

Understanding the Role of Community in Knowledge Mobilisation.

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## **Abstract**

Collaboration is how knowledge mobilisation (KMb) understands the role of community and can mean many things. In participatory action research (PAR), collaboration means a community is involved in all parts of the research process. Community members help create the research question, make decisions about methodology, help to gather and analyse research materials, and assist in developing and sharing the findings. KMb frames the engagement of communities in the same way. I explore the role of community within KMb outside of this limited frame through case studies of two community organisations that lead a KMb project. The co-production pathway to impact model was used to analyse the collaborations with community partners. I used the four stages to investigate the engagement of academics, researchers, and communities within KMb. The stages were knowledge production, dissemination, uptake, and implementation. The exploration of these two KMb projects through the co-production pathway to impact model identified three main ideas. First, academics and researchers experience structural limitations that force them to often disengage with a KMb project after dissemination. Second, communities engaged in a KMb project are more likely to engage in the uptake and implementation stages. Finally, communities experience unique barriers in the uptake and implementation phase that are rarely considered within knowledge mobilisation. I considered how the use of disability-related anti-oppression frameworks – such as crip time – could be used to address some of the concerns related to uptake and implementation.

## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to all the community organisations and grassroots movements that have made our world better. I hope that this bit of work can help you all do your work easier.

### Thanks

Completing this PhD has been a long journey. I am thankful to all the people who have listened to me talk through things, to all the people who have distracted me when I needed it, and the people who got me away from the computer and into nature.

I want to give my sincere thanks to my supervisors Dr. Xuan Thuy Nguyen and Dr. Geoffrey Reaume. Without your support, feedback, and guidance this thesis would not be as strong as it is. I will take your teachings with me as I move forward into the next phase of my life.

I want to thank my parents, who have always been supportive of me. You have listened to me ramble about my PhD work, even when it didn't make any sense to me, let alone anyone else!

## Acknowledgements

### Land Acknowledgements

This dissertation was written by a settler. Being a settler, I occupy stolen land. The land I reside on is the traditional territory known as Tkaronto, which has been care for by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, and the Métis. It is now home to many Indigenous Peoples. I acknowledge the current treaty holders and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject to the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region. I strive to uphold this covenant in my daily life and within my academic and activist work.

I want to acknowledge and take action against this history of colonisation that has occurred within all of Canada, but particularly in the traditional land of Tkaronto that I currently occupy. I strive to be aware of past, present, and future forms of colonisation that have/are/will be carried out on the Indigenous people of Canada. I make an effort, one that I am continually learning better how to do, to bring decolonial process into my academic and activities work.

Finally, I want to ensure that I bring Indigenous knowledge into the work I produce so that I might make products that will be useful to Indigenous people in their struggles against the colonial state. I do all this in order to take action to honour, protect, and sustain this land and its traditional people.

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## **Abbreviations**

1. Western Knowledge Institution (WKI)
2. Community Knowledge Mobilisation Evaluation Framework (CKME)
3. Critical Western Knowledge Institution (CWKI)
4. Marginalised Western Knowledge Institution (MWKI)
5. Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, 2-spirited (LGBTQIA2S)
6. Knowledge Mobilisation (KMb)
7. Participatory Action Research (PAR)

## Chapter 1: Introduction

I am passionate about social justice movements, being involved with environmental justice, equality movements, LGBTQIA2S rights, disability rights, anti-racism, and more. Each of these movements tries to create some form of social change. Often the goal of social change is to ensure that marginalised groups have access to human rights and are treated equitably in society. Another commonality between these movements is that they all struggle to have knowledge based on lived experience (Milan, 2013b). Marginalised groups struggle with having their knowledge validated, in part because their power is stripped from them (Brown & Strega, 2015; Driskill, 2011; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). For instance, in Canadian society the power differences between men and women have led to the socialisation of people in ways that promote violence against women (Harding, 2004). The impact of socialisation is worse when social systems, like the legal system, are also influenced in ways that make it difficult for women to access justice for violence perpetrated against them (Asch, 2001). These injustices within Canadian social systems create barriers that mean many women do not feel comfortable reporting violence.

Access to care and justice through our social systems is even harder for marginalised people in multiple ways (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). For example, the history of colonial violence towards Indigenous communities has left this group of nations with limited power within Canadian social systems, which has affected the way Canadians view concerns expressed by Indigenous communities in general (Monkman, 2018; Simpson, 2014). These situations have led Indigenous women to experience more barriers when trying to report violence. Within Canada, this has led to years of Indigenous women going missing or being murdered with minimal intervention by our social systems. For many years, Indigenous communities demanded

an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous people (Hansen & Dim, 2019). Indigenous communities were successful in gaining an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women by the federal government in 2016 (Coletta, 2018; Lucchesi, 2019). This result took years of organising—both inside and outside of Indigenous communities—and required building the power of Indigenous communities, partly through allyship and use of social media (Milan, 2013a).

The difficulties marginalised groups face to gain the power to change society through social movements left me curious about how to make effective social change. I began pursuing this curiosity in my master's research project called **How has Activism Impacted Theory Development: An Exploration of the Addiction and Disability Fields**<sup>1</sup> (Smith, 2014). In this paper, I considered how the knowledge of grassroots movements—a group of people organising in order to see social change occur—influences theory development (Smith, 2014). Through my master's degree work, it became clear that there are factors that make it easier or harder for a grassroots movement to share its knowledge. Some of the factors that assist in distributing grassroots movements' knowledge are long-term collaboration with an academic, consensus between members of the grassroots movements, and the ways knowledge is shared (Smith, 2014). After I became aware of the factors that influence how knowledge from grassroots movements moves, I began to identify overlap with knowledge mobilisation. This overlap made me wonder if knowledge mobilisation might support the work of grassroots movements.

Wondering about impacts that knowledge mobilisation could have for grassroots movements has led me to explore the field of knowledge mobilisation—a field that studies how

<sup>1</sup> For increased accessibility titles will use bold instead of italic formatting in this dissertation.

to move research knowledge to audiences effectively (Phipps, Jensen, & Myers, 2012). Knowledge mobilisation has developed in academic circles and connects to research collaborations with communities (Kapczynski, 2014; Qi & Levin, 2010). The expansion of my work on the movement of knowledge from grassroots movements to other groups, like academics, has led me to consider the place of grassroots movements within the field of knowledge mobilisation and whether that place benefits these communities in sharing their knowledge.

As I began this work, I became aware that it was best to expand my exploration beyond that of grassroots movements. Early in my research project I decided to include both grassroots movements and community organisations. By including community organisations within this research project, I will ensure that I am exploring a greater variety of ways that lived experience is used to create social change. Both community organising and grassroots movements focus on bottom-up decision-making, but I understand them to influence social systems in different ways (Parks, 2018). The difference important to this research project is that community organisations aim to create social change within their community first and foremost (Adebayo, Salerno, Francillon, & Williams, 2018). This form of organising often takes the form of drop-in centres, community hubs, not-for-profit organisations, or community health centres. Community organisations build power to influence social systems through the work accomplished, by gaining access to more significant funding, and by building respect over time (Tattersall, 2018). On the other hand, the aim of grassroots movements is to directly influence social systems within society (Nagle, 2019). Common forms of organising for grassroots movements include sit-ins, marches, voter registration, and events that celebrate culture and heritage. Grassroots movements focus on building power by making more people aware of issues and encouraging people to

become more politically engaged (Arribas Lozano, 2018). The hopeful outcome of these actions is to force social systems to change because of the will of the general population. Both of these forms of social change are valid and have histories that create effective social change (Milan, 2013b; Poell, 2015).

There is a history of knowledge mobilisation being useful to community organisations and grassroots movements. This basis is that academia, community organisations, and grassroots movements have a history of difficulties moving their knowledge to other groups (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Milan, 2015). In academia, when knowledge is successfully moved, it can take up to 20 years for research knowledge to become integrated into social policy (Brown & Duguid, 2000). Academia began to address these concerns about 50 years ago with the introduction of participatory action research (PAR) (Chambers, 1994). PAR methodologies resulted in communities being considered active participants in research projects instead of subjects who were studied (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). While these methodological changes were helpful, issues continue when the knowledge created is shared in collaborative research (Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007).

During this same period, community organisations and grassroots movements struggled with ensuring that they got their message to any group, the general public, allied groups, academics, or government officials. Thomas Poell and José van Dijck (2015) describe these difficulties about mainstream media<sup>2</sup> in this way: “Gaining public visibility through mainstream media has always proven difficult, as it forced activists to make concessions about how they present themselves publicly, catering to mass media’s need for spectacle, conflict, and

<sup>2</sup> In the context of this paper, mainstream media means well-established media that includes T.V., magazines, and newspapers (Milan, 2013a).

flamboyant newsworthy individuals” (p. 527). This means that community organisations and grassroots movements have needed to be innovative in how they share their messages. Some creative ways community organisations and grassroots movements have shared knowledge and information include children’s books, social media, comics, video games, pirate and community radio, alternative media, and fanfiction (Atkinson & Kenix, 2019; Soley, 1999). Some specific examples include the following: **Hilda and the Midnight Giant** by Luke Pearson (2014); the Twitter hashtag #disabilitytoowhite (2016); Youtube channels by Kat Blaque (2015) and Franchesha (n.d.); **500 Years of Resitance Comic Book** by Gord Hill (2010); a video game called **Never Alone** (2014); Accessible Media Inc. (The National Campus and Community Radio Association, 2019); Adbusters Media Foundation (“Adbusters: The Age of Total Disruption,” 2019); and fanfiction by Taylorpotato (2015).

Within academia, the continued struggle in sharing research knowledge has led to the development of the field of knowledge mobilisation (Levin, 2008). The knowledge mobilisation (KMb) field has strived to develop ways to help share knowledge with other groups, like politicians or service providers (Phipps, Jensen, & Myers, 2008). Having worked in the field of KMb, I have witnessed the potential of this field to address concerns about sharing knowledge. Seeing the possibilities of the knowledge mobilisation, I am curious about how grassroots movements and community organisations can use KMb theory, frameworks, skills, and more to share lived experience and community knowledge.

While knowledge mobilisation has potential benefits for community organisations and grassroots movements, this field is not without its concerns. For instance, we must consider the process of knowledge mobilisation since knowledge is a source of power. Brown (2000) noted that a common issue with the movement of knowledge is the power that comes with holding

knowledge, but also the privileging of certain types or sources of knowledge over others (Fanon, 1967; Hill Collins, 2009; Hill, 2010). These concerns with how power dynamics influence the creation and movement of knowledge exist within both academic and community spaces (Brown & Strega, 2015; hooks, 2000). Knowledge mobilisation is not without concerns related to power, particularly with its secure connection to research evidence. I will explore research evidence in greater depth in Chapter 2, but what is important here is the way the research evidence is ranked. Specific forms of methodologies are thought to produce better results than others, creating a system where certain forms of research evidence are considered more valid or given higher power than others (Denzin, 2009).

Being a critical scholar, I have the drive to engage with the field of knowledge mobilisation critically. It is a field with great potential, but what is not working within the field must also be considered. One area of KMb that I have explored was the services found within knowledge mobilisation units. KMb units are spaces within research institutions that provide services to help move knowledge to audiences outside the institution (Breckon, 2016). In the past, researchers often had access to communication support, like writing and sending out press releases (Vishwanath & Barnett, 2011). Knowledge mobilisation units move beyond communication support in many ways: providing a variety of services that assist in the development of collaborative relationships, developing an understanding in KMb theories and frameworks, and improving access to research evidence to a broader range of audiences (Cooper, 2009). These supports are supposedly available to researchers and community members.

I explored these services in a paper called **How can Knowledge Mobilisation be Used to Further Social Justice: A Case Study of the Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University** (Smith, 2017). Using the KMb unit at York University as a case study, I completed a

textual analysis of the unit's website, paper publications, and social media. Through the textual analysis, I identified the services that the KMb unit provides. It appeared that the KMb unit at York University was oriented to provide support to academics (Smith, 2017). This orientation left a question of the degree and type of support the unit could give to a community organisation or grassroots movement to develop and implement a KMb plan.

I believe communities, as co-researchers and independent knowledge producers, have the right to support and services from KMb units brokers<sup>3</sup>. In my experience with KMb units, both communities and researchers appear to be treated as service users (Smith, 2017). That communities are included as service users suggests to me that KMb units are trying to address community needs. I will note that KMb units are often small. The size of knowledge mobilisation units means that there are only a few people available to provide services to many people (Research Impact, 2016). The limitations that KMb units experience as a result of limited personnel could contribute to the inadequate services provided to community organisations and grassroots movements.

It is unclear how communities engage with KMb, particularly units. I believe this lack of clarity creates barriers to the knowledge mobilisation process. The process can occur without the support of a KMb unit or broker, but the supports offered by a unit or broker can help collaborative research projects or communities with the knowledge to share (Adebayo et al., 2018; Dearing et al., 2016; Worton, Loomis, Pancer, Nelson, & DeV. Peters, 2017). There is a need to understand better the types of supports community organisations and grassroots movements need to implement knowledge mobilisation successfully.

<sup>3</sup> Knowledge mobilisation brokers are the individuals, found within KMb units or through consultation, who provide the services outlined by Cooper and Shewchuk (2015).



There is a shortage of information about how communities engage, particularly if they are not involved in a research project with KMb units and brokers. I contend that the lack of clarity about this topic can lead to barriers to the successful mobilisation of knowledge. Both John Seely Brown's (2000) and Everett Rogers' (2003) exploration of the movement of knowledge make it clear that it can be challenging to ensure shared knowledge makes lasting changes. They stress that the movement of knowledge must happen in a way that people can understand it, implement it, alter it to fit their needs, and share their experiences with it. Meeting these criteria makes the process of KMb difficult.

Knowledge mobilisation is particularly tricky when past experiences create resistance. Many authors I read during the comprehensive exams discussed the difficulties of engaging communities (Asch, 2001; Chen, 2012; Simpson, 2014). One of the main reasons discussed was a problematic or exploitative relationship communities had with researchers in the past (Brown & Strega, 2015; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Simpson, 2014). Issues around the resistance to engage with research are found in many different fields, including Indigenous studies, disability studies, and decolonisation research (Driskill, 2011; McRuer, 2006; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

The barriers communities and researchers have working together on a research project also impact any KMb plan for the project. Thus, it is crucial to understand what supports and services communities can access at a KMb unit or through a KMb broker. In my paper **How Can Knowledge Mobilisation Be Used to Further Social Justice**, I found that communities need different services than academic researchers to mobilise knowledge gained through research (Smith, 2017). One service I suggested was support in learning to create long-term relationships with researchers, policymakers, or the media. Other communities might benefit from training in writing formal documents.

While I think this topic is essential, communities, researchers, and KMb units might have other concerns. Therefore, the question I presented in my proposal for this research project was to be a broad one. Using a broader question allowed community representatives to be part of the process of making the question more narrow to ensure the project was vital to them. This assists in making sure the communities are invested in the project, which is an essential part of the KMb process (Phipps et al., 2008).

I started this project with this question: How are community needs being met by the current services provided by KMb units? As I began working with my community partners, it became clear that exploring KMb through knowledge mobilisation units was too narrow. The knowledge mobilisation unit is not the only way that community organisations and grassroots movements can engage with KMb. Concerning the research partnerships I would have with community partners, a KMb unit would not be involved. Thus, my research question changed: How can knowledge mobilisers support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations?

This question is vital as it addresses concerns related to communities and knowledge mobilisers. For communities connected to research projects or running their own KMb project, the answering of this question helps frame the ways KMb and knowledge mobilisers can work for them? This will then allow communities to make informed decisions about the use of KMb for their particular project. For knowledge mobilisers, this question will identify where the supports and services we provide are not effective for communities. It will give us direction on where to focus our future research, theories, and frameworks to benefit all parties involved in KMb.

To explore this research question, I completed two collaborative partnerships. One was with an established community organisation that worked on community planning within Ontario. The partnership lasted four months, where I helped them learn about knowledge mobilisation and assisted them in creating a knowledge mobilisation plan for their four-year project. The second partnership was with a grassroots movement, which was only a few years old, and was founded and run by people from the community. I worked with the grassroots movement for eight months. Their aim was to create and publish a zine during the collaboration. I was to assist them in creating a plan to ensure that the zine could reach a wide audience. During the collaboration with the grassroots movement we published details about our project and educational blogs. These posts were shared to help other organisation learn about knowledge mobilisation so they decide if it would be useful to them.

Below are summaries of each of the chapters, the summaries show how the research question, using the collaborative partnerships, are explored throughout the dissertation.

## **Summary of Chapters**

**Literature Review.** What is knowledge? Why do we care about it moving between groups? In Chapter 2, I explore these questions to get a grasp of what knowledge mobilisation is and why it is essential to both academics and communities. Knowledge mobilisation was not something that occurred at once Knowledge mobilisation has its beginnings in different areas—health promotion and agricultural studies, for example—that needed to find ways to ensure that details about these topics could quickly and effectively reach people who could use the knowledge or information. While my discussion on knowledge mobilisation centres around academic understandings of the topic, we must keep in mind that communities have their own forms of knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. In Chapter 2, I also discuss how issues of

power and the valuing of knowledge are entrenched within the topics of KMb, and how this history might affect the work done in the academic field. For my own work in this research project I introduce a series of questions—taken from Tuhiwia Smith’s (2012) work **Decolonizing Methodologies**—that stem from the study of decolonisation. These decolonial questions assisted me in being aware of, and addressing, issues of power and the valuing of knowledge within the KMb projects I worked with during this research project.

**Theory.** To build on the guiding questions outlined in Chapter 2 that support me to avoid reproducing harm through knowledge mobilisation, I describe a disability anti-oppression theory that I use to guide my PhD project as a whole and to build empowering partnerships with community partners. This theory is entrenched in disability theory that upholds knowledge created from lived experience; focusing on knowledge stemming from lived experience, I bring feminist, Indigenous, anti-racist, and queer theory together to build upon and critique material and metaphysical theory. In the end, I describe an intersectional theory with aims to refute scholarly histories of research **on** the communities I am working in partnership with.

**Methodology.** To ensure that my actions are in alignment with the theory guiding this PhD projects, I have integrated multiple research methodologies. In Chapter 4, I review these methods and describe how they work together at different stages of my PhD. While working with community partners, I used participatory action research (PAR) for its focus on viewing partners as co-researchers. However, being aware of the criticism of PAR methods, I have brought in other methodologies to create a stronger means of research that aligns with the disability anti-oppression theory. One of these methodologies is ethnographic refusal. This method empowers partners by ensuring they have the final say over materials included in the analysis, and they are involved in determining the ways conclusions are shared with different groups, including how

and when the details about the project are shared. The use of ethnographic refusal is essential because it shifts power dynamics, moving beyond making a researcher and community partner “equal” to making the decisions of the community partner have a more significant impact on how details of the research project are shared. Finally, to assist in guiding my work as a researcher I am working with reflective research, a methodology that acknowledges that researchers are affected by the work they do in a research project, and by factors outside of the project. By acknowledging these impacts, I can address these changes for possible influences on the PhD project itself.

**Results.** In Chapter 5, I outline the details from two community partnerships. I say approved because as ethnographic refusal suggests the decisions of the community partners guided the details used within this dissertation. One crucial aspect is identifying the similarities and differences between the two community partners. Understanding how the community partners and their projects are similar and different provided me with a basis on which to apply the results to a greater variety of community organisations, grassroots movements and other groups, like knowledge mobilisers. It also helped me understand the limitations of this PhD project and what research needs to happen next to continue the work done by myself and the community partners.

I had to reorganise the research questions presented in the results section were explored through engagement with the two community partners. I acted as a knowledge mobilisation consultant on a community-based KMb project. As a consultant, the knowledge, skills, and resources I brought to the project depended on the needs of the KMb project itself. The difference in the KMb services is expected based on the needs of the project and those being consulted. Efforts were made to use the same KMb frameworks, theories, skills and tools to

provide consistency between the two partnerships. This effort created a space where I could do a critical review of some of the KMb frameworks, theories, skills and tools. As well, I discuss some of the barriers that might present themselves within community-based knowledge mobilisation projects.

**Discussion.** To build upon the details presented in the results section, in Chapter 6 I bring all previous chapters into the discussion. As well, I introduce two new ideas: the co-production pathway to impact and crip time<sup>4</sup>. The co-production pathway to impact is a KMb theory that is used to talk about frameworks, theories, skills, and tools within the different phases of the knowledge mobilisation process. Reflecting on the focus on certain phases of this KMb theory leads to a better understanding of how knowledge mobilisation might assist community organisations and grassroots movements in sharing their knowledge.

Crip time is a disability theory based in lived experience and temporality theory. I bring it into the discussion section for two reasons. The first is to bring a specific form of the disability anti-oppression theory into the discussion to start a reflective process, challenge normative ideas connected to the time of KMb projects, and to explore how anti-oppression and knowledge mobilisation work together. Second, crip theory's ability to entwine knowledge from both lived experience and academic theory is an example of how to manage power imbalances between the community and academic knowledge, which are often viewed as mutually exclusive. The presentation of this intersectional theory that is made stronger by the presence of lived

<sup>4</sup> Crip time is defined at length in Chapter 6: Discussion. It is an anti-oppression tool that addresses the breaks needed or slower pace people with disabilities often use. It also questions the erasure of disabled people from social spaces and the future.

experience and academic theory challenges the histories and present struggles with what knowledge is considered valuable.

**Conclusion.** Chapter 7 condenses this dissertation into a small but a manageable summary of the exploration of the research question: How can knowledge mobilisers support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations? While this final chapter provides an overview of the use of KMb for communities, it also notes the draw backs. The conclusion chapter brings together some central themes that knowledge mobilisers could work on address these drawbacks. A core theme throughout this PhD project has been finding ways to address power imbalances caused through the privileging of certain knowledge over others. In this chapter, I bring this theme together with the limitations of research related to KMb and anti-oppression theory to open a discussion with the field. I push my fellow knowledge mobilisers to begin an exploration of anti-oppression as a tool to create a KMb that is more effective for groups outside of academia

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **What is the Purpose of This Section?**

Social change in our society depends on the movement of knowledge between different groups of people. One concern, from academia, is that when research created social change it often takes a long time, often up to 20 years (Antman, Lau, Kupelnick, Mosteller, & Chalmers, 1992; Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007). Some of the barriers that create this delay are the lack of direct routes for knowledge exchange between academia and other social groups (Levin, 2008). For example, policymakers must often wait for knowledge to reach and gain popularity with the public before creating policies that reflect research evidence (Estabrooks, Derksen, Winther, Lavis, Scott, Wallin, & Profetto-McGrath, 2008). Lack of direct routes for knowledge movement is complicated by other barriers that make it difficult for knowledge to move effortlessly from researchers to other groups. (Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007).

Knowledge mobilisation (KMb) is a possible solution to this problem. In theory, KMb works at different stages of a research project to ensure that research is relevant to communities (Phipps, Nichols, Provencal, & Hewitt, 2012). As well, KMb focuses on guaranteeing that research knowledge moves quickly to groups who can implement it (FoodARC's Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014). There is a belief that with the use of KMb research can move more quickly to address social issues. Some examples of research that used KMb to address social concerns swiftly include the following: decreases in AIDS infection rates, improvements in water quality in remote locations, and the creation of effective assistive devices (Baljko & Hamidi, 2013; Dunn, Bakker, & Harris, 2014; Smith & Siplon, 2006).

While the movement of knowledge to create social change can have positive effects, we must be careful about the social changes knowledge can produce. I, personally, am wary about



mobilising any knowledge due to the history of prejudices embedded in research, which can make it harder for marginalised groups to live, let alone thrive (Brown & Strega, 2015; Mohanty, 2015; Simpson, 2014). I am not the only person concerned with how knowledge can work to harm groups if research is not engaged with critically. Social researchers have long been disturbed by the impact of knowledge on marginalised groups (Mohanty, 2003; Titmuss, 1974; Whitinui, Morcom, McIvor, Robertson, & Cashman, 2015). For example, the development of disability studies, in both activism and academia, has roots in the need to challenge the medical theories of disability that focused on bodily limitations (Erevelles, 2011; Rioux & Prince, 2002). Other theories of disability were needed to address the structural violence that the medicalisation of disability perpetuated.

Concerns over the possible harmful impacts of research for marginalised communities are also present in fields other than disability studies. In the study of social policy, as early as the 1970s Titmuss (1974) expressed concerns about what he called latent functions. This term discussed the ingrained social beliefs held by those working on, voting on, or putting social policies into action (Wolfensberger, 1989). Latent functions consider ingrained beliefs that could become barriers to new social policy being implemented. Wolfensberger (1989) suggests that latent functions are often “counter productive ... so that they create dependency” (p. 33), meaning that social policies influenced by latent functions fail to address their outlined goals. This creates a circular process where there is a continual need to develop or alter social policies to address social inequalities. This cycle can often hinder social change. The presence of latent functions means measures must be taken to limit their interference with the implementation of social policy. A number of tools have been created to manage the effects of latent functions and are usually implemented after social policy has been drafted (Prince, 2012).

The obstacles to the influence of latent functions on social policy development, and the attempts to manage them, complicate these processes. It means that social policy development is not a linear process (Westhues & Wharf, 2012). The obstacles that latent functions present means that those working in social policy must be aware of latent functions and attempt to manage them. A few examples of latent functions that presented themselves during the research for this thesis project include the following: the treatment of Indigenous people, the impact of Canadian international policy on African countries, multiculturalism policy, and policy related to transgender people.

The first area addresses the history of colonialism within Canada in the history of social policy related to Indigenous people of North America. The sources connected to Indigenous issues highlighted how colonial practices were, and are, enacted upon Indigenous groups through social policy (Getty & Lussier, 1983; Hart & Rowe, 2014; White, 2003). A book that is critical of social policy, yet continues to reinforce imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy is **As Long As the Sun Shines and the Water Flows** by Ian (Getty & Lussier, 1983). This book provides a history of Canadian policy that has affected Indigenous people. Getty & Lussier (1983) are critical of Canadian policies and admit that Indigenous groups had complex social systems before colonisation. Nonetheless, it addresses the issue of history from the perspective of settlers while denying the experiences of Indigenous people. I argue that because of the above issues, along with others concerns, **As Long As the Sun Shines and the Water Flows** (Getty & Lussier, 1983) is still written in a way that supports colonialism. Further examples show that the book rarely attempts to include Indigenous knowledge about the events described. Furthermore, the language used by Getty & Lussier (1983) inscribes colonialism, as is shown in the following line: “but rather of the **benevolent** action of political elites responding to the changed attitude to

Indians that developed in the postwar years.” (Getty & Lussier, 1983, p. 170–171). The uncritical use of “benevolent” in this sentence continues a patriarchal relationship between settlers and Indigenous people (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

Another example of the history of colonisation is seen in the book **Canada in Africa: 300 Years of Aid and Exploitation** (Engler, 2015). In this book Engler discusses how Canada uses international policy—some of which was based off the policies used to colonise Indigenous Peoples—to promote imperialist objectives and later to continue its own capitalist growth at the expense of countries in Africa. The third area that addresses oppression is the criticism of Canada’s multiculturalism policy. Some critics argue that this policy benefited specific populations, particularly European immigrants, and has done little to deal with racism within Canada; other critics argue that multiculturalism policy hides continued attempts at assimilation (Hyman, Meinhard, & Shields, 2011; Li, 2000; Moses, 2002) Finally, in her book **Sex Change, Social Change: Reflections on Identity, Institutions and Imperialism**, Viviane Namaste (2011) discusses how Canada continues oppressive objectives through social policy through its lack of consultation with transsexual, transvestite, and transgender communities before creating policy connected to this group.

I argue that it is not enough for knowledge mobilisers to move knowledge to different groups without considering the local historical, economical, and social influences. We must find ways to manage how certain knowledge is privileged, how unintended biases can impact KMb projects, and how knowledge can affect those with less power. I suggest that critical engagement with knowledge and KMb processes can prevent us from perpetuating the beliefs, systems, and institutions that have entrenched harmful ideas in society about marginalised communities.

To better explain how knowledge mobilisers can address these concerns, I will explore how knowledge mobilisation is understood. I will work to develop a definition of knowledge mobilisation to be used in this thesis that will make space for critical viewing of research. I will then use this definition to engage with knowledge mobilisation models, frameworks, and tools in a critical way. These details will create a framework for knowledge mobilisation that will encourage the user to ask questions about the production of knowledge while engaging in the process of moving knowledge.

### **Knowledge Mobilisation as a Process**

Knowledge mobilisation is, at its base, a process. This process explains the movement of knowledge or information from one group to another. However, this is a very simplistic definition of knowledge mobilisation that does not let the reader understand the nuances of this process. As well, it can lead a reader to believe that this process is linear (Westhues & Wharf, 2012). While this definition might be sufficient for an umbrella term that includes the variety of ways to share knowledge between groups, it does not give a greater understanding of the complexities that is knowledge mobilisation.

To introduce these complexities, I will provide comprehensive details on the different ways that knowledge mobilisation is executed. As a core piece of my thesis is to explore how communities and academics engage during the KMb process, I will detail how knowledge is understood, what knowledge is privileged, and how the push for research evidence has impacted how knowledge is perceived. I will then weave this information together to create the definition of knowledge mobilisation that will be used within this dissertation. This definition will create space for critical engagement with knowledge during the mobilisation process.

I will then focus on how knowledge mobilisation is implemented. The critical KMb definition will be used to discuss the movement of knowledge in various areas of society. Common knowledge movement models, tools for sharing knowledge between groups, and influences on what knowledge is privileged will be engaged with using this definition. Finally, I will tie in some of the understandings of the knowledge mobilisation processes to grasp what are understood as key pieces to successful knowledge mobilisation. This section will highlight the core components of KMb and begin to find ways to critically engage with knowledge that is produced.

This literature review section will define knowledge mobilisation—with a component that allows for critical engagement with knowledge—for this dissertation. This definition allowed me to introduce KMb planning to the community group in a way that supported their development of knowledge. The use of the knowledge mobilisation definition within the research project assisted me in identifying spaces within KMb where critical engagement with knowledge could occur. The literature review will highlight areas where I first thought critical engagement with knowledge could occur within knowledge mobilisation before completing the research project.

### **Knowledge Mobilisation and Power**

It is clear to me that there are many ways of creating knowledge. Research methods, spiritual views, social justice perspectives, legal provisions, or others may be use as the frame to develop an understanding of topics. However, no matter what structure is used to understand how the world works, the result is the same. People engage with a topic, their views are shaped by how they interpret that topic, and then knowledge is formed within them. The connection between knowledge and personal experiences makes it difficult to move knowledge from an

individual to any audience (Brown & Duguid, 2000). Knowledge can be divided into forms of information, which are more easily shared and less likely to be altered, but the nuances may be lost. We, as knowledge brokers, must prepare knowledge, and information to an extent, to be adaptable to different situations. We must understand, from the beginning, that the process of mobilising knowledge is a process by which knowledge will change, grow, and adapt. Knowledge cannot stagnate; it will flourish when it can engage with many different worldviews.

While I assert that knowledge is ever changing and we must be aware that not all knowledge is treated equally (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 2000), I acknowledge that the ways knowledge is created can produce a perceived value. This perceived value influences the inclusion or exclusion of specific knowledges (Simpson, 2014). One example can be seen in the exclusion of traditional Indigenous knowledges from academia or public policy (Brown & Strega, 2015). This is an example of how process of creating knowledge can differ between social groups. Researchers focus on the production of knowledge through research methodology. While community-led knowledge might use research methodology in the process of gathering different pieces of knowledge, the generation of knowledge often occurs through personal experience. Practitioners, particularly in the medical and social services fields, blend research evidence (a type of knowledge) with clinical expertise (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, 2012).

Unfortunately, because of histories of colonialism, patriarchy, and other forms of oppression, there is entrenched bias towards sources of knowledge. Hence, this bias has led to the exclusion of specific sources of knowledge from various areas of society. While the mobilisation of research evidence may be difficult, it does not struggle with being considered valid. This stems from the history of “science” being used to dominate ideas within patriarchal

and colonised societies (Brown & Strega, 2015). Creation of knowledge that does not stem from “rational thought” or “science” has additional barriers to address. These forms of knowledges must prove that they are valid and worthy of being included. These barriers are seen in the difficulties of activist organisations in accessing space within the mainstream media (Milan, 2015; Poell, 2015). Barriers can also be seen in the struggle of marginalised groups to establish and maintain academic departments connected with previously excluded areas of study (Mohanty, 2015).

