore the literature on community-based participatory research (CBPR) and youth participatory action research (YPAR) to understand the impacts of such methodologies for work around transformational racialized youth activism. These methodologies provide a good foundation for the approach and design of the participatory workshops that formed the basis of this research. These methods provide ways in which the data collection and design can be conducted with intersectional and transformational leadership for racialized groups.

Arts-based methods (ABM) and participatory visual methods (PVM) are used as tools in conjunction with CBPR and YPAR to offer youth space and diverse approaches to thinking and expressing themselves. Arts-based methods are at the core of the collected work and how I engage with youth within the workshops. Literature around arts-based methodologies (ABM) and participatory visual methodologies (PVM) will allow me to understand their functionality within community work with minority populations and how it fits within CBPR and YPAR as the methodological foundations. The foundations explored within this section will allow me to describe the design and decisions made for the workshops with the youth participants.

3.2   Qualitative Grounding to Focus on Participants' Stories

A qualitative research approach is often seen as best suited for studies of this nature, given my focus on understanding the lived human experience. Qualitative methods allow observations and stories to shine through and reveal to researchers many intersectional motivations, beliefs, motivations and values behind quantitative methodologies (Teti, Schatz, & Lienbenberg, 2020). Stories are important in qualitative inquiry as Freeman (2017) explains:

> "Our stories are often embedded in other stories, which are themselves embedded or linked to other stories. This unending flow of meaning-making affects, and is affected by human existence, whether or not we pay attention to it . . . Furthermore, this form of thinking is action-oriented and purposeful . . . the outcome of constructing a plot . . . constituted around a human need to know how to act in the social world" (p. 32–33).

Narratives, stories, and research methodologies that give voice to marginalized individuals can be powerful tools for amplifying silenced voices. We make meaning through the stories we embody through our experiences, the stories told to us throughout the years, and the stories popularized within society. Within the 1960s and 1970s liberation movements, narratives were a source of the liberation of people who had been silenced (Butler-Kisber, 2018). During this time, society questioned power, privilege and representation through the stories of the marginalized (Butler-Kisber, 2018).

Narratives are also seen as a liberating tool for racialized youth in this research. Freire (1971) asserts that education and research serve dominant groups' interests and overlook the marginalized voices within societies. These assertions remain true today as minority groups

continue to be subject to marginalization, oppression and silence through research and education. His work depicted the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor and described the internal conflicts that minoritized and marginalized people continuously face.

The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom, they cannot exist authentically. However, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting them; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, in their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account (Friere, 1971, p. 48).

This excerpt depicts an image where marginalized people feel an internal dilemma where they must contemplate their true identities, telling their stories to liberat their communities from the dangers of continuing oppression through silence. These are experiences people with multiple minority identities face continuously. Within research, it becomes important to understand these power dynamics and allow space for minoritized individuals to tell their stories and shape the storytelling in the ways they want while creating a safe space to do so. The ideas around the Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1971) are some that inspire the use of participatory methodologies, especially ones of CBPR and YPAR.

3.3   Understanding and Implementing CBPR In The Context Of The Research

According to Springer and Skolarus (2019), community-based participatory research

(CBPR) "involves a partnership between academic researchers and community stakeholders" (p. 48). CBPR can include partnerships at varying degrees of engagement. The deeper the community engagement within a research project, the more potential research has to represent the voices and stories of the participants involved. The deeper the community engagement with community members that are oppressed within societies, the more voice you give to those who want to share their stories. CBPR can potentially be a place of social action and progressive change. Springer and Skolarus (2019) explain, "it is a combination of research and social action. The appeal of this research approach is the opportunity to identify research topics that are important to the community and, therefore, have the potential for great impact whether it is the development of a new intervention or to stimulate policy change or social action" (p. 49).

Meaningful CBPR requires unpacking of power dynamics between the researcher and participants. This involves adopting strategies for ethical CBPR, including establishing trust between the researcher, the participating institutions and the community partners interested in the research topic. Moreover, trust needs to be extended from the community partner to the potential participants in the study. Using CBPR, you can spend years building trustworthy relationships and often spend a lot of time and resources interacting with your community outside of your research scope (Fernandez et al., 2017; Springer & Skolarus, 2019).

The values behind CBPR, such as community advocacy, cultural humility, reciprocity and access, are key for conducting meaningful and ethical research with racialized and minority community members. According to Coughlin and Ackerson (2017), "Providing benefits is also important. For CBPR projects to be ethical, community needs and priorities must be seriously considered, and there should be tangible community benefits. The aim of CBPR research and evaluation projects is to contribute knowledge that leads to positive social change, and the

enhancement of community well-being" (p. 3). Fernandez et al. (2017) express similar ideas in noting that "building a relationship with community partners takes time and effort" (p. 11). Cultural humility is necessary for ethical CBPR to appropriately support and create mutually beneficial research and community relationships (Fernandez et al., 2017). Cultural humility within CBPR includes constantly advocating for the community members you engage with while having a self-critical lens of your work and your role as a researcher within these community spaces (Fernandez et al., 2017). For instance, Fernandez et al. (2017) suggest that " Rather than expecting community members to attend meetings and engage in research activities at medical centers or in university settings, researchers should try to reach people where they live and work" (p. 13). Engaging with racialized and minoritized community members requires constant involvement and participation at every stage of the research, design and implementation process (Stoecker, 1999). Throughout the design of this research, the evaluation and implementation of these values have been a key starting point for constructing the Evergreen Youth Lab. More will be discussed further in this section on how these values permeated the research design process.

When researchers approach local communities to conduct research, they often carry with them biases and assumptions about these communities from their roles as researchers with differing identities and epistemologies. This can reinforce the oppressive nature of research by establishing hierarchical relationship between young participants and the researcher. According to Koster et al. (2012), these research practices are seen as "unethical, negative, exploitative, and marginalizing, and thus perpetuating colonialism" (p. 198). While CBPR is not the only cure-all for eliminating the oppressive nature of research and relationships between minoritized communities and the academic world, using Community-Based Participatory Research can help to disrupt these norms. CBPR can allow the valued contribution of the participants to provide

inputs on the design, topics and support they would need within this research.

In using CBPR, I am interested in deconstructing and addressing the researcher-participant power imbalance in opposition to positivist research approaches (Datta et al., 2015). Throughout the whole research process, community partners and youth participants in the C-Vert program were consulted to discuss the research and topics that were interesting to them. Through this collaborative effort, I aimed to ensure that the research directly benefited the youth participants and YMCA's programming. Moreover, another key component of CBPR is relationship building. Before the research process, I took time to connect with the C-Vert team and their youth group beforehand to understand needs, share my story, and create trust. My goal as a researcher was to build a community of trust for the research process and to connect with all of the individuals involved.

3.4 Understanding and Implementing YPAR In The Context Of The Research

Within the scope of CBPR, YPAR is a form of participatory action research that seeks to place youth at the cornerstone of the research processes. There is an increasing need for communities to have access to youth voices as a catalyst for progressive programming, activities and work (Foster-Fishman, Law, Lichty & Aoun, 2010). However, youth are often devalued, unheard and exploited. Martinez et al. (2017) express that "engagement can give agency to youth who are often marginalized and allow them to express their strengths and expertise (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006). Engaging youth in community programs provides them opportunities to connect collaboratively and clarify their own identities" (p. 85). Moreover, youths' unique perspectives and creativity allow community-based work and research to involve similar unique ways of thinking and innovative design for meaningful community support. The critical nature of YPAR as a methodology challenge who is allowed to participate in research by involving youth (BrownGriffin, 2021 & Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott & Morell, 2017). Research prioritizing

youth participation is grounded in the view that youth are experts in their own lives and can take action in the community by drawing out inequalities they face (BrownGriffin, 2021; Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott & Morell, 2017). According to Bertrand (2015):

YPAR should entail: (1) the centrality of youth's knowledge and experiences, as reflected in the direction of the research; (2) collaborative conduct of research; and (3) transformative research that can improve the lives of the youth. To this list Cammarota (2014b) adds youth empowerment and increased capacity for agency (p. 17).

These pillars are similar to the ones outlined by Rodríguez and Brown (2009) that center the creation of the Evergreen Youth Lab design, as I will discuss below.

YPAR's roots in working with marginalized communities started with its "response to discrimination, racism, poverty, under resourced schools, and the constant threat of violence felt by youth researchers and their communities" (Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott & Morell, 2017, p. 314). Returning to Freire's work (1971), he believed that everyday people are the social transformation and working with the everyday person will allow societal transformation towards anti-oppression of minoritized groups. This includes youth. Participatory research methods recognize that the everyday person is intellectual and has indispensable knowledge to research. YPAR recognizes that youth are also capable of carrying knowledge and are intellectual beings (Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott & Morell, 2017). "YPAR's intention to demystify and deconstruct power structures, then transform them to construct a new reality, the critical agency is fostered in youth who participate in this type of learning through research. (Caraballo, Lozenski, Lyiscott & Morell, 2017, p. 315–316). Youth knowledge is deeply embedded within their community. Moreover, racialized youth hold a rich knowledge of how their identities affect how they interact with their communities and can provide critical reflection on research methodologies and

outcomes that can benefit groups even more marginalized within society. The participation of youth of colour in the community is often overlooked. Their experience as young people of colour can help deepen engagement within the research (Bertrand, Durand & Gonzalez, 2017) and lead to action for more just communities affected by societal marginalization.

3.5 Arts-Based Methods as A Tool For CBPR/YPAR

By adopting CBPR and YPAR as my methodological pillars, my study is grounded in a belief that creating a space and giving agency for youth to explore community action and societal inequalities is necessary. Thus, identifying the right tools to aid in thinking about these intersectional topics is vital. Arts-based methods can allow youth to think critically and explore themselves as agents of change. According to Goessling (2017), art can serve as a valuable tool for young people to develop their skills and resources in becoming activists and envisioning new identities, realities, and systems. Meanwhile, Dewhurst's (2014) framework on social justice art education encourages researchers, educators, and practitioners to explore how art can be used to effect change, using three critical lenses: connecting, questioning, and translating. The connecting lens examines how artists convey their intentions and motivations in creating social justice art, enabling young artists to relate to the art in a personal and meaningful way based on their own experiences and beliefs. Dewhurst's framework (2017) emphasizes the importance of using the arts as a means of social transformation.

The power of art as a method for thinking critically, exploring identities and understanding the motivations of youth within climate spaces is why arts-based methods became a central tool within the Evergreen Youth Lab workshops. Like the Evergreen Youth lab, a study conducted by Ward (2020) found that youth who participated in their research could use arts-based methods (ABM) to understand their identities and place within their neighbourhood and were understood that they can innovate. Samaras (2010) suggests that arts-based methods have significant

potential for self-reflection and self-discovery. According to Samaras (2010), while traditional research methods rely on experimentation, observation, and control to understand a research situation, the arts enable students to visually depict and comprehend a situation through descriptive analysis, promoting diverse interpretations.

Using ABM within research and learning spaces is a way to deconstruct and supplement the mainstream western ways of thinking critically, producing knowledge and creation. Youth can also use ABM to explore the layers of thoughts, feelings and emotions more deeply (Samaras, 2010). Some of the values of CBPR align well with the use of ABM, and it is becoming increasingly common to use within community projects within research (Chin, Sakamoto & Bleuer, 2014). ABM are especially common within community and humanities research due to the fact that traditional methods have not been effective for all groups of people (Coemans, Wang, Leysen & Hannes, 2015). Engaging in artistic expression can offer a pathway to transcend potential linguistic and cultural barriers that might impede effective communication. It is also important to recognize that vulnerable populations "are harder to reach, but also less able to raise their voice" (Coemans, Wang, Leysen & Hannes, 2015, p. 34). "ABM may be able to overcome at least a fraction of these problems, by reducing the focus on the written word and looking at other means of communication, not only to gain access to deeper layers of meaning, but also to address power relations in research processes (Foster, 2012)" (Coemans, Wang, Leysen & Hannes, 2015, p. 34).

Along with being a tool to connect people within their community, ABM have the potential to connect people within their surrounding natural environments, what Hundertwasser (1983) described as being "the bridge between humans and nature" (p. 136). This can help understand the connection between activism and sustainability challenges.

The emotional connection when using ABM can reinforce an emotional connection to nature and be a mechanism for powerful climate work (Hicks & King, 2007; Muhr, 2020). "Art can also attend to and transform emotions, creating hope, responsibility, care, and solidarity (Ryan 2016)" (Bentz, 2020, p. 1596). Creation and artistic application can help open our minds, raise awareness, and communicate to others the need for transformative sustainability change (Bentz, 2020).

While arts-based methods can be transformative to our imaginaries, especially for climate activism, researchers must be realistic about a project's ability to make a deep systematic change toward just and sustainable futures (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). To assume that any arts-based method project will be radically transformative would be unreasonable and misleading to the participants, research outcomes, community stakeholders, and further knowledge creation. There are some caveats to using arts-based methods within research, and it is necessary to acknowledge them as the Evergreen Youth Lab is designed around some uses of artistic expression. Ethical concerns exist around artistic ownership and anonymity (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). As participants in a project will create their own art, it is important to recognize and allow the artist to own what is being made. As mentioned, art can also expose depths of emotions, sometimes traumatic, and anonymity becomes important to consider. The layers of emotions, thoughts and topics covered in one art piece can make it rich and overwhelming when analyzing the data for the researchers (Coemans & Hannes, 2017). Art is a long process and can demand a lot from both the participants and the researcher. Time is often a big limitation for ABM research projects to conduct at the right pace and to recruit participants (Coemans & Hannes, 2017).

The use of visual and arts-based methods within the Evergreen Youth Lab workshops is central to data collection, sharing ideas in conversations and evoking participant storytelling

around climate. The transformative nature of arts-based methodologies provides an effective way to convey transformative work on inclusive climate spaces and the empowering of youth activists of colour to tell their stories. The ideas presented in this section have allowed me to set the foundations for the design of this research. The ideas around CBPR and YPAR have shaped how I interact with youth participants in the research process. ABM and PVM are the vessels for showcasing stories and understanding one's self-discovery through the Evergreen Youth Lab workshop processes. In the next section, I will discuss the decisions made around the design of the Evergreen Youth Lab and the inspiration of the themes of the workshops from Monica Sharma's (2017) work on transformational leadership. This is where we see the Evergreen Youth Lab come to life.

