Gardening for Social Ills

Exploring the Social and Environmental Relations of School and Community Gardens

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Abstract

This dissertation describes and analyzes the social and environmental relations that emerged over the duration of a four-year school and community-based garden project in Tio'tia:ke/Montreal. Methodologically and epistemologically, I combine institutional ethnography, visual methodologies and urban political ecology to explore and uncover how school and community gardens, gardening programming and greening can work to produce disproportionate outcomes for learners, educators, community workers and community members. Drawing on a range of datasets including interviews, fieldnotes, voice memos, photographs, artistic renderings, and textual and policy analyses, I trace from people's experiential knowledge of attempting to use gardens for social (employment, food security), environmental (pollination, greening for reducing the urban heat island effect, etc.) and educational reasons – into local policy and texts that shape garden possibilities in urban contexts. In the process of creating and funding many different gardens in schools, community organizations and gentrifying neighbourhoods, I have elucidated specific institutional contrivances (e.g., funding, policy, geographies of injustice, work processes, discourse, curricular) that are presently structuring and defining who experiences access to gardens, gardening and its ostensible health and wellbeing benefits, greenspaces and environmental learning. Starting in the actual material sites where gardening and education take place (a university campus, schools, community organizations, greenspaces, local neighbourhoods, and so on), my findings on the educational, environmental, institutional, historical, geographic and political-economic relations suggest that while gardens have the potential for community-based learning, increased wellbeing, and ecological awareness, the use of school and community gardens needs to be highly contextualized within critical discussions related to settler-colonialism, neoliberalism, the history and politics of land and water use,

(green) gentrification, and land access and its growing criminalization. My reflexive findings also contest, complicate and deromanticize previous garden research that states that gardens and urban agriculture can address food insecurity and can contribute to wellbeing for all. My study responds to policy and governance issues related to urban human displacement, garden funding, employment, sustainability discourses, healthcare, safety, transportation, education and housing.

Résumé

Cette thèse décrit et analyse les relations sociales et environnementales ayant émergé au cours d'un projet de jardinage scolaire et communautaire à Tio'tia:ke/Montréal, sur une durée de 4 ans. Sur les plans méthodologique et épistémologique, je combine l'ethnographie institutionnelle, les méthodologies visuelles et l'écologie politique urbaine pour explorer et découvrir comment les jardins scolaires et communautaires, les programmes de jardinage et le verdissement peuvent produire des résultats inéquitables pour les apprenants, les éducateurs, les travailleurs communautaires et les membres de la communauté. En m'appuyant sur des données issues d'entrevues, de notes de terrain, de mémos vocaux, de photographies, de dessins et d'analyses textuelles et politiques, et à partir des connaissances expérientielles de personnes qui utilisent les jardins à des fins sociales (emploi, sécurité alimentaire), environnementales (pollinisation, verdissement pour réduire l'effet d'îlot de chaleur urbain, etc.) et éducatives, je recense les textes et les politiques locales qui façonnent les possibilités de jardins scolaires et communautaires dans les contextes urbains. Dans le processus de création et de financement de nombreux jardins différents au sein d'écoles, d'organismes communautaires et de quartiers qui se gentrifient, j'ai documenté des dispositifs institutionnels spécifiques (par exemple, le financement, la politique, les géographies de l'injustice, les processus de travail, le discours, les programmes) qui structurent et définissent actuellement *qui* bénéficie de l'accès aux jardins, au jardinage et à ses bienfaits apparents pour la santé et le bien-être, aux espaces verts et à l'apprentissage environnemental. Partant de sites concrets où se déroulent le jardinage et l'éducation (un campus universitaire, des écoles, des organismes communautaires, des espaces verts, des quartiers locaux, etc.), mes conclusions sur les relations éducatives, environnementales, institutionnelles, historiques, géographiques et politico-économiques suggèrent que, bien que les jardins offrent le

potentiel d'un apprentissage communautaire, d'un bien-être accru et d'une conscience écologique, l'emploi des jardins scolaires et communautaires doit être fortement contextualisé dans les discussions critiques liées au colonialisme de peuplement, au néolibéralisme, à l'histoire et à la politique de la terre et de l'utilisation de l'eau, à la gentrification (verte), à l'accès aux espaces publics et à son taux de criminalité. Mes conclusions réflexives contestent, compliquent et désidéalisent également les études antérieures selon lesquelles les jardins et l'agriculture urbaine peuvent lutter contre l'insécurité alimentaire et peuvent contribuer au bien-être de tous. Mon étude répond aux questions de politique et de gouvernance liées aux déplacements humains urbains, au financement des jardins, à l'emploi, aux discours sur la durabilité, aux soins de santé, à la sécurité, aux transports, à l'éducation et au logement.

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Introduction

Gardening for Social Ills

One spring evening, I was working late in Coach House at McGill University. I'm a restless person and I often need to couple my computer time with moving around. On that evening, I coupled my computer time with gardening. Or, I coupled my academic work with other important tasks that I need to do that are often not acknowledged as work[1] at a general or societal level. At sunset, I went back outside for a final gardening session. In April, garden tasks often include soil management, and on this particular day I was supplementing the soil with compost and other organic matter to restore the nutrients to make the garden beds ideal for food production and growing different plants. I don't like wearing gloves when gardening. This has nothing to do with the benefits of actually touching the soil[2], which may stimulate serotonin production, acting like an anti-depressant (Lowry et al., 2007). I don't wear gloves because I like to feel the soil. Touching the soil without gloves makes me feel connected to place, land, and to the process of life that I often experience through gardening. After I finished working the compost into the soil of the garden beds behind Coach House, I went back into the building to clean my hands so that I could get back to my academic work. Coach House is a lovely but strange old building. There's almost always an issue with the plumbing or the heating or the

[1] For the purpose of this dissertation, the term work corresponds with D.E. Smith's generous notion of work as developed in her collection of essays in the Everyday World as Problematic – that is, it will be used expansively to include unpaid or unacknowledged work. I will expand on this concept in Chapter 1.

[2] Dirt and soil are often used interchangeably but dirt is only dirt when it is underneath fingernails or on hands, while soil is an incredible mixture of organic matter that supports life (Capon, 2010). Soil is the correct terminology.

lighting, and any slight change to one system often affects the many other systems working in the building. I'm very aware of this.

Conscious of how fragile the building is, I went into the bathroom on the second floor of to wash up and went to elbow the light switch so that I could see the sink and water taps, etc. As I was raising my arm, I thought to myself, "I know this bathroom so well and turning on the lights is a waste of electricity." Not wanting to be wasteful, I decided to proceed in the darkness. I quickly found the sink and went to turn on the water. Just as I reached to touch the tap, I stopped. I paused for a moment and whispered to myself, "Don't even think about running the water before putting soap on those hands." Even though I grew up in Canada where water is plentiful and drinkable in most communities, I am hyperaware of how precious water is and don't like being wasteful. I put soap on my hands, quite proud of myself, and reached for the hot water tap. However, I once again caught myself in wasteful behaviour and I decided to wash my hands with cold water because cold water uses fewer resources than hot water. After I had scrubbed the dirt from my hands and fingernails, I went to reach for a paper towel to dry my hands. Just as I pressed my fingers on the towel, I came to another realization: I did not need to use a paper towel, I could use my shirt or pants. But it was too late. I had ripped a small corner of the paper towel and it fell to the ground. I did not want to litter, because littering is 'bad' and always wonder how washrooms get messy as I think most people clean up after themselves so I went to pick up my mess, but because I had not turned on the lights, I couldn't really see where the corner of the paper towel had fallen. So, I bent over and started to pat the floor hoping to find my mess, however in the process of looking for my paper towel, I dirtied my hands once again and became even more frustrated with myself and my wasteful behaviour. Instead of rushing back to the sink for more water, I decided to stay on the ground and reflect for a moment or two.

As I reflected on my efforts to be sustainable and how I engage in environmental behaviours (active/self-propelled transportation, composting and working toward a zero-waste lifestyle, with food production for myself and others), I thought that there must be a better way of thinking about environmental sustainability than just counting my environmental behaviours (although it is valuable).

In most relationships, we often have to do some things that we don't like to do to maintain a healthy interaction. In Coach House, I know that in order to keep the bathrooms functioning, I need to think very carefully about the plumbing; otherwise, it's likely that a plumbing issue will arise. Instead of getting upset with Coach House and its poor plumbing, I do my best to act in a way that helps the functioning of Coach House. To do this, I think of Coach House as a close friend or family member who is lovely, but strange. The loveliness far outweighs the strangeness and I'm happy to help her/him/them out. Considering our relationship with the planet, I often ask my students and garden team members to view nature and the planet as a best friend or a close family member, as we humans depend on the planet for food, water and air. Without clean air, humans would survive only four minutes. Without clean water, humans would survive only four days. Without food, humans would survive only four weeks. And without pollinators, humans and our food systems would collapse in approximately four years. Over the past several years, my work in and with gardens sought to connect people from different social backgrounds to the environment that sustains all lifeforms. I began a gardening project because I wanted to engage in work that was socially, educationally and environmentally meaningful and I thought that I would be able to do this through gardening and urban agriculture (UA). I used and continue to use gardens and UA to develop a connection with place, water, food systems and the more-than human world by critically working with and providing opportunities

for people to work and learn in gardens, and through water, food production, vermicompost (worms) and beehives. I worked diligently to connect the actual social, environmental, and educational use of gardens to social ills and relevant environmental and educational concerns.

I achieved this by developing community-based gardening work at local schools and community organizations and by assembling a garden team that brought their expertise and lived experience to different aspects of the community-based garden and UA work. In my grant writing and fund-seeking activities for creating gardens and garden teams for social, environmental and educational purposes, I eventually named this project that I describe in this dissertation *Gardening for Food Security* (see below). My experience gardening in social, community-based and different educational settings leads me to believe that gardening can indeed help people develop a connection to place and a connection to land; however, the land on which we garden is land that Canadian settler colonial nation state has claimed making it is easy to work in a garden and be completely disconnected from colonial history, place, self, and others. It is also easy to be unaware of the social and ecological ramifications of installing gardens, and of the history and politics of land and water use. I share this reflection to show the many contradictions and conflicts to consider in efforts to make socially and ecologically conscious choices, but to also show the interconnectedness of these actions to illuminate how they are embedded in *social* and *environmental relations*.

Furthermore, I am concerned about the health of our planet and in my research, I have critically analyzed my actions as I have attempted to use gardens for social and environmental justice while discussing my concerns encircling the health of the biosphere, as we in Montreal are already encountering the impacts of human-created (anthropocentric) climate emergency. Recent examples of this urgency include the City of Montreal declaring a state of emergency in

2017 and 2019 due to heavy rainfall and extreme flooding. Furthermore, a heat wave in the summer 2010 claimed the lives of over 100 people and in 2018, 66 people were killed as Montreal suffers from an urban heat island effect (Health Canada, 2019). When I began this gardening/UA project, I understood that gardens were being used for environmental reasons (i.e., greening to combat the urban heat island effect, to combat flooding, increase pollination, etc.), sustainability and social purposes (food production for food security), but I did not realize what exactly gardens were doing to teachers, learners, community members, organizations and to specific neighbourhoods. Gardening programs, greening and UA (more broadly) in Montreal (and elsewhere) are inextricably related to land use (zoning), housing, employment, transportation, education, healthcare and other coordinating and intersecting institutions.

Despite human dependence on the earth for human survival, public facing institutions (e.g., schools, universities, etc.) knowingly and unknowingly participate in neoliberal rationalism (Tuck, 2013) – that is, a violent alienation from place (planet, nature), others, and ourselves (our bodies). This separation from place, land, self and others facilitates the kind of social science research about school and community gardens and UA as if they exist outside the historical relations of capitalism, neoliberalism and colonialism. Embracing both history and complexity, my research has been an exploration of the social and environmental relations of gardening and UA in different urban locations where gardens exist (on private land, community organizations, schools, empty lots, etc.). I have also attempted to disrupt dominant discourse encircling sustainability and complicate the representations of gardens as inherently good, community-focused, environmental, pedagogical and full of magical benefits (Cairns, 2018), or as I often say: I challenge the pretense that gardens exist in a snow globe, outside of rampant global capitalism and settler colonialism. In other words, proceeding from people's actual experiences

working to organize gardening opportunities for social, educational and environmental purposes this project undertakes a study of the dominant discourses encircling sustainability, UA, school and community gardens while also attempting to complicate ideas about how gardens in education, communities and neighbourhoods are beneficial to all. In my exploration of UA, school and community gardening, I demonstrate how gardening and UA happens in Montreal by critically engaging with funding (to create gardens and garden teams), labour (physical, emotional and administrative to sustain gardens in an urban environment) and land. I intentionally highlight problematic relations that obscure how the benefits (social, educational and environmental) that might and claim to be inherent in UA and school and community gardening are not equally accessible, nor useful to people teaching, learning, living and working in Montreal and elsewhere. I also explore environmental discourse related to gardening, greening and how these actions might not be about environmental sustainability.

Today, both the word *green* and the term *sustainability* are overused, misused and often used interchangeably, yet they are rarely defined in environmentally focused research (Robertson, 2014). To be succinct, sustainability is the where the health of the biosphere[3] is maintained without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Brundtland Commission, 1987; Robertson, 2017). Robertson (2014) discusses sustainability in two ways: as an idea, and as a professional discipline. Sustainability as an idea refers to the body of knowledge related to the dynamic systems and how they work on planet Earth, including the current health and decline of the Earth's systems. On the flip side, sustainability as a professional

[3] The biosphere refers to the "Earth systems on land, in the oceans, and in the atmosphere inhabited by living organisms" (Robertson, 2017, p. 13).

discipline refers to humanity's rapidly evolving response to the urgent planetary challenges that humans are currently encountering. Although the overall concept of sustainability is seen as a positive for some, much like the complex systems the term sustainability describes, the definition and the history of the word are complex and are often fraught with tension and disagreement and Coulthard (2014) argues that conversations about sustainability are not slanted toward land, but rather toward economic sustainability. Robertson (2014) points out that the misuse of the word sustainability is almost more troublesome than its overuse, as sustainability can be used in combination with other words like pollution (sustainable pollution)[4]. Green or greening (*verdissage* in French) is usually employed as "general term for an environmentally responsible approach; a metaphor based on the color of most plants" (Robertson, 2017, p. 64); however, green and greening both possess "semantic vagueness" (Robertson, 2014, p. 55). Much like sustainability, green is now used in combination with other words that can produce strange and contradicting ideological interpretations. To provide some examples, there are greenhouse gases, green belts, green buildings and green infrastructure, green energy, the green economy and *greenwashing*. In relation to my research, I have paid close attention to how the terms sustainable development (*development durable* in French) and greening are employed in different contexts where my research and analysis have taken me (schools, universities, community organizations, different neighbourhoods, municipal policy documents, etc.) and what the terms are *doing* in these locations.

[4] This misuse and contradictory use of ecological terminology is called eco-babble.

Why Gardens?

When I am asked 'why gardens' or what my interest is in promoting and exploring equitable access to gardens in schools and communities, I tend to respond with the dominant narratives or scholarly tropes associated with environmental education, UA and school and community gardens. While UA is often simplified as food production in cities (McClintok, Meerwald & McCann, 2018), more recent academic and municipal accounts of UA also focus on UA food production for food security, healthy eating habits, urban sustainability through *greening*, and for proving recreational opportunities for different people within a city. A brief review of literature on school and community gardens can be distilled into the following themes and scholarly tropes: 1) gardens promote ecological, community, and nutritional literacies, and an understanding of food sourcing (where our food comes from; Hirschi, 2015); 2) gardens and gardening provide engaging experiential learning opportunities for students and community learners (Williams & Brown, 2012); 3) through gardening, students can connect with nature and begin to understand human dependency on the natural world; and 4) exposure to nature through gardens can improve ADHD symptoms, depression, stress and emotional wellbeing while encouraging physical activity, which helps with obesity, type two diabetes, asthma, pain reduction and vitamin D deficiency (McCurdy, Winterbottom, Mehta & Roberts, 2010). Despite these ostensible benefits, conducting research on and in a garden is often shaped by obstacles (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2010).

In my study, I bring into view the barriers and problematics that emerged through my research on UA and urban gardens (school, community, etc.) as I sought out funding, labour, environmental resources, and land. For instance, creating gardens required me to participate in funding schemes that undercut the environmental and social ethos of my work. Sustaining

gardens and garden teams through paid employment (gardening is hard physical labour after all) required significant administrative attention and auditing that then constrained not only the social and environmental potential of gardens, but also the educational opportunities and mentorship that I intended to provide for youth. Moreover, when teachers, community workers, activists, garden team members and I created gardens on land that was both public (school yards, municipally permitted community garden plots) and private (a front yard of a church, McGill University, and so on) land, we were hooked into many bureaucratic processes that significantly limited the environmental justice (like food security) outcomes often associated with gardens. Lastly, in contributing to increasing gardening, greening and urban beautification in rapidly gentrifying neighbourhoods[5], we contribute in small ways to increasing land values by fitting in with the area's new presentation in a process described as *green gentrification* (Dooling, 2008).

Situating people's garden-based experience in schools, community organizations and in different neighbourhoods of Montreal, my research explores how gardens *work* in relation to social and environmental justice. Using ethnographic (observations, interviews), visual, historical and other textual data, I investigated different ways gardens are being textually and politically used in cities to: advance global sustainability goals; enable employability training; enable learning; support local food insecurity programs; and contribute to neighbourhood "greening" and "revitalization." I traced my own and other's experiential knowledge into the vast political and institutional terrain of relevant texts and policies that coordinate our urban gardening efforts, paying attention to vast amounts of institutional work that enables the physical

[5] Ecological gentrification, or *green gentrification*, occurs when gentrification is paired with positive environmental change (Dooling, 2008) that can actually work to displace the people who this environmental change intends to benefit (Gould & Lewis, 2016).

labour we associate with gardening. I devoted months to scouring websites, navigating eligibility requirements for gardening employability programs, consulting with school-boards and city departments, applying for and managing endless grants, consulting municipal bylaws and zoning restrictions, and so forth. Behind the obvious work of tilling the earth and harvesting produce, people are undertaking considerable social, political and institutional labour to make city gardens work.

As I conducted my gardening work and this study over four years, I used photography, voice memos, field notes, informal conversation and interviews to document issues and institutional contrivances that shaped my gardening work and the gardening work of others. I spent over three and half years in the field working with teachers, learners, front-line community workers and community members thinking through and working the social and pedagogical uses of gardens and UA. In attending reflexively to my ongoing observations and reflections about UA, gardening and garden work, I began to see how gardens are implicated in enduring social and environmental relations – relations I could effectively navigate to create gardens in schools and in the community, but which concurrently prevented other people from doing the same things. Looking closely at the social and ecological relations that enable and constrain different types of urban gardening efforts brought into view how gardens worked in sequence with other processes of inclusion, exclusion, capital accumulation and land dispossession. By exploring the social and environmental organization of gardens, greenspaces, and UA and how these urban processes are influenced at an administrative and political level by municipal, provincial federal, and global policies, I soon became inundated in texts and images and struggled to make sense of everything I was seeing, reading and experiencing.

While my field notes and memos continued to support the idea that gardens have potential to promote cross-curricular learning opportunities, wellbeing, food production, employment and ecological awareness, these early data also raised several ethical issues. For example, my visual data suggest that gardens typically conceal relations of consumption – e.g., each year people flood the garden centres at grocery and big-box stores to purchase flowers, soil, fertilizer. Similarly, most school and community gardening practices generally reinforce, rather than challenge, particular white and Western aesthetic ideals. For gardens to be installed at a public school, they need to appear neat, tidy and enclosed (Ostertag, 2018) in the form of wooden box or fenced area, which often requires store-bought material.

Furthermore, the more I gardened, the more cognizant I became of the history and politics of water and land-use in the area we now know as Montreal and as such, realized many of my observations encircling school/community gardens and UA required further and critical, historical and textual interpretation. Indeed, while I was building and installing gardens for social and educational purposes, municipal governments were using similar gardens and other *greening initiatives* (Ville de Montreal, Eco-Quartier) to beautify gentrifying neighbourhoods of Montreal. Lastly, as there are fewer community resources for Montreal schools due to years of neoliberal government austerity measures (Harvey, 2013), I began to question whether UA was the best use of limited city funding (e.g., given the large numbers of people in Montreal without safe and stable shelter and encountering food insecurity). As I began to pay attention to the social, environmental and institutional relations through which UA is conducted and governed in Montreal, I began to focus less on what gardens *offer*, and more on questions about how gardens reveal something about the social, educational and environmental processes that have come to shape city life.

Study Background

While I expand on the background of the research in greater detail in the upcoming chapters, it is important that I provide some context about how this research emerged. Soon after I arrived at McGill (2015), I began working with Dr. Mindy Carter in the already established Faculty of Education Garden/outdoor learning space[6]. In the winter of 2016, I began applying for grant funding to support the garden work and socially and environmental just urban-based environmental education at McGill with hopes of working with teachers, students and within the local community for social, educational and environmental reasons. In May 2016, I was awarded a garden grant from the Toronto Dominion bank and used some of the funds to expand McGill's community garden in the form of a Three-Sisters Garden in partnership with Faculty of Education professors, and another doctoral student, and to install additional garden beds in the existing space. Over the next few months, I used the remining funds to hire two youth from a local-community organization and I received two additional grants (from Home Depot and McGill's graduate student society) and began developing garden-based connections with teachers, schools and different community-based organizations.

From 2016 to 2018[7], I continued to build partnerships and began creating gardens and gardening opportunities all over Montreal. I started by working closely with schools and community organizations. I used the majority of the funding I received to establish garden infrastructure in different sites and to provide and increase garden-based and UA opportunities

[6] Please note that the 'McGill Faculty of Education Garden/outdoor learning space' and the 'McGill Garden' will be used interchangeably as I am referring to the same garden/location.
[7] Please note that the partnerships that I describe briefly in this chapter will be further developed in the Chapters Two, Three, Four Five and Six.

for students, teachers, youth, community members and community workers. Keeping consistent with my own ethical commitments to gardening where gardens and UA should contribute to social and environmental good, and to community work where knowledge and expertise is shared and that people are paid an equitable wage for their time and efforts, I employed team members to take on a range of work related to teaching, learning, community engagement, and social and environmental justice in Montreal. Depending on individual interests, some team members worked physically in four different garden spaces (two large gardens at McGill, a school garden, and a garden at a local organization who's mandate is to support people experiencing homelessness called the Griffin House[8]) while other team members met with partners or supported the creation of a garden website to fulfill outcomes (e.g., having a bilingual website, showcasing financial support and community collaborations, and reporting on gardening productivity) promised on funding applications.

In the winter of 2018, I submitted an application for a Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) grant titled *Gardening for Food Security* with hopes of drawing social, environmental and educational connections to this evolving garden project while expanding and supporting the gardens at: 1) the Griffin House; 2) McGill University; and 3) English Park School[9]. As food security continues to be the focus of this this research and the gardening/UA work, I ensured that each garden we tended to had food production for food security as a main focus. By the time I received news that the 2018 CSJ grant had been funded (six employees working 30 hours/week for eight weeks), I had already created multiple gardens sites to provide gardening and employment opportunities.

[8] Griffin House is a pseudonym.
[9] English Park School is a pseudonym.

Working with teachers, youth, graduate students, activists and community workers, the garden team created and supported different gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes in different neighbourhoods of Montreal. At McGill, we created a large garden mainly designed for food production but also included an area for sensate engagement with herbs, flowers and a beehive. With teachers and students at English Park School, we initiated a garden club during lunch hour, built three raised garden beds, and planted a 'pollinator' garden that also produced food in the form of tomatoes and butternut squash. To maximize experiential learning during garden club time, I intentionally took on some of the more onerous tasks (digging, transporting the soil, and so on).

At the Griffin House, a day centre that provides a daily meal service, an employability program and a range of other services for people experiencing homelessness, we aimed to grow food to support both their meals and their food bank. In 2018, the garden team members and I met with the Griffin House chef to determine what to plant in the garden in relation to his meal planning. In conversation with the Griffin House employees and members, we completely redesigned the space and spent around two weeks supplementing the soil, digging trenches, moving around compost, installing paths to separate crops, coupling companion plants and flowers for pollination and pest resistance. Along with gardening for food production, important to my garden work at the Griffin House was fostering an aesthetic experience for those who spend time in the garden. I wanted the garden to be productive in more than a food production sense. I also wanted gardens to be visual, sensual and with an element of surprise.

Once all the gardens were planted, the actual summer garden project for food security began. The month of June was dedicated to maintaining three different community gardens, co-leading garden club at English Park School, and spending several hours each day at the Griffin

House to get a feel for how things worked and what a typical day looked like for staff and some for some "house guests" who worked in the garden on similar employment/employability programs to the one I was mediating for youth with the CSJ grant. Early in the summer, I continued working on the administrative part of the project, took meetings with current and future partners, started hiring employees[10], and devoted over 80 hours each week in the month of June to the combination of physical gardening work (transportation of soil and equipment, planting, watering, teaching, and so on), the textual gardening work (time planning the project to best benefit the teachers/students, the community organizations, the garden team employees), and to fulfill the objectives of the *Gardening for Food Security* of the CSJ.

By the end of the summer of 2018, the garden team had taken on supporting three additional community gardens. One garden was located at local youth homelessness organization called HeartWood, another was situated at a youth serving community organization called *Chalet Parc*[11], and we also looked after a large pollinator and perennial garden at McGill University. As the seasons changed and the members of our garden team went back to full-time studies or moved onto other employment, I closed down each garden and was asked to host some environmental education, garden-based, food systems and pollinator lessons in collaboration with teachers. While the educators of English Park School handled the vast majority of educational planning for these lessons, through our collective work I started to get a sense of how gardening and UA planning happened for teachers within the English public-school system

[10] Employee as a term infers a power dynamic and a transactional interaction. I contest this and throughout this dissertation employee in this context will be used synonymously with 'team member.'
[11] Both HeartWood and *Chalet Parc* are pysdonyms. *Chalet Parc* is also described in Nichols' (2019) institutional ethnographic research. In Chapter Three, I discuss the garden creation at *Chalet Parc'*s Studio Champion Sound.

of Montreal and had many questions about the institutional and policy processes for bringing gardening and UA to a school.

Much like I did in 2018, in 2019, and 2020, I hired new team members and the *Gardening for Food Security* project continued in collaboration with the Griffin House and English Park School. While we continued our conversations with HeartWood and *Chalet Parc* in 2019, our annual collaborations came to end as both organizations only needed our support at the beginning of the planting seasons but not during the summer. While these two garden-based relationships ended, others began. In 2019 we partnered with Greening Chinatown[12], a "local initiative that seeks to cultivate a social economy and sustainable organizational capacity that includes monetary and non-monetary valued resources, communal exchange and voluntary commitment" (Greening Chinatown, n.d., Retrieved from: https://greenchinatownmtl.wordpress.com/). In 2019 I began supporting the Redpath Museum, who visited our hives for their pollination classes and invited me to speak at McGill University's Climate Change week. In the spring of 2020 at the height of COVID-19's first wave, our work evolved again and we endeavoured to support the creation of a food bank affiliated with Griffin House where we had been gardening since 2017. It is important to note that even I as complete writing of this dissertation, I continue to apply for funding to support this ongoing work. The *Gardening for Food Security* project has continued into winter 2021 and I am preparing for another large-scale gardening partnership for the summer 2021 as demand for essential services (food, shelter, etc.) increases during COVID-19, the Griffin House "really needs help" (J. Senik,

[12] The Project Lead of Greening Chinatown (Jessica) asked that I use the initiative's actual name. Jessica is however a pseudonym.

personal communication, January 21st, 2021). Even though the data collection phase of my doctoral research has come to an end, the community-based garden project is evergreen and has now generated enough momentum to persist without my direct physical involvement at the school or organization.

Gardening as Problematic

As my gardening work evolved to include more than the physical act of gardening, I began to notice that what I described as "gardening" or "gardening work" or "a garden project" often required that I navigate textual processes, not associated with gardening. Along with actual gardening, I found myself writing grants, enrolling youth in post-secondary education programs to ensure their eligibility for employment, meeting with potential employees, partners, and filling out government forms on everything from finances to personal demographic information. In Dorothy Smith's (1987) *The Everyday World as Problematic*, she positions researchers as experts in their own lives and shows that a person can usefully identify a rupture, a research problematic, or a research starting place in experience rather than theory. One does not have to, for example, anchor one's research to a concept like "gardening for food security." In this study, research began in my body as I endeavored to create school and community gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes.

Of course, I did not immediately see the problematic in my everyday work. As is often the case, I took the work for granted as simply how gardens are made and how easy it was to access land as permissions were already established for myself and others. I began to focus on documenting the processes of getting a garden and making use of it for social and pedagogical purposes. I also started paying attention to the ways in which teachers, learners, community

workers and gardeners were speaking about gardens – noting that we often spoke of the inherent and unquestioned benefits of gardening for social, environmental and educational purposes, but paid less (or no) attention to how much administrative labour is needed to fund and create gardens and garden teams, the presumed benefits of gardens were distributed, nor to how gardens might also serve ruling interests (e.g., as tools for urban renewal, revitalization, "neighbourhood transformation"). As I continued to explore my own and others' experiences in relation to the organizing relations of garden work and UA, I began to note contradictions between how gardens were talked about (e.g., specific to food sourcing/production/security, environmental sustainability and educational potential) and their actual use in school, organizations and neighbourhoods. As I started to review my ethnographic and photographic data, I could see abstracted forms of social relations (e.g., gardening for food security not actually addressing food security, community gardening plots historically reserved for property owning residents of Montreal) organizing my labour and my overall ethos about gardening and UA in different urban contexts (schools, community organizations, different neighbourhoods).

For example, because I sought to embrace an anti-consumerist attitude, seeking to reuse and recycle materials whenever possible (including seeds harvested from previous gardens), I took on considerable additional labour. There were also times when my anti-consumeristic attitude was not possible to actualize in practice. Because I wanted to use the funding to create gardens and gardening employment, I worked on a tight budget and as such, started all seedlings for each garden in a mini-greenhouse in my apartment. Once the gardens were planted, I was responsible for watering several gardens within the downtown area of Montreal. Instead of driving to each garden, I opted to bike everywhere as I believe in active transportation and thought that driving to each garden through Montreal's ever-present city centre traffic was

environmentally counterintuitive to the ethos of my projects, as vehicle emissions are the largest contributor to Montreal's carbon footprint (Montreal Climate Plan, 2020). After a few weeks of moving soil, building gardens and biking around the city to complete my actual garden work (on top of my textual garden work, including my academic and school/community-based meetings/ commitments), I was physically and emotionally exhausted. In my discussions with teachers and community workers with whom I collaborated, we each described how this kind of gardening as work added a lot of additional considerations, many of which were physical (actual gardening and outdoor work), and many were textual in nature (filling out granting and employment applications, accountability forms, permission slips, risk assessments, evaluations, and much more).

In carefully documenting the work of *making gardens* and *making gardens work* in schools, organizations and neighbourhoods, I continued to note how physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted I had become from cycling everywhere with my tools to water six different gardens around the city during the day and handling project administration in the evenings. While I had received funding to hire a team of gardeners, the nature of the funding scheme (e.g., to provide summer jobs to youth) did not quite line up with seasonal gardening tasks that would ensure that the gardens would efficiently produce food for human consumption to address food insecurity, employment opportunities and educational benefits. To keep the project functioning, I had no other choice but to take on gardening work in both a traditional 'in the garden' sense, along with labour that is more 'academic,' administrative, or textual in nature. As I experience the world and the gardening work *in* and *through* my body, I started to see issues and problems with both the physical and outdoor gardening work, and how I was reporting and accounting for my work through government mediated employment programs, other granting

agencies, and with schools and community organizations of the different neighbourhoods of Montreal undergoing change.

Using my own experiences as a starting place for this research also allowed me to investigate my relationship with the land upon which I was gardening. I grew up in Montreal and for the first two and half decades of my life, I had been socialized to see the island as French and English, failing to acknowledge that Montreal is the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation. Tiohtiá:ke, or what it commonly called Montreal, has a long history of settlement, agriculture, meeting and exchange between and amongst sovereign Indigenous Nations. As a third-generation Irish/Italian immigrant and settler in Montreal, I continue to grapple with how to critically acknowledge my participation in settler colonial relations through gardening – including my participation in (and the ways I benefit from) systems that uphold white supremacy and colonial land, water and resource use. In the coming chapters, I point to some of the ways that school and community gardening and UA practices – especially the gardening bureaucracy – are emblematic of neoliberal and settler-colonial modes of governance and thought through which city land-use becomes commodified and transformed into real estate and/or commercial/consumeristic activity explicitly connected with the processes of capitalism as a growth machine (i.e. accumulation of capital, gentrification, growing a city's residential tax base, etc.).

Throughout this dissertation, I also explore my interactions with governments at different levels of the colonial Canadian state (municipal, provincial, federal), and institutions that uphold a white supremacist and colonial ideology, implicitly asserting that much of land on which we garden is property of the white, European, colonial government and the historical context that shapes current gardening practice and discourse. Tracing outwards from my experience

interacting with different levels of government in Canada as I created garden and garden-based opportunities in schools, organizations and neighbourhoods, I could see how my experiences (and later the experiences of others) connected to, local government priorities, national legislation and global commitments ostensibly to address the current and oncoming impacts of climate change, and to economic strategies like gentrification.

A Note on the Visual

Methodologically, I bring institutional ethnography (Smith, 2006) together with visual methodologies (Mitchell, 2011; Mitchell, De Lange & Moletsane, 2017). Mitchell (2011) highlights how the photographs and other images can be part of both data collection, representation and dissemination but also that the visuals should not dominate visual research. In this dissertation, photographs will be employed as data and to also acknowledge that my research has been multisensory (Pink, 2009) in nature. In this light, photographs will be used in the same way that I might employ a fieldnote or an excerpt from interview transcripts to illuminate a particular research finding or realization. Beyond the employment of visual research for data collection, representation and dissemination, Mitchell (2011) underscores how images can epistemologically situate both the researcher and her/his/their audience in terms of subjectivity (how we know what we know) and semiotics (how we make sense of what we read, see and experience) while orienting people who interact with these images toward social action and social change. In considering visual data as an evocative intervention (Mitchell, 2011, p. 4), and with hopes that others who interact with this work feel inspired to share their experiences, images and photographs will be presented in different sections of this document and should be

viewed as both data, and a heuristic that seeks to make gardens more socially, educationally and environmentally just.

To address some ethical considerations about the visual aspects of this research at the outset (Mitchell, 2011) it is first important to note that I have produced (collected) and analyzed all photographs and images but did not intentionally or methodologically examine these photos with research participants, although I have used photographs/images with some research participants for different reasons (e.g. to produce funding applications, social media accounts, websites, research dissemination, teaching, and for other visual work related to this project). While there are no photographs of people in this thesis, there are photographs of places and objects that are easily recognizable and this merits ethical consideration and further discussion (Mitchell, 2011). Because this research emerged from a school and community-based garden initiative and within in the City of Montreal, some of the collaborations that I discuss in this document have been publicized on social media and institutional websites (McGill, Twitter, school and organization's websites). As such, I will not be anonymizing place in any of the images or photographs I present; however, I have changed the names of the school and *some* organizations with whom I garden as I run the risk of confirming exactly who my research participants have been. I expand on my reasoning below.

With Mitchell's (2011) encouragements to "do most good" (p. 22), she problematizes anonymizing place in her research involving different schools in South Africa. She implicitly reminds her reader that if visual research is indeed about social change, then schools working to address social issues ought to be acknowledged for their efforts, and schools that struggle despite their labour, might actually receive local support if the school be more publicly recognized. In my research, I have used pseudonyms for my research participants, but have not renamed all the

schools and organizations with whom I work and where I garden as one of my research participants and community partners have asked that I raise awareness about what they are currently experiencing.

In visually or textually discussing the environmental and social relations of gardening (funding, employment, land, greening, gentrification, etc.) I intentionally name locations and neighbourhoods not only because urban areas, objects, markers and symbols are recognizable (i.e. *Société de Transport de Montreal* bus stops, neighbourhoods and their branding, and the different gardens, etc.) and have been posted on social media that already showcase our current collaborations with schools and community-based organizations; but, also because if this research is about changing policies and raising awareness, it important that I name areas that have experienced an increase in gardens, UA and greenspaces and what the consequences of these changes have been to schools, organizations and people living in Montreal. Please note that throughout the dissertation, the question of "is it ethical?" (Mitchell, 2011, p. 98), has been at the fore of my visual considerations and all processes of my inquiry (see Chapter Two for a more fulsome outline of my visual and research processes).

Outline of the Dissertation

In this opening chapter I describe the through-line running through my dissertation: that is, by focusing on my own and others' urban gardening work, I have sought to uncover a range of social and environmental relations that are shaped by and shape UA efforts in Montreal.

Moving from the introduction, the first chapter of this dissertation describes and analyzes how I have engaged with theory throughout the research process. Chapter One explores the theory that has informed my garden work and research as I made sense of the emerging practical,

pedagogical, social and environmental direction. I introduce key theoretical concepts drawn from IE (Smith, 1987; 2006; Foucault, 1972; 1983; Marx & Engels, 1976), other feminist historical materialist slants (Bannerji, 1995; 2020) and urban political ecology (Heynan, 2006). Here, I synthesize relevant theories that underscore and inform the way my research seeks to uncover social relations and environmental relations by also revealing the ways that cities rely on the transformation of nature – into commodities and how these commodities' structure city life. In my research, I argue that these processes cannot be understood in isolation but rather are deeply embedded in the history, social, political, and economic systems that shape the environment in which they advance.

Chapter Two is where I describe my research design, research participants, data collection and analysis strategies, and the distinct methodological contribution my dissertation makes with my theorization of institutional ethnography and visual methodologies. I also document each of the relevant research and garden sites that are important to the analysis of this dissertation. In addition to the reflexive accounts of my own experiences, I interviewed several people who have unique understandings of gardening work shaped by the particularities of their own bodies and the institutional organization of their activities.

In Chapter Three, I look closely at the work processes of funding and creating gardens for social (employment, food insecurity, etc.), environmental (greening for reducing heat islands, pollination, beautification) and educational purposes. To better understand the different social and environmental relations associated with gardening in many urban contexts, I bring into view how traditionally understood gardening labour (building, watering, harvesting, and so on) interacts with the bureaucracy and textual organization of gardening work (funding, reporting outcomes, etc.). I anchor my research in the perspective of community workers, teachers, a

schoolboard employee, a school administrator and an urban gardener/researcher (me) beginning in three distinct research locations: 1) at McGill University 2) at a community organization called, Studio Champion Sound; and 3) at English Park School. In discussing my reflections and ethnographic data (fieldnotes, interviews), I underscore how garden work is a reflexively organized social relation, mediated by funding schemes, organizing institutions, technologies, garden/sustainability discourses and other mental conceptions.

Chapter Four describes my experiences building gardens and fostering garden teams through employment programs in collaboration with the Griffin House, which to restate is a day centre that provides crucial front-line services for people experiencing homelessness, barriers to employment, and food insecurity. I compare my own experiences (as a gardener/researcher/educator) funding, building and sustaining gardens and garden teams with the efforts my collaborators (e.g., Jan, a front-line community worker at Griffin House) who also works to create and use gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes. My analysis traces from people's experiences organizing gardens and gardening for employment into the relevant funding and policy texts – funding schemes and government policies (municipal, provincial, federal) – that can limit and enable their own and other's participation in urban gardening efforts.

Moving on from the social relations of garden team building and funding schemes, in Chapter Five, I turn my ethnographic and analytic gaze towards gardening within – and outside – of the City of Montreal's municipally mediated and permitted gardening schemes. This chapter describes what it is like for people and community organizations to garden without land. Specifically, I trace the social relations required to get a community garden plot from the City of Montreal. While the City of Montreal's community gardens are textually positioned as

accessible, affordable and ideal for community building, food production, developing healthy eating habits and addressing food security, (Ville de Montreal, April 30th, 2020; Ville de Montreal, Community Gardens, n.d.), my research findings in this chapter point to contradictions between and amongst the stated mission of the City of Montreal's community gardens, the admissibility processes for accessing these gardens, and the overall availability of garden plots. Beyond explaining what it is like to get connected to a municipally permitted garden, I further consider the actual environmental justice impacts of the City of Montreal's community gardening program.

Chapter Six shifts from the specific social and environmental relations of my gardening research—to larger historical and extra-local relations that have shaped and continue to shape land uses, gardening efforts, urban greening and gentrification. I employ a range of research methods, research findings, historical research and textual analysis to show that urban gardening, greening and beautification have a history of dispossession in Montreal that is indicative of pervasive patterns of racial injustice and settler colonialism across Quebec and Canada. I move from findings and analysis to what can be described as discussion connecting my work and research with the undercurrents of urban capitalist development. Here, I situate my findings within the current climate, housing, and educational crises.

The closing chapter summarizes my most salient findings, my critiques of this project and other UA and gardening initiatives in Montreal and underscore the implications for those who want to use gardening for social, environmental and educational reasons. I consider future work while suggesting future garden/UA directions based on my ongoing involvement in the Gardening for Food Security project and on local committees. On one hand, I conclude by complicating how damaging disjunctures between the garden-based experiences of my

interviewees and institutional accounts of these same issues (e.g. gardening for food security, gardening is beneficial for all, etc.) continue to perpetuate systemic exclusion. On the other hand, I will also emphasize some of the more redeemable outcomes of my work and research findings contextualized within the notion of *doing more good than harm* when working with gardens in different urban settings.

Chapter One: Garden Threads and Theoretical Slants

My research on urban agriculture (UA) and school and community gardens in Montreal is informed by institutional ethnography (IE; 1990; 2006), feminist historical materialism (Bannerji, 1995; 2020), and urban political ecology (Heynan, 2006; 2014; 2015; 2017). Much like past research on UA (Bhatt & Farah, 2016), land education (Aluli Meyer, 2014), school gardens (Williams & Brown, 2012), as well as visual/multisensory ethnography of community gardens (Pink, 2008), I have researched the actual benefits of creating gardens and UA opportunities for students, teachers, community workers and community members. However, different from past garden, school, land, community or urban-based garden research, my work also seeks to uncover the social relations (work processes) and environmental relations (see below) that lie underneath the work of making gardens from different perspectives in relation to social and environmental justice: my own, teachers', principals', and community workers' and activists.

I locate my research within the broader fields of engaged and activist scholarship; however, I am cautious making this claim. Smith (1999) developed IE to democratize knowledge and to create conditions for empathy and unity between activists and researchers. However, despite this philosophy, few scholars have managed to actualize these aims, although there are some exceptions (see: Nichols, 2014; Pence, 2002) and Smith (2010) herself has outlined this difficulty. As a sociological approach and not a methodology per se, IE encourages methodological flexibility. Because of this, each IE is different, and I too have taken my own unique approach that does not quite align with other IEs, yet is most informed by those who work within the margins of both IE and Smith's theorizing (see: Bannerji, 1995; 2020; Nichols, 2019).

This chapter is loosely organized around two converging and overlapping theoretical orientations for uncovering the social and environmental considerations. First, I review and consider IE's specific sociological orientation. I do so by undertaking a sustained engagement with the conceptual and methodological shifts IE proposes while outlining the theoretical concepts and arguments that are relevant to my research (social organization, discourse, historical materialism). I then move from the social relations of historical materialism – to what I refer to as *environmental* relations. Here, I theorize urban political ecology and its conceptual connection to IE and my research more broadly. Sharing historical and material underpinnings with IE, urban political ecology has been useful for exploring ways in which material relations and unequal resource consumption, ideologies connected to urban nature and municipal environmental governance involve or function in concert with land and gardens.

Bringing urban political ecology in conversation with IE, I discuss the primitive accumulation of capital (Marx & Engels, 1976) as an ongoing process of land dispossession (Luxemburg, 2010; Coulthard, 2014). However, unlike past capitalist, imperial and settler colonial land grabs that dispossessed Indigenous nations and groups of people through violence, today's land dispossessions can occur through legislative mechanisms that work to obscure social and environmental relations. In cities like Montreal, this same process of land dispossession has occurred and is still occurring in a similar way through political and economic strategies like urban renewal, revitalization, and *gentrification*. In almost every urban renewal project over the past several decades, gardens, greening and urban beautification have played a role in how certain neighbourhoods have transformed. Dooling (2008) has labelled the process of coupling greening and gentrification *ecological gentrification*. As my gardening work and research has unfolded in many recently gentrified or gentrifying areas of Montreal, the final

section of this chapter situates readers within conceptual discussions of gentrification (and other urban shifts), and *how* the material conditions of Montreal and other urban areas were textually and physically structured to generate profit through different iterations of land dispossessions and urban transformations.