Another consideration to be included in a definition of KMb is how this process of sharing knowledge will address the history of oppressive power dynamics related to learning and knowledge. Brown (2000) noted that a standard issue with the movement of knowledge is the power that comes with holding knowledge. We also see the privileging of certain types or sources of knowledge over others (Fanon, 1967; Hill Collins, 2009; hooks, 2000). Concerns about power dynamics in the creation and movement of knowledge exist within many spaces (Ben-Moshe, Chapman, & Carey, 2014; Brown & Strega, 2015; Driskill, 2011; Mohanty, 2015). One of the ways power dynamics influence sharing knowledge within academia is how academics are rewarded. Academics are encouraged to produce and share new knowledge but are only compensated when they move knowledge in specific ways (Nutley et al., 2007; Rogers, 2003). For instance, academics and researchers are rewarded for publishing in peer-reviewed journals, but not often for alternative efforts to reach policymakers or practitioners, making academics less likely to collaborate with communities to create grey literature or other forms of sharing knowledge.

We can define the process of KMb in ways to address issues that have created barriers to sharing knowledge in the past. As detailed above, this definition goes beyond stating what model

or KMb tools are being utilised. Because of the political aspect of KMb, an explanation would benefit from outlining political objectives, expected social outcomes, attempts to address various forms of marginalisation, and the ways disruption of power dynamics may happen. As we move through a definition of what knowledge is, a better understanding of how these might be added to defining KMb will become apparent.

### **Three Parts of Knowledge Mobilisation**

Academics and researchers define KMb as the aim to move knowledge to ensure that social change occurs more quickly (FoodARC's Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014; Levin, 2008; Nutley et al., 2007; Phipps et al., 2012). Many academics and researchers also stress ensuring that the knowledge shared can be verified instead of relying on personal beliefs (Carlin & DiGrazia, 2004; Copeland & Wexler, 2015; Morton, 2015). Hence, a focus on research evidence is often found within KMb. This definition focuses on ensuring research evidence is reaching policy makers and practitioners (Davies, 2004; Levin, 2008; Nutley et al., 2007).

Definitions of KMb that thrive in collaborative spaces between academics, researchers, and community organisations are similar. Food ARC's Knowledge Mobilisation Working Group (2014) defines KMb as a way knowledge "gets to the right people in the right format at the right time" (p. 5). What definitions share is the following: there is a knower, knowledge or information, an audience, and impact. KMb is viewed as a way of assisting a knower to ensure their knowledge or information is presented in a way that can be easily understood and used by their audience (Cooper, 2009; Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015; Ng-a-fook et al., 2015). Everett Rogers (2003) in **Diffusion of Innovation** stressed that the introduction of a new concept or tool must be done carefully to avoid people rejecting it. When KMb is done well, audience members will integrate the knowledge or information into their daily lives, encouraging them to act.



Knowledge mobilisation is a process that can take many forms. Thus, defining KMb is an important part of developing a project where knowledge will be mobilised. Knowing when and how to implement the various definitions of KMb is necessary. A general KMb definition might work when communities or academics are learning how to share information or knowledge. For instance, defining KMb in this dissertation creates a frame by which the readers and I move through the paper together. It provides a solid perspective on KMb for the us to explore. Thus, even if a reader employs a different understanding of KMb in their work, they are aware of the definition found in this dissertation and can prepare to move forward. Some, but not all of the factors that can be addressed by a KMb process include the following: the models of KMb being used, the stage KMb is taking place, the intended audience, the context of the project, and the type of impact.

I mention these different ways of constructing KMb because it shows that there is no one definition. How KMb is understood and the process involved will change depending on many factors. It is helpful to present a precise definition of KMb in projects, conversations, or research. This allows all parties to start from the same position and will make it easier moving forward. Depending on context, it is possible for KMb definitions to include or exclude specific information (Driskill, 2011; Haller, n.d.; hooks, 2013). For instance, it is common for general KMb definitions to leave out its political objectives.

I argue that because KMb is a political process that aims to change society, any definitions of KMb should reflect its political nature (FoodARC's Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014). For example, I maintain that when defining a KMb process, it is best to include the following factors: political objectives, expected social outcomes, and ways to address oppression and prejudice. Making these clear is necessary because there is a history of

knowledge upholding harmful views and structural oppression (Brown & Strega, 2015; hooks, 2013; Mohanty, 2015; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Addressing the political nature of KMb can help to take action against possible harms.

Another reason for ensuring transparent and situation specific definitions of KMb is that this area has adapted tools from other fields. Communications, when focusing on sharing information, can appear to overlap with KMb (Barwick, Phipps, Johnny, Myers, & Coriandoli, 2014). This can make it difficult to identify the differences between KMb and communications. In fact, there have been ongoing discussions over what the differences between these two areas are (Barwick et al., 2014). Overall, KMb and communications can use a lot of the same tools but might have different objectives. It is still not clear where communications and KMb diverge.

### **What Is Knowledge?**

You will notice that I have been careful to talk about knowledge and information when discussing the process of knowledge mobilisation. This separation is because knowledge and information are defined differently (Brown & Duguid, 2000).<sup>5</sup> KMb plans will need different ways of sharing details depending on whether information or knowledge is being shared. Below, I will describe both information and knowledge, and I will explain how they are different. I will then discuss forms of moving knowledge and information. Finally, I will show the treatment of diverse sources of knowledge. Bearing witness to the treatment of various forms of knowledge

<sup>5</sup> While knowledge and information are considered different in KMb, it is important to note that they are not divided through an understanding of objective and subjective (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Nutley et al., 2007). This might confuse some as information might sound as though it is objective, meaning it is created through observation and analysis. This is not what information means in KMb, instead information and knowledge described the form details come in and how easy it is to move these details.

will demonstrate why integrating political objectives and actionable goals is significant to the KMb planning process.

**What is Information?** People tend to use the words “information” and “knowledge” interchangeably. Here, I will argue that these words are not interchangeable. In **The Social Life of Information**, John Seely Brown & Paul Duguid (2000) made a clear distinction between information and knowledge. According to Brown & Duguid (2000), information and knowledge have three core differences. One difference is that “knowledge usually entails a knower” (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 119). The lack of a knower means that information is independent. Thus, information is something that many different people can engage with; it is moveable without being altered. However, knowledge is not independent; it is part of a person. Hence, Brown & Duguid (2000) say that “it sounds right to ask, ‘Where is information?’ but odd to ask, ‘Where’s that knowledge?’” (p. 119).

Second, because information is independent of a person, meaning it is in a form separate from a person, and thus it can be treated as self-contained (Brown & Duguid, 2000). For instance, information from the Canadian census or journals like those of Anne Frank. Information can be used in a number of different projects. The projects and methods used when working with information can help us to learn new ideas within the different contexts, they are used. Knowledge is entangled with a person, built from their personal experiences and beliefs (Carlile, 2004). This makes knowledge difficult to share.

The third difference between information and knowledge is connected to how these concepts move. Brown & Duguid (2000) state that “Knowledge is something we digest rather than merely hold” (p. 120). What this means is that information will change little between situations or who is working with it. Knowledge, though, is created from the interpretation of

information based on experiential engagement with a topic and is shaped by internal beliefs and external social forces. More clearly, knowledge is when a knower (someone engaged directly with the source of knowledge) engages with a topic. The topic is understood through personal views in a space influenced by social, political, and economic systems. These factors are complex. They make it hard for people or groups who hold different personal views, or are affected differently by social systems, to share knowledge with each other (Lefrancois, Menzies, Reaume, 2013). This means that the creation of knowledge happens through an individual.<sup>6</sup> This combination of experiential learning, personal views and external influences makes knowledge hard to remove from an individual (Brown & Duguid, 2000).

Based on these differences we can begin to define knowledge and information. For our use, information is understood as details that are independent of a person or project, that can be easily understood on its own, used in many different situations, and can be moved without difficulty. Slogans from a protest are forms of information as they are easily shared amongst a large group of people, are not dependant on any one person, and can easily be understood within the context of the protest.

Knowledge is a bit more complicated to define. Knowledge is created when a person—a knower—engages directly with a source of information. The information is filtered through their personal views, and is influenced by social, political, and economic systems. Thus, the knower has taken the information and transformed it into knowledge. More simply put, knowledge is created through an individual's experiential engagement with a topic and is shaped by internal

<sup>6</sup> There are processes where people work together to share their knowledge to create a collective understanding. This is known as collective intelligence, which is explained after information and knowledge are defined in this section. See page 28.

beliefs and external social forces. This combination of experiential learning, personal views and external influences makes knowledge hard to move from an individual. Going back to the example of Canadian census data, we noted that census data, a form of information, could be used in different projects, with different methodologies, to explore different questions. The process of a researcher engaging with census data within a research project brings together the experiential learning, personal views and external influences to formulate a space where knowledge is created.

When looking at this process, it becomes clear that information is an integral part of the creation of knowledge. When knowledge is too complicated to share easily it can be divided into chunks of information. These chunks of information can then be used to ensure people receive a core part connected to knowledge. Then people can incorporate these chunks of information into their base of knowledge. The process of taking bits of information and transforming them into individualised knowledge can be seen in the way information is used to build knowledge in a subject through classes or workshops.

Before we move on, I want to address situations where people share their knowledge to create a collective understanding. Circumstances where this takes place are widely varied, happening in collaborative research, communities, organisation meetings, work sites, political spaces, and more. Some people use the term knowledge for this process, adding a modifier beforehand, like community knowledge (Cook, 2006; FoodARC's Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014). I worry that the term community knowledge could lead to a ranking of knowledge, which perpetuates the privileging of certain types of information or knowledge. I began exploring outside of knowledge mobilisation sources for other terms that might work. I found community intelligence, understood as the ability of a community to grasp the situation it

is surrounded by, to respond to these situations, and to learn from both successes and failures (Thomas, 2016). I believe it fits the process found within collective spaces better than the term knowledge. However, community intelligence appears to be ingrained in communities. Within discussions on community intelligence, community is often defined as a group of people who share a common background (Thomas, 2016). Given this definition of community I worry that community intelligence might be argued not to include partnerships between researchers and communities (Hawken, Ogilvy, & Schwartz, 1982). I suggest a slight change, using the term collective instead of community, making the term collective intelligence. This small change will broaden the meaning to encompass any situation where more than one person is sharing their information and knowledge to understand a topic or situation. This definition can still include planning to address the situation and learning from experience, though it might not be necessary in the context of knowledge mobilisation.

**Three Forms of Information.** Information, knowledge, and collective intelligence all must move if they are to change society. Within academic circles there are three agreed-upon ways that knowledge and information move: instrumental, conceptual, and symbolic (Estabrooks et al., 2008). Instrumental movement of knowledge and information aims to take suggestions from a respected source and implement them directly into a system. Two examples from the area of social policy research include the following: studying social policy systems to recommend to the government about how to ensure social policy meets its outlined goals (Copeland & Wexler, 2015); and using research and suggestions based on a specific topic that relates to an associated issue of social policy that is given directly to policymakers (White, 2003). Conceptual movement of knowledge and information focuses on indirect means that information engages with systems (Estabrooks, 2008). For example, this may include academic research that has been done,

absorbed by a community, and then used to create social change in their community. Nabil Amara, Mathieu Ouimet and Réjean Landry (2004) found that this is the most common way that research influences social policy. Finally, symbolic movement of knowledge and information is used to uphold an already decided position (Beyer, 1997). For instance, academic research later discovered to be faulty, and thus making incorrect arguments, might still be considered proof by people to maintain a belief. The focus of a retracted research article that suggests that autism is connected to vaccinations is an example of this (Flaherty, 2011; Hornsey, Harris, & Fielding, 2018; Li, Stroud, & Jamieson, 2017).

While these forms of information might appear similar, they are different. For instance, during the process of instrumental information many sources should be explored and evaluated. This process will include ideas that oppose each other. In contrast, symbolic information focuses only on details that support a view and dismisses sources that challenge the already held belief.

Understanding these core means of moving knowledge and information can assist with developing a robust KMb plan. In recent years, there has been a push in academia for the use of research evidence (Barwick, Barac, Akrong, Johnson, & Chaban, 2014; Nutley et al., 2007). I will begin a discussion about research evidence shortly. Research evidence is an area that has been created to develop and strengthen the use of the instrumental movement of knowledge and information. It can be similarly connected to KMb and thus must be addressed. The area of research evidence has had some positive impacts, but it—and KMb—must be critically engaged with to ensure not to reinforce harmful views.

### **What Knowledge is Considered Valuable?**

For people working within knowledge mobilisation we must strive to understand why moving knowledge that challenges people's position of power would encourage them to make

changes to policies or laws that are part of the structures that empower them. Even more so, we must ask how our positions within these systems influence how we make decisions about the type of knowledge and information we hold in high regard and thus are more likely to share? One of the ways we can try to mitigate the possible harms of the knowledge and information we mobilise is to be critical of the knowledge we include and exclude. We can do this by asking questions about the information and knowledge we privilege, contest, or marginalise. There is a history of research and academia where specific forms of knowledge are privileged (Ben-Moshe et al., 2014; Carlin & DiGrazia, 2004; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Privileging certain kinds of knowledge has historically been connected to oppressive power dynamics. For example, Foucault (1978) suggests that power and knowledge have a circular relationship, where power is gained based on certain forms of knowledge; power systems then encourage the production of more knowledge that reinforces the power structures. This situation means people are careful with their knowledge, withholding or sharing it with specific groups, because of the power gained from the perpetuation of certain forms of knowledge. A by-product of the entwining of knowledge and power is that some forms of knowledge will obtain more respect through being associated with particular institutions or groups (Foucault, 1978). For example, white men's knowledge has more regard compared to the knowledge of black women. This circumstance is a result of the differences in power that these intersections of identity experience, with white people and men having more power than black people and women in western society.

As people of colour and women gain more power, making the knowledge gap between the two groups smaller, we still experience a difference in respect of knowledge based on their sources (Li, 2000). These power dynamics connected to knowledge become even more complicated when colonisation is considered (Hart & Rowe, 2014b). In Canada, the history of



and ongoing colonisation means that even marginalised colonisers have greater power than Indigenous people (Thobani, 2007). Canadian immigrants are pushed to align themselves with colonising Canadians to ensure that they gain access to power and rights. Canada, as a nation, uses similar offers of power through policies, global trade, and Canada's imperialist history (Darian-Smith, 2010). The wielding of Canada's power has led Canada to have an impact on some African countries' politics, policies, and economies, even though Canada inhabits a different space within the globe (Engler, 2015). Thus, it is essential to consider how to avoid privileging specific sources of knowledge when KMb planning (Fanon, 1967; Hill Collins, 2009).

Concerns about power dynamics in the creation and movement of knowledge exist within many spaces (Brown & Strega, 2015; hooks, 2000). For example, one way power dynamics influence sharing knowledge within academia is through the reward mechanism. Academics are only rewarded for the production and sharing of new knowledge if it conforms with certain forms of knowledge sharing (Nutley et al., 2007; Rogers, 2003). For instance, academics and researchers are rewarded for publishing in peer-reviewed journals, but academia has been slow to accept alternative efforts to reach policymakers or practitioners. This reward system makes academics less likely to collaborate with communities, to create or include grey literature or other forms of sharing knowledge. In academia, these sort of rewards work to exclude lived experience or research completed by marginalised communities that has not been published in peer-reviewed sources.

These issues of power and knowledge are reasons I strive to include anti-oppressive, anti-racism, and decolonisation perspectives in my work. These fields have highlighted the harmful ideas that often permeate academic products and endeavour to create space to uplift marginalised

forms of knowledge (Mohanty, 2003; Razack, 1998; Simpson, 2014). I contend that by defining the process of KMb a person, community, or project is using, they can address barriers that have created issues to sharing knowledge in the past. As detailed above, this definition must go beyond stating the model or KMb tools. Including actionable items, such as supporting allied grassroots organisations, helps to address the political nature of a KMb plan issues of power and knowledge. I suggest that a definition would benefit from addressing issues related to power by outlining political objectives, expected social outcomes, and attempts to approach various forms of marginalisation.

### **Is Research Evidence Important?**

The growth of research evidence in areas including medicine, education, and social policy is an attempt to combat common sense (Cooper, 2009; Denzin, 2009; Overseas Development Institute, 2009). In this case, common sense is understood as based on biased information that results in practices that do not work or only work in a limited number of cases. To move decision-making to be based on research evidence “lead[s] to more informed policy, higher-quality decisions, more effective practices, and, in turn, improved outcomes” (Cooper, Levin, & Campbell, 2009, p. 160). Thus, research evidence should lead to evidence-informed decision-making, which focuses on using the best research evidence in combination with individual judgement to decide on best practices (Brown & Zhang, 2016). Is it possible that research evidence could address harmful power dynamics and oppression of marginalised groups? Could research evidence be a solution to our society’s injustices? In this section, I will explore research evidence, including excluded knowledge from this area. Through this exploration, I will ask if research evidence is a means to use knowledge mobilisation to address its political stances. I will consider what is understood to be research evidence, what the criticism

of research evidence are, and whether research evidence addresses the concerns expressed by marginalised scholars and activists.

Harmful biases are entrenched in some research, while other research has issues with reproducibility<sup>7</sup> (Breckon, 2016; Gibel, Carter, & Ramirez, 2016). Sometimes research methodology is flawed. There are many factors that cause issues of quality with research, which can impact the research findings. Concerns with quality control in research leaves some people, particularly people who are not researchers, wary of using research findings (Nutley et al., 2007). The movement to categorise different forms of research is an attempt to overcome this barrier.

The commonly used tools for research evidence—as a means of addressing quality—were developed in the medical field. The ranking and other tools created to address quality of research focused on quantitative research methods (Straus, Tetroe & Graham, 2013). One of the ways that researchers tried to address the issue of quality was to rank types of research. Appendix A shows the established hierarchy of research. The research in this hierarchy is predominately quantitative—cohort studies, randomised control trials, and systematic reviews—with little or no space for considering qualitative research (Denzin, 2009). Hassan Murad, Noor Asi, Mouaz Alsawas, & Fares Alahdab (2016) discuss ways to change this hierarchy. However they, like many others, do not address many of the criticisms of the research hierarchy.

The quantitative research field depends on statistics, reproducibility, and the idea of validity. A problem that has arisen is uncertainty about how qualitative research fits within the research evidence field (Denzin, 2012). Lack of clarity in the position of qualitative research in

<sup>7</sup> Reproducibility is not necessary to all forms of research, particularly qualitative research. It is mentioned here because reproducibility is a point that is focused on by some research evidence scholars.

research evidence has resulted in significant criticism (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2018). Attempts to address these concerns has been to use mixed methodology, research that uses both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, into the ranking of research evidence (Melnyk, 2017). The inclusion of mixed methodology alone does not address the issues with the ranking system in general, or the lack of consideration of qualitative research within this area of research evidence (Denzin, 2009).

Other issues with the hierarchy of research evidence include the question of what research, in general, is of high enough quality to be included as research evidence (Cooper, 2009). There is no one view on what makes quality research. Significant organisations that focus on research evidence—Cochrane Canada, Environmental Evidence, and others—all have different means of rating research quality (Cochrane Consumers and Communication Review Group, 2018; Collaboration for Environmental Evidence, 2018). Again, the ranking of research quality often focuses on quantitative over qualitative research methods. The lack of consensus on what makes quality research has led to further criticism of research evidence.

Researchers view research evidence as leading to practical solutions in a variety of areas (Breckon, 2016; Gibel et al., 2016; Nutley et al., 2007). However, there are many questions about the practicality of research evidence. In disability activism and the disability studies field, there are many criticisms about the focus on research evidence. Research evidence related to disability has focused on medical research (Withers, 2012). Focusing on medical knowledge has led to harmful social policies, built environments that exclude people with disabilities, and discriminatory ideas about disability (Chadha & Sheldon, 2005; Kang, 2012; Kim, 2011). For these reasons, disability activists and scholars are fighting to have the “research evidence” about disability reoriented (Robertson & Larson, 2016). Reorientation of disability research evidence

has resulted in the development of new theories, models, and ways of knowing disability (Withers, 2012). Yet medical research evidence continues to hold sway in many areas of our society.

When research evidence is used to make decisions, it should be balanced with knowledge from other areas—lived experience, clinical experience, and social concerns (Breckon, 2016). Decisions around disability in Canada do not always include other forms of knowledge, even when there is support through international organisations and governments (Chadha & Sheldon, 2005; Gill & Schlund-Vials, 2014). Similarly, histories of colonisation can limit the knowledge found within research evidence (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). For example, colonisation of Indigenous folks in Canada has resulted in minimal consideration of Indigenous knowledges in the field of medicine (Zavala, 2013). While Indigenous knowledge is beginning to gain more respect in a variety of fields, this change is slow (Driskill, 2011; Simpson, 2014). I argue that these situations display an underlying continuation of harmful power dynamics within research evidence. The lack of consideration of how other forms of knowledge—qualitative research, community knowledge, and non-colonial knowledge—works alongside research evidence shows the need for this issue to be critically engaged with and carefully implemented (Denzin, 2009; Simpson, 2014; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Withers, 2012).

While this thesis focuses on knowledge mobilisation, we cannot leave research evidence and its critics to the side. Research evidence is a part of knowledge mobilisation. We must address issues of power when we aim to affect the social policies that shape our world. When we consider what knowledge mobilisation is and how it is defined, we must also think about what types of evidence are being mobilised, and the impact evidence is having on society and marginalised communities.

## Knowledge Mobilisation Models, Frameworks, & Tools

There are many KMb models, and frameworks. While all are unique, they tend to address the areas central to our definition of KMb (Bennet & Bennet, 2007; Graham et al., 2006; Jones, Jones, Shaxson, & Walker, 2013; Nutley et al., 2007; Qi & Levin, 2010). There is a knower, knowledge, an audience, a means of sharing said knowledge, and an impact stemming from knowledge sharing (Phipps, Cummings, Pepler, Craig, & Cardinal, 2016). There has been a great deal written about different ways of understanding KMb and plenty of criticism of the conventional models.<sup>8</sup> Given that many models of KMb share core tenants, it is difficult to state that any model is correct (Bennet & Bennet, 2007; Nutley et al., 2007). Each KMb project or plan is nuanced based on factors stemming from the political climate, what is considered knowledge, who the audience is, and the means of sharing knowledge. It is possible that the model or framework used might need to change based on the project needs.

Before we move on to a summary of some of the common models and frameworks, I want to note two things. The first is the linear manner KMb models and frameworks are presented (Bowen, 2012; Ng-a-fook et al., 2015). Numerous authors note KMb rarely takes place in a linear manner (Jones et al., 2013; Qi & Levin, 2010). KMb projects are likely to undergo changes, which shows that KMb is not neat or orderly (Cook, 2006; Ng-a-fook et al., 2015). What KMb models and frameworks provide is a way to understand how knowledge is mobilised within the project (Hovmand, 2014). Models and frameworks of KMb help identify influencing

<sup>8</sup> For more information on the different types of understanding KMb please see the following authors Bennet (2007), Graham (2006), Nutley (2007), Qi (2010), Worton (2017), Jones (2013) & Michaels (2009). Critics of models are found within these articles along with explanations for how a new model attempts to address these concerns. Please note that this is only a sampling of the ways of understanding KMb as there is not sufficient room to fully address all the theories, models, and frameworks now.

factors of KMb process (Meadows, 2008). Using KMb models and frameworks give us a means to engage in KMb projects, but we must remember that the process of KMb is not linear.

The second topic is the impact of labels. Labels, due to many reasons, limit the area they have categorised (Hoffman, 2014). For instance, by using the term “knower” in my definition of KMb, I am setting limits on how to think about this area (Abrams, 2014; Goffman, 1963). Knower suggests a singular individual. The singular is contrary to KMb in many projects as it creates the idea that there is one individual with knowledge on a topic. Thus, the singular “knower” hides the fact that there is a team of people working on a research project or a grassroots movement. By using the term “knower,” instead of saying “knowers,” I have limited how you think about this area of the KMb definition. Unfortunately, most terms experience this kind of limitation on their meaning, sometimes in ways that are beneficial, but other times in unbeneficial ways. I hope we can acknowledge the limitations of labels and ask ourselves if there is anyone missing from what we are discussing.

**Knowledge Mobilisation Model.** A commonly used KMb model is called the co-produced pathway to impact model. David Phipps, Joanna Cummings, Debra Pepler, Wendy Craig and Shelly Cardinal (2016) created this knowledge mobilisation model. It uses a logic model framework to describe the KMb process, which is divided into five phases: research, dissemination, uptake, implementation, and impact. The research phase defines the type of knowledge considered within this model, which is limited to research evidence (Phipps et al., 2016). The process of creating and sharing knowledge products is called dissemination. Uptake describes the use of knowledge products by audiences, which can include the adaptation of information and knowledge to the audience’s context. When information and knowledge are put into action by audience members, the phase is called implementation (Phipps et al., 2016).

Finally, the effect of the understanding, adaption, and actions based on information or knowledge is the impact phase.

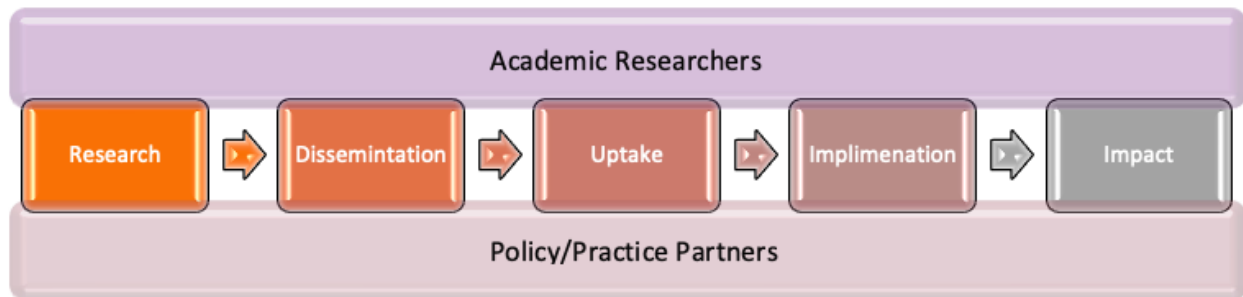


Figure 1: Adapted from *The Co-produced Pathway to Impact Describes Knowledge Mobilization Processes* by Phipps, Cummings, Pepler, Craig, and Cardinal, 2016

Two groups involved with each phase of this model of KMB are academic researchers and policy/practice partners (Phipps et al., 2016). As can be seen in the figure above, both parties are engaged in all five phases. This sets the expectation that academic researchers and policy/practice partners are engaged in the co-production of each phase of knowledge mobilisation. However, the authors acknowledge that different parties might have different levels of engagement at different phases of KMB (Phipps et al., 2016). For example, during the research phase the policy/practice partner might have minimal engagement, although they might help shape research questions. In theory, the “framework supports an ongoing relationship through the knowledge mobilization processes” (Phipps et al., 2016, section 2, para 2. sent 9).

**Limitations of the Co-produced Pathway to Impact Model.** I want to discuss some of the limitations of this model. This model focuses on how knowledge is shared and tends to focus on three separate phases: dissemination, uptake, and implementation (Phipps, Cummings, Pepler, Craig, & Cardinal, 2016). This KMB model is useful when there is a focus on how knowledge moves, but it is limited in its ability to consider factors needed to decolonise KMB work (Zavala, 2013). These limitations stem from restrictions on what is considered the knowledge and the lack of presence related to how the knower can impact the knowledge created (Mohanty, 2003).



Decolonisation of the co-produced pathway to impact model is not impossible. For instance, within the research phase, critical questions could be applied to research evidence to consider its impact on marginalised communities (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The co-produced pathway to impact model presents an example of how some KMb research neglects to consider decolonisation and anti-oppression.

The development of the co-production pathway to impact model focuses on researchers and academics (Phipps, Cummings, Pepler, Craig, & Cardinal, 2016). As such, this model focuses on sharing research evidence. Limiting information and knowledge to research evidence once again brings to the forefront questions of what and whose knowledge are considered valid. What and whose knowledge are considered valid within the context of this KMb model are presented in two ways. The first way that the validation of knowledge presents itself is in questions of whose knowledge is not present within the co-produced pathway to impact model (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). The focus on research evidence can cause the continued marginalisation of knowledge based on lived experience, consciousness-raising, and collective intelligence (Englart, 2000). These are all common ways that marginalised groups without access to academic resources or research develop their forms of knowledge. Thus, a focus on research evidence, without context, can continue forms of oppression (Denzin, 2009).

Second, research evidence, often creates a hierarchy of evidence (Denzin, 2012) where certain forms of research, often those using qualitative methodologies, are considered less valid than those using mixed or quantitative methodologies. The ranking of evidence can result in certain forms of research being relegated to a category of evidence that is not considered to be rigorous enough to be included within research evidence (Brown & Strega, 2015). While the need to ensure the validity and rigour of research is a topic that some are passionate about and

believe is necessary, we must be aware of the possible bias towards certain types of research methodologies (Tuhwai Smith, 2012). This bias is particularly crucial as marginalised communities establish a presence within academia, and they begin to launch methodologies that are appropriate for their cultural, historical, political, and economic spaces (Chen, 2012; Grande, 2018; Harding, 2004; Withers, 2012). When considering the usefulness of a methodology to produce research evidence, we need to move beyond quantitative measures. Historically, quantitative methodologies have been critiqued by marginalised academics for the problematic intersection of ingrained bias, privileging certain types of knowledge production, and ranking types of evidence (Brown & Strega, 2015; Driskill, 2011; Tuhwai Smith, 2012). By finding ways to evaluate qualitative and mixed methodologies, research evidence will broaden to include great representation of marginalised knowledge.

Third, KMB models that concentrate on sharing research evidence often have narrower audiences/knowledge users, which focus on groups like policymakers and practitioners (Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007). The narrow scope of who is considered an audience/knowledge user is often viewed positively because these audiences/knowledge users are thought to be those who can put research evidence into action (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, 2012). I question the narrowing of audiences/knowledge users because it fails to consider the way some systems, such as social policy, work (Rice, 2013). While policymakers or government representatives might be the people who create and vote on social policy, the decisions these people make are influenced by a variety of stakeholders (Watson, 2011). Some of these stakeholders include the public, lobbyists, mainstream media, and community organisations. Given the variety of sources policymakers and government representatives are inundated with, information and knowledge will have a better chance of uptake if entered from multiple avenues

(Brown & Duguid, 2000). Thus, there is a need to move beyond considering how knowledge is shared to better understand the factors that affect knowledge uptake and implementation:

- an established relationship with the source of information or knowledge (Moss, 2016)
- the culture of the institution where information or knowledge is to be implemented (Barwick et al., 2014)
- a belief that new information or knowledge is more effective than what is currently in place (Rogers, 2003)
- the need for buy-in from individuals at all levels of an institution (Barwick et al., 2005)
- the leadership style of those in charge of institutions planning to implement new information or knowledge (Woods & Martin, 2016)
- the format that information or knowledge takes (Yamada, Shorkey, Barwick, Widger, & Stevens, 2015)
- the ability of information or knowledge to be adapted to the needs of the institution (Straus et al., 2013)

**Knowledge Mobilisations Frameworks.** Here we will explore some KMb frameworks called linear, relationship, and systems (Campbell, Pollock, Carr-Harris, & Briscoe, 2014). These divisions will provide us with some forms KMb can take.

***Linear Framework.*** Linear frameworks of KMb are each a one-way process (Estabrooks et al., 2008). There is an expert and a person in need of knowledge. Knowledge is shared in ways where there is minimal consideration of the context of the space where knowledge will be implemented. This form of KMb, often called knowledge transfer, is controversial due to unequal power dynamics (Qi & Levin, 2010; Whitinui, Morcom, McIvor, Robertson, & Cashman, 2015). However, sometimes one group of people has a higher quantity of knowledge

than others on a topic. For example, a person who needs help with a medical condition does not have the knowledge to manage their symptoms, so they consult with a doctor (Bowen, 2012; Straus et al., 2013). Another example is when disabled people, as experts through lived experience, demand that local government—those that need access to this knowledge—fund curb cuts to increase the accessibility of their communities (Prince, 2012). Although linear KMB is critiqued, particularly for unequal power dynamics, it is not always bad (Campbell et al., 2014; Worton, Loomis, Pancer, Nelson, & Peters, 2017). With the example of the curb cuts, the lived experience of disabled people creates knowledge of inaccessibility which can then be acted upon (Milan, 2013b). However, we must use linear KMB carefully.