3.6   Participatory Study Design: The Evergreen Youth Lab

3.6.1 Foundations of The Lab Design

Monica Sharma's work (2017) on radical transformational leadership inspired the themes explored in the Evergreen Youth Lab workshops. In her book Radical Transformational Leadership: Strategic Action for Change Agents (2017), Sharma outlines three identities that change agents use for strategic and radical transformation: the Contemporary Pioneer, the Unifying Architect, and the Mindful Pro-Activist. These identities formed the themes of the first three workshops of the Evergreen Youth Lab. Sharma's work is centered upon many processes and values I wished to foreground in the Evergreen Youth Lab. These include transformation, action and leadership. These processes and values are necessary for progress on intersectional challenges such as the climate crisis. I also used three of the identities described in this book for my transformative leadership as a researcher through the design for the Evergreen Youth Lab and as tools to foster a space to explore the participants' identities as change agents.

The first workshop centers itself around the Contemporary Pioneer's identity. According to Sharma (2017), Contemporary Pioneers understand their inner selves. They prioritize reflection to work towards transformative leadership. This step is key in understanding and sourcing your inner identities and is foundational for self-discovery and powerful action. Sharma (2017) suggests that embracing identities is an asset and that "when we embrace the different aspects of our social profile inclusively and ground ourselves in our inner capacities or wisdom profile, we create new realities that work for everyone" (p. 65). Contemporary Pioneers' ability to be self-aware allows them to leverage their inner powers within complex climate spaces and support others in sustainable ways.

The second workshop is inspired by the Unifying Architect. According to Sharma (2017), the Unifying Architect is the crafter and designer. They are proficient at recognizing societal patterns, norms and gaps to design better outcomes. This identity practices its ways of thinking differently by understanding that the current failing systems cannot be changed with the same mindsets that created them. Knowing this, the Unifying Architect is a personality that practices ingenuity from systemic critical thinking. From this, they can design radical solutions to solve systems failures around the climate.

The third identity and third workshop are inspired by the Mindful Pro-Activist. Sharma (2017*)* states that the Mindful Pro-Activist takes action on their visions for the future. They implement projects and ideas mindfully for sustainable change. The Mindful Pro-Activist manifests as a transformative leader for societal change. Sharma explains that they do what they say, deliver on action plans, and have the courage to act and speak up.

All three identities are intersectional. No one person is likely to identify with only one of the identities, but they go through the process of seeing themselves with these personalities in

stages. These personalities are also always evolving. As we discover new things about ourselves, as events occur, and new challenges arise, we re-evaluate our transformative identities and ways we can work to be leaders for transformation on climate.

The Evergreen Youth Lab workshops used these themes as inspiration but also needed specific methods to allow the youth participants to uncover their identities as climate activists and actors. I was interested in providing a space to think critically and introspectively and discuss their stories with the rest of the group. I used various methodological perspectives to allow stories to be told in diverse ways. A focus on narratives through art production is a qualitative approach that explores individual experiences regarding environmental justice and positionality within climate spaces as youth of colour. Narratives allowed the youth to share their perceptions of climate justice, their identities, and the reasons they became involved in specific initiatives around climate justice. Arts-based methods provided a tool to the sessions that allowed youth to share their narratives. The study also consisted of CBPR/YPAR where I engaged with the youth by creating a lab space for participants to workshop their climate identities and observe their progression toward self-understanding.

3.6.2   *Design Process*

The design and process of creating the Evergreen Lab can be divided into three parts: (a) Recruitment/Partnership Development; (b) Workshopping; (c) Toolkit Development.

a)   Recruitment/Partnership Development
Creating the Evergreen Youth Lab and brainstorming involved community partners from the start. The YMCA C-Vert team is deeply concerned about creating inclusive spaces for youth participants. As a result, the organization seeks to broaden its approach to supporting youth participants of colour, infusing support across its programming. The staff also sought to further

understand why it remains a white-centric space while seeking to serve marginalized and racialized youth. Understanding the stories and barriers youth of colour in their programmes face is beneficial in understanding how they can transform their systems approaches to be more inclusive for the youth of colour. During the discussions with the team, they had emphasized the pivotal role that the Evergreen Youth Lab (EYL) would play in providing a vital and much-needed space, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, the C-Vert programming had experienced disruptions as its core activities relied on in-person gatherings for fulfilling its eco-citizenship objectives and establishing meaningful connections with its participants.

Throughout the pandemic, participant engagement had been sporadic, as the constraints of virtual interactions hindered the meaningful interactions that was characterized by their pre-pandemic activities. The introduction of the Evergreen Youth Lab emerged as a unifying force, offering a platform for participants from different C-Vert cohorts to come together. This inter-cohort gathering space served as a conduit for forging connections among youth who may not have previously known each other.

The task of mobilizing youth, a challenge exacerbated by the pandemic and the additional stressors of academic obligations, was navigated with concerted effort by the C-Vert team. The fusion of familiarity provided by C-Vert and novelty of the EYL served as a compelling incentive for youth participants, fostering a sense of encouragement to participate despite the prevailing circumstances.

Throughout our discussions, a notable aspect arose in the recruitment of youth of color for this study within the C-Vert team. This key team member, who had both experienced the study as a participant and identified as racially marginalized, played a proactive role in spearheading

the recruitment efforts aimed at engaging youth of color in their programs. Their dual position as both a former participant and a racialized individual made them an essential conduit that facilitated outreach and engagement among fellow youth of color.

In this complex interplay, this member served as a bridge, encompassing vital elements of familiarity, trust, and connection. Their shared experiences allowed them to deeply understand the lived realities and unique viewpoints of potential youth participants. This sense of familiarity, stemming from shared backgrounds and encounters, helped overcome potential barriers that often impede engagement of marginalized groups in research endeavors.

Trust played a pivotal role in encouraging young individuals to participate in our study. The C-Vert team member, who had walked the same path as the youth we aimed to recruit, played a substantial role in this process. Their ability to relate to the young individuals on a personal level due to their shared experiences made the participants feel at ease and confident about joining the study. This connection not only alleviated potential concerns but also fostered openness to research participation.

The most crucial function undertaken by this team member was that of a connector. Through their shared racial identity and past participation, they possessed a unique capability to establish authentic connections with potential youth participants of color. This capacity to forge genuine connections was pivotal in transcending the typical boundaries of researcher-participant relationships, thus cultivating an environment conducive to open and candid engagement.

The recruitment of youth of color into this study was significantly enhanced by the active involvement of the C-Vert team member. This multifaceted role, comprising familiarity, trust, and connection, played a pivotal role in bridging the gap between researchers and participants. This culminated in a recruitment process that was both inclusive and attuned to the experiences

and aspirations of the youth of color targeted for involvement.

Once the partnership was solidified, which required several months of collaborative meetings, discussions, and incorporating feedback from the team, we took a proactive step by organizing two in-person pre-sessions. These pre-sessions, each lasting an hour and a half, involved a group of 10 participants who were part of the C-Vert+ cohort – individuals who had previously engaged with C-Vert programming.

During these pre-sessions, our primary objective was to gain valuable insights directly from the C-Vert+ participants. We aimed to understand their specific needs, interests, and sought their candid feedback on various aspects of the proposed project, including potential workshop topics and designs that had been brainstormed. I took personal notes on the information shared about workshop interests and logistics and returned with a design that would accommodate the C-Vert+ participants.

One of the key outcomes of these pre-sessions was the creation of a space for potential participants to engage in meaningful discussions and form connections with each other. This platform facilitated not only the sharing of their individual values but also enabled a collective exploration of thoughts concerning the proposed Evergreen Youth Lab initiative. These conversations were guided by a two-way exchange, allowing participants to express their insights while also absorbing the project's rationale and potential benefits. The in-person pre-sessions emerged as a crucial bridge that fostered direct engagement and collaboration with the C-Vert+ participants.

b)   Workshopping as data collection
The data collected consisted of stories and items shared and made in the workshop space that was the Evergreen Youth Lab over five weeks. Based on the commentary and feedback that

potential participants shared in the two pre-sessions, the C-Vert team and I designed the

workshops to be conducted in person in a communal space accessible to participants, which is

the C-Vert hub for the community I worked with. We recruited eight youths aged 16-25, all from

Montreal, who expressed interest during the pre-sessions and through communications with their

C-Vert coordinator. We engaged in five workshop-style meetings spanning from 90 to 120 mins.

The youth and I workshopped over five weeks at a frequency of one time per week (Figure 3.1).

The workshops were facilitated by myself and overseen by the YMCA C-Vert coordinator of the

region. I took observational field notes and audio recordings of the workshops during each

workshop for transcription purposes. I also took photographs of group notes and artistic products

generated from the activities and outcomes generated by the group. For every process of

collecting data, I made sure to receive consent through a form that was signed before the data

was collected (Appendix A).

I used various arts-based methods within the lab space to engage youth in their self-

understanding and help tell their stories. As described above, each workshop was titled after a

chapter in Sharma's book on Radical Transformational Leadership. The figure below (3.1)

summarizes the workshops outlining the themes, goals, methods used and the number of

participants.

Session #	Date	Theme	Session Goals	Methods used	# of Participants
1	April 12 2022 (4:30 pm– 5:30/6: 00 pm)	**Week One: The Contemporary Pioneer: Sourcing Inner Power**	-Mapping identities -Timeline of standout moments in life (River of Life) -Debrief on discoveries	Narratives and Concept Maps	8
2	April 19 2022 (4:30 pm– 5:30/6: 00 pm)	**Week Two: The Unifying Architect: Designing Differently**	- Discussing systems thinking -Practicing iceberg model mapping	Narratives and Iceberg Model handouts	7
3	April 26 2022 (4:30 pm–5:30/6 pm)	**Week Three: The Mindful Pro-activist**	-Looking over different ways to take action on climate -Collage -Visioning and Manifesto	Narratives and Collage	7

4	May 3 2022 (4:30 pm– 5:30/6: 00 pm)	**Week Four: Manifesting your full potential** This summative workshop will allow participants to reflect on themselves, what they have learnt, and how they would like to go forward.	-Wrap up sessions and research debrief -Reflect on lessons -Toolkit decisions	Narratives	8
5	May 10 2022 (4:30 pm– 5:30/6: 00 pm)	**Week Five: Transformative opportunities aligning and tuning for transformation** This final workshop will be a time to brainstorm, plan and co-create a toolkit.	-Toolkit Working Meeting -Wrap up and what's next	Narratives	8

Figure 3.1. Schedule of the Evergreen Youth Lab.

Week One was titled *The Contemporary Pioneer: Sourcing Inner Power.* This workshop

looked at participants' inner identities—what makes them who they are and how those identity

pieces play a part in their climate passions. The workshop aimed to understand participant

identities, how they interconnect and how they affect personal climate work. It was also important to emphasize our identities of colour and how that looks within climate spaces. We aimed to understand concepts of belonging, exclusion, and inclusion in climate work based on our identities as people of colour. In order to work on this, we did two arts-based activities. The first was identity mapping, where participants mapped out all their identity pieces. According to Butler-Kisber (2018), "a concept map is a visual way of expressing ideas. 'Concept maps are created using hand-drawn sketches or virtual tools in a non-linear and visual format by drawing on paper or on the screen to show the thinking as it emerges, or to represent ideas in their embryonic stages' (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2009, p. 8)" (p. 12). The mindmap (also known as a concept map) allows a simpler depiction of complex ideas and components of an individual's identity. It also allows people to see intersections through arrows, groupings and titles.

The second activity was a river of life for their sustainability passions to understand motivation and events that have shaped their identities within climate work. The river of life is a visual representation of life's emotions through lived events in a simplified way. Both activities allowed participants and peers to understand each other and themselves as they worked through their inner powers within climate spaces. The activities also provide a good anchor to the rest of the workshops as we work cumulatively throughout the workshops and towards making a toolkit. We wrapped up the workshop by debriefing on the activities and sharing stories about important identity pieces, intersectional identities and racialization in sustainability. By the end of the workshop, participants had the opportunity to reflect, evaluate and storytelling about their intersectional climate identities.

Week Two was titled *The Unifying Architect: Designing Differently.* This workshop looked at how participants view their sustainable futures. Taking aspects of the identity work

done in the first workshop, participants designed their visions to then think about how to act on those aspirations. The workshop aimed to encourage participants to think critically and systematically about intersectional challenges around the climate crisis. We were able to bring in guest speakers from the organization Black Eco Bloom, whose work centers around inclusive environments advocacy and deconstructing systems of oppression for black women, black transgender women and black non-binary individuals in the environmental sector. They came in as a way for participants to see youth activism of colour in the works by having the co-founders in the space share knowledge on systemic oppression and its intersection with climate crises. Participants had the time to engage in discussion and work on an activity to practice their systems thinking using iceberg models. By the end of the workshop, participants had the opportunity to think critically, dive deep into systemic thinking models and discuss topics around climate justice, intersectional environmentalism, etc. This workshop allowed participants to situate themselves as activists within various systemic challenges that need transformative action.

Week Three was titled *The Mindful Pro-Activist.* In this workshop, participants were challenged to understand their climate passions and take action on them. The workshop explored different ways of taking action and related them to the participants' identities. We explored the skills and knowledge different participants can bring and the diverse ways they can change as an activist of colour. To conclude their mindful activism, we made manifestos/vision statements and used collages to represent their climate passions visually. The vision statement was a way to confidently say who they are and what they are interested in tackling as a climate challenge. A handout was made by me which consisted of a fil-in-the-blank vision statement to help participants map out their words and thoughts. However, using this handout was not mandatory

for participants to fill out in the process of creating their collages. The vision statement also

served as a guide for the collaging process.

As a climate activist, I like working on _____(Causes) and am especially interested in _____(Climate Passion). To be happy in life I _____ (Personal Interests).
My priorities are to develop _____, _____, and _____ (Skills or Interests). People in my life who are important to me are _____ and _____. "

Figure 3.2. Vision Statement Handout.

We used collages to convey the climate passion, or the area participants are interested in

tackling within their climate work. This visual element allowed them to convey their motivations

and deep emotions through pictures. By the end of this workshop, participants had the

opportunity to set mindful intentions for their climate journeys and explore opportunities to take

action on their climate passions.