Institutional Ethnography

Often described as a method of inquiry and not a methodology, IE is a sociology that resists producing and using knowledge in ways that perpetuate the objectification of people's lives and experiences as instances of a theory or concept (Nichols, 2014). IE is informed by Marxist and feminist epistemologies and subscribes to a historical-materialist understanding of social life: research begins with people's experiential knowledge, then traces their knowledge into the policies, laws, books, media and digital technologies they interact with and which coordinate the ordinary movements of their days and nights. In this way, my analysis seeks to reveal large-scale forms of social coordination within which people's individual lives and experiences are unfolding (Mykhalovskiy, McCoy & Bresalier, 2004; Nichols, 2014). Smith (2005) invites researchers to resist traditional western epistemological approaches of theoretical abstraction and explore "how people are putting our world together daily in the local places of our everyday lives and yet somehow constructing a dynamic complex of relations that coordinates our doings trans-locally" (p. 2). She suggests that the researcher is always in, and of, the world the research seeks to describe, which makes the researcher's multitude of experiences beneficial to knowledge generation and serves as a way of entering and exploring the research problematic.

IE is meant to be rooted in activism and empathy. The knowledge produced is meant to benefit those whose accounts informed the starting place for one's work. Smith (1990) further challenges researchers to under-mine dominant discourse emerging from one's research problematic. I take this challenge very seriously, as much of the literature (and most cited literature) that I encounter in school and community gardens, UA and environmental education seeks to explain or reduce particular variables and behaviours into categories for the purpose of analysis. These research areas and practices thus reproduce and perpetuate dominant discourses (i.e., that gardens provide inherent educational, social environmental and health and wellbeing benefits), rather than critically investigating how particular rationalities actively coordinate thought and action across time and space, diminishing attentiveness to other ways of knowing the field. In contrast, my research is concerned with how we (urban gardeners, educators, community workers, and activists) have come to know what we know – and how this knowledge inflects and is shaped by social relations, the natural world, institutional, economic and policy processes, and so forth.

In traditional sociology, social organization typically describes relationships and interactions amongst individuals and social groups (Goffman, 1956). I employ Dorothy Smith's (1990) nuanced interpretation of Goffman's work, whereby the term social organization refers to the ways actual people's work (including their thinking *work*) is co-ordered across time and space. For Smith, social relations are always – and nothing more than – relations among people. That is, "forms of concerting people's activities that are regularly reproduced" (Smith, 1990, p. 6). Social relations and social organization are thus analytic resources – terms that connect us to IE's social ontology and which thus shape how to make sense of data:

> social relations do not refer to relationships such as instructor-student, between lovers, parent-child, and so on. Rather, [the term] directs attention to, and takes up analytically, how what people are doing and experiencing in a given local site is hooked into sequences of actions implicated in coordinating multiple local sites where others are active. (Smith, 1990, p. 6).

Social organization "is not a thing to be looked for in carrying out research, rather, it is what is used to do the looking" (Smith, 1999, as cited in G.W Smith, 1990). In this light, the IE investigations central to my research have been oriented to revealing how patterns of thought and action are coordinated socially, yet are situated in the experiential knowledge of teachers, community workers, urban gardeners and activists.

Knowledge, Discourse, Ruling Relations and 'Hyperactive Optimism'

D. E. Smith's (1999) theorizing about power and ruling (or organizing) relations directs attention to the "forms that we know as bureaucracy, administration, management, professional organization, and media. They include the complex of discourses, scientific, technical, and cultural that intersect, interpenetrate, and coordinate the multiple sites of ruling" (p. 6). Discourse, according to Smith (1999), is a kind of ruling relation that is an "ontological […] field of socially organized activity" (p. 75). Building on Foucault's notion of discourse, Smith (1999) argues that discourse, or actualized forms of knowledge, emerges in socially organized ways that are mediated by texts. Similarly, Foucault's interest in discourse examined how certain statements provide a language for talking about or representing a topic or truth. These statements are expansively understood to be spoken statements, written statements, historical documents, or anything that provides the architecture for describing a particular subject. When Foucault (1972)

provided his initial conception of discourse, he complicated the sociological structures that determine language use in relation to a particular subject and the traditionally informed constraints placed upon that same subject. These structures are made possible by specific and historically produced concepts, concerns, and statements, which he refers to as "discursive formations" (p. 38). For Foucault, these discursive formations are not abstract theories for a postmodern analysis; instead, these historically produced discursive formations are real, and hold material properties. They are entities that can be seen, heard, touched, understood, and experienced by the sensate because of the objects (texts, books, etc.) that give them life and significance. This understanding of discourse is not unlike Marx's conception of ideology (which I explore below). The governing 'rules' of a particular discursive formation include: the social and institutional contexts where these objects emerged; the social identities of those who have developed the 'authority' to speak on such subjects; and, the intellectual frameworks or "grids of specification" (p. 23) that classify the discursive formation and relate it to other ideas intertwined in reality. As such, according to Foucault, discourse is a "group of statements insofar as they are made possible by the same discursive formation" (p. 117).

For Foucault (1972) and Smith (1987) discourse is related to the production of knowledge; anytime people speak, write or represent, they are making a proposition about the world through discourse. In the ongoing production of knowledge through discourse, the conditions for practice (being in the world) are created and people start to think and act in a particular way because of their participation in particular discursive formations. For example, in UA and school and community gardening, dominant discourse and research highlights the innumerable positive benefits of gardening and UA (sustainability, community building, food security, health and wellbeing benefits, etc.) without acknowledging that these initiatives occur

on stolen land in settler colonial states under rampant global capitalism that treats land and water as regulated and for-profit commodities. Therefore, discussions of UA, school and community gardens often exclude the exploration and history of systemic racism, colonialism, poverty, expropriation and land dispossession that has allowed gardens to be in one location and not others, and to serve some purposes, and not others. Nor does most garden-based, UA or environmental education research explore the social and ecological impacts of creating gardens in urban environments, particularly impacts related to access to gardens in gentrifying neighbourhoods, (over) production, and maintenance. Most research in Montreal's unique urban context also does not explore if gardens and greening actually achieve their stated objectives of food security and reducing the urban heat island effect. As such, people working with gardens and UA tend to continue to frame it as a way of stimulating the innumerable positive benefits of gardening related to education, the environment, health and wellbeing.

Extending from Foucault (1972), Smith (1990) conceives of discourse and ruling relations as operating in and through people as readers, writers, thinkers, talkers, watchers, users and agents within interconnected webs of *text*-mediated social relations. In the context of today's digital world, almost everything we do and engage with is negotiated by what we've seen, read, and listened to in-person and online. Conceiving of texts broadly to include any communicative media that has the potential to *connect* readers, writers, listeners, speakers, and viewers across time and space (e.g., podcasts, newspapers, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, or music and other art, etc.), it is important to note that we are living in a text-saturated moment in history. Many members of today's society are engaging with, creating and sharing movies, music videos, music, photography and the printed word. They are shopping and playing online and many are now learning exclusively online due to COVID-19.

Different from other generations, we can use digital means to communicate in real-time with others located elsewhere about what we are seeing, doing, watching and reading online. Similarly, textually mediated activities are present in how people work (Smith, 1999). In a work environment like a school or a community organization, the institution is *textually organized*. In other words, workplace documents like policy, funding, technologies, discourse/dominant narrative and so on hook people into activities that are unbeknownst to them. In relation to my experience creating gardens and gardening opportunities for students, teachers, youth, community workers and community members, the texts that mediate my everyday are funding schemes, accountability forms, medical and neuro-psychological diagnoses, risk assessments/workplace hazard documents, municipal government forms, property tax forms, and global environmental policies.

For educators, curriculum, professional development workshops that reinforce the dominant gardening discourse, attendance sheets, permission slips, schoolboard/institutional practices, Montreal's school tax commission, poverty maps, environmental policies, global environmental agreements (like the Paris Accord), and so on are key texts and textually-mediated processes that connect their work in gardens to extended relations of ruling in the City of Montreal. Community workers, on the other hand, may have to navigate municipal bylaws, employment program auditing forms, environmental maps (flooding zones, urban heat islands), financial accounting, healthcare and transportation schemes, and many other texts. These texts provide meaning while "linking language and consciousness to the social relations of power in society" (Griffith, 1995, p. 2). My work brings these relations into view by studying how gardens are funded, managed, and overseen; how garden teams and garden work is organized differently in schools, community organizations, and different neighbourhoods; how reporting processes

focusing on individualized outcomes reproduce typical sustainability discourses; how municipal accounts of community gardening addressing food security is actually an insidious myth as access to municipal community gardens prioritize homeowning individuals in Montreal, undercutting their environmental justice potential; and, importantly, how historical and ideological accounts (Bannerji, 1995, 2020) obscure human relationships with ourselves, each other, the planet and the more-than-human world.

In response to the overwhelmingly positive and unquestioned discourse encircling environmental education, UA, and school and community gardening, I complicate my gardening work with what Foucault (1983) calls "hyperactive pessimism" (as cited in Smart, 2002, p. 45). Here, his argument "is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous. And, if everything is dangerous," (Afterword, in Dreyfus & Rainbow, 1983, p. 236) then we, as hyperactive pessimists, always have questions to ask and work to do. Foucault (1983) states that his position "is not one of apathy, but rather a hyper and pessimistic *activism*" and encourages us to encounter the "ethico-political choice we have to make every day […] to determine which is the main danger" (p. 236). Throughout my writing, I don't claim that gardens are inherently bad or are not useful for social, environmental and educational reasons. I think gardens have immense potential for addressing social and environmental ills and for enabling meaningful and authentic environmental education, especially in an urban context. I do however argue that the employment, design and overall use of gardens, especially in cities, have never been neutral, have been rooted in the relations of capital, accumulation and dispossession, and as such can produce different outcomes along racial-ethnic, class, gender and linguistic lines where their social and environmental justice potential is not realized. In these relations where gardens can be more hype and harm than help, there are dangers to acknowledge and I continue to question if

my own work is actually helping improve social and environmental injustices and not exacerbating them. However, I also want to contest Foucault's idea with a 'hyperactive optimism.' As a researcher and activist for social, educational and environmental justice, it is imperative to not enter a space of 'eco-paralysis' where individuals and communities are unable to move from frustrations— to collective action and inter-individual accountability. In efforts to do more good than harm, an orientation of optimism has allowed me to understand that there are more than an environmental, social and educational justice successes and failures, and to never stop trying.

Under-mining Capitalist Ideology with Historical Materialism

My research seeks to understand how particular forms of social organization have come to be the way they are—historically, materially, discursively and ecologically— in relation to school and community gardens and UA in Montreal. With Smith's (1987; 2006) and Foucault's (1972) theoretical underpinning for finding the tangible properties that the conceptual interpretations disguise (and that empower their production and use), I have uncovered peoples' every day and every night activities in material sites like gardens, schools, community organizations and in different areas of Montreal, and uncovered how gardening and UA activities are coordinated textually across history, time and space. Informed by Marx and Engels (1974, see below), in much of her work, Dorothy Smith philosophically and analytically describes how things have come to be the way they are by piecing together research methods and findings to highlight the complexities and problematics that emerged through inquiry. Building on Smith's (1987) slant toward feminist historical materialism, Bannerji's (2020) more recent orientation attends closely to the politics of historical representation, the association of "historical writing

and history making to the 'relations of ruling' and their institutional/cultural discursivities and ideologies" (Bannerji, 2020, p. 82).

As my research and analysis evolved and I began to make sense of gardening problematics with others involved in the project, I was directed to explore more about the historical aspects of what I was observing and documenting what was shaping my garden work in schools, community organizations and in different areas of the City of Montreal. Exploring historical narratives and how different historical economic shifts around urban areas connect to mine and other work processes has been important to showing that concepts and ideas are not static; rather, they are part of the ongoing discursive techniques that uphold and rationalize colonial and capitalist ideology (Fanon, 2008; Said, 1979; Smith, 1987; Bannerji, 2020). Subscribing to Bannerji (2020), my tracing in this sense has been to intentionally interrogate and critique the "colonial, "nationalist," "masculine", and "elite" discourses that suppress the historical and contemporary "social relations of power, of deeply antagonistic contradictions that create 'differences' (pp. 82-83).

Central to the approaches of Smith (1987), Bannerji (1995; 2020) and other seminal scholars (Fanon, Said, Coulthard) in this line of theory is Marx and Engels's (1987) scathing critique of philosophy, western epistemology and capitalism found in *The German Ideology*. Here, Marx and Engels (1987) employ aspects of Hegelian reasoning to outline how European society had departed from feudalism into industrialism and capitalism and suggest that the response to the ills and inequalities of both feudalism and capitalism be addressed with communism. To oversimplify, Hegelian philosophy was the dominant ideology in 18th century Germany. It suggested that society advances through a process of thesis, antithesis, synthesis, hence the example of feudalism (thesis), capitalism (antithesis), communism (synthesis). Marx

and Engels (1976) attempted to resist this Hegelian approach and proposed historical materialism as an alternative. They argued that humans first ought to eat, stay warm/dry, have shelter and clothing before pursuing culture, politics, art, and philosophy. Contrary to Hegel's premise which argued that ideology advanced human society, Marx and Engels (1976) contend that material and economic forces and human relationships with the physical, biological and natural world also influence how societies advance, survive and thrive. As a species, humans have been living off the earth and its resources for as long as we have existed (Mulligan, 2015). However, as many humans were dislocated from their land through industrialization and colonial and capitalist land grabs (see below), they were then forced to sell their labour for their survival.

During industrialization, economic growth discounted and concealed the effects that resource extraction, depletion and pollution have on the environment. Environmentally, the main issue with growth economics and capitalism as an ideology is that it assumes the earth's resources are infinite. As Waring (1995) and Klein point (2014) out, with this logic, ecological disasters like oil spills are good for the economy as clean-up efforts create jobs thus creating economic growth. This growth mindset is founded on the idea that nature and its resources will automatically and eternally restore themselves and that human labour is a commodity. This treatment of humans and the natural world as separate commodities to be rationalized, exchanged and consumed makes it plausible to understand how humans in western societies feel that they have ownership over nature and have *distanced* themselves from nature while on the contrary, humans have a biological dependence on nature (clean air, water, food, etc.; Wilson, 2014).

As more humans began to populate cities during industrialization, people began to feel disconnected from nature as many greenspaces like parks and gardens were designed (and reserved) for the wealthy (Gandy, 2008). As rural workers moved into industrialized urban

centres, the city was seen as being in direct conflict with rural life and the natural world (see urban political ecology below). As Marx and Engels (1987) note, under capitalism human labour is separated from the material conditions of labour. They argue that ideology, or the creation and proliferation of ideas that all people imagine and conceive related to "politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics" (p. 47) and so on, serves to legitimize the views and social positioning of the ruling class. Capitalist ideology allows for the violence and oppression inherent in economic growth to be obscured, which serves to uphold the ruling class in its position of power. According to Marx and Engels, this kind of mystification through ideology often leads to the same kinds of contradictions that I have come to notice in my work. Whereas I teach and work for social and environmental justice, I am nonetheless willing to engage in behaviours that run in direct contrast to the social and environmental ethos that I describe to ensure that my projects persist. Marx and Engels (1998;1990) and Dorothy Smith (1987) implored me to attend to the material conditions of society and the social and environmental relations of my gardening and UA work. Therefore, beyond simply interpreting these contradictions as data, my research seeks to show what's actually happening to people who are working in and with gardens and for social and environmental justice (access to education, employment, food production for food security, etc.) in schools, community organizations and different neighbourhoods of Montreal.

While I had hoped that creating gardens in multiple locations (McGill University, public schools, several community organizations, and in different neighbourhoods of Montreal) would open up opportunities for teaching, research and school and community-based social and environmental justice work, this unexpectedly came at the expense of other important values that I professed, and additional unanticipated labour for myself and others. For example, funding gardens and garden teams meant entering into financial agreements for producing specific kinds

of UA and gardens using unproblematized narratives that do not address to the history and complexity of relations emerging from what gardens and UA would do (encourage sustainability, provide employment, address food insecurity, build community, allow for teaching on, about and for the environment, etc.). These processes inserted me into a discursive realm that displaced the actual material relations of my work creating gardens and gardening opportunities.

What was initially unseen in my approach to gardening for social and environmental justice and the *Gardening for Food Security* project was that for this work to be economically and environmentally sustainable, I had to devote substantial time and labour to structuring the conditions to make gardens sustainable and the project operational for the organizations with whom we partnered, and the youth garden team members. This translated to me working over 80 hours each week, as I also needed to attend to my material and financial needs, and to actually conduct research and not just 'community and educational garden work.' In the hecticness that I created when working more than fulltime teaching at different universities and managing multiple gardens and a garden team, I departed from the social and environmental justice ethos of this project (employing and mentoring youth; connecting people to gardens; supporting teachers in garden creation and garden teaching; and, creating gardens specifically for food insecure people in Montreal) and actively participated in what Ahmed (2012) describes as audit culture. Because of my commitments to granting bodies and institutions, I was sometimes more concerned with *reporting* on the gardening work, than the actual relational work of supporting youth, or the gardening work itself.

To demonstrate that the gardens were 'social,' 'environmental', and could provide educational opportunities, gardens needed to look a certain way and needed to produce food to support food security initiatives. I had to view the non-human garden world of groundhogs,

racoons, and birds as garden pests or *competition* for garden produce, rather than equal elements of in an interconnected ecosystem. To ensure employment for garden team members and garden infrastructure for schools and community organizations, I accepted funding from agencies that were concurrently investing in fossil fuel initiatives and from settler colonial government programs that hooked myself and others into sequences that did not fit with their already vulnerable and precarious lives. In addition to reflexively realizing the contradictory nature and troubling ethics within my behaviours, and how my relationship with the natural world transformed to fit the project, I also began to recognize how my interactions with garden team members, teachers and community workers also *shifted* as I moved from being a friend/mentor/gardener to a role of a direct supervisor asking them for timesheets and the precise tasks that they undertook. In wanting to do garden-based work with youth and adults, and with hopes of connecting them to the natural world while providing employment and mentorship, my research began to reveal multiple issues for consideration and I had to confront the many tensions of working with gardens, aiming to improve social and environmental injustices in Montreal.

Urban Political Ecology

My research took place in Tio'tia:ke or Montreal. Like many settler colonial cities (Hugill, 2017), Montreal has followed a particular colonial and economic development plan that is historically and materially connected to what I have observed over the past four years of engaging in ethnographic and visual research. Because gardens are often located on and *in* land, looking historically at how land has transformed and what ecological or environmental relations emerged has brought another important dimension to my research. Cities are often considered to

be completely separate or at odds with nature and the natural world; however, Jacobs (1961/1992) has argued that cities are as natural as a bed of oysters or insect colonies like beehives. Harvey (2006) claims that there is nothing *unnatural* about cities and Kaika (2005) rightly points out how everything humans interact with in an urban environment is nature that has been transformed and commodified with the integration of human labour and capital investment. Employing an urban political ecology framework can help complicate the bifurcation of cities and nature in western epistemology's very limited social imaginary. Like IE, urban political ecology is informed by Marxism due to its profoundly historical and material approach to making sense of urban geographies while also pointing to the multi-scalar developments and relations of power, including dispossession by capital accumulation (Heynan, 2014). I employ urban political ecology to direct attention towards and reveal contradictions in how capitalist and settler colonial forms of production and neoliberal governance shape cities in deeply unjust and uneven ways.

Urban political ecology suggests that humans cannot begin to explore urban issues like access to gardens and greenspaces, emission and waste reduction, poverty, homelessness, transportation, policing and healthcare without understanding the environmental problems and historical relations that shape them (Kaika, 2005). In line with my use of IE and its historical materialist commitment to uncovering objectified forms of consciousness and the social and ruling relations, I use urban political ecology to connect and analyze social relations with the environmental and ecological issues that cities like Montreal are currently encountering (climate change, greening, green gentrification, water, waste and emission reduction/management, food production, etc.).

Even the simple and taken for granted action of turning on the garden hose or water tap opens an entire network of social and environmental relations ranging from land use, natural resources, infrastructure, technology, human labour and a system of movement that transports environmental resources like water from the source, through treatment, and into our urban homes and gardens. When looking at cities as *nature transformed*, areas that appear natural and biodiverse in the city like gardens, green alleys (*ruelles vertes* in Montreal) and greenspaces are instead understood as *unnatural* and primed for critical social and environmental illumination. For example, creating and maintaining gardens, and adhering to common conceptions of what gardens and nature ought to look like, requires constant efforts in the form of human labour (physical, intellectual, emotional, administrative), financial capital (grant funding), and land and natural resources (soil, water, sunlight, etc.). Urban political ecology oriented my research to explore *how* gardens, garden programming, environmental policies (greening, waste reduction, composting, active transportation, etc.), and social policies (urban renewal, gentrification and other economic strategies for growth, education, housing, and so on) are inextricably linked to global social, political, and economic structures (Cornea, 2019).

The Ongoing Accumulation of Capital

Marx's (1990) conception of the primitive accumulation of capital is also helpful in exploring how UA and gardens have played a role in relation to larger economic strategies like colonization, settlement and gentrification in Montreal (see below). Marx and Engels (1976) remind us that dispossession is always coupled with accumulation. Among the many historic examples the authors use to illustrate their point, they refer to the Highland Clearances as one example for showing how profit was placed above the wellbeing of people as inhabitants of the

Scottish Highlands were expropriated from their lands and livelihoods. When Highland Clans started to refuse to be absorbed into capitalism and began to claim landownership of their historical territories, this triggered an even more aggressive and violent dislocation strategy (hanging of Highland Clan Chiefs). To further state his point about accumulation, Marx discusses the relationship between capitalism and colonialism in Africa, Asia (India and China) and the Americas and his account is harrowing and effective in showing how colonial nations imposed a brutal and sustained violent system of government to amass land and wealth. Marx and Engels (1974) labelled this process of acquiring land the primitive accumulation of capital.

By violently uprooting groups of people from their lands and resources, and by extension denying them of a place to live and make a living, displaced humans became refugees on their own land. The small-scale landownership of feudalism was superseded and replaced by large-scale property ownership, industrial farms, and large national corporations much like the East India Company or the Hudson's Bay Company. With extreme poverty, no shelter and limited resources for subsistence, many displaced peoples of the world were then subjected to legislation that punished them for being poor, hungry and homeless and they were forced to sell their labour for their survival. Marx and Engels (1974) refer to these policies enacted by monarchs and parliaments as the "bloody legislation" and argue that these kinds of laws had two underlying ideals. First, the laws intended to push the working-class into large agricultural work or city factories as poverty or "vagabonding" (p. 896) had become illegal. Second, by encouraging a mass exodus from certain land, driving many people to enter the workforce at the same time, legislation also focused on keeping wages low for workers to maintain a level of dependence on work for survival.

Shifting the Marxist analysis of capitalism to consider colonialism, land, and place-based ethics, Coulthard (2014) considers the accumulation of capital not as a historical moment but rather as an "ongoing practice of dispossession that never ceases" and that continues "to structure capitalist and colonial social relations in the present" (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016, p. 252). In this reconstruction, Coulthard also shows that colonial capital accumulation and land dispossession no longer require the same violence that Marx and Engels (1976) describe to achieve the same the same result of dispossession and economic growth through governmental policies. Coulthard (2014) suggests that the strategic legislative mechanisms designed to separate Indigenous bodies from reciprocal relationships with land forms the basis for white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, environmental degradation, anti-Black racism and other normalized forms of state sanctioned colonial violence. Also complicating the claim that primitive accumulation of capital happens only once, Rosa Luxemburg (2010) argued that for growth to persist, the ongoing dislocation, displacement and dispossession of people by systems of government must also continue. Luxemburg further (2010) argued that in societies with surplus wealth, cities would be used not only a place to live, but would naturally become geographical locations to engross capital so that resources would continue to flow back to the metropole. Luxemburg considered colonial and imperial culture, grand architecture, monuments, parks, beautiful streetscapes and gardens as a way to attract the wealthy to cities and increase the value of land.

Considering urban land in relation to urban gardening, there is an intrinsic tension between what Marxists calls "use value" and "exchange value" (Marx & Engels, 1976). Specific to land, "use value" is when a place or area is valuable to its inhabitants because it provides housing, gardens, parks, community centres and a community identity. On the other hand, the "exchange value" of a commodity is its potential economic worth in a market-economy. In

Canada's current capitalistic and settler colonial society where urban land has a "use" and an "exchange" value, places like community/collective/school gardens and community organizations working with people experiencing homelessness, housing precarity, and food insecurity will increasingly need to justify their use value, which (as land costs continue to rise) will be seen to be in conflict with the increased "exchange value" of their property in terms of a city's economic growth. In the current historical moment and urban context of my research, gardens (and greening) are being used for multiple purposes in gentrifying neighbourhoods. As neighbourhoods become more green, land becomes more valuable. In what I describe as 'green transformations' that work to increase the value of land, people and organizations are being dislocated from their homes, workplaces and social support networks. In many ways, gentrification mirrors the processes of capital accumulation, settler colonial ideology and dispossession through legislation (N. Smith, 2008; Elliott, 2019). Below, I further define and contextualize gentrification as a concept within historical political economic shifts that highlight how capital has moved in and out urban areas and that continue to shape the neighbourhoods in which I researched and gardened.

Gentrification

The use of the term *gentrification* is not new in academic literature or everyday vernacular, and the concept is inextricably linked to land. In Canada, issues and injustices encircling land are older than the country's colonial existence (Coulthard, 2014). Popular discourse and textual accounts of gentrification often label it as an organic process initiated by entrepreneurial locals and claim that gentrification is an inherently good thing for a

neighbourhood or a city as it can improve the social mix[13] of a district (Freeman; 2009; Geloso & Guenette, 2016). Atkinson (2002) describes gentrification as a process of transformation and dislocation of a lower income group of the population by those who possess higher incomes. Often, dislocation and displacement occur when people physically move from their homes to another location; however, the impacts can also be psychological as people who remain in a gentrified or gentrifying neighbourhood "may feel as if they were displaced from the social and cultural environment" (Mullenbach & Baker, 2020, p. 2), which Delaney (2004) has aptly termed "discursive displacement" (p. 849). Whether gentrification is viewed as positive or negative depends on one's ontological position (Slater, 2009) but regardless of worldviews, gentrification is a complex issue that involves social, economic, physical and material changes and considerations (Marcuse, 2015). However, gentrification, urban beautification (through greening) or neighbourhood improvement does not occur organically. Groups of people with higher income do not 'all of a sudden' and collectively decide to move into a historically lower-income area. Moreover, gentrification is not initiated by artistic or entrepreneurial individuals seeking to *revitalize* a post-industrial area of a city by installing additional gardens, opening a fancy restaurant, a wine bar or a coffee shop. Rather, gentrification is strategic and requires the structuring of multiple policies so that both private interests and governments can profit from the transformation of a neighbourhood (Moskowitz, 2017). Specific to Canadian cities that only have residential property taxes as a consistent stream of revenue to fund public operations (of which gardens are part), municipal governments are effectively hamstrung to encourage gentrification

[13] Social mixing is often described as an equitable policy proposal whereby lower income people will benefit from being located in the same area as wealthier residents; however, social mixing has also been called gentrification by stealth (Bridge, Butler & Lees, 2012), reflecting free-market economic shifts.

since cities do not have the legislative mechanisms to levy taxes on income or carbon. In my research, I have used gardens and UA as a lens through which to see how these larger and unseen gentrifying processes work in cities and this required a conceptual and historical investigation of urban history and political economic shifts.

As cities changed over time (industrialization, modernization, deindustrialization), urban studies scholar Phillip Clay (1979) observed four distinct phases of gentrification. The first phase is when individuals, without government support, start moving to a working-class neighbourhood. Next, others (usually with more capital) are attracted to the area due to cheap rent and property values and begin buying real estate. In this second phase of gentrification, the area begins to receive attention in the media, commending the neighbourhood for its revitalization while concurrently condemning it for pushing out the current inhabitants. The third stage is when larger institutional changes take place. This might mean additional social services (bus lines, new parks, community gardens, policing, etc.), and this is also when the social mix of the neighbourhood changes. In this stage, the new middle class is represented on local committees (city council, governing boards of schools, etc.). According to Clay (1979), the fourth and final phase of gentrification is when the neighbourhood becomes wealthy and displacement is rampant, often spilling over into adjoining, less gentrified neighbourhoods. At this stage, tensions and conflict between the neighbourhood's original or past community and its new inhabitants are present[14].

[14] Specific to the field of urban planning, I acknowledge Clay's (1979) work has been superseded by more recent and relevant analyses; however, for the purpose of this review, I intentionally situate my synthesis of literature *historically* (Bannerji, 1995; 2020) and want to underscore that public discourse does not move at the same speed as scholarship.

Extending Clay's (1979) work, influential Marxist geographer Neil Smith (1996) adds another layer that considers how gentrification is governed by the larger relations of global capitalism and foreign investment. In his seminal text on gentrification titled *The New Urban Frontier*, he draws parallels between the language and discourse encircling gentrification and exploitative approaches inherent in colonialism, and suggests that certain neighbourhoods in cities have become the "urban frontier" (p. 26). Recently, Haudenosaunee author Alicia Elliott discusses big city capitalism and its colonial legacy in Toronto, Ontario. Elliot (2019) weaves together the gentrification of a Toronto neighbourhood and her personal history of displacement while discussing how Indigenous people have been "displaced on their own lands" (p. 43) and how this displacement interacts with institutions like schooling and social services (healthcare, policing and so on). She equates gentrifiers and by extension settlers to "tourists" (p. 44) who bring in capital to erase the history of the place and exploit its natural resources for financial gain. Implicit and subtle in Elliot's writing is that gentrification is not just an erasure of land and its history, it is also an erasure of people's personal, social and cultural history. She reminds her readers that when Toronto was Tkaronto, it was ruled by a treaty (Dish with One Spoon) between and amongst nations that was based on sharing, peace and reciprocity. Now, Toronto, like Montreal, is governed by bylaws that seek to violently undo and undermine those ideas of sharing and reciprocity in favour of capital gain, human displacement and exploitative practices. While Tkaronto and Toronto (and Tio'tia:ke and Montreal) are the same geographical locations, they are no longer the same place.

Urban Renewal, Suburban Development and White Flight

Prior to the infrastructure projects that smashed through neighbourhoods in the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government of Canada had begun implementing housing strategies for urban renewal due to very little spending on housing during the great depression and World War II (Linteau, 1992). In 1944, the National Housing Act (NHA) structured a joint lending program between banks and the federal government for homeowners and buyers and in 1946 the Canadian (called Central at the time) Mortgage and Housing Corporation was created to administer the NHA (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; DeVertreuil, 1993). Through funding schemes, the NHA allowed for "acquisition and clearing of land suitable for public housing (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992, p. 53) and by 1956, the act was amended with federal aid for the purpose of clearing "urban slums for purposes other than housing" (DeVertreuil, 1993, p. 26).

With the increasing demand for urban renewal due to the policy shifts (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992), between 1958-1968 Montreal destroyed 15 000 housing units and created only 800 (Melamed, Schachter & Emo, 1984). It is also important to note that at the time when people in the inner city were being dispossessed of their homes, the NHA amendments were designed to bolster government support of private lending agencies. As such, the actual mortgage support for homebuying was only "available to the top third of Canadian homebuyers" (Milner, 1969, p. 431) who were mostly white. In 1964, additional and substantial amendments to the NHA significantly increased financial support for urban revitalization and shifted the responsibility for public housing creation and decision-making from the federal government to both the provinces and urban municipalities (Oberlander & Fallick, 1991). Both Montreal and Quebec set up their own programs (Rose, 2000). Almost immediately, the amendment had an impact as it allowed the inner city to deteriorate, as most funding was directed to suburban developments where there was more capacity for capital to be generated. At the time, urban renewal was synonymous with

the displacement of the working-class, and sought to enable *non-resident* or tourist use of the former neighbourhoods (Carrol, 1990). For example, in Montreal, housing in the Sud-Ouest and the Centre-Sud was destroyed and was replaced by parking lots (Melamed et al., 1984). In response to public opposition to urban renewal in cities across Canada (highways were being built through Toronto and Vancouver as well), the federal government formed a task force on housing and urban development and engaged the public from across the country in large-scale participatory democracy that led to creation of the Hellyer Report (named after the transport minister of the time).

After World War II, as many cities in North America developed and modernized, the availability of cheap land, new construction, travel advancements, and federal subsidies for highways and suburban housing led many wealthier residents away from urban centres (Jackson, 1985). This shift from city to suburbs was marketed and strategized as a means to generate capital through additional land grabs. The suburbs were constructed and promoted as a refuge from the city and for a life of secluded individuality (Moskowitz, 2017). Moreover, as Moskowitz notes, they "were a necessary project in North America to maintain a hyper-capitalist, individualistic, patriarchal and racist society" (p. 157). At the time, the creation of the suburbs was considered a very strange idea. Hayden (2003) notes that even the wealthy needed convincing to make their lifestyle more inconvenient. The suburbs were marketed through media programming in post-war North America depicting joyful housewives using new kitchen appliances and men driving to their jobs in big fancy American cars (Moskowitz, 2017). The "ideal house came to be viewed as resting in the middle of a manicured lawn or picturesque garden" (Jackson, 1985, p. 47-48).

If popular culture of 1950s did not encourage enough of an exodus from cities, governments also supported white middle-class people moving to suburbs with subsidies, which came in the form of home loans, fuel subsidies and new highways to suburban developments; however, for Black people in America and Canada who were mostly living in urban centres, the experience at the time was much different (High, 2010). Racist housing policies like 'redlining' consisted of restricted and targeted loans in specific geographical areas designed to force many North American Black families into city centres, while the rest of a city's population moved to the suburbs (Harris & Forrester, 2003). By depressing the market-economy in cities and for low-income homes, government investment shifted toward supporting single family homes outside of the city limits (Jackson, 1985). In the United States (US), mortgages for single family homes are still subsidized today through a tax deduction that rises corresponding to the price of the new home. In other words, the more the house costs, the larger the government subsidy. Moskowitz (2017) states that the cost of these tax breaks adds up to four to five times more than the US government devotes to public housing. In many US cities, white flight and departure from the city centre also translated to the loss of the city's residential tax base. Less municipal tax leads to fewer social services, including fewer and less well-maintained parks, gardens and other recreational opportunities.

In a Canadian context, Harris and Forrester's (2004) account details how the development of Canada's suburbs mirrored that of United States but argues there were further factors to consider in Canada, especially with regard to regional differences. He contests that suburbs were designed to cater to the upper and middle classes in the Canadian context and uses the blue-collar suburban development around Hamilton and Toronto to substantiate his point that viewing the suburbs as an urban refuge is far too simplistic. Like the US, redlining along racial-

ethnic lines in Canada was made possible by lending agencies, insurance companies and governments in geographical locations outside of municipal jurisdictions where land was *yet to be 'claimed'* or developed (Harris & Forrester, 2003). In Canadian cities, the creation of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) compounded by comprehensive municipal by-laws led to conditions that eventually allowed for privatization of public land and large-scale corporate development took hold in line with other neoliberal shifts of the time (Harvey, 2008).

Specific to Montreal, Lewis, (2000; 2001) showed how "local political and economic alliances created the physical, ideological and legal structures" (Fiedler & Addie, 2008, p. 6) that allowed public, social and industrial space to have flexibility for urban sprawling and capitalistic growth. Therefore, the industrial suburbanization of Montreal was created alongside the development of suburban working-class neighbourhoods so that the new industries had labourers in close proximity. This logic followed that of Montreal's urban areas where working-class quarters along the industrial corridor of the Lachine Canal ensured that workers were never far from the factories. As such, the creation of many Montreal suburbs occurred in tandem with decentralizing of working-class neighbourhoods by offering affordable housing in response to employment demands in particular areas. Lewis (2000; 2001) concludes that the social and human geography of Montreal in many ways reflects the waves of urban and suburban industrial development that have fragmented the city along class, occupational, racial-ethnic and linguistic lines.

Deindustrialization, Back to Cities and Rent Gap Theory

After suburban land was developed and suburban real estate prices increased, profit from this development began to plateau. Developers and governments had two main options for pursuing ongoing profit and investment. First, they could continue to expand the suburbs in areas further away from the city. Second, they could return their investment to the cities, which were facing white flight and rapid deindustrialisation. In North America, both options were pursued. By exploring the urban history and urban transformative processes associated with this era, N. Smith (1979) created rent gap theory. By closely examining tax data and land transformations, Smith (1979) was able to pinpoint areas of cities that appeared primed for gentrification. Analyzing the core tenets of capitalism and the free-market economy, Smith argues that the more disinvested land becomes, the more profitable it is to gentrify. In other words, capital will 'organically' move to wherever there is the highest potential rate of return for land purchase and real estate development, which is often in working-class and immigrant neighbourhoods.

N. Smith's (1979) findings showed that in urban areas marked for change, buildings were often in disrepair and thus could be purchased cheaply. Like Clay (1979), Smith also observed that these areas with buildings in disrepair were typically close to other gentrifying neighbourhoods and as such, could handle the overflow of displacement from the surrounding areas. In sum, rent gap theory showed the gap between how much land and properties were worth in their dilapidated state and how much they would be worth after gentrification had taken place. Using his theory, Smith (1979) correctly predicted the gentrification of many neighbourhoods in New York City, including the Lower East Side and Harlem. His investigation uncovered that gentrification happened soon after buildings reached their highest levels of tax debt, which signaled that landlords were not paying their taxes and/or were not maintaining their buildings in preparation for sale or renovation. Given Montreal's aging housing stock (Rose,

2000; 2010), lower rents and land value when compared with other large cities, quantity of older buildings (often the reasoning for low rent), and number of neighbourhoods with the capacity to handle the overflow from human displacement, many neighbourhoods in the city are ideal for gentrification.

The Creative Class

For the past several decades, cities like Montreal have worked to create the conditions to grow their knowledge-based economies, creative industries, educational institutions, and technology sectors. Along with real estate development, government intervention and private investment, gentrification is often attributed to groups of people with particular cultural and consumption preferences (i.e. artists, hipsters, creatives, etc.,). In urban studies theorist Richard Florida's (2002) influential yet heavily critiqued text, *The Rise of The Creative Class*, he urges cities to attract the "creative class" as a means for urban revitalisation. According to Florida, the "creative class" is a group of people whose economic purpose is to generate new ideas and new content and this distinction is meant to highlight a shift away from an industrial or manufacturing-based workforce to the knowledge-based and creative economies. As cities were divested, deindustrialized and 'renewed' through the modernization and development of decades past, Florida's (2002) book provided a blueprint for bringing people and capital back to urban centres. Because industry had been moved to either the suburbs (due to urban deindustrialization) or overseas (due to globalization), Florida sought to turn every worker into a 'creative worker.' While Florida (2002) does not outline how to turn workers into creatives, he does explain that creating the material and living conditions attractive to artists, hipsters and millennials–who apparently enjoy an active lifestyle (but not team sports), art, antiques, and fancy but casual

restaurants and bars – will generate revenue for a city (Florida, 2002; Moskowitz, 2017). For Montreal, this blueprint has been crucial for its recent economic resurgence. An example of the City's efforts to attract creatives is the rebranding of its neighbourhoods by local Chambers of Commerce (or SDCs in French, *Sociétés de Development de Commerce*) to highlight their creativity and uniqueness.

To combat the loss of capital from industry and manufacturing, Florida (2002) instructs cities to invest in three sectors that will drive the new knowledge-based and creative economy: technology, education, and tolerance. For many politicians, Florida's (2002) proposal is ideal insofar that it is a safe political shift as theoretically taxes need not be raised, no additional infrastructure needs to be built, and no new bylaws need to be passed to enact his suggestions. On the flip side, to attract the tech industry and higher education institutes, and to promote tolerance, cities need to incentivize, offer tax breaks, and rebrand along creative lines. What's not mentioned in Florida's (2002) book or in Montreal's creative branding is that attracting new industries and "creatives" into the different parts of the city comes at the expense of displacing others, usually lower-income and racialized people. Florida (2002) acknowledges that ignoring these residents and organizing the city along geographic and economic lines only perpetuates racial and economic segregation in ways that replicate white flight and the city vs. suburb divide. In this sense, when cities like Montreal subscribe to Florida's (2002) logic of attracting the creative class and his recommended knowledge-based economic investment strategies, these gentrifying cities are participating in, supporting, and socially and environmentally organizing inequality.

Ecological, Environmental or Green Gentrification

The process of pairing gentrification with positive environmental change that can function to displace the people who this environmental change intends to benefit is called ecological (or eco), environmental and/or green gentrification (Dooling, 2008). Over the past few decades, it appears that every urban renewal or revitalization project involves some form of *greening* through gardens, greenspaces, urban forests, tree-lined streets, green alleys, and UA. Specific to gardens, greening and UA, scholars have noted that the increased implementation of gardens/urban greening often attracts white, higher income residents who change the social fabric of the community (Lebowitz & Trudeau, 2017; McClintock, 2018) and that these garden projects often do not have clear access (for all residents) nor social justice planning inherent in their initiatives. More recently, this environmental slant to urban renewal has been promoted and often overstated by city officials and developers as a way to increase urban environmental sustainability and to intervene with the current impacts of climate change in cities (Goossens et al., 2019; Ville de Montreal, n.d.) further obscuring the actual social and environmental relations of urban renewal, gentrification and greening.

On the surface, many greening efforts appear to have social and environmental justice considerations embedded in their employment (increasing greenspaces in many areas of the city that were previously divested, reducing the urban heat island impact); however, these initiatives have also served to 'hold land' or increase the value of land, which leads to displacement and dispossession inherent in accumulation processes like gentrification. In a poignant example of how greening and gardening can obscure social and environmental relations, Quastel (2013) employed urban political ecology to reveal green and garden problematics when a Vancouver developer created a community garden on an empty lot they owned. While the developer divided the unused land into smaller plots, they also installed advertising that indicated that interested

gardeners could call a number to reserve their plot. However, despite the public presentation of the garden, the underlying purpose was not to increase access to recreational opportunities, food security or urban gardening. Rather, it was to make gardens marketable and consumable in similar ways to other urban amenities like health clubs (Quastel, 2013; Garr, 2008). Furthermore, when asked about the garden, the developer informed reporters that they created the garden mainly to cleanse their image (made possible due to the overwhelmingly positive discourse often associated with gardening) and avoid public safety issues as people experiencing homelessness would often gather and 'trespass' on unused land as Vancouver's homelessness crisis intensified.

In the past, urban gardens were often used as part of tenant resistance to rising rents and private real estate development. In contrast, now gardens are appearing as part of these real estate developments, which disguises how gardens were once created as very political acts in these same material sites of production. In redeveloped neighbourhoods, public gardens that once helped "take land out of the market economy" and 'decommodify' it" (Zukin, 2010, p. 211), now function as symbols of "authentic" urban communities, more apt to reflect the consumption habits of the new urban middle class, such as preferences for "local, organic" foods, rather than to offer refuge for people who can no longer afford to live in the neighbourhood (Loughran, 2014, p. 51). Other studies on green gentrification argue that environmental or sustainability shifts in urban areas can increase economic pressure on lower-income residents that might lead to their displacement. Recently, Anguelovski et al. (2019) even proposed the term "green gap" to describe how environmental or *green* interventions mediated by municipalities and private interests that were originally framed under discourses of public good for all, result in "rent gaps," (N. Smith, 1979) land speculation and dispossession. Importantly, cities do not just *green* or *gentrify* because of the choices or actions of developers seeking profit or of citizens like me who

possess green or creative consumption preferences. For gentrification or large-scale greening to take place, there needs to be intervention, active participation and promotion by institutions large enough to influence and synchronize policy: That is, the municipal, provincial and federal governments.