**Relationship Framework.** Relationship KMB expands from linear KMB. It focuses on relationships between the knower(s) and the audience (Estabrooks et al., 2008). Relationships might result in the audience becoming a part of the KMB project (Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014). This form of KMB is helpful in several ways, including making sure that (a) the knowledge created is valuable to the audience, (b) the audience is invested in the KMB project (increasing the chance of knowledge being taken up by audiences), and (c) the knowledge is in a format the audience is likely to use (Campbell et al., 2014). Relationship KMB focuses on the development of trust, which increases the likelihood that knowledge will be considered valid (Worton et al., 2017). As well, relationship KMB allows for knowledge to move in more than one direction, helping knowledge to readily adapt to the local context while maintaining the fidelity of knowledge (Campbell, Pollock, Briscoe, Carr-Harris, & Tuters, 2017). For instance, this process can be seen in the social model of disability developed from a collaboration between disability activists and researchers in the 1970s (Robertson & Larson,

2016; Shildrick, 2012). This collaboration permitted this model of disability to gain traction and influence how disability is understood on a global scale.

**Systematic Framework.** A systematic approach to KMb creates change in all levels of society (Ogata, 2004). This means having a robust KMb plan that addresses mobilising knowledge to multiple audiences concurrently (Campbell et al., 2014; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). A systematic KMb project could involve other KMb frameworks to address the needs of separate audiences (Graham et al., 2006). A project aiming to ensure that people who are autistic, queer and trans can access their health care needs with minimal complications would benefit from a KMb plan that has plans for allied communities, the general public, and medical professionals. In systematic KMb, each audience has a personalised KMb plan to ensure knowledge is mobilised to increase positive impacts. For allied communities, the use of a zine will build awareness, which is a linear approach to KMb. On the other hand, while sharing knowledge with medical professionals the KMb plan should focus on building relationships through topic-centred conferences, focusing on the relationship approach to KMb.

**Knowledge Mobilisation Tools.** Choosing a model or framework is only part of a successful mobilisation of knowledge. That process must consider how to ensure uptake of knowledge within its audience(s) (NGL Consultants Ltd., 1991). There is a wide range of things that can be done to help improve the chance of uptake (Arduin, 2015; Brown & Zhang, 2016; Campbell et al., 2017). Research is beginning to measure the success of KMb tools. These tools support the KMb plan and must be chosen to fit the context of the KMb project. I will outline some of the standard tools within KMb, both within academia/research and within grassroots organising. Tools are listed in alphabetical order. Thus, the order they are presented does not depict the strength or effectiveness of the tools.

**Buy-In** involves finding a way to get an audience interested in what is available to share (Brown & Duguid, 2000). It is best to begin buy-in before the knowledge plan is ready to start (Rogers, 2003). Having buy-in before the plan is put into action helps to increase uptake of knowledge in general. However, buy-in can also be implemented at any point in the KMb plan (Nutley et al., 2007). Forms of buy-in include making sure knowledge addresses concerns the audience(s) have, responding in a timely way to these concerns, or building concern within an audience. For example, my KMb plan for this research uses buy-in through a website, which is used to engage with people from allied communities. This website created a group of people who are eager to access and share information and knowledge that comes from this research.

**Champions** are the faces of the KMb project. Typically, there are one or two individuals who have gained the respect and trust of one or more audiences (Barwick et al., 2005). These people are often the ones to speak at conferences, launch events, or other public events. The champions often build credibility over time, becoming well known for speaking up about the topic.

**Clear Language** is a means of creating written documents that increase uptake (Mencap, 2008). The focus in clear language is on how the audience learns. Clear language mainly focuses on the writing of the document, particularly the reading level of the audience, to ensure it can be easily understood (NGL Consultants Ltd., 1991). However, some formatting pieces are also considered, such as having an easy-to-read font that is large enough for audiences to read easily (Marsay, 2017). ResearchImpact has been working on creating what they call Research Snapshot (ResearchImpact, 2019). These are two- to four-page summaries of published research with a reading level of between ten and twelve.

***Legal Rights*** connect to the KMb of grassroots movements. With provisions at different levels of government and the legal system, grassroots movements gain access to a trusted, widespread system (Ben-Moshe et al., 2014; Gill & Schlund-Vials, 2014). Thus, KMb plans can access audience(s) that might otherwise have not engaged (Jones et al., 2013). It also encourages uptake of new knowledge because of the support from government policy or laws (Rioux & Prince, 2002). For instance, people with disabilities had to fight for inclusion in Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms when it was being instituted. This law has forced provinces and organisations to consider knowledge from disabled groups because of this legal protection. It also created spaces within the legal and government systems to address concerns and holds institutions accountable when they are unwilling to address concerns from marginalised groups.

***Open Access Journals*** relate mostly to research from academics. Peer-reviewed publications are the standard within academia (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Brown & Strega, 2015). Many peer-reviewed journals must be paid for access to the articles within them (Milan, 2013b). The subscriptions to these journals are pricey, limiting who can access them. A means to address concerns about access is open access journals (Piwowar et al., 2018; Ramírez-Montoya, García-Peñalvo, & McGrea, 2018). These journals continue the peer-review process, but make access to some or all of their articles open to anyone with access to the internet.

***Participatory Action Research*** is a way of doing research that moves away from communities as subjects—people to be researched upon—to co-researcher—people who have an equal say in the research project (Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014; Haraway, 2014). This form of research is central to KMb planning as it builds buy-in by having audience(s) engaged in the project from the very start (Kim, 2016).

***United front*** means that a grassroots movement, organisation, or institution has a shared view on a topic (Bosi, Giugni, & Uba, 2016). This shared view is used to create KMb projects with focused aims. When opinions are in alignment it is easier to generate buy-in from an audience and increase uptake of knowledge in various areas of society (Poell, 2015). This KMb tool is particularly necessary for grassroots movements because if there are too many different voices trying to determine the problem, there will be a long list of ways to try and fix it. Different opinions can leave audience(s) confused about what view is correct, meaning that uptake will be unlikely (Kelly, 2013). For instance, during the 1960s there was a rise of social movements that had different goals, but they used a similar legal rights framework that allowed the social movements to support each other (Shaw, 2013). This viewpoint helped the diverse social movements to reach some, if not all, of their goals.

***Visibility*** stems from grassroots movements. There is a long history of exclusion of people who do not fit within what is accepted by society (Elling & Knoppers, 2005; Killen, Rutland, & Yip, 2016; Obsuth et al., 2017). This exclusion made marginalised groups invisible to the general public. Thus, the concerns of marginalised groups are often dismissed as unimportant. Creating space where marginalised groups are visible and can challenge the stereotypes placed upon them is essential to the sharing of their knowledge (Devotta, Wilton, & Yiannakoulis, 2013; Haller, 2010). We have seen marginalised groups demand visibility time and again through public demonstrations, rallies, and celebrations (Milan, 2013b; Prince, 2012; Smith, 2014). Many marginalised groups continue to struggle with visibility, particularly visibility in the media that is not just stereotypes (Haller & Becker, 2014). Visibility is a necessary component to any KMb plan because without access to media, conferences, or other ways of sharing, how can an audience engage with the knowledge that is moving.



## Barriers to Sharing Knowledge

Just as there are methods, frameworks, and tools to assist a knower in sharing knowledge, there are barriers that make it harder for knowledge to move. Below I will discuss a few of the barriers connected to knowledge mobilisation. As above, I am only giving a sample of the barriers that those engaging in KMb will experience. I selected the barriers to specifically address those that would be experienced by communities and grassroots movements. The barriers that I discuss are as follows: (a) lack of trust in knowledge sources, (b) resistance that stems from challenging people's worldviews, (c) knowledge uptake limitations because of presentation of knowledge, (d) identifying the group of adopters to focus on, (e) project alienation, and (f) over planning.

**Lack of Trust in Knowledge Sources.** There is a history of knowledge not being trusted when it comes from research or lived experience (Nutley et al., 2007; Rogers, 2003; Whitinui et al., 2015; Worton et al., 2017). There are different causes of the lack of trust: limited understanding of the research process can lead to difficulty grasping research outcomes and connecting to a particular situation (Nutley et al., 2007); in terms of lived experience, knowledge is doubted due to perceived bias (Frazee, Gilmour, & Mykitiuk, 2006), and people have difficulty empathising with lived experience that is different from their own (McRuer, 2006). However, the impact of the lack of trust in both cases is the same: people question the knowledge that comes from these areas, making it difficult for knowledge from research or lived experience to move quickly into new areas, like social policy.

**Resistance to Changing Worldview.** Each person has a unique view of how the world works—standpoint or sitpoint (Harding, 2004)—though some ideas may overlap when people share a culture or educational background. Attempting to change a person's views is

complicated; people often become defensive when their worldviews are challenged (Puar, 2007). Some people even attack, verbally or physically, when their perception of the world is disputed (DeWall et al., 2010). Recent research has been considering this reaction and found that when a person's worldview is threatened, their responses are similar to those that occur when a person is physically assaulted (Friesen, Campbell, & Kay, 2015). There is no known way to manage this reaction in people. Thus, it is essential for people who are sharing knowledge to be aware of different types of resistance. Resistance does not mean that a person's worldview cannot change, but that it could take longer.

**Limitation to Uptake Due to Presentation of Material.** Not all people learn in the same way (Quinn, Smith, Kalmar, & Burgoon, 2018). What works best for some people when learning new information or knowledge will be inaccessible to other people (Lugones, 2006).

Unfortunately, when creating a knowledge plan, there are usually not enough resources to generate the range of knowledge products to meet the needs of everyone who might access them (Bowen, 2012). Lack of variety means that knowledge mobilisers must make choices about what format their knowledge sharing will take. These decisions are difficult to make. It is best to involve the audience that will be engaging with the knowledge to discuss what formats are best suited for them (NGL Consultants Ltd., 1991). However, while moving knowledge one must be aware that not all formats are effective at sharing knowledge. Finding the balance between a format that can share knowledge well and be readily engaged with by an audience can be precarious.

**Patterns with New Ways of Thinking and Doing.** While it can be hard to challenge people's worldviews, some people appear to be more open to change than others. Rogers (2003) believes that there are five types of what he calls adopters. Adopters are people who engage with

new information, knowledge, or innovations and make use of them. The five types of adopters are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2003). The five categories describe people who engage with information in different ways: (a) those who are quick to engage with new information or knowledge (innovators and early adopters), (b) those who engage when information or knowledge becomes popular (early or late majority), and (c) those who are very resistant to change (laggards). The presence of people who will engage with information and knowledge at different times is a barrier for knowledge mobilisers. Researchers, policymakers, and grassroots movements often must move quickly to new projects, media topics, or pressing concerns (Stammers, 2009). While knowledge mobilisation should be prolonged to ensure the KMb plan addresses all adopters, it is not always possible. Unfortunately, KMb plans often must aim for a specific adopter when developing their strategies due to limited resources and the need to move to other concerns or research.

**Project Alienation.** When knowers, like researchers, research assistants, and community members, are involved in only a small part of the research project they can become disconnected from the project (Marx & McLellan, 2000) Marx would call this disconnection a form of alienation from their work (Marx & McLellan, 2000).<sup>9</sup> This alienation encourages knowers to move on to different projects. Disconnection from a project can leave knowledge sharing plans at risk, leading to fewer effective results. Risk of disconnection makes it high risk for some knowers, like communities, to engage with specific projects, like research. It is difficult for research partners to address these concerns. Even with compensation for community partners,

<sup>9</sup> More details on Marx's understanding of alienation and surplus-value is found in Chapter 3, in the section called Classical Disability Theory.

when the surplus-value created by the research results cannot be ensured, it might not be worthwhile for communities to engage with research projects (Titchkosky, 2014).

**Over Planning.** Morton (2015) warns against being too elaborate when addressing barriers to mobilising knowledge. She gives this warning because the KMb process itself can become a hindrance to the process of mobilising knowledge. To limit the factors to be addressed in the mobilisation process we come back to the relationship between knower and audience. This relationship can help knowers decide what KMb tools will best suit their needs (Morton, 2015). Understanding an audience's preferred format of knowledge sharing will help people using KMb to manage resources and gain investment. Some methods of focusing investment are through a process called productive interaction (Spaapen & van Drooge, 2011). A productive plan usually takes a direct, indirect, or financial approach to building investment in knowledge. Relationships between knower and audience also allow knowers to learn what topics will be relevant to audiences in coming years. Developing and sustaining relationships with audiences can be difficult but the results are productive in the long run (Campbell et al., 2014).

### **Decolonising Knowledge Mobilisation**

There is too strong a focus on what knowledge can improve and less on how it can cause harm. The current definitions of KMb encourage the focus on intended impact. What about unintended impact? By unintended impact I mean the possible broader impacts on the social wellbeing of people. How does a KMb plan impact negative and positive human rights?<sup>10</sup> Does it reinforce harmful stereotypes about marginalised folks? The unintended impact section allows us to bring social justice ideals into the knowledge mobilisation process. It encourages people to

<sup>10</sup> Details on human rights, including positive and negative human rights, are found in Chapter 3, in the section called Anti-Oppression: Human Rights

consider the political purposes, both positive and not-so-positive, of their projects. It provides a space for people to think more critically about the knowledge and information they plan to share, and how they plan to share it. This greater critical engagement could also affect how people think about knowledge production and knowledge uptake.

To develop some questions to encourage thinking about the positive and not-so-positive political impacts of a KMb plan, I will be working with Linda Tuhiwia Smith's (2012) **Decolonizing Methodologies**. I will be using Tuhiwia Smith's work because in Chapter 9, "Responding to the Imperatives of an Indigenous Agenda: A Case Study of Maori," she discusses the complicated process of decolonisation work. I believe that this can provide a framework through which I can build a process for exploring unintended impact.

While I would like to go into the depths that Tuhiwia Smith's (2012) and others have explored about the process of challenging the work one does, I do not have space in this paper. To successfully consider both the needs and the not-so-positive impacts of a KMb plan, it is necessary to understand the impact within the process of KMb. One day I hope to explore this topic in more depth. For now, I will present a set of questions to use to consider the positive and not-so-positive impacts of a KMb plan.

One of the aspects of Tuhiwia Smith's (2012) work that I like is the presentation of questions people can use in their work to begin to decolonise it. I have personally used these questions to help guide my work and as a reminder to engage in decolonial processes while completing research. Tuhiwia Smith's (2012) questions are as follows:

Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant?

Who says so? What knowledge will the community gain from this study? What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study? What are some likely

positive outcomes from this study? What are some possible negative outcomes?

How can the negative outcomes be eliminated? To whom is the researcher accountable? What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher? (Chapter 9, Section 6, para. 4)

I believe we can adopt some of these questions to consider the positive and not-so-positive political impacts of a KMb plan. However, there are some points related to KMb plans that I don't think are addressed in the questions above. Brown (2000) noted that knowledge can change while people learn about it and integrate it into their own life experiences and worldview. Thus, having a means to understand changes in knowledge as it adapts to new situations is vital.

Thus, I will use the following questions while considering the impact of a KMb plan to view the possible positive and not-so-positive impacts:

1. What knowledge will a community/policymaker/practitioner gain?
2. Who would benefit from this knowledge?
3. Who will not be impacted by this knowledge?
4. Does the knowledge consider marginalised communities?
5. Does the KMb plan allow knowledge to change?
6. What are some likely positive outcomes from this study?
7. What are some possible harmful outcomes?
8. Can the harmful outcomes be reduced or eliminated?
9. To whom is the knowledge sharer accountable?
10. What processes are in place to address concerns about the knowledge?

We could include other questions on this list. However, for people to use impact within a KMb plan, it must not be overwhelming. I believe that this list provides a reliable guide for topics to consider when thinking about the political impact of a KMb plan.

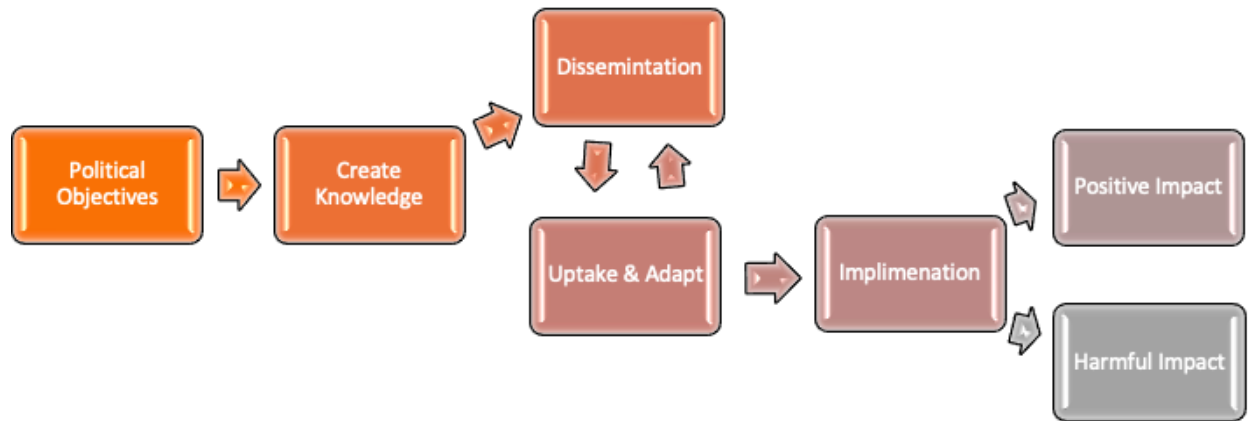


Figure 2: Diagram of the definition of knowledge mobilisation

For this dissertation, I define knowledge mobilisation, as an umbrella term that describes different processes whose aim is to move information or knowledge from one group to another. Core components to the process of KMb are political objectives, knowledge, dissemination, knowledge user(s), uptake and adaption, implementation, beneficial impact, and harmful impact. Some components that might be involved in the KMb process are knowledge holder(s), knowledge mobiliser, and the creation of knowledge or information. Figure 2 is a diagram of the process of my definition of knowledge mobilisation with all the core components. Note that as KMb is a process that can change from project to project, how the components engage with each other will change, meaning the diagram is an example of one possible KMb process.

Some of the core components overlap with the co-production pathway to impact model and need no further explanation. Components that are new or altered from that KMb model are detailed here. First, political objectives are the broad aims of a KMb project. For instance, a researcher might have a KMb plan to get their research evidence to policymakers to influence decisions about new government policy. This political objective is essential to know as the rest of the KMb process is guided by this objective.

The knowledge user component is an alteration of the term audience from the co-production pathway to impact model. Audience is a term with a long history within the linear

framework and holds a connotation of passivity. I recommend adopting knowledge user, which forces us to recall that people receiving information or knowledge are those who cause implementation of information and knowledge. The components of knowledge creation and uptake and adaption are reframing the research and uptake phases from the co-production pathway to impact model. Knowledge creation allows for a wider variety of knowledge creation, besides research evidence. Uptake and adaption create space to acknowledge that it takes time and effort for knowledge users to access, learn, and adapt information and knowledge into their worldview.

The positive and harmful impact components are a division of the co-production pathway to impact phase called impact. The division of this phase makes us acknowledge that while our KMb project has the best of intentions, it is likely to cause some form of harm. Being aware of this, we can take a proactive approach to possible harmful impact: trying to identify possible harms, planning and putting resources towards addressing harms, and being open to hearing what harms could or have happened.

## **Conclusion**

In this section, I have explored what the knowledge of knowledge mobilisation is. I made it clear that a well-defined understanding of knowledge is needed to make decisions about how mobilisation will happen. By exploring how knowledge is made, it is clear that the mobilisation process works with information as well. Information is a crucial piece to the KMb process since it is easy to share and is less likely to be transformed during the sharing process. The distinction between knowledge and information is not always easy to make but is necessary because it helps make decisions about the mobilisation plan.



Concerns about knowledge were also broached. I argued that in a definition of KMb these concerns must be addressed. I recommended that interests related to knowledge, like what sources of knowledge are respected and included, should be discussed under the political aspect of KMb. Addressing political elements of KMb can allow mobilisers to better orient their plans, improve transparency of a KMb plan, and assist in managing possible harmful impacts of KMb planning. Using this definition of KMb, we will move on to better understanding the practicalities of engaging in KMb in the next section.

## Chapter 3: Theory

### Introduction

I have mentioned my past engagement with activism, lasting most of my adult life. I was a person who asked why people accepted the way things were when the world could be so much better. My time within activist movements made me aware of the power of collective action—the need for people to work together and demand that our society be better.

During my undergraduate and graduate studies, I strove to understand collective action and its connection to research. Through these explorations, I have learned that social change happens efficiently when collective action and research occur concurrently (Smith, 2014). I would argue that collective action and research are parts of the social change process.

Knowledge mobilisation, in part, has been created to help ensure that collective action and research can work better together. The relationship between knowledge mobilisers and audiences is an essential component of social change (Campbell, Pollock, Carr-Harris, & Briscoe 2014). This relationship works because knowledge mobilisers have directly engaged with a topic, thus ensuring that they have an in-depth understanding of the matter (Rogers, 2003), while audiences have limited access to knowledge on a topic, but could benefit from learning more about it. Similar to the issues related to power between researchers and communities, so too are there power issues between knowledge mobilisers and audiences (Brown & Strega, 2015).

Below is my attempt to create a complex intersectional disability theory to guide me through my research project. I hope this theory will give me a framework to address unequal power dynamics when I take on the role of knowledge mobiliser with community collaborators. I hope the theory will begin a discussion between knowledge brokers and consultants about how we complete our work while reducing possible harmful impacts. I will use the theory to guide

my understanding of knowledge mobilisation and its outcomes throughout my project and the writing of this dissertation.

## **Context**

To develop an intersectional disability theory, I am working within western academy. I define western academy/research as an institution of knowledge production. While I strive to include global sources, I admit that my access to global research is limited by several factors, including language skills and journal access. I have been forced to use work mainly produced by academic institutions found within Canada and the United States. A benefit of this limit on research materials means that I can focus on critics found within these western academic institutions. Before I discuss the theory, I want to make clear what I mean by western academic institutions. I will include a definition of different areas of the western academic institution.

Western institutions of knowledge production are based upon the knowledge systems of nations that commonly engaged in colonisation (Elder, 2012). For example, the scientific method is entrenched in colonial history, making it difficult for certain forms of information and knowledge production to be considered valid (Fowkes Tobin, 1999, Driskill, 2011). There are also issues of acceptance of information and knowledge produced by marginalised groups within colonised spaces (Garland-Thomson, 2014). The differences in what information and knowledge is considered valid are essential. I do not believe that we can have a sufficient understanding of the world if it is based on limited experiences.

While developing the theory for this dissertation, I deliberately delved into marginalised forms of knowledge found within western institutions of knowledge production. Figure 3 is a visual representation of the three types of western knowledge institutions I will be engaging with throughout this thesis:

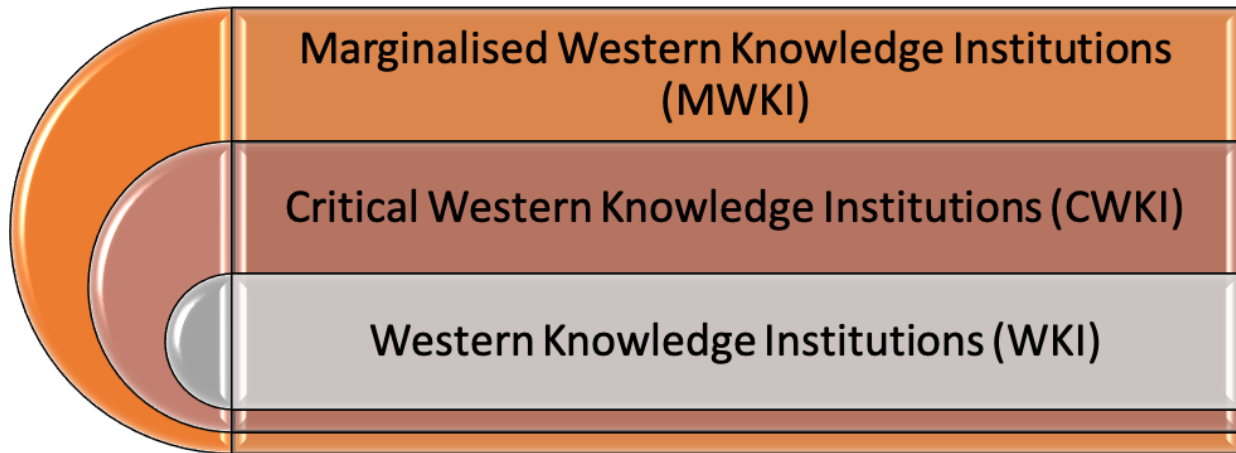


Figure 3: Adapted from Smith (2018, February 8)

1. Western Knowledge Institutions (WKI)
2. Critical Western Knowledge Institutions (CWKI)
3. Marginalised Western Knowledge Institutions (MWKI)

In my discussion I make general statements about the above categories. I know not all knowledge produced in these sections will fit within the general statements made (Fanon, 1967; Foucault, 2004). I argue that these pieces of knowledge are outliers; for the majority, these statements will hold because “academic writing is a form of selecting, arranging and presenting knowledge. It privileges sets of texts, views about the history of an idea, what issues count as significant” (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p. 36). I am cultivating categories that present the dominant knowledge found within these categories.

**Western Knowledge Institutions (WKI)** are embedded with “imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy” (hooks, 2013, p. 23). Imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy is a term developed by bell hooks to describe the “interlocking political systems that are the foundation of our nation’s politics” (hooks, 2003, p. 17). The terms “imperialist,” “white supremacist,” and “capitalist” are all used to modify the concept of patriarchy. This phrase has been adopted and explored by other academics to address the embedded racism, classism, and

colonialism present in the United States and Canada (Farmer, 2004; Puar, 2007; Thobani, 2007; Weheliye, 2014). Many academics do not find this phrase to be inclusive and have called for the inclusion of heteronormativity, ableism, and other forms of oppression (Driskill, 2011; Haritaworn, Kuntsman, & Posocco, 2014; McRuer, 2006; Simpson, 2014). I use imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy as an inclusive term because I believe this phrase reflects the political atmosphere that generates the various types of oppression experienced within WKI. This means that accepted knowledge within WKI adheres to a hierarchy of marginalisation. In this structure, only the knowledge of those at the top of the hierarchy, commonly white-cis-wealthy-abled bodied-straight-men, is considered valid.

**Critical Western Knowledge Institution (CWKI).** The Critical Western Knowledge Institution is not that different from WKI. The critiques of WKI are produced by individuals that only have one or two differences from white, cis, wealthy, able-bodied, straight men. For instance, Foucault is known as a white, cis, wealthy, able-bodied, gay man, and Fanon is known as a black, cis, wealthy, able-bodied, straight man (Gutting, 2005; Julien, 1996). While being critical of WKI, CWKI can continue to perpetuate imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (Brown & Strega, 2015; hooks, 2013; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). For example, Marx, Foucault, and Fanon are all critical theorists who are extensively critiqued for the limits of their work (Bakan & Enakshi, 2014; Debrix & Barder, 2011; Gleeson, 1997; Mbembe, 2003; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Said, 1979; Spivak, Landry, & MacLean, 1996; Weheliye, 2014).

While I found connections between critical academics and marginalisation it was not a requirement that researchers had to be marginalised. There are some within this category that are white, cis, wealthy, able-bodied, straight men who were critical of WKI. While all criticism of WKI is important, I try to focus on marginalised folks to centre their voices.

**Marginalised Western Knowledge Institution (MWKI)** moves knowledge production out of the space of those who are most privileged. The focus of MWKI is on ostracised knowledge. I narrow my exploration of ostracised knowledge to sources that reflect and challenge the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy society I am within. This focus allows me to resist the pressures to be accepted in WKI (Driskill, 2011; Morris, 2014; Thobani, Razack, & Smith, 2010; Wing, 2003). Knowledge within MWKI demands I change the base assumptions of what knowledge is and how it is created (Brown & Strega, 2015; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). For example, some forms of feminism are thought to perpetuate imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy due to their focus on white, cis, wealthy, able-bodied, straight women (Morris, 2014). In these instances, even though feminism is attempting to address patriarchy, the continuation of racism, ableism, and heteronormativity in these feminist theories fails to challenge the base assumptions of WKI.

I must consider many perspectives on the theories found within MWKI. These considerations will assist me in ensuring that I am using theories that challenge the base knowledge of WKI. I want to make it clear that I am not throwing all knowledge from WKI out. It is the basis of how knowledge is understood within western academia/research. What I am doing is making sure that I am critically engaging with WKI ideas. As well, I am critical in my use of theories from CWKI and MWKI. This critical view of CWKI and MWKI will empower me to create a theory that will shape my research to resist imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy.

## **Audience**

In this chapter I am writing for knowledge brokers and consultants. I feel there is limited critical engagement when knowledge brokers and consultants work on a project. In my personal

experience working on KMb projects, there was an unspoken expectation that research knowledge would not be questioned. As a result, I would bring my skills in KMb to a project without broaching topics of possible harm due to the research knowledge or how knowledge was being shared.

I do not believe that KMb experts should let research knowledge that could harm marginalised groups enter spaces of social change. That is not to suggest that we are gatekeepers of knowledge. I think there is a way to bring critical engagement with research knowledge into our KMb skill set. Bring critical of research knowledge is not a natural process, nor is there only one way to be critical of research knowledge.<sup>11</sup> I hope that by focusing this chapter on knowledge brokers and consultants, we can start a conversation about how we bring critical thinking and identification of possible harms into the KMb process.

### **Why Anti-Oppression and Disability Theory**

I aim to do anti-oppressive research stemming from disability theory. I view disability theory as an interdisciplinary field that allows me to pull in works from the following perspectives anti-racism, feminism, human rights, Indigenous rights, queer rights, and social justice. In disability theory, we are encouraged to explore the complexities of identity, experience, and engagement with our social and built worlds. This sophisticated understanding of disability theory allows me to pull work from early critical theory, like Marx and Foucault,

<sup>11</sup> To explore different writings on decolonisation (Mohanty, 2003; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012), anti-oppression (Brown & Strega, 2015; Moosa-Mitha, 2005), anti-racism (Back & Solomos, 2009; Bakan & Enakshi, 2014; hooks, 2013; Weheliye, 2014; Wing, 2003), feminism (Garland-Thomson, 2014; Harding, 2004; Hill Collins, 2009; Thobani, Razack, & Smith, 2010), queer (Driskill, 2011; Haritaworn, Kuntsman, & Posocco, 2014; Zavarzadeh, Ebert, & Morton., 2001), disability (Ben-Moshe, Chapman, & Carey, 2014; Erevelles, 2011; Wendell, 1996), and Indigenous (Fowkes Tobin, 1999; Driskill, 2011; Elder, 2012) views.

and weave them with more contemporary critical anti-oppressive theory. Anti-oppressive theory—another interdisciplinary field that brings together understandings of social justice and human rights to focus us on acting against oppression, discrimination, and injustice—forces us to reflect on our work, but also the social structures and institutions we engage with. We are forced to recognise the harm perpetrated on marginalised groups, and we are supported and encouraged to make anti-oppressive changes whenever possible. Through developing an anti-oppressive disability theory for this project, I aim to create a theory that will support me in addressing concerns of oppression, discrimination, and power.

While I weave anti-oppression and disability theory together, I argue that there is a need to ensure that the theoretical differences are clear during the weaving process. As a result, I will explore disability theory through its interdisciplinary lens, pulling from many areas that intermingle with disability experience. Using disability theory, I will first explore classical critical theory, such as Marx, Foucault, Said, and Fanon. I begin here because these classical critical theories are embedded in the work of disability theory. Then I will explore contemporary disability theory, which entwines the work of anti-racism, feminism, human rights, Indigenous and queer theory. While I bring other marginalised fields into the theory, I work with a disability lens to gain a more complex understanding of theoretical concepts. The lens of disability follows as I move into anti-oppression theories, specifically social justice and human rights.

As noted, this chapter is written for knowledge brokers and consultants. I regularly talk about theoretical concepts that engage with knowledge mobilisation. This dissertation also focuses on grassroots movements, and I would be remiss not to address how anti-oppression disability theory engages with these groups.



## Doubleweaving Methodology

I want to note how I am weaving anti-oppression and disability theory. I use the word weave deliberately as I am working with doubleweaving—meaning the entwining of different approaches into a complex whole. I borrow doubleweaving from the work of Qwo-Li Driskill (2010), theory that is based on a basket weaving technique used by the Cherokee and other Indigenous nations from the southeastern area of the continent known to western nations as North America. Driskill (2011) describes doubleweaving as a highly sophisticated form of basket weaving that “have two independent designs as a result of the weave, one on the outside and one on the inside” (p.74). The two different designs in the weaving of the baskets are possible because two separate baskets are constructed and joined at a rim. Doubleweaving as a theory supports me in combining approaches while being critical of the arguments for and against the theories. Doubleweaving forces me to be aware of a theory’s limitations. This awareness of theory limitations, like weaknesses in a basket weave, helps me in selecting other theories that address these limitations. This process allows me to create an entwined disability theory that leads to a stronger anti-oppressive theory.