Week Four was titled *Manifesting Your Full Potential*. According to Sharma (2017), this

means embodying the identities through thinking critically, understanding yourself and acting

courageously. Using all the lessons from the past three workshops, this summative workshop

allowed participants to reflect on themselves, what they had learnt, and how they would like to

proceed. In this workshop, we introduced the toolkit as an opportunity to showcase the work they

had been thinking of and the lessons they had learnt. This workshop aimed to allow participants to take action on their reflections and intention setting from the previous three workshops. The aim was also to review lessons, discussions and things that emerged in the past workshops to refresh the participants to create a toolkit. They evaluated diverse ways to share stories and lessons with the greater community with the support of the C-Vert+ team and myself as a researcher. No clear processes were pre-determined in order to allow the participants full autonomy to decide how they would want to work on making a toolkit, the format and their storytelling. By the end of this workshop, participants had the opportunity to debrief their experience in the workshops and started co-creating and brainstorming the toolkit. Week Five was titled *Transformative Opportunities Aligning and Tuning for Transformation.* According to Sharma (2017), this means fine-tuning your activism towards communal transformation and focusing on your place in transformative opportunities. This final workshop continued to be a time to brainstorm, plan and co-create a toolkit to showcase to the wider community. This toolkit can be shared widely to create awareness within the Montreal climate community around supporting youth activists of colour. By the end of this workshop, participants involved in the creative toolkit process had put together a plan for their own cumulative piece to showcase to community members. This was continued with my support in providing access to a website editor necessary for online communications.

c) Toolkit Development[1]

The goal of developing a toolkit was to co-create a project where youth participants could share their stories, what they have taken from their participation and ways that community members can support youth activists of colour in climate spaces trying to take action. The toolkit

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[1] The Evergreen Youth Lab Toolkit website is located here https://theevergreenyouthlab.com/

format, which the group of participants chose, is a website compilation of the work they have

provided during and outside of their time at the Evergreen Youth Lab. The toolkit's digital

format will allow it to be shared with wider networks and community hubs that support youth

climate activism. As a part of the toolkit development process, I used the discussions and

recordings from the final two sessions of the EYL to understand the participants' experiences

creating and making decisions on the toolkit. The data collected highlights the active process of

taking action on climate and the toolkit being a vessel for that action.

3.7   Data Analysis

I used a variety of approaches, such as arts and narrative-based approaches, to allow for

meaningful storytelling and unpacking of intersectional identities and topics around climate

justice. Throughout the workshops, I documented discussions, images, and art pieces to describe

how youth activists of colour understand themselves, climate justice, intersectional systems of

oppression, and taking action on climate. In analyzing the data and delving into the outcomes of

the workshops, I adopted an inductive thematic analysis approach as outlined by Braun and

Clarke (2019). This methodological choice allowed for the themes explored in this section to be

guided by the inherent patterns and insights present within the data itself. Drawing directly from

the data, I have discerned the emergence of three distinct themes: "Unpacking Climate

Identities," "Understanding Climate as a Justice Issue," and "Taking Action on Climate."

Due to art's multifaceted nature and layered expression of the self, presents a unique

challenge in deciphering the explicit meanings embedded within art-making and production. To

better understand the meaning behind the artwork and stories, I often used a method called the

semantic approach, which was inspired by the ideas of King and Brooks (2017). This approach

involved closely looking at the obvious things that the participants said and showed in their

recordings and art. By focusing on these visible aspects, I aimed to uncover the clear messages and feelings that the participants were trying to share. Additionally, I adopted a latent approach, as delineated by Braun and Clarke (2012), which necessitated a more interpretive stance. This approach involved making informed assumptions and inferences to uncover the underlying narratives and meanings concealed within the participants' stories and artistic pieces. By delving beneath the surface and delving into the intricacies of symbolism, metaphors, and contextual cues, I sought to unearth the deeper layers of meaning that may not be immediately apparent. By using a combination of these different ways of analyzing data, I was able to dig deep into the information we gathered. I looked at both the obvious things people said and the deeper meanings behind them. This helped me put together a complete picture of the ideas that came out from what the participants talked about and created in their art. This way, I could better understand how climate identities played a role in the lives of youth of colour.

3.8 Ethical Considerations for The Design Process

I did foresee potential psychological, emotional and social risks or discomfort to other participants due to participating in this study. Participants were engaging around the sensitive topics of systemic racism and other challenging themes of the climate crisis. Participants were advised to communicate such concerns to me; they were informed that they might choose not to participate in any workshop sessions, activities or segments if they were uncomfortable with the content. Only participants aged 16–25 years were recruited to participate in this research. We obtained participants' signatures on the consent forms before the meetings. We required parents' consent for minors under 18 years of age. Their signature on the consent forms will be mandatory to participate in the research (Appendix A).

The research from this project seeks to understand the challenges youth of colour face with the intersectionality of climate justice. These are sensitive topics that may cause strong

emotional responses from participants. The goal, however, is to better understand the challenges

the participants face, understand their stories, understand their experience with being a minority

in climate justice, and create a toolkit to aid the participants in feeling comfortable in these

spaces. Therefore, the risks were seen as acceptable as these are challenges the participants are

already facing, and the project will explore how to address these challenges. I sought to ensure

confidentiality throughout the data collection of the study and in the research. Data, notes and

scripts were de-identified and assigned a specific code. During the construction of the toolkit,

participants were given the option to either use their real names or pseudonyms. None of the

participants chose to opt-out, and as a result, all participants used their names when presenting

their works. As the toolkit served not only as a research tool but also as a platform to showcase

participants' works, their names were disclosed. All identifiable information within the research,

including the master file and consent forms, will be deleted no later than seven years after the

study is completed.

4. Evergreen Youth Lab Workshop Outcomes on Climate Identities, Justice And Action

In this section, I cover the stories, art and narratives that were shared during the EYL sessions. The themes of Unpacking Climate Identities, Understanding climate as a justice issue, and Taking action on climate encompass the mindmaps, collages, drawings and youth voices that were provided during the sessions.

4.1   Unpacking Climate Identities

In Sharma's work (2017), the process of understanding oneself and being able to take action requires self-discovery. However, understanding oneself is not evident and is not a linear process. When it comes to youth activists of colour, they have to consider a multitude of minority identities to understand their positioning and privilege within climate spaces. Their intersectional minority identities of being a person of colour and a youth provide a unique perspective of justice issues in climate work. Unpacking these climate identities is a difficult, incomplete and ever-evolving task for each unique participant. The first session of the workshops, which was themed around the Contemporary Pioneer.

Each participant produced an individual concept map to explore and connect the different elements of their identities. I asked them to think about What activities do I like? What causes am I interested in? How do I describe my appearance? What makes me who I am? Below are the maps that they have each created. Throughout this questioning and process, stories around the participants' connection to climate and how their identities heavily impact their actions started to surface. Below are some concept maps created by the participants that show the elements they showcase about their identities.

Figure 4.1. Documentation of the eight participant identity maps.
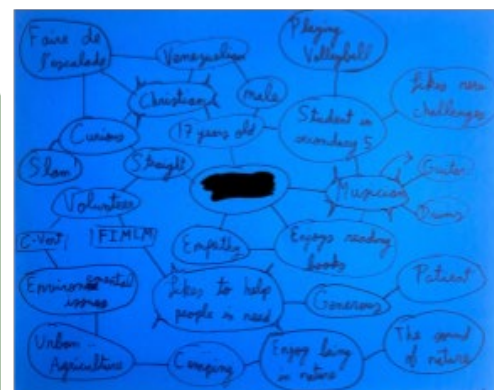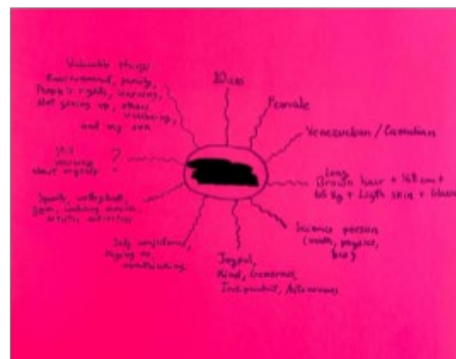
In our conversations, delving into the complexities of youth identities related to race can be quite challenging. Due to its intersectional nature, it can be difficult to identify pieces, events and components of one's self. In our debrief on concept mapping, the following participants expressed that:

"It was hard because like you I think most people know who they are, but like to put it into words is hard. Yeah. And at the same time, I felt like I didn't." – Terra.

These are common ideas shared because every individual is composed of so many little elements, events and experiences that are closely intertwined to make each person unique. The interconnected nature can be hard to separate into categories and maps and can be difficult to explain. Another participant explains that:

"For me, like doing it wasn't really difficult . . . at the end, like, I don't really know what to write. I feel like this is not like the complete me. Like there are still things missing. And like, I don't believe that my personality is defined by these few words yet." – Rivers.

These sentiments of feeling like the maps were incomplete or not fully representative of each individual were shared amongst the participants. This can be explained by the fact that we are always evolving. Past identities play a big role in who you are today but might not fully represent the evolution of yourself. Again, going back to ideas around intersectionality, it can be difficult to define oneself with words and lines because so many playing parts can encompass a complete image of the self.

"Obviously, some things like others said are like pretty obvious to write down. But for other things, like I'm still trying to figure out who I am. And what I want to do. So some things are more difficult to figure out." – Stone
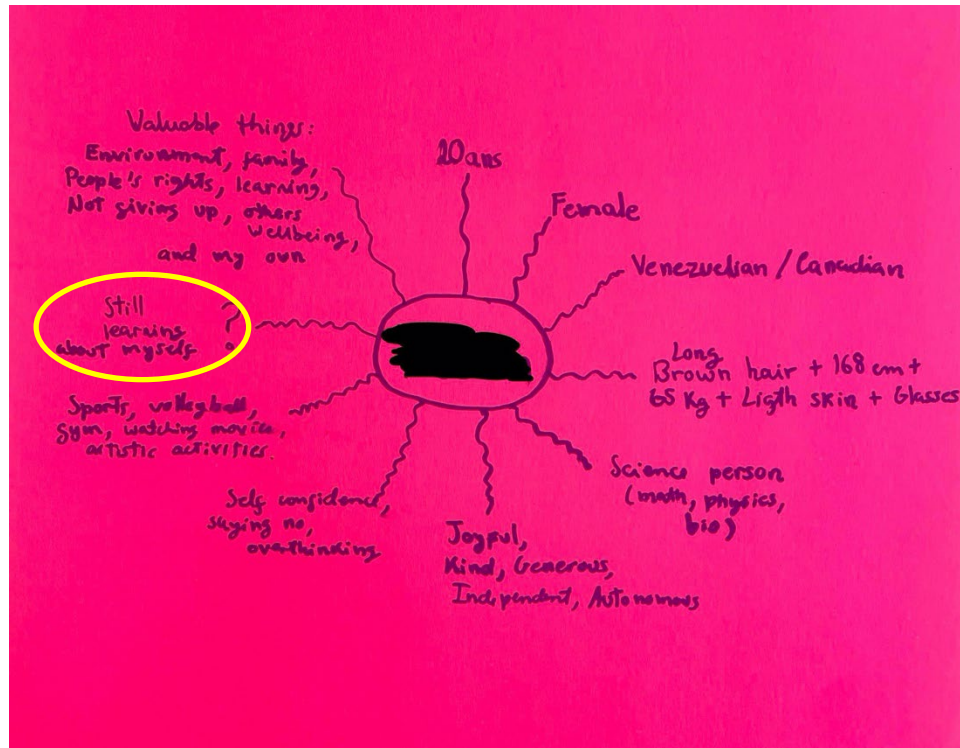

Figure 4.2. Clay's identity map.