Synthesizing the Social with the Environmental

In this chapter, I have described the theoretical resources and concepts that have informed my research and have been important for making sense of my analysis at both the local and global level. Drawing on several converging and at times overlapping theorists (Smith, Marx & Engels, Foucault, Bannerji, Heynan) and theories (IE, historical materialism, urban political ecology), my inquiry makes visible social and *environmental* relations that connect my embodied experience (and the experience of others) to the discursive, economic and policy organization of UA and urban gardening in different contexts (schools, community organizations, and so on) in Montreal. In outlining theories, concepts and urban shifts, it has not been my intention to map each and every tension between and amongst history and ideas, nor to create a new or comprehensive theoretical framework; rather, my prerogative is to report on the unseen and under-examined social and ecological relations of school and community gardens and UA and dissect the role of discourses encircling the employment of UA and urban greening in different areas of the city. Like other IEs, my work is informed by feminist historical materialism. Different from all other IEs that I have encountered, I employ urban political ecology as a supplementary heuristic for tracing the environmental alongside the social into the powers of current and historical government policies, urban shifts, land dispossession, real estate development, consumption, and social organizations as they act in relation to urban ecologies

and discourses of gardening, greening and sustainability. Tracing the consequences and problematics of such discourses on gardening, greening and gentrification, and tracing how gardens, UA, greening and gentrification exploit such discourses contributes to showing how social, educational and environmental narratives and policies involve issues of distribution, power, and inequity

In bringing many theories to orient my IE research toward a more environmental and ecological focus, I embarked into several deep explorations of intersecting historical and legislative texts on topics including land, food, economics, immigration, housing, transport, consumption, real estate and beyond to connect what I (and others gardening in Montreal) am seeing in my research to the larger translocal systems of coordination that form ideas and subjectivities (Smith, 2006). My work specifically considers the embodied experiences of working in a garden for social, environmental and educational purposes, finding garden funding, accessing land, accessing healthcare to be able to work in the garden as gardening is hard physical labour, traveling to and from gardens located within a city, and interacting with multiple government and school policies, to the embodied experiences of others attempting to do the same. Moving away from the urban/nature and nature/human/culture dualities, and to make sense of how larger global economic shifts have altered cities across time and space, I explore how the historic use of land, and the city's relationship with its natural environments (parks, greenspaces, and gardens) have evolved and what social, environmental and ruling (power) relations are involved in this evolution. In in my exploration of gardens, I also deconstruct the ways that gardening, greening and gentrification are reliant on transformation of the natural world into commodities and how different urban processes produce disproportionate social and environmental outcomes for students, teachers, community workers and community members.

In closing, the *Gardening for Food Security Project* that forms the central data of this research was deemed fundable and worthwhile by governments and private foundations because I strategically used dominant narratives about the social, environmental and educational potential of gardens to speak to the wide, unquestioned and objectified social and environmental benefits of gardening and UA initiatives. In wanting to create gardens for social, environmental and educational reasons, I prioritized short-term project and garden objectives like the employment of team members and mediating garden experiences, and did not consider the long-term ecological and/or social impacts of my work. Noting these contradictions in my garden work and in conceptions of gardens has prompted me to consider how UA and gardens are connected to larger historic systems of capital and to consider what the social and environmental implications of these larger connections might be on people working, living and learning in schools, community organizations and different neighbourhoods of Montreal.

Chapter Two: The Research

IE is an analytic project that can be realized using a myriad of techniques and research methods and there is no *right* or *one* way to go about doing it as long as IE's central analytical, epistemological and ontological commitments are maintained. Recall that IE's ethnographic and analytic emphasis is not people and their interactions but rather the organizing social and institutional relations that shape people's every day and every night experiences. I conducted an empirical investigation of garden and UA creation, discourse, practice, policy, and pedagogy that extends from: 1) my own embodied position teaching environmental education, gardening and UA in institutions (schools and universities) and socially organizing gardening/UA projects in schools, a university and different community-based organizations; and 2) the experiences of educators, administrators, schoolboard employees, and community workers in different contexts and neighbourhoods of the City of Montreal. In other words, in the upcoming chapters, I ethnographically and textually examine: garden funding; garden teams and garden labour; gardening with and without land and permissions; the political and educational history of gardens and greening in Montreal and elsewhere; and, what's relevant from my analysis for other urban gardeners, educators, community workers and community members. My study includes multiple datasets (e.g., fieldnotes, photographs, cellphilms, interviews, policy/textual) that explore how school and community gardening and UA are socially (and environmentally) organized to produce outcomes that often obscure the original intention of the garden or social/environmental initiative. I open this chapter by explaining how I used visual methodologies within an overarching IE frame. I then describe the research sites, my research participants, my idiosyncratic research design, my research methods and my ongoing approach to

data analysis. Because this community-based gardening work and IE research took place in Montreal, I devote a section of this chapter to critically situating Montreal as a research setting.

Visuals for Reading the Social and Environmental

In many ways, visual methodologies (VM) and IE share *common* ground as both approaches to inquiry are informed by activist and sociological foundations while starting in actual material sites like gardens (Mitchell, De Lange & Moletsane, 2017). In my use of visual methodologies, I subscribe to Mitchell (2011) who includes "visual tools such as photography, video, drawing, and objects as artifacts worthy of analysis for data representation and dissemination…related to social change" (Mitchell, 2011, p. xi). These methods have evolved to include a range of "high-tech approaches" like digital platforms, photovoice, digital storytelling, geographical information systems (GIS), participatory video such as cellphilms (videos made with a cellphone) and "low tech" (Mitchell et al., 2017, p. 23) approaches like drawing. Given that discourse emerges in socially organized ways that are mediated by texts (Foucault, 1969; Smith, 1990) and that today, more than ever, many people are creating and sharing movies, music videos, music, photography and printed words, using VMs within IE has offered me interesting and pertinent readings as I continue to revisit the historical moments that were captured 'on film'. Implicit (and at times explicit) in Mitchell's (2011; 2017) writing is how she pushes and inspires researchers to do more good than harm. I see many parallels between Mitchell's (2011) theorizing and much of the theorizing in IE. She writes:

> If we think that change is always about someone else, or about some division of policy-making *out there*, we fail to recognize that all of us who engage in research, visual or otherwise, are already in positions to affect some change or some social action

> somewhere. We can do that most effectively when we attend to the details of both production and display. Let us, then, be haunted by images, and work with communities in ways that ensure that others are similarly haunted. (p. 216)

Mitchell's (2011) theorizing encourages and evokes emotions while recognizing that research needs to be situated in the actual everyday experiences of research participants, much like tenets of IE that Smith (1987; 2006) describes. In much of Mitchell's work, she discusses and presents striking photographs, drawings, films and other forms of inquiry without objectifying these experiences.

Like Smith's (1990) resistance to traditional approaches to sociology, Mitchell (2011) instructs researchers not to use theory to describe or analyze the images: instead, she is interested in exploring the *big picture* per se. Mitchell's (2011) research orientation resonates with Smith's (2016) notion of under-mining – that is, finding the tangible properties that the conceptual interpretation disguises and that empower its production and use. What resonates most with my own thinking and research in Mitchell's (2011) use of the VM is how art and visual research needs to tell the truth: truths that we often forget and need to be reminded of. I originally came across this notion when reading Aristotle, but Mitchell (2011) rightly points out that too often images are unproblematized and meant to provide an "extra truth" or in other words "they simply speak for themselves" (p. xxi), especially when these images are created by members of a community.

While images do have the potential to speak for themselves, they may offer even more when further studied and interrogated by those involved in the research processes. Combining photography with my IE research processes (McCoy, 1995) has enhanced my data as taking

photos (and videos) and analyzing these images allowed me to enter new discursive realms, see new gardens differently and interpret familiar gardens and locations in new ways. Furthermore, while visually documenting (in the form of fieldnotes) the ecological and physical changes in gardens (i.e., public gardens changing from generic flowers to beds full of herbs and vegetables) and neighbourhoods (recently established bus lines, additional/redesigned gardens and greenspaces, e.g., see Image 2 below), I began to bring into view what government policies encircling social and environmental issues *look like* from my evolving embodied gaze. In sum, IE seeks to reveal people's work practices that can be connected across time and space by paying attention to the political, economic and administrative systems that produce and shape diverging human experiences while VM (2011) encourages researchers to make data collection and representation visual. In this sense, my research seeks to make the unseen visible for more evocative readings related to *how gardens work* and *what gardens are doing* in Montreal.

Visual and Ethnographic Embodiment

Throughout my research processes, I used my body as an entry point to the research problematic, interrogating and elucidating how my White, masculine, able body intersects with my research in spaces and places like schools, municipal government/citizen service offices, community organizations, different neighbourhoods and gardens. For example, I reflect on why it is that my privileged cisgender masculine body is unquestioned, belongs, is welcome, and is often invited into gardens while other bodies are not? As my data will show in the following chapters, the bodies of people experiencing homelessness often do not enter community and/or public facing gardens in the city of Montreal as most gardens and public spaces are enclosed by fences, locked gates and other actual physical barriers to entering. The presence of an 'outsider'

entering this enclosed area is typically alarming to community garden members and there have been times where the police have been called on someone who enters a community garden, who does not have a plot and as such, "*doesn't belong"* (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019).

Important to this work is how I position myself and the use of my body as *texts* within a historical moment open to critical analysis for exploring social and environmental relations. I engage my body in work processes that allow me to *make gardens work*. Therefore, discussions emerging from my reflections on this embodied work seek to present my body as connected to the social world of my research and as an important point of ethnographic access to the social organization of urban gardening. At times, conversations that begin in my body will not only describe the social relations that have allowed me to do this kind of garden work (lifting weights, biking, having 'free' time, and so on), they will also elucidate the social relations that continue and perpetuate my involvement in this work (e.g., English and French bilingualism, easy access to healthcare, grant funding, etc.). In terms of embodiment, Weber and Mitchell (2002) note how VMs influence researchers to bring their own bodies 'into the picture.' Viewing, positioning, taking the picture, and "revealing one's gaze" (Mitchell et al. 2007, p. 129) all suggest embodiment and I have attempted to do this in my research. Thinking through embodiment while revisiting my 'gaze' and considering "who am I in the picture?" (C. Mitchell, personal communication, February 18, 2019) throughout the research has provided me with different readings that have illuminated tensions within the data and community work (creating gardens that no longer had the same purpose as other gardens I created; see Chapter Four). Taking up Mitchell's (2011) encouragement for visual researchers to explore themselves (reflectively and reflexively through my photographic gaze), I used photographs to "reveal the process of [my] particular project and site[s]" (p. 136), and as fieldnotes. As such, I have read and analyzed these

photos “in the same way [as] written or audio taped/transcribes fieldnotes” p. 136; see Data Analysis below).

Situating the History of Montreal as a Research Setting

As I began to collect and analyze my doctoral data, I realized that situating my research and school/community gardening and UA within the City of Montreal’s current and historical social and environmental relations required further inquiry, nuance and contextualization. While I expand in greater detail in my analysis about the historiography of gardens, land, and capital in Chapter Six, before explicating my research design and methodological orientation, it is important to provide a brief overview of the distinct conditions in which we now garden and the historical and colonial moment we are inhabiting (Bannerji, 1995; 2020). Today, Montreal is the second largest Canadian city in terms of population and economic output (Statistics Canada, 2017), but that was not always the case. For most of the city’s colonial existence, Montreal was Canada’s cultural, industrial and economic centre. Montreal’s geographic location at the confluence of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers was of strategic importance for both French and English colonization. The city’s emergence as Canada’s economic driver in the 1800s is mostly attributed to its geography, particularly its location downstream of the Lachine rapids (Olson, 2004). The rapids, located in the Sud-Ouest of Montreal (in what is now the neighbourhoods of Lasalle and Verdun), were described as unnavigable by early settlers and were later used to power Canada’s first wave of industrialization (Tulchinsky, 1977, as cited in Moser et al., 2019). The construction of the Lachine Canal in 1825 to bypass the rapids positioned Montreal as a major port attracting industry and capital to the area with the promise of

more efficient shipping routes, ensuring that most goods entering Canada came through Montreal.

The combination of Montreal's location coupled with unregulated and exploitative colonial practices led to its unparalleled importance in Canada's development as a colonial nation (Jacobs, 2011). While France established a fur trading settlement in Montreal and claimed the city as theirs, they suffered several defeats in colonial conflicts and ceded the majority of the territory to the British. As the population and economy expanded during British colonial rule, English and Scottish merchants developed a disproportionate influence and control over politics, disenfranchising much of the majority Francophone population. By 1900, the Anglophone elite of the Golden Square Mile (the area around McGill University) controlled over 70 percent of Canada's wealth (Gersovitz, 1981). Throughout most of Montreal's (and Quebec's) colonial history, the majority Francophone population was subordinated by the Catholic church, Anglophone business interests (English and Scottish merchants like James McGill) and also by the ruling elite and political Francophone class. The subordination of the majority Francophone population reached a boiling point under anti-union Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis, who held power from 1944-1959.

In Quebec, the Quiet Revolution took place in the 1960s and signaled a rupture with Francophone oppression while concurrently giving rise to modern Quebec nationalism, the creation of a robust welfare state known as the 'Quebec Model' (subsidized education, daycare, etc.), and the increased acceleration of 'secularism' (Katz & Roussopoulos, 2017). In Montreal, however, the rise of Quebec nationalism and other social, political, intellectual and artistic movements were occurring during a pivotal time in the city's history and modernization (Jacobs, 1980). During this time, cars became the main mode of transportation while the city hosted

several major international events that continue to have a lasting imprint on the city's physical, social and environmental landscape. In 1967, Montreal hosted the Expo World Fair. Nine years later in 1976, Montreal hosted the Summer Olympic Games. In this same year, Quebec voted a separatist political party into power provincially: *Le Parti Quebecois* (PQ). Part of the new government's mandate was to encourage national sovereignty for Quebec, which led to two lasting political movements: First, the PQ implemented *Loi 101* or Bill 101: The Charter of the French Language; and next, the 1980 Quebec Referendum. At the time of these political shifts, along with ongoing tensions between and amongst the Francophone majority and the Anglophone and Allophone[15] minorities, there was an exodus of many corporations and a massive departure of Anglophones and Allophones, who left Quebec for other parts of Canada, mostly Toronto (Jacobs, 1980). Somewhere in these decades of political instability, Toronto overtook Montreal's economic output.

While many Western governments in the 1980s took a neoliberal turn in response to stagflation[16], the PQ in Quebec attempted to create a national welfare state: the Quebec Model (Katz & Roussopoulos, 2017). Described as progressive in some ways, the Quebec Model was nonetheless grounded in settler colonial and neoliberal ideologies as it included no environmental regulations and led to major dispossession of unceded Cree land, which the province took full advantage of for hydroelectric projects. While the Quebec government strengthened their financial growth through hydroelectric energy and other resource-based

[15] Allophone is a terminology only used in Quebec and Canada. It signifies that a resident speaks a language other than English or French.
[16] Stagflation is when wages stay low (stagnation) and cost of living increases (inflation).

industries, Montreal was spending large sums of money on events like the Summer Olympics while concurrently losing a huge portion of their residential tax base as many Anglophone residents moved to other parts of Canada.

Prior to hosting the Olympic Games, Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau had a contemporary urban vision for Montreal as a global city and was responsible for many of Montreal's large infrastructure projects like the construction of the metro, overpasses like the Turcot exchange that linked expressways from all directions, "a new (and now closed) mega-airport" (Moser et al., 2019, p. 127) and the expressways, which erased areas of the Sud-Ouest, as well as most of Chinatown (Chan, 1986; High, 2017). While Drapeau's public presentation of self was modernist, he was ultra-conservative. In his first term as mayor, he cut down 30 000 trees in Mont Royal Park to prevent illegal homosexual encounters (Podmore, 2015; Caron, 2018). Prior to homosexuality becoming legal in Canada in 1969, Drapeau encouraged police violence toward the LGBTQ2S community and gay businesses and discouraged nightlife, a discourse that ran counter to Montreal's previously progressive reputation as a jazz music and party city of pre-World War II (Gilmore, 1988, as cited in Moser et al., 2019). Drapeau had a major influence on the city and this influence persists, as his promotion of infrastructure development has enabled Montreal to generate capital via large international events and festivals, while concurrently dispossessing and dislocating specific and entire neighbourhoods under the banner of urban renewal.

Unlike other North American cities that at least pretended to consult citizens before making zoning changes, in Montreal, Mayor Jean Drapeau opted for an alternative plan that has been described in an economic sense as "laisser-faire," meaning that there were no public consultations, inequitable regulations to urban development, mirroring other neoliberal turns

inherent to that time (Moser et. al., 2019; Harvey, 1989). At the height of neoliberal government planning (during the 1970s and 1980s), Logan and Molotch (1987; 2007) argue that mayors and local governments shifted away from emphasizing the importance of housing affordability, good schools, robust social programs, and so on, and instead became more focused on transforming cities into economic growth machines. In other words, cities like Montreal have been forced to operate like a business and be profitable, which means using strategies that increase their residential tax base to offset the gaps in their budget. Urban renewal often aims to revitalize neighbourhoods to increase the value of land. Higher property values can yield higher rent and higher property taxes, which means more revenue for the city and extreme competition for land. It is in this context of capitalistic and neoliberal urban change that this study and my community gardening work is located. Along with revealing the social and environmental relations of school and community gardens, in the coming chapters, I additionally employ a historical materialist slant to trace how people's current experiences have been shaped by the history and policy structure of Montreal, and how "greening", beautification, greenspaces, gardens and UA have been used to achieve this objective through deindustrialization, gentrification and ongoing social and environmental ideological mystification.

Research Sites

While research took place in different areas and neighbourhoods across the City of Montreal, the main sites of gardening and data collection were a local public school called

English Park School[17], a community organization working with people experiencing homelessness, which I have renamed the Griffin House, McGill University, and a local garden and gardening initiative known as Greening Chinatown. Because my research developed from long-standing partnerships with teachers and community workers, these different sites allowed me to investigate the bureaucratic, discursive and political-economic organization of urban gardening programs from a range of different vantage points, paying attention to how particular processes work in different ways, depending on where and how one enters into them (e.g., whether an educator begins her gardening work in an organization serving people experiencing homelessness or at an elementary school where gardening is positioned as an extra-curricular activity). It is important to note that I spent more time in some locations than others based on the garden, community and pedagogical needs and wants of my collaborator/participants. For instance, I spent more research time at McGill University, English Park School and the Griffin House (as they need me to help create a garden and to structure and facilitate garden-based learning opportunities) and far less actual research time at Greening Chinatown.

The Griffin House

While the research emerged from my garden work at McGill, my research in the community sector began at the Griffin House, a community-based organization that provides front-line services to people experiencing homelessness. Specifically, the Griffin House offers a drop-in day centre, three meal services each day, an employability program, a food bank,

[17] As noted in the Introduction, the school's actual name is blinded to not identify my research participants.

recreation programming and other essential services. The Griffin House as a research site provided a distinctive perspective on urban gardening that was important to the analysis I offer in this dissertation. In collaboration with the Griffin House, I organized urban gardening opportunities for youth (both team members from the garden project and youth using the Griffin House services) and this partnership opened interesting inferences about the geographies of injustice (Maynard, 2017) that inflect UA initiatives. Conducting sustained community work and then research with the Griffin House allowed me to further track changes in programming, staffing, the house's location (as they were priced out of their original neighbourhood during my research and had to move locations) and the ramifications and significance of these changes on the focus and purpose of their gardens. Furthermore, working, observing and speaking with frontline community workers (formally and informally) allowed me to explore and discuss perspectives (i.e., those of front-line community workers, people experiencing homelessness) and themes (gentrification, poverty, etc.) often excluded from research related to environmental education, UA and garden-based research more broadly.

Greening Chinatown

Originally located in Chinatown, Greening Chinatown began as a collaboration with the Chinese Hospital in 2013, but has since moved locations four times because of changes in City regulations. As of 2021, Greening Chinatown is located in Laurier-Est/Rosemont, which is almost six kilometers away from their original location. Greening Chinatown describes itself as a gardening venture that seeks to promote a communal economy that values and includes financial and non-financial communal exchange and voluntary commitment amongst its members. While I did not spend the same amount of time with Greening Chinatown as I did at the Griffin House

garden, the initiative's story and our collaboration are important pieces of the puzzle for contextualizing the social and environmental relations of gardening within the confines of ever-changing municipal policies. Hearing first-hand how Greening Chinatown has experienced ongoing eviction and displacement outside of Chinatown has led me to explore how and why the organization's experiences (and the experiences of other organizations that have had to move locations) are materially connected to Montreal, Quebec and Canada's colonial history. It is important to note that I have not blinded nor changed the name of Greening Chinatown as requested by people involved in the initiative.

English Park School

Moving from the community sector to schools, my inquiry on school gardens was situated at an English public elementary school (K-6) described as multicultural, multi-ethnic and as celebrating its diversity. While English Park School is located in one of Montreal's most affluent neighbourhoods, it does not have access to the same breadth and scope of opportunities as other local public schools and private schools in the nearby neighbourhoods. For example, during my fieldwork, English Park School did not have an outdoor or garden-based extra-curricular program, nor did they have many environmental field study courses, food and waste audits, global citizenship courses, winter activities, international learning trips, nor service learning. Instead, at English Park School they now have a garden, a small garden club (of which I am part) and the occasional field trip, if planned well in advance. Due to administrative permissions (see Chapter Three), English Park School students only participate in environmental, outdoor and garden-based opportunities that are organized by their homeroom teacher. Like the

Griffin House, the school moved locations at the end of the 2019 school year. This move had major implications to the gardening work and in 2019, the garden club shifted to the classroom.

McGill University

The last research site is McGill University. From a research position, while I am indeed interested in the physical garden space at McGill as it has provided both the research project and community work stability and *land* on which to garden, I am also interested in how McGill University as an institution has facilitated my access to schools and community organizations while conveying credibility when I applied for funding. Having an affiliation with McGill University held immense symbolic significance to the organization and schools with whom I work. Thus, when considering the social, environmental, institutional, and political-economic factors influencing access to gardens and UA, tracing up to the problematic from my embodied experience of being associated with McGill has elucidated precise institutional systems (e.g., affiliation, funding, policy, human resource) that are presently structuring some garden experiences and who experiences access to it (funding). Furthermore, as I mapped and analyzed the texts, policies, and provincial/national/global social and environmental legislation that are relevant to an understanding of the social and institutional organization of access to gardening and UA, having McGill as a research site was crucial for bringing into view particular texts in my textual analysis that highlighted the discrepancies, resemblances and other developments that connected people's work to emerging social and environmental relations. When I first designed my research, I assumed that the garden space at McGill would be irrelevant as a research site to my inquiry and for the *Gardening for Food Security* project as it was not actually located at a community organization. However, as my research unfolded, I realized that my affiliation with

McGill afforded me credibility with some of my community partners, while the garden at McGill University provided the project with access to land that was not under threat of development. In sum, McGill University and the Faculty of Education Garden served as one of the central sites despite not realizing its immense importance until after I analyzed my data.

Research Participants

Overall, I conducted eleven (n = 11) formal interviews with nine interviewees and documented over 50 informal conversations with teachers, community workers and community members. In the community sector, I interviewed Jan, the Program/Clinical Coordinator of the Griffin House (see Chapter Four) and Jessica, project lead of Greening Chinatown (see Chapter Five). While I was gardening at the Griffin House, I also spoke with many different people who worked there and who used the services. On the other side of the city, I conducted a half-day interview with Jessica in Greening Chinatown's current location (no longer in Chinatown) and then at a local diner. Within the public-school system, I spoke with three teachers, one administrator, and one schoolboard employee who works as the Director of Community Learning[18]. Lastly, within the realm of private schools, I interviewed two educators from a well-respected private school, and one educator from a prestigious all-girls private school. Lastly, I paid attention to my own efforts to organize garden opportunities for myself, students, teachers, youth, community workers and community members. Therefore, when I was gardening, teaching and *working* in any location, I took fieldnotes on my observations, and my interactions with

[18] I have intentionally changed the job title to protect the actual identity of this interviewee.

students, staff, and others who were present. Furthermore, as my gardening work (expansively understood) took me to expected and unexpected locations (participating in the City of Montreal's 2050 Carbon Neutrality Committee; leading garden-based professional development; speaking at different events at McGill University like Climate Change Week, and so on), I often documented these experiences as data and reflected critically on how my everyday connected to my research and my garden work processes.

Study Design and Research Activities

While research activities unfolded over three years in school and community gardens and in different neighbourhoods of Montreal, the majority of my data collection took place during Montreal's gardening season (spring, summer, fall) and revolved around three large scale and complex UA initiatives in the summers of 2018, 2019 and 2020. The project I refer to here is known formally (on grant applications) as *Gardening for Food Security*. As the project's title suggests, the community work looked to use gardening as a way to address food insecurity in Montreal. As I launched this project in collaboration with schools, community organizations, and a garden team made up of youth (18-30), I concurrently applied for research ethics approval from McGill University and once approved, set out to research the ways in which people have access to gardens and UA through differing infrastructures (public schools, private schools, universities, community organizations, the City of Montreal's garden programing); however, as this research was emerging, my focus soon shifted to reflect my ongoing observations and the observations of my research participants (teachers, community workers, and others) about what enabled and constrained our collective gardening initiatives. Specifically, I focused my inquiry on how people create and lead garden-based opportunities for students, young people and

community members, and then investigated my findings from multiple datasets in relation to aspects of gardening and UA that have organized my projects in Montreal, including: funding, garden teams and labour, land, the political economy, and local and global environmental policies.

This approach allowed me to compare how access to school/community gardens is mediated when I begin in one location, and how access and opportunities vis-à-vis urban gardening are differently organized when I begin in another. Because my research built on my ongoing school and community garden partnerships, my research design needed to be flexible as it shifted and as I discovered new institutional processes or funding procedures that I or my collaborators needed to better understand to create and connect others with UA, gardens and gardening work for social and environmental purposes (food security, employment, etc.). I began this investigation by paying attention to my own work to create and fund a number of gardening projects before exploring the same social and institutional relations from the standpoints of others (teachers, community workers, etc.).

Throughout the project (expansively understood to include many gardens I was a part of), I examined my own gardening work in an autobiographical way, informed by Smith's (1990) conception of *standpoint*. To situate research in people's actual lives, Smith (1990) uses standpoint as both a method and as a theory. She proposed that as researchers, we embody a standpoint from which we might go after our problematic and that arises from our own experiences (DeVault, 2006). My research emerged from my standpoint as a gardener, participant, educator, supporter and mediator of UA initiatives, which provided insider knowledge on the labour required to create, deliver, evaluate and make gardens *work* in different contexts. In thinking through *gardening work* for myself and others, I employed Smith's (1987)

concept of 'work' as it is used expansively and generously to encompass any "action by an actual person that takes time, energy and intention" (Nichols, Griffith & McLarnon, 2018, p. 118).

Consistent with other IEs that describe different work processes expansively (see: Griffith & Smith, 1995 for mothering work), in my analysis, I often refer to *garden work* or *gardening* as *work* that was not actually located in a garden. I specifically sought to bring into view the seemingly mundane aspects of my gardening work, the cumbersome institutional, bureaucratic and *textual* work of *getting a garden*, getting a garden team, organizing garden labour and getting hooked up to land on which to garden. I investigated gardening in different contexts (schools, community organizations, on private and public land, with and without municipal permissions) largely from my own experiential knowledge of what gardening work entailed, and I also gathered the insights of others with whom I worked on these gardening projects (e.g., teachers, community workers, community members, etc.). Focusing on people's gardening *work* allowed me to produce rich descriptive accounts of people's everyday activities and often invisible actions within and outside of institutions. I often juxtaposed my experience to the work of others attempting to do the same kind of gardening work for similar and dissimilar purposes (for educational reasons/ food production for community members, guerrilla gardening, etc.) in order to pay attention to the ways in which the same institutional process worked differently for different people. I documented my work processes expansively and in great detail along with my observations and experiences in the form of fieldnotes, voice memos, photographs, and videos.

As I compiled early ethnographic and photographic data from the 2018 *Gardening for Food Security Project*, I began coding and subsequent analysis in order to share what I was learning with project stakeholders to adjust for the upcoming data collection plans and for the

next gardening season. In 2019, the material conditions of my school and community partners shifted and I altered that summer's *Gardening for Food Security* project and research methods to best support the evolving garden needs of my collaborators. That summer, I continued to collect and analyze the ethnographic and visual data and began conducting in-depth interviews with teachers and community workers, which took several months as many of my collaborators had limited time. I completed my last interview in February of 2020 and analyzed the interview data. As I started to see patterns emerge, I then moved to IE textual analysis (see Textual Analysis below) to reveal how these patterns connect to organizing relations and relevant texts (policies, etc.). Because the research emerged from my collaborative community and school-based gardening efforts, keeping track of the project's activities was a major challenge. Before outlining how I employed particular research methods and processes, I present the table to below to simplify the project's inception and development as this is important to situating my research, when certain gardens were created, each specific garden's primary (and evolving) purpose, when the research activities took place/overlapped, when different research participants were involved, the funding source used to create gardens and employ garden teams, and where my reader can expect to encounter the discussion of specific data in the upcoming chapters.

Table 1

Research information timeline and display

YEAR	RESEARCH/ GARDEN SITES	PRIMARY GARDENING PURPOSE	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAPTER
2016	1) McGill University 2) Studio Champion Sound	1) Food production 2) Greening	Reflections, observation fieldnotes, visual data generation	Myself	TD Bank, Home Depot, others	Three
2017	1) McGill University 2) Griffin House	1) Food production 2) Food production	Reflections, observation fieldnotes, visual data generation	Myself	TD Bank, Home Depot, and others	Three, Four
2018	1) McGill University 2) Griffin House 3) English Park School	1) Food production; education. 2) Food production; employment 3) Education; pollination	Observation fieldnotes, visual data generation, data analysis	Myself, teachers, school staff, front-line community workers, and others who worked in gardens	Canada Summer Jobs, and others	Three, Four
2019	1) McGill University 2) Griffin House 3) Greening Chinatown	1) Food production; education. 2) Community outreach; employment 3) Food production; social networks; circular economy	Interviews, Observation fieldnotes, visual data generation, data analysis, textual analysis	Myself **Interviewees:** Jan (Clinical Coordinator of the Griffin House), Vanessa (public school educator), Mary (public school educator), Kevin (school board employee), Jessica (project lead of Greening Chinatown); Alex (private school educator), Jon (private school educator, Sarah (private school educator)	Canada Summer Jobs, and others	Three, Four Five, Six

YEAR	RESEARCH/ GARDEN SITES	PRIMARY GARDENING PURPOSE	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAPTER
2020	1) McGill University 2) Griffin House	1) Food production 2) Community outreach	Interviews, Observation fieldnotes, visual data generation, data analysis, textual analysis, writing	Myself **Interviewees:** Jan, Clinical Coordinator of the Griffin House), Jeremie (school administrator)	Canada Summer Jobs	Three, Four, Five, Six

Observations

Like in ethnography, the starting point for many IE researchers is participant observation (Diamond, 1995; Nichols, 2014). Starting in the spring of 2018, I employed observations to explore how gardening was occurring *differently* in different contexts (schools, community organizations, different neighbourhoods), and where I might further direct my inquiry. Along with observing teachers, students, school staff, front-line community workers and community members in their work socially organizing gardening opportunities, I also studied and noted the institutional processes for creating and sustaining gardening through funding schemes and what UA opportunities looked like in the various sites of this research. These observations extended into exploring my own gardening work and as such were ongoing for over three years. Inspired by Diamond (1995), my actual participant observations took place anytime I was present at a research site. In other words, I was always *researching* even when I was engaged in other work (teaching, gardening, participating in meetings, etc.). Sometimes, I observed participants as we worked during gardening work (teaching, building, planting), but I also observed teachers, students, community workers and community members in moments of their everyday as this

gave me a sense of how things functioned when we weren't gardening. As organizing garden experiences required funding, coordination and planning, often my fieldnotes, which I timestamped with the date and time, would instruct or direct me to write a reflection on the day, or review emails and other texts (e.g., accounting documents). This process later helped me to piece together how gardening happened or did not happen and how gardening was institutionally restricted, permitted and organized in different research locations.

Often my observations highlighted where I lacked understanding of institutional processes that ranged from school governance to municipal bylaws. Returning to Smith (2006), my observations and fieldnotes looked for and inquired into the discursively and textually organized processes and relations amongst those who were involved different gardening initiatives through my community work and research. For example, during fund-seeking work, I paid close attention to textual relations like those developing from the Canada Summer Jobs grants, taking into consideration that "Canadian charitable status policy and the associated funding regime demand ideological practices of accountability in the local activities of people" (Nichols, 2008, p. 64). Taken together, I undertook observations wherever and whenever my work occurred because of my analytic commitment to investigating organizing relations from the experiential knowledge of people, myself included.

Visual Methods and Processes

I spent most days working in gardens, moving to different sites throughout the day. Along with conventional forms of ethnographic observations documented in the form of written fieldnotes or recorded voice memos, I documented my data in the form of photographs, cellphilms (Dockey & Tomaselli, 2009) and drawings. I took photographs and short videos

(cellphilms) to monitor garden progress but also to capture the historical moment or *terroir* of my research. *Terroir* is a French term originally used to denote how the taste of a bottle of wine is affected by ecological factors like soil conditions, weather, regions, grape, etc. Purists would argue that the same wine grown only rows apart in elevation will taste distinctly different (Winston, 2014). I employ terroir in this thesis to further theorize my employment of IE and VM, to remind readers that texts (in my case photographs) are a reflection of the historical moment in which they were produced (Smith, 1990) and to highlight that no visual or multisensory garden documentation will ever be the same due to the ever-changing nature of gardens and the natural world (plant growth, weather, people in the garden, and so on; Pink, 2008). Other than documenting actual gardens, my fieldnotes included photographic representation of: the weather; the bike routes I took to and from gardens; my garden injuries; and other observations that I felt were compelling to my research.

I took all the photos and videos I used as data with my cellphone. When taking photos, I employed differing techniques depending on the situation. Sometimes, I looked to take the perfect shot and devoted significant effort to framing[19] the photograph. Other times, I took photos and video from my bike, or while moving around in the garden, pretending that my phone was a pollinating insect. Early in my data collection, I often took multiple photos in sequence, which required lots of sorting, deleting and categorization in developing the photo albums. However, when analyzing my images after my first summer in the field when I took over 1000

[19] In photography, framing refers to the technique of bringing focus to the subject in the photo by framing out other parts of the image with something in the scene.

photographs for research purposes, I became more mindful of the organization and analysis of the images and took fewer photographs (see Data Analysis below). Most of the photos I took for research purposes gazed at gardens and most of the gardens I photographed were gardens that I was working in or involved with at the time. However, as the research was taking place, additional gardens began showing up in many locations that I frequented and so I took photos of these gardens as well, reminding myself to 'keep my eyes everywhere' (C. Mitchell, personal communication, February 18, 2019). For instance, I live across the street from a public school. When I began this research, the school was under renovation. As construction ended, a garden suddenly appeared, almost as if it was part of the new construction. Gardens began appearing all over my neighbourhood and other neighbourhoods where my research took me and I documented these developments with photographs.

Using VM data collection helped capture these changes as they were happening in gardens and in the neighbourhoods and communities where my inquiry was concurrently taking place. In my early analysis of my photographic data, I noticed that as I was creating and installing gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes, the City of Montreal was also installing similar looking gardens in gentrifying areas. This was one of the many moments where I paused to reflect on if my community work and research was doing more harm than good. Specifically, I asked: how and why was it that greening was happening in the way that it was happening (through gardens, greenery, urban art and other forms of beautification)? What actually is greening as a complex of objectified social and environmental relations – rather than a textual abstraction that is subsumed environmental sustainability discourse? And, what was greening *doing* to different people in the neighbourhoods in which we live, work and garden? As gardens and other greenspaces increased in neighbourhoods, I noticed that so did other

(municipal) government-mediated social and environmental services. The emergence of a new bus line in one of my photographs caught my attention. “Why weren’t these bus lines linking this part of the city to other gentrifying areas here last year?” (Fieldnote, August 4th, 2018). In my data collection, I was able to document these urban processes in both textual and visual forms and explore the similarities, overlaps and tensions between and amongst what people were doing and saying, while also reflecting on what my images revealed to my larger analysis on the social and environmental relations of gardening in Montreal.

Figure 1. *Greening Chinatown, No Longer in Chinatown*

Figure 2. *Image of a Local Green Terrace Also Showing a New Bus Line Linking Gentrified Neighbourhoods.*

Interviews

In the winter and spring of 2019, I continued to document and analyze my ethnographic and photographic data of my *gardening work* as I was writing grants to fund another summer-long *Gardening for Food Security* project. As the 2019 summer project began to take shape, our garden collective added another urban gardening community partner, Greening Chinatown. Concurrent to conducting ethnographic observations and visual fieldnotes in the summer of 2019, I conducted interviews to gather the experiences and insights of teachers, school administrators, and community workers about UA and school and community gardening from their unique embodied standpoints. The interviews focused on their everyday *work*, discourse, educational practice, garden/ing decisions, the intended outcomes of their gardening work, and how they each mediated garden-based experiences in their respective contexts, and for different purposes. The interviews allowed me to explore gardening from the standpoints of teachers, schoolboard workers, principals and community workers to bring into view different institutional and policy relations that enable and constrain UA/garden projects in Montreal. While interviews are a common method used in ethnography, in IE interviewing the objective is "not to generalize about the group of people interviewed, but to find and describe the social processes that have generalizing effects" (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 18).

Before arranging formal interviews, I conducted non-formal interviews (n = 50) as part of my ongoing *garden work* and research, which I recorded as jot-notes and voice memos. Because I was typically participating in garden, community and school-based work (as an educator, community gardener, and so on) while conducting these non-formal interviews, I reproduced many of the conversations and the actual words used by people to the best of my ability. For the formal interviews (n = 11), I used a standard set of generous prompts and the interviews were

recorded and transcribed verbatim. I conducted member checks with interviewees informally as a natural aspect of the meaningful and reciprocal collaborations I had with most of my interviewees. I also followed up more formally, sending each interviewee a copy of the transcription to review. I was not convinced that each participant actually read the transcript, so I sent additional emails to participants when I used a conversation or a quote from their interview to ensure that I correctly interpreted their tone and intended meaning.

Given the nature of my work in gardens, schools, and community organizations, many interviews with educators, administrators and community workers took place in gardens, at coffee shops or pubs, during lunchtime in community organizations, and in other alternative and outdoor settings. Unfortunately, this affected the quality of one audio recording, but also added to the multisensory experience of my data (Pink, 2008). The interviews, both formal and conversational, were attentive to the needs of my participants to best convenience their busy lives. Informally, if I wanted to have a conversation but knew it was not an opportune time (at the end of garden club, bus duty, lunch time, normal chaos in either the schools or the Griffin House), I took a field note and timestamped the date and time, indicating that I needed to take note of how something worked in relation that what took place in that moment. During the formal interviews, it was normal to discuss new ideas and future work (e.g., booking future meetings, talking about future funding deadlines, when to drop off garden produce, etc.).

Subscribing to IE interviewing techniques, while I did *have* an interview protocol (some IE interviews do not), many interviews were not much different from other informal conversations I would have with interviewees. My interviews themselves were not generalized in the sense that I did not always ask each interviewee the exact same questions in the exact same sequence; however, there were a few questions that I always asked. For instance, in each

interview I asked participants to describe a *typical workday* to determine how educators and community workers are engaging with texts and textually mediated relations in their everyday. Specifically, to get a sense of the social, environmental and textual relations related to gardening and UA, I asked participants to describe their typical workday when garden experiences were scheduled, as conversations with teachers and community workers alike suggested that incorporating gardening included more cumbersome institutional and bureaucratic engagement and accountability than a typical workday (e.g., permission forms, administrative permissions). By conducting interviews that explicitly explored texts and people's work, I looked closely into how "people's actual experiences are subsumed in discourse, objectified as abstract data, and or transformed into the terms through which they [the institutional actions and processes] become institutionally, recognizable and actionable" (Nichols, 2014, p. 25). Later, when engaged in analysis (see below), this allowed me to identify disjunctures between everyday life and administrative accounts of it. To uncover these organizing relations, in my analysis, I consider my transcripts as important texts for further questions (DeVault & McCoy, p. 118). Guided by Smith (2016), I would ask 'How is that these people are saying what they're saying?'

Data Analysis

Below, I outline how my data analysis unfolded. After the summer of 2018 and the first *Gardening for Food Security* project, I began coding and organizing my findings from the photographic and ethnographic data into distinct and aggregate categories corresponding to social, environmental, institutional, and political-economic factors that I was observing and that influenced people's access to gardening and UA opportunities. I continued this process of categorical analysis into 2019 and also analyzed my interview data. Then, emerging from

interview data analysis, I engaged in textual analysis (Smith, 2006) to map and analyze the workplace texts, schoolboard and municipal policies, and provincial/national legislation or global policies that interviewee accounts suggest were relevant to an understanding of the social, environmental and institutional organization of access to gardens and how gardens and UA construct and structure peoples' experiences, and negotiations of self.

Ethnographic and Visual Data Analysis (2018-2020)

As noted, I began data collection with ethnographic methods in 2018 and thus I first analyzed my expansive fieldnotes (reflections, fieldnotes, photos and cellphilms, and so on). Initially, my reflexive fieldnotes paid close attention to what I was seeing in gardens, and how my work was systematized at the different research sites. The themes that initially emerged through open coding were related to how my garden work was organized around funding applications, the school day/schedule, meal times at the Griffin House, and the health and wellbeing of my body (I had suffered a few physical setbacks from garden work and I documented my injuries as if it would help me heal sooner). Realizing how dependent my work was on the work of others, my participant observations looked to explore how others' work was organized in relation to gardening for social, educational and environmental purposes and garden discourse, and what their work actually looked like when I was present.

To ensure that I critically engaged with my collection of photographs (my album) and other images as ethnographic data, I asked particular questions in relation to the images for reflexivity and for coding purposes (Mitchell, 2011). For example, inspired by Ruby (2000), Rose (2001), Pink (2008), and Mitchell (2011), my processes included asking questions about the images like 'When and where was this picture made?', 'What is being shown?', 'How does

this photo fit within the series/album?', 'How might an image obscure or accurately represent what is happening in the garden?', 'Will/how will it be circulated?'. Thinking through questions of this nature helped me consider the gardens reflexively beyond thinking about how they were progressing, to also think about what the gardens were actually doing for students, teachers community workers, and community members. For example, organizing photos into albums and analyzing the images helped me to problematize my research as it emerged, especially in relation to the rapidly increasing number of public gardens in different locations of Montreal. I considered the emerging questions about the images I was reading and used these questions to address my broader research objectives for uncovering the social and environmental relations of gardening and UA. My analysis of photographic data also helped me connect datasets (photographic, ethnographic, textual). For example, compelling readings came when I explored the themes of presence and absence in a series of images (Mitchell, 2011). In reading or looking closely at the different images, I started to see how the co-constitutive relations between and amongst nature, the urban-environment, and the built city were manifesting through multiple and different gardening, UA, and greening initiatives.

For instance, in a 2018 album, I noticed that many gardens that I photographed lacked *diversity* and I analytically explored this in two ways. In my early readings of single photographs (Molestane & Mitchell, 2007), I realized that many of my photos of gardens lacked biodiversity. Of course, there is much unseen in these images. However, given the pervasiveness of concrete, urban heat islands, and manicured lawns in urban and suburban environments, I could not conclude from this observation that gardens decrease biodiversity. Instead, what I saw in interpreting many of my photos is that because of my subjective and embodied gaze, *I* rarely captured the biodiversity of the gardens. I extended this notion to looking at images as part of

larger albums/series and I remarked that although I was looking at different gardens in different photographs, they all looked the same: the gardens themselves lacked diversity. Most gardens were built with inexpensive wood, had similar plants, and a near similar presentation (i.e., they were colourful, painted, artistic).