## Classical Disability Theory

While anti-oppressive theory is essential to me personally as it connects with my activist work, why is it relevant to this thesis? How does anti-oppressive disability theory connect to knowledge mobilisation in general? Moreover, how is anti-oppressive disability theory linked to the use of KMb in grassroots organising? The need to include anti-oppressive disability theory within the KMb work of this project comes down to power. Marx’s (1889) discussion of labour, particularly in **Capital** where he outlines the idea of power relations within capitalism, describes different types of labour, which create different outputs and different social relationships (Marx,

1889). Marx describes two forms of labour, domestic and productive labour.<sup>12</sup> I am interested in productive labour for this dissertation (Marx, 1889). Productive labour is work done to produce an item. For Marx, there is an association between productive labour and the capitalist employment system (Marx & McLellan, 2000). Productive labour used to create an item within this system is not directly connected to a person's livelihood but exchanged for payment. Thus, the labourer works for the owner of the product, creating a power imbalance between the labourer and the owner.

I propose that the relationship between a knowledge holder and an audience can be like the relationship between an owner and a worker (Brown & Strega, 2015). Knowledge mobilisation is built around challenging the one-way relationship between a knowledge holder and an audience, alternatively known as the linear model of KMb.<sup>13</sup> The linear model is focused on here because it was the conventional means of sharing knowledge for many years (Campbell et al., 2014). While the linear model is no longer the primary way of sharing knowledge, the history of its predominance still impacts KMb today. This one-way relationship between a knowledge holder and an audience is steeped in power imbalances. The assumption is that the knowledge holder has all the details of a topic and that audiences are but a vessel for information

<sup>12</sup> Marx is not critical of domestic labour and often seems to reinforce the patriarchal idea of men working and women caring for the home. Lise Vogel (2013) suggests domestic labour engages with the history of patriarchy to reinforce the oppression of women. Vogel (2013) is not the only person to criticise Marx, particularly in connection to different forms of labour (Zavarzadeh et al., 2001). There has been a call for the consideration of intersecting oppressions that impact a person's engagement with either domestic or productive labour (Bakan & Enakshi, 2014). For example, understanding how race, sex, and ability can change the experience of class oppression is vital to grasping both the individual experience of oppression, but also how systems, like capitalism, affect different groups of people (Bakan & Enakshi, 2014; Spivak, Landry, & MacLean, 1996; Vogel, 2013; Weheliye, 2014; Zavarzadeh et al., 2001).

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 2 for a more in-depth explanation.

to be placed (Campbell et al., 2014). The linear model of KMb places much of the power within the knowledge holder. Thus, a knowledge holder could be seen as the owner of productive labour.

When KMb began in farm and health research, the use of emancipatory or participatory projects were designed to empower the audience during projects (Cook, 2006). While these are positive changes, Leslie Brown and Susan Strega (2015) indicate that emancipatory or participatory methods are not enough. They suggest that unless a project instils an anti-oppressive ideal from the beginning, it can remain entrenched within a corrupt system that has thrived on the power residing with the knowledge holder. For instance, the knowledge holder's organisation often holds the resources connected to a participatory research project (Levin, 2008). This placement of resources within the knowledge holder's institution creates power imbalances between knowledge holders and audiences. The power imbalance is created because the audience does not have the same access to resources, like money, materials, or literature. Control over resources sets knowledge holders firmly in the role of the owner of a project's productive labour.

The power dynamics of the linear model of KMb mean that the knowledge holder and audience experience the emotional and mental effects of productive labour. Marx (1889) calls this alienation. Abigail B. Bakan and Dua Enakshi (2014) describe alienation as the way people become disconnected from the products they make, the labour process, their fellow humans, and their species-being (see Appendix B for definitions of terms) (Marx & McLellan, 2000). Disconnection from a person's labour, products, fellow people, and species-being causes people to experience adverse mental and physical harms (Spivak et al., 1996). The ways alienation will express itself can vary. Alienation can occur within a person because they do not have any

connection to the products they make, or it can happen between groups (Marx & McLellan, 2000). No matter how alienation presents itself, there are feelings of disconnection between a person and their world (things or people) or between groups of people.

The presence of alienation within KMb projects could increase the likelihood of the project failing because people move on to other projects, no longer feel invested in the KMb project, or do not feel connected to the people they are working with. The effects of alienation are significant to consider when working with grassroots movements because there are often so many projects its members could be doing. If the grassroots organisation becomes disconnected from the project or the people they are working with, they could decide that their time and resources are better used elsewhere.

The process of disconnection between groups of people can be a factor in the dehumanisation or “othering” of individuals or groups. “Othering” continues the narrative of being “super-adequate” (Spivak et al., 1996). “Super-adequate” implies that a person or group of people can work well within a certain system. This term is often used to individualise the privilege or lack of privilege a person or group has when engaging with a system. The individualisation of “super-adequate” makes it appear that a person is the cause of their success or downfall, meaning that those who lack privilege are the cause of their failure to thrive (Harding, 2004). Thus, the focus of many narratives about “othered” groups often takes up the story of how they are not “super-adequate.” Disability studies has a history with the concept “super-adequate.” The term “supercrip”, found within disability studies, has historically identified a person who moves beyond the conventional, socially imposed limits of people with disabilities (Kama, 2004; McRuer, 2006).

Narratives of alienation and the “other” are present in many interactions within our society (Goffman, 1963). When we enter meetings with audiences, we have expectations of their level of knowledge, the skill set they have, and what they can bring to the KMb project. At the same time, audiences who engage with knowledge holders also come to the research project with similar assumptions. If we are uncritical in our ideas about a knowledge mobilisation project, the commonly assumed roles of knowledge holder and audience will reinscribe the history of the exploitation of marginalised communities.

How do we, as knowledge brokers and consultants, find ways to challenge power dynamics that could cause harm in collaborating communities? I think that we start by learning what factors cause the marginalisation of a group. Foucault’s concept of biopower explores power differences that marginalise some groups in specific contexts (Foucault, 2004). As Foucault states, biopower is the process of society moving towards viewing a subject’s body as a machine. When a subject’s body is working correctly, it can fill a specific role needed for society to function. Thus, society uses different forms of power to groom subjects’ bodies—machines—to fit into the roles needed for society to function (Foucault, 1978). Parts of this grooming ensures the subject’s health, knowledge, and obedience. I want to take a moment here to emphasise that knowledge is part of grooming. As knowledge brokers and consultants, we must be aware that our work, if not done from an anti-oppressive place, could lead to the grooming of people for their social roles.

It is important to consider how knowledge brokers and consultants might help to groom people for social roles. Brad Elliot Stone (2004) can help us understand this. Stone states that biopower began to be used in society when it started utilising a war model. The war is an internal battle between “the dominant subgroup within a country against the ‘inferior’ subgroup” (Stone,

2004, p. 80). Taking this view of the war between dominant and inferior subgroups, knowledge brokers and consultants are at risk of perpetuating harmful ideas about inferior subgroups. Some of these dangerous ideas include the notion that specific subgroups behave or are genetically predisposed to act in certain ways. The mainstream media often plays into these harmful ideas about inferior subgroups. For example, when mass shootings happen, if the shooter is white, there is a focus on their mental health (Knoll & Annas, 2016). The framing of the white mass shooter as mentally ill perpetuates the harmful idea that people with mental health concerns are a danger to society; in fact, people with mental health issues are more likely to have violence done to them (Varshney, Mahapatra, Krishnan, Gupta, & Deb, 2016).

How are subjects placed within a dominant or inferior subgroup? Jana Sawicki suggests that Foucault's concept of biopower uses both disciplinary and regulatory power to mould subjects into their societal roles (Gutting, 2005). Regulatory power uses social institutions to mould individual bodies into their roles (Foucault, 2004; Stone, 2004), whereas disciplinary power works through social policy and governance to manage people through punishment. For example, the "war on drugs" has allowed for the continuation of minimum mandatory sentences (Bruno & Csiernik, 2018). This policy led to more people incarcerated for drug possession. After examining who was being imprisoned under these policies, it becomes clear that there were a higher number of people of colour. These policies were one piece that contributed to the school-to-prison pipeline (Wald & Losen, 2003). The theory of the school-to-prison pipeline states that when students of colour cannot meet the roles within the regulatory power of the education system, the legal system takes over to administer disciplinary power. This process continues the oppression and discrimination of people of colour, particularly young black men in the United States and Indigenous folks in Canada (Monkman, 2018).

The number of subjects that fail to fit within the social mould is challenging to manage through disciplinary power. Achille Mbembe's (2003) concept of necropower is complementary to the idea of biopower. Mbembe (2003) argues that the internal war means that the status of living dead is forced upon groups of people. Living dead means that there is no need for the regulatory powers of health care. Groups labelled as inferior through biopower are always in a position of being labelled the living dead. The label of living dead allows the resources needed to care for these groups to be given to those considered to be living, which is also known as the dominant subgroup (Mbembe, 2003; Stone, 2004). Historical and ongoing attempts at cultural and physical genocide of Indigenous people in Canada is a clear example of an inferior group being labelled as the living dead to benefit Canadian citizens (Giroux, 2006; Thobani, 2007). The labelling of Indigenous people as living dead is witnessed in several ways: within art when Indigenous people are viewed as part of nature, within the legal system with the lack of investigation of missing and murdered Indigenous women that has lasted for decades, and in research when Indigenous people are over-researched but gain little from the projects they have collaborated on (Simpson, 2014; Thobani, 2007; Whitinui et al., 2015).

I have shown that social systems engage in processes to mould, punish, and erase certain people to create subjects needed for cheap labour within our economic capitalist system. We as knowledge brokers and consultants can support these social projects. We must acknowledge the influence we have. However, that is not our only role in this process. David Ingram makes it clear that society manages the work of biopower and necropower without an overseer (Gutting, 2005). This lack of an overseer for the implementation of biopower means that surveillance of yourself and the others around you becomes paramount. We can support biopower and necropower through the knowledge we share and through our engagement with people and

knowledge. It is for these reasons that I believe anti-oppression must enter our work as knowledge brokers and consultants. We must find ways to challenge ourselves and the knowledge we share.

Before we move forward, I want to acknowledge that theories of biopower and necropower are not without fault. There are numerous critics of both ideas. Alexander G. Weheliye (2014) has a substantial critique of racialisation and necropower. He suggests that these theories are uncritical in their view of the causes of racism, which results in these concepts reinforcing the idea that race is biological. He indicates that exploring concepts like that of the Flesh—a notion that “represents racializing assemblages of subjection that can never annihilate the lines of flight, freedom dreams, practices of liberation, and possibilities of other worlds.” (Weheliye, 2014, p. 2) —permits the social creation and institutional reinforcement of racism to be acknowledged, challenged and preferably replaced.

There is no easy answer to how we address issues of power, oppression, or discrimination within knowledge mobilisation. Creating new places or ways to develop knowledge might sound like a great idea, but Licia Carlson and Shelly Tremain (2005) suggest that the creation of new institutions is a form of disciplinary power because these spaces create new areas of knowledge, which then can increase control on “othered” subjects (Tremain, 2005). Grassroots movements have a history of finding ways to share knowledge and influence social policy (Milan, 2013a), from pirate radio to alternative news sources to using hashtags (Milan, 2013b; Tremblay, 2015). Thus, while there are benefits of having a field of study for knowledge mobilisation, we must consider the impacts formalising this area of research has on knowledge production and mobilisation for grassroots organising.



One way I bring anti-oppression into my research is by staying aware of the limitations of our language. Ian Hacking's (1986) **Making Up People** discusses how categories change the way we expect a person, or group of people, to act. Judith Butler (1993) talks about not just the importance of words, but a word's history; she explores the way specific terms carry the weight of meanings into new situations, even when the word is used in a different context. We must be careful when choosing how to describe knowledge holders and audiences. The history of these designations affects how we perceive their role in the knowledge mobilisation process. These perceptions are important because that perceived role and its importance can change how people are compensated for their time, which impacts their material wellbeing.

Language takes on a more involved role when people hold positions where they straddle the boundary of knowledge holder and audience. Franz Fanon (1967) talks about the impact communication has on how others view us. According to Fanon (1967), the black man must find a way to balance using the language of white colonisers and the language of the black man's community; otherwise, he will experience exclusion from both communities. People working in their communities can experience similar situations. The language knowledge brokers and consultants use with audiences from their community can and will change how their community engages with them (Brown & Strega, 2015).

### **Contemporary Disability Theory**

Standpoint theory is another way that I bring anti-oppressive theory into this dissertation. Patricia Hill Collins (2009) defines standpoint theory as an understanding that a marginalised group has different experiences of shared space than a non-marginalised group. This experience, particularly the invisibility of black women within American society, permits that group to critique the standpoint of the non-marginalised group. Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge

(2016) go on to say that the standpoints of individuals mature through a person's experiences with policies, social structures, and the institutions of society. When a group of people share similar experiences upon engaging with social structures, this lived experience can be used to theorise a critical view of the non-marginalised group standpoint.

The term sitpoint will be used when discussing disability-related standpoint theory because as Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (2014) describes in the article "Feminist Disability Studies," sitpoint helps to employ the crip lens to standpoint theory. Susan Wendell (1996) formalises a discussion on sitpoints in her book **The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability**.<sup>14</sup> Wendell (1996) says, "having read and listened a great deal to the thoughts of people with disabilities, I do want to claim that, collectively, we have accumulated a significant body of knowledge, with a different sitpoint (or standpoints)" (p.73). The engagement of disability studies with standpoint theory makes clear the need to acknowledge that there may be more than one unique critical point of view within a marginalised community. The variety of disabilities can significantly change an individual's engagement with social structures, which means that disability sitpoint critiques both the majority's sitpoint, and those predominate sitpoints within disability studies.

Sitpoint theory has become useful in many different areas, which Sandra Harding (2004) notes: "Race, ethnicity-based, anti-imperial, and Queer social justice movements routinely produce standpoint themes" (p. 3). She goes on to state that standpoints bring together

<sup>14</sup> Rosemary Garland-Thompson is a feminist disability scholar whose work aimed to bring disability theory, particularly feminist disability theory, into conversation with feminist theory. The introduction of sitpoint was a way to crip the term and theory of "standpoint," which in its use, created an ideal of an able-bodied subject. Sitpoint forces the reader to consider the complex intersectional experiences that might otherwise be forgotten.

marginalised knowledge with new theoretical perspectives to make “epistemological, scientific, and political advantage” (Harding, 2004, p.7). It is essential to remember, as Nancy Hartsock says, the theorization of new sitpoints does not matter when we see that while non-marginalised groups have power, they can embed their reality within social structures (Harding, 2004).

Finding ways to bring marginalised sitpoints into broader society is essential. Finding ways to make space for marginalised voices is essential to social change that minimises harm to marginalised groups. I believe that knowledge mobilisation might be a means of raising voices from marginalised groups, within and outside of academia.

Bringing sitpoints from groups that are still marginalised within Canadian society, like women, people of colour, people with disabilities, and queer people, into more academic works is an essential goal for knowledge mobilisation to ensure that research is useful to communities (Brown & Strega, 2015). As Dorothy E. Smith says, “If we begin from the world as we experience it, it is at least possible to see that we are located and that what we know of the other is conditional upon the location as part of a relation comprehending the other’s location also” (Harding, 2004, p. 30). Expanding discussions to include different sitpoints aims to break down the western notion that there is one solution to the experiences of many different groups. (Brown & Strega, 2015; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Wing, 2003).

We must allow for diverse means of sharing knowledge when creating and working on KMB plans. When we do not know all the forms of diverse ways of knowledge sharing, we risk othering certain groups of people. Through this othering process we risk harming those groups with our good intentions. As Jenny Morris (2014) says, the act of feeling sorry for a marginalised person “is part and parcel of hostility, of an inability to identify with him/her and entirely compatible with a tendency to inflict physical or verbal abuse” (p. 4). Violence towards

marginalised communities takes many forms, sometimes non-physical, which confirms that we need to consider multiple solutions, both inside and outside of specific marginalised communities. Sarah Schulman's (Schulman, 2009) discussion about homophobia in families as being dominated by the process of shunning is an excellent example. The process of shunning is an action that denies personhood to an individual or group by ignoring their presence within specific spaces. This shunning is a form of denial of another's sitpoint, which creates a society where violence against women, racialised folks, disabled folks, queer folks, and other marginalised communities is normalised. Then our society often frames the normalised violence as brought on by the marginalised person or group, creating scapegoats, where the blame for the violence is placed on the victim; as a result, society does not have to consider the violence it creates (Morris, 2014). We need to consider the complex world through listening and acknowledging different sitpoints.

While it is important to acknowledge and listen to different sitpoints, it is also essential to understand how to bring multiple sitpoints into knowledge mobilisation. One way to do this is to connect lived experience with a theoretical framework (hooks, 2000). The framework can be used to take the experiences of a person or a group into an academic understanding. For example, there are several different theories of disability (Withers, 2012). These theories create a very different understanding of disability sitpoint. As no one theory can provide a perfect understanding of a sitpoint, researchers must develop the skill of combining different approaches to form a more comprehensive understanding of disability experience. For example, Robert McRuer (2006) connected crip and queer theory to gain a more enriched understanding of disability.

The need to combine different theories to grasp the complexities of sitpoints stresses the need for knowledge mobilisation to complicate the positivist idea that there are a limited number of ways to understand knowledge production (Brown & Strega, 2015; Namaste, 2011; Razack, 1998; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). This positivist view of history limits the understanding of what knowledge has power—often white men or colonising countries—and how that knowledge dictates how the world has been understood. While the presence of multiple accounts and truths is becoming present in some academic areas, such as those that use sitpoint theories or the field of history, the positivist views of knowledge are still present (Fein, 1993; Simpson, 2014; Trigger, 1985; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). The past and current colonisation in western society must be acknowledged and addressed if we are to change these systems. These are just a few of the reasons why I, as a knowledge mobiliser, strive to find ways to bring anti-oppression into the KMb work I do.

Using anti-oppressive disability theory has not been easy. I have struggled to bring anti-oppressive theories into activism, where it often feels like marginalised communities are pitted against one another. hooks (2000a) views the process of forcing marginalised communities to compete for the same limited resources as part of domination culture. For example, Jasbir Puar (2007) believes domination culture has pushed the queer community to adopt the homonational subject. The homonational subject is one that meets specific criteria set out by the state, which at the same time further marginalises those that do not fit the requirements. Puar argues that the move to reclassify queer people who fit into heteronormativity—being middle or upper class, planning to marry and raise children—as “non-deviant” is an example of domination culture acting on North American queer culture. As Jasbir Puar (2007) notes, the people who fit this definition are often white men. They become a symbol of the queer individual who fits closely

enough within heteronormativity to be accepted by the state, the assumption being that heterosexuality is the default sexuality which will lead cis men and cis women to enter relationships, get married, and produce offspring. When people uncritically go along with homonationalism—the idea that within homosexuality, predominately white, wealthy, able-bodied, gay, cis men can be used to exemplify the ideology of the nation-state—not only are they harming more “deviant” queer people but often other marginalised groups as well. Puar (2007) outlines how the homonational subject was used to make Muslim people more “deviant” than queer folks after the 9/11 attacks.

The process of the state accepting certain marginalised communities allows these groups greater access to their material needs while continuing the oppression of other marginalised communities (Thobani, Razack, & Smith, 2010). One of the core arguments of Sunera Thobani’s (2007) book is the process by which the government forces immigrants to align themselves with colonisation. The Canadian government does this by allying with colonisation, an unwritten part of the process to access the rights of a Canadian citizen. We can find examples of the forced alliance throughout the immigration process; we will explore the rites and rituals Thobani (2007) discusses. One ritual is the citizenship ceremony. This ceremony includes the oath of citizenship:

I swear (or affirm) / That I will be faithful / And bear true allegiance / To Her Majesty  
Queen Elizabeth the Second / Queen of Canada / Her Heirs and Successors / And that I  
will faithfully observe / The laws of Canada / And fulfil my duties / As a Canadian  
citizen. (“Government of Canada,” 2014, section 1, para. 5)

This oath and the ritual are a part of colonial rule, not just the Canadian nation-state, but also the history of colonialism by England. It continues the erasure of Indigenous nations within Canada and perpetuates the genocide of Indigenous people.

The presence of domination culture at all levels of society makes it difficult for knowledge brokers and consultants to share knowledge without engaging in some form of oppression. We must be aware of this, so we do not forget the possible harms our work can do. As Anthony Appiah and Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks (2000) state, we need to understand sitpoints as essential to understanding the complicated history of white supremacy in our society (Back & Solomos, 2009). Knowing the marginalisation of other groups occurs while whiteness is glorified will help us to understand the social dynamics, as well as the systems and structures, that reinforce white supremacy (Back & Solomos, 2009). We must also understand how glorified categories like whiteness are created or changed. For example, who is considered white during certain time periods; how can we understand the access, privileges, and continued discrimination of groups like Irish, Italian, and Jewish people experience while being “white.” As Zygmunt Bauman argues, this can help us in the deconstruction process and avoid reinforcing these systems within our KMb projects (Back & Solomos, 2009). Knowing the scientific history of biological determinism—the idea that there are biological differences between people with different skin tones and hair textures, creating a hierarchy of the “best” humans (Caspari, 2018)—permits us to understand how whiteness became viewed as “better” than other groups with different skin colour and hair texture (Gould, 1996; Razack, 1998). Being aware of how whiteness became equated with power gives us the ability to critique assumptions about whiteness and power.

Steven Gould (1996) made such an exploration in his book **The Mismeasure of Man**. Gould critiques scientific studies and statistics used to create biological determinism. While Gould’s work has not stopped all people from looking to find reasons for biological determinism (Camporesi, & Cavaliere, 2018), it has helped to create space to examine non-biological reasons

for differences between groups of people (Westhues & Wharf, 2012). In Canada, the exploration of non-biological reasons for differences between groups has led to ideas like the social determinates of health (Pacquiao & Douglas, 2019). We need to act instead of allowing individuals with power (such as white, cis, wealthy, able-bodied people, to name a few examples) to feel better by admitting or presenting guilt over the past atrocities that have created the benefits experienced today (Ahmed, 2005; Steele, 2018).

### **Anti-Oppression: Social Justice**

How can we as knowledge brokers and consultants take action to minimise harm to marginalised communities? I suggest that we might explore social justice to find guidance on how to shape our actions during the KMb process. John Rawls (1971) defines justice as focusing on redistribution. This concept suggests that ensuring equal access to material resources will provide equal access to justice. In principle, knowledge mobilisation already engages with this form of justice as a core component to ensure that knowledge reaches new audiences. Access to material goods is not the only aspect needed to ensure that we achieve social justice (Fraser, 2005; Mohanty, 2015). In fact, Iris Young (2011) argues that groups affected by multiple forms of oppression are not served well by distributive justice. Even when immaterial forms of oppression and discrimination, like access to quality education, can be distributed, injustice is still experienced by groups with intersectional identities. As knowledge brokers and consultants, we must move beyond repackaging knowledge. We must begin to address both the individual and systematic factors that prevent certain groups from accessing knowledge. When addressing systematic factors related to knowledge, I explore the historical, political, cultural, and economic factors (Erevelles, 2011).



Liat Ben-Moshe, Chris Chapman & Allison Carey (2014) describe examples of cultural, historical, and political influences that create structural violence when they discuss compulsory able-bodiedness—the assumption made by society that all people have the same physical and mental abilities (Ben-Moshe et al., 2014). This assumption presumes any person can be switched with another person and perform to similar standards. For example, if an employee quits a specific position with a company, there is an assumption that the newly hired person should meet similar work expectations without needed accommodations. Compulsory able-bodiedness means that society is designed to accommodate the needs of able-bodied people; in doing so people who engage with the world differently are dehumanised. Nirmala Erevelles “insists that what is both moral and desirable in the neoliberal social contexts of late capitalism is necessarily heteronormative and nondisabled” (Ben-Moshe, Chapman, & Carey, 2014, p. 82). Without the historical and political influences of late capitalism in creating a neoliberal culture, the concept of being non-disabled or heterosexual would have developed differently. With these historical and political influences, we have social focuses that work to mould all people in a society, including oppressors. Here we come to another vital aspect of systematic views of justice. This factor is the demand for consideration of how institutions and power dynamics contribute to the dehumanisation of oppressed people, but also oppressors (Freire, 2000).

The aims of addressing the dehumanisation of all people affected by systematic oppression, even those who benefit from systematic oppression, should be a part of knowledge mobilisation (Freire & Freire, 2014). There is a push for constructive collaboration between researchers and community partners for both parties to benefit from collaborating (Chambers, 1994). Community partners get to influence and have direct access to research and findings, while researchers are guided by what is essential to the people who need access to knowledge.

Constructive collaborations begin to address systematic issues related to the history and politics of academic research. This process creates positive changes for both the community and the researcher.

Through the example above we can see how some forms of KMB take a systematic approach to sharing knowledge. This approach will not work for every situation. Sometimes knowledge already exists or was developed as an effect of a research project (Campbell et al., 2014). I believe that social justice can provide us with guidelines in finding systematic ways to address barriers and oppression to sharing knowledge. Iris Young (2011) offers a critical theoretical lens for identifying social injustice through five faces of oppression. The five forms of oppression Young (2011) details are exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. Exploitation is the process of a person or company taking advantage of a person's labour. For example, when workers are not paid a living wage for a full time job their employer is exploiting them (Scheper-Hughes, 2003). Marginalisation is the process of pushing a group to the outer edges of society or labelling a group as living dead (Debrix & Barder, 2011). Treaties with Indigenous folks that limit their legal "Indian" status to living on reserve land is a form of marginalisation (Getty & Lussier, 1983). It forces Indigenous folks to choose to assimilate into Canadian society or keep the rights the Canadian nation-state has "bestowed" upon them. Indigenous folks who want to keep their rights are then forced to stay in spaces where they are silenced and kept out of the public's awareness, making them invisible and their needs less of a concern to dominant groups (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Powerlessness is complex. Young (2011) argues that powerlessness deals with how a dominant group of people has greater decision-making power than marginalised communities, giving dominant groups more control over social structures and institutions. Greater decision-

making power means the dominant group can create spaces where oppressed groups are excluded from legal rights and have difficulties engaging in the political process (McIntosh, 1981). In doing so, the dominant group keeps the oppressed in a state of powerlessness. Examples of powerlessness in the disability community range from eugenic processes that killed, isolated, or sterilised disabled folks (Grue, 2010) to people with disabilities having their rights to make decisions removed from them and be forcibly medicated (Fabris, 2011).

However, powerlessness can go deeper as well. Freire (2000) discusses powerlessness as happening on an individual level, where people begin to feel hopeless about their ability to change their situation. These feelings create what Freire calls a culture of silence, where the oppressed cannot even talk about their oppression. When a culture of silence falls, it becomes radical to breach this silence, like people have been doing during the #metoo movement, which has created space for survivors of sexual assault to talk about their experiences.

Returning to Young's five forms of oppression, cultural imperialism is the practice of the dominant subgroup forcing their way of life on to other oppressed subgroups (Young, 2011). The establishment of dominant culture causes people to shun or discriminate against those who do not follow the set cultural rules (Schulman, 2009). Cultural imperialism has been discussed in depth by many marginalised groups through the following terms: ableism, racism, sexism, heteronormativity. Violence or the threat of violence instils cultural imperialism into a society.

To use the forms of oppression Young outlines we only must consider if any group experiences one of the forms of oppression. The five forms of oppression can also give us some nuance to the experiences of a particular marginalised group through the unique combination of the forms of oppression. For example, disability theory acknowledges that there are different forms of disability, each of which affects how a person experiences barriers due to impairment,

social views, or the built environment (Oliver & Barnes, 2012). Different forms of disability are visible, invisible, chronic or episodic. The five forms of oppression can help us better understand how these different disabilities create different experiences of oppression.

I believe that Young's work on oppression can help knowledge brokers and consultants open a discussion on decision-making power; one person's decisions can influence other people more than themselves (Young, 2011). Decision-making power is particularly relevant here since policymakers oversee decisions that affect the lives of large groups of people, both within and outside of their nation-state (Engler, 2015). Hence, when a knowledge broker and consultant's audience includes policymakers, we aim to influence policymakers' decision-making power, which can affect the lives of people who live within the nation-state and that nation-state's broader global engagements. If we as knowledge brokers and consultants are not careful, the research we mobilise could inadvertently reinforce injustice (Engler, 2015; Namaste, 2011).

While Young's work on oppression is helpful for knowledge brokers and consultants, we cannot forget that her work is far from exhaustive. For example, cultural imperialism lacks consideration of cultural appropriation. Cultural appropriation occurs when a dominant subgroup takes parts of a marginalised subgroup's culture and wears or uses it (Burns Coleman, 2017). Cultural appropriation can go unnoticed, or there may be praise for the dominant subgroup, while the oppressed subgroup experiences punishment for showing or using their cultural tools or symbols. For example, the use of headdresses within fashion, movies, and as costumes is an example of Indigenous cultural appropriation that is torn from its history by the dominant culture (Burns Coleman, 2017). The removal of cultural items from their context can lead members of the dominant subgroup to ignore the pleas and arguments from Indigenous folks to stop using a symbol that is important to certain Indigenous nations.

Nancy Fraser (1995) wrote a critique of Young's work which focused on the blending of what Fraser calls "cultural and political-economic phenomena" (p. 172). Fraser (1995) felt that Young's attempt to avoid a bifocal view of oppression—and thus avoid issues of recognition and redistribution—failed to address some of the complexities associated with justice. Young's understanding of oppression is influenced by the specific historical, cultural, and economic setting she is working within, which happens to be the United States.

It is crucial that as knowledge brokers and consultants we are aware of the local context where our project is happening. Our world is growing more significant as we gain access to technology that permits us to work with communities outside of our local context. It is vital that we listen to Fraser's (2005) concerns and consider her suggestions to fight social justice on a global level. To view social justice on a global scale, we must discuss three areas: political representation, redistribution of material resources, and recognition that includes a cultural dimension. Political representation suggests that all people must be allowed to engage in politics in the same way as the dominant subgroups (Fraser, 2005). Fraser (2005) argues that political representation ensures that we hear the voices of oppressed subgroups, and hopefully balance the history of non-recognition. Cultural dimension, as defined by Fraser, means that for justice to occur there must be consideration of "inclusion in, or exclusion from, the community of those entitled to make justice claims on one another" (Fraser, 2005, p.7). Simply put, for oppressed subgroups to make successful claims for justice they need permission from the dominant subgroup. The final area is the redistribution of material resources. Fraser's (2005) view is similar to that of Rawls (1971), in which redistribution of material and nonmaterial goods is essential to social justice, but Fraser stresses that redistribution cannot be the only topic considered.

## Anti-Oppression: Human Rights

Focusing on human rights are one way to bring oppressed subgroups into spaces where justice claims are made. Before moving further into the topic of human rights, I want to make it clear that human rights and social justice are separate ideas, but these ideas are entwined. For instance, human rights are understood to be one part of social justice. How can better understanding of human rights help us as knowledge brokers and consultants to share knowledge in ways that support social justice? I argue that we must view human rights as a broad area that is not dependent on the goodwill of dominant subgroups. Unfortunately, the long history of human rights has been limited to a legal or philosophical topic, leading to its separation from social justice (Stammers, 2009). However, human rights are a much broader field than the realm of Anglo-American law (Nguyen, 2015). This narrow definition of human rights, where human rights are part of the legal system, leads to the idea that only a few individuals with decision-making power can create and ensure rights are upheld, what is known as “the global human rights industry” (Clapham, 2015; Stammers, 2009). This idea eliminates the long history of human rights that existed before the UN Declaration of Human Rights (Stammers, 2009).