The evolving nature of our identities can mean it is difficult to describe, understand and express to others. Participants identified themselves naturally through their cultural backgrounds, age, and causes that interested them, meaning those elements are important in their current understanding of themselves. The participants that wrote the causes they were interested in included more than one they were passionate about mentioning. This also highlights the intersectional nature of the issues participants are interested in.
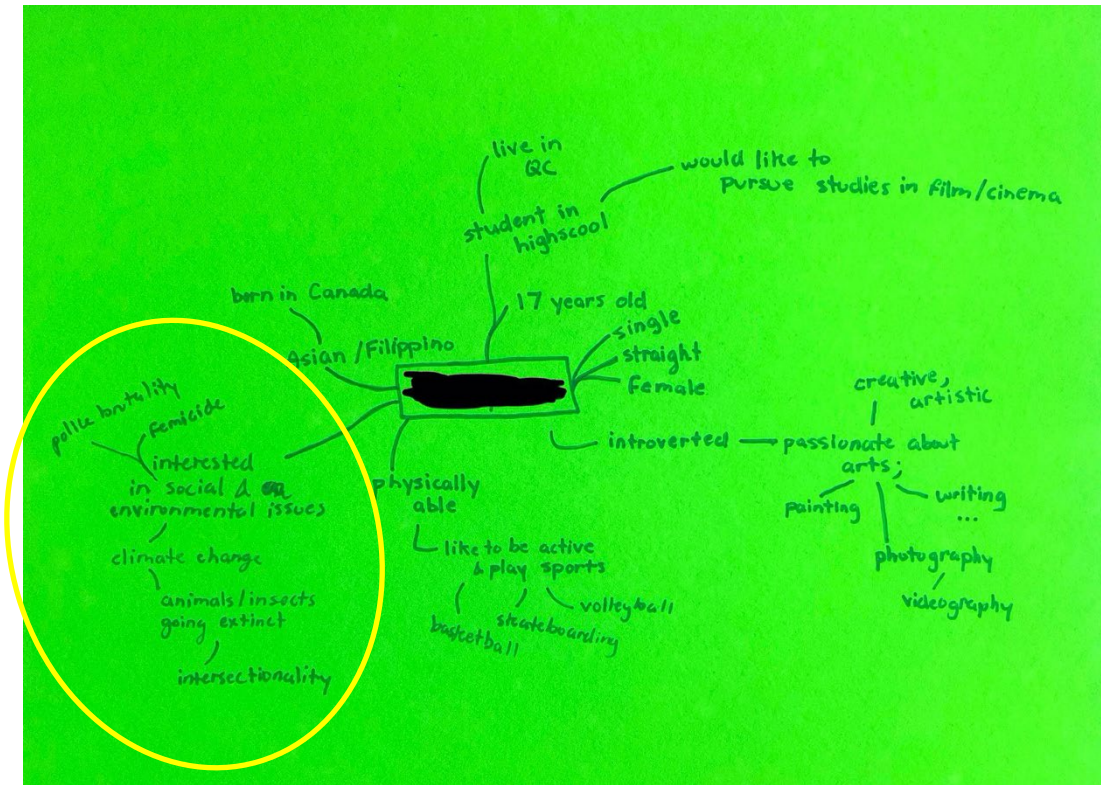
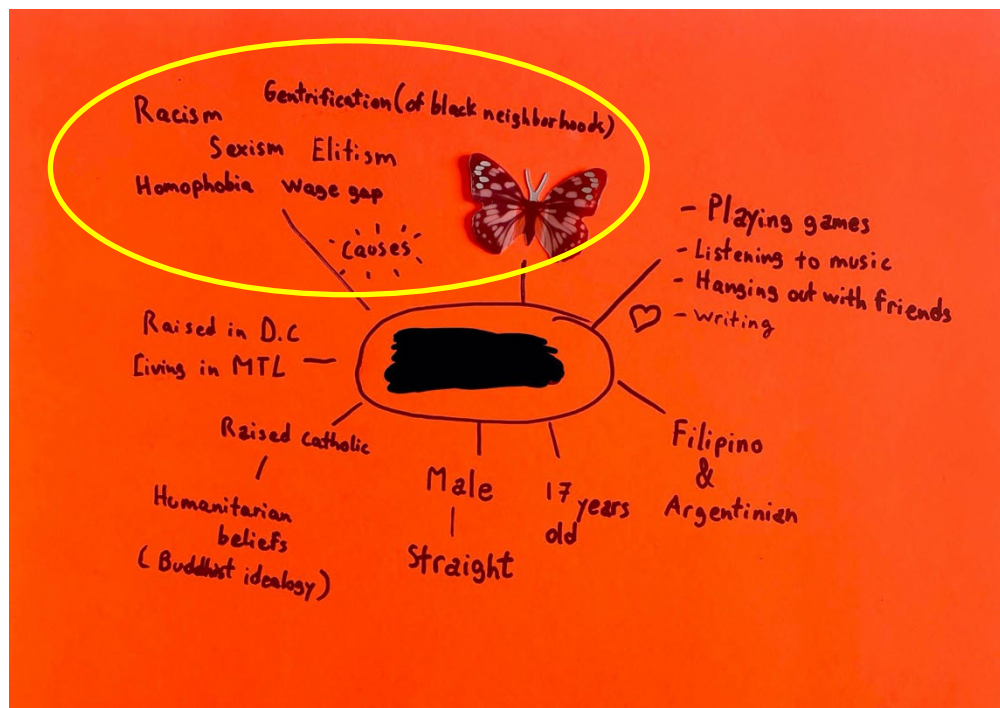Figure 4.3. Stone's identity map.
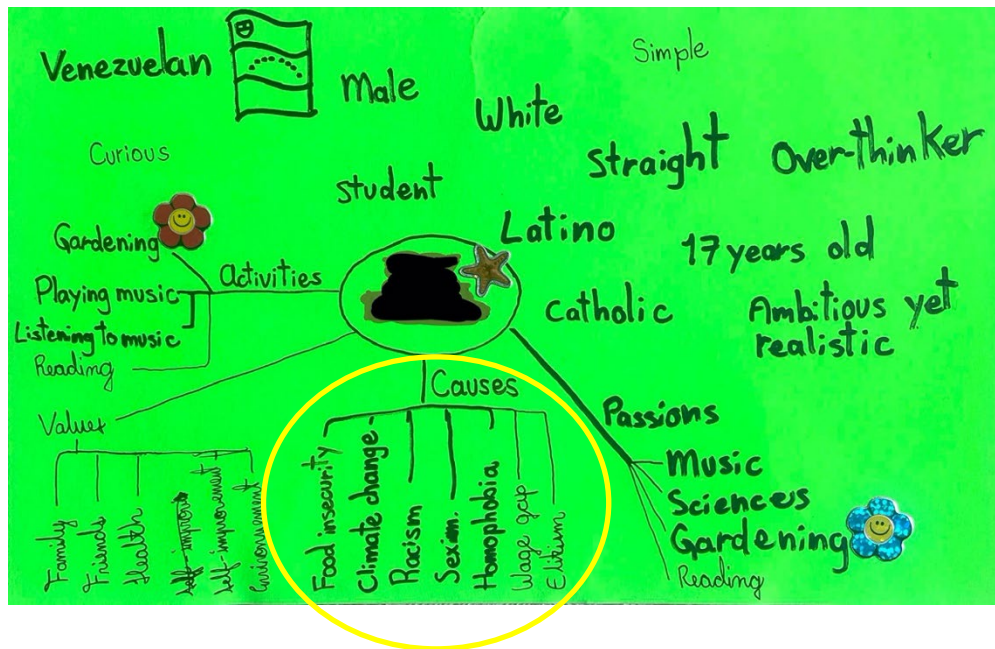

Figure 4.4. Meadow's identity map.

Figure 4.5. Rivers's identity map.

For example, the maps above (Figures 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5) show that the participants are interested in topics around climate change, food insecurity, racism, sexism, homophobia, femicide, police brutality, gentrification, wage gaps and elitism. Many of these issues directly affect minorities and people of colour disproportionately (Bullard, Wright & Mohai, 2007). The fact that they are youth of colour makes these participants more interested in topics around climate change and the other justice challenges that are tightly interconnected.

" . . . The causes I fight for also very important, like climate change and racism, sexism, all the isms" –Rivers.

Within all of the maps, participants identified their cultural background and race. This is a significant identity piece for racialized folks due to the impact of oppression, racism and histories of segregation, apartheid, colonialism, etc. (Nagel, 2003). The juggling of racialized

identities with western identities can be difficult to unpack and understand for youth of colour (Yosso, 2005).

> *"Well, the first one that is really important is my origins. Since I am Canadian, like I have the paper and everything, but I'll never feel 100% Canadian. And I don't want to be 100% Canadian, either. So being from another country, I will say is like one of the most important, and I wrote it right away like this is the first country and then I'm Canadian"*
> *– Clay.*

Racial identities significantly influence how individuals navigate climate spaces, passions and communities. The unique experiences that youth of colour have shaped how they view their climate identities and fed their passions for climate justice. For the second part of our first session together, I asked the participants to create a river of life. The river of life consists of around three moments/events/experiences that have affected their climate awareness. Each participant drew their river. I asked: "How do your identities that you've picked fit into your climate passions? Are there pieces in your identity that are especially important to you? Why did these moments in your river of life stand out to you?" Stories of participants' cultural upbringing influenced the climate passions that they currently hold. A participant tells their story of how their country of origin in Venezuela lit up their love for gardening and later built a connection with climate change through loving plants.

> *"One piece of my identity that really helped me, like, build a climate passion is gardening since I was very little. In my country, Venezuela, my dad had a big garden. And sometimes*

I would join him like what are the plants and everything. So from very small, I've always liked gardening and plants and everything. And then that makes me want to protect the environment and save the planet because I love plants. But also, last year, I worked for summer, as an agriculture assistant in the food depot and the DEA and the people at NDG food depot there. They are also activist for classes such as climate change, and food insecurity. So that really made me like, build a concrete, concrete link between gardening and climate change. And it's also an event that really pushed me to become a climate activist." – Rivers
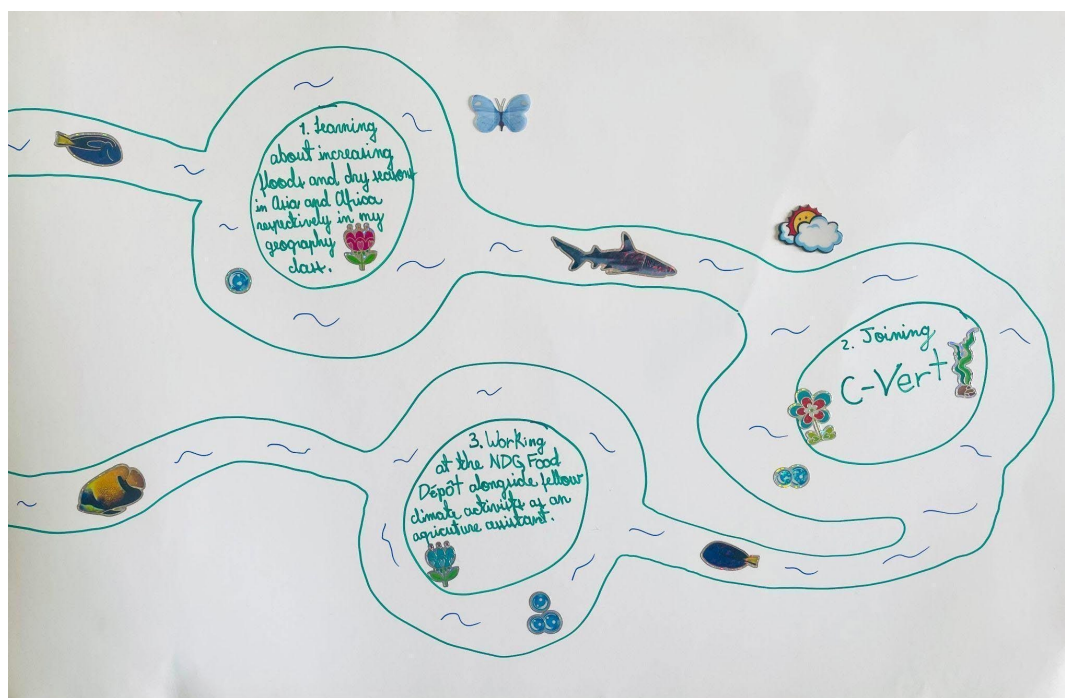

Figure 4.6. Rivers's river of life.

Another participant (Figure 4.7) explains how their cultural background affected the way they view waste and how those environments affected how they view environmentalism.

"*Growing up in family that, like, didn't have much kind of made me develop these habits of*

like, reusing things, reducing consumption and all that. And like, as everyone said, like the environment you grew up in it kind of like, shapes how you view life and like how you go through it, which impacts a lot." – Stone
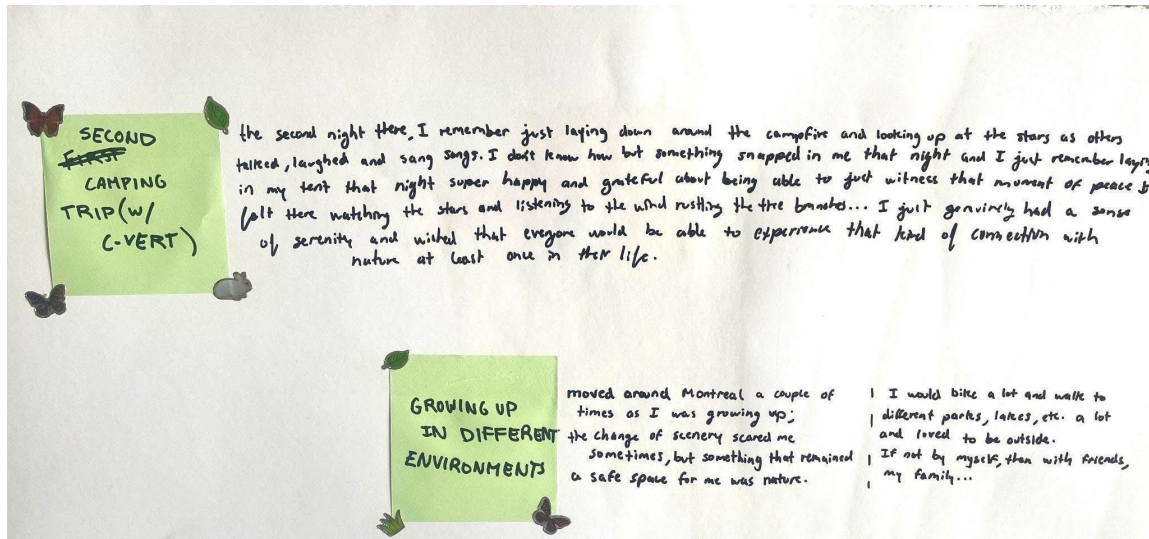

Figure 4.7. Stone's river of life.

Woods (Figure 4.8) highlights their immigration to Canada and realizes that their first-hand experiences of flooding in the Philippines were not normal or just. In their river of life, they explain how growing up in the Philippines, flooding and playing in the waters was normalized and used as a space for play. Through immigration, participation in the C-Vert program and schooling, these participants could recognize the injustices they experienced with the first-hand climate crises in their homelands. Immigrants or first-generation immigrants have unique experiences with the climate. By employing the river of life exercise, Wood has demonstrated that, as an immigrant, they are confronted with a dual perspective. On one hand, they witness and are informed about the immediate impacts and injustices their country of origin is grappling with. On the other hand, they navigate the complexities of residing in a Western society, which offers both comfort and the role of contributors to the swift progression of climate change.
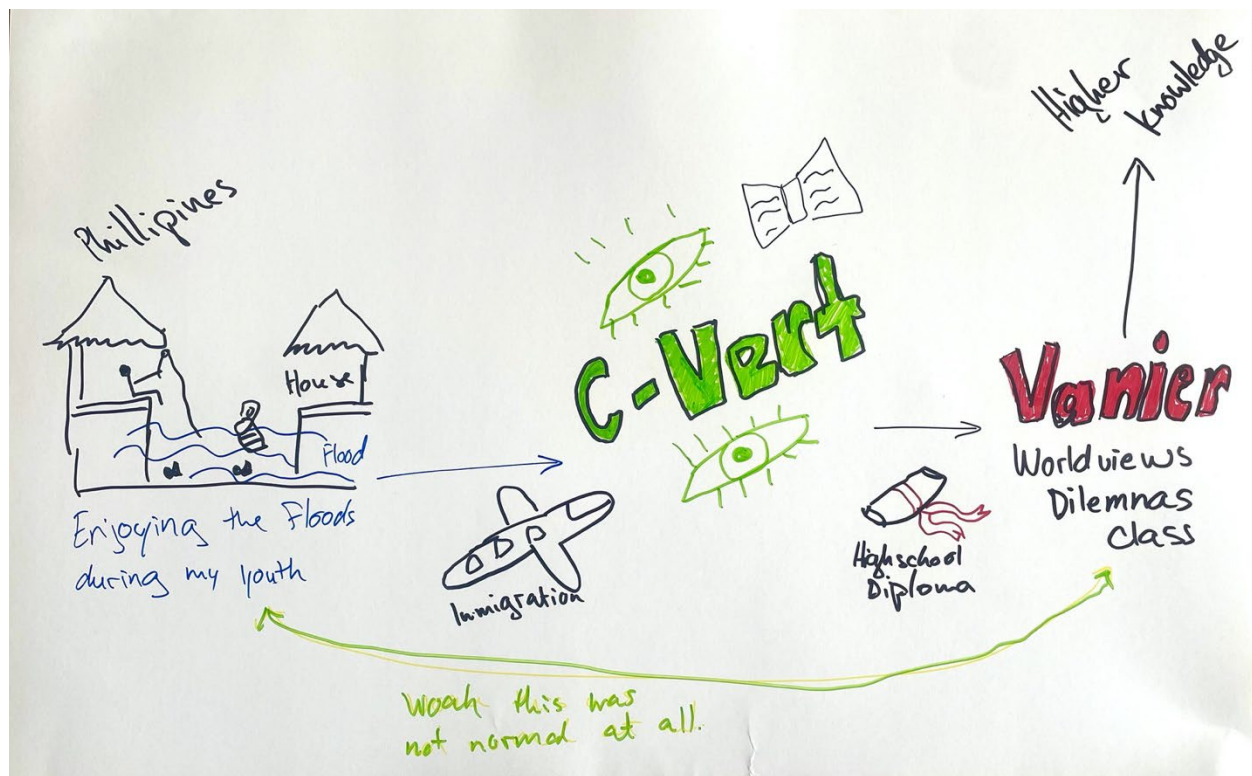
Figure 4.8. Woods' river of life.