Figure 3. *A Public Facing Garden Created to by the Gardening for Food Security Team to Fit in With the Neighbourhood's New Creatively Branded Character*

Figure 4. *A Public Facing Garden Created by the Local Chamber of Commerce (known in* French as the Société Development de Commerce*). The Neighbourhood of Saint-Henri, Where the Griffin House Is Located Is Creatively Branded as the* Quartier Du Canal

In the first summer of visual data collection through photography and other processes, I took over 1000 photos and became overrun in my sorting, categorizing, deleting and analysis. In the years since, I have been far more careful when taking photographs as I wanted to devote more time to deeper analysis and less time deleting similar photographs. At the conclusion of my analysis, I categorized nine albums (approximately 180 final images) that showcase the gardens at different research sites during each year of the project, different neighbourhoods as they have transformed through greening, and other themes connected to my research (gentrification, branding, transportation, etc.). As I coded and analyzed the extensive visual data in relation to discourse, history, and social/environmental policies that have come to shape gardening practices

in Montreal, I began to get a sense that there was more to learn. My analysis of the visual and textual data led me to further complicate my research questions that I interrogated with my research participants/school and community partners, with garden team members and in the upcoming chapters. Specifically, I asked: How gardens were being created and by whom (municipal governments, private organizations or developments, local Chambers of Commerce)? What was the difference between the gardens being created on public land and an actual City of Montreal community garden? What is the purpose of these gardens? What is the garden's relationship with social ills (consumerism, gentrification, dispossession and accumulation)? As I learned more about the contemporary production of gardens, I looked to the historical context of gardening and greening in Montreal, and inquired into the history of land use, urban planning, local and global economic shifts, immigration, educational policies, environmental policies, housing policies, and other government legislation that has created the urban conditions in which I now garden.

Interview Data Analysis (2019-2020)

As noted, I conducted interviews in the summer of 2019 and into the winter of 2020. I transcribed and coded the interview data within one week of conducting each interview and created a working codebook. After coding the interviews, I then organized my findings into distinct and aggregate categories corresponding to social, institutional, and political-economic factors that influence people's access to gardening opportunities as described by my participants. At this point, I also categorized relevant texts discussed in each interview and considered how these texts organized the work of my interviewees as they aimed to create gardens for social, environmental and educational reasons, and provide gardening opportunities for others. After my

categorical analysis, to feel confident in the consistency and themes developed from my coding, I re-coded and analyzed my interviews on three different occasions, amending the codebook as needed. During this time, I used any opportunity I had to re-listen to my interviews ensuring that I did not miss anything, and to further ensure that I had a grasp of the content and context. I listened to each interview approximately six times. Because my data like my gardening work was seasonal in some ways and revolved around the *Gardening for Food Security* project, it was necessary to constantly reexamine my datasets to maintain momentum and consistency with my interpretation, but also so that I resisted abstracting from data into theory (Smith, 2006; Mitchell 2011).

During this time of data analysis in my research processes, I continued to cross-reference and verify different datasets in relation to the codebook and considered the themes comparatively to the initial analyses, and to the dataset as a whole. To maintain trustworthiness in my codebook, I revisited and revised codes regularly and eventually organized my codes into smaller themes with sub-themes. Many prominent codes emerged from interviews exploring the social and environmental relations of school and community gardening and municipally permitted UA. Some examples of codes included attendance, lunch, cooking, gardens, governing boards, parents, permission forms, collaboration, time (lack of time; time away from loved ones), extra-curricular activities, City of Montreal bylaws, historical documents, greening, funding, land permissions, transportation, healthcare, moving/displacement, and employability programs.

Textual Analysis (2020)

As I grew confident in my codes and codebook, I embarked on textual analysis, where I traced people's experiences into texts and textual mechanisms that organize their work lives

Adhering to IE analysis, the research goal of my study was to empirically connect, delineate, and explicate tensions entrenched in people's *work*, including my own, and not to theorize them. Like other IEs, the objective of my textual analysis has been twofold. First, to get a sense of the invisible social relations not explicitly addressed or expressed through people's experiences, but shaping their every day; and second, to bring into view how institutional texts influence work processes that are engrained in and through people's actions (Smith, 2006). In my textual analysis yet outside of my original research design, interview accounts suggested that there was a historical aspect to gardening and greening in Montreal that could help materially explain what my research participants were currently observing and experiencing related to evictions and dispossession of land. In response, I devoted significant efforts to exploring the historical, political and educational use of gardens in Montreal and elsewhere.

My textual analysis helped to reveal large-scale forms of social and historical coordination within which people's individual lives and experiences are unfolding. As the textual analysis evolved, I examined City of Montreal policies, bylaws, local hospital policies, global environmental agreements (like the Paris Agreement), extra-curricular risk assessments (school, schoolboard and local government authorities), garden proposals to school administrators, letters to parents, field trip permission forms, activity logs, invoices related to gardening work, governing board minutes from specific schools and schoolboards where my research took place, schoolboard newsletters, school marketing materials, funding schemes, school websites, the School Tax Commission of Montreal, Montreal's school poverty map, where garden programs are offered or not offered in Montreal, public consultations, the Education Act of Quebec, multiple documents found on the city of Montreal's website, specifically related to community gardening, municipal gardening permissions, municipal environmental policies, Montreal's

Intersectoral Plan for addressing homelessness, relevant media, social media (tweets), and emails from: teachers, administrators, community partners, and government employees. The point of this textual analysis was to puzzle together pieces of my research that I had gathered from interviews and observations to shed light on the disjuncture, similarities and *other processes* that link people's 'work' to institutional practices and social and environmental relations of gardening and UA.

By comparing and cross-referencing my research findings using a range of data collection methods (observations, fieldnotes, photographs, drawing, interviews, historical research, etc.) and seeing tensions emerge through the writing of this research, I have crystalized reflective, reflexive and textual explanations of the social organization of knowledge related to school and community gardening and organized these into several chapters that help explicate how gardening actually happens in different contexts and different neighbourhoods of Montreal. Because I have shared emerging research findings with my participants and community partners and have used my findings in successful grant applications to continue this community-based gardening work for social and environmental justice, I have aimed to produce catalytic validity (Lather, 1991) and relational validity (Tuck & Mackenzie, 2015). Here, I aim for my research to be a reference point for social change (Lather, 1991; e.g., connecting specific educators with other schoolboard staff to open lines of communication for internal garden support), to stand against the prioritization of economic validity in our understandings of land, and to stand for scholarship that is accountable to people and place (Tuck & Mackenzie, 2015).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I underscore shared ground between IE and VM while bringing these

theories, methods and analytics in conversation with my own research interests of exploring access to school and community gardens and UA in the Montreal. Although IE and VM begin with the experiential knowledge of research participants, VM does not necessarily trace participants' knowing into texts to reveal bureaucracy, governing processes, and disjunctures between institutional accounts and individual experience (see ruling relations below). Instead, VM finds ways to address power imbalances by having the people who make policies and have influence view, interact with and engage with the ways in which participants and researchers have documented and presented their own experiences (Mitchell, 2011). In contrast, IE uses conceptual mapping to "highlight the analytic goal of explication rather than theory building", aiming for the analysis "to be "usable" in the way that a map can be used to find one's way" (DeVault, 2006, p. 294).

Important to this project and my analysis was to divulge the extensive forms of social coordination within which people's distinct lives and experiences are occurring. I began my research problematic in my own embodied experience attempting to produce garden experiences for teachers, learners and communities. Rather than seeking a justification for my behavior and the behaviour of educational and community workers as we work to organize garden experiences, I explored the conceptual, institutional and discursive practices associated with garden work and UA. By starting with the personal and linking to the political, my project has mapped garden tensions and shared struggles to show researchers, teachers, community workers and community members "what they are up against (politically) and where they might want to apply pressure" (DeVault, 2006, p. 295).

The reflexive dimension of my research provided me with insights that I could not have had otherwise. Unlike past studies on school and community gardens where research was

conducted about or with a teacher gardening with her class (see Blair, 2009 for a review on this kind of garden work); or, other research where the researcher studied the community garden, the gardener, the grant writer and those who experience the garden as *place* (Pink, 2008); or, critical and compelling research where the researcher also gardened with youth at a local organization that provided summer employment through UA (Cairns, 2018), in my research, I embody multiple roles (gardener, grant writer, researcher, and many more) in one. This unique position has allowed me to see social, environmental and institutional relations that are neither visible nor discussed holistically nor simultaneously in past research. In each of the upcoming data chapters, I begin with my embodied experience to reveal how UA and school and community gardening is socially (and at times environmentally) organized in different contexts. Tracing my experience into the different vantage points of my research participants, I synchronize a chorus of voices in relation to texts, laws, media, discourse, policy and institutional accounts that produce and shape UA and garden-based experiences in Montreal and other urban environments.

Chapter Three: Growing and Funding Gardens

In this chapter I describe the many work processes involved in funding and creating gardens for social (employment, food insecurity, etc.), environmental (greening for reducing heat islands, pollination, beautification) and educational purposes from the standpoints (Smith, 1987) of community workers, teachers, a schoolboard employee, a school administrator and an urban gardener/researcher (me). To explicate the time, effort and intent needed for garden creation and textual accountability associated with different kinds of gardens, I explore garden work (expansively understood) by starting in three different research sites: 1) at McGill University 2) at a community organization called, Studio Champion Sound; and 3) at English Park School. In my descriptions and analysis, I focus on how myself and others have come to know of 'garden work' through funding schemes, grant writing practices, implementing garden-based programs, and by working with educators, students and other young people.

While much of my inquiry and gardening work was overlapping as it emerged across research sites (e.g. I was in working in one garden and conducting research in the morning and another later that same day), the writing in this chapter discretely discusses the different gardens as the they entered the scope of my research. As I was conducting research on my own work and how I attempted to subvert the garden constrains I encountered in relation to the project's emerging directions, I looked to capture precisely what was taking place as I created and/or maintained gardens. In this chapter, I also consider how my original gardening objectives of increasing access to education, employment, and sustainability began to transform and conform to larger 'greening' efforts. Here, I also reflected on specific ideas about how gardens ought to be presented, and what came into view from this kind of ideological alteration. Given that I have been working in community gardens for the past five years and have conducted research in

community gardens for past three years, I have had access to considerable field-based data from which to build my analysis. I have used my own reflections and ethnographic data (fieldnotes, interviews) to illuminate how garden work is a reflexively organized social relations, mediated by funding schemes, organizing institutions, technologies, and mental conceptions. In the coming pages, I also rely on textual data to illuminate the different processes of creating gardens and gardening programs, and the ethical constraints and considerations that arose for myself and others. After describing some of the unseen labour processes that allowed me to research and organize gardens, garden funding and garden programming, I conclude this chapter by summarizing salient findings and elucidate considerations related to where one might want to apply pressure to ensure that gardens are being used socially, environmentally and educationally.

Germination

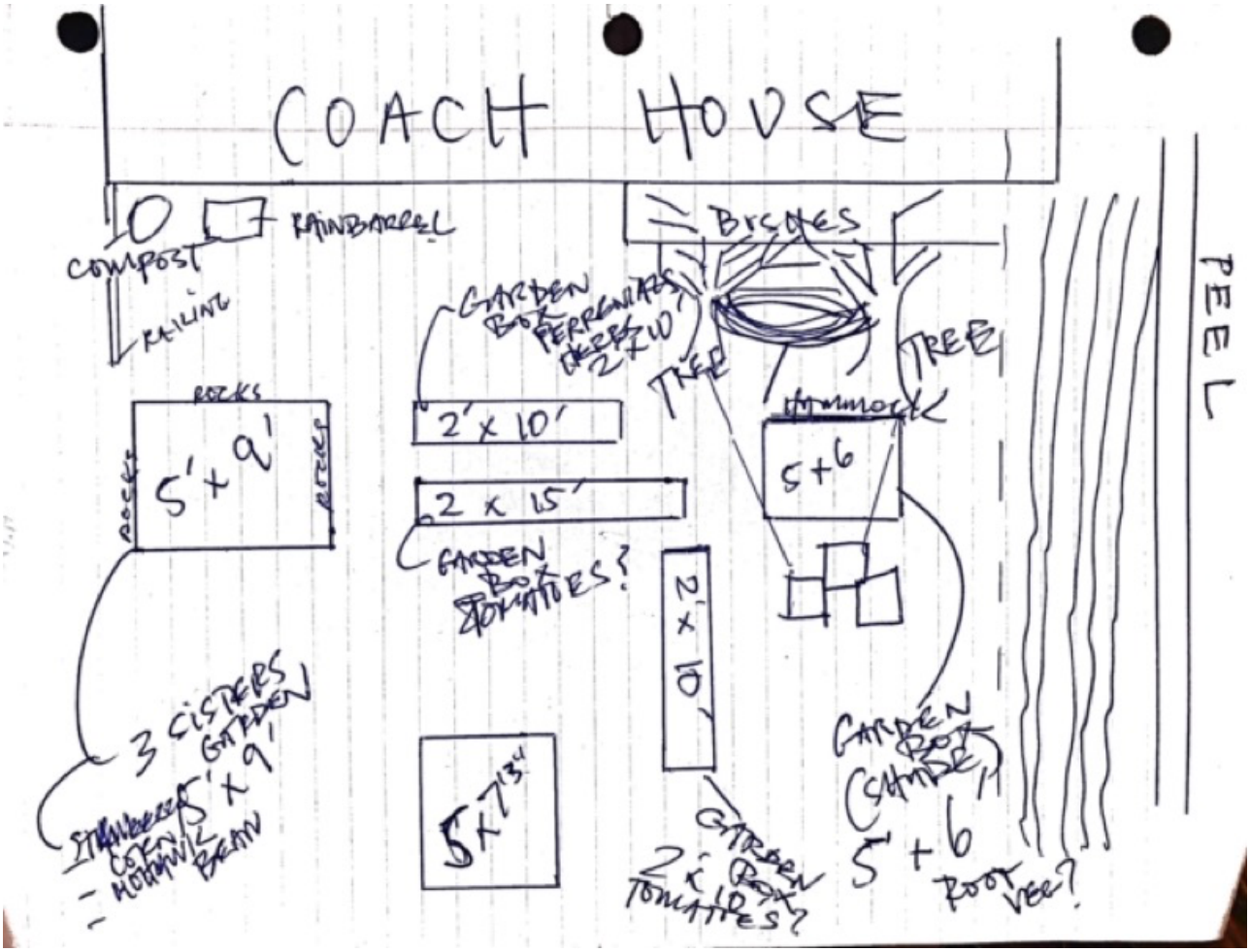
Germination is a five-step process where a seed, with the right conditions, transforms into a seedling. Much like plant growth, the garden work that I have done has gone through many phases of (trans)formation. Before connecting my gardening work/initiatives to local schools and the community sector, I attempted to set up more robust and independent environmental education initiatives, and stronger social, environmental, and educational connections to gardening at McGill University. When I arrived at McGill in the fall of 2015, I was invited to look after the newly established garden and outdoor learning space. While I was not around for most of the bureaucracy that went into planning and permissions, I was informed that the processes of getting a garden for the Faculty of Education were very cumbersome. The development of garden space started in December 2013 when Dr. Mindy Carter and a working group of interested faculty and staff discussed the possibilities of a departmental garden

to link an outdoor space to the Bachelor of Education program while providing a serene environment for students, faculty, and staff (M. Carter, personal communication, July 19th, 2018). In 2014, Dr. Carter and some of her graduate students met multiple times with the Associate Dean of Infrastructure, the McGill grounds team and horticulturalists to determine where the garden could be located. The working group also met to envision what the garden could look like during this planning period. When no possible garden site was identified for the 2014 planting season, they waited until 2015 to continue their attempts to bring about this educational and environmental initiative. During this time, Dr. Carter was awarded funding from the McGill Office of Sustainability. With this funding, in spring 2015 many of the people from the working group came to help Chris, a graduate student who was hired with funding from the McGill Office of Sustainability, to plant the first garden (M. Carter, 2018, personal communication). Finally, in the summer of 2015, the creation of McGill's outdoor learning space began with the construction of two garden boxes located between Coach House and Duggan House and between the streets of Peel and McTavish in Montreal's historic Golden Square Mile.

As mentioned above, in the fall of 2015, I began working on the garden at the Faculty of Education of McGill University. As I uprooted dead plants to prepare the garden for winter, I identified garden needs and donated garden tools and a composter to help with the decomposition of the organic matter I was removing. When I first saw the space set up by Dr. Carter and some of her students, I was both excited and reluctant. I was excited about the potential of using gardens and the outdoors both research and teaching given my background in environmental education. Conversely, I was reluctant because I was not sure if I had the time and space to look after another garden, being aware of the labour that goes into gardening. The original purpose of the garden was to create an educational space for pre-service teachers, and

for McGill faculty and staff (Personal communication, M. Carter, 2015). As I entered into early garden planning with a small group of professors and others from the Faculty of Education, we thought that the garden could be an interesting site for growing food and hosting school groups and community members. However, with only two garden boxes, providing approximately 24 square feet of gardening space, we would need a significant expansion to enable food production and additional spacing and design for teaching and learning. When considering the garden's potential, I envisioned the garden space at McGill as a central educational site that could provide pedagogical and physical support to other gardens in schools and community organizations.

Figure 5. *A Hand Drawn Map of the McGill Education Garden From My Field Notes in June 2018*



Note. The map included information on the garden's location, what type of plant is being planted and where, the size of the garden beds, and other noticeable features from the space (notice the poorly drawn contour lines descending toward Peel Street). Notice Peel Street on left side of the image and Coach House at the top. Since 2018, there have been many changes to the space. Additional garden beds have been created with teachers, learners, student and members of the Gardening for Food Security Team.

Recognizing that urban political ecology positions social and environmental issues in cities as complex and interrelated, I paid close attention to the social and environmental relations that I was encountering through garden creation and garden programming. As this garden project developed and extended into schools and the community, I started purchasing garden materials from garden centres to make public facing gardens that conformed to a popular urban gardening aesthetic. As I took notes about the garden creation and what myself and others were writing, doing and saying in relation to gardening, it was easy to see that the gardens that I created were conforming to Western aesthetics, and consumerism. I wondered if it was even possible to locate this garden work outside of consumerism. I asked myself, 'can gardens resist being consumed by consumerism?' (Field note, July 27th, 2018).

Norris (2011) argues that consumerism, as an ideology, is both hegemonic and socially pervasive. The destructive effect of consumerism is that people learn to rely on store-bought solutions. I certainly had this concern about my approach to gardening. When I started gardening both at home, at school and in community organizations, I bought soil, compost, and wood for garden boxes and produced gardens that conformed to how gardens ought to look when public facing: neat, tidy and enclosed (Ostertag, 2018). As the gardening work advanced, I did not want to 'buy' the garden, rely on store-bought solutions, nor did I want the garden to conform to the logics of individualism that is pervasive in many community gardens[20]. Norris (2011) further argues that one of the many harms of consumerism is that it "leads citizens to conceive of

[20] Community gardens as currently understood in Montreal's contexts do not necessarily involve interaction with others. For example, in Montreal's community gardens, there are not shared plots of land to be worked collectively. There are single plots that are intended to be worked by a single person or dwelling, rather than by a community (see Chapter 5).

themselves first and foremost as individuals" (p. 180) rather than as responsible and valuable members of a collective society. He writes, "When isolated into private units of possessiveness, we are less able to conceive of ourselves as members of a democratic political community with the capacity to engage in anything beyond our own self-interest and gratification" (p. 27). As the early stages of the project developed, I began to question the foundation and ideology of creating gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes. Was gardening inherently environmental, social and educational? To what extent can a gardening project actually address social, environmental and educational ills?

In the early stages of this project when McGill was the only garden that was under my care, I had taken on most of the labour often associated with gardening (planting, garden upkeep, supplementing soil, etc.). I soon realized that if I wanted to expand McGill's garden space (adding additional garden beds) at the Faculty of Education and extend its garden's reach into local schools and in the community, I would need financial support. I considered how I might use funding to establish gardens, and had also hoped to assemble a small garden team (see Chapter Four) to help with the myriad of physical, intellectual and textual tasks that were emerging alongside my ideas about gardening at the university, in the community and at local schools. Convinced that I had good, or the "right" kind of garden intentions, I began to apply for funding to expand the garden at McGill and proposed to extend McGill's garden and garden supports into local schools and the community. As I wrote and submitted different granting applications, I quickly found myself reaching out to McGill professors and staff of different internal divisions to ask questions about human resource regulations, employment taxes, budgets, liability insurance for people who might work in the gardens and here is when I unknowingly started participating in reporting and policy processes that circumscribed my work and connected

it to the aims of neoliberal governance, hierarchies and active involvement in audit culture (Ahmed, 2012). As I applied for and received funding, I continued to pay attention to the emerging social and environmental relations that came into view and soon noticed that I was spending more time finding funding and organizing the gardens, than in actual the gardens.

Money Trees

The main reason I was able to garden at McGill University was because Dr. Carter had already established a garden space and received land permission from the institutions to do so. I was able to expand the existing garden space and enact a gardening initiative from McGill into local schools and in the community sector due to funding, which I was able to access because of my grant writing experience combined with my institutional affiliation with McGill University as a lecturer and PhD student/candidate. Importantly, the garden work I envisioned and applied for was community-based work and *not research*. This important distinction allowed me to apply for funding opportunities that were different from research grants that McGill as an institution was accustomed to administering. After researching gardens on Canadian university campuses, especially gardens within faculties of education (UBC, OISE), I started to get a sense of what funding bodies provided support to university gardens and to school/community-university partnerships (see below). In my early grant applications, I relied heavily on the academic discourse that asserts the innumerable benefits of gardens and gardening as naturally occurring social, environmental, educational and community-engaged activities.

Along with outlining the innumerable benefits of gardening for addressing issues like (un)employment, homeless and food insecurity, on grant funding applications I promised to build a bilingual (English and French) institutional website (on McGill's server) to showcase

gardening efforts, garden photos, educational content and to recognize funders for their financial support to textually solidify these relationships. As recognizing funding sources was important to certain funders (Toronto Dominion; Home Depot; McGill Office of Sustainability), I positioned the creation of the website as of equal importance to the creation of the garden. I stated that the website would highlight the support received, and indicated that I hoped that the digital infrastructure would attract other funders. Within three months, I quickly leveraged one small grant into several small grants and had a modest budget for doing garden work at McGill, with local schools and community organizations, and had earmarked funding to recruit a small garden team to support gardening work. The textually stated purpose of the McGill Garden project as outlined in the grant applications was to: a) promote environmental education, learning for sustainable development and environmental stewardship; b) increase awareness around food sourcing and food security; c) provide gardening employment as preventative measure for homelessness (see Chapter Four; and d) create community partnerships through gardens. Each grant, while incredibly useful for establishing garden infrastructure, also came with a predetermined set of results (or "outcomes") I had to achieve or other funding eligibility criteria I had to meet. For example, one grant was conditional on hiring a McGill graduate student from the Faculty of Education (see below), while another allocated half of the funding for garden materials and as such and prevented the use of that funding for human resources or other expenses like vehicle usage and "parking fees" (Toronto Dominion Bank, Friends of the Environment Foundation, 2016).

Campus Gardening, Sustainability and Institutional Credibility

While my gardening efforts overlapped in different gardens and research sites, in this section, I describe and analyze my garden and funding interactions with McGill University since it has served at a central garden site throughout my research, providing the research and community work with academic legitimacy on funding applications while concurrently permitting access to private land on which to garden. Despite searching for internal funding opportunities to create and support gardening at McGill and elsewhere, I intentionally did not apply for internal funding from McGill's Office of Sustainability to enact gardening work for social, environmental and educational purposes on campus. In the years before my arrival at McGill, the McGill Office of Sustainability had financed many projects that *greened* McGill's campus through both small and large-scale campus agriculture, including the internationally recognized edible campus (McGill Office of Sustainability, n.d.), which by the time I arrived at McGill was run by the Santropol Roulant: a local organization that uses urban agriculture as a way to address food insecurity, social isolation and community engagement (Santropol Roulant, n.d.). While funding opportunities from McGill's Office of Sustainability appeared to be a natural and obvious fit for my planned gardening work at McGill and in the community, there were several encounters that deterred me from pursuing their internal opportunities.

Before my gardening work started to take shape, I had applied for and received McGill's Office of Sustainability funding for a waste reduction and literacy initiative on campus that I undertook with another doctoral student. The funding that was approved was not a large amount and required more textual accountability and auditing than other grants I had received for gardening and other projects on McGill's campus. In these encounters with the McGill Office of Sustainability, I found their review process dated, ill-informed and subscribing to measurements

that were socially and environmentally unsustainable and irresponsible (e.g. printing mass amounts of stickers to showcase funded work on campus, insistence on volunteer recruitment rather than compensating someone, and when they did release funding for paying someone, it was approved at the prevailing minimum wage). To receive funding for the waste reduction/literacy work I very briefly described above, the McGill Office of Sustainability insisted that we adopt their definition of sustainability on our application and indicated that they did not share our commitments for providing paid work opportunities, observing that it was unnecessary to pay someone to work on the project when there are so many McGill students in need of pertinent work experience and who were willing to volunteer.

After several emails back and forth, where I highlighted the ways in which unpaid internships perpetuate a violent cycle of privilege and exclude students who cannot afford to volunteer, I decided that it was easier to find funding from the private sector and other sources. I was disappointed with the McGill's Office of Sustainability because as a McGill student, some of my tuition each semester helps fund the grant programs to which I was applying. However, I learned that unless I had faculty support and adopted the McGill Office of Sustainability's conservative discourse around sustainability, that I, as a doctoral student, was unlikely to receive funding. It was difficult to enact this gardening project at McGill not only because my own ethical commitments were at-odds with the objectives of McGill's Office of Sustainability, but also because the McGill Office of Sustainability seemed most interested (and likely had little choice) in participating in an audit culture (Ahmed, 2012) – that is, processes that obscure the university's actual environmental footprint yet enables them to track their progress towards its sustainability outcomes, which my more 'radical' and community-based vision did not support and vehemently opposed. It appeared to me that McGill's Office of Sustainability was more

pressed to showcase the sustainability work that they funded than actually funding work that would make McGill more environmentally responsible.

While I did not see eye to eye with the McGill's Office of Sustainability on a range of issues, I did learn a great deal from these kinds of bureaucratic and measurement/outcome focused interactions. Perhaps not surprisingly, on future external funding applications I positioned McGill University as a central site/garden and proposed to develop satellite gardens in schools and in the community sector, highlighting the 'successes' of the McGill Education Garden in the same way that the McGill's Office of Sustainability highlights their environmental achievements. Receiving funding from outside sources (banks, corporations, the government) to do garden work at McGill was straightforward because of McGill University's charitable registration number (CRA). Recall that this work was not positioned as research; it was community gardening. Writing grants about supporting schools and community organizations using McGill's institutional network of support taught me to overstate objectives and deliverables all while subscribing to the conventional and expected rhetoric of effects of sustainability and community gardening (Cairns, 2018). While receiving financing through McGill University's CRA helped fund my gardening work, I was also helping some of these corporations reduce the amount they pay in taxes, as the grant funding I received can be claimed to offset the income of the corporation that year.

Although McGill University's Office of Sustainability did not or has not financially support my ongoing garden work, it would have been extremely difficult to apply for external funding from banks, corporations and the government without the affiliation I had with the institution at large. In this way, McGill University both enabled and constrained my work in both ethical and financial ways. My interviews confirmed that my connection to McGill held

'institutional credibility' in schools and in some community organizations. A partnership with McGill University can demonstrate and imply that the school or community organization has an academic collaboration, which in turn might help the school/organization with other funding applications (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019; Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019). Along with credibility for future funding, my institutional affiliation with McGill also helped advance my access and pedagogical permissions at a local school. Along with McGill's institutional credibility, one teacher I interviewed also pointed to my (sex) gender as holding additional credibility in this context for establishing gardens:

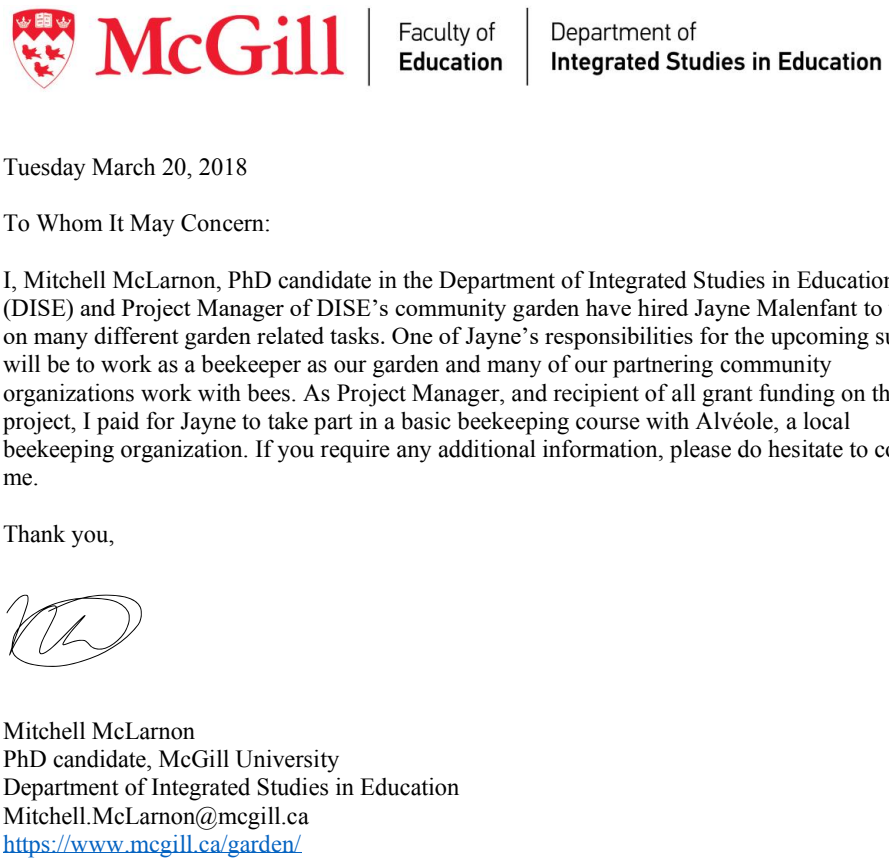
> Bringing someone in from McGill, and bringing in a male who is perhaps, an authority on the front [on gardening and environmental education] as our teaching staff is predominantly female – definitely helped legitimize our request [for garden and pedagogical permissions] (Interview, Vanessa, August, 15th, 2019).

As I was developing relationships with teachers and community workers, having McGill as a central garden site helped demonstrate in real time that I knew what I was doing in gardens, while also opening different kinds of funding opportunities. Although McGill certainly enabled a lot of my garden work, there were several barriers that I experienced to accessing funds as my garden work and I were also hooked into some of McGill's institutional and financial processes. Because I benefited from using McGill's CRA number, I was accountable to McGill's rules and regulations on expenditures, even though my grants had fewer spending and employment stipulations when compared with research funding. The university is very accustomed to managing the typical funding that students receive like Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada doctoral fellowships, but did not have procedures in place when cheques and Home Depot gift cards starting showing up for the garden project at McGill's financial offices.

Despite holding multiple roles at the institution (PhD candidate, lecturer, consultant, researcher) whenever I interacted with McGill's finance department or any other administrative division of the university, I was quickly reminded that I was a student and that if I wanted to do any of this work, I would need the support of a fulltime faculty member.

My connection with McGill permitted access to funding schemes that aren't accessible to others who might want to do this kind of garden work for social, environmental and educational purposes, yet the internal processes and the cumbersome bureaucracy of McGill prevented me from enacting this work as efficiently as I would have liked, and often required me to act in ways that ethically compromised my initial intentions and my relationships with community partners. Even though I had received some private funding without stipulations for how I needed to use the funds, once those funds were deposited in McGill's CRA and financial system, I had to adhere to their regulations and had to participate in the auditing processes of the institution and the regulations of its hiring and human resource departments, often requiring additional labour on my part to keep the garden project progressing with the material needs and wants of the schools and community organizations with whom I was partnering. For a poignant example, McGill finances refused on three occasions to reimburse me for another doctoral student's beekeeping course and I had to write a formal letter to explain why garden funding was being used for a doctoral student learning how to keep bees.

Figure 6. *Letter to McGill University's Financial Office*



McGill | Faculty of Education | Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Tuesday March 20, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Mitchell McLarnon, PhD candidate in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE) and Project Manager of DISE's community garden have hired Jayne Malenfant to work on many different garden related tasks. One of Jayne's responsibilities for the upcoming summer will be to work as a beekeeper as our garden and many of our partnering community organizations work with bees. As Project Manager, and recipient of all grant funding on this project, I paid for Jayne to take part in a basic beekeeping course with Alvéole, a local beekeeping organization. If you require any additional information, please do hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

Mitchell McLarnon
PhD candidate, McGill University
Department of Integrated Studies in Education
Mitchell.McLarnon@mcgill.ca
https://www.mcgill.ca/garden/

This was not the first or last time that I needed to explain why and how I was spending money. Justifying many of my expenses was not the only issue I had when interacting with different internal departments of McGill. I always had to justify who I was hiring and why with McGill's human resources, and additionally had to find alternatives to McGill's typical 'direct deposit' payment system for some garden team members who did not yet have bank accounts. I was often hiring and mentoring youth who were experiencing barriers to employment and financial insecurity, so paying people equitably and in a timely manner for their labour was

important. Nevertheless, my requests to expedite some of these processes appeared to frustrate many people working in these divisions.

On two occasions when payment was delayed at McGill, I used my own money to pay team members and then submitted reimbursements for myself retroactively. I also incurred other personal financial expenses. Because McGill's finance system is typically set-up in a way where one would first spend their personal money and then submit for reimbursement, there was always a slight delay in receiving expense reimbursement. As of June 2020, I was owed over $2000 (from my own grants) from gardening expenses that required additional justification, but there was a time when I was owed over $4000 in repayment for expenses, which was held up at different levels of McGill's finance department. After struggling to communicate with McGill's finance department even with the ongoing support and labour of my doctoral supervisor and others within the Faculty of Education, I eventually opted to run all the remaining garden expenses through my professional development funds from being a sessional lecturer at another academic institution. I share these details for two reasons: first, I want to highlight one of ways I tried to subvert institutional processes to benefit gardening efforts and people who were labouring on the garden project; and two, to show some of these challenges I encountered when attempting my evolving and idiosyncratic approach to gardening for social, educational and environmental purposes.

Reflecting on my experiences interacting with different people and departments at McGill (or having others like my doctoral supervisor interact on my behalf) revealed that gardening work at McGill, which requires a significant amount of financial and human capital, is textually organized and inextricably linked to funding schemes, human resource departments, land, permissions, accountability to the university's finance department, and hierarchical

professional communications inherent of institutions like universities. In contrast, I wanted the gardening project to be non-hierarchal, accountable to teachers and community partners, and non-exploitative of people's labour. I eventually realized that it would be impossible to locate the kind of 'critical' gardening work I envisioned at McGill because of the ways I had to bend the work to fit within inflexible auditing and reporting processes, organizational pyramids, and extremely slow bureaucracy. Some weeks, I was devoting more time and effort to communicating with different internal departments and justifying my expenses than grant writing, actual gardening, or working with schools and community organizations to support their programming. Even though, I actively attempted to resist participating in this audit culture and tried to subvert McGill's processes in multiple areas (finance, the McGill Office of Sustainability) whenever possible, getting gardens, garden funding and textually reporting on what was happening became my gardening work.

As the actual garden ideas developed and transformed in collaboration with school and community partners (see below), I decided that moving the funding to an external community-based organization might help disrupt the institutional processes that I felt were slowing the gardening as a physical and embodied act and might benefit the school and community organization in ways that were near impossible when working from within McGill. Increasingly, I found myself more interested in creating gardens and gardening opportunities off campus, on local schoolgrounds, in different neighbourhoods, and in the community sector, rather than participating in what felt like an endless search for small pockets of funding that then led to increased labour (for myself and others) through interactions and communication with the different people, regulations, processes and departments of McGill. The analytic attention that I have placed on myself and McGill is not to blame the institution or the individuals of the

institution but rather to highlight the processes of the institution that individualize people's work and undermine the collective pursuit of just outcomes.

The Roots: Community and School Gardens as an Entry Point

Concurrent to expanding the McGill's Faculty of Education Garden space, I was also looking to extend the garden work into schools and the community sector and was searching for school and community partners. I was not approaching teachers, schools, community workers and community organizations so that I could conduct research; rather, using my network and the networks of others (friends, colleagues, my partner, my doctoral supervisor), I met with teachers, educational workers and with front-line employees of different community-based organizations that worked with youth and adults experiencing food insecurity to explore garden collaborations. Ethically, it was important for me to speak with teachers and community workers to get a sense of what was actually happening in local schools and organizations. Just because I had funding to conduct pedagogical and community gardening work, I did not want to reinvent what was already taking place and looked to the insights and material needs of potential partners. While meetings and gardening connected me to many different schools and community organizations, the descriptions and analysis I offer in the next two sections emphasize my gardening work with one community organization (Champion Sound) and English Park School.

Champion Sound

Beyond using funding to expand the existing garden space at McGill, I first funded and facilitated the design and installation of a community-based garden in the courtyard of a youth-serving hip-hop studio at Champion Sound as part of my work with my doctoral supervisor (Dr.

Naomi Nichols) on one of her research projects, titled: *Sampling Youth Development*. The project was a participatory collaboration with youth from *Chalet Parc* and its affiliated hip-hop studio, Champion Sound. The main focus of *Sampling Youth Development* was on the institutional processes, and social determinants of health and education that shape exclusionary and disproportionate developmental trajectories for youth in Montreal. In many ways, my involvement in *Sampling Youth Development* and the first garden I co-created at Champion Sound acted as a prototype for my future research in terms of: gardening and UA work in both schools and other community organizations; and paid youth engagement (Nichols, 2019; see next chapter).

The idea for creating a youth-led garden at Champion Sound was originally discussed in the spring of 2016, yet the garden project was undertaken with the youth research team in early July 2016 during one of the ethnographic research training days that I facilitated. During one of the many breaks the youth and I took, we wandered into the narrow outdoor space on the side of the building and remarked that it had great sunlight and potential for gardening. We also thought that in developing a garden there, we could create additional space at the studio for users to create art and relax during down time. The construction of the garden at Champion Sound took place over two days. The first day consisted of conversations lead by the youth participants about how to best use the space. The outdoor space available had been unused for many years and as a result had accumulated many discarded items from the studio. As a group, we walked around the space and began to imagine what it could look like with a garden. We sat down to draw the design, and went online and began to budget for soil, plants, pots and other gardening supplies. In attempting to stretch the budget, limit consumption, and deviate from store-bought solutions, we opted to recycle some of the discarded items found in the outdoor space for gardening. For

instance, we used an old doorframe as a garden box with great effect. As a team, we divided into smaller working groups. Some of us went to local gardening stores to purchase the necessary supplies, while others stayed at the studio and began to prepare the area for our garden, based on the initial design. On the second day, most of the materials and supplies were planted although some additional cleaning and finishing touches were needed.

On the heels of creating the Champion Sound garden, two of the same youth participants were then hired to work at the McGill Faculty of Education community garden for the remainder of the summer and fall. What is potentially most interesting about the garden work at Champion Sound beyond the promotion of gardening, or the conversations around the importance of food sourcing and security it inspired, is how the youth project participants used the outdoor space they created at Champion Sound in their artistic practices. Before we converted the space into a garden, the youth observed that this was a space no-one used. At the time, I thought setting up a garden, or greening a concrete urban area like studio Champion Sound, was a positive political act and perhaps it was. However, as I reflected on the initial purpose of this garden for *greening*, and for critical discussions related to social and environmental justice, I also realized that I needed to expand the kinds of impacts garden and UA and can have. I was reminded of Cairns (2018), who asks, "What is lost when we assess pedagogies of gardens from this narrow evaluative framework?" (p. 517), which usually is limited to health (eating, time outdoors) academic achievement and sustainability. As I tried to more meaningfully expand my ideological impact measurements in relation our gardening work at Champion Sound and later at McGill, I hoped to devote more time to explore a more expansive understanding about how youth viewed the garden benefits themselves. However, this never came to practical or intellectual fruition. A year later, the studio moved to another location and the garden was left behind.

School Gardening and "Garden Club"

Because much of the gardening work in community organizations and at the local school materialized from personal and professional connections, creating a school garden at English Park School took almost two years from initial conversations to building garden beds with teachers and students. While the conversations that lead to the 'Garden Club's' creation are certainly interesting, what I want to underscore most is that it took a lot of time. Many back-and-forth communications were needed to bring our discussions to pedagogical permissions— and then additional time and communication was required to move from permissions to actually gardening. The person who I communicated most with in order to support the creation of a garden at English Park was Vanessa. Over two years prior to the creation of gardens and 'Garden Club,' Vanessa and I had several in person conversations before I was looped into an email thread with her and some of her colleagues, one of whom already had experience creating gardens at a different school. With hopes of getting permission to create a garden for the upcoming season, in January 2018, the educator who had already created a garden at a different school wrote a proposal that was submitted to the school's principal who was asked to 'OK' the project.

The document outlined the garden's purpose, location on the schoolgrounds, benefits (educational, environmental, and health and wellbeing), maintenance schedule, timeline and other pertinent details that allowed us to install a garden on the schoolyard. Interestingly, in the proposal, the garden project and upcoming work was textually framed as a "Pollination and Beautification" (Garden Proposal, 2018) of the schoolyard. After reviewing this document with the collaborating teachers and informing them that I had funding that could be fully devoted to

this initiative, I did not hear news that we had received administrative permissions until months later.

On a cold April morning, Vanessa and I arranged to meet outside the school to finalize garden locations, dimensions and to sketch out short-term and long-term lesson-plans for 'Garden Club' (Fieldnote, April 25th). That day, Vanessa and I marked off locations and took some measurements so that we could imagine what the outdoor schoolyard would then look like with gardens. As indicated on the proposal sent to the school's administration, we were aiming to build gardens on the front of the schoolyard for environmental (greening, pollination) and teaching reasons, but also for beautification. As the meeting concluded that day, I wrote down a broad teaching plan, along with the tasks that Vanessa and I would take on before the first 'Garden Club.' Specifically, Vanessa would continue to communicate with her colleagues, school administration, and students to ensure permissions, student attendance and appropriate student to teacher ratios, while I went to the hardware store to purchase the materials we needed for the upcoming 'Garden Club' meetings. At this point in May 2018, I still had not yet met the other educator who would be part of Garden Club, nor had I met the students with whom we'd be working.

Because of how the teachers and I shared the immense labour of establishing a school garden and given that they had not yet hired or assembled a garden team due to the textual organization of funding schemes (it was April), I took on some of the more physically onerous tasks so that we (the educators, students and I) could maximize our short 50-minute lunch time. As planned by Vanessa, the first day of Garden Club involved: "1) Eating lunch together; 2) Talking about why we want to plant a garden and what will grow in it; 3) Using whiteboards to guide the kids to drawing the garden plan we discussed last week; 4) Measure and insert pegs"

(Vanessa, personal communication, May 17th, 2018). From May 18th to late June (the last day of the school year) Garden Club was held twice a week with a group of twelve students from a grade three class (Vanessa's class), a grade five class (Mary's class) and myself.

To the extent that was possible at the time, the educators and I attempted to link all garden activity to teaching and learning outcomes (Interview, Vanessa, August 16th, 2018). For example, on the first day of garden club, the students were grouped up to measure the boxes and decide where they would plant seedlings depending on size and companion plants. Before this 'Garden Club,', Mary, the other educator with whom we gardened, printed out 20 laminated photos of potential seedlings and plants that so that students could decide what exactly they wanted planted in their school's garden. Other than digging holes for the garden beds, getting the garden materials, drilling pilot holes for the garden boxes (the students fastened them), moving heavy bags of soil, and watering, the majority of the garden work was undertaken by the students.

Under our shared supervision, the students measured, staked and attached strings to show the gardens' surface area, selected plants that they wanted to plant from the laminated photos (e.g. squash, tomatoes, sunflowers, marigolds, etc.), researched exactly what the seedling would need to survive, located a water source, used power tools (drills) to fasten the garden boxes together, planted the seedlings, and took on other garden tasks both during and outside of 'Garden Club.' Although it took some time to establish a relationship with the teachers before starting garden club, creating a school garden seemed straightforward. The only time we postponed garden club was because of cold and rainy weather. While creating a school garden and a 'Garden Club' was easy at English Park School, that is not always the case. As my work in gardens led me to share my gardening experiences at teacher professional development days, and

in educational webinars, I began to hear different stories about the challenges other people experienced when attempting to fund and establish gardens and educational gardening programming.