The UN Declaration of Human Rights<sup>15</sup> is important to the history of human rights as it introduced “a new era in recognition of human rights, state accountability, and an acknowledgement of collective worldwide responsibility for crimes against humanity” (Darian-Smith, 2010, p. 4655). However, the focus on human rights in the legal system resulted in three main issues with current academic work related to human rights (Stammer, 2009). These three

<sup>15</sup> Note that I do not talk about other UN declarations, including the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. This is a deliberate act on my part to ensure that I explore human rights outside of the legal system and outside of the work that the United Nations has done on human rights.

concerns as outlined by Neil Stammer (2009) are “the lack of a proper ‘long history’ of human rights [...], the reduction of the sociality of human rights to ‘theory’ and ‘law’, and the tendency to assume that human rights should be a process of ‘top-down’ elite construction” (p. 231). This process restricts the conversation related to human rights to civil and political rights. It also places human rights within the power of dominant subgroups, relying on their benevolence for oppressed groups to access the rights that permit them to seek justice.

Focusing only on civil and political human rights—considered negative rights—will “erect an invisible wall, protecting an individual from unreasonable conduct on the part of the state” (Chadha & Sheldon, 2005, p. 42), while the inclusion of positive human rights in the understanding of this complex topic means that people gain access to “goods or services and may require state action” (Chadha & Sheldon, 2005, p. 42) to meet the rights of all people. Thus, positive human rights address issues of redistribution, which is a core component of social justice (Fraser, 2005; Rawls, 1971). Neglecting positive human rights helps dominant subgroups maintain power, particularly decision-making power. It is necessary to consider both negative and positive human rights, which means moving beyond rights found within the Anglo-American legal system (Chadha & Sheldon, 2005). Positive rights also bring into consideration the idea of collective rights instead of viewing human rights as happening in individual cases (Stammers, 2009). Thus, we can build a greater systematic understanding of human rights and their connection to social justice.

I contend that a systematic view is necessary for knowledge brokers and consultants since we want to share knowledge with more than one person. We want to reach diverse groups, which means we need to consider the impact of our knowledge sharing in systematic ways. When I say knowledge sharing in systematic ways, I mean thinking about how we might create social change

by sharing knowledge with parents, students, teachers, school administrators, school board members, taxpayers, and elected officials to create more inclusive schools (Proia, 2016; Tjernberg & Mattson, 2014). However, I also mean the way understanding oppression, health, farming and other areas as they affect a group of people—focusing on collective rights — can change how we think about the process of sharing knowledge. The use of systematic knowledge mobilisation is an area that needs more exploration for its possible use in social justice oriented projects.

Systematic views will also help us consider the unexpected global impacts of our knowledge sharing. For example, the understanding of human rights changes in different countries due to historical, cultural, and economic factors (Clapham, 2015; Stammers, 2009). We need to consider other contexts related to human rights other than those of our western nation-states. When we fail to explore the work happening within different settings, we can fall into the trap of focusing on developing human rights in other countries instead of addressing how human rights issues that occur within our nation-state affects us and other countries (Falk, 2000). The focus on the state of human rights in other countries is a common tactic used by countries with dominator power to distract from their own human rights violations (Engler, 2015). Redirecting focus can happen between a variety of different groups. Thus, it is vital that knowledge mobilisers are aware of this common trap and do their best to avoid it.

### **Anti-Oppression Disability Theory and Grassroots Movements**

Human rights are a cornerstone of many grassroots movements. Nguyen (2015) suggests that “instead of thinking about rights as an abstract notion that functions to legitimise capitalism, we must think about them regarding the struggle that groups and individuals have initiated through their social action” (p. 73). We need to be aware that through the organising of people



who share similar experiences, collective intelligence is created. As a reminder, collective intelligence is a process a community undergoes to develop a mutual understanding of a situation; the community can then create a joint action plan to address these situations, and later learn from what went well and what did not work with the action plan (Thomas, 2016). The activism that follows from collective intelligence is essential when dominant subgroups refuse to acknowledge the human rights of oppressed subgroups. Grassroots movements based on collective intelligence have a vital role in shaping our society (Tremblay, 2015). As knowledge brokers and consultants, we must not forget the historical and present impact organising around collective intelligence has on our society.

We must acknowledge the long history of human rights that has stemmed from grassroots movements (Stammers, 2009). At the same time, we must also admit that this means of knowledge exchange and social change is lengthy, sometimes taking up to 20 years (Brown & Duguid, 2000). This length of time references when moving knowledge causes social change. Being aware of an issue, like the time it takes to create social change, is crucial if we are going to change things. It is essential to build an understanding of what makes robust research evidence, develop skills for using evidence-based knowledge, and learn how to best move knowledge. At times, it feels like the focus of knowledge mobilisation is on academia and research, yet grassroots movements have a rich history of moving knowledge, in creating sustained projects that are adaptable. There is a wealth of knowledge on what works and what fails. There are unique approaches that are ingenious, entrenched in the culture, and at times both.

As knowledge brokers and consultants, we should be willing to work with grassroots movements, as well as those with decision-making power, as this is another means of creating social change. We must explore alternative ways of sharing grassroots knowledge—the

development of knowledge from the lived experience and research done by grassroots movements. For example, the social model of disability was developed in collaboration with people with disabilities and based on their lived experience (The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation & The Disability Alliance, 1975; Withers, 2012). This example is one where grassroots knowledge moved into academia and social policies within countries and then globally. This collaboration between academics and groups who created collective intelligence related to disability is an example of how grassroots movements can alter, albeit temporarily, power relations to create an impact on the decision-making process.

A temporary disruption of the decision-making process might not be something knowledge brokers and consultants can do, but this strategy has been used by multiple marginalised communities to gain access to human rights (Driskill, 2011; Tremblay, 2015). It is only one of the many ways grassroots movements share knowledge and address oppression. I contend that grassroots movements, with their knowledge and history of addressing issues of power and injustice, offer an area that knowledge brokers and consultants must begin to explore. This shift in the understanding of expert knowledge related to sharing knowledge could help to disrupt relationships between grassroots movements, academics, and knowledge brokers and consultants. This process could create the space needed to begin bringing anti-oppression into our work.

## **Conclusion**

By starting to view KMb relationships as being shaped by capitalist owner and worker relationships, we create a space where alienation from knowledge can be understood. This alienation leaves room for biopower and necropower to flourish between knowledge holders and audiences. We are creating harmful categories that limit the work that knowledge brokers and

audiences can accomplish together. Standpoints and sitpoints begin to provide a framework we can adapt to understand how knowledge can flourish in these collaborative relationships. However, these pieces are not enough to bring knowledge brokers and consultants to a place where our work does not have harmful impacts on oppressed subgroups. There needs to be further exploration of systematic oppression and how it presents itself in research. Social justice and human rights provide us with a framework, particularly Young's five faces of oppression, to begin these explorations. However, even with the integration of social justice and human rights into knowledge mobilisation, the question of why those in power who have better access to knowledge would use it if it would undercut their own power maintains. This is not a question that can be answered in my dissertation, but it one that the field of KMb will have to address as it moves forward.

The intersectional view of disability theory that I have described provides a sophisticated view of knowledge brokers and consultants, audiences, and knowledge mobilisation projects. The weaving of these theories into a single unit that can be implemented in my dissertation helps me critically engage with knowledge mobilisation and the research that it focuses on moving into society. As well, the weaving of this theory allows me to become aware of its shortcomings and to find ways that the approaches work together to strengthen this intersectional disability theory. I am aware that there are flaws in the theory that I have discussed; however, I believe that its strengths outweigh the weaknesses. This intersectional disability theory permits me to be critical of knowledge mobilisation, which is crucial to the building of relationships between knowledge brokers and audiences. It is also key to finding ways to bring anti-oppression into KMb frameworks, which is essential to avoid creating social changes that are harmful to marginalised communities. Even if research is slow to create change, reluctant to include anti-racism and anti-

oppression, this does not mean that knowledge mobilisers cannot try to ensure its work takes a critical stance. Knowledge mobilisation needs to be critical or its focus on only positive impacts of research will lead to unmitigated harms to marginalised communities.

## Chapter 4: Methodology

### Introduction

Over the course of this chapter I aim to outline how I will address my research question: how can knowledge brokers and consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations? I will also explore the three sub-questions: (a) how can knowledge mobilisers, knowledge brokers, and knowledge consultants bring anti-oppression into their work, (b) how do community organisation and grassroots movements currently engage with knowledge mobilisation, and (c) how can knowledge brokers and knowledge consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation within community organisations and grassroots movements. I will explain how these questions are addressed through research methodologies.

The research question, and sub-questions, are explored through two collaborative partnerships. One collaborative partnership had a partner who had government funding and was part of a larger network. During this partnership, which lasted four months, I created a knowledge mobilisation plan for their four-year project and helped them gain a better understanding of knowledge mobilisation. The second collaborative partnership was with a grassroots movement. This partner was founded and run by people from the community. The collaboration lasted eight months. I helped this partner to create a plan for widely distributing the zine they planned to create and publish. During the second collaboration the partner and I posted details about our project and educational blogs on my personal website. These posts aim was to help community organisation learn about knowledge mobilisation. The methodologies explain how the collaborative partnerships where explored to address the above questions.

While I outline the research methodologies, I will describe how I bring anti-oppression disability theory into action in my work with the collaborative partners. Working with collaborative partners from community organisations and grassroots movements, while taking on the role of researcher, has been a struggle for me. This struggle comes from the biases that researchers are often viewed as outsiders from communities who have access to resources that give them different forms of power than community members. I have always worried about power dynamics in many forms of research. I have been part of grassroots movements working with researchers, only to have the researcher disappear once they have their data. I have witnessed how the disappearance of a researcher can harm a project, build resentment towards research collaborations, and create inter-group conflicts. Many fields, including Indigenous studies, have concerns about the impacts that research can have on communities and grassroots movements. For instance, the field of Indigenous studies has raised concerns about the effects on their communities when they are over-researched (Brown & Strega, 2015; Driskill, 2011; Simpson, 2014; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Another example can be found in disability studies' exploration of alienation and the continuation of stereotypes due to research (Bellman, Burgstahler, & Chudler, 2018; Devotta et al., 2013; Manders, 2006; Mike Oliver, 1992). Resistance, distrustfulness and refusal to participate are signs of past harms from research relationships and become barriers to future collaboration with communities (Weheliye, 2014).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) talks about another concern, the impact of taking on the role of a researcher when working with your own community. How does holding a dual role—of researcher and community member—change how your community members engage with you? How does your dual role make it difficult for all those involved? Tuhiwai Smith speaks about the need to allow community members to change their interactions with your role as a researcher as

it helps the community to protect itself. All these concerns build on top of the issue of power dynamics that I explore in Chapter 3. While I have developed an anti-oppressive disability theory to help guide me through these difficulties, I still worry.

My worry comes from the understanding that theory does not always lead to action. It is words and ways of thinking that help to shape the work I do. The anti-oppressive disability theory does not provide actions I can take to ensure I am behaving in a manner that is congruent with the theory I have outlined. Ensuring that my actions and behaviours follow the theory I have created is essential. If actions and behaviours do not align, then the anti-oppressive disability theory is only words on a page. The words look and sound pretty but lack meaning. This concern regarding words without actions has been with me for years. I explored this concern in a paper for a class in relation to my involvement with a grassroots movement. I reviewed one grassroots organisation that had a strong mandate for anti-oppression but lacked the policy and procedures to put the mandates into action (Smith, 2015). It felt vital to find methods that could put the theory outlined into action.

I could not find a single methodology that met the needs outlined by the anti-oppressive disability theory I describe in Chapter 3. Instead, I rely on three overall guiding methodologies, one method to direct the community collaborations, and two methodologies that assist in the creation and analysis of research material. The weaving of these methods allows me to address issues with the construction and occupation of social roles, like community member or researcher, that could create power imbalances. For instance, one goal for this research project is to build knowledge mobilisation skills within community organisations. This goal is problematic because it puts me in the role of expert, creating a more significant opportunity for power imbalances to occur. To manage this concern, I engaged with community collaborators in the

role of knowledge mobilisation (KMb) consultant instead of researcher. I chose this role because a KMb consultant is a supportive role that empowers others to find effective ways to share knowledge. Entering a community collaboration in the role of KMb consultant means there is a shift in power, giving the community collaborators more power in their role as directors of the project. The change in power indicates to community collaborators that while I am an expert in the field of knowledge mobilisation, it is community collaborators who oversee making decisions about what knowledge is gathered and shared. This format places decision-making power in the hands of the community collaborators.

Two guiding methodologies were essential in my decision to present myself as a knowledge consultant: reflective research and ethnographic refusal. Reflective research helped me to stop, reflect on the project, and make changes to the methods if they were not meeting the needs of the anti-oppressive disability theory (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). Being a reflective researcher became invaluable to me, as I originally planned to use community evaluation during part of this project. However, because of the reflective research process, I realised that community evaluation was creating power differences with a community collaborator. Due to this reflection, I could address concerns related to this methodology. Ethnographic refusal gives community researchers decision-making power over what results are kept within the community or shared with academics or practitioners (McGranhan, 2016). Giving this decision-making power to collaborators is necessary as I am working with communities that have difficult histories with research findings, including how they have been represented in these findings, and situations where the findings have not been shared directly with them (Bellman, Burgstahler, & Chudler, 2018; Devotta et al., 2013; Manders, 2006; Mike Oliver, 1992). Below, I dive into these



methodologies in more detail. Discussion of reflective research and ethnographic refusal will occur in the first section, called Overarching Methods.

The next section, called Community Collaboration Methods, will address participatory action research (PAR), the core method used while working with community collaborators. I worked with PAR for three reasons, the first being the level of skills I have from my experience with PAR, having used similar methodologies or skills sets in past research or employment. Second, I chose PAR as it can help to address concerns of power dynamics in research (Chambers, 1994). Finally, PAR has been connected with knowledge mobilisation for a long time (Breckon, 2016).

While the collaboration with community researchers is integral to this research project, my research question focuses on the use of knowledge mobilisation to community organisations and grassroots movements. Thus, I need methodologies to highlight and pull this information from the collaborative projects. I have chosen ethnographic journaling and content analysis to gather information from the research material. Content analysis will let me evaluate the use of knowledge mobilisation after the set timelines (Krippendorff, 2018). Ethnographic journaling will assist with two parts of the project. Ethnographic journals will provide space to consider influences on the research project and consideration of needed adjustments. This makes journals a great support for reflective research. Journals also provide me with a way to make notes about relationships, areas of difficulty, barriers that were addressed, and a variety of other details that could be important to the analysis.

Before I begin talking about the methodologies in depth, I will discuss the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this project. In this process, I will introduce all possible collaborative

partners that could be included in this research project. Finally, I will note a conflict of interest with one of the collaborative partners included in the project.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Throughout my PhD, I have worked on four knowledge mobilisation projects. These projects are known under the following names: disability partner, internship partner, research partner, and lab partner. Three partners are named based on the source that paid for my work. The research partner was an SSHRC funded research project. The lab partner was a project run by an engineering lab at York University. The internship partner was funded through government education funding. Only the disability partner was unfunded, meaning the partner did not pay for my services. Instead the disability partner was a result of a response to my call out.<sup>16</sup> As such, they are named after the type of activism the KMb project was focused on, which was disability.

With the possibility of four knowledge mobilisation projects to pull from for research materials, I needed to set up inclusion and exclusion criteria. The criteria set guidelines for what knowledge mobilisation projects would be included in this dissertation. There are two inclusion criteria and one exclusion criteria. To be a source for research material a knowledge mobilisation project had to (a) place me in the role of knowledge mobilisation consultant, (b) make documents connected to the knowledge mobilisation projects available to me, and (c) use knowledge mobilisation projects run by a community organisation or a grassroots movement.

**Researcher Acts as a Knowledge Mobilisation Consultant.** By including knowledge mobilisation projects where I was a knowledge consultant, I could ensure that there was consistency in my role between projects. However, while the expectations for my role as a

<sup>16</sup> For details about the call our see page 110 and Appendix C: Call Out.

knowledge consultant were consistent, there was enough flexibility in the role to adapt to the needs of the collaborative partner. For example, exploring KMb projects where I was a knowledge consultant meant that in each project I was in charge of collaborating with partners to create a knowledge mobilisation plan. In addition, the role of knowledge consultant allowed for negotiation of expectations for I would perform with each collaborative partner. In one partnership I helped to write a funding application; in another I assisted in finding academic research the collaborative partner did not have access to; and in another I drafted possible knowledge products.

The role of knowledge consultant permits a balance of structured support while giving room for an individual partner's needs. There is a need for there to be some similarities in the services provided, which in this case included knowledge mobilisation planning and empowering collaborative partners to understand and use knowledge mobilisation frameworks, models, and tools. In order to address the research question—how knowledge mobilisers can support the use of knowledge mobilisation within community organising—there had to be enough flexibility within the services I provided as a knowledge consultant to address the needs of collaborative partners, including unexpected needs. I believe that the balance provided by the role of the knowledge consultant role helps to empower learning about knowledge mobilisation while leaving space for exploration and support as needed by each collaborative partner.

Ensuring a clear definition of my role as a knowledge consultant was one way of addressing concerns regarding the ownership of knowledge. Being a knowledge consultant meant that I was viewed not as a member of the organisation, but as a person providing a service for the collaborative partner. As a result, knowledge created throughout the knowledge mobilisation projects belong to the collaborative partner. Knowledge created throughout the

knowledge mobilisation projects is not part of this research project. Instead, the research materials I am interested in are the processes and forms of support given to collaborative partners during my time working with them as a knowledge mobilisation consultant. This focus on process and support does not mean that there was no negotiation with collaborative partners about what knowledge is included in this dissertation, but it made the process easier since the partners and I had a clear understanding of the different learning that came from the knowledge mobilisation project.

The first inclusion criteria—that the researcher is a knowledge mobilisation consultant—means that all four KMb projects have the possibility of being sources for research materials.

**Knowledge Mobilisation Project Documents are Available.** Collaborative partners were asked to approve access to documents connected to the knowledge mobilisation project to be used in this dissertation to ensure a broad range of research materials were accessible for analysis. Both the disability partner and the internship partner approved access to most documents. The internship partner gave access to documents created before I joined the KMb project, all documents developed during my employment with them, and anything published on their website. The disability partner approved meetings minutes, online learning posts, and some draft documents connected to the knowledge mobilisation project.

**Knowledge mobilization projects run by the community organization or grassroots movement.** This exclusion criteria connects to the research question, which focuses on supporting community organisations' use of knowledge mobilisation. Thus, the inclusion of a knowledge mobilisation project where the collaborative partner was a researcher or academic does not fit within the research question being explored. However, the collaborative partner was a community organisation or grassroots movement connected with researchers, they could still

be included. For instance, the internship partner is a community organisation connected with multiple researchers.

The exclusion criteria did eliminate the lab partner and research partner. Exclusion of the lab partner stemmed from the knowledge mobilisation project being run by an engineering research lab collaborating with an education research project. This exclusion criteria also eliminated the research partner since an academic and researcher ran the project. None of the people involved in either of these knowledge mobilisation projects was involved with a community organisation or grassroots movement. After this exclusion criteria, only the disability partner and internship partner were eligible for inclusion in this research project.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

I want to acknowledge a conflict of interest involved in one of the KMb projects. The collaboration with the internship partner was a paid internship. Being paid for my engagement with the internship partner means that there is a conflict of interest in using specific research material. The possible conflict comes from the fact that I was paid for this internship, which could bias me towards viewing the material from the internship in a positive way. I acknowledge this conflict but believe that there was minimal impact. The research material from the internship partner does not only rely on content created during my internship, nor is the KMb support the internship partner gained based solely on my internship. Instead, supports that the internship partner can access are primarily based on their engagement with a broader KMb network. Finally, the analysis of the research material from the internship partner is not reliant on my indicating a positive outcome. The analysis relies on exploring the process the internship partner has undergone to work on their KMb goals. While there is a conflict on interest in including the

internship partner's research materials, this conflict has had minimal impact on the research project overall.

While this next concern is not a conflict of interest, it is important to acknowledge and address. This concern comes from my insider knowledge of disability organising in Ontario. I have and continue to be engaged in disability movements in Ontario. This engagement means that I know many people who responded to the call out for a collaborative partner. The grassroots movement that best met the call out was an organisation with whom I had a social relationship. I have a personal relationship with one of the organisers, meaning there is a dual relationship. This concern is significant because the person with whom I have a social relationship was one of the representatives from the disability partner. This role meant that they would attend meetings where the work for the collaborative KMb project happened. To manage this concern, the representative and I engaged in discussions of boundaries between our social relationship and the relationship for this collaboration. I provide details on the boundary-making process in [Chapter 5: Results](#). Based on the boundary-making process, the representative and I were confident that we minimised any issues based on our dual relationship for the duration of the collaborative knowledge mobilisation project.

## **Overarching Methods**

In this section, I begin by exploring the methodologies that guide all areas of this research project. These methods focus on ensuring the anti-oppressive disability theory outlined in [Chapter 3: Theory](#) is put into action. These methodologies are ethnographic refusal and reflective research. I begin by discussing reflective research and the way its methodological practice encourages flexibility in a researcher. Reflective research forces the researcher to consider the impact of research while it is occurring and to encourage them to adapt theory and methodology

while a project is underway to mitigate harms. I then discuss ethnographic refusal. This methodology allows the researcher to manage the possible harms associated with sharing all information and knowledge developed during a research project. I explain the need for communities to be decision-makers on sharing knowledge. These discussions show how I enact anti-oppressive disability theory in this project.

**Reflective Research.** Any researcher must consider how they may influence the results of research. This consideration needs even greater attention within collaborative research. The development and maintenance of relationships and management of power dynamics are vital to success, but can impact the results of a collaborative research project. Reflective research skills build a person's ability to understand the complex and interconnected process between researcher, partners, and research project (Morley, 2008). These skills develop understanding of how researchers, partners, and the project itself change the direction, analysis, or results of a project. Reflection research skills encourage a researcher not to accept that a research project changes but to consider those changes, decision-making processes, decisions, and their possible impacts (Gordijn, Eernstman, Helder, & Brouwer, 2018).

Being a reflective researcher is vital to more than the analysis of a project. Reflective research is a methodology used throughout the research project. As a researcher, I strive to create a research project that is rigorous, fair to all those involved, and minimises harm. However, I cannot predict all possible conflicts or harms a research project can cause. Being aware of the complex relationship between the parties involved in the project, and how their emotions impact the project, means I am willing to adapt specific methodologies of this project to better understand the importance of reflective research methodology

Before connecting with any community collaborator, I identified community evaluation as a methodology that was rigorous, acknowledged community collaborators as researchers, and focused on relationship building. For these reasons, I planned to use the community knowledge mobilisation evaluation framework (CKME) as a methodology for this research project. The creators of CKME state that it

is designed to capture various forms of knowledge use within community settings. Rather than focusing on implementation of a specific program, this framework is intended for knowledge mobilisation efforts undertaken to convey the key components of a community-based initiative in a way that promotes adaptation and uptake by community stakeholders and allows them to use the information in ways that meet their needs. (Worton et al., 2017p. section 4, para. 1 sentence 2)

Once I began working with the community collaborators, it became clear that including CKME in the research project would harm the collaborative relationships. Conversations with the community representatives showed experience with other forms of community evaluation; however, the methodology did not easily align itself with the community collaborator's way of organising. Focusing on networking, consciousness-raising, collective agreements and other grassroots movement's methodologies ensured that the experience of the community collaborators was different enough from community evaluation to be a barrier to building the collaborative relationship.

Reflective research helped me to recognise that not negotiating the use of CKME would harm the collaborative relationship. It made me identify what parts of community evaluation were essential to this project, allowing me to find creative ways to keep the strengths of the



methodology while showing consideration and care for the ways community collaborators worked. These conversations and reflections allowed me to consider how changes to methodology would impact the research project. It helped me weigh changes to methodology against building relationships with community collaborators. The reflective research process helped me acknowledge that removing parts of CKME from the research project and replacing it with methodologies that better suited the community collaborators would only benefit the research project.

During the process of adjusting the methodology to better work with community collaborators, I used two kinds of reflective research. The first was prospective reflectivity, which addresses the experiences and beliefs of the researcher and how they influence research (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). Had I not found it necessary to deviate from the outlined research project, I could have caused harm when community representatives expressed concerns with using CKME. Understanding the theory that was guiding the project was essential. By focusing on the anti-oppressive disability research, it allowed me to reflect on how my views and emotions might impact the research project.

Prospective reflectivity can move beyond acknowledging the views and emotions of researchers. It can consider unconscious biases, like unconscious discrimination that collaborators might engage in and how that could impact the research project and results (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). For instance, in both community collaborations, I had to check myself for biases against community representatives. In one situation, I recognised that I had become frustrated with one of the community members. I was dismissive of their points, even though their contributions were essential. Only after engaging in progressive reflection did I realise that I let ageism affect my view of this particular person. This realisation allowed me to

take action to minimise ageism in my interactions. This form of reflective research assisted me in identifying ageism as unconscious bias that was impacting my work and relationships, and I was able to address this concern.

The other form of reflexivity is retrospective. This form of reflection considers how the research impacts the researcher, both in the new perspectives they develop, but also in the emotions and beliefs that flourish. Through this process researchers consider themselves to be part of the data investigated (Attia & Edge, 2017). Retrospective reflectivity was essential to this project because it provided me with space for growth as part of this research project and other projects. This research project happened over two years. During this time, my understanding and experience with knowledge mobilisation grew and changed. Retrospective reflectivity created a space for me to recognise how my understanding and experience impacted what knowledge and skills I brought to collaborative projects, how my views altered, and how I went about encouraging KMb growth in community representatives.

Reflective research skills are also crucial to ensuring I take action on anti-oppressive disability theory. During my collaboration with grassroots movements, taking time to reflect on my work helped ensure that my actions were in line with my anti-oppressive disability theory. Reflection research was essential during the writing of this thesis. It helped me to stop after writing a section and consider what I wrote, how I was depicting community collaborators, and how my anti-oppressive disability theory was being used. Reflective research has weaved itself into every aspect of this research project, making my research stronger.

**Ethnographic Refusal.** Disability folks, particularly those who have communication barriers, are often researched in ways that have led to significant harm to their community (Klar,

2013; Kang, 2012).<sup>17</sup> This past and ongoing injury caused by research is something I had to address in this research project. Above, I detailed how I addressed possible harm through the use of reflective research during the collaboration. However, harm can also present itself in language and viewpoints used when writing research knowledge. To address this concern, I discuss ethnographic refusal, a decolonial methodology that views the denial of colonial perspectives, or the positions of those in power, as correct (McGranhan, 2016). Ethnographic refusal helps me to ensure that community researchers have decision-making power over the sharing of results. Ethnographic refusal empowers marginalised communities to create or use their way of knowing, countering harmful narratives about their community, and reshapes refusals to forms of defiance (Ortner, 1995).

As mentioned, ethnographic refusal can address concerns of over-research and lack of control over knowledge sharing. Ethnographic refusal occurs when co-researchers (made up of community members and academic researchers) work together to decide how to share the results with different groups—academia versus the community (Simpson, 2014). Data might be kept from academia to ensure that communities can engage with knowledge first (Zavala, 2013). The use of ethnographic refusal is a means to fight back against academic research that reproduces

<sup>17</sup> Note that the ethical issues associated with working with marginalised folks has been taken up by the Tri-Council [which includes the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)] (Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018). This agency has designed a certificate course—TCPS2 Core—that every Canadian researcher must complete before starting a research project (York University, n.d.). While these are positive changes, they do not address all possible means of harm to people who participate in research.

colonialism or other forms of structural violence. Ethnographic refusal aims to ensure that communities have control over their representation.

Structural violence continues in academic research in the ongoing narrative of Indigenous communities that need western interventions to fix issues they experience because of colonialism (Brown & Strega, 2015; Simpson, 2014). For communities engaged in research, particularly those groups that are over-researched, ethnographic refusal allows the research subject to decide what information is vital to their community. This information might first be kept within the community, allowing the community to act quickly, and may be shared with others later (Ortner, 2016). Certain information could be shared with academia or other groups, but knowledge needed for the community to thrive enters the community first.

There are other times when mobilisation of some results from a research project does not happen with the academic community. Audra Simpson (2014) explains that during her research for **Mohawk Interruptus** there was a need to learn when and how to share information gifted from the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke that she interviewed. She describes an obligation to refuse specific details that would affect the nation's fight for sovereignty. Thus, as researchers we must find a way to know when we are nearing what Simpson (2014) calls ethnographic limit. This limit is, as Simpson describes, not just harming a community, but creating small impacts that can cause ripple effects that result in harm to other marginalised communities. I believe Simpson (2014) describes ethnographic refusal best when she says,

My notion of refusal articulates a mode of sovereign authority over the presentation of ethnographic data, and so does not present 'everything.' This is for the express purpose of protecting the concerns of the community. It acknowledges the asymmetrical power relations that inform the research and

writing about native lives and politics, and it does not presume that they are on equal footing with anyone. This presumption of equal footing is false. Thus, this refusal and recognition of sovereignty should, I think, move us away from previous practices of discursive containment and pathology that have marked work on the particular Iroquois that concerns this book (p. 105)

Finding ways to work with over-researched populations that do not increase their forms of oppression and discrimination is essential. The notion of being co-researchers with a community is an excellent starting point, but I think Simpson (2014) makes an important point. No matter how we phrase it, a community's engagement with a project will always include power differences between academic and community researchers (Brown & Strega, 2015).

Refusal then creates a space of hope and defiance for community researchers. Through refusal, they create space for their political understanding of the world, for the resistance of harmful social dynamics, and to reify their right to exist as humans. Through refusal, community researchers find ways to unify their community. Simpson (2014) expands on this when she discusses the differences between refusal and resistance. She argues that refusal rejects the power dynamics forced upon marginalised groups, instead of fighting them as resistance does. Based on this view, I believe that refusal creates space for resistance to occur. Without refusal, there might be limited space to organise resistance and other forms of activism.

To use ethnographic refusal, I use the framework presented by Alex Zahara (2016). There are three stages to the ethnographic refusal framework, starting with pre-research, then moving to soft or hard refusal. In this phase, researchers get to know the historical, economic, social, and other factors that have caused harm to the collaborative group. This knowledge can then be used

to contemplate how the knowledge created during the research project could harm the community. As well, details gathered in the pre-research phase of ethnographic refusal is crucial as they outline the types of refusal to look for from community researchers; explore how power differences might affect a community researcher's confidence when making a refusal; and help researchers gain awareness of their power when pressuring community researchers to share certain forms of knowledge created from the research project.

The next stage of the ethnographic refusal framework is looking for forms of refusal, either soft or hard, during the collaborative process (Zahara, 2016). A firm refusal is when the denial is evident within language. Soft refusals might present in subtle ways, such as pauses, jumping topics, or other forms of avoiding a topic. It is best to clarify possible soft refusals to ensure there is no miscommunication. Finally, the ethnographic refusal framework, post-research, suggests it is best to work collaboratively with community researchers to approve what results are made available to what groups (Zahara, 2016).

The inclusion of ethnographic refusal gave me a process to manage possible harms to oppressed communities. As well, it helped me build skills to work with the communities with whom I am allied. This skill set is something I struggled to find for years. Ethnographic refusal makes me think hard about what knowledge I could do without in this dissertation and what knowledge was best left with the community researchers. It forced me to reframe this dissertation as "our research" and instead "my research."

Ethnographic refusal made writing this dissertation more complicated. I struggled with negotiating what knowledge to bring to this dissertation because the knowledge belongs to the community researchers. By leaving this knowledge with the community, they can focus on how to use it within their community. I am still a part of the research project though. I am writing my

dissertation based on the work with community collaborators. I am still exploring how community organising and grassroots movements fit within KMb. My aims for this research project are slightly different from the community collaborators, who want to complete a KMb plan. Ethnographic refusal, I hope, will help me tease out these different forms of knowledge. This process will leave me with details on the larger KMb process, while also letting community collaborators access what they need for their knowledge mobilisation projects.

My work with reflective research and ethnographic refusal has raised many questions for me about KMb and its place in research, collaborations, and knowledge dissemination. Some of these questions are about how knowledge is chosen to be mobilised, what knowledge is mobilised, who selects the knowledge, and what the are reasons for these choices. These are questions I plan to explore in the future since they go beyond the scope of this current research project. I think that both reflective research and ethnographic refusal could be methodologies that might guide knowledge mobilisers to bring anti-oppression into their work. They certainly helped me in my anti-oppression work during this research project.

### **Community Collaboration Methods**

Entering a collaboration with a community partner means I must be careful. Whatever method I use must balance the power I gain with the title I enter the relationship with. Power comes from my title of researcher and KMb consultant. As discussed above, the title KMb consultant is used within this project because it denotes my level of expertise, while giving community partners control over the main project. However, there is still a high level of expertise associated with the title KMb consultant that could impact how the community partner engages with me. To address these concerns I decided to work with participatory action research (PAR).