The next participant (Figure 4.9) is also of Filipino descent and, through their upbringing, always heard stories from the homeland of the common floods and losses in the Philippines.

These stories heavily shaped the participant's climate passion. Similar to Woods, they learnt of the injustices of climate change and started to grasp its severity through C-Vert programming and online platforms.

"I only really want to talk about this one certain moment in my life where I talked about how I was learning more about the consequences of global warming all over the media growing up from like TV shows or like, on the internet, etc., etc. I feel like it's important to me for like two reasons, not only was I more exposed to the consequences of global warming, it was also around that time where I started browsing the internet more, which

clearly defines who I am right now. Because that's the feel like most teenagers are like

most people of my age spend less than three times on the internet." – Meadow.
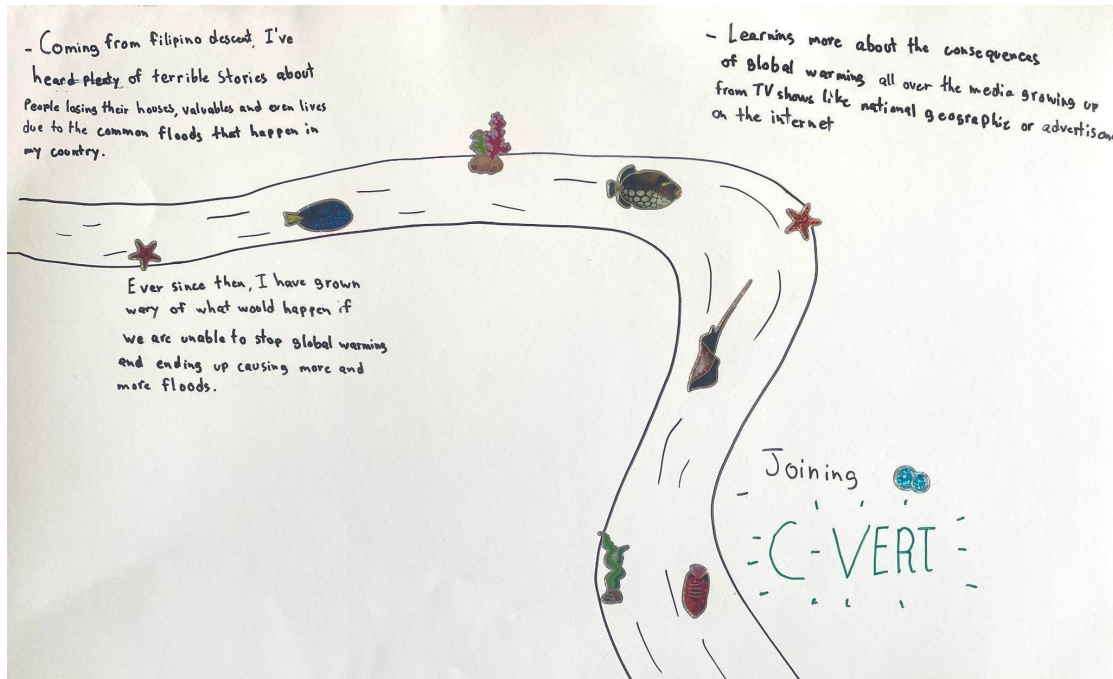

Figure 4.9. Meadow's river of life.

The two following participants (Figures 4.10 and 4.11) use the river of life to showcase events of seeing pollution and waste as an awakening to their climate activism. Similar to the other rivers from various participants, the imagery of seeing shocking events, whether natural disasters or unsafe pollution, can stick with people, especially youth (Dunaway, 2021). The likelihood of these events happening to racialized people is more common if it is abroad or within western society (Bolin & Bolton,1986).
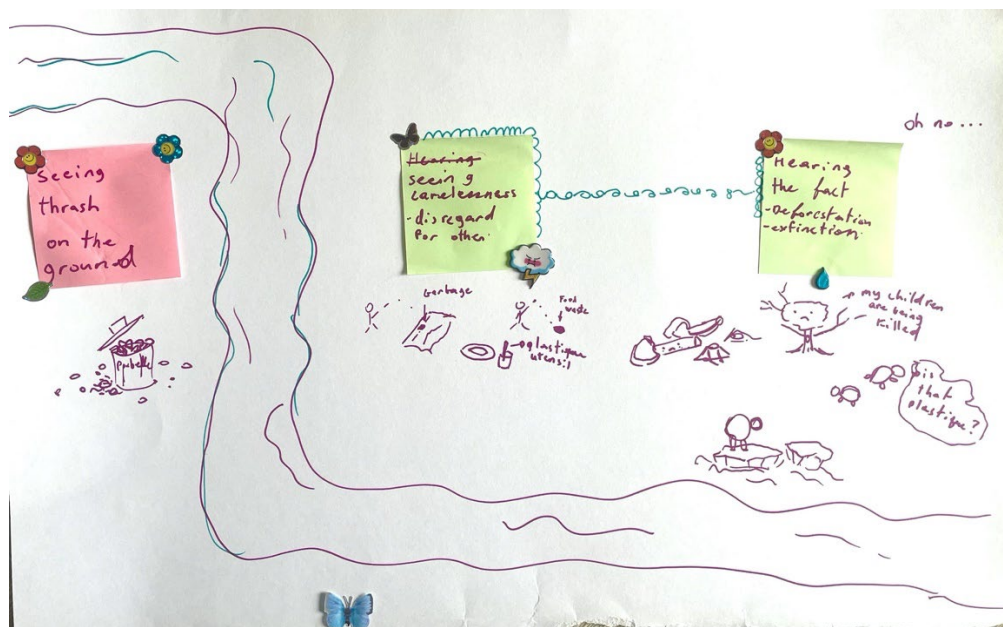
Figure 4.10. Gaia's river of life.

Figure 4.11.Terra's river of life

The C-Vert program as a space for youth to unpack their identities and realize climate

passions is another key moment in the rivers of life. Through the experiences C-Vert offers

youth, they can explore nature and find a connection to environments and other curious young

activists.
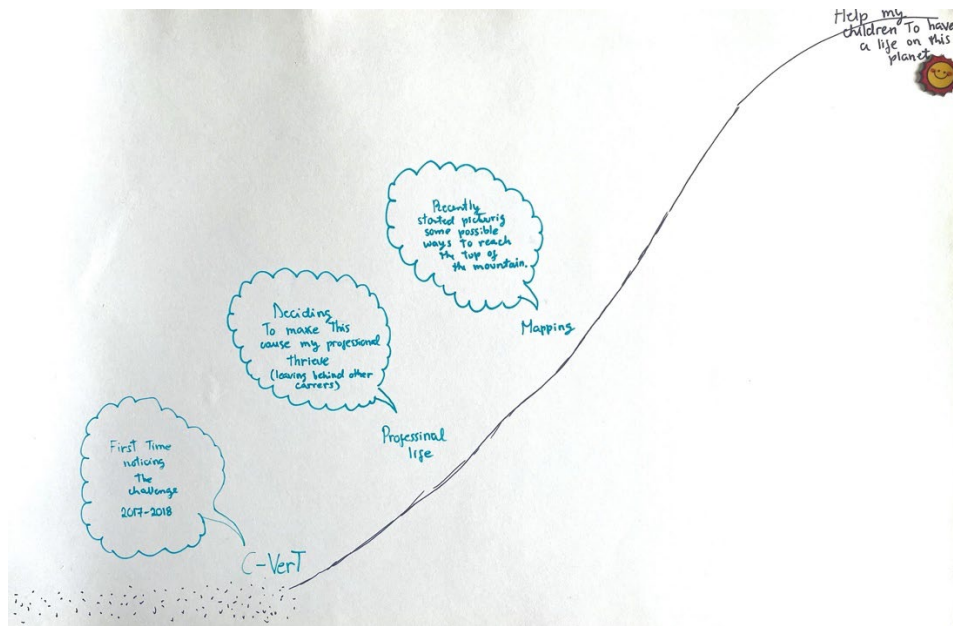
Figure 4.12. Clay's river of life.

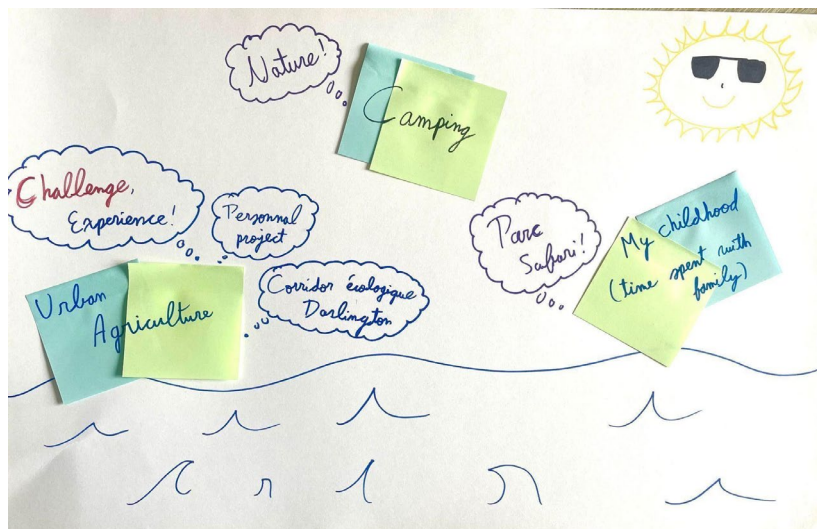Figure 4.13. Ocean's river of life.

"Premièrement à travers mon enfance et surtout par le fait que j'ai passé avec ma famille

du temps ensemble au parc. On va aller surtout je m'rappelle comment faire vous avez une

fois au Parc Safari ça j'ai vraiment aimé ça voir les animaux. C'est là ou j'ai découvert C-

Vert c'est aussi en tant que tel que ça m'a permis d'élargir mon champs et voir quelles sont

les connaissances en environnement et sur les enjeux environnementaux. Vraiment c'est ça la façon de voir l'environnement et de le valoriser et je veux vraiment que que c'est une belle experience surtout que j'ai eu durant mon enfance que les générations du futur en profite" – Ocean.

["Firstly through my childhood and especially through the fact that I spent time together with my family at the park. We would go to the Safari Park and I really liked to see the animals. That's where I discovered C-Vert and as such it allowed me to broaden my field and see what knowledge I have about the environment and environmental issues. Really it is the way to see the environment, to value it and I really want this beautiful experience especially that I had during my childhood so that the generations of the future take advantage of it" -Ocean.]

The rivers of life from figures 4.12 and 4.13 also indicate childhood memories of being able to explore environments and wanting the same memories for generations and youth of the future. From these rivers of life, the youth express a sense of obligation to the generations that will come after them. They feel a sense of urgency which feeds their climate passions to take action. Understanding that people of colour are disproportionately affected by climate change and the injustices at play creates a sense of urgency, responsibility and care that youth of colour embody as climate activists.

Through this mind mapping and our discussions during our sessions, it is clear that youth of colour understand how race impacts societal systems that can affect how they are viewed and interact within climate spaces. Youth understand the multilayered nature of systemic change and how climate requires an understanding of systems. The identity maps of all the participants

showed how complex and intersectional their identities are. The mapping emphasized the importance of race, marginalization and climate passions within their experience as youth of colour. The river of life further explained the significant moments in the youth's lives that fueled their climate passions. Many of these stories and experiences tie back to social climate injustices that greatly affect the safety and wellbeing of people of colour around the world. These reflections provide a basis for each participant's understanding of climate as a justice issue and later their passions for taking action.

4.2   Understanding Climate as A Justice Issue

Youth of colour have first-hand experience observing and experiencing exclusion based on race. The participants in this research are aware of the systems in place that can prevent them from taking meaningful action on climate. Based on youth identities, youth of colour have experienced, seen and inherently understand how communities of colour are affected by systems of oppression and climate change. They understand that climate is an intersectional issue. Youth understand the multilayered nature of systemic change and how climate requires an understanding of systems.

The second session of the Evergreen Youth lab was dedicated to conversations around systems thinking and how participants navigate these topics. Each participant participated in discussions led by a black female youth-led environmental organization called Black Eco Bloom. During this session, participants were asked to evaluate an article describing an environmental justice case and were asked to use an iceberg model to understand the layers of uncovering systems in place that affect their climate engagement.

The participant below described how inequalities impact people of colour's ability to take action in society. They understand how various groups of people will face varying degrees of

barriers.

"some people might have different starting points than others. People might have different starting points than others" – Gaia

One injustice described in the session is a story a participant shared about their experience with gentrification. With their experience of gentrification, which often happens in lower income and communities of colour, this participant can understand how these instances disproportionately affect people of colour and those with multiple minority identities.

"I'm actually a victim of that you are . . . We had to move here in Canada, because it was being gentrified. So yeah. Like, reshaping the community and making it like, a better costing, like a more costly place to live and so it's not very good for the people who can't afford to live in." – Meadow.

We continued our discussion around the challenges of the system that people of colour face. This allowed the participants to have a common understanding of what barriers they face as youth of colour and how those barriers permeate climate movements.

". . . there are a lot of things connected that one may not see at first glance." – Rivers.