The more I collaborated with teachers, not-for profits and other gardeners working with schools and schoolboards, it became clear to me that 'Garden Club' at English Park was an unusually simple and easy school gardening experience. According to conversations and several interviews with Vanessa, the garden creation and gardening work at English Park School was possible because of her colleague's past gardening experience, our partnership, the funding that I was offering, my position as a third-party expert on gardens, and due my institutional affiliation with McGill's Faculty of Education:

> I think that it was a very lucky situation because at the time, the administration that we had was not always giving off funds, or trusting of different projects that people would bring forward, so actually the woman that's my colleague, she had started a garden in another school. So she brought with her that kind of experience, and we had talked about wanting to start something small at our school. She was on very good terms with the administration, and I guess I was too. So because we both were, I think we got a green light a lot easier than other staff might have, or in a different setting. We felt that by also including what you had, and your documents, it would reinforce the credibility of the project, and the expertise. Basically, we said [to the administration], "there's enough people here, and enough funds here that all we need is for you to okay it, we don't need you to do much." I think it might have been different if we had had to say "we need a budget for this." But we basically said "it won't cost you anything, we have the people

> that know how to do it, can we just have an okay that we can use this space?" (Interview, Vanessa, September 13thth, 2019)

While Vanessa describes our partnership as one of the variables that convinced the school's administration to allow gardening and gardening club, other schools in Montreal with similar partnerships and collaborations can encounter textual and physical barriers to creating and using gardens for teaching and learning. My interviews with other teachers, a schoolboard employee, and principal suggested that it is the principal and other administrative staff who can enable or constrain gardening or other educational planning that might fall outside of the core curriculum or a typical school day regardless of how funding has been earmarked (Interview, Jeremie, November 15th, 2019). For example, the schoolboard employee (Kevin) I interviewed who held the position of 'extra-curricular specialist,' mentioned that he "need[ed] a principal's approval for most things" (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019). However, he also outlined other ways schools and teachers can get hooked up to gardens and school garden funding:

> There's three ways that they (schools and teachers) can get funding for this [gardens]. I mean, from the school board. So one of the ways is the school itself. So the school has budgets for like, you know, construction costs or whatever they want. And that goes through governing board, which is a group of parents and teachers. Right? So they can say, "we want to build a garden. We want to raise X amount of money" whatever. Governing board says "Yeah, that's cool. We'll spend that money on the garden." Another way is through the schoolboard itself. So, the school board has a pocket of money. (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019)

He further stated that while most principals are supportive of installing a garden and other environmental learning infrastructure (Kevin told me that some schools have mini-orchards), the

garden or ‘green’ funding that Kevin has accrued himself from private or external sources might be used to cover the school’s outstanding expenses. “Sometimes what happens is let's say if we get a grant and that school has a deficit, sometimes that grant goes ‘bye bye’ and doesn't get to the Green Program" (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019). Because gardening, environmental education, cooking (home economics), and other subjects are not included as core topics in the Quebec Education Program (Ministere de l’Education, Sports et Loisir, 2014), these broad subject areas often fall under Kevin and his small team’s responsibilities for schoolboard mediated extra-curricular programs. In another instance, Kevin discussed how a principal’s personal and/or aesthetic preferences can interact with financial considerations and together can influence how a garden appears at the school to create unanticipated barriers:

> So for one school’s garden, I had X amount of dollars and we were going to do a retaining [garden] or whatever—we had this whole plan. The principal said to me, as long as it's not too colorful. So I said— I was like, “I don't know what that means. Right now I'm talking about green and brown because we're gonna buy soil, right?” – “OK, as long as you don't do anything too colorful, you can build your garden.” But those are the attitudes, right? And I say OK, and just do what I have to do. And like, if we need a landscaper to come in, I give them the bill. They have to approve the bill even though it's funding that I procured. And if they are like ‘I think this is a lot of money,’ and I have to be like, “Oh, when's the last time you built a garden?” So it's a lot of red tape. But you can learn to move or maneuver around it. (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019)

To work through this “red tape” that Kevin might encounter with a school’s administration, he and his staff (who are full-time but temporary schoolboard employees, which means no health

benefits, etc.) have created a form that acts like an "agreement" more than a required and joint and severally liable garden contract. Kevin states:

> It's really more like a ceremonial, type of thing rather than a binding contract. So what's happening is we would be building these gardens and then principals would be washing their hands clean of it. We (Kevin's department in the schoolboard) wanted some sort of like documentation being like: you read it. You signed it. (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019)

Kevin continued to inform of me of the challenges of creating and sustaining school gardens. Even after a garden is approved, and a form has been signed, if administration then changes their mind for whatever reason, this can create a lot of additional labour for Kevin and his team.

> I had one of my staff calling me or my co-worker, calling me being like "she (the principal) said that she was going to pay for the wood. Now she doesn't want to pay for the wood". And I have this huge project plan. So then, I call my boss and I say, "listen, we need money because this project's halfway on the way. And don't worry about it, because I'll apply for grants and we'll get that money covered in the rest." (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019)

I asked Kevin what are the issues that prevent schools from creating, sustaining and maintaining school gardens given that funding is indeed available, and he noted that because he and his team take on the majority of the labour in terms of finding and providing funding, garden construction and upkeep, the garden does not move to becoming a priority for the school: "we also found is like when we pay for everything, the schools don't have any buy-in" (Interview, Kevin, November 16th, 2019).

In contrast, my conversation with an administrator suggests that it is not only about receiving administrative permissions to create a garden as there can be many other levels of bureaucracy that administrators encounter, depending on the school, its geographical location and its governance structure. Jeremie, the vice-principal I spoke with noted that a written proposal is certainly needed for a garden to be created on the schoolground and that schools can provide funding for gardening if requested months prior to the beginning of the school year through a provincial budgeting program called “measure” (I-13.1, Education Act, Gouvernement du Quebec, 2020). However, beyond funding and administrative permissions, there are other levels of approvals needed for creating gardens and moving gardening into teaching time. Sometimes, a garden and its pedagogical or extra-curricular use during the school day/year can be negotiated between a teacher and a member of the administration, but there is typically much more to consider.

For example “if students need to miss classes or go to a special event or things like that, then it comes back to staff, council and governing board” (Interview, Jeremie, February 12th, 2020). While a staff council “is a group of teachers who kind of represent the whole staff” and is “similar to governing board but it's a teacher vote” (Interview, Jeremie, February 12th, 2020), a governing board is mandated by Quebec’s Education Act (2020). According to the English Montreal Schoolboard (n.d.), governing boards are “composed of the principal, parents, teachers, representatives of both the non-teaching professionals and support staff, daycare, and students in cycle 2 of secondary school, and community representatives who work in partnership to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities.” (School Governing Board, 2021).

For teachers who encounter daily barriers to a regular school day like "fighting with the photocopier, or the computers or whatever [that's] unforeseen" (Interview, Vanessa, September 13thth, 2019), having another level of administrative permission from the governing board makes the process of establishing a garden more cumbersome. While many of my teacher collaborators stated that they are fully committed and interested in creating garden-based learning experiences for their students, additional levels of permissions translate to more administrative labour that can detract from arranging other important aspects of garden creation (establishing funding, collaborators, curricular connections, etc.). Given that this research is located in Montreal, a city with a long winter and a short intense summer, for school gardens to work, the planning and administrative labour/permission for a spring garden needs to happen in the early in the school year to account for the inevitable delays.

Returning to Jeremie's explanation, he further highlighted that perhaps the issue encircling the pedagogical or extra-curricular employment and potential of gardens may not be about school or teacher 'buy-in,' but rather time constraints to the already overloaded work-lives of teachers and principals. He stated unequivocally that for a garden to be sustainable and used pedagogically, a teacher (or group of teachers) would need to occupy the most central role(s) of its organization. Importantly, Jeremie mentioned that:

> all extracurricular activities are additional to their (teacher's) teaching load […] Because me (the vice-principal), I'm just saying we should have a garden won't lead to having a garden. Right? And like, where are we going to put it? How do we start? It's having the person power to get it started […] And we want to take the time to organise something at the grade level …[but] this is our problematic. But where do we get that (information)? So somebody has to take the lead. And most often, it's the administrator or part of the

> administration. So we need to contact the school board and special consultants. We need to look at organisations. We need to know which organisations offer which services, so it's sharing that information, so that's something that lacks as well. (Interview, Jeremie, February 12th, 2020)

Jeremie also noted that public school teachers can receive compensation for this additional work with their administrator's approval, but this extra labour can be too much for many teachers, which is why Jeremie is more accustomed to either reaching out to an internal (within the schoolboard) specialist, or connecting with a third-party organization like myself. She states that it is crucial to have this kind of extra-curricular and pedagogical support at her and the school's immediate disposal given how time is fleeting each school day:

> It's knowing where to go because you've never had that need to call this organization or to know about it, you have no idea it exists. So that's it. It's having that time to research the different organizations and sharing the information with other administrators. So it's having that time to stop, to think, to plan. That's what's missing. (Interview, February 12th, 2020)

Interestingly, another teacher I interviewed said that any additional garden work translates to "time away from the family" and that this kind of garden planning occurs during "vacation time" Interview, December 17th, 2019). At English Park, Vanessa, her colleagues and I were able to co-create garden club and provide gardening programming because we shared labour: I acted as a garden specialist who brought funding, materials, know-how and pedagogical support while Vanessa and her colleagues structured the textual conditions to receive administrative approval, but as explicitly stated above, this took a long time. As echoed from the standpoint of an administrator, a third-party (internal or external) is usually needed if a garden is to be used

pedagogically and sustainably within a school, teachers need to take the lead, but require additional support because of their already fulltime work schedule and the ongoing neoliberal crunch where public facing institutions like schools are constantly pressured to do more with less.

Closing

Starting by locating my garden work at McGill University, in this chapter I have shown how teachers, schoolboard employees and I have created gardens for different types of gardening programming, and how these efforts at each location became accountable to different regulations shaped by funding stipulations, hiring practices, employment policies, land permissions, school and schoolboard governance, competing and overlapping discourses and other pertinent and sometimes invisible processes that kept the gardens and garden initiatives operational or limited. For example, my affiliation with McGill University as a PhD candidate limited my gardening actions internally at McGill in terms of my capacity to independently hold internal funds, yet this same affiliation enabled my access to external garden funding and for establishing local school and community-based partnerships. With teachers, although we created several gardens and a garden club to promote environmental education, the work required additional planning. Because of limited time compounded with the innumerable tasks of educators, we were only able to work with a small number of students during lunchtime. Above I also underscore the connection of the larger gardening work – to the ethos of the collaborative work that I was a part of at Champion Sound. Acknowledging these specific roots are important. The analysis presented in this chapter and dissertation could not have been possible without the work of others (my partner; my

supervisor; collaborating teachers, students, community workers and community members; Griffin House staff; and other garden team members – who I was able to hire, train and mentor).

At different schools and the community organization (Champion Sound), the redeemable work like creating a garden and connecting people with growing food opened my eyes to a complex network of unseen and unexpected labour and organizing relations. Indeed, these early projects provided me with ample opportunity to learn about the not-so-obvious institutional, policy, funding and organizational processes that shape how school and urban gardening occurs, the types of gardens that are permitted in schools, community organizations, that cities and neighbourhoods produce and support, and the distribution of the benefits associated with gardening for social, environmental and educational purposes.

Chapter Four: Gardening Employment: Sustaining Gardens and Building Garden Teams

In the last chapter, I drew on my own experiences creating and funding gardens in three different research sites (McGill University; Studio Champion Sound; and English Park School) in order to illuminate some of the institutional and policy relations that shape urban gardening. Picking up some of the same threads clarified in the last chapter (funding gardens, school and community collaborations, limits to the transformative potential of gardens, etc.), Chapter Four describes my experiences building gardens and fostering garden teams through employment programs at the Griffin House – a day centre that provides crucial front-line services for people experiencing homelessness, barriers to employment, and food insecurity. I compare my own experiences (as a gardener/researcher/educator) funding, building and sustaining gardens and garden teams with the efforts of my Griffin House collaborators (particularly, Jan, a front-line community worker) who also create and use gardens for social, environmental and educational purposes. In this way, this chapter explains and reveals the challenges of garden labour, government funding, along with key realizations related to use of gardening and UA for employment programming, and for social, environmental and educational purposes.

For the past four summers, the garden team and I have supported the Griffin House with their garden and garden programming, as well as addressing other material needs communicated by the organization. Some days, the team and I worked in the garden most of the day. Other days we helped in the kitchen, supported the organization's food bank, or contributed to their online infrastructure. This long-term collaborative and community-based work has shaped the direction, focus and scope of my inquiry.

Throughout this chapter, my research traces from people's experiences organizing gardens and gardening for employment into the relevant funding and policy texts – funding

schemes and government policies (municipal, provincial, federal) – that can limit and enable their own and other's participation in urban gardening efforts. Since my community-based gardening work and subsequent research has taken place with Griffin House, this chapter forays into homelessness, food insecurity, and barriers that Jan and I encountered when hooking people up to garden-based employment programming. While this chapter zooms in on my research and gardening with one community organization and does not explicitly discuss schools and/or school gardening, I continue to surface the educational implications of this work. I conclude this chapter by analyzing the extent to which the gardening work with the Griffin House actually achieved the project outcomes of gardening for social, environmental and educational purposes (like gardening for food security). Here, I also revisit the ethical considerations that have come into view by paying attention to how our gardening efforts are organized institutionally and I ultimately consider what my research suggests about how community-based gardens and UA should be interpreted within ongoing social and environmental justice efforts in Montreal and in cities more broadly.

Background

As mentioned in the previous chapter, beyond using garden funding to construct gardens, the funding that I secured using McGill University's CRA was earmarked for paying garden team members for their work at McGill and in other gardens at schools and in the community. The previous garden grants I wrote had projected outcomes such as: promoting environmental education, learning for sustainable development and environmental stewardship; increasing awareness around food sourcing and food (in)security; providing gardening employment as preventative measure for homelessness; creating community partnerships through gardens; and

building a website on McGill's server. In July 2017, I was in need of human resource support to report on these outcomes, how each grant's stated objectives were met, and how the work complied with other environmental and charitable auditability measurements (i.e., how many trees were planted, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, 2016). To minimize my labour output and time, as I was writing and organizing the final reports for funders, I used the previous summer's achievements to apply for another gardening grant to further support upcoming work – this time from McGill's Faculty of Education's graduate student society. I was awarded the grant and its only condition was that I hire a graduate student who was also a member of this same society. With this funding, I hired my friend and colleague, Jayne Malenfant, who took on a myriad of gardening tasks at McGill and in the local community including the administrative and reporting tasks associated with the previous grants I had secured, and the creation of an institutional website for the garden project on McGill's server that showcased the ongoing gardening initiatives, current funding and community partners.

Around the same time that Jayne and I started working together that summer, we were reminded by my partner that the Griffin House needed support with their already established, under-used and potentially immense garden space. The first person we communicated with at the Griffin House was Jan, the Clinical Coordinator. When we first connected with Jan, she mentioned the organization had a garden, and guests[21] who were hired to help with tasks around the house. However, given her workload in what she expressed as a "very chaotic work environment" (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019), she simply did not have enough time or

[21] Please note that people who use the Griffin House services are called 'guests.'

resources to organize any formal garden employment programming as there were other more pressing needs for her to coordinate on a day-to-day basis (staffing, social work interventions, conflict resolution, food pick-up, meal service for guests, house cleaning, clothing distribution, and many other important front line services for people experiencing homelessness; Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019). On the heels of this first meeting, Jayne led the emerging collaboration with Jan to support the garden and gardening programming at the Griffin House and developed many relationships with front-line workers and house guests.

Each week, Jayne and I worked with a small number of guests who were tasked with gardening and together we cared for the garden. We yielded an impressive harvest given that the early collaboration with the Griffin House was mainly about building our relationships and an understanding of the organization, its needs and its guests, and less about actual gardening for a specific purpose (i.e., employment, food production, etc.). In this sense, gardening was the beginning of a relationship with the organization. At the time, the relationship was generative because there was alignment between our gardening work and the programming needs of the Griffin House and because Jayne was compensated for gardening work. Below, Jan describes the importance of establishing relationships that summer:

> If we use the example of Guest 1 in the garden: how proud he was when that first year—when it literally was you, Jayne, him and that other guy. You literally dug all of the earth up and everything. They had taken the soil, the compost the city had delivered on the other side of the fence and moved it all over and did sort of bridges. In that picture of him sitting there, on the table sort of very content with what he had done, and the relationships he established with you and Jayne. He loved you and Jayne and you and Jayne listened to him, he loved talking to you two, and it was an opportunity for him to

> talk to somebody who wasn't from (another local organization that works with people experiencing homelessness), and who wasn't an intervention worker. It was just people from the community, sharing something that you knew about with him, and it was just people creating a relationship and creating a meaningful bond over something that is...I mean, who doesn't think a garden is beautiful? Who doesn't feel good, when you're walking through the sunflowers, or when you are taking a salad freshly picked from the ground? To be able to give that to people, to be able to allow the people to have that experience in an urban setting, where a lot of these people have kind of been born and raised in an urban jungle, is very valuable. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

While I am incredibly critical of the overwhelming positive garden discourse and as such take a 'hyperactive' and 'pessimistic' approach to my own gardening work in schools, community organizations and in different neighbourhoods of Montreal, reviewing Jan's interpretation of our collaboration reminded me that the relationships established were authentic and allowed for redeemable, relational and just garden programming for people who are not often included nor prioritized in garden experiences.

Gardening for Food Security

Building on the relationship Jayne and I established with Griffin House in 2017, the following year I prepared for the upcoming gardening and grant writing season. Inspired by the past work of Nichols (2019) where she used a Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) employability program in collaboration with a local community-based organization to assemble a community-based youth team, I knew that one way I could provide both funding and labour support to the Griffin House's garden and other programming was via a CSJ grant. However, different from

past grant applications where I used McGill University's CRA number, in the CSJ application, I used the Griffin House's CRA number, hoping that locating funding and labour outside of McGill's institutional relations would better benefit the organization and translate to less administrative work for myself and others. Within the scope of this granting opportunity, we could apply for funded gardening positions to support other needs of the organization. Our aim was to address Jan's expressed needs for staff support:

> We need some more staff, and if it wouldn't be staff, then stagiaires (student interns). The problem with stagiaires is that they leave, but some stagiaires would help. If I could get somebody … stagiaires (interns) in administration, or human resources, because then that would take some of the workload off of us […] our poor administrator does everything. There's only a limit to what she can do in the hours that we pay her. So if we had one or two other people that were maybe doing their stage here— because we couldn't afford to pay them. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

When writing the CSJ grant, I connected our past and ongoing gardening work at McGill with the mandate of the Griffin House (which was to support people experiencing homelessness, food insecurity and barriers to employment). I again highlighted that I had an affiliation with McGill University. I stated that the CSJ grant would be a collaboration between the Griffin House and McGill University, using the established McGill garden and institutional networks for credibility. I referenced the McGill website Jayne had built the previous summer to showcase our ongoing work and garden achievements, current school and community partners and past funding. In other words, once again I leveraged my institutional affiliation with McGill University to establish a garden team at the Griffin House. In the application, I titled this collaborative gardening project with the Griffin House, *Gardening for Food Security*, because we aimed to use

the funded youth employment positions to create gardens for food production to support the Griffin House's established food security programs (three daily meal services, a food bank, employment programming, etc.).

Rhetorically, I positioned our proposed garden work as supporting sustainability, community building, food security, health and wellbeing benefits by citing research on the health and social benefits of gardening. I observed that the proposed gardening project and summer employment programming aligned with what the CSJ "local priorities" program (CSJ, 2018) for the Sud-Ouest of Montreal. Griffin House is located in the electoral district or 'riding' of "Ville-Marie – Le Sud-Ouest – Ile des Soeurs" (Government of Canada, n.d.) where local priorities of the district include: "Environment; Organizations that provide programs and services to women, youth, persons with disabilities, seniors, disadvantaged families, refugees, immigrants and Indigenous peoples; Homelessness and poverty: Nonprofit organizations and public sector; and Social Services: Non profit organizations and public sector" (CSJ, Application, 2018).

While I was aware that the team and I would not be capable of addressing these vague and broad "local priorities," reflecting issues that have persisted for decades, I employed the overwhelmingly positive community gardening discourse to suggest that the project could, indeed, support organizations that provide services to the groups named above, address poverty and support non-profit social services, for example. The *Gardening for Food Security* project would be located within a not-for-profit organization that explicitly supports people experiencing homelessness and poverty. We would support Griffin House to use gardens for social, environmental and employability purposes. While academic literature and public discourse often position gardening as a way to address food insecurity (Carney et al., 2012; Ville de Montreal, April, 30th, 2020), I questioned the veracity of these claims for two main reasons. First, as an

experienced gardener who has had several highly productive vegetable gardens, I only produce enough food to feed myself for a few months and during Montreal's growing season, I compare my home gardening efforts as comparable to having another fulltime job given that it requires a significant amount of time, labour and timely intervention to maximize food production and harvesting. Second, food security persists as a major social issue in Montreal, despite an increase in gardening and greening initiatives in many neighbourhoods (Fieldnote, July 8th, 2018) so I am very suspicious of past academic research, community gardening and especially municipal (or other governmental) efforts that claim gardens reduce food insecurity (see: Ville de Montreal). Different from the past research and municipal efforts that critique, I felt in some self-righteous way that the proposed *Gardening for Food Security* project had a different ethical orientation to other garden (and UA) initiatives that claim to address food security, as this collaboration was actually physically located within a community organization supporting food insecure people. In other words, I sought to connect the work of growing food to environmental justice concerns like food insecurity, and inadequate access to healthy food, and greenspaces.

Before learning that the *Gardening for Food Security* project was funded, Jayne and I met with the Jan from the Griffin House on a weekly basis throughout the winter and early spring to plan the garden and explore funding opportunities to address other pressing needs of the organization. Building on the momentum and relationships from the previous summer, in our meetings we discussed upcoming grant deadlines, and in relation to the garden, we dreamt of having a space fully devoted to food production to support meals and the Griffin House food bank, a vermicomposter, a beehive and a shade tent, and discussed hosting a series of non-formal and co-operative workshops on topics that ranged from the digital to the artistic to the environmental and then to employability. When I received news that the CSJ grant had been

fully funded (April 2018), providing six fulltime garden positions (at minimum wage, which at the time was twelve dollars per hour, Service Canada, CSJ, Entente/Agreement, 2018) for a duration of eight weeks (ending before September 1st, 2018), I wanted to finalize the garden plan because we would need to start seedlings as soon as possible, especially with the textual outcome of food production for supporting food security initiatives.

At the next weekly meeting, Jan invited the Griffin House chef to join our meeting so that we could finalize exactly what produce he wanted to cook with throughout the summer and fall. We made an ambitious plan for food production and aimed to have regular harvests of leafy greens (e.g., lettuce, kale and swiss chard) to support as many daily meal services as was possible, and to use leftover produce to support the organization's food bank. To ensure that the garden would be ready for weekly harvesting in July, I started sowing of hundreds of seeds indoors and began planning the garden space at the Griffin House (and at the other locations). What was problematic at this point in my funded garden work was that the timing of grant's approval and its stipulations conflicted with the lives the youth garden team and so I would need to take on most of the physical labour of preparing each garden for planting myself. For example, many of the youth were in school so while I had met with them to plan their summer work and gather their personal information for the employment contract, I could not officially hire them before July due to scheduling issues. And, because I only hired the team in July, I only sent the employee declaration information to Service Canada in late June, which is necessary for receiving the CSJ funding. Since it takes time for the government to process and approve the information I submitted, Service Canada only released the funding to the Griffin House for paying the team members in July (see below). Given that the garden project exists within

capitalism, it was important to pay youth for their gardening work and needing to the get the garden started to maximize food production, I took on the work myself.

In terms of actually assembling a gardening team and hiring youth, the 2018 CSJ employment program included the following employment conditions: “Canadian citizenship or permanent residency, being between the age of 16-30, matriculation at an educational institution”, work fulltime hours (30-35 hours per week for however many weeks were approved for funding), that the employment contract had to be completed by “September 1st, 2018” (Service Canada, Entente/Agreement, 2018). Once I received the notice of funding, recruiting a garden team became my fulltime occupation. When applying for the grant, I had not taken into account how these regulations could constrain who I could I hire, when I could actually hire and train them, and how this might impact the gardens, the gardening work, the frontline support (meal service or kitchen support, administrative work like answering the phone, managing donations, or coordinating volunteer scheduling) for the Griffin House, and reporting requirements associated with the grant. I wanted to provide gardening employment opportunities for youth, but I also needed the garden to produce food in high quantity to best support meal service and the food bank. Although I had received funding to employ six people fulltime for eight weeks, at the time of preparing the gardens, I did not yet have people to support the work that was most pressing in terms of timing and labour intensity (e.g., sowing seeds, taking care of seedlings, planning and preparing the gardens, and planting seedlings). To maximize the potential food production and to fulfill commitments to the organization, I took on the majority of the garden preparation so that the team could start their employment with actual gardening, aiming for harvesting in by late June and early July. Over the next several weeks, the gardening tasks became innumerable. Along with all the administrative work of assembling and

compensating a garden team (setting up direct deposit with the organization, communicating with Service Canada), I was biking all over the city to establish gardening infrastructure so that the garden team would have garden work.

By physically and financially locating the *Gardening for Food Security* project at the Griffin House and outside of McGill University's internal bureaucracy, I had hoped to lessen my own participation in a neoliberal audit culture (Ahmed, 2012) by returning to the needs of people and the community organization. I wanted to offer employment to young people who I knew were struggling to find work, many of whom were my former students who had expressed interest in this kind of gardening and community work, or youth members of other organizations with whom Jayne, myself and others within our larger networks had collaborated with in the past (e.g., Studio Champion Sound). Because of the conditions of the grant and who I was able to recruit for the summer work, the funded phase of the project and employment of the team members only began the first week of July as many of the youth I hired were either not available (because they needed work sooner than the contract started), or were ineligible (e.g., because they were not enrolled in full time school).

As noted above, conditions of the CSJ employment program included ongoing enrollment at an educational institution (Service Canada, Entente/Agreement, 2018). For one garden team member who had been out of school for two years (Fieldnote, August 8th, 2018), we (he and I) spent a few afternoons in June taking meetings with Dawson College and Concordia University to see whether he could enroll at an education institution so as to become eligible for this job. While I was ensuring and navigating the eligibility (or inclusion) criteria and availability of team members, Jayne was taking on an increasing number of gardening tasks that needed to be completed so that the employment program could start on schedule. Within a few weeks, all six

positions were filled. The garden team was now a group of eight people working on different garden-related tasks under the banner of *Gardening for Food Security.* That spring, as the summer gardening work took shape, Jayne was awarded two prestigious doctoral fellowships, which limited her working hours and required her to be present at events in different cities across Canada. This left an immense labour and relational hole in the project as Jayne had been integral to establishing a trusting working relationship with Griffin House staff and guests. Despite not being 'employed' by the project any longer, Jayne remained a central part of the garden team. Even with her new commitments that summer, Jayne still supported the Griffin House staff and garden, mentored many team members, and led several workshops during the summer, inspiring and assisting others to design and lead workshops themselves.

Garden Team Building

To create a funded garden team I had to: write multiple grants; participate uncritically in positive discourse encircling community gardening and UA; align my narrative with the federal government's "local priorities" (CSJ Application, 2018); collect and submit lengthy personal and demographic forms about each team member (which included information on race, minority status, gender, sexuality, if the CSJ employment opportunity was the employee's first job, and if the employment program contributes to their field of study); research and write about workplace health and safety and account for workplace health and safety at each working location; create mentorship plans for each team member; coordinate weekly work schedules for each employee, ensure that the Griffin House was adequately supported and that the other gardens were being watered; and, report on the finances and successful completion of the employment program

before receiving the funding/full reimbursement. Getting the auditing and accounting right was thus a significant preoccupation, throughout the entire summer.

Before the first day of work that July, I had asked team members to send me their banking information and the CSJ "Employer and Employee Declaration" form that documents their participation and eligibility in the program, and ensures timely reimbursement for the organization. I did my best to collect and submit all relevant information to Service Canada and the Griffin House as soon as possible to expediate financial processes. I was told the following:

> You must complete the Employer and Employee Declaration within seven days of the beginning of the CSJ-funded employment. This form enables Service Canada to validate your compliance with the Articles of Agreement. Advance or payment may be delayed if you do not provide the Employer and Employee Declaration(s). (Service Canada communication, July 28th, 2018)

Any delay in entering and submitting team information to the government led to delays in receiving funding, which delayed people being paid. This was concerning and important from a financial, organizational and ethical standpoint. The Griffin House, like many front-line community organizations, have experienced the effects of significant divestment in public and non-profit social services and do not work with a surplus budget. Furthermore, because I hoped to support the Griffin House with gardens and with whatever was of material importance to the organization, I was adamant about not burdening their already busy staff with additional administrative tasks related to the grant. This meant that I took on the role of managing the grant's finances, collecting financial and demographic information from garden team members and communicating with Service Canada. Ethically, given that I had deliberately hired some youth who experienced barriers to employment and poverty, it was essential that I completed the

accounting and reporting processes carefully and in a timely manner so that the organization was indeed reimbursed as quickly as possible and so that the employees were not working without payment.

For some of the youth hired, this job represented their first foray into gardening and employment. Ensuring team members were present each day at eight in the morning to support breakfast at the Griffin House and to water the garden was a challenge. Even though youth aren't supposed miss any work during an employment contract (CSJ Application, 2018), on a personal and individual level, it did not bother me if a team member missed a day of work or showed up late. However, along with the textual constraints of the grant agreement, there are natural and environmental constraints imposed by gardening. Given our food production objectives and the intense heat island effect in Montreal during summer (Environment Canada, 2008), gardens needed to be watered regularly and, in the morning,[22] to optimize water absorption. In addition to periodically missing shifts, one team member was absent for over two weeks throughout the summer of 2018 for personal and medical reasons. As the absences added up across the team for different reasons, I started to receive phone calls and emails from the Griffin House staff asking where garden team members were. After discussing the nonappearances with the Griffin House staff and the garden team, I decided to rework the schedule to ensure that gardens were getting watered at the right time of the day and so that the organization had adequate support during meal times.

[22] While it has been debunked that watering during the day burns the leaves of plants, watering in the morning is ideal and preferred because less water evaporates before it's absorbed in the soil (Zazueta, 1994; Culham, 2018).

Reorganizing the schedule also meant that myself, other garden team members, and/or Griffin House staff had to take on additional labour. In addition to finding someone else to cover the missed shifts, I also had to explain to Service Canada why that same team member 'broke the contract of employment.' Because the Griffin House understandably did not want to compensate a team member for two weeks of missed fulltime work, there was a discrepancy between the funds approved and the final financial report. The government took note and asked me to explain what transpired and made it clear that they would not issue the reimbursement to Griffin House until my reasoning was approved. Thankfully, after filling out an additional accountability statement form and exchanging several emails with civil servants, Service Canada accepted my rationale for why an employee missed work and reimbursed the organization.

This experience reveals a conflict between the stated program objectives of the CSJ program to: "provide quality work experiences for youth; respond to national and local priorities to improve access to the labour market for youth who face unique barriers; provide opportunities for youth to develop and improve their skills" (Employment and Social Development Canada, n.d., Retrieved from: https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html), and the actual lives of young people who experience employment barriers. In conversation with a Service Canada government employee, I requested that the youth make up the missed time at a later date or on a part-time basis, but my request was refused. The rigidity of the regulations at the time of the 2018 CSJ grant (contract must be completed by September 1st, Entente/Agreement, 2018) assumes a stability in young people's lives that may not be possible for them to maintain throughout the entire program. For many youth, social and material instability will mean the employment contract cannot unfold exactly as dictated by the Service Canada agreement (2018). While there

is some flexibility with the program, any unforeseen change to the project requires additional administrative work, leading to less time for youth mentorship, and less labour support for the Griffin House given that the young person was not allowed to make up the missed work outside the terms of the CSJ agreement.

Taking on the supervisory and reporting work meant I was not mentoring team members in ways that actually supported "youth to develop and improve their skills" or "provide quality work experiences" (Employment and Social Development Canada, n.d., Retrieved from: https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/funding/canada-summer-jobs.html). Indeed, these administrative tasks detracted from time with youth and time in the garden. Furthermore, not all team members wanted gardening or educational mentorship: they just needed work. One way I tried to acknowledge young people's varied passions was to ensure that each team member devoted a portion of their working hours to projects, events or initiatives that were important to them, even if it was not gardening. Helping young people identify their passions often took the shape of an inquiry-based pedagogy anytime a team member asked me a question (i.e., "well, what do you think we should do?"). Often the events, initiatives and ideas that youth were interested in pursuing were not connected to gardens, but supported the needs of the Griffin House (see below). At other times that summer, the team proposed initiatives that had little to do with either the Griffin House or gardens, and I encouraged them to pursue these as well. I viewed connecting the interests of team members to the *Gardening for Food Security* project as one of my growing responsibilities and to ensure that youth felt valued beyond the monetary compensation and mentorship plans submitted to Service Canada.

Team member's projects in the summer of 2018 included: a garden song; four academic articles; artistic renderings; a workshop about misconceptions about Black masculinity in

Canada; and several workshops on various teaching topics. Outside of gardening and individual projects, for the Griffin House, the garden team worked on tasks that were pressing and helpful on a daily basis along with other outstanding work that the fulltime staff had identified as needed. For instance, some days the team would support daily tasks like meal service, driving to Montreal's largest food bank (*Moisson Montréal*), and house clean-up; and the construction and maintenance of a new and updated bilingual (English and French) website that included information about the organization's current front-line services, a more efficient system for receiving donations, a functioning volunteer recruitment portal.

Despite the redeemable social and environmental work taken on by all garden team members, situating the gardening work in the community sector still meant participating in capitalist exchange relations. Although I started this project hoping to provide gardening, paid employment and youth mentorship in a supportive and non-hierarchal way, participating in the CSJ program shifted the balance of my work. As the summer unfolded, I often found myself playing the role of a project manager or supervisor. Once again, I found myself looped into hierarchal relations, not unlike those I experienced at McGill. In this instance, instead of submitting financial information for approval, I was asking for accountability (weekly timesheets) and auditing the gardening team's work in relation to the daily, weekly and monthly needs of the organization and the reporting requirements of the CSJ program.

While I was no longer accountable to McGill's financial and institutional processes, I had seamlessly become accountable to the administration and finances of Griffin House and to the Canadian government through the "employment agreement" (Service Canada Entente/Agreement, 2018). My relationships with youth shifted from being a friend/mentor to also being their supervisor, as I had to ensure that people were physically present in their

assigned gardening locations. Even though I had managed to assemble a team to take on community-based gardening work, I had not reduced the administrative tasks and auditability processes I critiqued at McGill; rather, I had stepped into another set of interpenetrating social, institutional, and economic relations. My comprehensive plan for supervising and mentoring youth became less important than submitting information to the government in a timely fashion and achieving the project's outcomes (ensuring that organization had a food production garden and human resource support). It also became increasingly clear that none of this would work without my own unpaid labour.

Recognizing that this project is located in a capitalistic economic system, it is not realistic or sustainable for myself and others to work additional unpaid hours each week because we also have to attend to the material conditions of our own lives. Although the CSJ grant enabled me to offer employment and mentorship opportunities to young people who needed jobs, it changed how I related to the youth I hired and altered the organization of my days so that I was increasingly engaged in supervision and reporting work. It also reflects normalized relations dependence between non-profit organizations and the state. Dependence on government funding is a consequence of the decades of austerity (Harvey, 2008). Governments no longer actually provide services directly; rather they rely on a range of grantees and contractually obligated entities to do this service work for them (for minimum wage; Service Canada, 2020). With governments divesting from social services, organizations like the Griffin House are forced to rely on any support that is available – but as this account shows, doing so changes the nature of one's work.

The CSJ program under-estimates the labour required of non-profit organizations that are responsible for managing and accounting for the program's funding and deliverables. The

program fails to acknowledge the important labour of people who take on managerial tasks (often in addition to their already busy work lives) to ensure that communities, organizations and people are able to receive important and timely supports that eventually function to textually address the needs of a particular voting district. Based on my experience in the past four years, the administrative and bureaucratic labour of managing a CSJ employment program limits the degree to which organizations are able to fulfill the 'youth mentorship' program objective and forces organizations to depend on inadequate and competitive government funding initiatives. The CSJ employment program, while helpful in a short-term sense (i.e., paying youth who might be experiencing the pressures of poverty to provide human resource support for organizations), further serves to normalize the Canadian government's neoliberal ideology. By depending on individuals and community organizations to address local priorities, the state places the onus and responsibility for 'social change' on individuals. This helps obscure systemic inequalities while limiting actual government intervention, all while promoting capitalist (free-market) solutions (Harvey, 2008).

Community Gardening for Employment

In this final section, I juxtapose my experience socially organizing a gardening employment program (Gardening for Food Security) with Jan's efforts to do the same thing. I describe how Jan works with similar government mediated employment programs to provide gardening opportunities to Griffin House guests who experience homelessness, food insecurity and barriers to employment and point out striking differences and similarities between her work and my own. In order for Griffin House guests to successfully complete garden employment programs and experience garden benefits, Jan has to help them navigate other institutional

relations (e.g., transportation and healthcare). To provide people with employment opportunities, Jan relies on programs offered through *Emploi Québec* (e.g., *PAAS Action* (*Programme d'aide et d'accompagnement social*, or social assistance and support program in English), a provincial program designed to support people in financial hardship to re-enter the workforce and integrate into society (*Emploi Québec*, 2014). Similar to the CSJ program, *PAAS Action* has particular inclusion and completion regulations that organize participants' weekly working hours and employment objectives and the duration of their contracts, and requires final evaluations that must be communicated with the government in a timely fashion.

To successfully complete *PAAS Action*, program participants are required to sign a contract with *Emploi Québec* that includes:

> The identification of the program and the partnering organization; the duration and intensity of the participation (maximum 12 months); the objectives set by the agent (1 to 2 objectives); *Emploi-Québec's* commitment regarding payments of support allowance and additional costs, if applicable; the person's commitment to their obligations; details of the additional costs allocated (transport costs, child-care costs, other one-off costs); the terms of payment of the support allowance; the modalities concerning the administrative review; and the consent of the participant to the exchange of personal information with the organization. (*Emploi Québec, PAAS Action*, 2014, p. 8) [23]

After setting objectives and signing the contract, the participant (or gardener in this case) needs to maintain eligibility by working 20 hours per week, communicating with the organization for

[23] Please note that I translated this text from *Emploi Québec*.

the duration of the employment (usually 12 months), and submitting a program evaluation at the completion of the contract. As indicated in the excerpt above, beyond compensation for working 20 hours a week, *PAAS Action* also provides financial support for "transport, child-care, and other one-off costs" (*Emploi Québec, PAAS Action*, 2014, p. 8). Despite these supports for participants, Jan describes *PAAS Action* [as] "very difficult" elaborating that "if you [program participant] miss more than five or six times, you can't do it anymore and then you have to wait a few more years before you're allowed to try again" (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019).

Struck by how this process resembled the CSJ program in its adherence to strict attendance policies, I looked more closely at the PAAS Action project and learned there are several ways for someone to be considered ineligible or penalized for "false declarations […] or participation that's less than 20 hours per week" (*Emploi Québec, PAAS Action*, 2014, p. 13). Furthermore, like the CSJ grant, every alteration to the contract's duration, intensity, or objectives requires communication with the managing government department.

For Jan to keep people connected to gardens through the *PAAS Action* employability program, she focused her efforts on communicating with the *Emploi Québec* to maintain the participant's eligibility:

> So that's a rigidity of working with the government […] you have to give names and social insurance numbers, and be very, very specific […] very often when you do a program with *Emploi Québec* and you don't succeed—the person for whatever reason—it doesn't work out, they're too disorganised, they can't do it. The person will not be allowed to do another one. They will have to wait. So it might have been that this program was not the program for them, but there's another program and another organization that is better suited, but they can't access that program because they've

> technically failed. And so we're going to penalise you and for the next 3 or 4 years, we're not going to allow you to do another program. So it's unfair. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

In her efforts to keep people eligible for a range of employment programs, Jan prefers using funding from private donors because it allows her to work without the kind of labour-intensive bureaucratic accountability I describe above.

> When you're working with private foundations and you're funded privately, it gives you a lot more leeway as to how you intervene with people, and what you choose to intervene with. We don't have to give names, we don't have to say that so and so participated in this program, period. We talk about it globally in our final reports. Like, "we had throughout the year, 30 or 40 people who participated in this program for X amount of time." (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

Private funding required Jan to undertake fewer administrative tasks (i.e., a broad final report) than those associated with *PAAS Action* or other government mediated employment programs. Private funding involves significantly less surveillance of the Griffin House guests and affords Jan more time and flexibility to work one-on-one with guests to ensure that the material conditions of the work are designed to meet their needs.

Much like how I attempted to creatively subvert some of the more stringent regulations of the CSJ employment program to better support the actual aims of the program (youth inclusion, mentorship, asking them to work on projects that are important to them and so on), Jan has also developed tactics to better navigate and structure the successful completion of employment programs for a variety of individuals. While *PAAS Action* and other government employability programs can work for a range of people, these programs are based on the assumption that

participants have stable housing and a functioning body that can travel safely around the city.

Because Jan and the Griffin House work with people experiencing multiple barriers to employment, homelessness and food security, Jan often lines up important institutional supports that will enable the successful completion of an employability program before she enrols a guest. For example, she may find that person temporary and/or stable housing, a social worker or "*intervenant*" and/or negotiate access to preventative and/or diagnostic medical/psychological examinations

Bureaucratic processes are often linked. One may have to be evaluated psychologically so that they can access a particular supportive housing environment. Access to housing will also support a person to participate fully in an employability program. Jan explains these linkages in the account below:

> So basically, we wanted the gardener to have an evaluation by a neuropsychologist […] You need the neuropsychologist to make a formal diagnosis that this person does not have the mental capacity to make decisions in terms of his own housing – about where he's going to live, if he needs to be in supervised housing, can he do shopping, can he nourish himself? So he needs to see a neuropsychologist but there is no neuropsychologist for him to see. So you'll call one place and I'll say "so I need a referral." We'll go to the doctor and will say "OK doctor, this person needs to see a neuropsychologist, can you please write a reference?" Which he does. But there is no neuropsychologist. So you thought you heard about a neuropsychologist in the North End of the city, so you're calling the Guichet d'Accès [Quebec's Healthcare phoneline] and you say "Hey I've got the referral for any doctor. Is doctor so and so here? I heard that this guy" – "no he left; he's not working here anymore." "OK well can you refer me to

> another?" Or there might be a neuropsychologist who works for the Douglas but that person only deals in brain injuries and he will only see people who have brain trauma. So you have all of these things that happen with people that you want to help, you see them sliding through the cracks […] There's nowhere to send them. There's no organisation that's going to take them because there's so many issues there. One social service deals with mental health, one place deals with drug addiction, one person deals with intellectual disabilities but as soon as everything sort of overlaps, nobody can deal with it. That's a lot of our clients here. There's just no access the services that they need. It is hard enough for me or you to find a family doctor. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

Specific to the Quebec healthcare system, Jan's last point about finding a family doctor is an important one that might help highlight the series of complex and interrelated social relations that work in synergy and make it challenging for vulnerable people to access important services like healthcare, housing, and employment. For the average citizen of Quebec, the wait time from registering for a family doctor to actually seeing the family doctor is 500 days (Montreal Gazette, July 29th, 2019). Tracing some of the unseen obstacles to government-organized employability programs bring into view the challenges people like Jan and I experience in our efforts to provide the range of possible supports needed for someone who is experiencing barriers to employment. This section also raises issues of environmental justice and ableist assumptions in community gardening discourse. Gardening is hard physical labour that requires a functioning body. The idea that gardens and gardening work can improve people's mental (stress and anxiety reduction, improved mood, patience, and attentional abilities) and physical health is based on the assumption that people have a heathy enough body to engage in physical labour, have slept in a bed, have gainful employment and are well nourished. Within textual discourse, gardening is

positioned as a recreational activity; however, not all people can access the supports needed to actually attain the stated benefits from gardening as an outlet for daily stresses. For people who live and sleep on the street, obtaining the many health and wellbeing benefits from gardens is not as straightforward.