Participatory action research has a history in disability research and knowledge mobilisation (Abrams, 2014; Anderson, 2017). Within disability research, the need for knowledge gained from lived experience is present in some models, like the social model of disability. The lived experience of people with disabilities was essential to the development of this model of disability (The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation & The Disability Alliance, 1975). We can find a prominence of PAR, emancipatory, and auto-ethnographic work within the area of disability studies.<sup>18</sup> The presence of PAR means that it is likely to be known by community partners within the field of disability. Awareness of PAR, both the strengths and weakness, could encourage disability communities to consider a collaboration for this project.

Within knowledge mobilisation, PAR is touted as a robust KMb tool (Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014; Vishwanath, & Barnett, 2011). PAR pushes researchers to integrate community collaborators in every phase of research planning (Lawson, Caringi, Pyles, Jurkowski, & Bozlak, 2015). Thus, PAR means that community collaborators gain more control and power in many research projects (McIntyre, 2008). Increased community control can increase the uptake and use of knowledge by building investment in the group with whom knowledge will be shared. PAR, with its focus on community partners as researchers, builds investment in the knowledge a research project creates (Nutley et al., 2007). This process allows community collaborators to make decisions about the research question; influence the way data is collected; and assist in analysing data, reviewing data, and making conclusions. Community

<sup>18</sup> Just a few examples of PAR, emancipatory, and auto-ethnographic work in the area (Bannerji, 2011; Fabris, 2011; Lefrancois, Menzies, & Reaume, 2013; McRuer, 2006; Thobani, 2007, Schormans, 2011; Wendell, 1996; Withers, 2012).



collaborators might help by presenting research findings at conferences or co-authoring peer-reviewed articles. The use of PAR in this project reflects a standard tool used within KMb, which increases the likeliness that the findings of this project will be useful to a larger KMb audience.

Participatory action research allows communities to actively participate in research, which gives them greater control over research projects. I believe research methodologies that give communities control over a project are vital because of the history of over-research of certain marginalised communities, the lack of sharing research results with communities, and my concerns with power imbalances between researchers and community partners (Anderson, 2017; Brown & Strega, 2015; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

John Chambers (1994) suggests that the development of PAR began in the 1960s. He points to Freire's (2000) work in **Pedagogy of the Oppressed** as the beginning of working with communities to complete research. Chambers (1994) argues that collaborative research flourished in the fields of education, health, and farming. PAR research moved away from communities being viewed as subjects to being viewed as co-researchers; in other words, communities moved from being people researched upon to people who have an equal say in the research project (Haraway, 2014). Collaborative research gained support and validation through the 1970s and 1980s (Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014). Increased validation led to the official creation of PAR in the 1990s (Chambers, 1994).

When a co-researcher is involved, PAR moves beyond collaboration. There is an instrumental participatory piece by all communities involved (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). However, PAR often focus on action-based outcomes or results. For instance, results might be new knowledge that the community can use to engage with policymakers. Alternatively, when a research project with a community partner is successful, we must be

careful because success in one situation does not mean similar results in other spaces. We need to consider what is unique about a research situation, as differences can have significant impacts on the application of action within institutions (Cunningham et al., 2014).

Another reason for using PAR within this research project is the way this methodology questions knowledge (Kemmis et al., 2014). PAR does not view community partners as co-researchers just because it increases investment in the knowledge created; community partners are co-researchers because they are experts in their lived experience (Anderson, 2017; Baum, McDougall, & Smith, 2006). Focus on the importance of knowledge based on lived experience is crucial because it integrates well into anti-oppressive theory, reflective research, and ethnographic refusal. The acknowledgement of the importance of lived experience is essential when questioning whose knowledge is understood as valid and why that might be. I am a strong proponent of PAR as it is said to be “considered democratic, equitable, liberating, and life-enhancing qualitative inquiry that remains distinct from other qualitative methodologies” (McDonald, 2012, p. 1). However, these anti-oppressive qualities do not mean that PAR is without weakness, concerns, or issues.

Patricia W. Elliot (2011) outlines some concerns connected with PAR, which she lists as follows: matching researchers’ skills with community need, power dynamics, internal dynamics, acceptance of science, co-optation, follow-through, and the lot of the activist scholar. Some of these concerns are easily understood. Given the open nature of some of these concerns with PAR and the fact that I addressed power dynamics in depth in Chapter 3: Theory, I will not be

explaining power dynamics, acceptance of science, and follow-through.<sup>19</sup> PAR concerns I want to highlight are internal dynamics, co-optation, and a lot of the activist scholar.

Matching researchers' skills to a community's needs is self-explanatory. We cannot randomly match researchers and communities together, assuming the required interest and skill set will work together. We must find ways to connect communities with researchers who are interested in the community's needs but also have the research, relationship, and communication skills necessary to work with the community on their proposed goal. Some KMb brokers can help with this process by screening, matching, and supporting relationships between communities and researchers (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015).

When working with collaborative partners, there are going to be organisational relations and general engagements. These are what Elliot (2011) calls internal dynamics. These factors need to be identified and addressed as they can influence the research project. I aim to avoid getting involved in organisation relations by clearly outlining roles, including mine, in a Terms of Reference. This document outlines the expectations of all parties in detail and addresses concerns like conflict of interest and other topics connected to internal dynamics (Rossi et al., 2004). The Terms of Reference will also help to outline my role with community partners. I must be careful about overstepping my position since I am bringing a specific set of skills about knowledge mobilisation to the project. I must be careful how I approach supporting the community organisations. I must remember I am there as a source of knowledge and support, but I have no control over the project itself.

<sup>19</sup> Please review Elliot's 2011 research report called "Participatory Action Research: Challenges, Complications and Opportunities".

The need to ensure I do not overstep my role as a source of knowledge and support is made more difficult by the fact that I am a disability activist. From this perspective, I may want to jump into a different position when I am working with community partners. To address this concern, I focused on collaborating with communities with whom I am indirectly connected. For instance, I am a disability activist, but I am not part of the autistic community. Not being autistic will act as a reminder of the role I have throughout this project. These concerns create Elliot's (2011) lot of the activist scholar. It is something I have experienced in my work on this project. I hope the boundaries, clear roles, and focus on reflective research skills can permit me to find a balance within this project.

Now that I have explained why I am using PAR and the specific concerns related to this project, I will describe the process I used to find community researchers, build a relationship with them, and gather data for my thesis.

**Call Out.** I originally planned to work with six community collaborators. It became clear that trying to work with six organisations was not going to be possible in the timeline I had for my PhD. Thus, I decreased the number of community collaborators to two. One community collaborator is called the internship partner. This partner employed me full time over four months. During this time, I provided knowledge mobilisation consultation for their KMb project and I gained access to documents connected to the project to be used in my dissertation. The second collaborative partner is the disability partner. This partner accessed a year of my services as a knowledge consultant without a fee. The partner selected two representatives who would attend monthly meetings. The representatives were given a ten dollar honorarium plus transit costs for each monthly meeting they attended. In turn, materials from one year of the KMb consultation were made available for me to use in my research.

Since I had to reduce the number of community collaborators I worked with, but I did not want to lose transparency or knowledge sharing with disability communities, I devised a second form of engagement. The second form of engagement was called an online learning partner. The ideal online learning partner was a disability organisation with knowledge to share. These partners were people or organisations who were interested in knowledge mobilisation but could not be a research partner. For instance, if an organisation applied to be a research partner but was not accepted, they were encouraged to become an online learning partner.

Online learning partners were encouraged to engage with the online learning space, which included blog posts designed to help community members learn about knowledge mobilisation and how to run a knowledge mobilisation project. Online learning partners could ask questions and engage in conversations on the website or through social media. The online learning space was created so learning could occur at any pace. The online space aimed to have four posts a month. Most posts were written by me with occasional guest writers, and they covered the following topics:

- knowledge mobilisation
- project updates and meeting minutes
- project reflections
- community research partner updates

To share the call out, I used a snowball method. This method means that people are encouraged to share the call out (see Appendix C) with others who might be interested (Heckathorn & Cameron, 2017). To start sharing the call out, I sent it to five disability organisations I had previously worked with to ensure that the groups would have trust in my work as an academic and activist. I also sent the call out to one disability organisation that was

already doing KMb work, but with whom I had no past relationship. Finally, I shared the call out on three disability listservs and one queer community listserv. I sent the call out to these four listservs to reach a broader audience. I chose the queer-specific listserv because I wanted to ensure I was reaching out to diverse organisations that do disability-related work. I also wanted to be welcoming to diverse disability organisations. To do this, I included an equity statement on the call out and noted a preference for groups who experience multiple forms of marginalities.

I first sent the call out on September 28, 2017. The original deadline for groups to express interest was November 4, 2017. I received questions about the projects, inquiries about my experience as a researcher, and questions asking how to show interest throughout October and the beginning of November. Based on these conversations, I worried about the submission date. Thus, I extended the submission date to November 21, 2017. I gained two submissions for research partners by November 21, 2017. One of the organisations did not have a project, and I recommended they be an online learning partner, which they accepted. The other organisation had a project they were working on and were eager to connect with me. This organisation became the disability partner.

The disability partner and I decided to make the call for online learning collaborators open, meaning we continued to promote the online learning space at conferences and community events. We agreed to use my social media accounts to promote the website. Thus, every blog post is also shared on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and LinkedIn. Over the first few months, we tried the following hashtags to help promote the posts: #KM #KMb #knowledgemobilisation #communityKM #disability #AutistiQueers #Autistic.

## Analysis of Research Materials

After I determined how I would connect and work with collaborative partners, I needed some way to analyse the research material I gathered from these collaborations. I used two methods: ethnographic journals and content analysis. Below I detail why I chose these methods and how they are employed.

**Ethnographic Journals.** While I completed the collaborations with community partners, I needed some way to track meetings and a place to note discussions, planning, and barriers to the KMb process. I decided that ethnographic methodologies, particularly ethnographic journals, would work the best help me track these research materials. My main reason for using ethnography methods is its history of research from the inside (Barbour, Pope, & Rinehart, 2013). Research from the inside means that ethnography, over time, has developed knowledge, skills, and methods for gathering research material while the “researcher” is engaging with “researched.” Karen O’Reilly (2012) gives a definition of ethnography that works well with the other areas of the methodology I use in this project. As she explains,

ethnography is a practice that evolves in design as the study progresses; involves direct and sustained contact with human beings, in the context of their daily lives, over a prolonged period of time; draws on a family of methods, usually including participant observation and conversation; respects the complexity of the social world; and therefore tells rich, sensitive and credible stories.

Ethnography should be informed by a theory of practice that: understands social life as the outcome of the interaction of structure and agency through the practice of everyday life. (O’Reilly, 2012, p.3)

This definition of ethnography provides similar components as those found in PAR, which I have outlined. However, it does not satisfy my understanding of ethnography. In **A Different Kind of Ethnography**, Dana Culhane (2017) describes ethnography knowledge as evolving “not through detached observation but conversations and exchanges of many kinds of people interacting in diverse zones of entanglement ... a methodology of inquiry into ‘collaborative’ or ‘co-creative’ knowledge making” (p. 3). As I work as a KMb consultant, with indirect but frequent contact with community collaborators, the connection is not embedded in the daily lives of community representatives; however, their daily lives are still likely to present themselves in the work I do. The need to bring daily narratives into this research process is essential to create a deeper, more complex understanding of the use of KMb for grassroots movements.

Ethnography also aligns with my work through its questions about knowledge, specifically asking who holds knowledge and what knowledge is considered valid (Barbour et al., 2013). Please note that ethnography was not always so open in its understanding of knowledge. Ethnography has a historical connection with anthropology, which has a history that is deeply entrenched in a colonial understanding of knowledge (Pels, 2018). The field of ethnography has grown in its understanding of knowledge through the questions noted above. These questions have led ethnography to a broader understanding of knowledge, which includes knowledge from lived experience (Culhane, 2017). Focus on a variety of knowledge sources lets ethnography expand its understanding of what is considered “data.” Ethnography encourages the use of a variety of research materials, including notes from meetings and ethnographic journals.

Ethnography connects to the core research methodology I used in this project. Due to these connections, I used ethnographic journals within this project. These journals have assisted me in reviewing what happened during the project. They have also helped me to be a reflective



researcher, bringing up questions and encouraging me to be critical of my position and how the personal beliefs of community collaborators impact the project.

Two pieces of ethnographic journaling that are important are the limits put on editing journals and the need to identify and take note of tactical knowledge (O'Reilly, 2012).

Ethnographic journaling advises that there should be minimal editing of journals. The reason for this recommendation is that the more editing that is done, the more the original thoughts, emotions, or reflections can be altered. Being a person who struggles with spelling and grammar, it is common for me to spend a great deal of time reworking documents. Ethnographic journals are not about perfecting research material for an audience but making notes, reflections, and reminders about engagements with community collaborators. I worried about how the extensive editing I usually do could affect the quality of the journal entries. By bringing an ethnographic methodology to journaling, I made guidelines for the editing I could do:

- correct the spelling of words
- keep the original word or description
- write the full journal before making any corrections
- make sentence structure changes when the meaning is unclear

The second part of ethnographic journaling that is important is the focus on tactical knowledge (O'Reilly, 2012). It is common in our daily lives for our brains to process information in the background. For example, our brain might decide that sounds, feelings, or sights do not need our direct attention. The brain might also note cues from non-verbal communication, but we might not be aware of them. While there are important reasons why these processes happen without us actively thinking about them, they can impact how we engage with others. In journaling it is vital to find ways to bring these tactical pieces of knowledge to the

forefront of research materials. Being aware of tactical knowledge and its possible impacts are essential. Since I am mostly working within the disability community, tactical knowledge becomes even more critical. There are many kinds of disability that can affect how people engage with others (Kang, 2012). The presence of ableism, the need for care, and the inability to read social cues are only a few issues that can impact the engagement between community collaborators and myself. Thus, I needed to build awareness of tactical knowledge into my journaling processes. I did so by having sections and questions in the ethnographic journals that primed me to consider tactical knowledge. Reviewing past journals before meetings also reminded me to acknowledge tactical knowledge.

**Content Analysis.** The KMb project run by the internship partner continued on after my time with them ended. For that reason, I needed a way to assess the ongoing KMb work the internship partner did. The internship partner has a robust online presence, so a content analysis of their work will provide the details needed for analysis of research materials.

Content analysis focuses on describing and interpreting data sources (Franzoi, 2018). There are many ways to explain and understand data. Content analysis explores texts to answer a research question. One example of content analysis is the work of Beth Haller (2010), specifically her chapter “Researching Media Images of Disability,” which can be found in **Representing Disability in an Ablest World**. Throughout this chapter, Haller (2010) uses disability theory to analyse a series of images and compare the images. The content analysis methodology allows Haller (2010) to build an understanding of how disabled soldiers/veterans were shown over a set period. This understanding permits her to develop an argument about changes in the way disabled soldiers/veterans are viewed and what these changes mean. Thus, using this same process allows me to identify the growth of understanding of KMb by the

internship partner; I know whether they have used or adapted the KMb plan created for them, and I can see whether they are using any KMb at a later stage in their project.

I work closely with Alan McKee's (2003) **Textual Analysis: A Beginner's Guide** to interpret documents. McKee (2003) emphasizes the point that cultural influences can impact how the viewing of content is interpreted. Thus, I will be sure to use the theory section to identify where I might have biases that could impact my view of the data. As well, McKee's book provides an excellent guide for how to acknowledge and manage personal and cultural influences. For instance, since I was a part of this project, I must ensure that any memories I have of the situations connected to the documents are accurate.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, I detailed the way I use methodologies to address my concerns about power differences between myself and community collaborators. I discussed my approach to the main research question—how can knowledge brokers and consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations? I also described my approach to the three sub-questions: (a) How can knowledge mobilisers, knowledge brokers, and knowledge consultants bring anti-oppression into their work? (b) How do community organisations and grassroots movements currently engage with knowledge mobilisation? (c) How can knowledge brokers and knowledge consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation within community organisations and grassroots movements?

Through reflective research, ethnographic refusal and PAR, I developed overarching methodologies that helped ensure more equitably distributed power between myself and community collaborators. The process of working toward this equitably distributed power meant that I had to adapt methodologies to meet the experience of community collaborators while

maintaining the validity and rigour of the research project. It was only through the combination of these three methodologies that I found the knowledge and skills needed to manage these difficult tasks.

I then discussed the use of ethnographic journaling and content analysis in the review of research materials gathered during the project. I explained how the focus of ethnographic journaling on limited editing of research materials and tactical knowledge makes it vital to learning more about how community organisations fit within KMb. I then discussed how content analysis can be used to go through the research materials in a way that will identify themes related to the research question, but also permits ethnographic refusal. These five methodologies assist in creating a strong research project, with the skills and knowledge needed for me to take action on the disability anti-oppressive theory I have outlined.

## Chapter 5: Results

### Introduction

Below, I outline the information and knowledge gained from collaborations with the internship and disability partners. I use the term research material, as opposed to research data, because it can include a greater variety of research sources (Culhare & Elliott, 2017). For example, research material can include field notes, social media posts, and personal reflections. As I am pulling from a variety of sources, research material is the term better suited for this dissertation.

The research material provides details about the processes that support community organisations who use KMb. These materials also provide background information. Inclusion of background about the disability and internship partners allows me to explore similarities and differences between resources, previous experience with research or KMb projects, experience with funded projects, and familiarity with knowledge mobilisation. These details help me understand the type of support community organisations need to succeed at KMb. I start by presenting the research materials for the internship partner. I begin with the internship partner because I worked on this KMb project first. Some of my experiences working with the internship partner shaped how I worked with the disability partner. By presenting the internship partner first, I can make note of the influences present in the disability partner's knowledge project.

### Research Materials

Documents, notes, meeting minutes, web pages and email conversations related to the development of the internship partner's KMb plan, evaluations, and new grant applications were all included as research materials. Documents, notes, email conversations, and public knowledge

from the Wellbeing Networks<sup>20</sup> website were also included as research materials. In total there are 148 research materials connected to the internship partner. I divided these documents into three periods: before the summer of 2017 (56); during the summer of 2017 (51); and after the summer of 2017 (43). The research materials found within each of these sections are divided in this way: administrative (meeting notes, memos, and email conversations); research (annotated bibliographies and project reports); proposal (drafts for further funding and KMb planning); knowledge mobilisation (list of knowledge products, and clear language information); visuals; web pages; and census data.

<b>Document Breakdown for Internship Partner</b>			
	Before Summer 2017	Summer 2017	After Summer 2017
<b>Administrative</b>	2	16	6
<b>Research</b>	1	6	6
<b>Proposal</b>	3	17	–
<b>Knowledge Mobilisation</b>	–	8	9
<b>Visuals</b>	–	4	–
<b>Web Pages</b>	22	–	22
<b>Census Data</b>	28	–	–
<b>Total</b>	56	51	43

<sup>20</sup> The Wellbeing Network was the organisation I was hired by during the summer of 2017. The internship partner, who I worked with over the summer, was identified as the community organisation who would benefit from my KMb expertise the most. More details on the Wellbeing network are found on page 125.

The search for research materials happened in September 2018 and January 2019. I gained access to research materials from before and during the summer of 2017 as part of my internships itself. The school board representative and the internship partner approved using these research materials. Some documents are notes I took in meetings or reflections I made on my work experiences. Research materials from after the summer of 2017 were accessed from the website created for the Wellbeing Network and through email conversations. While the information on the website is public, I discussed its use as research material and gained approval from the administrator of the Wellbeing Network and the internship partner. I use these materials to provide in-depth background on the internship partner and their engagement with knowledge mobilisation.

**Before Summer 2017.** The internship partner is a network of 18 not-for-profit organisations focused on social research, policy analysis and community development. In this thesis, I will refer to them as community development organisations. The internship partner acts as a way for these 18 community development organisations to support each other and engage in community development on a province-wide basis. To gain an understanding of the work of the community development organisations, I explored their websites and the website of the internship partner. In total, I examined 22 separate web pages on 18 websites. From the websites, I learned whether they had funding and who funded them; whether they had paid staff; whether they had a board and the number of people who were on it; how many projects they had done; and the type of projects they worked on.

To better understanding the impact of the organisations, I explored census data for the community development organisations. Census data for 26 towns and cities were studied. I calculated the census data for 26 towns and cities (not 18) because some community

development organisations covered regional areas with more than one town or city, Appendix D provides the details on the community development organisations connected to the internship partner. The table provides a breakdown of the area served and the resources held by the community development organisations. The resources listed are made up of the following: the number of paid staff members, the number of board members, the number of programs run, and the number of funders.

Areas served by the community development organisations have been placed in one of three groups divided by population. Since I am using Statistics Canada to access details on the populations of the areas served, I felt it was best to adapt their classifications for population centres. These three groups have been selected to follow classifications used by Statistics Canada (2018). In **Population Centre and Rural Area Classification 2016 – Definitions**, designations are based on population alone; these designations include small population centres (1,000 to 29,999), medium population centres (30,000 to 99,999), and large urban population centres (over 100,000).

During my internships, I accessed six documents that guided the Wellbeing Network's project lead for the internship partner's KMb project. These documents included a bibliography of research used to write the project proposal, the project proposal and two supporting documents, and notes from two meetings between the collaborative partners. These documents were accessed in early May of 2017 and explored in more depth between September 2018 and January 2019.

**During Summer 2017.** In the summer in 2017 I gained access to 16 administrative materials, including notes from meetings, meeting minutes, memos, and the like. Other research materials included four annotated bibliographies, a summary of Ontario's education policy, and a



list of knowledge products. There are 17 drafts of different sections of the funding proposal, created in May and June 2017. There are eight knowledge products, such as a clear language summaries. Finally, there were four visuals created during the summer of 2017. The total of number of research materials accessed during the summer of 2017 is 51.

**After Summer 2017.** Soon after the summer of 2017, a website for the Wellness Network that included a web page for the internship partner was available online. The website provided space to post details about the KMb project and knowledge products. In total, there are five knowledge products, three created during the summer of 2017 and two created after. The organisation did four presentations connected to the project during 2018. Twenty-two web pages are available on the progress of the KMb project. Six web pages contain research on education and poverty. There are six update posts from the Wellbeing Network's website. There are a total of 43 website pages and documents for this period.

**Disability Partner.** There is a total of 47 research materials from the collaboration with the disability partner. Research materials included in the analysis consist of ten field notes, five meeting minutes, 25 blog posts, five website pages, one academic presentation, and a workshop. Four themes divide the 25 blog posts in the following way: project updates (six); disability partner presentations (four); KMb bites (eight); and collaborative research bites (six). Bites are clear language blog posts focused on knowledge sharing related to either knowledge mobilisation or collaborative partnerships. Blogs presented by the disability partner had details about the disability partner or were connected to neurodiversity education or activism.

We shared blog posts with the online learning partners via the tools available on WordPress. We also shared 15 blog posts on my social media. We decided to use my existing social media because it is a great deal of work to establish followings on new social media sites

(Vishwanath, & Barnett, 2011). As well, we wanted to reach both the disability community and knowledge mobilisers<sup>21</sup> through the online learning space. My Facebook already had strong connections with people and organisations from the disability community. On Facebook, I had 138 Friends, of which 44% per cent were connected to disability activism and scholarship. My Facebook was connected to seven disability organisations and five allied organisations, while my Twitter had access to a network of knowledge mobilisers. On Twitter, I had a smaller number of people I follow (71) and who followed me (31). Thirty-five percent of those I followed were knowledge mobilisers, and 45% of those who followed me were knowledge mobilisers or KMb organisations. We also included my Tumblr and LinkedIn to try to reach a wider audience, but neither of these had strong representation from either group.

In the first month of sharing blog posts on my social media, there was little engagement with the site. The disability partner agreed that hashtags should be used to tag the blog posts and promote the posts on social media. Hashtags used were #Collaboration, #researchimpact #disabilityresearch, #KM #neurodiversity, and #KMb. I added other hashtags when it was appropriate for the blog post topic. For example, on a blog post about clear language, the hashtag #clearlanguage was included. From then on hashtags were included in any promotional posts.

Based on data gathered through WordPress about traffic to the online learning space, throughout 2018, Twitter directed a total of 23 of the website views, Facebook

<sup>21</sup> I am using the term knowledge mobiliser as a broad term to talk about anyone who engages in KMb. This will include knowledge mobilisation professionals, like knowledge brokers, but also researchers, community partners, community organisations, and others.

directed 38 views, and LinkedIn directed five views. Tumblr did not direct any traffic to the online learning space. In total, 66 views for the online learning space were directed from social media promotion posts.

<b>Breakdown of Engagement with Online Learning Space</b>		
<b>Website Page or Blog Post</b>	<b>Number of Views</b>	<b>Average Views</b>
<b>Knowledge Mobilisation Project</b>	16	-
<b>Who is Involved</b>	6	-
<b>Minutes and Other Documents</b>	6	-
<b>Online Learning Partners</b>	3	-
<b>Research Partnership (Closed)</b>	6	-
<b>Project Update</b>	15	3
<b>Disability Partner Presents</b>	9	2.3
<b>KMb Bites</b>	21	2.6
<b>Collaborative Research Bite</b>	15	2.5
<b>Total</b>	97	-

To further explore social media posts directing people to the online learning forum, I went through each post on Facebook and Twitter to see what kinds of engagement the posts had. There are three types of engagement on Facebook: comments on the post, sharing the post on other pages, and liking a post (this indicates that a person enjoyed the content in a post). On Twitter there are two forms of engagement: retweeting, where the post is shared; and commenting on the post.

All 15 Facebook posts had engagement, with each post being liked. Two of the posts on Facebook had supportive comments. Blog posts related to collaborative research had the most

participation, with a combination of comments and likes. People who commented or liked promotional posts on Facebook were from this disability community.

The same 15 promotional posts were also shared on Twitter. Engagement on Twitter focused on retweeting; six of the 15 promotional tweets were retweeted. The engagement on Twitter mainly came from knowledge mobilisers. Thus, it is not surprising that the promotional posts retweeted the most were related to knowledge mobilisation.

### **Internship Partner**

In early 2016 the Education Research Network, whose focus is on finding ways to move education research evidence into Ontario elementary, middle, and high schools, put out a call for a knowledge mobilisation project related to student wellbeing. The grant was for a four-year project. Previously, the Education Research Network had funded two other four-year KMb projects related to education in Ontario schools. In the summer of 2016, the grant was awarded to a collaboration between a school board, four not-for-profit organisations, and a university research lab. This collaborative network requested not to be named in this dissertation. The collaboration between these six partners, in this dissertation, is called the Wellbeing Network. The Education Research Network provides more than financial support to their funded projects. They also assist in creating websites, design support, and KMb brokering. It is important to note that the grant provider is reliant on local, provincial, and federal government support to continue providing long-term grants.

The Wellbeing Network believes that the integration of research evidence to improve student mental health, create safe school environments, increase the physical health of students, and make schools more accessible will improve the lives of children in Ontario schools and prepare them to manage their emotional and mental wellbeing as they age. To bring more

research evidence into Ontario elementary, middle, and high schools, the Wellbeing Network plans to work on four separate but interconnected KMb plans. Each area identified above is connected to a knowledge mobilisation plan.

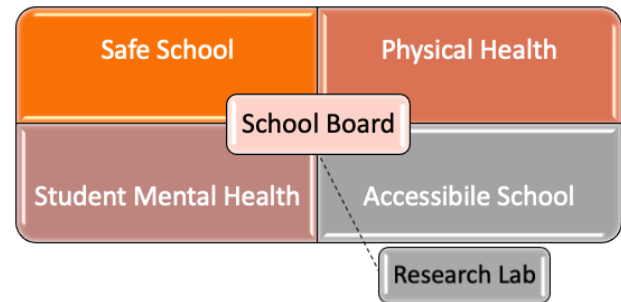


Figure 4: Structure of Wellbeing Network

Before we move on, it is vital to understand the structure of the Wellbeing Network. The term network is used here because it best describes the structure of the organisation. There is a central hub, the school board, that supports the work of each knowledge mobilisation plan. The school board has a primary representative who acts as the contact for all of the other partners. They also act as administrators, dealing with releasing grant funds, and as a knowledge broker. The not-for-profit organisations all have an area of focus related to wellbeing and all have had prior engagement with Ontario elementary, middle, and high schools. The not-for-profit organisations work separately on their KMb plans that specifically address one area related to student wellbeing, such as reducing bullying. A few times a year the school board representative gathers the not-for-profit organisations together. At these meetings, they discuss their work, brainstorm how they can support each other's projects, and learn from each other. The research lab gathers and produces research related to student wellbeing that is made available to the not-for-profit organisations to use within their KMb plans.

I was hired by the school board in summer 2017 to assist not-for-profit organisations with creating KMb plans, accessing relevant research, and developing grant applications. I ended up only working with one of the not-for-profit organisations over the summer. The not-for-profit organisation I worked with during the summer of 2017 is the internship partner. While I was

hired by the Wellbeing Network and was supervised by the school board representative, the community organisation I worked with as a knowledge consultant was the not-for-profit organisation focused on the topic of student accessibility. I was asked to focus on this not-for-profit organisation because they had the least experience with the academic theory of KMb and needed the greatest support in creating a knowledge mobilisation plan that fit funder requirements.

The internship partner's KMb project focused on making school culture more accepting of student differences. The internship partner was an Ontario-wide organisation run mostly through volunteer labour. Thus, they created a committee of volunteers to work on developing the KMb plan. This committee was made up to three senior volunteers with years of experience in the organisation; two junior volunteers with relevant experience but who had not been with the internship partner long; and me, a knowledge consultant. Since the organisation had minimal background in the theory of knowledge mobilisation, I was to help them create a plan for the KMb project and an evaluation plan for the project that met the needs of the funder. I was also to help the internship partner access relevant research evidence.

**Background.** The internship partner was founded in the early 1990s. They aimed to create positive community development throughout Ontario. The internship partner is a network of smaller community development organisations from around Ontario. Common topics community development organisations focus on include poverty, transportation, youth/senior issues, and food security. Community development organisations support their goals through community resources centres, advocacy, and the creation of community groups. While the number of community development organisations involved with the internship partner fluctuated

over the years, during the summer of 2017, eighteen of these organisations were listed as being part of the network.

The internship partner brings representatives from the 18 community development organisations together to meet once or twice a year. At these meetings, they discuss what the pressing issues are in the areas they provide services. Then the representatives make decisions about ways the internship partner can support individual community development organisations; they also consider joint funding projects and begin planning for these projects. The internship partner has managed the successful completion of a number of joint funding projects since the 1990s. Topics of joint funded projects include reducing the impacts of poverty, using census data to find factors that reduce quality of life, improving the quality of education for students in Ontario, and creating guides to help communities work on increasing their social capital.

**Knowledge Mobilisation Experience.** By exploring past projects that were completed by the internship partner I gained a better understanding of their knowledge mobilisation experience. The research material found for the internship partner presents an image of a network of skilled community researchers with experience running and completing funded research projects that focus on human rights. Exploration of past funded projects shows the skills needed to complete long-term collaborative research projects. The internship partner has the knowledge and experience to bring people from different communities and research groups together. Past funded projects show a strong presence of participatory action research (PAR). For instance, it was a habit for the internship partner to bring community members and researchers into a project in the early stages and for these individuals to maintain engagement with the project. The internship partner has developed strong relationships with academics, researchers, parents, community members, and youths. All of this knowledge, experience, and skill show an

organisation that is prepared to deal with several barriers that might happen during a funded project, unexpected or otherwise.

Ensuring the presence of members from marginalised communities in projects has been a priority for the internship partner, though representation from marginalised communities is not always equal. There is often a priority to include people living in poverty—people living on the streets, people in temporary housing, people who are house poor, and people struggling to maintain their housing — within joint funded projects. There is often less representation or mention of Indigenous Peoples in joint funded projects.

I must note that the representation of marginalised communities in joint funded projects appears to depend on which community development organisations are helping to run the project. Each community development organisations has different forms of diversity within their communities. For example, one community development organisation has a strong focus on the representation and support of people with disabilities. When this particular organisation is helping to manage a joint funded project, people with disabilities are more likely to be represented. Depending on the population of marginalised folks within their communities, community development organisations may have similar priorities for specific marginalised groups.