"Essentially, one thing leads to another. So you should like take in consideration as many as possible, since you'd like consequences before you choose like a solution. Yeah."
– Terra.

Participants in the discussion understood that systems are complex and intersectional (Thomas, 2020; Tokar & Gilbertson, 2020). Often, the connections could be more evident, nor do they make sense to everyone. Conditions and experiences of oppression due to histories of exploitation of people of colour will be more evident to people of colour and can be hard to understand for all to create a solution (Lorde, 1984).

" . . . but there are minorities and communities that most of them there, they live in, and very mentally unstable places. All droughts, or floods, or hurricanes or, or air pollution, or some are put next to factories." – Rivers

"...fairly similar. It's just like some group of people, you're more like vulnerable or more prone to these environmental hazards." – Meadow

The iceberg model allowed participants to evaluate climate justice issues at varying levels, from the evident to the underlying conditions that might affect how we act on climate. Participants understood that there are systems in place that are in place, that were built off of racist, oppressive and colonial ideologies, which would affect how they, as people of colour, would be able to navigate climate challenges. A participant remarked that:

"Yeah. Okay, well, essentially, like the surface level is obviously the easiest, but like the most evident things, deeper you go down, the more like, not harder, but less obvious."
– Terra.

In their exercise of using case studies of climate justice issues, participants were asked to evaluate the case with a multi-level lens where they would try and identify the varying depths of the actions, policies, infrastructure and ideologies that lead to why societal systems permeate unjust environmental behaviour towards communities of colour. For one of the case studies, a group of participants discussed the accessibility of green spaces and some health issues amongst communities of colour. They identified the following:

"Okay, so for the things you can see, I wrote that green spaces are not equally accessible to all . . . we wrote that, where there is people with low income, and there is people of colour, then there is less accessibility to green spaces. That's the better . . . Yeah, I think I'm leaving spaces more expensive, where there are green spaces. Yeah. And for the last one, that mentality, we wrote that there is environmental racism ideologies."-Clay.

"yes, there's a connection between greenspaces and, and health problems. But it's not like it's set in stone. Like, if you do not have spaces, you will be sick. You know, it's not like a rule. But it's, it's more of a pattern. So it doesn't always happen. But it like it raises the chances" – Rivers.

Another group had the opportunity to evaluate the case of water contamination and industrialization within racialized and indigenous communities. This is what they could identify as the systems analysis of their case:

". . . the patterns with the water contaminating industries are usually near indigenous and black community…disadvantages policy for a poor and colored community. So like,

industries designed and built their factories near those community. For the mentality, I put

colonialism ideologies because we kind of invaded their territory to put our structures or

our benefit. And also, this might be around a little bit about like business owners always

trying to make the most profit out of it. Think less about the environmental effects" – Gaia.

"There's contaminated waters hence for lack of water to drink, which leads to health

problems and lack of services. For the patterns, there's like a minority, many marginalized

communities to be put near factories and polluting industries, and environmental hazards."
– Rivers.

In analyzing these conversations, we can see that youth of colour understand the systems in

place that affect the lives of people of colour and how that would affect the reach of their climate

action. Histories that continue to shape our everyday lives around colonialism, oppression,

apartheid, and racism permeate all facets of society (Fanon, 1963). This includes climate

movements. As youth activists of colour, the participants could identify these issues in ways that

seemed second nature (Crenshaw, 1991). As explained in the previous section, youth of colour

have seen and experienced climate injustices, so they can think critically about systems of

oppression. While youth of colour continue to have barriers in climate movements, they still

have the passion for taking action on climate.

4.3   Taking Action on Climate

Youth of colour are passionate about various intersecting climate topics and have the will

to take action on climate. Their identities, experiences and the urgency of life for youth of colour

pose an urgency for action. A space to take action and have meaningful discussions around their

intersectionality is key in helping them through the experience of taking climate action. Indeed, unpacking the barriers and injustices, they might have faced equipped them to take meaningful action.

The final three sessions allowed the participants to consolidate their understanding of themselves and the systems around them to identify areas of action on climate. The third session looked at how youth participants envisioned their activism. We used this time to use collaging as a method to create visions of the future that encompassed their climate passions; in order to do this, we discussed what challenges inspire them to action.

Gaia explains how the challenge of food, agriculture and its relation to climate change affect their urgency to take action. They explain:

"I'll say one of the challenges would be food shortages. So because of like climate changes and everything, like the crops that were used to grow in certain region is like, because the climate changes, you're not able to grow them anymore, then the prices of the fruits and vegetables goes up. And that's meaningful to me. Maybe because the prices go up." – Gaia

Another participant related the experiences and challenges they have experienced in their homeland to a meaningful challenge for them. They explain:

"One topic, like I'm not really sure, it's because of this, but I would see is like, the storms and stuff like.. I feel like those are meaningful to me. Because my country, the Philippines are getting hit by a lot of those recently. And I guess some parts of the States too. Yeah. That's, yeah, this is meaningful to me, because I feel like my country is affected by it." – Meadow.

Another participant describes the importance of culture and its relation to how we treat

environments as a key challenge they would like to explore.

> *". . . stuff fascinates me a lot when it comes to climate in the world is the difference in culture. Because our culture does play a big role on how we treat climate. We're however, we're very lucky as a youth to meet like civil or like to meet like, individuals who has the same culture ideology when it comes to protecting the environment or helping the community. However, from a very young age, especially for me, as a Filipino, I came here, not America. The culture I was brought upon was basically work hard, get the house, get the car, have a family, right? And right now that I need to develop now I'm kind of considering Hey, is it really a good idea to get the car? If not, what can I do to find a solution for it? So out of all that subjects, I find culture such a beautiful thing, because even though in a lot of cases, it is beautiful. It is also damaging. So as a community I think we have to find a middle ground for both climate and respecting one's culture." – Woods.*

Another participant builds off the idea of the culture around climate change action. They emphasize the importance of shifting ideologies to believe in science and know the importance of climate change knowledge to mobilize individuals and corporations to be responsible. They explain:

> *". . . mentioned a lot of good topics, but I just wanted to add a challenge, I guess. Well, it's just people not listening to like, like not thinking that climate change is real. And like not listening to scientists, and everyone who's like, who's saying that basically. Like, the climate is changing, but I'm not saying that, like, it's people's fault if they don't listen or not like. Because obviously, there's still the big companies to like, especially fast fashion*

companies that are like, just, you see a lot of news where they're like, just creating all this

waste, and like, not really caring about the environment, but mostly just caring about

profit, which goes back to it yesterday and said about finding a balance between that and

like the economy." – Stone.

There are a variety of reasons and challenges that inspire the participants in this research, from cultural shifts to understanding and caring for the environment to the experiences of communities with food shortages, natural disasters, and so much more. These topics are understood to be intersectional, and climate change is affected by justice issues and will exacerbate more injustices if not repaired.

The participants' understanding of tackling climate with an intersectional lens can be seen in their collages of how they view their visions for climate and passions. For this activity, I asked participants to make a collage board that acted as their vision for the climate. This picture depicted images they found inspiring and key in fueling their passion for taking action on climate. Each participant was asked to create the collage; however, we did not discuss the pictures they had created.

Figure 4.14. Stone's collage.

Figure 4.14 represents the issues of creating cultural shifts and awareness of climate

justice. Stone mentioned the challenges they see between the western cultures of not caring,

polluting and exploiting other communities of colour. To me, the term "Wake Up" depicts the

urgency the participant feels in this awareness that climate change is real. Many western

countries might not feel the urgency because they can adapt to changing climates. At the same

time, other communities of colour suffer from Western exploitation and deal with the currently

changing climates (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2008). The participants used images of art forms such

as photography and drawing because they see art as a form of communicating climate change

and raising awareness through those methods. The varying images of what climate change looks

like, with the forest, loss of biodiversity and waste, show the participants' understanding of the complexity of climate change, and they intentionally use frightening images to communicate urgency.

Figure 4.15. Ocean's collage.

Figure 4.15 shows similar visions of creativity being a key way to show climate passion. The image Ocean created shows that they find creativity as a key outlet for climate work and channeling their communication. This collage shows an awareness of holistic outlooks of climate change where caring for people and nature and upholding art is key. I see the importance of art in this person's image because the people in this image are all showcasing artistic forms, and I see images chosen where the picture of the dolphin tail and the forest is illustrated rather than a real photograph. This is interesting to see another participant highlight art within their climate

passions. The use of art within communities of colour has a significant impact on well-being, education, and social justice action (Roberts, 2011). Often, art forms become a method of storytelling for communities of colour and the oppressed (Bell & Desai, 2011). They are also ways to communicate the layered nature of the climate crisis and the intersectionality of climate solutions (Samaras, 2010; Coemans, Wang, Leysen & Hannes, 2015; Thomas, 2020)

The following two figures (4.16 and 4.17) show two participants depicting images of childhood and youth through their collages.

Figure 4.16. Clay's collage.

Clay's collage (Figure 4.16) reinforces their ideas about the importance of family, culture and youth in their images. Figure 16 shows innocence through the pictures of children chosen to add to the collage. The image gives a feeling of beauty and bounty with the beautiful greenery

and diverse animals. This image shows an image of hope for future generations connecting children to enriching environments for their well-being. When looking at this image, I get a sense of what it could be if we care for our future generations and if we, as a collective world, take responsibility for thinking about the youth of the future. Seeing youth care very much about children and other youth is very interesting. The pressure youth feel today to be the leaders for climate progress is evident (Hess, 2021).Youth today feel an urgency to protect the environment, unlike other generations (Grønhøj & Thøgersen, 2017). Moreover, youth of colour are often upheld to a standard to act older, work harder and take responsibility sooner than some of their white counterparts (Epstein et al. 2017; Bullon-Cassis, 2021). It is clear that youth have to find visions of hope for the future to justify their actions and fuel their work around climate progress (Kleres & Wettergren, 2017)

Figure 4.17. Terra's collage.

Terra's collage (Figure 4.17) shows similar images as figure 16. The images chosen show a particularly comforting beauty. I see beauty as the main imagery for this collage with the child in a dress, jewels, sunflowers, lush forests and a unique night sky. Again, this collage shows an innocence of a child, which ensues a reaction of protection for the child. The beauty and comforting colour in this image elicit an instinct of preservation.

The following two collages show imagery of intersecting challenges that have been exacerbated by climate change: agriculture and health.
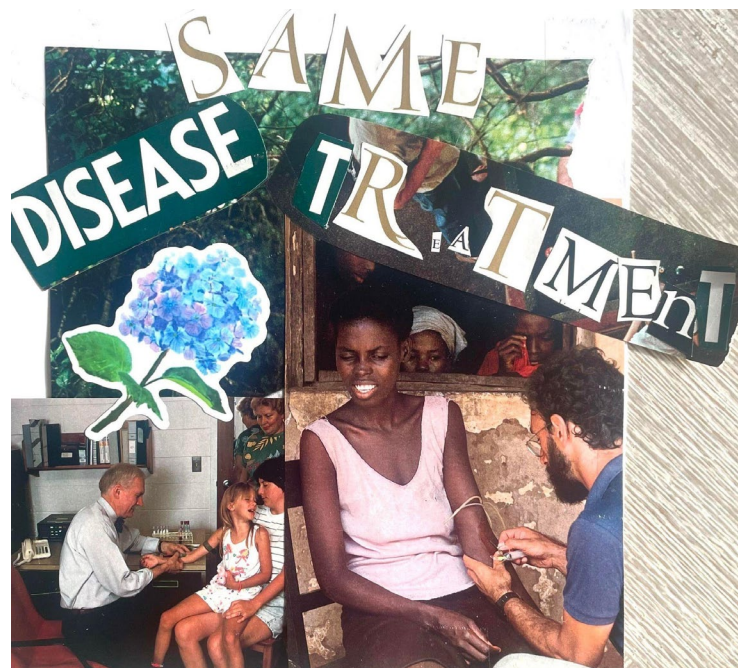

Figure 4.18. Gaia's collage.

Gaia's collage (Figure 4.18) shows imagery of injustice within health care. The participant writes "Same Disease, Same Treatment" to show that humans should be treated equally regardless of race. Climate change's impacts on health are significant, and people of colour bear a disproportionate burden of lack of care and increased climate-related diseases (Lynn, MacKendrick & Donoghue, 2011). The imagery chosen in this collage is impactful with the two

similar treatments for two people within different cultural contexts. The participant shows that understanding ethical health care is critical for communities of colour because they often do not receive it (Elias & Paradies, 2021; Hassen et al., 2021). Moreover, Western communities often exacerbate climate change and the oppression of communities of colour, making the disease and worsening health more prevalent and people of colour at the frontlines of changing climates (Rudge, 2023; Williams, 2021).
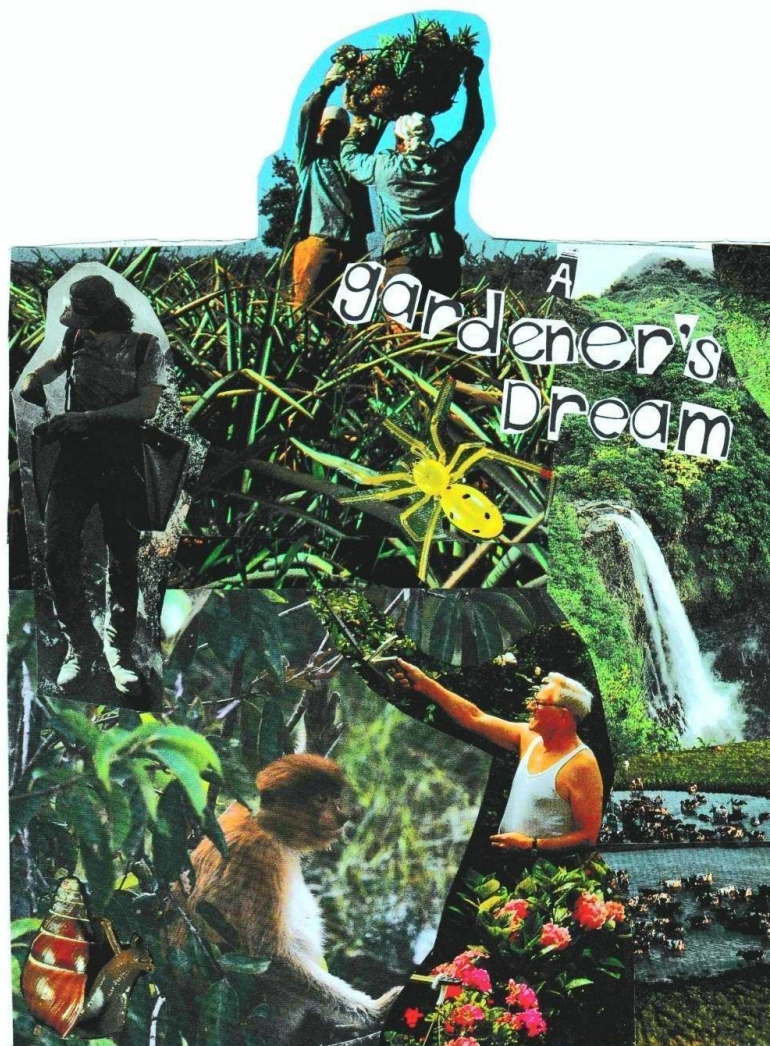

Figure 4.19. Rivers's collage.