Getting Work and Getting to Work: Criminalization, Employment and Gardening

Beyond the barriers Jan and I encountered to ensure people had what they needed to stay connected to employment through government-funded programs, there are also personal barriers that people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity face that are not accounted for in private and publicly-funded employability programs. Jan explained to me some of the barriers she has encountered in trying to hire people to work in the garden.

> I think sometimes they're scared to try something new. They'll say "I can't even grow a plant," and I'll be like "Me neither! I have a whole line of dead plants in my house that I keep watering, hoping." They'll be intimidated, sometimes it will be that they don't want to fail. Very often it's that they don't want to commit to something. They don't want to commit to something, because it goes back to their lifestyle and the fact that they're just trying to get through the day, and if they walked to one end of the city for whatever, because they had to sleep at a shelter [name removed] that's on Bennett street in the East. They're not going to walk all the way back. Sometimes it's things like that. I think that it has to start with something that is a little more structured. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

The long-term impacts of local community organizations having less government funding means that very few organizations have the capacity to help everyone needing support. While there are

a few organizations in Montreal that offer a myriad of essential supports at one location (i.e. employment programming, on-site healthcare, food support, shelter, etc.), spots are limited, and those wishing to access services in these organizations need to have the correct documentation and arrive early in the day to obtain this access (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019). Moreover, for people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity, accessing key services at these supporting organizations often requires involvement in that same organization's programs for employability, psychosocial support, urban support and so on (see: Old Brewery Mission, Retrieved from: https://www.missionoldbrewery.ca/en/our-actions/preventing-ending-homelessness/psychosocial-support/), and these programs fill up very fast given the limited availabilities. Returning to Jan's point, more typically, a front-line community organization in one end of town will provide housing support while another organization in a completely different part of Montreal will serve meals, have a food bank and might offer employment programming. Due to few supports and limited capacity, some people experiencing homelessness need to move to one area of the city to access food, and then to another area for employment and then to another neighbourhood if they choose to visit an emergency shelter.

Jan describes the daily travel of one of the Griffin House guests who seeks shelter in one area of the city, but is enrolled in the Griffin House day and employment programming. After the interview, I calculated the travel distance of the landmarks and organizations Jan mentioned in the interview. The total distance was over 10 km one way. For someone who's employed in the Griffin House garden, yet seeks access to a shelter and a bed in the other end of the city, they

would need to spend over fours[24] walking between sites. While public transit is an option, and the *Emploi Québec's PAAS Action* program (2014) will reimburse expenses for "transportation costs" (p. 8), tickets for the bus and metro, it is not the safest or most comfortable option. Many people experiencing homelessness, especially women, women of colour and Indigenous women decide not to take public transit as they are often not let on buses, or are hassled or assaulted by police or Montreal's Transit Society (Société de transport de Montréal) security officers (Field note, June 26th, 2019). People's experiences of travel and transportation can serve as barriers to participation in employment programs.

To further complicate transportation, Jan's quote underscores a key point about gardening: it is a long-term commitment. For the past several years, the garden at the Griffin House survived and thrived because several people involved have a long-term commitment to the garden with many paid for their direct labour in the garden. Even with the established partnership and paid positions, there were often days when youth team members could not attend work because cars broke down or they missed the bus or they had spent too much time in the sun that week. Gardening is physical work. For people who also need to devote time, effort and intent to moving around the city to access essential services and are not sure where they'll be sleeping and how much rest they'll get, garden work may not the most ideal form of employment, despite the ostensive health and wellbeing benefits. Throughout my research I came to consider how the celebratory discourse of *gardening for wellbeing* and *food security* undercuts the extensive physical and emotional labour (and exhaustion) that one can experience

[24] To make this loose calculation, I used the average walking time according to Google Maps (approximately 15 minutes/kilometre).

when gardening. As Cairns (2017; 2018) points out, these imagined and uncritical narratives about gardening also erase the labour of actual farming and food production where most workers are low-wage, migrants, immigrant, women, and people of colour (Gaddis & Coplen, 2018). To Cairn's argument, I add that much of the government and private funding opportunities that allow gardens and community support to exist is dependent on the invisible administrative and auditing labour required in attempting to create paid opportunities for economically and socially marginalized people to benefit from UA efforts. The purported benefits of gardening for wellbeing and food security might ring hollow for people without employment, stable housing, food security and other essential supports.

Closing

Smith (2005) reminds us that the capacity for collective action is not located in discourse, institutional processes or government policies, but among people. To conclude this chapter and reflect on the degree to which urban gardens can support social, educational and environmental justice, I return to my interview with Jan to help respond to the questions I ask myself on a daily basis: Why gardens? Why garden?

> Me: So why would we garden? Why would you think that gardening or beekeeping employment initiatives are worthwhile when so many of the issues that you're dealing with on a day-to-day basis with have no relation to the garden. It's not like you need a garden to deal with these issues…

> Jan: Because a garden is…[pause] One thing I realized when I started to garden, is that it's very, very, calming. You have a task, you are there, you're in nature, you are touching the earth, you are with a flower, you're with seeds and you're creating life in a very, ver—it's just you and whatever it is that you're doing. And if you're planning vegetables, or planting the seed or you're measuring the distance between the next seed, it becomes sort of your baby. And you feel proud about that, and feel good about that […] I mean, it's not something that you're able to do for people very often. So, when you have someone who sleeps on the sidewalk, to be able to have them come into a space and say "You're gonna grow a flower today. You're gonna take this little seedling" and then you take people who have never done anything like this before and you had them plant the seedlings. […] How proud he was, that we then took these little seedlings in these tiny little pots and we transferred them into the ground, into the garden, which is something he had never done before. It's that pride that you have when you are responsible for creating something, not just for yourself, but for the entire House. It was nice for the guys to be able and to take their meals on their tray and sit in the garden, and have their lunch or their dinner. It's a beautiful feeling and it's nice to sit out there. A lot of the time the guys would just sit out there in the garden. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

Despite the issues that Jan and I encountered when trying to hook people up to gardens for employability, Jan continues to see the garden as an important feature of the organization, and a means for living a life with dignity. Despite my own increasingly critical orientation to gardens, I recognize the importance of cultivated inclusive and beautiful spaces like the one we built together at Griffin House. Yet, I remain ever sceptical that our garden collaboration has

fundamentally altered the landscape of opportunities for recreation, employment, food security, and punishments for those involved in the project and in Montreal, more broadly.

While the garden collaboration with the Griffin House produced an immense amount of food that was harvested on a weekly/bi-weekly basis from late June to early November, it did little to actually address food insecurity at the organization and in Montreal more broadly. For instance, although the garden was thriving that summer, the Griffin House never reduced their food order to *Moisson Montreal* (Montreal's largest food bank). The *Gardening for Food Security* project did however modestly support the Griffin House's food bank and an occasional (once a week) meal service. Many people dedicated physical and emotional labour to the ongoing harvests and should be applauded for their efforts. None of the Griffin House guests I worked with ever described the kale or swiss chard as tasty; however, many people did describe the pleasurable and *visual* experience of being in the garden. They would describe the sensate, the scents and colours of the garden, and how they felt when sitting in the garden (Fieldnote, July 27th, 2018). On other hand, building garden teams and getting connected to gardening employment programs presented a litany of difficulties for both participants and organizers that perhaps diminished gardening and UA's transformative or political potential.

For both Jan and me, getting people connected to gardens for employment involved a significant amount of administrative labour that was eclipsed by the program reporting schemes. Without diminishing the importance of providing paid employment for youth and offering an underfunded yet crucial front-line community organization human resource support, the textual structure and rigid regulations of employment programs of the CSJ and *PAAS Action* can often work to exclude and restrict the same people those programs are designed to help. While the collaboration between the Griffin House and our garden team did little to impact food security,

the labour provided to the organization did help temporarily relieve some of pressures experienced daily by Griffin House staff.

Reflecting on my efforts to connect the work of growing food to environmental justice issues inherent of capitalism, I cannot claim gardening helped to alleviate the concerns of food insecure people in any quantifiable way. When working with people experiencing barriers to employment, food insecurity and homelessness, my findings also challenge scholarship that suggests gardening contributes to wellbeing of 'wellbeing for all,' highlighting the myriad of ways this general claim is complicated by particular bodies and experiences. The discourse encircling community gardening and UA is based on the problematic assumption that everyone receiving these health promoting benefits possesses a certain level of physical health and have a lifestyle conducive for a long-term commitment to receiving the purported benefits of this work.

Chapter Five: Gardening Without Land

The last two chapters have discussed how gardens, garden work and garden programming are enabled and constrained by neoliberal funding schemes that permit garden creation, garden-based employment opportunities and garden collaborations, yet also require significant administrative labour and auditing that curtail the social and environmental justice potential of the projects. Implicit in the preceding chapters is that many of the gardening initiatives were made possible because we (the garden team, Griffin House staff, etc.) had access to land; permissions to garden on land; people willing to take on the hard labour of gardening; people who were compensated for gardening work; the necessary garden equipment; different transportation options (having a car really helped); and money (funding). Moving on from the social relations of garden team building and funding schemes, I turn my ethnographic and analytic gaze towards gardening within – and outside – of the City of Montreal's municipally mediated and permitted gardening schemes. Like in the last chapter, I situate my inquiry within the *Gardening for Food Security* project as I once again applied for a Canada Summer Jobs grant to support the Griffin House. In 2019, the Griffin House sold their building and moved locations, which meant that community workers and community members no longer had access to the established gardening space and we had to creatively reconceptualize our collaboration. This chapter describes what it is like for people and community organizations to garden without land.

I begin this chapter by briefly describing why the Griffin House had to sell their building and move locations before tracing the social relations required to get a community garden plot from the City of Montreal. While the City of Montreal's community gardens are discursively framed as accessible, affordable and ideal for community building, food production, developing healthy eating habits and addressing food security, (Ville de Montreal, April 30th, 2020; Ville de

Montreal, Community Gardens, n.d.), my research findings in this chapter point to contradictions between and amongst the stated mission of the City of Montreal's community gardens, the admissibility processes for accessing these gardens, and the overall availability of garden plots. In the coming pages, I explicate what it is like to get connected to a municipally permitted garden and question the actual environmental justice impacts of the City of Montreal's community gardening program.

Getting a City of Montreal community garden plot in the Sud-Ouest is still an ongoing process due to a lack of garden availability (Ville de Montreal, 2021). After the Griffin House moved locations in the summer of 2019, we again collaborated to create another garden for the organization. However, different from our immense garden space at the former location, the garden I describe in this chapter is located on the front lawn of a church, on land that the organization does not own. Consequently, our 2019 garden work was shaped by access to land, internal church permissions, and the new garden's purpose. Specifically, I first explore how and why our garden collaboration transformed. To close this chapter, I depart from garden work with the Griffin House and bring into view another Montreal gardening project that has been shaped by displacement. Here, I discuss the challenges encountered by Jessica, the project lead of Greening Chinatown, an ongoing gardening initiative that emerged from the Chinese Hospital of Montreal. Learning about Jessica's experience gardening with and without permissions in different areas of the city underscored the invisible and complex social, environmental, political, and economic relations that structure inequitable access to gardening, land and resources in an urban setting like Montreal.

No Building, New Neighbourhood, No Garden

As described in the last chapter, in 2018 the Griffin House garden was located behind the organization's actual house and on land the organization owned in Griffintown, a neighbourhood in Montreal's Sud-Ouest borough. Constructing a food production garden in this location was a major undertaking for everyone involved, but as a collective, we had access to land, water, and financial and human resources, and had established a coordinated effort to use the garden for food production to support meal services, a food bank, and for youth employment. In 2019, everything changed. The Griffin House sold their building and moved out of their long-standing house in Griffintown because the house was in a terrible state, the foundation was compromised (from dynamite of the recent construction in Griffintown), and "that they needed a new space to sustain and improve their programs" (Voice memo, July 26th, 2018). Because our collaboration and funding opportunities were based on having a garden and providing garden programming for food production and employment, the Griffin House and I had to get creative about where we could garden and how we could maintain momentum from 2018.

Although the Griffin House sold their building and property for a large sum of money as Griffintown had recently become a very desirable and 'hip' place to live, they could not find an affordable and suitable location in the same neighbourhood or borough[25] to maintain their mandate of helping people experiencing homelessness meet their essential needs. Unable to find an affordable new location, the administration of the Griffin House started lobbying different levels of government for financial support while concurrently reaching out to other community

[25] To remind readers, Griffintown in located in the Sud-Ouest (South West) borough of Montreal.

supports that might help provide a solution (Field note, August 7th, 2018). In March of 2019, the organization moved into a nearby church basement in the neighbourhood adjacent to Griffintown: Saint-Henri. Because the Griffin House no longer had land, they no longer had direct access to a garden. To keep our gardening collaboration and projects ongoing, I again applied to the Canada Summer Jobs grant to support the needs of the organization, but had not yet found a garden space to enact garden work. At this point in the late winter/early spring of 2019, the Griffin House and I wanted to recreate a garden that resembled what we had built in the Griffintown location. We wanted "another garden for the food bank and the kitchen" (Fieldnote, April 27th, 2019). In other words, we wanted a food production garden to support meal teams and the Griffin House food bank. Because the Griffin House was in a new location and the employees were still adjusting to providing important front-line services in the Sud-Ouest of Montreal, setting up a garden was not the first priority. With hopes of getting connected to a garden, I looked to the City of Montreal's community gardening program.

Municipally Permitted Community Gardens

For many people, the City of Montreal is able to provide "registered gardeners […] with earth, a water point, access to a shed or a toolbox, tables and fences" (City of Montreal, n.d., Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden) at an affordable price (free for people on social assistance as of February 2021; Ville de Montreal, n.d.). However, like in many other cities (e.g. Victoria, London, New York, etc.), garden plots are in high demand with long waitlists, sometimes lasting years (Global News, May 1st, 2019; CBC News November 29th, 2019). According to the City of Montreal's (2021) website, community gardens "offer residents plots of land to plant a vegetable garden, at a low cost. In most cases, residents of the

borough where the garden is located are given priority when assigning the plots "Ville de Montreal. Community Gardens. February 17, 2021, Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/topics/community-gardens). Because I currently live in Saint-Henri, the same neighbourhood and borough where the Griffin House is now located, I had hoped to use my resident status to procure a space to support food production for the Griffin House and was looking to start the process immediately to maximize garden productivity. In April 2019, the City of Montreal's website indicated that in order to get a garden plot, I (or whoever) needed to show up in person with a "municipal tax bill, a utility bill (other than Bell Canada), and an Access Montreal card" (Ville de Montreal, n.d., https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden?arrondissement=Le%20Sud-Ouest). As a renter and not a home owner, I did not have a municipal tax bill nor did I have an *Accès Montreal* card, but getting a card seemed simple enough from the information that was available online. After clicking on a few links and quickly searching the City's website, I landed on another page that stated that the "card is offered exclusively to Montréal residents and property owners. Go to an *Accès Montréal* office to get it" (Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-acces-montreal-card?arrondissement=Le%20Sud-Ouest). I easily found the location of the Sud-Ouest's *Accès Montréal* office, located a utility bill (other than Bell Canada) and set off hoping to get an *Accès Montréal* card and, more importantly, a community garden plot.

When I arrived in person at the Sud-Ouest's *Accès Montréal* office, I found the service counter and was quickly informed by a civil servant that I could get an *Accès Montréal* card and register for the community garden at the same time, providing that I had the correct documentation (Fieldnote, May 9th, 2019). While I was able to get an *Accès Montréal* card quickly by filling out and signing a form, presenting my driver's license and my *Hydro Québec*

electricity bill, I did not have a municipal tax bill because I am not a homeowner. Here, I was informed by the agent that getting a community garden required a municipal tax bill. Undeterred, I asked the agent if we could proceed without the municipal tax bill and questioned its relevance given that I indirectly pay municipal taxes in my rent and that many residents of the City of Montreal rent and as such do not receive a municipal tax bill. In contradiction with the City's website that stated that I needed a municipal tax bill, the service agent informed me that we could indeed proceed; however, it would be unlikely that I'd be granted a garden plot in any case as there were no plots available in the Sud-Ouest (Fieldnote, May 9th, 2019). I was then given the option to be placed on a waitlist.

Because there are many community gardens in the Sud-Ouest (and in Montreal), I inquired about registering for different gardens' waitlists within Saint-Henri. To increase my chances of getting a community garden plot for the Griffin House that summer, I requested registration on four different community gardens' [26] waitlists, all located within close proximity of the Griffin House's new location in the church basement. After I registered on the waiting lists, "I was informed that it could be several years before I might hear back from one of the four Sud-Ouest gardens that were in close proximity to the Griffin House" (Fieldnote, May 9th, 2019). Months later as I was analyzing my data, I researched the overall lack of availability of community gardens and according to a recent CBC article, there are hundreds of Montreal citizens on waiting lists for community garden plots (CBC News, November 25th, 2019). McKenna (2019) interviewed two long-time community gardeners and a city councillor in

[26] I registered for the waitlists of the following City of Montreal community gardens: Bons-Voisins Garden; Rose de Lima Garden; Little Burgundy Garden; and, the Des Seigneurs Garden.

Montreal and found that over the years there has been a shift from collective gardening to community gardening. Collective gardening is when a group of people cultivate a shared plot of land for food production, much like what the team and I have attempted to do at McGill University and the Griffin House. On the other hand, as the term is constructed vis a vis the City of Montreal's programming, community gardening is when homeowning residents tend to their own plot. My analysis highlights that the current structure of gardening in Montreal supports community gardening initiatives on municipally restricted public property with specific inclusion criteria, rather than positioning gardening as a *collective* response to food insecurity and a collective and equitable right to greenspaces as many community gardens are fenced, gated and locked, requiring a key to enter.

With waitlists and demand for garden space growing, the City of Montreal has not created any additional plots in the past several years and asserts that there is a shortage of public land (CBC news, November 25th, 2019). This claim is undercut by the process of applying for gardens, which is set up for individuals, rather than for community organizations that would allow access to shared and/or public land that could be used for this purpose. Despite textual accounts and the public discourse suggesting that community gardens in the City of Montreal are accessible to residents (Ville de Montreal, April, 30th, 2020), there are several barriers that people looking to get connected to community gardens can encounter. First, simply getting on a community garden waitlist took time and a certain level of fluency and confidence in French as all communication that day took place in French.

In addition to language as a barrier, time can be another obstacle to getting hooked up to a community garden or its waitlist. Because I have flexible work, I had time to research the City of Montreal's website to gather information about: how I could get a community garden; where I

had to go to get one; what I needed to bring to be considered eligible; and, how much it would cost. I then had to show up physically, knowing that I did not possess all the correct documentation according to the website at the time. Although I did not have the correct documentation, I had the time and willingness to press for a community garden if need be and the time flexibility to register during the City of Montreal's workday. The *Accès Montréal* offices are only open from "8:30am to 12:00pm" and "1:00pm to 4:30pm," (Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/places/acces-montreal-office-le-sud-ouest). For people working fulltime, making it to an *Accès Montréal* office during opening hours presents a challenging barrier, especially if one works outside of their neighbourhood and relies on public transportation.

For renters like myself who have time, and who aren't discouraged from arguing and/or showing up in person without a municipal tax bill (or any other document that makes one eligible), the waitlists are yet another hurdle that people encounter to actually accessing a community garden for recreation, food production or any other purpose. An analysis of census data (Stats Can, 2016) conducted by the City of Montreal's economic development office (2016) suggests that over 63% of people living in Montreal are renters[27]. Having a municipal tax bill as inclusion criteria for officially registering for a community garden appears to intentionally prioritize home-owners, a subset of Montreal's population that I would argue is least likely to experience food insecurity and more likely to have access to private land on which to garden. However, this subset of the population benefits most from municipal efforts to encourage and

[27] Please note that data on renting vs. homeowning in Montreal is contested. For example, another analysis of Montreal's census data suggests that 45% of residents are renters (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2019). In my reading of different interpretations, renters in Montreal make up somewhere between 40 to 70 percent of the population.

support community gardening. This begs the question: How do community gardens address food security when the eligibility criteria can indirectly exclude many food insecure people who may not possess the correct documentation?

For those experiencing food insecurity, and without a fixed address, gaining access to a community garden is a near impossible task due to eligibility constraints and physical barriers including metal fences and locked gates. Furthermore, someone with no fixed address cannot get their own garden plot in Montreal, and until the City of Montreal updated the eligibility criteria for getting a community garden in February 2021, neither could many renters. My findings suggest that the City of Montreal community gardens may not be the most welcoming place for people who aren't officially registered, which can severely undermine the environmental justice objectives of the program. As I indicated in the last chapter, municipal bylaws intersect with social profiling and this means that parks, gardens and other City monitored greenspaces can be inaccessible to those whose actions can be legally construed or interpreted as loitering. In some areas of the City of Montreal, loitering is illegal in gardens and in many other public spaces *(Ville de Montreal* Offence Type: Loitering / Flâner Réglement Concernant La Paix Et L'Ordre Sur Le Domaine Public (RCA11 22005) - P-1 – [2011]) as loitering legally constitutes a disturbance of the peace.

Another city bylaw that keeps certain bodies excluded from gardens is through an offense titled "disorder" (Ville de Montreal, Disorder/Occasionner des troubles By-Law Concerning the Prevention of Breaches of the Peace, Public Order and Safety and the Use of Public Property - P6, 2012). In this case, disorder can be interpreted to mean trespassing (Fieldnote, May 27th, 2019) even though community gardens are located on what is described to be public land. Even if the community garden gate is unlocked, some people are policed by the registered gardeners.

For example, when someone who is not recognized by the officially registered gardeners enters into the community garden space, they are asked what their purpose is, reminded that they aren't allowed to pick anything, or they are asked to leave (Fieldnote, September 7th, 2019). In one extreme case, I was told by a community worker from Griffin House that "the police were called to remove someone experiencing homelessness for trespassing in the community garden" (Fieldnote, September 7th, 2019). Since city community gardens are fenced in, gated and locked and further compounded by bylaws for trespassing in certain areas of the city, some bodies are not made to feel welcome in a designated and highly regulated public space.

Despite community gardens being affordable ($10 -30/year and free for residents over 65 years of age and as of February 2021, free for those on social assistance, with the correct documentation; Ville de Montreal, 2021, How to Get a Community Garden. Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden?arrondissement=Le%20Sud-Ouest), they are not widely available, which further destabilises the potential for recreation, food security, access to greenspace, and other outcomes of the program. Although I managed to register on the waitlist for four different gardens located in the Sud-Ouest of Montreal, I still have not heard back from the City about actually getting a plot. It has now been over two years, and I am still waiting.

As briefly noted above, the City has recently updated its eligibility criteria and registration process during COVID-19. Today, the process for accessing a community garden can be completed online. The updated website informs residents of the Sud-Ouest interested in accessing a garden about pertinent community garden processes:

To get a garden plot, you must register for the waiting list for the garden of your choice.

> People on the waiting list will be contacted once the renewal period is complete and the number of available plots has been confirmed.
>
> Garden plots are assigned according to the order of registration on the waiting list.
>
> Registration on the waiting list does not guarantee that you will get a garden plot during the year or even the next year.
>
> Limit one garden plot per civic address.
>
> Priority to borough residents. (Ville de Montreal, 2021, How to Get a Community Garden. Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden?arrondissement=Le%20Sud-Ouest)

Furthermore, while residents no longer need to present a municipal tax bill to be permitted registration for a community garden or its waitlist, the City now requests a: "photo of your driver's license or bill from a utility company (Hydro-Québec, Gaz Métropolitain, etc.)" and "documents must be less than two months old at the time of reservation" (Ville de Montreal, 2021, How to Get a Community Garden. Retrieved from: https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden?arrondissement=Le%20Sud-Ouest). Different from when I first visited the *Accès Montréal* office in 2019, the website's information has been updated to encourage participation from people who aren't homeowners; however, it is unlikely that people who make it on the waitlist will be able to access a community garden within a reasonable timeframe as priority for community garden plots are reserved for past members (Community Garden Rules, Jardins Sud-Ouest, 2021), who are likely homeowners. In other words, people who own property in Montreal have historically had more straightforward access to a garden than those who rent, and/or live in social or co-op housing. Therefore, people who have been renting in the borough for the past 40 years have had more barriers to accessing a community garden than those who

have purchased property in the neighbourhood. Interestingly, converting renters to property owners has been a key objective of Montreal's housing policies (Rose, 2010), but how can the process of accessing a community garden be community-oriented and equitable if property-owning individuals have historically been prioritized?

While textual accounts from the City of Montreal state that community gardens "improve food security in Montreal" (Ville de Montreal, April 30th, 2020. Retrieved from: http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=5977,43117560&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&id=32606), there is no evidence to suggest that community gardens are actually helping food insecure people. This claim continues to be advanced without any substantiation. Community gardens as currently understood in Montreal's context typically do not involve collective food production. For example, the City of Montreal's gardens plots are not shared land to be worked collectively. They are single plots that are intended to be worked by a single person, family or dwelling, and not by a community or a group of people. This notion of community gardens in the City of Montreal mirrors the logic of individualism that structures neoliberal society. When individual gardening efforts are positioned as a way to become food secure, this obscures not only the lack of available of gardening space, but also the significant and sustained physical labour, knowledge and time required to grow enough food to actually become food secure given Montreal's humid continental climate and short growing season.

Beyond claiming that "for many people, community gardens are more than just a hobby. They allow them to feed their families and to obtain fresh produce at a low cost" (Ville de Montreal, April 30th, 2020, Retrieved from: http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=5977,43117560&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&id=32606), during COVID the City also attempted to support frontline organizations that

provide food security support for citizens by collaborating with the Botanical Gardens who committed to growing an urban farm in the summer of 2020 to support food banks. The Botanical Gardens predicted that their farm would produce enough food to feed 100 people for an entire year. While the initiative is impressive and commendable, these claims are treated as factual without any confirmation to support them. Moreover, there are far more than 100 food insecure people in Montreal, home to one of the most food insecure populations in Canada (Food Secure Canada, 2020). As my findings show, despite the textual accounts provided by the City and its officials (Mayor, City Councillors, environmental educators), its community garden programming does not actually prioritize food insecure people in any meaningful way; rather, it has historically prioritized and continues to prioritize homeowners. According to 'Montreal Hunger Counts,' conducted by *Moisson Montreal* (2018), the city's largest food bank, over 640 000 people in Montreal request monthly food aid with over 150 000 receiving monthly support. While the Botanical Gardens impressively "filled 2300 bins of fresh produce for the city's food banks" (CBC News, September 7th, 2020) and while I'm sure it temporarily helped some people with the severe pressures of poverty and food insecurity and provided some individuals and families with local produce, the Botanical Gardens program, while admirable, only helped support four food banks (CBC News, September 7th, 2020).

As someone who has socially organized a similar gardening and food production initiative in collaboration with one food bank (the Griffin House), I know first-hand the stark differences between providing a food bank with fresh produce that can support a few people for a week or so – and actually addressing long term food security. What's omitted and perhaps unknown to City led 'food security garden projects' is that many food insecure people do not visit gardens for a fall harvest, nor do they use food banks; rather, they dumpster-dive: a practice

many people use for saving money and for food security. Emerging from conversations between team members from the 2019 *Gardening for Food Security* project, team members argued that if gardens were considered a way to become food secure, dumpsters should be too (S. Narcisse, personal communication, May 3, 2019; J. Malenfant, personal communication, May 17, 2020).

Garden (dis)Location: New Neighbourhood, New Garden,

Since getting a City of Montreal community garden was not possible in 2019, the Griffin House and I sought an alternative arrangement in cooperation with the church where the Griffin House would now be delivering its programs. In this new location, I could not just dig gardens anywhere to maximize exposure to sunlight like I had done in the past and in other locations. When I received confirmation that the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) funding had been approved yet again for *Gardening for Food Security 2.0*, I contacted Jan from the Griffin House about what 2019 could look like. She replied promptly.

> How are you? I was going to call you today. I wanted to invite you to our new space so we can talk about the garden project. It would be on a smaller scale but I wanted to do a community herb garden in front of the presbytery of the church. A way of letting the community know we are here and offer them access to fresh herbs. Do you have any availabilities coming up so we can talk? (Jan, personal communication, May 8, 2020)

The following day, I met with Fran and a volunteer from the church to determine where to create a garden. After exploring all of the outdoor space belonging to the church and discussing our ideas for 2019 (beehives, more workshops at McGill, what to grow, and so on), and where we could access a water source, the church volunteer outlined the limitations of our plans.

> He told us that we couldn't have a beehive at the church. His worry is that someone would damage or vandalize it. He also expressed that we could not use the existing flower garden already established by the church as that was their annual project. As such, we had to create our own gardens. I suggested that we check out where the sun is best and proceed from there. Jan reiterated that she wanted a public facing community garden that everyone from the surrounding community could access. (Fieldnote, May 9th, 2019)

Because Jan took on the labour of communicating and coordinating the garden space with the different stakeholders of the church, in one of our conversations that summer I asked her to describe the new realities of gardening on land that they do not own.

> It becomes very bureaucratic. So what happened was that first I had to talk to Gerrard, who's a volunteer at the church, and Sylvain. They told me yes, we can have this thing [the garden]. So you and I got together, we did a walk. So then, they say no, the Monseigneur doesn't want this stuff [the garden] there. They don't want people on church property. Put it around the edges. But for us to even arrive at that point, I had to write a letter to the Monseigneur, an email. The Monseigneur had to talk to the archdiocese, the archdiocese had to respond to the Monseigneur who then had to talk to Marc and Yvonne who then had to talk to me, and then we met, and then we have to go back to Marc and Sylvain because then it was not exactly what they had wanted. The bees were off limits, no bees. Unfortunately, I would say that that is a little bit of a barrier sometimes, is having to deal with this. If this were our building, I would have just said that's it can you just drop it off over there, I'll have some people shovel it, but here, there's nobody to ask. So that's sort of the benefit of being able to do things on your own land, because you don't need to consult with anybody. Whereas the next couple of years in the church are

> going to be very difficult, because we share the space. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

After Jan took on the textual labour of getting gardening permissions at the church, during our meeting to create the new Griffin House gardens, Jan and I finalized the location of the garden, but we also shifted the focus and appearance of the actual garden. Unlike in 2018 when we had created a highly productive food garden for Griffin House guests, this summer the future harvest was being grown for community members of the neighbourhood (and not Griffin House guests) and we would be working with significantly less space. Moreover, instead of digging a large plot for growing vegetables, Jan wanted garden boxes that could be painted by Griffin House staff and guests that resembled the other gardens in the neighbourhood. During the interview with Jan, I once again asked her to elaborate and expand on why she wanted the 2019 garden to shift in purpose and appearance.

> I knew that a lot of the community members were going to be reticent about having a day centre for homeless people, which they were, some of them. So, I wanted to be able to create something by us, for them. Here's a tomato garden, here's a fine herb garden, here's something that you can have so that when you're walking home, and you're thinking about what you're going to make for dinner tonight, "I need something like parsley, snip, snip." And then without anyone having to come to us, "thank you Griffin House for providing this for us," but just to have this little thing saying "hi, we're here. We appreciate the fact that you are accepting us to be here. You're tolerating us here. Here is something to make things nice, so here's a nice little thing we're offering you." It makes the space nice. It makes everything smell good, because of the smell of fresh basil, herbs,

> lavender. And that was my goal in having the herb garden. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

In some ways, Jan wanted to thank the people of the neighbourhood (mainly young, white, middle class) for tolerating a day centre for people experiencing homelessness. In this sense, the new Griffin House garden was not about supplementing meals, providing employment, or offering refuge for people who have been most impacted by the inequitable outcomes of the government-mediated changing of neighbourhoods due to gentrification. The new garden was to be designed to appeal to the consumption habits of the new urban middle class whose neighbourhood Saint-Henri was quickly becoming.

To conclude this section, I return to the interview with Jan where we discussed our collaborative gardening efforts spanning three summers (2017-2019). Near the end of our conversation, I asked about the community reaction to the recently built public facing garden boxes and what she thought next year (2020) could look like:

> I know people in the committee have commented because when Chloé (staff member) was out there painting, people came over and were taking herbs. So people were very happy about that. So I know people were very appreciative of that and the church was very nice, because they would let us use their hose to water everything so it was fine, and it would be very nice if more people from the community came to help us with the garden. Or maybe if somebody or the City had a lot somewhere that they are not using, and sometimes you have these random lots that are kind of bricked in, they have these huge stone bricks that prevent people from parking there, you can use there a lot for the next year if you want to garden. Things like that would be perfect. You don't have to do anything; you just have to give us a space. (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019)

As my collaboration with Griffin House staff reveals, while the organization wants and needs a garden and appreciate what it brings to the organization, the Griffin House food bank does not need fresh produce from an external garden or urban farm; rather, they need: land on which to garden and or resources and permissions establish their own garden programs (Interview, Jan, November 12th, 2019); more human resource support for organizing the increasing requests for daily meals and weekly food baskets (Fieldnote, July 24th, 2020); better financial support; and ultimately, more equitable social and environmental policies.

Same Garden, New Location, No Gardeners

On the other side of the city, Greening Chinatown, another socially engaged gardening initiative with whom we partner, has also had to find creative ways to garden for social and environmental purposes (greening, food production, etc.). Like the Griffin House, Greening Chinatown has been gardening without land and have been perpetually dispossessed and denied access to gardening space. What originally began as a collaboration between scholars at Concordia University and health professionals at the Montreal Chinese Hospital of Occupational Therapy, the original Greening Chinatown garden was located at the Chinese Hospital in Chinatown (2004-2013), but after multiple evictions, the gardening collective and garden has moved locations many times since its inception, at times practicing guerrilla gardening[28] or as

[28] For people and organizations who desire or require a garden for food production, greening, beautification, recreation, enjoyment and so on, but can't access garden space through more conventional channels (e.g., private land ownership, municipally organized and permitted gardens), guerilla gardening has long been an alternative and resistance movement promoting more equitable access and rights to land. While guerrilla gardening can take many forms within an urban and or rural setting, not everyone who gardens outside of the boundaries and permissions of governments and land owners describe their gardening work as 'guerilla' per se. Each garden varies with objectives and achievements depending on geographic location, yet what might be a unifying factor of guerrilla gardening initiatives is the desire to cultivate land despite the barriers (Reynolds, 2008).

Jessica states “What do you call it when you just move in a place without permission? Anyway, I've always done that. Some other gardeners are not like that” (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019). Today, the Greening Chinatown garden is more than six kilometers away from Chinatown in front of a construction trade school and expects to be there until at least 2021 (Greening Chinatown, n.d.).

Along with the intention of greening Montreal’s Chinatown, originally, the Greening Chinatown garden provided an opportunity for hospital patients to work on their fine motor skills during their convalescence (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019). As the garden grew in scope and use, the City of Montreal evicted the garden from the hospital site to build a gazebo in 2017. According to the project lead of Greening Chinatown, Jessica, as of 2019, the gazebo had not yet been built and for the previous three years Greening Chinatown has been wrapped up in City bureaucracy on contested land sites that do not permit gardens for social purposes, unless it is mediated by the City of Montreal, private enterprise, or the *Éco-Quartier*, the City’s public-facing environmental department (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019). After a summer-long collaboration with Jessica and Greening Chinatown in 2019 where the team helped Jessica and Greening Chinatown with watering, harvesting and other garden tasks, I met with Jessica in Greening Chinatown’s current garden location to discuss her experiences with gardening and UA in Montreal. I arrived early for our meeting and found Jessica working in the garden. After locking up my bike, Jessica put me to work as she described the history of Greening Chinatown, why they were currently located several kilometers away from where they began gardening, and how the moves have impacted how many people now participate in Greening Chinatown programming. Below, Jessica explains *how* different processes of garden dislocation unfolded:

> Well, the hospital said "Thanks to you (Greening Chinatown), the hospital is inspired, they (the City of Montreal) want to build a gazebo." So, we said "OK," because they (hospital staff) were very gracious about it and I know the Chinese Hospital people, so it wasn't like a "Get out!" type of thing, and by chance there was this big empty lot next to the hospital, so we just kind of moved there. We didn't even get permission from the City; we just went there. But, after one year, the City approached us because they knew through the Chinese Hospital who we were and said (the City of Montreal) "We want to use that space for construction." So, we spent several years in the front yard of the hospital, then one year in the big empty lot (next to the hospital), then for one year in the Mile End, and then one year on St Laurent Street, and now this is our first year at this park. (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

As I listened to Jessica, I asked her to detail the processes of having to move their garden on so many occasions. Besides the financial cost of frequent moves, Jessica describes the long-term impacts related to the social sustainability of the Greening Chinatown.

> This is our third move since 2013. We've moved from Chinatown Hospital – to the empty space –then to Mile End – then, here. It's mostly women, so we needed a bunch of guys, you know? That's four months (of growing) and three of those moves we had to pay truckers and rent a truck and that was most of our money. So, because it was like three hundred bucks per move – so that was, you know? Getting money to pay for that, that's what we had to charge people. I don't think we did a fundraising thing at all. But that's why we charge people. It was for the move. And then buying the smart pots, they're expensive too […] People are willing to pay 50 dollars but not come in and actually do two hours of gardening. In Chinatown, it wasn't an issue. Here, [6 kilometers away from

> Chinatown] it is. So it has, the distance, the changes. The communities remain the same, but in terms of actual physically gardening, it's been thin. To do the garden work, it's far for people, yeah. (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

Although Greening Chinatown has had to charge its gardeners an annual fee to subsidize moving costs, Jessica states that the issue is not completely financial; rather, it is getting people to physically show up to the garden for upkeep and harvesting, which further highlights the immense labour needed to maximize garden productivity. Even though Greening Chinatown has had to move locations and creatively manage to access land on which to garden while maintaining membership and financial support, the current location of the garden threatens the futurity of Greening Chinatown. Along with describing the immense cost and labour of having to relocate their garden because "each time we move it's like three-to-four hundred dollars" (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019), many of Jessica's responses that day described her efforts to navigate Montreal and Quebec's cumbersome government bureaucracy, colonial processes, and the racism that she has experienced as Canadian woman of Chinese descent living in Montreal, attempting to grow vegetables for food production for her community of other Chinese Montrealers. In the interview, Jessica described Canada as "one big hick town" (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019).

Growing up in Toronto, living in Vancouver and moving to Montreal as young artist in the 1970s, Jessica attributed the issues encircling gardening for social and environmental purposes in the city as inextricably linked to Canada's settler colonial past and present, the increasing legislative protection of the French language in Quebec, combined with conflicting environmental narratives and City policies that do not actually facilitate citizen-led greening, UA

or food production, unless it is in an area that is not interfering with slow moving municipal processes:

> This relocating is part of Montreal, the local municipal and provincial government in Quebec is really institutionally and legally very detailed. Every single word, every tiny detail is dictated by the Quebecois, and it comes from France. It goes back decades, in terms of how the French are used to colonizing vs. how the English colonized. That's where it starts. (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

In each fight for the Greening Chinatown garden, Jessica and others had to interact with City employees and officials whenever and wherever they installed their gardens. With each garden relocation, Greening Chinatown was displaced further and further away from their original location in Chinatown. After years of attempting to re-establish their connection with Chinatown, Jessica and some of her fellow Greening Chinatown gardeners were frustrated having to relocate.

> Our name is Green Chinatown Montreal, right? And it, part of our intent and the mandate and the goal in Chinatown was to try to bring greenery back to the city because it's been so…well, under construction. (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

She explains one of their last communications with the City of Montreal, gardening without land and its lasting impacts below:

> So, the city publicly says they support the environment and the greening of areas. But, if you set up a garden somewhere, the bureaucratic blockages that you have to go through and hoops to jump through are just too many. When we did set up gardens, they (City of Montreal) wrote to the Green Chinatown email and they wrote and said "bla bla bla, you don't have permission." And, I wasn't going to go and fight it [again]. It was sort of like a "Thank you very much for, you know, for informing us. We will do our best to relocate or

> whatever." I didn't want to kind of spend all my time kind of fighting the government institution, when I'm more interested in just *gardening*. So, it was easier just to go and find the other site, than fight bureaucracy. I would say out of all three (Canadian) cities (that she has lived in), Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, Montreal is the worst city to communicate with the government authorities on the municipal level, and on the provincial, forget it. Don't even bother. Yeah, unless you mean something […]. And you know, it's not like "Oh, we want to create, you know, a building for Asian Quebecers," or anything like that. It's literally the greening of a city on your empty fucking lot. That's been empty for fucking 10 years. […] You can integrate, you can do whatever you want, but the Quebecois really want the visible minorities, or people of colour, or people who are not Tremblays to assimilate. (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

What Jessica describes about her embodied experience of garden dislocation opens a series of relations that go beyond racism as an inter-individual occurrence, and points to how intersecting government policies can allow some people to accumulate benefits (like land access for gardening) while others are dispossessed from land, resources and *belonging*. On the surface, it appears that unless an individual or an organization owns property, gardening opportunities in Montreal are limited by municipal consent. As the location of organizations change, so do their gardens and their gardening objectives.

The interview with Jessica lasted most of the day as we gardened together and then biked to a local diner to finish our conversation. When we finished the interview, I returned to the current location of the Greening Chinatown garden alone to write, speak, and photograph fieldnotes. After completing my reflections with annotations, adding in further questions I

generated in response to some of Jessica's commentary, I started biking back to my home in the Sud-Ouest. Riding on Montreal's extensive bike paths took me through Chinatown. I stopped to check out the parking lot near the Chinese Hospital and as Jessica mentioned, no gazebo has been built.

My textual findings suggest that the systematic movement of the Griffin House out of Griffintown and Greening Chinatown out of Chinatown is related to larger patterns of forced dispossession connected to the City of Montreal hosting major international events (Expo 67 and the 1976 Olympics), suburban development, urban renewal, modernization, real estate development and gentrification that prioritize profit over the wellbeing and vitality of poor and racialized urban communities. Logan and Molotch (1987) show that at the height of urban renewal and modernization of the 1960s, when all over North America new highways and developments were constructed through racialized and lower-income neighbourhoods to move people from the suburbs into city centres for work, displacing thousands of people, the primary measurement for determining the path of a highway or the location of a new development was not crime rates, access to education, access to greenspace, or the needs, health and wellbeing of those communities; rather, it was where the city could turn the most profit. Following this logic, the Montreal, Quebec (since transport is a provincial jurisdiction) and Canadian governments worked in concert to build major infrastructure projects like the Turcot, Bonaventure and Ville Marie expressways through neighbourhoods like Saint-Henri, Little Burgundy, Pointe-Saint-Charles, Griffintown, and Chinatown destroying and expropriating majority working-class Francophone neighbourhoods, as well as neighbourhoods home to Chinese and Black Anglophone communities in Montreal. However, in the City of Montreal reports from the time of these expropriations that labelled communities as 'urban slums,' there was no mention of race,

which High (2019) notes is a form of racism in itself. In municipal documents and media representations of the time, the communities of Little Burgundy and Chinatown were textually positioned as part of the Anglophone minority, which further permitted the erasure of Black and Chinese presence in Montreal while over-highlighting the "the marginalization of the French-speaking working-class during Quebec's Quiet Revolution" (High, 2019, p. 34).

Over decades of urban renewal along with shifting methods of transportation (from train to cars), the City of Montreal passed bylaws that rezoned these areas from 'residential' to 'commercial' or industrial.' To briefly oversimplify, these policy changes also prevented the people who once lived there from finding another home or business in the same area[29]. In 1963 the City implemented zoning bylaw 2785 that designated Griffintown (where the Griffin House was originally located), as 'industrial' despite the neighbourhood having over 3500 inhabitants at the time (Gabeline, Laken & Pape, 1975). While the 1963 bylaw had many ramifications, when Griffintown was officially rezoned as 'industrial,' housing, community organizations, schools and other essential services were replaced with parking lots (to accommodate the increase in cars arriving from the suburbs and elsewhere), bus depots, print shops and other businesses, killing the vibrant residential communities that once lived and worked in the area to better accommodate tourists visiting Montreal for Expo 67 or the 1976 Olympic Games and people who lived in the

[29] For instance, Goose Village or Victoriatown was a neighbourhood condemned as an 'urban slum' by the City of Montreal (1962). Among the reasons that they deemed the neighbourhood unsuitable for habitations, the City of Montreal stated that there was "insufficient greenspace, no community facilities, no police/fire stations […] no doctor's office [..] and too abhorrent industrial stenches (City of Montreal, 1962, p.33., as cited in DeVertreuil, 1993, p. 57). In the same report, the city planners also acknowledged that there was the presence of a strong community and the area was without "juvenile delinquency, lawlessness, sickness, or those other problems so often associated with urban slums (City of Montreal, 1962, p. 5, as cited in DeVertreuil, 1993, p. 57). Soon after, highways, a large parking lot and a transportation system were developed in the area for moving people to the site of Expo 67 and the 1976 Olympic Games. As part of a familiar pattern, the city did not help the 1 500 people expropriated to relocate (Kaplan, 1982).

suburbs but worked in the city (High, 2019). In Chinatown, dispossession in this context was reinforced through bylaw 6513 (Ville de Montreal, 1985), which unanimously passed in 1985 and which restricted the expansion and commercial development of Chinatown while heavily investing in the areas surrounding its location. This policy reduced the geographic area of Chinatown and also prevented Chinatown from expanding.