The differences in which marginalised groups are prioritised in a joint funded project are concerning. Ontario has a large population of people from a variety of cultures, religions, and backgrounds. For this reason, I understand why it would be hard to ensure representation from all of these groups. The internship partner's focus on poverty raises the possibility of some representation from most of these marginalised folks. I found nothing in the research materials from community development organisations to indicate that the focus on poverty included an



attempt to bridge representation from diverse backgrounds. However, based on my experience working with the internship partner, the focus on poverty allowed for the broad inclusion of people from a variety of backgrounds. From an anti-oppression perspective, the internship partner could benefit from developing a way to identify marginalised groups who are impacted by a project. They could then ensure these groups engaged in the project regardless of the population priorities of participating community development organisations. If the internship partner is already engaging in such a process, they could benefit from better transparency that would make clear the anti-oppression work within their projects.

While the internship partner had a strong background in PAR, networking, and relationship building—all important to knowledge mobilisation—they had little understanding of the academic background of KMb, the difference between a knowledge mobilisation plan and a project work plan, what knowledge products were, or how to evaluate a knowledge mobilisation plan.

**Creating a Knowledge Mobilisation Plan.** On May 4, 2017, the internship partner arranged for representatives from the community development organisations, the school board, and me to attend a planning meeting for the KMb project. After much discussion, we decided to focus on the impact of poverty on student and parent engagement in the social and educational environments of schools. A committee was created to work on the project and bring updates and major decisions back to the internship partner. This committee of seven people was made up of representatives from four different community development organisations and me. Through consensus, we agreed that throughout summer 2017 the committee would (a) apply for another source of funding for this project, and (b) create a knowledge mobilisation plan for the project.

Over May and June in 2017, the committee focused on developing a funding application as the deadline was early July. I was asked to create a KMb plan and an evaluation framework for the funding application. To begin the knowledge mobilisation plan, I gathered details on how the network had completed past funded projects and their plan for the current KMb project. The Knowledge Translation Planning Template created by the Hospital for Sick Children (2008) was used to help create the knowledge mobilisation plan. The school board representative, acting as administrator for the Wellbeing Network, believed this template was a powerful tool for creating a KMb plan. Furthermore, it could provide consistency between the four knowledge mobilisation projects happening within the Wellbeing Network.

After struggling to create the KMb plan for the funding application, I put the Knowledge Translation Planning Template aside. I focused on some of my other work for a week and then came back to the knowledge mobilisation plan. During this week I had a conversation with other people who were part of the planning committee. Based on this conversation and reflections on the work we had done so far, it became clear that not all people on the committee had the same depth of understanding about what KMb meant or what knowledge products were. At the same time, the committee began to shift focus to a meeting happening later that summer, one which would provide details on the project plan and the KMb plan. The two situations made me realise that in our rush to get the funding application done before the July deadline, not everyone on the committee had received access to details about knowledge mobilisation. As a result, we now had to find a way to ensure that everyone involved with the project had the same level of understanding about KMb. The internship partner and I decided to return to the beginning.

First, we explored the documents from the Educational Research Funder and the funding application submitted by the Wellness Network. These background documents provided us with

an understanding of what KMb meant to both of these organisations. Next, we started a process where the internship partner began to develop an understanding of a project-specific definition of knowledge mobilisation. I believe that the process of developing the project-specific definition of KMb was essential to creating the knowledge mobilisation plan. Because the internship partner did not have a background in the academic theory of knowledge mobilisation, we had to find a way to bring this form of KMb into their community-based knowledge mobilisation process. We did this by acknowledging their history of community-based KMb as the starting point for the way KMb models, frameworks, and skills could benefit this project, make knowledge sharing easier and more effective, and meet the requirements of the educational research funder.

As part of the learning process, the internship partner needed to gain confidence in knowledge mobilisation. One area of KMb they were worried about was the creation of knowledge products. Knowledge products was a term put forth by the educational research funder that was not clearly defined. The funder expected that there would be knowledge products created in some form. An unclear definition of knowledge products left committee members unclear on what that would involve. They asked that I compile a list, with examples, of knowledge products.

The list of knowledge products I created include 44 examples divided into eight sections. This list can be found in the document called **Knowledge Mobilisation: A Summary and Example of Outputs** in Appendix E. The eight different forms of knowledge outputs are knowledge products, knowledge processes, knowledge sharing, social media, mentoring, skill development, empowerment, and arts. Having access to a list that included a variety of examples of knowledge products helped build the confidence of committee members. On the list, they saw

multiple examples of knowledge products that were part of the internship partner's past projects. With the list of examples, committee members began to feel comfortable engaging with the KMb process.

As committee members gained confidence with knowledge mobilisation, the conversation shifted away from the funder's definition of KMb towards what knowledge mobilisation would mean to the organisation's project. I was asked to create a short document to explain KMb to share with all of the internship partner members. The process of creating this document began a lengthy discussion about what knowledge mobilisation meant to their funder, what KMb looked like in the internship partner's past projects, and what KMb would mean for the network in this project. The final document presented an understanding of knowledge mobilisation and frameworks that were informed by research evidence but customised to the needs of this project.

After the process of defining what KMb meant to the internship partner and selecting knowledge mobilisation frameworks, the creation of the KMb plan fell together. By then I had a strong understanding of the work the internship partner was experienced in, ways they could quickly adapt, and support they would benefit from as their project moved forward. The knowledge mobilisation plan ended up being a document to help guide the purpose of their project as they moved into working with people outside of their organisation. It was designed to be flexible, adaptable to changes that might be needed. The flexibility meant that the KMb plan was a more of an outline for the project, with evaluation built in to help adapt the plan to the evolving project.

The final knowledge mobilisation plan combines the use of relationship and systematic KMb frameworks, allowing the internship partner to engage multiple audiences—policymakers,

school administrators, teachers, guardians, and youth—to share knowledge. Given the importance of relationships in this KMb plan, a significant component is the development and maintenance of relationships with all participants and audiences. Thus, relationship building and maintenance is given priority in each year of the project. I provide key points from the KMb plan below, broken into two sections from year two and year three:

**Year Two:**

- Find and support local champions. These are people who take on a leadership role within their community to actively share details about this KMb project to build engagement and share research knowledge.
- Review research related to KMb topics.
- Review school-based projects on KMb topics.
- Find existing knowledge products on these topics.
- Access lived experience through the experience of youth and parents.

**Year Three:**

- Create knowledge products for research-based evidence.
- Begin to share knowledge products, those from other sources and those made as part of the KMb plan, with local champions and audiences.

The internship partner's project has continued since I finished my internship in the summer of 2017. I could not stay engaged with this KMb project for a variety of reasons, but I have maintained email correspondence with the internship partner. However, the majority of the details found below are based on what is present on the Wellbeing Network website.

Unfortunately, these sources do not give me the same level of detail about KMb supports as I personally gathered during my internship. As a result, details of the KMb project after the

summer of 2017 are useful only to help us identify what parts of the KMb plan are being used. The details do not tell us what kind of support they gained from the knowledge brokers as they moved forward with their KMb project. Below I will outline four major project milestones: community planning session, advisory committee, community intelligence, and knowledge products.

**Community Planning Session.** In November 2017 the internship partner hosted a community planning session. Thirty education and poverty champions (youth, parents, and community members working on the connection between education and poverty) and 14 representatives from community development organisations were invited and attended this event. The purpose of this planning session was to explore education policies connected to socio-economic status and equity in education; to explore community conversations related to poverty and education; and to narrow the scope of the work that the KMb project would do in the second year.

Presentations at the community planning session included the following: an overview of the province's Equity Action Plan; contributions the internship partner could add to the Equity Action Plan; summaries of concerns related to socio-economic status and education from four Ontario towns and cities; and discussion on possible knowledge mobilisation products for reaching different audiences. Local education/poverty champions and a representative from the community development groups were tasked with sharing the details that were discussed at this planning session with their communities; they were also asked to listen to feedback about the project and continue ongoing conversations related to poverty and education.

**Advisory Committee.** The planning committee welcomed new members, such as education/poverty champions, and became an advisory committee. This group met, generally by

teleconference, to develop actions to ensure progress on the goals of the KMb project. The advisory committee worked on connecting with experts—both community and academic—to discuss the concerns identified in the community planning session.

The advisory committee focused on the following actions: prioritise and narrow the list of knowledge mobilisation products; identify and apply for further funding opportunities; explore the creation of knowledge products; develop connections with allied organisations; and create a website and social media presence.

**Collective Intelligence.** Just as there is research evidence present in the work of the internship partner, considerable effort was made to ensure that community knowledge and experiences influence the project's work. The influence of collective intelligence is present in the four community consultations used to guide the conversation in the community planning session. In the documents published by the internship partner on their website, we also see the way community concerns influence these documents and direct the choice of future topics. For example, we see the way the emphasis on relationship building with community members has influenced the aims of projects.

While the internship partner does not rely on the guidance of the community members, it rarely uses collective intelligence on its own. In publications, topics might stem from community concerns while research is used to shape the information presented. This way of using community concerns to influence the exploration of current research is common within KMb (Breckon, 2016; Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007). I enjoy seeing communities and researchers engaging, but given the history of power imbalances between these groups, I want to stop myself from offering congratulations here.

I feel I must keep a critical perspective on these engagements. I must ask, and I encourage others to ask too, what makes research or research evidence different from collective intelligence or consciousness-raising? Why is one form of knowledge given a higher level of respect when both go through rigorous processes for their development (Ben-Moshe, Chapman, & Carey, 2014; Driskill, 2011; Whitinui et al., 2015)? In what situations can collective intelligence be used as a source of knowledge to be shared on equal standing with research evidence? This brings us back to the questions regarding whose knowledge is considered valuable, whose knowledge do we produce and share, and who gets to share these knowledges. I began this conversation in Chapter 2: Literature Review and presented no clear answers. I am sure situations will have an impact on what knowledge is respected, making it difficult for us to find a single answer. What I do know is that we must not stop asking these questions.

**Knowledge Products.** In May 2018, the internship partner began exploring ways to take the knowledge they had gathered from research and collective intelligence and transform it into a form that could change the culture of Ontario schools. Knowledge products were focused on exploring possible collaborations with other groups doing similar work; they stressed the importance of student-lead actions and supporting the work of local education and poverty champions and community research groups.

Over the next few months, the organisation was involved in many activities: they held workshops to create knowledge products; supported forums to develop student-led action; conducted focus groups to help determine the information needed to develop useful knowledge products; and supported work done at the local level related to education and poverty. Two new knowledge products, in the form of short (no more than five pages) research summaries, were published based on the work outlined above.



**Year Three Updates:** There have not been any updates related to year three on the website. In email conversations I had in January 2019 with the school board representative—who is in charge of the finances for the Wellness Network—I discovered that the funder was making changes to the financial support they were providing to the Wellness Network (D. Buchanan, Personal Communication, January 15, 2019). Along with changes in funding, there was a delay in releasing funds to the Wellness Network. This delay meant that the Wellness Network could not provide further financial support for the four KMb projects related to student wellbeing. At that point, the internship partner temporarily stopped working on this project. The work that internship partner does in the remainder of its third year will have to be addressed once they can access the new level of funding by the education research funder.

**Knowledge Translation Planning Template.** The Hospital for Sick Children is thought to be making great strides in translating research evidence into usable products and in training people in knowledge translation, making the Knowledge Translation Planning Template a robust KMb tool (D. Buchanan, personal communication, April 7, 2017). The Knowledge Translation Planning Template is a document used for training for two education programs, Knowledge Translation Professional Certificate and Scientist Knowledge Translation Training (The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019b). I have had the template recommended to me by knowledge mobilisers in my network more than ten times in the last four years, showing the level of respect the Knowledge Translation Planning Template has gained within the KMb field. The template covers ten areas critical to knowledge mobilisation planning: project partners, the degree of partner engagement, partner roles, knowledge translation (KT) expertise on team, knowledge users, main messages, knowledge translation goals, knowledge translation strategies, the knowledge translation process, knowledge translation impact and evaluation (Barwick, 2008).

Based on the areas that the Knowledge Translation Planning Template covers, it seems like the detail is sufficient to develop a KMb plan. Yet, I struggled to take the information for these areas and create a knowledge mobilisation plan for the funding application. At the time I thought I was struggling with creating a KMb plan, something I had only done twice before. Upon reflection over the whole summer, I believe there was more to my struggles. One of these struggles, I believe, is that this template is designed for knowledge translation.

As noted in Chapter 2, knowledge translation is one form of knowledge mobilisation. Knowledge translation, like an infographic based on research evidence, might be one part of a KMb plan. A focus on knowledge translation suggests that the Knowledge Translation Planning Template explores only certain forms of knowledge mobilisation. In fact, under the KT strategies section, the only suggestions sharing knowledge are translation based. While options can be filled in, a list of this kind can lead people to think about knowledge mobilisation in limited ways (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015; Karau & Williams, 1993).

The KT Process section also highlights a concern with the limited use of knowledge mobilisation within the Knowledge Translation Planning Template. This section includes two options for the process of KMb: integrated iKT3, also known as PAR-based knowledge mobilisation; and end of grant KT3, where knowledge mobilisation happens without community involvement and occurs only once the research is complete. Again, I discussed several different knowledge mobilisation frameworks in Chapter 2. While PAR-based KMb and end of grant KMb are two ways of understanding the process, there are many frameworks to help with knowledge mobilisation planning which are missing from the Knowledge Translation Planning Template (Cooper, 2009; Gaetz, 2014; Moss, 2016; Phipps, Cummings, Pepler, Craig, & Cardinal, 2016; Whitinui, Morcom, Onowa McIvor, Boni Robertson, & Kimo Cashman, 2015).

Finally, the Knowledge Translation Planning Template was designed by and for researchers (Barwick, 2008; Barwick et al., 2005; The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019a). I believe that trying to use it without adaption is problematic for a community organisation. The use of the Knowledge Translation Planning Template is problematic in this instance due to power imbalances in access to knowledge. Specifically, there is an imbalance in access to research evidence, including KMb research (Brown & Strega, 2015; Piwovar et al., 2018), though there has been some progress made with open-source journals in recent years (Ramírez-Montoya, García-Peñalvo, & McGrea, 2018). While communities have a strong history of sharing knowledge, they have limited access to the wealth of information about KMb. For instance, one-day training courses in the Knowledge Translation Planning Template cost \$700 (The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019c), while five-day training courses cost \$2,500 (The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019b). These prices make the courses, and therefore the use of the Knowledge Translation Planning Template, less accessible to communities.

### **Disability Partner**

In September 2017, I shared a call out for a research partner and online learning partners. The research partner needed to be interested in collaborating on a KMb project. Online learning partners had to be interested in learning about knowledge mobilisation, but not have a current project. The call out noted that this project would be transparent to broader disability communities. Whether they were a research partner or an online learning partner, the groups had to be comfortable with others in the disability community knowing who they were and what organisation they represented.

In December 2017, there were two applications for the position of research partner. One organisation expressed interest in KMb but did not have a project they wanted to work on. I

recommended that they would be better suited as an online learning collaborator. They agreed to this change in engagement and began to follow the online learning space.

The second submission was better suited to be a research partner. They had an idea for a KMb project, which was the creation of a zine, means to gather the knowledge to be shared, funding for the project, and were agreeable to sharing details of the KMb project online. We agreed to work together in December 2017.

The disability partner and I met seven times between January and October in 2018. Only five meeting minutes exist. No minutes were created for July and October as the meetings were brief ones that focused on updates and the conclusion of the project.

**Disability Partner History.** The disability partner is a relatively new organisation that was started in 2016 by three neurodiversity activists. The organisation was formed when the activists noticed a lack of support for neurodiverse folks once they entered their twenties. From their experience with programming for neurodiversity, they also noticed that there was limited or no information around sexual and gender diversity. This lack of information builds on the long-standing issue that neurodiverse folks meet resistance to their right to self-determination within health care. For neurodiverse folks, there is particular resistance to acknowledging or accessing medical support for sexuality or gender identity.

To address these concerns, the disability partner began a peer support group for neurodiverse folks who were also trans and/or queer. When they began the peer support group, they created a private—not accessible to everyone—Facebook<sup>22</sup> group. There is no need for a

<sup>22</sup> There is an ongoing conversation about using social media platforms to organise community or grassroots movements. This conversation is based on the complicated relationship with social media platforms like Facebook, the use of personal information posted on the site, the purchase of smaller social media by larger corporations, questions around how social media corporations

diagnosis to join the Facebook group or attend the meetings. The disability partner felt that a diagnosis was not needed to access the group because not all marginalised groups are given diagnoses in a similar manner. The Facebook group is the main means of communication and organisation for the disability partner. The disability partner also wanted to have a physical space for peers to meet and support each other. To find physical space to host the peer support group, the disability partner worked with a community health care centre to access their space. Peer support meetings happen monthly, with one of the neurodiversity activists facilitating the group. The peer support meeting is vital to the disability partner because it creates space for neurodiverse trans and/or queer folks to share their experience, and to talk about the shared lived experiences of the neurodiverse, trans, and queer intersection. They felt it was important to create a space where all of these experiences could be explored.

Spaces where lived experiences can be shared help foster consciousness-raising, which the disability partner believes can lead to political activism and social change. Given that much of the activism and research done on neurodiversity is completed by neurotypical people, the disability partner felt that a peer support group would help people living at the neurodiversity, trans, and queer intersection to direct, produce, and share knowledge by neurodiverse folks.

To support the people involved in the peer support group, the disability partner applied for and received a Community One grant. This grant is given for community organising within

share news, the lack of fact checking for news on social media site, and more (Jenkins, 2018). These issues regarding social media corporations raise questions about the impact of supporting these corporations when using them to organise, the limitations of alternative options for organising on alternative social media sites, and the overall effects of organising via social media on community and grassroots movements (Murthy, 2018).

the queer and trans community. This grant gave the disability partner the ability to encourage attendance at peer support meetings and to plan the development of a zine.

**Organisational Structure.** After the support group's first year of operation, the disability partner asked one of the three neurodiversity activists who had started the group to leave. I am aware of the reasons why this occurred, but the details were disclosed to me as a friend, not as a researcher or KMb consultant. As per ethnographic refusal, I accept the soft refusal provided by the disability partner representative. What I believe is essential to note is that community organising and grassroots movements are often reliant on volunteer service. When personal or organisational issues arise, people who are volunteering their time can decide to stop providing their services. These barriers can cause issues with sustaining community organising and grassroots movements.

After one of the founding members was asked to leave, only two people were left to deal with the administration of the group and facilitation of the peer support meetings. The two remaining activists have disabilities other than neurodiversity, are people of colour, have jobs, and are involved in other projects; these things impact the resources they have available to run the organisation, set up and run peer support meetings, and make progress on the KMb project. The lack of structure in the disability partner's organisation did not help manage the amount of work for the two organisers. While the organisation was relatively small there was little way for the activists to transfer work to other people involved in the organisation. This lack of structure was a strain regularly voiced by a representative for the disability partner.

While I was working with the disability partner, they expressed concerns about how the lack of structure in the organisation had been impacting our collaborative work. At their request, I provided them with four resources from my personal experience working in an organisation

that lacked structure. I shared resources with them, including “Tyranny of the Structureless,” an article by Jo Freeman (1973), and a book called **Come Hell or High Water: A Handbook on Collective Process Gone Awry** (Vannucci & Singer, 2010). I also shared two articles about how to establish collective structures in an organisation: “Collective Organisation” by John Englart (2000) and “Differences Between Worker Cooperatives and Collectives” by the Cultivate Coop (2015).

There are many issues associated with the structure of community organisations and grassroots movements. The structure of an organisation can put a strain on all members of the organisation. Sometimes it is not the structure that is a problem, but how the organisation runs. Freeman (1972) outlines three ways that organisational structures can become challenging to manage, problematic, or likely to result in closure. These three forms of organisational structures are known as political impotence, the “star” system, and elitism.<sup>23</sup>

I want to note how the “star” system is an example of the way community organisations share knowledge differently than knowledge brokers and consultants. Choosing a champion—a charismatic person who acts as the spokesperson for a knowledge mobilisation project—is a KMb tool that is encouraged (Breckon, 2016). In contrast, the use of a champion, or ‘star’ appears to be a possible source of concern within community organising or grassroots movements. In community organising the issues arises when the mainstream media focuses on one person from the group who has come into the media’s field of interest for other reasons (Freeman, 1972). This type of media focus can become a problem because the organisation has

<sup>23</sup> For more details on these three organisational issues that may be experienced by community organisation read Freeman’s (1972) article.

not chosen the spokesperson or the stances to be presented in mainstream media. As a result, there can be backlash from within the grassroots movement or community organisation.

I do not feel it is appropriate to try to assess any issues with the structure of the disability organisation within this dissertation. The ability of the community organisation or grassroots movement to function is not a focus of this research project. However, it is vital for knowledge brokers and consultants to be aware that the organisational structure of a community organisation or grassroots movement might be a barrier that needs to be addressed within a KMB plan. For instance, when an organisation has a board, the positions must be elected. There is a set time frame on how often the board is elected, how many times people can be on the board, how many times a person can hold a specific position, and how an election happens (Cultivate Coop, 2015; Vannucci & Singer, 2010). The changing of an organisation's board can have an impact on any project. Some of these impacts might be a lack of support by the new board, changes in where funding is allocated, and an allotment of the time needed to ensure the new board is established and aware of its roles. Understanding the structure of the organisation, and thus how these structures can impact a project, is essential for knowledge broker or consultant when supporting a community organisation or grassroots movement.

**Knowledge Mobilisation Project.** The disability partner planned to create a zine as a way to share their knowledge. A zine is a self-published magazine (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2018). It can be digital but was initially made on paper and then photocopied. Zines are often used to share knowledge that is not part of the mainstream media (Collingwood & Kassir, 2018). With the Internet, it has become easier to share zines. Previously, people had to be part of a community to know how to access zines. However, zine archives are developing online, making it easier for people to find zines that are of interest to them (Zines Barnard College, 2018).



The disability partner wanted to create a zine that would focus on the barriers neurodiverse people who are also queer and/or trans face when accessing medical care. The zine was expected to push back against ideas perpetuated by neurotypical people about queer and/or trans neurodiverse folks. Some of these ideas bring into question the ability of neurodiverse people to be queer and/or trans, which can cause barriers to their access to appropriate health care (Doreleijers, van Berckelaer-Onnes, Cohen-Kettenis, Noens, & De Vries, 2010). The disability partner believes that limitations create these barriers in knowledge based on the lived experience of the intersection of neurodiversity, trans, and queer folks. Thus, they plan to share the knowledge developed through consciousness-raising in peer support meetings.

A zine was thought to be an appropriate format to share this knowledge because of the history associated with zines. Overall, zines have been forming spaces of respect for the development and sharing of lived experiences and collective intelligence. Investment by respected institutions is one sign of developing respect for zines. For instance, the Art Gallery of Ontario has an online and hard file archive for zines (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2018). As well, some organisations like Broken Pencil Magazine have created zine awards (Broken Pencil, 2019). These hard-won forms of respect have created space where the knowledge contained in zines has gained respect, both for the knowledge itself but also for the process involved in the creation of zines.

**Collaboration 2018.** The first meeting, held in January 2018, focused on administration and relationship building. Consent forms were filled out, and we discussed the Terms of Reference (which outlined my role and the representative's role) and language (evaluation terminology vs collaborative community terms). The disability partner's representative outlined

their project, their plans for the next year, and what they wanted to gain from this partnership.

The disability partner had three main goals for the next year:

1. Develop a structure for the organisation.
2. Create a committee for the zine project.
3. Communicate with the grant provider.

Between January and March, planning for the zine project was discussed. The original timeline outlined by the representative noted that they wanted to release the zine in June, during Toronto Pride. Toronto Pride is the city's annual LGBTQIA2S celebration, knowledge sharing event, and protest. Over meetings in February and March, it became clear that the representative was concerned about moving forward with the zine project. Their concern came from the fact that disability symptoms and workloads (for both the representative and co-organiser) were making it difficult to run the organisation and facilitate the peer support meetings. The thought of the zine project seemed overwhelming based on the infrastructure of the disability partner. When issues with infrastructure surfaced, it became clear that a release date of June 2018 was not possible. While the disability partner moved forward with developing new infrastructure between May and July, we reworked on a timeline for the zine project. As the representative was feeling overwhelmed by the zine project and the restructuring of the organisation, we only altered the start and end dates of timeline; the basic outline still reflected the time needed for each part of the zine project. After a break from meetings in August and September we met in October where the disability partner indicated they could not progress further on the zine project at that point. I thanked them for letting me know and offered to support the zine project once they began it again. As of March 2020, the disability partner has not restarted work on the zine project.

**Online Learning Space.** During January and February, I worked to create an online learning space. This space was a website that provided details that are summarised below. The online learning space was created to make the collaborative project with the disability partner transparent to the wider disability communities and to be a space of learning, networking, and engagement for online learning partners. The website included the following elements:

1. **Online learning space:** This section provided details about the online learning space, how to use it, and who would find it useful.
2. **Who is involved:** This section provided information about me and my role as a knowledge mobilisation consultant, as well as details about the disability partner and their representatives.
3. **Zine project:** This section included an explanation of what a zine is and a description of the zine project. It also described why the disability partner chose this form of KMb project.
4. **Minutes and other documents:** This section provided access to documents connected with the collaboration for the zine project including meeting minutes.
5. **Call out:** The call outs for a disability grassroots partner and online learning collaborators remained on the website for transparency.
6. **Blog:** We aimed to publish four posts monthly, but on average there were two to three blog posts. These blog posts fell into four possible themes.
  - a. **Project update:** These were released monthly and shared meeting minutes, cancellation of meetings, and details on any other project activities (e.g., workshops).

- b. **Disability partner presents:** These were posts about the disability partner or topics they thought were important for people following the project. For example, one month we shared a video called **Trans 101: Gender Diversity Crash Course** (2018). The video was about gender and sexuality within neurodiverse people.
- c. **KMb bites:** These blogs posts were designed to provide details about a smaller piece of knowledge mobilisation.
- d. **Collaborative research bites:** These blog posts related to working on a collaborative process. Some of these posts discussed rescheduling missed meetings, building relationships, and the need for an understanding of disability time in collaborative research.

Initially, the online learning space was to have a forum; this would be a space for online learning partners to talk and ask questions. To have a forum on WordPress you had to purchase the yearly premium package. This package was out of my price range. To cover this cost, I applied for funding through York University, but the funding was not approved until the KMb project had concluded. As an alternative, online learning partners were encouraged to use the comment sections to ask questions and hold conversations. Unfortunately, the comment sections on individual blog posts were not used to further conversations about KMb in communities. I fear the lack of formal space for conversations—comment sections are connected to each blog post, meaning that it is difficult to track specific conversations—resulted in this vital part of the online learning space from being useful to online learning partners.

**Social Media.** I used my social media to promote the online learning space. Promotional posts included the title of the post, a summary, and hashtags. Recommendations from workshops on using social media as a KMb tool suggest that instead of beginning a new social media

platform, use existing social media platforms that have existing followers (Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019). The disability partner and I were aware that we wanted to connect with two audiences through social media. These audiences were disability communities and knowledge mobilisers. My presence on social media presented opportunities to access to these groups on Facebook and Twitter.

On Facebook, I could reach approximately 60 disability activities and 12 disability organisations. Since I am friends with the disability partner's representatives on Facebook, they could also share promotional posts with their network, which on Facebook was a total of 739 followers. The prominence of disability activists and scholars on my Facebook resulted in more engagement—more likes, shares and comments—on promotional posts connected to themes of collaborative research. Engagement with promotional posts on Facebook resulted in 38 visits to the WordPress site, again focusing on posts connected to collaborative research. While it would have been great to gather more engagement with the online learning space from Facebook, it would have been difficult without paying for Facebook to highlight the posts on followers' Facebook pages. Financially, this was not affordable for this project.

My Twitter is less established as I only started it in January 2018. I had avoided Twitter because I find it challenging to use. I knew that Twitter had a strong presence among knowledge mobilisers: Twitter is used to share what is happening at KMb events; it is often used for discussions on KMb topics; and knowledge mobilisers talk about Twitter as the best social media platform for KMb networking. Therefore, I decided I would have to find some way to make this social media platform work as I began this research project. I had a small number of people I followed (71) and a smaller number who followed me (31). Thirty-five percent of the people I followed and 45% of the people who followed me were connected to knowledge mobilisation.

Twitter also uses hashtags as a way to access people who are not following particular accounts. Since my network on Twitter was not large, it was vital that we use popular hashtags on Twitter. To find popular KMb hashtags on Twitter, I explored the hashtags used by knowledge mobilisers and KMb organisation with a large number of followers. Based on the common hashtags used during 2017, we focused on #KMb, #KM and #researchimpact. Use of my Twitter network and hashtags directed 23 visits to the WordPress website that hosted the online learning space. The focus of engagement with Twitter promotional posts was six tweets connected to the KMb process. The people who engaged with the tweets, mostly through retweets, were always knowledge mobilisers or KMb organisations.

**Dual Relationships.** One representative from the disability partner and I know each other socially. It was important to us that we find ways to keep our social engagement separate from the work on this KMb project. Part of the first meeting was about boundary setting, particularly around communication for the KMb project. One of the boundaries set was to minimise conversation about the KMb project outside of meetings. We agreed that research materials included in my thesis would only come from official meetings or communication. We also felt we needed to engage in meetings as though we had no prior background on the other project. Going back to square one meant that the first few meetings focused on relationship building and information sharing. By sharing details as though the other did not know about the project, we ensured that we did not skip details. I believe that this information sharing, without any background awareness, was essential as it led to questions about both projects that improved our mutual understanding.

At specific points during the collaboration the representative had difficulty handling the amount of work. Some of this work was related to the structure of the disability partner. We

entered a discussion about what kind of support I, as a KMb consultant, could provide to the disability organisation. This discussion was difficult for me. As a disability activist, my usual reaction to this type of situation is to step in to the organisation and provide administrative support; this support gives the organisers time to take care of themselves and bring more people in to organise and facilitate. This situation brought complications to my dual role as an activist scholar to the forefront. I wanted to support this disability grassroots movement but had to consider how my role as a researcher would affect any support I provided. As a researcher connected to the organisation, I was not a member of the group. I also had personal concerns about my role as a disability activist, since this was a specific neurodiverse group working to support people from their community. As I am not a member of the community, it could be problematic for me to assist them in the way I generally do in my role as a disability activist or as a researcher connected to the organisation. However, as a disability activist, I could not abide by doing nothing while a disability organisation struggled.

Given that I also had a dual relationship with a representative for the disability partner, I used this situation to my benefit. I could default to the expectations of my role as a KMb consultant that were set out in the Terms of Reference. As a KMb consultant, I could move outside of my role with the disability partner to enter the organisation and support restructuring. After much discussion between myself and the representative, we decided that I could provide two kinds of support: as a KMb consultant and as a friend. The support provided as a friend would not be part of the research materials. As a KMb consultant, I could provide information on building infrastructure in an organisation, such as the creation and management of committees to run the zine project. The representative and I also agreed that we would include discussion and updates on the infrastructure changes to the disability partner at official meetings.

**Knowledge Translation Planning Template.** Completion of the Knowledge Translation Planning Template<sup>24</sup> happened from January to March. In the internship partner section, I noted that there were concerns with this template. I chose to use it with the disability partner as a means of consistency between the KMb projects. Feedback from the disability partner on the Knowledge Translation Planning Template indicated that they did not feel the template added much to the planning of the zine project. The representative felt we had already dealt with the ten areas of discussion found in the template. They pointed out the Terms of Reference and review of Community One grant as sources for the information.

While the document was useful for reaching a common understanding of the project, it was an understanding we were already moving towards. The disability partner did acknowledge that the form could help ensure that people assisting with the zine project were aware of the project's goals. However, they noted that the Knowledge Translation Planning Template did not have enough information on its own and was only useful as part of a broader discussion. Understanding the representative's concerns with the template was essential because the disability partner had already undergone a community-based planning process when applying for grants. It became clear we would have to consider the use of the Knowledge Translation Planning Template with community partners.

The displeasure that the disability partner expressed regarding the Knowledge Translation Planning Template reinforces for me the impact of power differences between knowledge brokers and consultants and community organisations or grassroots movements. The disability

<sup>24</sup> While the Knowledge Translation Planning Template is used within this research project there are a number of different tools, some that are simpler to understand or might work better with a community organisations. To access some of these other KMb tools visit [www.kmbtoolkit.ca](http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca).



partner had already undergone a community-based process for planning its knowledge sharing, which helped them successfully access a grant. As a result, the template was of limited use in helping us create the timeline or other processes connected to knowledge planning. Admittedly, the Knowledge Translation Planning Template was created for researchers and knowledge mobilisers; it is possible that community-based resources were explored during its conception (Barwick et al., 2005). It could be challenging to adapt the template to the needs of a community organisation or grassroots movement whose focus is on anti-oppression.