Rivers's collage (Figure 4.19) represents agriculture, gardening and luscious biodiverse

greenery. This image is filled with different plants, insects, animals and gardeners/farmers. The participant has mentioned that food, agriculture, and gardening are some of their passions regarding climate change challenges. They have created an image of the dreams they hope to achieve through their activism, and the title "A gardener's Dream" enforces that sentiment. People of colour and Indigenous folks are responsible for most of the biodiversity protection, cultivating food and stewards of the land (Beckford, Jacobs, Williams & Nahdee, 2010; Jones, 2021). This collage shows how important food, biodiversity and preservation are to communities of colour and their well-being. People of colour have a significant connection with food production and the protection of sustainable farming and gardening practices (Penniman & Washington, 2018). They are often the activists in those spaces who push for just action around sustainable food production for all (Penniman & Washington, 2018).

The visions created by the participants with collaging as a method are just a starting point for taking action The collages provided a path for participants to take into their climate activism. To wrap up and provide an opportunity for the youth to act on climate, we aimed to make a toolkit. This toolkit served as a platform for the participants to showcase their stories and how wider communities can help support youth activists of colour. The last two sessions served as a space to co-create the toolkit. All participants gathered to discuss the toolkit, its purpose, and how it would get made. The sessions were a brainstorming space for participants to act on their climate stories.

The participants had decided collectively to take on a website format to reach wider audiences. They had decided to use the website as a portal for each participant to own their page and showcase their reflections, lessons learnt, produced art and stories. Participants could include what they wanted and edit each page as their own. The website's main page would be a space for

a collective piece that would welcome visitors to hear their voices.

"... after like discussing, we found that mostly on like your website, and overall, we talked about, like having a main page that could like resume, everything we did on the workshop, but that's still uncertain, uncertain. And then there will be also like subpages that we'll talk more about our own personal experience with the workshop ... And the main page, we thought about a video, and maybe like someone really no point, but that's still a discussion. And I guess they also look about what to include. Yeah, so yeah, that's more like brainstorming" – Clay.

The consensus for the collaborative piece would be a video that briefly introduces the project. Discussions were shared around doing a collaborative poem as an art method; however, due to capacity and timing, this would change to a collaborative audio piece where all participants shared their experience within a sentence with some b-roll. The images of the toolkit website are available in the Appendix B.

Storytelling is impactful. Youth are often ignored in their climate storytelling. People of colour are often ignored in their storytelling. Being a youth of colour adds extra barriers to being heard in climate spaces. A website is a way for youth to feel heard.

4.4   Impactful Gathering Spaces

While the toolkit (Appendix B) showcases stories and creates impactful action by the participants in this study, it is important to recognize the impact of the Evergreen Youth Lab as a model. Throughout our time together in the Evergreen Youth lab sessions, we have had the chance to discuss some in-depth topics around climate identities, systems thinking, and taking

action on climate passions. The sessions themselves served as a safer space for youth of colour to see other youth of colour who are concerned and feel similar ways that they do within the climate movement.

Spaces such as the Evergreen Youth Lab are necessary for community building and support for youth activists of colour. These spaces have the potential to uplift voices and give tools to youth to take action, share their stories and gain support from climate movements. A participant explains:

"this stuff, it helped me a lot to become, in a way a better person not only in according to the topic, but only for other things like for example normally without like before so I would normally just go home and watch Netflix and sleep and stuff like that but now that there's like a 'parascolaire' [out of school club] I managed to like socialize more and become more active with like other people and etc etc but also in if I'm talking about like the topic I guess it made me more become open minded about the issues and yeah at least now I'm learning more and more" – Meadow

Another participant adds:

"...It really inspired me to speak up" – Rivers

While participants explained their gratitude for having an activity to turn to for engaging in climate and socializing with like-minded people, they also mentioned that they have been able to learn and have been inspired to stay open-minded. I would argue that they came into the space

with a very impressive grasp of complicated issues around climate justice. This is because they could reach in and talk about real-life experiences that they identified in our discussions. The richness of the space was due to simply having the space made for them to share and having active sharing from the participants.

"Really appreciate to everyone for kind of participating and making sure that we're all community engaged to everything that's been happening. And stuff. It's very rare to find like, a community talk about these things."- Woods.

Community spaces provide informal learning spaces special for those who feel left behind from mainstream learning spaces (Richards, 2022; Haworth & Elmore, 2017). A participant explains:

"creating community, there's a lot of students, especially in racialized communities, that have good ideas outside the box. And it's just they don't have the platform or the environment to tell their ideas. So creating community such as C-Vert gives a chance to many people to give their ideas so we can find for a better solution." – Woods.

C-Vert, as a programme, has aimed to create a community of students to engage in their climate, which is necessary to mobilize youth to feel worthy and heard. The Evergreen Youth Lab provided an extra space within the programming to talk with a group of racialized youth to unpack solutions, share ideas and later take action. A participant describes their main takeaway from the Evergreen Youth Lab experience:

"... I think my biggest takeaway is what I mentioned about activism taking different forms"

– Clay

The data gathered in this study uncovered how youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program see themselves as intersectional and complex and passionate activists. They were able to understand the impacts of their identities in how they understand climate justice topics and how to approach climate action. Their identities as youth of colour impacted greatly their connection to intersectional climate topics. Many of the participants explained stories of climate disaster and marginalization from their identities. The data that was collected and the participant's journeys to better understand their intersectional identities, their privilege and passions for climate activism was supported through the facilitation of informal community arts spaces. Exploration through creation leads to self-discovery and motivation for the participants to explore their climate activism beyond the lab.

5. Conclusion

Evergreen Youth Lab was a space for youth climate identities to be explored and support activists of colour within the C-Vert program in creating their climate justice journeys. The community-based nature of the study allowed me to pilot new ways that climate spaces can become more intentional in providing support for youth of colour and explore justice within sustainability challenges. The narratives and art explored in the research allowed new ways to uncover meaningful storytelling from the eight youths who participated in the lab. We can now share these stories and lessons learnt with wider climate communities with a toolkit website that was co-created with the youth.

This research allowed me to understand that youth activists of colour in the C-Vert program have a unique connection to sustainability issues and inherently understand climate justice through their experiences as racial minorities. Through the lab experience, they have seen themselves in climate spaces by exploring easy-to-take action. However, seeing themselves taking action in climate spaces can be difficult due to their minoritization. The stories and exploration throughout the lab could only come to fruition due to the impact of arts-based methods and informal learning space to discuss and reflect.

While coming to the conclusions above, Chapter Two looked at literature around intersectionality, climate justice, racial privileges and youth activism of colour. The histories around these topics provided context to the stories, motivations and art produced in this study. In Chapter Three, I explored the foundations of my methodology and research design. CBPR, YPAR, ABM and PVM were the inspiration for how the Evergreen Youth Lab would look and the concrete methods that were employed within the workshop spaces. Sharma's work on transformational leadership played a crucial role in the varying themes and workshop purposes. Finally, Chapter Four explores the stories and outcomes of the research. The stories, art pieces

and images were all gathered to analyze themes around climate justice, climate identities, and taking action.

While the project has been completed, there are a variety of lessons learnt and implications that such a project has had on the C-Vert community. The following chapter will explore the reflections necessary to evaluate any future projects or research that deal with youth activists of colour in climate spaces wanting to explore their activist transformations.

5.1   Implications of the Research

This study has provided new insights into how youth activists of colour engage on issues around the climate. In order to understand the implications, the research has had on the C-Vert community, I held debriefing conversations with the C-Vert team. The team expressed that the Evergreen Youth Lab provided a necessary space after a long and online pandemic. The C-Vert programming had been halted and depends on environment gatherings for its eco citizenship mandate and connection with their participants. During the pandemic, the participants had been sparse. The Evergreen Youth Lab was a gathering space to reunite participants from different C-Vert cohorts. The inter-cohort gathering space allowed youth who did not know each other to connect. Mobilizing the youth had been challenging for the C-Vert team due to the pandemic and school stressors; however, youth participants were encouraged to come to the EYL with its consistency and novelty.

The C-Vert team mentioned that conversations during the sessions were rich and connecting. Some of the C-Vert team had had conversations with some of the youth or other facilitations around climate and racial justice which showed that they were dedicated to the process however the team still needed to receive critical tools to reflect and take action on these intersectional challenges. The team appreciated that the lab built off youth activism by giving

concrete activities, theories and active discussions for the participants involved. On the C-Vert team, one racialized facilitator stayed throughout the sessions and was a connector between myself and the participants. The facilitator mentioned that they would have appreciated such programming when they were younger. In previous sessions held for the C-Vert youth by other facilitators, they had talked about racial justice. However, the connection between race and climate justice was clearer for some participants when they went through the process of the EYL.

While the research had connecting and awareness capabilities for the C-Vert team and their participants, I, as a researcher, have benefited greatly through the process of doing this study. Developing workshops through the lab and co-creating a toolkit with the C-Vert participants benefited the C-Vert team since they can be used as inspiration and actionable steps to address gaps in the deeper involvement of youth of colour in the C-Vert programming.

As mentioned earlier in this study, I am a youth of colour. I have dealt with the fatigue, stress and anxiety of being a person of colour trying to take action on colour. I have also seen these similar responses of feeling left out, unheard, and urgently needing action on climate from other youth of colour. This study has helped me reconnect with other youth activists, rekindle my activism and see the importance of spaces such as the EYL going forward. Through the design of the EYL, I can now conceptualize and realize how art can be a tool to uncover rich stories, emotions and histories around climate justice for youth of colour.

5.2   Limitations of The Study

There are certain limitations that I experienced in the process of doing this study and creating the Evergreen Youth Lab. I identified time as a predominant limitation that I experienced during the study In conducting community-based participatory research, I recognized that the more time, the better. The more time one has to create meaningful and

trustworthy relationships with an organization and potential participants, the better it is to address the needs of everyone. With the limited time capacity for the participants, the C-Vert team and I were challenged to coordinate. The project required close collaboration to find an appropriate time for the youth participants, the C-Vert team and myself. I was privileged to have a good partnership with the C-Vert team which allowed us to conduct the study with their close involvement. The structure of the Evergreen Youth Lab workshops within this study was limited by time. Retrospectively, a project such as EYL needs more time and has the potential to be a bigger project with more participants, more sessions and deeper unpacking. In creating the toolkit website, having more sessions and time would have helped the participants have more time to add to the project.

Accessibility of the EYL for participants also ties back into timing. When having discussions with participants about ideal times, lengths and schedules of the EYL, it was evident that whatever would become the decision would leave some youth behind. The five-week process was ideal for some youths; others might not have had the same capacity to do that work. The project should have found ways to integrate more voices in the process by allowing other participants with limited time capacity to engage in the workshops. Youth voices of colour are the center of the EYL, and there is always room for improvement to include more stories and allow participants to be a part of the co-creation process of the lab.

With a pandemic that inhibited a lot of our ability to conduct research freely and allow programming to occur as usual, it was challenging to predict and plan for the Evergreen Youth Lab meetings, the format, and the methods used. The study was conducted at a time when restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic were starting to loosen up enough to have in-person gatherings with close health regulations. The pandemic seriously affected the youth's mental and

physical capacity (Samji et al., 2021). This could have affected which youth decided to participate and their ability to participate in a 5-week program on complex issues such as climate justice. The pandemic also impacted community programming, and C-Vert dealt with the consequences of engagement through online programming and connecting with their youth participants. Dealing with emergencies can also seriously impact community organizations and the extent of the meaningful work that the team of employees can do.

Despite the limitation that time had on creating the EYL and conducting this research, as well as how the pandemic overlapped with capacity challenges, I believe the study has the potential for further investigation.

In boldly expressing my identity in this study, I also recognize the limits of my viewpoint. I'm aware that my own experiences can't fully capture the diverse realities of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized Canadian youth. This understanding is crucial and should be acknowledged as a limitation of this study.

It's important to highlight that my personal journey and insights, while valuable, can't represent everyone's experiences. I want to make sure we approach the findings with sensitivity and keep in mind that there are many voices and stories that aren't included in my own perspective.

To be upfront and transparent, these realizations shape the boundaries of what I can grasp and convey. So, while the study provides valuable insights, it's just one piece of a much larger puzzle. It's a reminder that there's a broader range of stories and perspectives out there that deserve attention and recognition. It stands as a reminder that the realm of youth activism, identity, and climate engagement is populated by a rich spectrum of narratives, each deserving of its own platform of attention and recognition. Thus, this study functions as a call to embrace the

multiplicity of stories and perspectives that weave together to form a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the intricate dance between climate activism and the diverse tapestry of youth experiences.

5.3   Future Possibilities

I foresee many possibilities for the EYL and the study conducted on youth activists of colour storytelling. As mentioned, there are many stories to be told and intersections to understand within identities and climate movements. More research needs to be done on minority identities in climate spaces. This research uncovered how racialized youth understand themselves in climate spaces. However, going even further, we can add more layers of minority identities within the category of the youth of colour to understand climate privileges. Some youth of colour within this study had identified other parts of their identities that affected their privilege. This could have been an opportunity to understand more in-depth how intersectional identities are and uncover privileges with more consideration. Further research should understand how other minority identities, with age and race, can affect how youth activists of colour understand themselves in climate spaces and how they can take action.