Why cities decide to build highways through poor and racialized neighbourhoods instead of white and wealthy ones might be explicated by Marx and Engels' (1976) concept of "use" vs "exchange" values. Quite simply, poor neighbourhoods have a smaller tax base to expropriate. If the city of Montreal decided to build a highway through Westmount (a wealthy, predominantly Anglophone neighbourhood) where there would be the same fierce citizen resistance and opposition found in the Sud-Ouest borough and Chinatown at the time of their dispossession, the city would operate at a loss from both fighting a well-funded opposition and losing an already profitable tax base (Moskovitz, 2017). While the residents of the Sud-Ouest (Black Anglophones and poor whites) and Chinatown vehemently opposed and protested the municipal and provincial governments' plans for infrastructure development, bulldozers flattened the areas under the guise of urban renewal and modernization. These raced and classed displacements primed the areas of Chinatown and the Sud-Ouest for different waves of gentrification and continue to structure who can benefit from gardening and UA and how (in what form) in these areas of the city.

Closing

Considering and contrasting Jessica and Greening Chinatown's experience with mine and Jan's at the Griffin House suggests that without land ownership, land access and/or the correct land authorisations, gardening for any purpose in Montreal is mired with challenges,

compounded by a lack of available gardening plots, ever-changing processes for accessing gardens, and conflicting municipal permissions. In 2019, the *Gardening for Food Security* project persisted with the Griffin House thanks to permissions from the church that allowed for a garden. My analysis finds that gardening for social and environmental purposes was and is possible because we have money (funding), people, knowledge, land, and long-term collaborations that involve both personal and professional commitments. However, even with all of these important variables, gardening in urban areas is not always straightforward.

For example, while many of the variables that allowed the Griffin House and our garden team to garden remained the same from 2018 to 2019 (funding, teams, coordinated efforts for food production), in 2019 we no longer had the same location, nor the same garden and thus we had to start over. Even though this seemed like a minor impediment given that the team and I had created new gardens in multiple schools and other community organizations, this change had other unanticipated consequences and finding solutions to emerging and complex problems was not simple. Without land, the Griffin House and I could not replicate the garden from the year prior and this significantly altered our collaboration. Unlike the previous summer, the Griffin House garden did not aim for food production to support food security efforts within the organization; rather, the garden boxes created that summer were designed to provide herbs for neighbourhood residents and were painted to resemble other public facing gardens nearby. On the other hand, while Greening Chinatown has managed to maintain access to land whether it was municipally permitted or not, their garden is now so far removed and dislocated from the original location and community in Chinatown that their 'team' of volunteer gardeners can seldom make the trek to their garden for socializing and harvesting. Even though their new garden is essentially identical to their past gardens because they plant in moveable smart pots,

the ever-changing location of their garden has uprooted their collaboration with the Chinese Hospital and shifted the initial purpose of the garden, which concurrently threatens the futurity of their garden and social networks.

To conclude this chapter, I return to the problematic textual accounts of the City of Montreal (Ville de Montreal, n.d.) that position, perpetuate and overstate gardening and UA as a means for becoming more food secure. My research strongly contests the idea that the City of Montreal's community gardening program is helping people become more food secure. First, Montreal is northern city with a limited yet intense growing season. While it is possible for a person or group of people to produce enough food in Montreal to become food secure, the narrative that the City of Montreal's community gardening program helps residents to do so is steeped in privilege and necessitates careful contextualization and moderation. Gardens and UA require planning, land, time, labour, timely human intervention, and resources. For someone to create and maintain a garden for food security in Montreal's climate requires close to fulltime attention from May until November. For people privileged with land (or access to land), steady employment, time, garden materials and gardening knowledge, gardening for food production, food security and food sovereignty is a substantial undertaking and time commitment. I describe my gardening efforts at home, in schools and in the community as another full-time job, because it is. It is hard to imagine how people or organizations who do not have these privileges could reasonably use gardening to become food secure in Montreal.

Importantly, gardens in Montreal exist within the context of rampant global capitalism. For those without land, steady employment, time and gardening experience, gardening for any purpose, including food production, food security, greening or recreation is under constant threat from ever changing municipal regulations encircling land ownership, community garden

eligibility criteria and extensive waitlists. Excluding what's taking place on private property owned by either individuals and organizations, I question the veracity and equity of the City of Montreal's (2010; 2020; n.d.) claim that they are aiming to use greening for environmental purposes (reducing the heat islands effect, access to greenspace, and so on) and community gardens for social purposes (exercise, recreation, addressing food security, etc.; Ville de Montreal, n.d.). By expecting individuals to garden for their own food security without providing meaningful policy that actually allows people to access gardens, the City of Montreal is not only subscribing to neoliberal solutions to structural inequalities, they are ensuring that these social and environmental inequalities persist while textually suggesting otherwise. After all, food security and equitable access to greenspace are complex issues that will not be resolved by individuals gardening. In sum, the current discourse encircling gardening for food security obscures the time, immense labour and expertise required to produce food within limited urban space. Exploring community gardening at the municipal level reveals how the state places the onus and responsibility for social and environmental change on individuals, which limits actual government intervention and perpetuates systemic inequality by promoting neoliberal solutions.

Chapter Six: Knowing History: Gardens, Greening, and Ecological-Gentrification

As my gardening work and research evolved each summer from 2016 to 2020, new garden problematics emerged and caught my attention. For example, in the last chapter, I briefly outlined how I felt uneasy about how the 2019 Griffin House garden was no longer purposed for food security initiatives and was instead designed to appeal to the consumption habits of the new middle class and to express gratitude to local residents for accepting a day centre serving people experiencing homelessness. I also realized that the new garden we constructed in collaboration with the Griffin House was slightly different from other gardens we had built in years prior. Rather than just digging a hole in the ground and filling it with compost and soil for food production purposes, this garden was constructed with the intention of fitting in with the 'look' of the neighbourhood.

In the preceding chapter, I began to identify some of the ways that urban renewal, government intervention and policy have created raced and classed displacement that continues to impact Greening Chinatown and Griffin House and shape differential benefits of gardening and UA. Without some form of private land ownership, gardening and accessing gardens is extremely challenging despite textual accounts from the City of Montreal that suggest otherwise without offering any evidence. In the opening chapter of this dissertation, I argued that gardening and UA do not exist in a snow globe; rather, they exist in the context of rampant global capitalism. In this chapter, I further discuss how greening is historically and tangibly connected to colonial land grabs, urban renewal and gentrification, and what the current impacts are on the neighbourhoods in which we garden. I also highlight how the historical moment of climate emergency that humans (and non-humans) are now occupying is providing cities with green, environmental and sustainable ways of accumulating capital.

The preceding three chapters explored the social relations of what my data and analysis deemed relevant (funding, labour/teams, land) during different annual iterations of the *Gardening for Food Security* project. In this chapter, I move from the specific social and environmental relations of my gardening research—to larger historical and extra-local capitalistic and colonial relations that have shaped and continue to shape gardening efforts, urban greening and gentrification. In other words, this chapter uses a range of research methods and research findings to underscore how gardens and greening have been shaped and have been part of shaping the political-economic shifts and changing urban conditions of Montreal (and other cities) in the past century. Smith (2006) compares the process of puzzling together research methods and findings to the creation and tapestry of Persian rugs, which are woven together using different techniques to produce their complex visualization. Understanding that I must revisit and examine my inquiry with different "pieces of fabric," (p. 9), this chapter uses research findings, visual data, theory, historical research such as colonial texts, and textual/policy analysis to show that urban gardening, greening and beautification has a complex history that requires careful contextualization.

While gardens have the potential for cross-curricular learning, increased wellbeing, and ecological awareness, the use of school and community gardens needs to be situated within critical discussions related to settler-colonialism, consumption, consumerism, the history and politics of land and water use, (eco)gentrification, land access and its growing criminalization. Revisiting my interview data in conjunction with visuals, current literature, historical texts, and policies revealed to me more about how the Griffin House having to sell their property in Griffintown is connected to Greening Chinatown's ongoing garden evictions. In some ways, both organizations' shared experience of garden dislocation can be traced into larger patterns of

legislative land dispossessions that are materially connected to and mirror colonial expansion. These experiences are simultaneously indicative of pervasive patterns of racial injustice in the province and country, associated with the preservation of some ethno-racial groups at the expense of others (Coulthard, 2014; Rutland, 2018; High, 2019). In other words, I argue that the greening that I am currently observing is not new in its employment but rather a renewed iteration designed to generate capital, in this instance for growing a city's residential tax base.

"Keeping my Eyes Everywhere"

Before embarking on this chapter's objective of tracing how the current and historical social and environmental relations of gardening in Montreal (and occasionally other cities) related to what I am currently observing in relation to gentrification, greening, or *green gentrification*, I want to situate readers within my process of discovery and within my textual analysis. Throughout my research, I noted that gardens and greening efforts like *ruelles vertes* (green alleys), street trees and garden boxes were increasing in presence. I was also aware that greening more broadly had a role in gentrification as I had engaged experientially, academically and textually in learning about what gardens and greening can do when coupled with urban renewal. I had heard of eco-gentrification; however, I could not envision how some of these pieces fit together or *how* green or ecological gentrification happened. I knew that neighbourhoods or '*quartiers*' like Griffintown, Little Burgundy, Saint-Henri, Chinatown and others had gentrified or were gentrifying through similar processes to neighbourhoods in other cities (white flight, urban renewal, deindustrialization). As such, I started asking questions about both the contemporary and historical aspects of gardening, "greening" and gentrification in Montreal and in other urban contexts. I inquired into what greening actually is (as a complex of

reflexively organized social and institutional relations – rather than a policy abstraction). I also asked questions about greening and its relationship with gentrification: how did greening happen? How was gentrification occurring (through gardens, green alleys, urban art and other forms of beautification)? And what was greening and gentrification *doing* to different people in the neighbourhoods in which we live, work and garden?

In my analysis, I often traced my ethnographic/visual data and interviewee accounts into texts and policies that helped myself and others (teachers, learners, community workers and community members) better understand potential garden problematics like dislocation, dispossession and gentrification. Some of my most compelling research realizations occurred through the processes of including visual data in my analysis of the extra-local relations influencing garden employment in different neighbourhoods of Montreal. Including visual documentation of the competing or overlapping agendas of gardens and UA in relation to gentrification, I remembered to "keep my eyes everywhere" (C. Mitchell, personal communication, February 18th, 2019). Initially, I struggled to figure out who exactly (other than our collective) was creating gardens (municipal governments, private organizations or developments, local Chambers of Commerce). Moreover, I had trouble determining the purpose of these gardens and what exactly was the garden's relationship with social and environmental ills (urban heat islands, sustainability, consumerism, gentrification, dispossession and accumulation).

As the *Gardening for Food Security* project evolved each year, and as my research emerged, my analysis revealed a shared and collective experience of garden dislocation that was not represented anywhere else I researched. Other than the Faculty of Education Garden at McGill University, every school and community garden that we co-created as part of the project

was abandoned, displaced or destroyed. For example, the community-based garden at Studio Champion Sound was abandoned after one summer as the building's infrastructure was collapsing and the organization moved to another location[30]. The original garden at English Park School was bulldozed because the school was undergoing necessary and overdue renovations. As mentioned in the last chapter, the Griffin House moved from their original building in Griffintown in 2019, but they will soon be moving again as their church basement location is only temporary. While not applicable to each garden dislocation that I describe above, many of our experiences resonated with McClintock's (2011) findings that the ever-changing zoning regulations and renewal plans in urban areas will continue to threaten the long-term future of both individual and community mediated gardening and UA. If not municipally connected, UA will always be at risk of being displaced by future real estate development.

In order to investigate whether my work was part of a bigger movement to "green" Montreal for ostensibly social and environmental reasoning, I began looking for policy and other institutional texts about the City of Montreal's approach to UA and *greening* the city. I found that in 2010, Montreal signed a declaration in favour of biodiversity and greening. Signatories of the declaration acknowledged six realities of environmental degradation and agreed to eight actions, which included acting quickly for protecting biodiversity and increasing access to greenspace for every Montrealer (Ville de Montreal, 2010)[31]. Then in 2006, Montreal's City Council unanimously adopted the Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities.

[30] The organization now has a garden in the new location. We helped at first, but not since 2018.
[31] Please note that the City of Montreal has since released new Sustainable Development plans since 2010.

The Charter, the first for a city in North America, explicitly states Montreal's commitment to "human dignity, justice, peace, equality, transparency and democracy" (Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, 2017, p. 1) and commits to its citizens' rights to social justice, dignity, safety, sustainable development, democracy, culture, recreation, and municipal services. Included in this Charter is the ability to initiate public consultation on any issue deemed relevant to any citizen over the age of 15, which can be exercised at both the borough and city level. To invoke the process of consultation handled by the *Office de consultation public de Montréal* (OCPM) with either a borough or the City, citizens must present a petition signed by at least five percent of the eligible population of a borough (above the age 15), or 15 000 signatures for city-wide consideration. Interestingly, the first ever citizen-led consultation was in 2012 on the subject of UA, the petition for which generated over 30 000 signatures at the time (OCPM, 2012). Over 1 500 people participated in the consultation process and a 50-page report was produced. The report concluded that UA required improved municipal coordination, that the City underestimated UA participation and that they needed to provide better information so that citizens and organizations could more easily enact their projects.

> Notably, the commission recommends the use of zoning and regulations as urban agriculture consolidation and development tools. UA should also be included in the measures imposed on real estate complex developers via greening regulations. In other cities, architectural concepts have been known to include terrace gardens, for example. (Newswire press release, OCPM, October 17th, 2012, Retrieved from: https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/ocpm-believes-urban-agriculture-in-montreal-involves-numerous-activities-requiring-better-coordination-510963301.html)

By further examining current literature on gardening and UA in Montreal, I came across Bhatt and Farah's (2016) research that provided a brief history of UA initiatives in Montreal. The authors focused on past and ongoing efforts of individuals and institutions and provided an entry-point for situating my research within documented, albeit larger scale UA efforts. Although I had been working in and with gardens and UA for several years, in the hecticness of my work, I realized that I was *mostly* unaware of other UA initiatives in Montreal and the broader colonial history of gardening in the city. Bhatt and Farah's (2016) review had an optimistic outlook on past, current and future UA programming and correctly asserted that while individual gardens created by a multiplicity of stakeholders in Montreal differ in scope and purpose and may seem modest, the sum of these activities is substantial and impressive. Through Bhatt and Farah's (2016) research, I learned of celebrated local initiatives like McGill University's edible campus and *Université du Quebec a Montreal*'s AU/Lab (see: http://www.au-lab.ca/), which is a massive rooftop gardening project located on the *Palais de Congress* (a large convention centre) that runs international summer gardening courses and declares itself as a leader in innovation UA programming and practices.

I also found that since 2015, the City of Montreal created a website called *Cultive ta ville* (n.d.) that hosts important information for citizens about UA and about different gardening initiatives. The website includes: an interactive map; a project registration system where gardeners can chronicle their project and connect with other gardeners in the city and province (Quebec); a history of community gardening in Montreal; how UA is employed in relation to Montreal's sustainable development plan; details about the city's UA working group; frequently asked questions, and other relevant information. As I continued to read over texts related to greening, UA and gardening in different urban contexts, what I noted omitted was the shared

experience of garden dislocation that my partners and I experienced amidst city-wide greening efforts. In my tracing, I struggled to find any information that explained or elucidated what was occurring in these dislocations and I returned to my data, which pointed me to look historically at policy and governance issues related to sustainability, housing, transportation, and education as related to gardening and UA.

As I pieced together multiple datasets attempting to produce a complex visualization of my research findings, I revisited my interviews with teachers and community workers and was compelled to look politically and historically at gardening and greening as relations of ruling (Smith, 1987; Bannerji, 1995). Inspired by Bannerji (1995; 2020) who aims to "grasp the concept of ideology and find its working in colonial texts," I looked historically at documents, policy and movements that explicate how the neighbourhoods in which I now garden have transformed over time and what that now means to gardening efforts for different purposes and to garden displacement. In the upcoming sections, I organize my discussion as follows: I open the upcoming section by situating my historical garden/greening review in relation to colonial texts and then complicate its history by paying attention to the colonial history of gardening and greening movements that have shaped the landscape of Montreal. Next, I locate greening, gentrification, accumulation and dispossession in relation to Chinatown and the Sud-Ouest in Montreal, critiquing the historical and contemporary discourse and the overrepresentation of settler colonialist, nationalist, patriarchal and privileged discourses that suppress the historical and contemporary social and environmental power relations that create social environmental justice disparities in Montreal and across Canada.

Because this chapter focuses on how bureaucracy functions and broadly on how city planning has worked over the past century in relation to gardening, greening and land

dispossessions, I want to recognize that there are many well-intentioned civil servants who have championed ideas and initiatives related to improving social and environmental justice for those living, working and gardening in Montreal. Keeping a consistent line of analysis, my intent in this chapter is not to critique *individuals* working for municipal governments, or *individual* initiatives enacted by governments, but rather to highlight different municipal and bureaucratic processes that are capable of *individualizing*. I acknowledge and further remind readers that since property taxes are the only stable revenue source that cities like Montreal can rely on to fund their growing public operations, Canadian cities (in this current settler-colonial context) are essentially forced to employ gentrification as an economic strategy. In this sense, I seek to raise awareness of the extreme care that is required in the ongoing maintenance of cities and other evolving human-centric systems.

An Alternative History of Greening and Gardening in Montreal

In my alternative historical review on gardening and greening in Montreal and Canada, I intentionally include perspectives that are omitted from other textual accounts that I encountered that overstate and often uncritically celebrate gardening and greening in Montreal (see: Ville de Montreal, 2002; Bhatt & Farah, 2016; *Cultive ta ville*, 2021). I also expose the immense complexity of gardening on stolen land under rampant global capitalism. Different from other accounts of gardening and greening, I contrast my historical findings encircling gardening and greening in relation to past research and documentation to help explain the ongoing dislocation of community gardens that my collaborators and I have experienced. Like other urban processes, gardening and greening in Montreal have been shaped by different waves of (inter)national/continental gardening movements, private land ownership, financial investment,

capitalistic growth and colonial expansion. Additionally, I pay close attention to how my selective review intersects with my findings on the social and environmental relations of garden funding, garden labour/teams and access to and dispossession of land on which to garden.

Gardens, Greening, Colonial Expansion, Nationalism, and War

I open my historical review of gardening and greening in Montreal in the 1870s, around the time of the City Beautiful movement and with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR). At this time, three large parks (Mount Royal Park, La Fontaine Park, and Park St. Helen) were created in response to rising urban industrialization and the growing perception that accessing natural environments had become more challenging during this time (Desjardins, n.d.). The most famous of three large parks, Mount Royal, was created by Fredrick Law Olmstead and adhered to the City Beautiful movement insofar as it was underpinned by both economic and social objectives. The majority Anglophone elite responsible for the early greening of the city believed that visually improving the city through significant investments in greening would translate to also improving public morals.

As rail became the main mode of transportation, in eastern cities like Montreal, the public pressured the state for railway station beautification, and this came in the form of gardens and greening. To encourage settlement in the Canadian Prairies, the government of Canada and the CPR used gardens to promote the fertility of the lands in the western provinces (Davidson & Krause, 1999; Ville de Montreal, 2002). These gardens and railroad station greenspaces flourished until the 1930s with onset of WWII when cars became the more typical mode of transportation. The remnants of railway gardens (1890-1930) are still present in Montreal,

especially Saint-Henri, Little Burgundy and the Town of Mount Royal (TMR), a centrally located suburb of Montreal.

For example, TMR was designed according to the Garden City and City Beautiful movements and was constructed on land owned by the Canadian Northern Railway (Heritage Canada, 2007, https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=11871&i=7591). Starting in 1914 and with development and urban renewal persisting into the 1970s, TMR developed in distinct phases so the town could incorporate aspects characteristic of a Garden City including a greenbelt boundary, clear distinctions between residential streets, industry, commercial activity and public and private greenspaces (Howard, 1902), and a connection to Montreal's downtown core by rail. Geographically bounded by a railroad track, the TransCanada highway and a large fence (covered by a hedge), TMR had low residential density, an abundance of greenspaces and a "remarkably homogenous community" (Heritage Canada, 2007, n.p.).

TMR was created as a 'Model City' and "in response to the industrialization and big-city problems that plagued large metropolitan centres during the late 19th and early 20th centuries" (Heritage Canada, 2007, n.p.). To attract capital and to turn a profit, the railway company and its speculators hired a landscape architect (Frederick Gage Todd) to oversee this long-term transition of undeveloped land into a Garden City (Heritage Canada, 2007). With over 30 parks, 70 other greenspaces, and an urban forest that "complements the professional-quality landscaping found in private yards," (Town of Mount Royal, 2020, n.p., Retrieved from: https://www.ville.mont-royal.qc.ca/en/town), the town boasts that they have as many trees as they do inhabitants. What's noteworthy about TMR's development is not only its "Model City" status or Heritage Canada (2008) designation, but that its developers strategically employed gardens, greenspaces, greening and the concept of escaping the city over the long term (several

decades) as a means for generating capital by attracting wealthy residents. As Heritage Canada (2007) states, “by making an attractive suburb, they [the railway company] were making sure they could sell their lots” (n.p.). Moreover, what is also worth highlighting is that this process was initiated by private interests collaborating with different levels of government. This shows how movements like the Garden City or City Beautiful were “largely tangential to the underlying dynamics of capitalist urbanization” (Ganby, 2008, p. 67) and also highlights capitalism’s long-term vision for generating wealth through the ongoing accumulation of land and capital coupled with decades-long garden and ‘green’ development.

An aspect often omitted from the historical accounts of community gardens is how gardens were used as a tool for settler colonialism in North America. CPR’s promotion of fertile lands available for settlement in Western Canada depended on the violent appropriation of land, and the destruction of Indigenous lifestyles, food cycles and ecosystems that provided subsistence (Coulthard, 2014). At the same time as the CPR was being built, Indian Residential Schools in both Canada and the United States used school gardens and school farms to instill western values in relation to labour, land-use, and productivity (Ostertag, 2015). The intervention simultaneously and intentionally eroded Indigenous children’s identities, disrupted their connections to families, place, language, culture, food, self and others, and led to personal, social, emotional and generational trauma (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

Coupling European agricultural practices with the moral and religious values of Canada’s settler colonial state, school gardens and farms were integral to the colonial project of assimilating First Nation peoples in Canada. As the fur trade ended, the buffalo was all but extinct when settler immigration west increased along with famine, crop failures and “racism and

the imperialistic betterment discourses of Euro-Canadian and American colonizers" (Ostertag, 2015, p. 63). While gardens and farms were used in Indian Residential Schools as pedagogical heuristics, they were also used for food production and the economic self-sufficiency of the schools as harvests were often sold at local markets (Kuokannen, 2007). The food production labour was conducted by First Nation children and according to Churchill (2004), a U.S. government report (1923) confirms that the conditions of child labour in Residential Schools would have been be illegal in most U.S. states.

These unfortunate forced working conditions compounded by poor living conditions contributed to the egregiously high death rates of children in Indian Residential Schools (TRC, 2014). A harrowing example documented by Miller (1996) depicts a school that did not have adequate food supplies to feed their students but refused to accept food hunted by the students' parents to help supplement their children's diet. Taken together, separating children from their parents and families, homelands and communities, and forcing Indigenous youth to work in gardens and eat in regimented dining halls led to unhealthy relationships with food, culture, self and their bodies (Ostertag, 2015). Moreover, the idea of using gardening or UA as an intervention for 'betterment' and remediation has had a lasting imprint on the social and pedagogical use of gardens that is still being employed in both literature, gardening discourse, and practice.

As Residential Schools persisted, railway gardens grew and concurrently the School Garden movement (1900-1913) came and went (Cosegrove, 1998). Different from the gardens of Residential Schools, the School Garden movement emerged alongside the Nature Study educational movement, which used gardens experientially to help young learners develop their character as they made sense of their surroundings. Along with connecting young learners to

their surroundings, enclosed and bounded educational gardens were used to connect youth to their homelands. Ostertag's (2018) research shows that early examples of German school *Kindergartens* (children's garden) echo the logic of individualism that structure indoor classroom spaces. The "*Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) ideology that contributed to school gardening being mandated for all schools during Nazi Germany is a particularly horrifying example of school gardening linked to race, eugenics, and territorial enlargement" (Ostertag, 2018, p. 13).

As WWI was instigated, the School Garden movement waned; however, during wartime in North America (and in other Western nations like the UK), the Vacant Lot movement commenced (Baeyer, 1984) as did the Relief Gardens of WWI followed by the Victory Gardens of WWII. The purpose of these gardens was to provide employment opportunities for low-income people, to green cities, and to increase food production during the war efforts (Ville de Montreal, 2002). While these ideas appear commendable at a surface level, beyond the connection of gardens to war efforts or victory, they also served as methods for upholding gender roles (women harvested the crops), demonstrated a desire to revitalize urban and rural communities and provided anti-intellectual/manual labour opportunities for working-class people, further perpetuating class divisions while influencing child labour relations (Ostertag, 2015). As I write this dissertation during the COVID-19 pandemic, similar "Victory Gardens" or food production gardens are being promoted as a way to increase food security, reduce urban heat islands, and for the greening of cities, all praiseworthy and crucial objectives for a city with many food insecure residents already dealing with the ramifications of climate change (flooding, heat waves, etc.).

Along with Victory Gardens for food production, during WWII Montreal was also the site of an internment camp where prisoners of war had the option of performing manual labour like gardening and urban farming labour for 20 cents a day (Bérard, 2012; CBC news, January 4th, 2020). The internment camp, made up of 400 Italians, was located on Île Ste. Helene, an island located just south of the port of Montreal that was later used as the site of Expo 67 (Montreal's World Fair) and the 1976 Summer Olympic Games. After Italy joined forces with Nazi Germany in 1940, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered the mass arrest of all Italian nationals (or descendants of Italian nationals) living in the United Kingdom. They were rounded up by police and then shipped to different prisoner of war camps across the Commonwealth (Pieri, 1997).

The internment camp in Montreal, known as S-43, was operational from 1940 to 1943. During the summer months, the prisoners of war often gardened for food production and in the winter, they were tasked with shoveling the snow after large snowfalls and making bandages and other products for the Red Cross (Bérard, 2012). After Italy surrendered, the prisoners were permitted to return to the United Kingdom; however, the horrible living conditions had a lasting physical and emotional impact (Pieri, 1997). What I find most disturbing about situating my current garden research in relation to the historical employment of gardens in Montreal and Canada is how gardens were used in connection with settlement, colonial expansion, resource extraction, nationalism and land dispossession. This dislocation from land led to a disruption of Indigenous knowledge, cultures, food systems and ways of being. It also underscores how the current framing of gardening for recreational purposes is steeped in privileged discourse that undercuts the significant amount of labour needed to produce food and how gardening and greening efforts have been positioned alongside the undercurrents of capitalism.

Figure 7. *Prisoners of War Doing Gardening Work on Île Sainte-Hélène, 1941 (Bibliothèque et Archives Canada, Pa- 176622, as cited in Bérard, 2016)*

Shaping Contemporary Community Gardening

After WWII, gardens, greening and beautification were inherent components of both urban renewal and attracting wealth to the suburbs (see TMR above). In Montreal, lack of greenspace was often used to justify the clearing of locations deemed urban slums. For example, a city report on Little Burgundy, home of the Black community in Montreal's Sud-Ouest borough, stated that "narrow streets, squeezed between long rows of grey and anonymous houses, leave little room for sunshine and even less for a bit of greenery" (Ville de Montreal, 1965, as cited in High, 2019, p. 34). At the time, however, urban planning *discourse* was most concerned with the expansion of the suburbs and most government investment focused on

building highways and new infrastructure to move people efficiently from the green suburbs to the city and back again (Jackson, 1985; Rose, 2000). The idea of an urban sprawl added to the increasing environmental concerns of the counterculture movement, which once again helped propel gardens into public discussions of self-sufficiency and in promotion of local food systems (Ville de Montréal, 2002).

In the 1970s, what are now called community gardens in Montreal started to take shape due to two citizen-led developments. According to the city of Montreal's (2002) report on community gardening and *Cultive ta ville* (2021), European immigrants (Italian and Portuguese) started gardening in vacant lots and underneath powerlines around the city. While this was not permitted at the time, these 'unregulated' or 'guerrilla' gardens that started to appear around Montreal gave the city a working model for what a community garden might look like in the future. Soon after, a group of citizens from the Centre-Sud neighbourhood of Ville Marie approached Montreal's Botanical Gardens asking for land and support to establish gardens in their constituency. As citizen-led initiatives and interest in UA grew, so did city regulations. As Montreal began to formalize the regulations around gardening and vacant lots, many citizens asked for gardening space and the city found itself wedged between and amongst competing interests for access to land, gardens and public resources. In sum, historical and contemporary accounts (Ville de Montreal, 2002; Bhatt & Farah, 2016) suggest the regulations of community gardens were influenced by both vacant lot or 'guerrilla' gardening, and by more official collaborations (i.e., with the Botanical Garden, McGill's Edible Campus, and the AU/LAB at *Université du Québec à Montréal* [UQAM], and so on).

On the heels of formal and informal collaborations, the current system of community gardens officially began in 1975[32] (Ville de Montreal, n.d.) and was spearheaded by the director of Montreal's Botanical Garden, Pierre Bourque, who later became mayor of Montreal. Bourque organized the community gardens until the program grew too large for the Botanical Garden to manage. Gardens in Montreal became regulated. People were now required to register to access divided garden plots that were (and still are) fenced in, gated and locked. For a very affordable annual fee, citizens lucky enough to get a plot, obtain access to land, water, tools and other materials. In 1985, a major review of the city's gardening programs took place. The analysis led to the city of Montreal creating clear policies about how gardens would operate. In the proposed amendments, three major changes were implemented.

The first change shifted the responsibility for community gardens from the Botanical Gardens to the city's department of recreation and community development. The next change mandated that all gardens would use organic methods, and the last major change stipulated that several horticultural educators (or animators) would be hired to support gardens and gardeners transitioning to organic gardening (Ville de Montreal, 2002; UQAM, 2010). By 1989, community gardens had grown in size and scope and were now under the purview of Montreal's department of sport, recreation and social development who started to coordinate with other city departments. As such, different aspects of community gardening intersected with other municipal

[32] While the City's website suggests that community gardening officially became municipally mediated in 1975 (Ville de Montreal, Bhatt & Farah) *Cultive ta ville* (2020) states that in 1936 the first community garden on island was created in the district of Lasalle, which at the time was an independent municipality. Following a fire that destroyed an entire quadrangle in the Centre-Sud region of Montreal 1974, residents of this underprivileged neighbourhood asked for a garden to be set up in this space which would allow them to ensure their food security (*Cultive ta ville*, 2021)

organizations to ensure that there was multi-sectoral operation and responsibility of the program. However, even at this time, gardens were not available to everyone as many Montreal citizens were waitlisted for garden plots (Davidson & Krause, 1999). Critics at the time stated that while the cost of renting a community garden was accessible, there were other limiting factors, which included adhering to city insurance policy, agreeing to planting rules, an expectation of upkeep and appearance, and so on (Cosegrove, 1994).

In 1994, Pierre Bourque, the former director of the Botanical Gardens, became mayor. With his extensive background in horticulture, he looked to transform Montreal into "one big garden" and wanted Montreal to be an environmental leader in North America (Radio Canada, April 8, 2019). Under Bourque, there was a clear focus on city-led environmental initiatives. He created a number of environmental sub-divisions within the city's governance. For example, Montreal's Éco-Centre was developed to process reusable materials and city's recycling, and the Éco-Quartier was created to work to improve citizen life through environmental programming like gardening, UA and other green initiatives[33]. Furthermore, existing greenspaces were expanded, additional trees were planted, land was protected, parks were created and there were environmental clean-up efforts in the city's deindustrialized zones, notably in Old Montreal (a popular tourist destination), St. Catherine street (one of Montreal's foremost shopping areas), and in the Sud-Ouest along the deindustrialized Lachine Canal, the former heart Canada's industry.

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[33] Today in 2021, there are seven Éco-Centres, 18 Éco-Quartiers and 97 community gardens (Ville de Montreal, n.d.). Much like the community gardens, the Eco-Quartier erroneously claims that their services are beneficial to all citizens. *Cultive ta ville* website (2021) boasts that Montreal has one of the largest UA programs "in the world with more than 8,500 plots in 97 gardens, 75 collective gardens and many private initiatives" (n.d.).

In the later years of the 1990s, under Pierre Bourque's administration, the City combined his massive greening efforts with its growing condominium development in central areas through the creation of the 'Central Neighbourhood Revitalization' program, which was developed in conjunction with Quebec's provincial government, but operated exclusively by the City of Montreal (Rose, 2010). The program was created in response to poverty continuing to exist in certain downtown areas in spite of an economic upturn and in the midst of the visible homelessness crisis across Canada (Gaetz, 2010). In theory, the program aimed to: 1) improve rental housing infrastructure and stimulate local businesses; and 2) combat poverty in these urban areas (Rose, Germain, Bacqué, Bridge, Fijalkow & Slater, 2013). In reality, what occurred has been described as the type of "instant gentrification" (Rose, 2010, p. 422) inherent in social mixity housing policies.

By integrating people with differing levels of middle-class economic stability into low-income areas, the City sought to legislate housing and neighbourhood revitalization (through greening) in conjunction with one another. This approach had been employed in other international cities as a method for diversifying and densifying a city's tax base (Harvey, 2007). Since the employment of the first socially mixed condominiums of the 1990s, this has been the model for real estate development in Montreal, with some policy alterations. One of the main geographical areas of major condominium development occurred (and is still occurring) along the Lachine Canal (Rose, 2000; 2010; Moser et al., 2018) in the neighbourhoods of Griffintown (where the Griffin House was originally located), Pointe-Saint-Charles, Little Burgundy, and Saint-Henri (where the Griffin House is currently located in the church basement).

Urban Renewal and the Greening of the Sud-Ouest

As noted in previous sections, for over fifty years, the Griffin House was located in Griffintown, a neighbourhood just south of downtown in Montreal's Sud-Ouest borough. When creating or working in gardens, unless I was transporting a large amount of garden equipment or materials, I would always bike to the different garden sites included in my larger community gardening project. Most of my days in the summer of 2018 included at least a kilometer of cycling on the Lachine Canal bike path to get to the Griffin House. As I exited the Lachine Canal, I would see a litany of recently built condominiums and many more under construction. In 2019, after the Griffin House moved locations, I would usually walk to the new location, which is an eight-minute walk from where I live, along Notre-Dame street. Today, as I walk down Notre-Dame street, which is a commercial artery that runs through Saint-Henri, Little Burgundy and Griffintown and into the Old Port of Montreal, I can see remnants of the neighbourhoods' former character. Many of the dépanneurs, diners or *casse-croûtes* have been transformed into wine bars and expensive brunch restaurants that people line up for on weekends. In recent years, the sidewalks have been expanded to make shopping (or waiting) easier for the city's consumers and gardens now line the street for multiple purposes.

Figure 8. *Urban Greening in the Sud-Ouest of Montreal*

Note. The lighted writing is from Gabriel Roy's First Book, *Bonheur D'Occasion*, which describes struggles in Saint-Henri, an urban slum in Montreal.

Figure 9. *The Greening of a Private Terrace, Located on Notre Dame Street, the Main Commercial Artery of the Sud-Ouest*

Historically, the Sud-Ouest of Montreal was known as a working-class area. In the early 1900s, it was called "the city below the hill" (Ames, 1897), referring to its location at the base of Montreal's Mont Royal but also to "crushing poverty, overcrowding and sickness at the time of industrialization" (Centre for Oral History, 2013, p. 12). Around the turn of the century, Ames (1897) conducted a house-to-house research exploration of the living conditions of Montreal's working-class. At the time, he stated that "the city below the hill is for the masses, the city above the hill is for the classes" (Ames, 1897, p. 3). Using oral history, High's (2019) more recent

research draws attention to the neighbourhood of Little Burgundy and how urban renewal dispossessed much of the Black community of their homes in the Sud-Ouest. Using a collection of interviews and policy documents, High (2019) shows that Little Burgundy was a name fashioned by city officials to define their urban renewal strategies. Because of the Sud-Ouest's location south of Montreal's city centre and proximity to the railroads and the Lachine Canal, the neighbourhood was an industrial corridor and home to many factories, which lined the canal and were built in response to Canada's first and second waves of industrialization and early colonial expansion. During this time, many Black men worked as sleeping car railway porters on the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) and lived in Little Burgundy due to its proximity to Montreal's central train stations. Because the area did not have a lot of greenspace until after the urban renewal, youth from the area often "played on railway lands" (p. 26).

Before the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1954 and before highways replaced rail, the Lachine Canal (connected to the Port of Montreal) was the gateway and main commercial passage to the Great Lakes, passing through Montreal, to and from Toronto, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and other towns and cities along the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes (DeVertreuil, 1993). With the opening of the Seaway in 1959 as a more direct commercial route and the onset of deindustrialization with the emergence of new developments through urban renewal, Montreal's commercial importance began to diminish. Many of the factories that lined the Lachine Canal closed or moved to the suburbs, leaving a large percentage of people living in the area unemployed. Concurrently, many Black men became unemployed as rail travel declined and the Black community in Little Burgundy were disproportionately expropriated (High, 2019).

Like other poor and racialized neighbourhoods in Montreal (and elsewhere), people in the Sud-Ouest were dispossessed of their homes and land was cleared for new highway developments while the City of Montreal rezoned different neighbourhoods around the downtown core from residential/commercial – to industrial. As the inner-city land was not as profitable nor as attractive to private developers at the time, the rare new-build developments in the city centre were turned into social housing (Rose, 2000). By 1986, unemployment in the Sud-Ouest (Saint-Henri, Little Burgundy, and other neighbourhoods) peaked at almost twenty percent and the area's population dwindled from 120 000 in 1961 to 60 000 in 1991[34] (DeVertreuil, 1993). The deindustrialization along and around the Lachine Canal forced those who could work elsewhere to leave the area for other opportunities, leaving behind a large population of low-income people. For the Black community of the Sud-Ouest, this dislocation caused disarray for families and longstanding local institutions as many people were dispossessed of their homes, routines and social networks and were moved into large social housing projects. In the 1990s, 'spot rezoning'[35] allowed for some new real estate development in the area, which began a new conversion of the neighbourhood from industrial back to residential, with high-end condominiums and no additional social and affordable housing being built (Rose, 2010, Moser et al., 2019). Disappointingly, the City of Montreal was unwilling to provide homeowning subsidies for lower-income citizens and continued to use the converted land available to shift renters into first-time homeowners (Rose, 2010).

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[34] By 1981, the population of Griffintown/Little Burgundy had decreased to around 6000 people (Hoffman, 1990, Arrondissement de Sud-Ouest, p. 13, as cite in DeVertreuil, 1993). There were almost 23000 people living in the areas in 1961.

[35] Spot rezoning is when smaller sections of land are rezoned for a specific purpose within a larger area (i.e. private condominium development with an industrial zoned area of the city).

One aspect of attracting people to again live in the area was the rezoning of the Lachine Canal from an industrial site to an expanded blue (water) and greenspace. As the city was rezoning the Sud-Ouest to attract investment and higher-income residents, the federal government supported this transition by investing in the transformation of the Lachine Canal into a park and heritage site (Bélanger, 2010). This was one of Canada's largest heritage and revitalization projects in the last few decades and required a collective and coordinated investment of over 100 million dollars across the municipal, provincial and federal governments (London, 2003). At the time of this intersecting government investment in the early 2000s, the private sector invested over 350 million for real estate development along the canal with another 300 million already earmarked for future urban renewal (London, 2003, p. 33). Since then, the Sud-Ouest has experienced major changes, and even more significant investments from public and private interests coupled with creative re-branding to attract higher-income consumers.

Recently, Garcia Lamarca (2019) outlines specific issues with how this renewal has been coupled with greening or ecological gentrification initiatives. To remind readers, ecological gentrification occurs when gentrification is coupled with positive environmental change (Dooling, 2009; Gould & Lewis, 2016) that can displace the people who this environmental change textually intends to benefit. The increased investment in the Lachine Canal has recently raised issues of access as many private condominium developments have cut entrance to the public greenspace in the form of metal fences and locked gates (Garcia Lamarca, 2019) similar to those found in the City's community gardens. Furthermore, given the timing of the public and private investments in the Lachine Canal, many locals do not view the greenspace as part of their neighbourhood but as something different that's been created for the newly arrived higher income residents (Bélanger, 2010; Twigge-Molecey, 2013; 2014).

Entering into the early 2000s, Montreal's economy and housing market was stronger than it had been since the decades of the post WWII economic boom. Following urban megamergers in other parts of Canada (like the amalgamation of Toronto in 1998 and Ottawa in 2001), in 2002 the Quebec government passed Bill 170, a megamerger that consolidated 29 Montreal municipalities into the "une île, une ville" or "one island, one city" model (Katz & Roussopoulos, 2017). While several municipalities eventually demerged from the megacity to return to their position as separate administrative cities, with the fiercest opposition found in Anglophone communities and wealthy Francophone communities, the conglomeration at first allowed the City to share crucial social and material substructure expenses with its surrounding suburbs. However, division during this time coupled with public backlash led to increased democratic participation and the creation of a public consultation office (*Office de consultation publique de Montreal*), and an eventual decentralization of power that continues to shape Montreal's current governance. While Montreal is united in an island-wide amalgamation where the City provides major services such as policing, waste management and transportation, since the merger (2002) and demerger (2006), the borough councils (e.g., the Sud-Ouest) are now tasked with management of their own local jurisdictions in relation to housing, culture and recreation, which includes urban planning, parks, gardens, community development, libraries, and local roads (major parks and intersections fall under the City's responsibility).

In 2000, the Sud-Ouest borough council proposed to 'green' a concrete alleyway with funding from the Quebec government's public health division to combat the urban heat island effect. The project was modeled after the Dutch 'Woonerf,' which translates to 'living street' and constructed in-between social housing and a new private condominium development, which advertised its properties as being part of a 'green' development. While the Sud-Ouest borough

praises the Woonerf's creation, which cost the City and province upwards of two million dollars to develop (National Observer, January 23rd, 2019), local citizens and housing advocates point out that no matching investment was earmarked for the other already established recreational areas and that the Woonerf is disproportionately used by the new wealthier residents. In a shocking 2018 study, the local housing group in the Sud-Ouest (POPIR[36]) showed that 45 percent of residents living on the street facing the newly developed Woonerf had moved in less than a year before, pushing the former residents of the area further west away from grocery stores and other key services (Garcia Lamarca, 2019).

While public consultation has significantly increased since urban renewal, and has played an important role in the shaping of some municipal policies, the City and its boroughs are still lacking in both accountability and transparency. Recent bureaucracy has become more challenging to navigate, even for locals. For example, as I traced outwards from interview data where teachers and community workers outlined the difficulty in connecting with anyone from the City who could provide them with information about garden creation, garden support, where gardens were permitted and so on, I realized that there were different levels of "government" or government approved/affiliated organizations that were responsible for the City's greening efforts. As mentioned, recreation is mediated by the boroughs and as such community gardens and green alleys are organized by the *Éco-Quartiers*. However, there are other greening efforts that are not developed and monitored by the *Éco-Quartiers* and are instead designed and implemented by local not-for-profit Chambers of Commerce (Société de development

[36] POPIR stands for Projet d'organisation populaire, d'information et de regroupement (see: https://popir.org/).

commercial in French; SDC), like the *Quartier du Canal* or the *Quartier d'Innovation*, whose sole purpose is to promote the business interests of the neighbourhood.

Consistent with IE's focus on revealing social relations, how things happen and how things have come to be the way they are, I returned to my question that considered what greening and gentrification was *doing* to different people in the neighbourhoods in which we now live, work and garden. My tracing showed that along with being part of private real estate development and government interventions, gardens and greening has also been involved in creating the conditions for attracting particular groups of people with particular cultural and consumption preferences. For example, Gibbs and Kruger (2007) highlight a relationship between cities that have flourished in the creative and knowledge-based economies (the technology and design sectors, innovation, higher education, etc.), and those that have implemented environmental sustainability policies and discourse. Resonating with my findings on garden funding, garden labour and gardening on urban land, the authors further note that environmental sustainability "may not be an obstacle to capitalist accumulation but rather a constituent part of it" (p. 103). By piecing together my conceptual tracing in with my visual and ethnographic data, my research revealed that many of the gardens being installed along major commercial routes in the Sud-Ouest are not being built in response to Montreal's Sustainable Development Plan, nor are they created by the City's environmental division (the Éco-Quartier) in response to food security, heat islands or for educational reasons. Rather, they are explicitly branded as environmental but are designed for consumption and are produced by the local Chambers of Commerce, or the *Société de development commercial* (SDC).

Figure 10. *Greening for Reducing Heat Islands?*

Figure 11. *A Partnership Between a Local School and the Local Chamber of Commerce, or Gardening for Educational Purposes?*

The photographic examples I use above show different gardens currently located on Notre Dame Street in the Sud-Ouest. I was compelled to take a photo of this garden box and sign that indicates a brief description of its creation, but not its purpose per se. In French, the sign reads that “this urban landscaping project is an initiative of the local SDC – Les Quartiers due

Canal, and that it was realized in collaboration with students and teachers from a local high school." I looked on both the school's and the SDC's websites to learn more about the collaboration but could not find any information about what the collaboration entailed and what exactly is educational, social or environmental about this project.

Confusing Bureaucracy, Creative Branding

I continued to trace my research findings into concepts that helped explicate what I was encountering with increased greening and garden creation from multiple urban stakeholders (myself included) and tried to work out how greening was being employed in gentrifying areas. Recall that in Chapter Two I outlined how cities like Montreal have aimed to create the conditions to grow their knowledge-based economies and creative industries, by investing in educational institutions, technology sectors, and tolerance. Some of the ways this manifests in Montreal are through massive tax breaks to the creative industries (fashion, film, music and artistic festivals, sporting and cultural events, major conferences, videogames, aerospace, and so on) and the rebranding of some of the city's neighbourhoods to what I call in my voice memos "the Quartier Cartel" (Voice Memo, July 12th, 2019). The Quartier Model of branding is designed to feature specific aspects of Montreal in an area so they can be consumed. For example, the Montreal JazzFest and Just for Laughs festivals are held in downtown Montreal (Ville Marie), or the newly branded *Quartier des Spectacles,* which is a member of the Global Cultural Districts Network (Quartier des Spectacles, 2020). The many museums of Montreal are located in *Quartier des Musées*. The Griffin House is now located in *Quartiers du Canal*, but was previously located in *Quartier de l'Innovation*, the recently branded and corporatized amalgamation of the once working-class neighbourhoods in Montreal's Sud Ouest.

Originally inspired by Ontario's Business Improvement Areas of the 1970s, during the first wave of Montreal's gentrification post urban renewal in the 1980s, Montreal established four SDCs that coincidentally corresponded to areas that had been bulldozed for real estate development. Today, there over 20 SDCs operating on the island of Montreal (Ville de Montreal, 2020) connected by yet another central organization called the *Association des Sociétés de développement commercial de Montréal* (Association des Sociétés de développement commercial de Montréal, 2020). According to their website, "SDCs represent a winning formula for neighbourhood development and empowerment in all urban centres, large and small, which has demonstrated its value through many successful innovative projects and concrete beneficial results for community life" (n.d.). According to the City's website, "businesses occupying a commercial space on January 1st are billed for SDC dues" (Ville de Montreal, 2020).

While the SDCs claim to have a neighbourhood's best interests at the fore of their policy proposals, my observations of recent events suggest that SDCs are replacing commercial and citizen consultation and are using creative branding that obscures their reinforcement of consumerism. In the summer of 2020, citizen and commercial backlash to a proposed "Active Mobility Corridor" revealed that the *Quartier du Canal* (one of the Sud-Ouest's SDCs) requested that the City shut down the area's main commercial artery to motor vehicles. According to Sud-Ouest borough mayor (Benoît Dorais), the plan had been in development for months but the City and SDC only informed local citizens and merchants days before the change was set to be installed. Despite businesses paying taxes to both the City and the SDC, they were not consulted on the proposed change. From an environmental perspective, Active Mobility Corridors (for ostensibly reducing emissions) coupled with greening will need to be part of Montreal's response to the current climate emergency and its growing impact on the city. To achieve environmental

goals like carbon neutrality by 2050 (Ville de Montreal, 2020), other environmental policies will also need to be enacted, especially as public transportation[37] use is down and private vehicle usage has increased during COVID-19. However, the local SDC's branding might suggest that greening and active transport is also being employed to assist in accelerating gentrification and displacing lower income residents and that this investment in green infrastructure also increases land values.

[37] In 2020, ridership on the Societé Transport de Montreal (2020) was down by 54.2 percent.

Figure 12. *Greening Branding for Green Gentrification*

Recall that in Chapter One, I outlined that many cities and states have invested in three sectors for economic resurgence through the knowledge-based and creative economies: technology, education, and tolerance (Florida, 2002). In recently gentrified areas of Montreal like

Griffintown, the Plateau/Mile End, and Chinatown, or in soon-to-be gentrified/gentrifying areas like Parc Extension (see footnote below), it easy to see how different levels of government have worked to grow their knowledge-based economies and creative industries by investing in higher education and technology. For higher education, this is visible through the construction and expansion of *École de Technologie Superior* in Griffintown, *or Université de Montréal Campus MIL* in Parc Extension[38]. Moreover, investment in technology is achieved through tax breaks to Ubisoft (and other companies) in the Mile End and a significant investment in the development of Montreal's Artificial Intelligence sector across universities. However, investment in tolerance is more challenging to identify in a province that has institutionalized islamophobia (see: Bill 21) and where the legislative protection of the French language concurrently shapes racial inequity (Backhouse, 1999; Maynard, 2018). As I continued to probe the *green and tolerant* branding I was observing the Sud-Ouest, I came across ways SDCs are promoting tolerance and visually documented what I viewed to be a shocking contradiction between the city's historic and ongoing racism and its attempts to show tolerance as part of its rebranding or "rebirth." For example, in the image below, I present a photographic fieldnote of the Quartier du Canal's street branding that depicts a Black jazz musician from Little Burgundy or the West End (see:" https://www.grenier.qc.ca/nouvelles/16664/les-quartiers-du-canal-saffichent). What's most compelling and confounding to me is that past city policies and government infrastructure projects have dispossessed much of Little Burgundy's Black Anglophone population to other

[38] Bordering TMR, Parc-Extension is a working-class neighbourhood built around rail transportation that's currently undergoing gentrification and rampant evictions. With the new arrival of the *MIL Campus*, one of *Université de Montréal's* science and technology hubs that's heavily funded by the federal and provincial governments, no matching or substantial investment was earmarked for a housing strategy to handle the influx of students in the surrounding areas.

areas of the city, but the city is now showcasing the Black community for branding and for profit that will not actually benefit Black futurity in Montreal.

To remind readers, the construction of major highways like the Turcot, Bonaventure and Ville Marie expressways through the Sud-Ouest (and Chinatown, see below), destroyed and expropriated the then home of Canadian Jazz Music, Montreal's Black Anglophone community and one of Montreal's first multi-racial neighbourhoods (High, 2017) to better move wealthier residents from the suburbs and tourists to and from the site of Expo 67 and the 1976 Olympic Games. High's (2019) research interestingly shows that much of the recognition given to Little Burgundy as a Black neighbourhood and home of Canadian Jazz has occurred years after the community had been removed for urban renewal. This recognition has not translated to increasing municipal support to Little Burgundy's community organizations and institutions that were dispersed. Yet this community is now being celebrated through branding that perhaps intends to perpetuate the notion of tolerance needed for attracting creative citizens (Florida, 2002).

Figure 13. *Tolerant Branding (Also by the Local Chamber of Commerce) that Helps Erase the Racist Displacement of the Former Black Anglophone Community of Montreal*

Similarly, the larger relations as to why the Griffin House's Griffintown location was under threat are directly related to municipal governance and urban planning mirroring the no consultation days of urban renewal. As I continued to track texts that helped explicate what happened to Griffintown and the Griffin House, I found out that with Montreal's new municipal governance (borough councils, etc.) and the creation of the OCPM (Montreal public consultation office), the city and borough can bypass a public consultation on urban development if the city transfers the responsibility for the development to the boroughs, and this is what occurred in

Griffintown in 2006 (Katz & Roussopoulos, 2017). Without consulting the few remaining citizens and organizations in Griffintown or the OCPM, the City of Montreal accepted a proposal for the large-scale redesign of Griffintown from Devimco, a developer known for the construction of large suburban shopping and entertainment complexes. The City of Montreal and borough of the Sud-Ouest partnered with Devimco, giving them exclusive access to planning and actively working with them to densify the neighbourhood for the return of capital. As criticism of their unilateral approach mounted, the City's administration only then began a consultation process at the same time as they officially backed the 1.3-billion-dollar redevelopment project, which rendered whatever community consultations that eventually took place irrelevant.

After years of demolition and rezoning in Griffintown, followed by its recent renewal in which dynamite was used for structural engineering purposes in the construction of new condominiums and the expansion of ÉTS (the engineering university built in Griffintown), the Griffin House, an already underfunded, overworked, front-line community-based organization, was left with a dilapidated building with a deteriorating foundation surrounded by brand new condominium developments, new transportation options like bus lines and bike paths, fancy furniture stores and car dealerships. As the city, province, country and private industry invested in innovation, higher education, and the creative rebranding of the neighbourhood, no matching investment was earmarked for existing organizations like the Griffin House. As of July 2021, the Gardening for Food Security projects persist in collaboration with the Griffin House without a substantial garden plot, as the organization remains located in a church basement as they await funding for their new location.

The Whitewashing and Greenwashing of Chinatown

Much like the Sud-Ouest, large areas of Chinatown were flattened by urban renewal projects and redeveloped through gentrification (Chan, 1986). Like the Griffin House, there is a historicity that helps explain why Greening Chinatown did not survive in Chinatown despite being located on land purchased by the Chinese community, while other UA projects are permitted in the area. Given that the City of Montreal (2020) plans to "mobilize Montrealers" and "make our living environments greener" (n.d.), Greening Chinatown's project appears to fit within the city's mandate. To understand this contradiction, I again returned my data. One section of Jessica's interview is worth reiterating here:

> This is part of Montreal, the municipal, local and provincial government in Quebec is really institutionally and legally very detailed. Every single word, every tiny detail is dictated by the Quebecois […] it goes back decades.
>
> (Interview, Jessica, October 5th, 2019)

Since arriving in Canada as labourers in the 1800s to work on colonial extraction projects and the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway for further colonial expansion, Chinese people have been subject to discrimination and violence (Chan, 1991) in many forms, including racist hiring practices and employment policies and restrictive immigration measures. In Montreal, labour and immigration policies had a profound impact on the demographics of Chinese communities as the male to female ratio was 10:1 in 1941 (Lee, 1967 as cite in Chan, 1986). Immigration policies like the Chinese Head Tax worked to disrupt the Chinese from forming families in Canada (Krauder & Davis, 1978). A generation of Chinese men (regardless of marital status) were deprived of normal family relationships, which led to a "male bachelor society" where many men indulged in gambling, opium, smoking and soliciting sex work

(Davidson, 1952). Boyd's (2006) research shows that Canada's first opium laws legislated in 1908 were created not to address the health issues encircling its consumption, but to target and criminalize Chinese labourers.

To discourage any additional immigration after the completion of the railroad, in 1885 the Canadian government implemented a Chinese Head Tax. From the time of the policy's inception in 1885 to 1923, when the law shifted to banning nearly all Chinese entry into Canada, Chinese immigrants paid over 23 million dollars to enter Canada (Canadian Encyclopedia, n.d.). While some Chinese people returned to China, many who remained in Canada settled in the stops along CPR, finding work, setting up shops (mostly cafés, restaurants and laundromats, as racist employment practices across Canada limited Chinese people to work in restaurants and laundromats), and establishing institutions of mutual protection from the colonial and white supremacist society that is still Canada (Chan, 1986; 2001). By the 1900s, there were many Chinatowns located along the CPR route, one of which is in Montreal, just north of the Old Port. Chinatowns were a place where the Chinese found refuge from the ethnic slurs and discrimination they were subject to everywhere else in the city, province and country (Chan, 1986). Chinese institutions were often built in Chinatown in response to regressive and racist legislation and lack of access to essential services. During the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918, the Chinese Hospital was created in Montreal's Chinatown (Montreal Chinese Hospital, n.d.).

After almost a century of systemic and institutionalized racism, the lives of many Chinese people in Canada were circumscribed as stigmatized. Furthermore, while Chinatown might have provided temporary relief from inter-individual racist interactions in Montreal, this refuge did not shield the Chinese community from the economic, structural and legal apparatuses designed to dispossess them of their homes, businesses, institutions and social networks. Chan's (1983a)

research conducted a study of the institutional infrastructure of Chinatown in Montreal and counted a total of 62 organizations "squeezed into a few city blocks" that worked to support the Chinese community as "surrogate families and parents" (p. 69). Historically these organizations provided the Chinese community with a multitude of functions ranging from defending their civil, legal, social and business interactions with larger society and Canadian institutions to sheltering them from discrimination, to recreational activities, to mediating disputes amongst the Chinese people themselves (Chan, 1983a; 1986).

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, many of the organizations became unessential as governments started to fund neighbourhood-level support for similar purposes, with local Chinese people working at these government-funded institutions. In other words, the Quebec government bureaucratized community work that was already taking place in Chinatown, making these community organizations obsolete or redundant. Additional institutions in the community were also under threat beginning in the 1960s. In 1962, the City of Montreal condemned the original Chinese Hospital and declared it unsuitable for medical purposes. Luckily, a successful fundraising campaign for one million dollars secured the construction of a new building that opened in 1965. Ten years later, Quebec's Act 65 (1971) mandated all hospitals to become public. For the Chinese Hospital in Montreal, this led to the creation of three separate agencies to manage the hospital's operations: "Corporation of the Montreal Chinese Hospital; The Montreal Chinese Hospital; Foundation of the Montreal Chinese Hospital" (Montreal Chinese Hospital, n.d.). Chan's (1983a) research shows that in the 1980s even as infrastructure, institutions and community organizations were under threat, the Chinese community valued Chinatown for two salient functions: One, Chinatown provides an urban space that's Chinese. It represents a safe location where Chinese people can flourish and "nourish a sense of ethno-cultural identification

and pride, which in turn enable the Chinese as members of a visual minority to cope with external, discriminatory treatment" (p. 70); And, two, the "institutional infrastructure functions to safeguard Chinese values, traditions, beliefs, and symbols and to transmit them with dignity and pride to new generations" (p. 70). However, this transference of Chinese culture is becoming more difficult as provincial laws and municipal rezoning has systematically reduced Chinatown to a fraction of its original size. Much like Saint-Henri, Griffintown and Little Burgundy, since the 1960s, the land on which Chinatown is located in Montreal has been adjusted for both municipal and provincial purposes. Specifically, Chinatown has decreased in size due to real estate speculation, as a result of major infrastructure projects (Chan, 1985; High, 2018).

For example, from the 1960s to the 1980s, coordinated efforts and developments by the City of Montreal, the provincial government, the federal government and private industry (Desjardins Financial) created numerous office building and multi-use complexes at the northern and western borders of Chinatown, impeding the neighbourhood from future development in those directions while concurrently encroaching and expropriating on its land base at the time. In the construction of the Guy Favreau Complex, a federal government building, this coordinated effort cleared six acres of private property and an entire city block of Chinatown (Yee, 2005). These developments were responsible for the demolition of historic Chinese churches, 20 dwellings, many cultural storefronts, a school, a Chinese food processing plant and a grocery store. While there is currently a housing co-op in Guy Favreau, at the time of its construction, the housing in the building catered to middle-class families and was fully occupied within two years of its completion (Chan, 1986).

Within two decades, the entire neighbourhood of Chinatown had changed. As the governments cleared land, this also allowed private interests to enter the neighbourhood. Large

modernist government buildings, convention centre (Palais de Congrès) and new-build condominiums now tower over the low-rise historic Chinatown buildings, creating physical and symbolic borders. As Chinatown shrunk in size due to these developments, dispossession and accumulation in this context were reinforced through bylaw 6513 (Ville de Montreal, 1985), which was unanimously passed in 1985 restricting the expansion and commercial development of Chinatown while heavily investing in the areas surrounding its location. Even though the Chinese community and local activists fiercely resisted the bylaw, the City Council was not deterred by any of the concerns these groups outlined (the major shifts in the income levels, class and racial makeup of the area that the bylaw would lead to, lack of citizen consultation, the destruction of infrastructure, no matching investment in Chinatown, etc.). In response to criticism over the lack of consultation, the left-wing opposition party (Montreal Citizen's Movement, see below) defended their position in support of the bylaw by stating that they were protecting the (mostly white Francophone) tenants' movement at *Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, a nearby public-housing project (Nettling, 2017).

During and after the construction of nearby office buildings and real estate, the Chinese population in Chinatown dropped from 3000 to 500 (McLeans, June 3rd, 1985) while 62 (of the 200) clan associations and family and community-based organizations had to close down or relocate outside the area they had called home for several decades (Chan, 1986). Since the 1980s, Montreal's Chinatown has been positioned as a commercial and tourist location rather than as an affordable neighbourhood for Chinese people living and working in Montreal, despite that being its original purpose (Hsu, 2014). What was once a site of cultural refuge and community support remains under threat today and Jessica's and Greening Chinatown's experience of dispossession is just one example of a broader pattern of displacement. Another example is the former

Montreal Chinese Cultural Centre building (opened in 2000). In 2018, the building was sold to a local music school. Due to financial mismanagement, the building had previously been seized by a non-Chinese creditor. While the Chinese community was raising the money to buy back the building in their historic neighbourhood, the City passed a resolution in 2017 that allowed 60 percent of the building to be used by the for-profit music school (Global News Montreal, September 1st, 2018).

Interestingly, members of the Chinese community are currently echoing the same concerns they had more than 30 years ago as new condominiums are being constructed and land is being purchased by developers at an alarming rate (CBC news, June 20, 2021). The local city councillor (Robert Beaudry) of the self-described left-leaning *Projet Montréal* municipal party stated that the City "wants to work with the Chinese community to preserve to social mix[39] in Chinatown" (Global News Montreal, September 1st, 2018), which is the same notion that continues to benefit the white middle class majority of Quebec. In response to the trepidations the Chinese community have been repeating for decades about preserving what remains of Chinatown, the City of Montreal has recently released an "Action Plan" (Ville de Montreal, 2021) that local community organizer Jimmy Chan says "gives us [the Chinese community] concrete hope" (CBC news, June 19, 2021). Over the past two years, the City of Montreal consulted with over 500 people and the actions proposed include: "increasing liveability by focusing on pedestrian access to the area and improving access to downtown and Old Montreal; adding green space on both private and public land; Supporting business owners with the

[39] To remind readers, while social mixity appears to be a socially just policy shift, research suggests that displacement of low-income residents persists in these initiatives and is seen as gentrification by stealth (Bridge, Butler & Lees, 2012) as the idea seeks to obscure displacement.

creation of a SDC; and developing social and affordable housing units" (Ville de Montreal, 2021, *Plan d'action 2021-2026, Pour le développement du Quartier Chinois,* p. 8-14). Contextualizing the current issues of Chinatown historically and in relation to other neighbourhoods in the city might suggests that this "Action Plan" simply reinforces the mechanisms already in place that concurrently operate to increase the value of land (greening, increasing responsibility for SDCs who use creative branding to increase consumption, etc.). What is perhaps most concerning about the proposals in the "Action Plan" is that the similar municipal processes and environmental discourse that is being used to now protect and revitalize Chinatown was used to dispossess the Chinese community and gentrify other areas of the city (greening, SDCs, etc.).

In Jessica's and Greening Chinatown's case, even though their initiative connected to Montreal's objectives for a greener and more livable city, policy can still ensure that if Chinatown is to be 'greened,' this process will be mediated by those with some political clout who can use gardens and greening to obscure gentrification and other processes of accumulation. For example, the *Palais de Congrès,* which was constructed in Chinatown *during* (not after) the community consultation process in the 1980s and expanded to twice its former size from 1999-2002, flattened an entire city block of Chinatown. The site currently hosts one of Montreal's most celebrated private and academic UA collaborations (Bhatt & Farah, 2016), which includes a partnership with the AU/LAB, or the *Laboratoire de recherche, d'innovation et d'intervention en agriculture urbaine associée à l'Institut des sciences de l'environnement de l'Université du Québec à Montréal*. Like many UA initiatives (mine included), the objectives of this massive and impressive rooftop space include education, reducing the heat island effect, and increasing biodiversity and food production. Of the 650 kilograms of food produced at the site in 2017, most went to the catering service of the *Palais de Congrès* to feed its conference delegates.

However, since the initiative produces more food than the catering service needs, "a portion of the food is donated to Maison du Père to help feed those less fortunate" (CTV news, July 23rd, 2017, Retrieved from: https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/secret-garden-palais-des-congres-shares-rooftop-harvest-1.3514816).

What is most disappointing here is the that the *Palais de Congrès* was built and expanded using public funds, yet now provides food services for tourists and conference delegates. When land is treated as a regulated commodity and can be possessed and then redistributed by government through complex infrastructure, construction and rezoning policies, the dislocation of community-oriented initiatives and gardens are always at risk in the face of future real estate development (McClintok, 2011). It is not my intention to critique the work taking place at the AU/LAB, but rather to show that UA/LAB is only possible because of the dispossession of Chinatown and ongoing investment in Quebec's largest collection of universities that predominantly benefits Quebec and Canada's white majority. In many ways, the same critique can be made about my work that is luckily physically and rhetorically situated at the McGill Education Garden. I am able to enact gardening projects that focus on social, educational and environmental reasons because of my access and affiliation with a major Canadian university that sustains and reproduces Canada as a settler colonial state (Hampton, 2020). Without my access and affiliation to McGill, my gardening efforts would ring even more hollow as I would not be able as easily access land, teams, or funding.

The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same

As I learned more about the contemporary production and purposes of gardens in different urban contexts, my interview and photographic data compelled me to look closely not

only at who exactly was creating gardens presently, but also at the historical employment of municipal gardening and greening in Montreal. In my tracing, I inquired into land use, urban planning, local and global economic shifts, immigration, educational policies, environmental policies, housing policies, and other government legislation that has created the urban conditions in which I now garden. Beyond thinking through how gardens and greening are used to obscure the social and environmental relations by which garden and green experiences are coordered in urban areas (and by which people coorder them), I have shown different ways that the history of people and place in my research context is materially connected to contemporary urban social and environmental injustices. While gardens and greening evidently need to be used as physical and political apparatuses for combatting climate change, these efforts will need to be more than a marketing strategy if they are to truly achieve their aims of both environmental sustainability and environmental justice. In situating my findings within my historical and textual discussion, I have learned how gardens and greening in Montreal (and Quebec and Canada) are substantively associated with processes of land grabs and dispossession that are part of pervasive patterns of racial injustice and settler colonialism, gentrification and other approaches connected to urban capitalist development.

Tracing the impacts of greening policies and gardening discourses on dispossession highlights how green gentrification is a new iteration of capital accumulation that mirrors processes found in settler colonialism and urban renewal. It further underscores the significance of under-mining environmental discourses and policies associated with greening and gardening as political and ideological abstractions. Only through this process of under-mining is it possible to reveal the exact details of different greening and garden-based movements and projects to determine if these projects are actually doing more good than harm and if they actually embody

the kind of social, environmental and educational ethos that gardeners, educators and community workers intend.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Next Steps

In the last chapter, I looked historically at gardening and greening in different social, environmental and educational contexts. In this closing chapter, I am concerned with highlighting my original contributions to knowledge. Here, I restate some of my research realizations that emerged from gardening work, my unique methodological orientation, and the directions of my ongoing garden-based research in Montreal. Anchored in my research findings, I move beyond my preliminary critique of how gardening, greening and environmental discourses are damaging in themselves. My research draws attention to many different realities of urban gardening in Montreal within the context of settler colonialism, neoliberalism and global capitalism. For people, schools and organizations with and without access to land, funding, labour, time and gardening experience, gardening for any purpose, including food production, food security, greening, recreation and education involves a myriad of challenges. Gardening efforts for teaching, learning, food production and so on are under constant threat from ever changing municipal and institutional regulations related to land ownership/access, community garden eligibility criteria, extensive waitlists and other limiting factors. Excluding what's taking place on private property owned by either individuals and organizations or in 'collective gardens', I question the veracity of claims that the City of Montreal is greening for exclusively environmental purposes (reducing the heat islands effect, access to greenspace, and so on) and that community gardens improve food security (Ville de Montreal, n.d.).

I bring this closing discussion in conversation with an orientation of optimism to recognize that gardens can be more than either (or simply) good or bad, and (or) that environmental, social and educational undertakings can be more than either (or simply) successes or failures. Because gardens exist in ever-changing urban environments, there are

always ample opportunities for objectively redeemable outcomes beyond dominant garden discourses and predicted garden outcomes. Because my research and community work are ongoing, I continue to devote immense amounts of time in gardens and working with schools and community organizations. The more time I spend gardening and doing *gardening work* at schools, community organizations, university campuses and in different neighbourhoods, the more I notice that it merits deeper, critical and empirical inquiry that is beyond the scope of this project. It is not my intention to list other emerging garden problematics that I continue to notice; rather, I organize my closing considerations and future directions around what I have learned in attempting to create synergy by gardening for social, environmental and educational purposes.

Visual Methods for Social and Environmental Readings and Relations

In my research, I have employed visual methods (Mitchell, 2011) within the institutional ethnographic commitments of feminist historical materialism and of revealing social relations. Using urban political ecology, I have also made an analytic commitment in my research to bring into view the environmental relations of gardening, UA and greening. While it was not my intention to create a 'visual' or 'environmental' IE, my idiosyncratic and reflexive research design can provide a rough map for how other researchers might work through analytic tensions and reflexivity and bring together different ways of knowing to textually and visually show the complexity of research problematics and research findings. Beyond the contributions of weaving together Smith's (2006) and Mitchell's (2011) differing yet at times converging sociological scholarship with an environmental slant, my study has used images for showing how gardening discourses and gardening work practices are connected across time and space and coordinated by political, economic and administrative systems that produce and shape diverging gardening

experiences. By using and working through tensions in VM and IE data collection, analysis and representation, my research aimed to make visible the easily unseen and overlooked in our every day. Considering images in my research process was helpful for connecting different research findings that often led to more evocative readings related to *who was creating gardens, how gardens work* and *what gardens are doing* in Montreal. Specifically, the images have been crucial for showing what gardens are actually doing in gentrifying neighbourhoods and how they have been employed for consumption purposes and in attempts to increase the value of land. In this light, I encourage researchers to use visual data generation and analysis to keep their 'eyes everywhere' and to consider 'ethics first.'

Gardening for Social, Environmental and Educational Purposes

Theoretically, throughout my research and writing, I have directed my inquiry to the invisible social and at times *environmental* relations that connect my embodied experience to the discursive, economic and policy organization of gardening and UA. I wanted to enact environmentally focused work; however, I also wanted the gardens to produce food and appear a certain way because I had made commitments to schools, organizations and funders (i.e., the federal government), and the productivity and overall appearance of these gardens were the central focus of our work. The projects were deemed fundable and worthwhile because I had strategically used dominant narratives about the social, environmental and educational potential of gardens to speak to the wide, unquestioned and objectified social, educational and environmental benefits of gardening and UA initiatives. In this process, I often prioritized the short-term project and garden objectives, the employment of team members, and mediating garden experiences, and did not necessarily consider the long-term ecological and/or social

impacts of my work. I participated in *discourses* about the social, educational and environmental benefits of gardening and as such I was willing to sacrifice other critical considerations (e.g., that gardens have been/are key to the settler colonial project in Canada and remain a form of ecological extraction and control). Noting these contradictions in my own work and in relation to conceptions of gardens has prompted me to consider how UA and gardens are connected to larger historic systems of capital, what might be the social and environmental implications of these connections and what education can offer in response.

Over four years, the *Gardening for Food Security* project has transformed into an annual collective that is informed by the needs and insights of teachers and community workers combined with my reflexive realizations about gardening for greening, food security and other purposes. When I first began gardening with schools and community organizations, I was initially most concerned with increasing access to gardens, UA and environmental education for social and environmental justice purposes and also for environmental sustainability. However, as I undertook the larger and more collaborative *Gardening for Food Security* project, I noticed that as I was building gardens with schools and community organizations, other gardens that looked similar to the kinds of gardens we were building were also being constructed by the City (or so I then thought), along with *ruelles vertes,* or green alleys, and other neighbourhood beautification. At first, I was excited to see other gardens and green beautification projects in the neighbourhoods in which we gardened. My early inspiration for my current gardening work emerged from insights from greening a concrete outdoor space at Studio Champion Sound at *Chalet Parc* and thus I understand the sentiment of wanting to convert concrete to garden as there are many health, wellbeing and environmental benefits to this kind of urban conversion (Ville de Montreal, 2020). Noticing these changes and understanding that greening was being

employed as a way to reduce the urban heat island effect (Health Canada, 2020), I felt like I was part of a chorus of gardeners and environmentalists who all wanted a more equitable, sustainable and green city where each citizen had access to greenery, nature, gardens and locally grown food.

However, as my research emerged and I started to think through the social and environmental relations of greening, gardening and gentrification, I realized the current environmental discourses for gardening were extremely problematic. My research importantly shows that despite textual accounts of the value of gardening for food security, recreation, and a range of other benefits, municipally mediated community gardens in Montreal are not accessible to many people or organizations that want and need a garden. Although Montreal has harsh winters and short summers and apparently one of the most extensive community gardening networks in North America (Bhatt & Farah, 2016; Cultive ta ville, 2021), my research and ongoing community work suggest that the community gardening program falls shorts of its objectives of enhanced food security, recreation for all, community development, and a range of other outcomes. My findings resonated with earlier research that suggests that very little socializing, critical awareness and bonding (in a conservative social capital sense) occurs within the purview of Montreal's community garden programming. Bouvier-Danclon & Sénécal (2002) state that the only "community element of these gardens is their name" (p. 508) and that municipally organized gardens present a socially ambiguous space for citizens and institutions.

Adding to and contesting past research describing and analyzing gardening efforts in Montreal (Bhatt & Farah, 2016; UQAM, 2010), my analysis explicitly shows that without homeownership or direct or access to private land (like my access to McGill), gardening for any purpose in Montreal is significantly limited by ever changing gardening and land regulations,

long waitlists, conflicting discourses, and other evolving changes. By bringing images and historical accounts in conversation with my research findings, I concurrently show how gardening is being used in green gentrification (Dooling, 2008) and creative branding as a way to attract certain people to a specific neighbourhood for consumption purposes. Furthermore, in looking critically at history as a colonial text and ruling relations (Bannerji, 1995), my research proposes that green gentrification is part of long pattern of greening and gardening narratives that support the accumulation of capital. As my study was located in recently gentrified areas of the city, my research adds to existing knowledge on green gentrification in Montreal (Bélanger, 2010; Twigge-Molecey, 2013; 2014; Garcia-Lamarca, 2019). Different from past studies, I have helped reveal the social and environmental relations of gardening for social, environmental and educational purposes from the standpoints of teachers, community workers, and activists.

Like many IEs, I traced outward from my body and experiences and identified multiple and intersecting barriers people encounter as they endeavor to secure sustainable funding, employment opportunities for economically, socially and educationally marginalized youth and adults (e.g., people experiencing homelessness) and fully accessible gardens. I uncovered and draw attention to how institutionally organized processes for enabling garden-based employment initiatives, securing gardening resources, and building gardens themselves can serve to advance those who already have access to power and opportunity in cities (e.g., property owners, people who can effectively navigate bureaucratic processes the official public language, tourists, and business developers), while displacing organizations and initiatives serving racialized groups and/or people living in poverty. This line of research is extremely important because it reveals some of the unintended consequences of urban environmental sustainability efforts. People living, working and gardening in the city need to be taught to see how environmental

sustainability efforts produce differential effects at the level of a large and diverse urban population.

Why Still Gardens?

Before considering the current and future directions of my research and of the *Gardening for Food Security* project, I want to briefly highlight some of the salient findings from each research location to celebrate some of the project's successes in a more optimistic and hopeful light. Rather than discussing each research site in specific terms, I write broadly about what has emerged from gardening on a university campus, in the community sector in different neighbourhoods, and in schools. In this short section, I respond to the question: why still gardens? Despite my ongoing critique of gardening and UA, I remain ever encouraged that gardens in urban contexts can provide engaging learning and employment opportunities, can lead to meaningful relationships and collaborations, and are a wonderful entry-point to critical discussions about social and environmental (in)justice. Here, I revisit IE's analytic research commitment of starting with people and their experiential knowledge (Smith, 2006), and apply my own slant by returning to people, especially the key actors of this project whose work and commitments allowed gardens and our partnerships to flourish.

Considering some of the more redeemable aspects of my gardening work on a university campus, I have not only revealed the challenges of reporting on gardening work on highly regulated institutionally-owned land, but I have also provided a model for subverting and disrupting the conventional culture of academic work. When gardens are positioned and celebrated for producing anticipated and limited outcomes, much can be lost. By reporting on both the usual garden outcomes and the emerging social and environmental relations of

gardening, I have shown different garden possibilities on a university campus. Specifically, my work with schools and communities can perhaps stretch the institution and the city's conservative sustainability goals to better leverage how universities and other large-scale landowners with central land on which to garden might transition to more ethical engagement and collaboration with different urban communities who may not typically have access to land. To reiterate, without my affiliation to McGill University and the timely labour of many others who supported this work (research colleagues, my doctoral committee, university staff, etc.), funding and creating gardens, garden teams and garden programming in schools and community organizations would have been impossible. In sum, looking reflexively, retrospectively and holistically at what is redeemable about my gardening work on a university campus implicitly underscores the importance of ethical and relational collaborations and collective action for small-scale change that might lead to larger impacts in schools and community organizations with so few resources. In other words, the university's metrics for valuing this kind of ethical-relational work do not accurately or adequately acknowledge what it might mean to others who work in locations that overlap with research. This an important reminder to stretch and expand the expected outcomes of research and community work.

When I reflect on what I deem to be redeemable about my research related to gardening in schools with teachers and learners, I remain extremely hopeful about the educational potential of school gardens. Because my research intentionally avoided the ongoing celebratory discourse and pre-set effects of school gardening like healthy eating, wellbeing, environmental stewardship and academic achievement while locating gardens within the socio-political histories and geographies of injustice in Montreal and elsewhere, I have opened different kinds of curricular possibilities that explicitly connect to social and environmental justice. From an educational

perspective, I have started to lay the foundation for exploring gardening and its ongoing relationship to settler colonialism and will continue to grapple with this as part of my ongoing school gardening partnerships.

Importantly, the pedagogical and professional development work that emerged as a product of my research facilitated partnerships that have extended into other areas and have benefited schools, teachers and learners. For example, through the school and schoolboard connections that I developed through my larger garden project, I did my best to connect others with similar interests and mandates for mutual benefit. On one occasion when I finally had the opportunity to share my research findings with my partners and participants, I realized that some teachers had schoolboard support at their disposal but did not know how to access it. Through sharing my research findings about the cumbersome school gardening processes, I concurrently connected several teachers with schoolboard support for gardening, composting and other environmental and educational purposes. This further highlights that even without my direct involvement, the relationships established across school garden sites permitted meaningful collaborations that in turn benefitted many students. Hearing recently that yet another collaboration will continue into the upcoming schoolyear inspires me to continue gardening in schools with both teachers and learners.

Lastly, I am ever committed to gardening in the community sector and especially with organizations that work with people experiencing food insecurity, barriers to employment, housing precarity and homelessness. Despite not growing enough food to meaningfully contribute to a noticeable decrease in food insecurity in Montreal, connecting the work of growing food to food security initiatives is one of the project's larger accomplishments; however I again want to return to the important relationships that developed between and amongst myself,

the garden team, teachers, students, community workers and community members. I am now in 2021 organizing the fourth iteration of the *Gardening for Food Security* project and members of the 2018 garden team (the first year with an actual garden team) have returned. In speaking with the returning team members, I have a different appreciation for what this work means to them outside of the scope and realm of funding schemes and mentorship plans.

The simple fact that the garden team and I continue to collaborate with community organizations like the Griffin House is a remarkable success that should be celebrated. Furthermore, that some youth have now returned to the garden team knowing more about the immense challenges of urban gardening work (hard physical labour, administrative labour, long-term commitment, etc.) reminds me that our time together has been meaningful in more than the typical transactional ways inherent to neoliberal work experiences. Taken together, through my school and community garden-based research, I have produced both catalytic validity (Lather, 1991) and relational validity (Tuck & Mackenzie, 2015). The examples I offer above show that redeemable aspects of my research and community work can be used as reference points for small-scale school, community and garden-based social change (Lather, 1991). Lastly, our collective efforts have stood against the prioritization of economic validity in understandings of land, and toward scholarship that is accountable to people and place (Tuck & Mackenzie, 2015). For these reasons and more, I remain committed to critical and materially pertinent gardening in urban contexts.

Implications for Action

A consistent finding from my ethnographic tracing and ongoing gardening work has been the immense constraints that I and others encountered when attempting to garden for social,

environmental and educational reasons as our efforts intersected with land, labour and different funding schemes. To avoid entering my own descent into cynicism, I want to re-invoke 'hyperactive optimism' and bring readers into how my research findings have been applied to my current and future gardening projects with schools, community organizations and in local neighbourhoods. The following conditional statements are inspired by prefigurative politics (Raekstad & Gradin, 2020) and highlight how I (and others with whom I work) have been interacting with municipal government workers and affiliated non-profits (like the *Eco-Quartier*) in different neighbourhoods of Montreal. I have organized the following conditional statements around the different kinds of gardens (school, community, university, etc.) I have worked in over the past five years and each statement is designed to provide educators, gardeners and community workers/organizers with alternatives to current school and community gardening models and include specific implications for action with the intention of making gardening and greening more equitable.

First, thinking through shifting how school or learning gardens are socially organized, if educators or outside parties (like myself) wish to support school gardens with funding and labour, then I strongly recommend that students lead the creation, development and importantly the evaluation of the garden. Far too often, the success of the garden is measured by particular impacts imposed by outside parties, administrators or schoolboards that do not actually correspond with the lived reality of youth. Moreover, I also argue that for gardening to be relevant and add educational value for both teachers and learners, gardens need to be incorporated into each core curricular area (French, English, Math, and so on) and not only used before or after school hours and during lunchtime.

Shifting to my implications for doing municipally-mediated community or collective gardens in Montreal, if the city wishes to continue to promote food security as a primary outcome and underpinning of their gardening programs, then the city should ensure that at least 50 percent of the garden plots in use are reserved for individuals and families who do not own property and are renters. With regard to increasing municipal investment through greening/gardening in neighbourhoods, if governments seek to invest in lower-income and gentrifying neighbourhoods with greening and other forms of urban beautification, then citizens and long-standing community organizations should benefit from funding and transparency, and should have some agency in how this investment is managed and actualized. For example, in Parc-Extension, a rapidly gentrifying neighbourhood, *Ville en Vert* (the new branding of the City of Montreal's environmental division, formerly known as *Eco-Quartier*) has received over one million dollars to combat the urban heat island effect in the borough.

If Montreal's municipal government insists on creating green lanes (*ruelles vertes*), tree-lined streets or temporary or permanent community gardens through funding large non-profits (*like Éco-Quartier* or *Ville en Vert*), then then they should also consider providing funding and labour to nearby community-based organizations or local schools for the development and upkeep of the initiatives along with implementing bylaws that limit vehicular traffic/emissions and mitigate evictions. Specifically, I contend that the following conditions be considered: 1) engage, recognize and compensate local residents and organizations for their time, feedback and expertise on issues that impact them to better ensure that funded initiatives respond to identified local needs and desires; 2) incorporate citizen reactions within emerging and evolving project intentions, especially with respect to the proposed project budget; 3) commit to transparency that allows local residents and organizers to receive meaningful and specific updates on project

benchmarks and budgetary allocations; and 4) rather than contracting/hiring 'experts' from outside of the community, the city and its affiliated non-profits might consider hiring local residents to manage the initiatives while embracing an intersectional lens that can connect the city's plan for addressing systemic racism (Ville de Montreal, 2020) with its environmental sustainability initiatives, its ecological transition objectives, and its goal of carbon neutrality in 2050. Environmental objectives will continue to ring hollow unless all community actors feel part of these urban transformations.

What Now, What Next?

Moving into the summer of 2021, I have many reasons to be hopeful for future garden work. The *Gardening for Food Security* project is now in its fourth summer and while I take on much of the labour for finding gardening funding (still from different sources), assembling garden teams, and administering the project, we continue to collaborate and support different community partners. As the project has shifted and taken different shapes, more recently I have observed that gardening is often not the central activity of the project. Because accessing land for gardening is so challenging and access to our existing gardens has been significantly reduced during COVID, the project has shifted from gardening as a collective activity to mostly supporting community organizations in food security initiatives, which translates to driving to and from foodbanks and people's homes, calling people in the community to arrange food drops, and the labour of putting together food boxes. Given the increased pressure in the Sud-Ouest of Montreal during COVID, food security has been a major focus of our work, and gardening has not always been part of these collective efforts to improve food security. This is partly due to limited access to gardens and mostly because even when we did garden prolifically, we were

only able to produce enough food to address the food security efforts of the organization on a very temporary basis (see Chapter Four).

Reflecting on my efforts to connect the work of growing food to environmental justice issues like food security, I again want to state that our gardening did not help alleviate food insecurity concerns of food insecure people in any quantifiable way. When working with people experiencing barriers to employment, food security and homelessness, my findings also challenge scholarship that suggests gardening contributes to wellbeing, illuminating the myriad of ways this general claim is complicated by particular bodies and experiences and by the increasing criminalization of 'trespassing' in gentrified neighbourhoods. The dominant discourse encircling community gardening and UA is based on the problematic assumption that everyone participating possesses a certain level of physical health and have a lifestyle conducive for a long-term commitment to receiving the purported benefits of this work. Also, as I have noted, the historical moment of climate emergency that humans (and non-humans) are now occupying is providing cities with green, environmental and sustainable ways of accumulating capital and undermining this discourse remains a central and ongoing concern of my inquiry.

On a final note about gardening problematics, there are no easy solutions to the problems of urban gardening or greening for any purpose. Gardens on their own or greening on its own is not enough to solve issues as complex as urban heat islands, food insecurity, decreasing pollination, and so on. I resist the idea that installing a garden is enough to make a positive impact on its own. I also know first-hand that often educators and community workers want and need a garden, but they are more in need of: financial support, pedagogical support, human resource support, more time, fewer students, curricular freedom, and relevant professional development. Even small community change takes time and ongoing collective effort.

Importantly, gardens for social, educational and environmental purposes do not need to be magic (Cairns, 2017) or revolutionary sites that can solve all social, environmental and educational issues. As activist Sarah Shulman (2009) reminds us, before hippies, feminism, civil rights and the antiwar movements of the late 1960s generated momentum, there had been decades of foundational work laid by writers, thinkers, filmmakers, poets, performers, artists, activists and others who helped people imagine a different future in a better world. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, we are inhabiting a different kind of foundational period on the precipice of something different, and it is time to start planting seeds.

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