This study also paid attention to how the EYL can be a space of change; however, more research needs to be done on how informal learning spaces in various contexts can be change-making for youth of colour. Informal spaces are places of activism and community learning and have the potential to inform formal educational spaces on how to engage with youth in inclusive and diverse methods (Foley & Lester, 2013). Moreover, these learning spaces have deep roots in indigenous ways of learning (Kimmerer, 2013). More research needs to be done to connect indigenous ways of teaching and how youth activists of colour can use these spaces for experiential learning.

Even though the literature in this study has explained an overview of various histories of oppression and racism and its impact on activism and climate movements, more needs to be unpacked around how racist ideologies permeate current structures and how the youth understand those histories.

Further possibilities should improve the EYL structure to be more accessible and encourage co-creation with community partners and participants. Meaningful CBPR and YPAR include participants at all levels of the study, from the mapping, choosing and developing of methodologies, to the participation in the research, to the data analysis (Hacker, 2012; Cammarota & Fine, 2008). In this research, I involved community members in the consultation of the EYL, receiving feedback on the methodologies, and I involved participants in the pre-sessions in choosing details of themes and logistics and participating in the workshops. In the context of YPAR and CBPR, having participants unpack the data would have provided a richer analysis of the stories and art pieces. In the context of the art methods, I used art methods that were chosen myself, so I encourage future researchers to provide space for youth participants to have the opportunity to explore whichever art type they would like for their storytelling. Components of this research were chosen from my research and prior experiences; for a study to be truly participatory and community-based, future research needs to look at how participants have more agency to lead the study. This type of agency can be especially important for communities of colour and youth.

5.5 Final Words

Working towards providing inclusive and justice-oriented climate work is key to address our world's climate challenges. The youth provide a unique passion for taking action on the climate. Youth of colour provide important historical knowledge and first-hand experience on climate change. To go forward and make changes towards sustainably just futures for

generations to come, we must address histories of oppression to take action to repair current systems that have been built on the backs of exploited people of colour. To progress, we must lean on the community to build up youth leaders of colour to be heard and to take action. The community is responsible for providing meaningful spaces for youth of colour to reflect on themselves as activists and create what they want to create. Creating art is a method that has liberated communities of colour and youth in a time when these groups are marginalized and unheard. The stories that youth share, whether from their artistic work or not, from their experiences and reflections, are powerful and can mobilize better understandings of the intersectionality of justice within the climate.

6. References

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Appendix A

Evergreen Youth Lab Consent Form 18+

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Community-based Action Research on Climate Identities of Colour and Inclusive Climate Spaces with YMCA's C-Vert Plus Program

Researchers: Salma Tihani, MA student, *(613)263-3443 salma.tihani@mail.mcgill.ca*
Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Supervisor:

Dr. Blane Harvey, Assistant Professor 514-398-4527 ext. 00506 blane.harvey@mcgill.ca

Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Sponsor(s): N/A

Purpose of the Study: The goal of this study and the Evergreen Youth Lab project is to create a youth climate identity lab and support youth in their climate journeys. In partnership with the YMCA's C-Vert plus program, the lab will be a space where we will host workshops on climate identities, storytelling, taking action and visioning climate futures. The purpose is to understand your individual climate stories and ways community members can support youth of colour.The lab will offer an opportunity to document and share the experiences of climate activists of colour. As a wrap-up we aim to co-create a toolkit that will be shared with the wider community of environmental organizations and activist circles to showcase ways to support youth of colour.

Study Procedures*:*

The study will recruit 5 to 10 participants between the ages of 16-25 to engage in 2-6 workshop-style meetings spanning from 90 to 180 minutes that will be delivered in workshop format. The workshops will be facilitated by the Principal Investigator and McGill Master's

student Salma Tihani. It will also be overseen by the YMCA's C-Vert program leader
Khuram Awan and C-Vert Manager Marie-Eve Paquin.

Data in this step will include
- Observational field notes, researchers' and participants' reflections.

- The study will take audio during the workshops for transcription purposes.
- Researchers will also photograph group notes, products generated from the activities and outcomes generated by the group.

Workshops
The first part of the study which includes the workshopping will be conducted in person in communal spaces accessible to participants which is the C-Vert plus meeting room in NDG Montreal. In the situation where it is not possible, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, workshops will be held online on the McGill Microsoft Teams.

For password protection purposes, Microsoft Teams via McGill's secure servers will be the videoconferencing platform of choice. Participants will be sent a private link for the meeting. In the case of an online event, we will be informing participants that the session will be recorded and stored in a password protected McGill server. All data will be transcribed and de-identified.

Data use
Audio recordings and potential video recordings will be used and transcribed for the MA thesis. They will not be publicized or disseminated in any other way. All audio recordings will be de-identified and coded for confidentiality and anonymity. A master list linking participants to their code will only be accessible by the Principal Investigator (PI) and Faculty Supervisor. Video recordings will only be taken during online sessions to be able to extract audio. No video footage will be used as data and will be erased once audio has been extracted. These recordings, along with the master list, consent forms and any other identifiable data, will be stored on the PI's password-protected McGill drive or their password-protected personal harddrive. All identifiable data will only be accessible to the Principal Investigator and Faculty Supervisor which will be destroyed after the publication of the thesis. De-identified data will be kept for 7 years after publication of the thesis in accordance with McGill Research Policy.

Toolkit creation
At the final meeting, we will invite participants to be involved in developing a toolkit to co-create a project where youth participants can share their stories, what they've taken from their participation and ways that community members can support youth activists of colour in climate spaces trying to take action. The toolkit will be developed at the last workshop. The toolkit format will be a digital compilation (ie. Squarespace website or Flipsnack zine) supported by the researcher. The toolkit's digital format will allow it to be shared to wider networks and community hubs dedicated to supporting youth climate activism. The participants in this stage will be credited as co-creators.

Voluntary Participation*:*

Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in parts of the study, may decline to answer any question, and may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. If in-person gathering is not possible, we will use Microsoft Teams to convene for the workshops. Videoconference recordings will be saved directly to password-protected files. Please note that it is not mandatory to participate by video and you can keep your video camera off. If you decide to withdraw, your data will be destroyed unless you give permission otherwise. If you choose to withdraw during or right after the dialogue session, all information obtained up until that point will be destroyed unless you specify otherwise at the time of withdrawal. Once data has or combined for publication, it may not be possible to withdraw your data in its entirety. We can only remove it from analysis and from use in future publications.After publication occurs it may not be possible to withdraw your data in its entirety.

Potential Risks: As these workshops will discuss sensitive subjects I do foresee a potential for psychological, emotional and social risks or discomfort to participants as a result of participating in this study. Participants will be engaging around the topics of systemic racism and other challenging themes of the climate crisis. Participants will be advised to communicate with the PI with any concerns, and may choose to not participate in any workshop sessions or segments if they are uncomfortable with the content.

Potential Benefits: There will be no direct benefits to the participants however it is hoped that participating in this study will expand the networks of educators, community organizations and actors working with you in climate spaces. It is also hoped that we can work together to address barriers that youth of colour face in climate action and work. Participating until the end will allow for participants to take part in a co-created toolkit that will be disseminated and shared to the wider networks previously described.

Health and Safety: The workshops will follow all health safety guidelines of McGill University and the province of Quebec.

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of my participation. However due to this research being the nature of a workshop, complete confidentiality is not possible from the other people participating in the workshops. We ask that all those participating respect the confidentiality of the other participants. Although all precautions are taken, there is always the possibility of third-party interception when using communications through the internet. Identifiable data will be kept separated from the data and stored in password protected files; only the Principal Investigator (PI) and Faculty Supervisor will have access to identifiable data. All de-identified data will be stored in password protected files in my (the PI's) McGill

OneDrive, and only the PI and Faculty Supervisor with the link and password can access the de-identified data. We do not foresee any potential use of the data by others.

Yes:_ No:_ You consent to be audio-recorded for the purposes of transcription (this recording will not be shared or made public).

If I participate in toolkit creation I would like to be named as a co-creator. I understand that this would reveal that I am a participant in this study. Yes:_ No:

Dissemination of Results:

<u>MA thesis</u>
The results will be disseminated through the researcher's Master's thesis.

<u>Toolkit</u>
The co-created wrap-up toolkit will be a representation of the lessons learnt and stories of the participants from the study. This toolkit will be shared widely to create awareness within the Montreal climate community around supporting youth activists of colour.

Publications and presentations:
We will seek to find opportunities to share methodologies and research outcomes within the academic community around education, sustainability and youth activism, as well as through community presentations. We will also seek to publish the research findings in academic journals related to sustainability and education.

Results and publications will be shared with participants and the YMCA C-Vert program.

We have obtained McGill's REB approval III to conduct this study. Please contact the Principal Investigator, Salma Tihani salma.tihani@mail.mcgill.ca with questions or suggestions.

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If you have any ethical concerns or complaints about your participation in this study, and want to speak with someone not on the research team, please contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca.

Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. A copy of this consent form will be given to you and the researcher will keep a copy.

Participant's Name (Please print):
Participant's Signature:
Date:

McGill University
Participant Information Letter
COVID-19 and In-Person Research Respecting 2-metre Distancing
(Community-based Action Research on Climate Identities of Colour and Inclusive Climate Spaces
with YMCA's C-Vert Plus Program
and REB-III)

The health and safety of both research participants and researchers are primary concerns of the University. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about COVID-19 and how your study participation may be affected because of COVID-19 related risk. All other information in the study consent remains the same.

Please read the following information to determine if participation is right for you at this time.

The occupational health and safety measures that will be put in place during your study participation have been approved by the McGill Emergency Operations Committee, based on current federal and provincial public health directives as well as recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO).

What are the risks of COVID-19? For most people, COVID-19 causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and, more rarely, may cause death.

Who is most at risk? Persons aged 70 and over, those with a weak immune system and those with a chronic disease such as some cancers, diabetes or heart, lung and kidney disease, are most at risk of developing serious complications if they contract the virus.

Can COVID-19 be prevented? Current evidence suggests person-to-person spread of COVID-19 is efficient when there is close contact, making physical distancing an important prevention measure. Proper handwashing, cough hygiene and cleaning with an appropriate disinfectant are also key to limiting virus transmission.

It is important to understand that since study participation may include increased travel outside of your home and increased contact with others within a clinical care environment or research site, it may increase your exposure to COVID-19.

What procedures will be in place to minimize risk of transmission of COVID-19 during your study participation?
The assessments of risks and the protocols to mitigate them are guided by the Directive: Preventing the spread of COVID-19 on campus and the Directive: Principles and procedures for research on campus. Measures that will be taken to reduce the risk include:

- maintaining 2-metre physical distancing;
- hand washing before and after study participation;
- providing the participant with a disposable facemask if they do not have one;

- limiting the number of times a participant has to come to a research site;
- reducing the time participants are in contact with other people;
- ensuring all high-touch surfaces and objects are disinfected daily and disinfected between users.

All research team members are required to have training on preventing the spread of infection and all McGill students and employees must respond each day to a required self-assessment health questionnaire. All participants will be screened before accessing the research site and will be asked if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with anyone who has or has had COVID-19. Participation will be cancelled or postponed when responding yes to any of the screening questions. Wearing a mask that covers the mouth and nose is mandatory inside all McGill buildings, in accordance with Quebec public health regulations.

By agreeing to participate in this study you acknowledge that you have been informed of the health and safety procedures in place and agree to follow them. <u>Please be reminded that participation is voluntary</u> <u>and you may decline or postpone participation at any time</u>.

There are two ways to acknowledge receipt of this Participant Information Letter. The first and preferred way is digital confirmation (typically email) in advance of the research taking place. The second, acceptable approach is researcher documentation of verbal agreement

Evergreen Youth Lab Parental or Legal Guardian Consent

Parent or Legal Guardian Consent Form

Title of Project: Community-based Action Research on Climate Identities of Colour and Inclusive Climate Spaces with YMCA's C-Vert Plus Program

Researchers: Salma Tihani, MA student, *(613)263-3443 salma.tihani@mail.mcgill.ca*
Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Supervisor:

Dr. Blane Harvey, Assistant Professor 514-398-4527 ext. 00506 blane.harvey@mcgill.ca

Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Sponsor(s): N/A

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Data in this step will include
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Voluntary Participation:

Participation is voluntary. Participants may refuse to participate in parts of the study, may decline to answer any question, and may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. If in-person gathering is not possible, we will use Microsoft Teams to convene for the workshops. Videoconference recordings will be saved directly to password-protected files. Please note that it is not mandatory to participate by video and participants can keep their video camera off. If participants decide to withdraw, their data will be destroyed unless permission is given otherwise. If the participant chooses to withdraw during or right after the dialogue session, all information obtained up until that point will be destroyed unless participants specify otherwise at the time of withdrawal. Once data has or combined for publication, it may not be possible to withdraw the participant's data in its entirety.After publication occurs it may not be possible to withdraw a participant's data in its entirety. We can only remove it from analysis and from use in future publications.

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MA thesis
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Toolkit
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Participant's Name (Please print):	*Parent or Legal Guardian Name (Please print):*

Do you assent to be audio-recorded for the purposes of transcription (this recording will not be shared or made public).	*Do you consent for the participant to be audio-recorded for the purposes of transcription (this recording will not be shared or made public).*
Yes:_____No: _____	*Yes:_____No: _____*
If I participate in toolkit creation I would like to be named as a co-creator. I understand that this would reveal that I am a participant in this study.	*I consent that if the participant participates in toolkit creation that they can be named as a co-creator. I understand that this would reveal that the participant has participated in this study.*
Yes:_____No: _____	*Yes:_____No: _____*
Participant's Signature:	*Parent or Legal Guardian Signature:*
Date:	*Date:*

McGill University
Participant Information Letter
COVID-19 and In-Person Research Respecting 2-metre Distancing
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Please read the following information to determine if participation is right for you and/or your child at this time.

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<u>It is important to understand that since study participation may include increased travel outside of your home and increased contact with others within a clinical care environment or research site, it may increase your and/or your child's exposure to COVID-19.</u>

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All research team members are required to have training on preventing the spread of infection and all McGill students and employees must respond each day to a required self-assessment health questionnaire. All participants and accompanying will be screened before accessing the research site and will be asked if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with anyone who has or has had COVID-19. Participation will be cancelled or postponed when responding yes to any of the screening questions. Wearing a mask that covers the mouth and nose is mandatory inside all McGill buildings, in accordance with Quebec public health regulations.

By agreeing for you and/or your child to participate in this study you acknowledge that you have been informed of the health and safety procedures in place and agree to follow them. <u>Please be reminded that participation is voluntary and you may decline or postpone participation at any time</u>.

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Appendix B