What might be better when working with a community organisation or grassroots movement is a checklist that addresses points important to knowledge mobilisation that are not often found in community-based knowledge sharing plans. For instance, knowledge brokers and consultants could help these collaborators by identifying their audience and ensuring the knowledge products match the needs of this audience. I mention issues of audience as this topic arose during the KMb collaboration with the disability partner that is discussed below.

**Audience.** One topic we discussed was the audience for this zine project. The representative said the aim of the zine was to make changes within the medical field. Thus, they identified their audience as medical professionals. I had concerns about using the zine in this way, given that the zine format is only starting to gain respect with specific institutions, mainly in the area of art, and there was little research on the use of zines with professionals.

To broach this topic, I began a conversation with the disability partner representatives about how KMb guides the selection of knowledge products based on what the audience is likely to engage with and learn from best. I asked if they had thought about how the zine would be received among medical professionals. I followed this up by asking if they had thought about whether medical professionals would take the information found in a zine as seriously as that

found in academic journals. The representative acknowledged that they had not thought about how a zine would be received by medical professionals.

These considerations led us to discuss the audience best suited for a zine. I suggested that the zine might work better to build alliances among disability, queer, and trans communities, which would be an essential step in the organisation's long-term goals. The representative acknowledged that a zine might be better suited for a non-medical audience. They planned to talk to the other members about a change in the target audience for the zine. I perceived disappointment in the representative's non-verbal language. Due to this non-verbal communication, I stressed that if a zine was how they wanted to share knowledge with medical practitioners, I would work with them to create the best KMb plan for reaching this goal.

We discussed their disappointment when I was in my role as a friend, so I cannot disclose the cause of the feelings. What I want knowledge brokers and consultants to think about is the assumption that everyone has the ability to produce the knowledge product best suited for an audience. I have spoken about financial and personal resources before. Let us take a disability perspective on personal resources, which moves beyond considering the knowledge and skills needed to create a knowledge product. A disability perspective on personal resources also considers the ability of the person or group to create the knowledge product. In particular, disabilities can have an effect on how a person works, how a person thinks, and the way they share information and knowledge. While we want to consider the knowledge product best suited for the audiences, we also must consider what knowledge product can effectively be created by disabled people. Sometimes we might not create a knowledge product best suited for the audience or knowledge user, rather a knowledge product closest to the best suited option that fits within our financial and personal resources.

In later appointments, there was a positive response to the idea of moving the audience of the zine to allied communities. It appeared that the disability partner began to consider the zine as one part of a larger project that they would be working on. The support for the change in the audience was presented both verbally and non-verbally. Non-verbal support for the change was shown in a renewed commitment to complete the zine in time to share during Pride, meeting the original deadline.

**Project Organisation and Resources.** While two neurodiversity activists ran the disability partner organisation, all members would be welcome to contribute to the zine project. The representative noted that on the disability partner's Facebook page there was a discussion about starting a committee for the zine project. They mentioned they were having difficulties organising and preparing the people interested in working on the project. A primary concern was that many people were willing to help, but few people could take on an organising role. When asked about attempts to bring more group members into leadership roles, the representative said, "Trying to organise people... was like herding cats" (organisation name was removed to maintain confidentiality). The lack of people with the resources needed to take on an organising role meant most of the work of the zine fell to the two main organisers.

This workload was complicated when the representative acknowledged they were dealing with new disability symptoms, which was making it more difficult for them to complete work for the zine project. In June 2018, the representative said their disability symptoms were getting better, but another project deadline (one that paid the representative) was happening soon. They felt pressured to prioritise the paid project as it would help them meet their financial needs. Refocusing on another project meant they would have difficulty supporting the zine project

committee. Unfortunately, the other organiser for this group was also struggling with disability symptoms, severely limiting their ability to do this work.

I want to note that during this time I was also experiencing difficulties with my disabilities, partly as a result of the prolonged strike my union was undergoing. I also had paid work, which I was forced to take on due to a few financial strains caused by the strike. These difficulties meant that my resources for the work needed for this KMb project were minimal.

When the representative and I met in July, it was a brief meeting where we both noted we had not completed work we had been planning to do for the KMb project. The representative mentioned further issues with disability symptoms, the pressure from the paid project, and a new project starting in September. This led to frustration which, when combined with other pressures, meant the zine project did not progress as planned.

As for myself, in July the stresses from various sources accumulated, resulting in a breaking point. Thus, my mental health was in crisis, and I felt that whatever resources I had must go towards my paid work. The need to focus on paying work, the stress from a strike, and the mental health of those working on the zine project meant we cancelled the August and September meetings.

In October 2018, the representative and I met socially. During this meeting, we agreed to wrap up the KMb project early, without the release of the zine. I told the representative I would be glad to work with the disability partner again should they move forward with the zine project.

## **Conclusion**

Presented above was the experience of a knowledge consultant as they supported two community-based KMb projects. The projects had some similarities: both aimed to create change within social institutions; both planned to encourage a movement of information and knowledge

through the use of knowledge products; and both had issues with the Knowledge Translation Planning Template. However, there were differences in the organisations themselves and their projects: one was a one-year project with minimal funding run by a newly established organisation; the other was a four-year project with substantial funding managed by a well-established organisation. I believe these differences will provide a broader understanding of the impacts of KMb projects within communities, and highlight important details knowledge brokers and consultants should consider when working with community organisations. As we move into discussing knowledge mobilisation supports for communities, this information will highlight barriers and other factors that need to be addressed.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

### Introduction

In this chapter, I will bring all the information and knowledge that has been collected so far into a discussion focusing on the research questions. As a reminder, the research question is, how can knowledge mobilisers support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations? One detail we will return to and explore is the definition of knowledge mobilisation outlined in [Chapter 2: Literature Review](#). Here I argue that KMb must be understood as an umbrella term related to the process of moving information and knowledge between groups. The essential parts of my definition of KMb include the following: political objective, knowledge, knowledge user, dissemination, uptake, positive impacts and harmful impacts. Knowledge might be shared in different ways: the creation of summary documents, the establishment of a community of practices, embedding knowledge within systems, and the creation of champions to build authority.

Disability anti-oppressive theory supplements the broad understanding of KMb. This theory indicates that there is a historical precedent in research for bias and discrimination that affects research outcomes (Meekosha, 2011; Michalko & Titchkosky, 2009; Prince, 2009). The harmful effects of bias and discrimination can stem from systematic factors such as expectations of funding packages, lack of consideration of marginalised groups in approved ethics, limited spaces to learn to work with, instead of on, a collaborative partner, or the unconscious biases that a researcher holds (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Disability anti-oppression theory outlines how I strive to identify and address different forms of bias and discrimination within my PhD project and the writing of this dissertation.

Finally, I bring in what I have learned about KMb as a process from the two collaborations that were detailed in [Chapter 4: Methodology](#). KMb collaborations involve a community organisation and/or a grassroots movement. The focus on using knowledge mobilisation in non-academic spaces came from my long history of community and activist work. My work in community and activist spaces has led me to wonder about how knowledge from different sources, such as community-based knowledge and research knowledge, influences each other. I was aware that community organisations and grassroots movements engage in KMb (Never Alone, 2015), but I wondered if the field of KMb could assist these groups in their knowledge mobilisation projects. The limited benefits of KMb planning tools made it important to find ways to support community organisations and grassroots movements. In this chapter we will expand this conversation by demystifying knowledge mobilisation and exploring the impact crip time<sup>25</sup> could have on KMb.

To bring all these different sources of information and knowledge together to address the research question, I bring us back to the KMb model: the co-produced pathway to impact. I must consider how this model affects the types of knowledge, skills, and supports knowledge brokers and consultants can provide, and what these outcomes mean for the support knowledge brokers and consultants can give to community organisations and grassroots movements. Then I will discuss the impact demystifying knowledge mobilisation has on the confidence of community organisations and grassroots movements to work on and complete KMb projects. Part of demystification KMb is the negotiation of language, such as the decision to use the term wisdom

<sup>25</sup> Crip time is an anti-oppression tool used to address the difference in pace and the need for breaks by people with disabilities. It also challenges the erasure of disabled people from social spaces and the future through the exploration of temporal theory.

instead of knowledge. Finally, I will introduce the concept of crip time as an anti-oppression tool that can be used to address concerns connected to the slowing and breaks that happen during KMb projects.

### **Effects of Knowledge Mobilisation Theory**

While I assisted in the development and implementation of KMb plans while working on my PhD, I still struggle with planning to share details from this dissertation. The audiences/knowledge users with whom I am sharing details are varied, from grassroots movements to community organisations to knowledge mobilisers. Each of these audiences will engage with the details from this project in different ways, meaning that with limited financial and personnel resources, I must find ways to present relevant details to specific audiences or knowledge users. The task is daunting.

I have immersed myself in this project over the last six years, and there is a lot of information and knowledge involved. How do I take the knowledge I have developed over these six years and give it to others? How do I figure out what information and knowledge are vital to what audience? What formats do I use to share the details? How do I ensure the audiences can use the products? What can I do with the limited resources I have?

With all these questions, uncertainties, and doubts presenting themselves, it became clear to me why researchers and academics focus on sharing knowledge in journals, books, and conferences. Throughout my academic career, I have been introduced to a limited number of ways to share research knowledge. Academic writing has been the core way of sharing knowledge, though there are different forms of writing including academic papers, journal articles, and academic books. Presenting at conferences has also been encouraged, and is a format I am quite comfortable with. I was lucky to find a strong presence of arts-based work in



my program. As a result, I was introduced to and encouraged to use arts-based methods, giving me another way to share my knowledge inside and outside of academic spaces.

As I enter the final stages of this PhD, I am thinking about how to share details about this dissertation. I struggle with the uncertainty of sharing the intricate knowledge created throughout the last six years. Given that I feel overwhelmed, a part of me wants to default to the forms of knowledge sharing I already know: write an academic book based on this dissertation, submit some articles to academic journals, and present at some conferences.

If I were to default to these forms of knowledge sharing, I would only reach a small portion of the audiences/knowledge users who could benefit from the knowledge I have cultivated. How do I, as one person with limited resources, ensure that I present knowledge in a usable way to a variety of audiences? There is no easy answer to this question. I created a KMb plan early in my research project, but I have to be realistic. Once this dissertation is completed, I will be starting to work in a new job. Having a job will limit my time and resources for enacting a KMb plan.

I am experiencing feelings of uncertainty and doubt even though I created and revised the KMb plan, which includes blogging, social media, presenting papers, and workshops. These four KMb products have helped in the past to build engagement within different audiences. However, I did not have a set format for how to share information and knowledge after the dissertation was completed, leaving me feeling uncertain about how to move forward with sharing knowledge based on my research.

**Co-produced Pathway to Impact Model.** To help me figure out how to package my information and knowledge, I attended an eight-week course hosted by the Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University (Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019).

The course was called Mobilize YU, and it focused on developing KMb skills while creating a KMb plan for a project. The course was a pilot project that aimed to help people with a variety of experience with KMb develop knowledge mobilisation skills (Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019). This class did help me deal with the feelings of being overwhelmed by getting me to focus on the forms of knowledge sharing I was already doing.

The course focused on one model of KMb: the co-produced pathway to impact (Phipps, 2019). This model was described in detail in Chapter 2: Literature Review. In this dissertation I focused on the five stages of KMb outlined by the model: research, dissemination, uptake, implementation, and impact. The authors of this model acknowledge that the five phases are linear, but they recognise that the process of KMb is more complicated than a linear model presents (Phipps et al., 2016). Even with these limitations, the creators of the model believe that this linear model can help others to learn about KMb, create knowledge mobilisation plans, and evaluate KMb projects.

For the KMb unit at York University and the Mobilize YU program, the co-produced pathway to impact model fits its needs. One of these needs is the reminder that while a researcher or academic is involved in the KMb process, they do not create an impact (Phipps, 2019). Instead, the impacts are a result of audiences/knowledge users who have brought knowledge from research into their work. Thus, while the co-production to impact model considers researchers or academics to be engaged in all phases of KMb, their engagement is focused on the research and dissemination portions of the model (Phipps, 2019; Phipps et al., 2016).

One criticism of knowledge translation has been that researchers and academics are only involved in the first two stages of knowledge mobilisation. I will show flaws in this presumption by exploring the ways researchers and academics create a bridge between dissemination and

uptake (Phipps, 2019). In the co-produced pathway to impact model, dissemination focuses on the various ways a researcher or academic can share knowledge with appropriate audiences. The unit helps researchers and academics create a bridge by assisting with preparing for the uptake of information or knowledge by the audiences/knowledge users.

There are many ways to share knowledge. Thus, finding ways to share knowledge with various audiences/knowledge users in ways they will understand is essential (Bowen, 2012). We must also consider how forms of knowledge sharing can motivate audiences/knowledge users to implement and adapt knowledge in ways that maintain integrity; this element is vital to the co-produced pathway to impact model (Carlile, 2004). However, it is precisely the vast variety of ways to share information and knowledge that makes me feel overwhelmed.

The reminder that a researcher or academic is not expected to have high engagement with all audiences/knowledge users through every phase of KMb has helped relieve some of my anxieties. This reminder is important for two reasons. First, as the researcher in this project, I am not expected to put the same amount of work into each of the phases of the KMb project (Phipps, 2019). I work specifically with four audiences/knowledge users: the disability partner, the internship partner, knowledge mobilisers, and disability grassroots movements or community organisations. My new KMb plan focuses on championing the dissemination, uptake, and implementation of information and knowledge from this research project with only one of the audiences/knowledge user (Cooper, 2009). With this shift in expectations, I can focus on finding ways to share knowledge with this group by focusing on the bridge between dissemination and uptake.

The second reason this reminder is important is that it emphasizes the fact that my work with the internship partner and disability partner does not focus on this bridge. For example, the

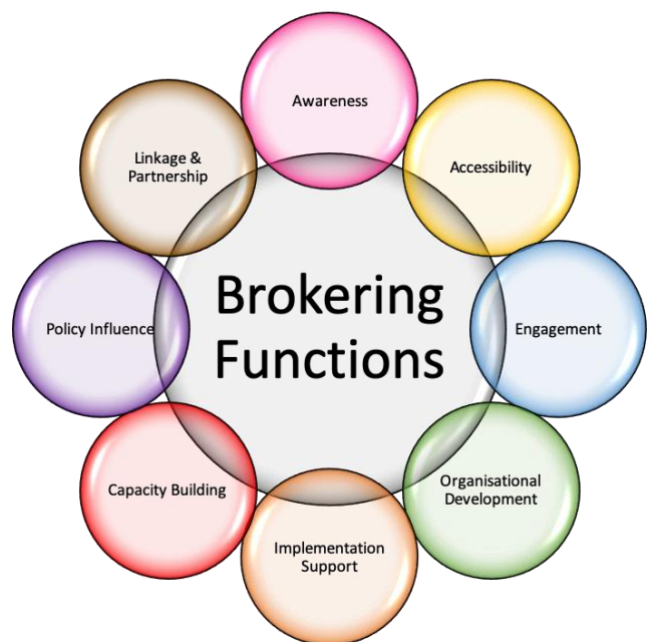
internship partner's goal was to encourage implementation of research evidence into elementary, middle, and high school environments to create a positive impact on all students. This KMb project is an example of work that focuses on all phases related to moving knowledge (Campbell, Pollock, Carr-Harris, & Briscoe, 2014). As a result, the internship partner was not completing research, but using research evidence that already exists. There was a strong base of education research evidence that was making minimal impact on Ontario school culture (Campbell et al., 2014). This KMb project aimed to address barriers within dissemination, uptake, and implementation. The project is an example of how the knower—in this case, a community organisation—can impact the type of work completed through KMb.

Focusing on the uptake and implementation phase of the co-produced pathway to impact model may require different forms of support from knowledge brokers or consultants (Brown & Zhang, 2016; Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015; Gomendio, 2017; Kimber, Barwick, & Fearing, 2012; Barwick, Barac, Akrong, Johnson, & Chaban, 2014). One type of support that changes depending on the organisation's focus is the form of a knowledge mobilisation plan takes. KMb plans that focus on bridging dissemination and uptake have the following aims: identify the audience/knowledge users, isolate the knowledge to be shared, find ways to share the knowledge that audiences are receptive to, consider the cost of the project, and evaluate the KMb plan (Barwick, Phipps, Johnny, Myers, & Coriandoli, 2014; Straus, Tetroe, & Graham, 2013). The knowledge mobilisation plans I helped create for the internship partner considered all the above, but added several more considerations: building relationships with partners and audiences/knowledge users; creating investment with various audiences/knowledge users; identifying means to encourage and implement research evidence; considering systemic barriers

to moving research evidence into school environments; and supporting local education champions.

Clearly, the focus on specific areas of the co-produced pathway to impact model can affect the type of work done in KMb projects. I am therefore left wondering what knowledge and skills knowledge brokers and consultants can use to support the latter three stages related to sharing knowledge in this model.

**Services Offered by Knowledge Brokers and Consultants.** In Chapter 4: *Methodology* we discussed the Knowledge Translation Planning Template, which was used with both collaborative partners. Part of the discussion included the difficulty we had using this template during the collaborative partnerships. After considering the phase a KMb plan uses to share knowledge and information, it is clear the Knowledge Translation Planning Template is best suited for the dissemination phase. I argue that this template is designed for the dissemination phase because it was specifically created to bridge dissemination and uptake, as we are told by the presence of “translation” in the title. The focus on dissemination instead of on the bridge between uptake and implementation caused this tool to be ill fitted to the needs of the KMb project. Given the context of the Knowledge Translation Planning Template focusing on dissemination or the bridge between dissemination and uptake, it is less of a shock that this tool created difficulties when trying to



*Figure 5 Adaptions of Brokering Functions from Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015*

develop a KMb plan that focused on the uptake and implementation phases of the co-produced pathway to impact model.

What is interesting is that much of the research related to KMb in education that I gathered—a total of 44 articles<sup>26</sup>—appeared to address the implementation of research evidence, suggesting that this specific area of knowledge mobilisation does not adhere to a narrowing of the KMb to dissemination or bridging dissemination and uptake. If support for knowledge mobilisation needs an understanding of KMb as more than a small section of the co-produced pathway to impact model, do knowledge brokers and consultants have the information, knowledge, and experience needed to support people seeking guidance?

To consider whether knowledge brokers and consultants are capable of supporting KMb projects at various phases of the co-produced pathway to impact model, we are going to explore the type of work that knowledge brokers and consultants do. Amanda Cooper and Samantha Shewchuk (2015) have outlined the six most common types of work that knowledge brokers do: awareness, accessibility, engagement, organisational development, implementation support, capacity building, policy influence, and linkage & partnership (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). I will define and then consider each of these categories for their usefulness in the uptake and implementation phases of the co-produced pathway to impact model

Note that Cooper & Shewchuk's work focuses on education. While exploring these six categories might help us identify whether knowledge brokers and consultants are capable of working within different phases of the model, it will not tell us what phases of support are

<sup>26</sup> Some of these articles are (Barwick, Peters, & Boydell, 2009; Brown & Zhang, 2016; Cain, 2015; Campbell, Pollock, Briscoe, Carr-Harris, & Tutters, 2017; Freeman & Simonsen, 2015; Gomendio, 2017; Kimber et al., 2012; Moss, 2016; Rodway, 2015; Rycroft-Malone et al., 2016; Schneider, 2015; Woods & Martin, 2016; Zarinpoush, Sychowski, & Sperling, 2007)

offered. Understanding the differences between having the capacity to support work in certain areas and providing this support is essential. Not every person or organisation that can provide support in a particular area does so. For instance, based on a presentation by David Phipps during Mobilize YU, I found that the KMb unit at York University focuses its support on the bridge between dissemination and uptake (Phipps, 2019). Phipps (2019) provided an example of the support provided in the development of a KMb plan for a funding grant and indicated that this type of support is a core service their main users (academic researchers) access. While the unit at York University might be capable of offering knowledge mobilisation support for uptake and implementation, these are not services that fit within the organisation's goals. The exploration of Cooper and Shewchuk's categories of KMb services shows that support in the uptake and implementation phase is a possibility, but it is unclear if these are services provided by knowledge brokers and consultants regularly.

*Types of KMb Supports.* Awareness, the first of the six categories we are exploring, addresses improving access to research evidence (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). One way that awareness can occur is through collecting evidence into a summary document, such as systematic reviews, literature reviews, or annotated bibliographies. The presentation of the summarised document should adapt to the needs of the audience/knowledge user, which brings accessibility to interaction with awareness. Thus, we begin to see how the six areas can intermingle during a project. The process of awareness, by repackaging research evidence for an intended audience/knowledge user, fits within the dissemination phase of the co-produced pathway to impact model. Awareness does not provide a framework that directly supports uptake or implementation.

The next category is accessibility, which considers the audience/knowledge users who will access details from a KMb project (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). This category then contemplates or engages with the audience/knowledge users to find the best way of sharing information or knowledge. Details are shared through the creation of knowledge products such as the summary documents mentioned above, workshops, videos, or a community of practice (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). While accessibility does consider how an audience /knowledge user will engage with a knowledge product, it is not a form of KMb support that occurs in the uptake phase. Instead, it is a form of dissemination that considers uptake.

Engagement does focus on how to get the audience motivated to read, watch, or listen to knowledge products (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). An exciting twist on engagement is that it focuses on using multiple senses to build interest. For instance, building engagement might combine the use of social media, written summaries, infographics, and workshops. The combination of these different knowledge products keeps information in the minds of the audience/knowledge user and uses a variety of different senses to assist with developing knowledge (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). Engagement is one category that does directly consider uptake. While engagement is used to impart knowledge through products created in the dissemination phase, its focus is on creating an environment where uptake can occur.

Next, we consider capacity building. This category of support specifically focuses on creating a strong base of understanding and skills in knowledge mobilisation (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). Development of KMb skills or expertise within a person or organisation can help address specific barriers, such as using research evidence. Capacity building is a versatile skill set that can connect to many stages of the KMb process. Thus, this category of support connects with the uptake and implementation stage as a strong understanding of the whole



process can help identify what types of supports, skills, or outside information can help reach goals within specific phases of the process

At first, implementation support sounds like it is directly connected to the implementation phase. However, the category and phase of KMb, while sharing language, are not directly connected. The implementation phase focuses on how research evidence is used by the audience/knowledge user. Implementation support focuses on helping others complete knowledge products to share with people working on a knowledge project (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). Thus, this category fits within the dissemination phase as its aim is the implementation of a KMb plan, not the implementation of research evidence into different areas of society, such as social policy.

We now begin to explore how to make an audience/knowledge user aware of a knowledge mobilisation project. This category is known as linkage & partnership. Developing and maintaining a partnership, often framed through participatory action research, is thought to be one of the best forms of KMb (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014; Nutley et al., 2007). The basis for this belief is that through PAR-based partnership, an audience/knowledge user is invested in the research being completed. PAR-based partnerships are thought to have benefits beyond investment. These forms of partnerships are supposed to empower audiences/knowledge users to help design research questions and research projects, as well as analyse data (Baum, McDougall, & Smith, 2006; Cook, 2006). It is argued that the full engagement of a PAR-based partnership would both empower an audience/knowledge user and build capacity for using research evidence. Linkages are not as involved; they focus on building relationships with the audience/knowledge users to build investment in and improve the uptake of research evidence (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015).

I used both partnerships and linkages when working with the disability partner. For instance, a PAR-based partnership developed with representatives from the disability partner. Linkages were built with a variety of audiences and knowledge users through the use of social media, workshops, and conferences presentations (by both representatives from the disability partner and me). Use of these knowledge products ensured that different audiences and knowledge users were aware of the KMb project and the different forms of information that could be accessed, including neurodiversity, knowledge mobilisation, and collaborations. The linkage & partnership category focuses primarily on early stages of a KMb project, particularly research and dissemination. However, this category can also help with bridging dissemination and uptake by building investment in the audience/knowledge user, which can improve the chances that they will explore the research evidence.

Organisational development is directly connected to uptake and implementation. In this category of support, knowledge brokers and consultants help organisations create an environment where research evidence is regularly searched for, appraised, shared and evaluated (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). How this process occurs within each organisation is different. For instance, some organisations might encourage people to present a summary of information gathered from a workshop they attended, while other organisations might focus on building a community of practice to encourage sharing of research evidence. In each situation, organisational development works directly within the areas of uptake and implementation.

Finally, we talk about policy influence. This category aims to focus on select audiences/knowledge users, those who impact policy on either an organisational or government level (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). Cooper (2009) outlines examples of knowledge products for

policy influence that focus on summary documents, social media, and news media. The focus on these knowledge products suggests that policy influence focuses much on dissemination.

***Uptake and Implementation Supports.*** Of the six categories of supports provided by knowledge mobilisers within education, half can directly connect to uptake and implementation. These three categories are organisational development, engagements, and capacity development. Note that these categories focus on support in the uptake phase more than in the implementation phase. The other three categories might have some connection to uptake and implementation in their consideration of how audiences use uptake to help with dissemination of knowledge products.

While the knowledge and skills needed to support the uptake and implementation phase exist, where are these supports being offered? Time and again, there are KMb products, tools, and models that focus on dissemination and translation: training sessions (The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019a, 2019b); services offered through KMb units (Barwick et al., 2014; Phipps, Jensen, & Myers, 2012); presentations and workshops given at KMb events (Kenny, 2016; Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019; Phipps, n.d.); and research shared through a community of practices (Brown & Zhang, 2016; Bruckauf & Hayes, 2017; Conklin, Lusk, Harris, & Stolee, 2017; Dietrichson, Martin Bøg, Trine Filges, & Klint Jørgensen, 2017; Straus et al., 2013). KMb models like the co-produced pathway to impact identify uptake and implementation as necessary for impact to happen, something the researcher cannot create alone. Researchers cannot force knowledge to move through uptake and implementation (Phipps et al., 2016), but what can they do to support this process? There appears to be minimal consideration of uptake and implementation beyond the investment of audiences/knowledge users and the reception of knowledge products.

***Uptake and Implementation Research.*** In the KMb plan developed in collaboration with the internship partner, there was a focus on networking, developing and maintaining relationships, and empowering and supporting local champions. As the internship partner's main goal was to move education research evidence, their KMb plan focused on creating environments in which research evidence could create impact. Thus, there was a need to understand how to help audiences/knowledge users implement knowledge and information.

There is a great deal of research on the uptake and implementation phases in the area of education (Barwick, Peters, & Boydell, 2009; Moss, 2016; Penuel et al., 2016; Schneider, 2015; Zarinpoush, Sychowski, & Sperling, 2007). This research does not stop at the dissemination of education research evidence. Instead, it explores systematic (Hargreaves et al., 2012), cultural (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016), and individual factors (Athanasas & Martin, 2006; Kimber et al., 2012) that influence the use of research evidence within classrooms (Yamada et al., 2015), administration of schools (Woods & Martin, 2016), and school culture (Schwimmer, 2017; Special Education Policy and Programs Branch, 2009). This research is starting to understand the complexities that affect uptake and implementation (Barwick et al., 2009; Campbell, Pollock, Briscoe, Carr-Harris, & Tuters, 2017; Moss, 2016) and move beyond the format, presentation, and engagement with knowledge products. Some areas of education research that focus on uptake and implementation include the following: consideration of how people decide what knowledge or information to use (Rodway, 2015; Schneider, 2015; Woods & Martin, 2016); exploring barriers to learning (Allodi, 2017; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016); adaption and use of research evidence (Brown & Zhang, 2016; Cain, 2015); and evaluation of knowledge products such as a community of practice (Barwick et al., 2009; Campbell et al., 2017; Cooper et al., 2009; Yamada et al., 2015).

These explorations have highlighted the way school culture has a significant impact on the uptake and implementation of research evidence (Athanases & Martin, 2006; Leithwood, 2010; Penuel et al., 2016). When school administration is resistant to change or does not support teachers in learning, adapting, and using research evidence, the creation of significant barriers occurs (Carrion, Gomez, Molina, & Ionescu, 2017; Schmidt, Burroughs, Zoido, & Houang, 2015). One barrier is the vast amount of knowledge for teachers to consider. To manage the overwhelming experience of sorting through this knowledge, people will take guidance from a trusted source (Kimber et al., 2012), usually someone with whom they have a relationship (Killen, Rutland, & Yip, 2016; Linnansaari-Rajalin et al., 2015).

While there are some knowledge, skills, and tools that knowledge brokers use to support uptake and implementation (Barwick et al., 2009; Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015; Phipps et al., 2012), these are inadequate. There is a need to understand these parts of knowledge mobilisation better. I argue that the lack of uptake and implementation support (provided by knowledge brokers and consultants) prevents knowledge and information from making an impact. I am excited to know this process is being explored so we can better address it within KMb projects. However, for community organisations that are not creating knowledge, but whose work focuses on the uptake and implementation of knowledge and information within specific groups, the inadequate support provided by knowledge brokers is a barrier. Understanding how an audience/knowledge user will uptake knowledge or information is an essential part of KMb in order to provide sufficient supports. As we gain a firmer understanding of the factors and barriers that influence uptake and implementation, we will be better able to manage the bridge between dissemination and uptake.

## Demystifying Knowledge Mobilisation

As I learn more about KMb, it becomes more challenging to provide a concise definition. KMb is a complex process that has many interconnecting parts, and each of those parts is complex. Understanding these intricacies is essential for knowledge brokers and consultants to provide the best support possible to those who have the knowledge to share. A knower does not need to understand all the complexities of KMb processes to effectively share their knowledge. I have questions about how a knower will benefit from learning about the KMb process. I wonder how we take the complex process of KMb and explain just what needs to be understood to knowers? How are decisions made about what knowers—but not knowledge mobilisation experts—need to know about these processes? How do we explain KMb in a way that empowers academics, researchers, community organisers, grassroots movements, and different audiences? In this section, I explore these questions through the use of the co-production pathway to impact, particularly the phases of dissemination and uptake. This model will help us (as knowledge brokers and consultants) support knowers in a dual role. This dual role of a knower and knowledge broker is necessary to learn about how to use knowledge mobilisation to effectively share knowledge and information.

While the knower is vital to KMb, we cannot neglect other people who are part of this process. Audiences are necessary so knowledge and information have a place to move (Rogers, 2003). Funders, when present, provide resources needed to ensure knowledge and information can be mobilised. Skilled experts can help with the development of knowledge products (Conklin et al., 2017; Gaetz, 2014; Marsay, 2017). Many others could be involved in the knowledge mobilisation process depending on the scope of the project. While not every person involved needs an in-depth understanding of knowledge mobilisation, but each person should feel

empowered by their engagement in the process (Spaapen & van Drooge, 2011; Whitinui, Morcom, Onowa McIvor, Boni Robertson, & Kimo Cashman, 2015). Knowers should gain confidence in a variety of ways by sharing their knowledge (Morton, 2015). Funders should have the assurance that knowledge created will be shared with appropriate audiences.

Audiences/knowledge users should build a firm enough understanding of the knowledge or information to use and adapt (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Rogers, 2003). For these three groups to be empowered by KMb, each group would benefit from different details about the process.

When different groups are empowered, sharing knowledge and information is easier; each group is also more likely to make use of their experiences in future projects (Nutley et al., 2007). When KMb empowers audiences/knowledge users, they are more likely to implement new knowledge or information within their local contexts (Straus et al., 2013). KMb can expand the ways a knower is able share knowledge and provide a process to increase uptake in audiences/knowledge users, which ensures that their knowledge and information will be used (Vishwanath, & Barnett, 2011). Funders can confidently expect more elaborate plans for knowledge sharing using KMb as a framework.

Knowledge mobilisation is an ongoing process, one that we engage in with different roles multiple times a day (Kenny, 2016; Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019; Levin, 2008). At times we are the audience/knowledge user, learning about new knowledge or information (Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019; Phipps, n.d.). At other times we are knowers, sharing what we have learned with others (Conklin et al., 2017; Hering, 2016; Michaels, 2009). It is vital to acknowledge that we slide in and out of roles within the KMb process. We are always learning, adapting, and sharing as knowledge mobilisers. We never hold the role of the expert in all situations. Even in spaces where we are an expert, there is still

much for us to learn. Being aware of our own dual role as knower and audience/knowledge user can help us stay grounded in the work that we do. Understanding our role as knower is essential for us to develop the best way to empower our audiences to use and adapt KMb (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015). However, it is also essential for us as knowledge mobilisers to acknowledge our role as knowledge user when learning about those we are supporting and the knowledge and information they have to share (Moore, Redman, D'Este, Makkar, & Turner, 2017; Olejniczak, 2017).

The knowers that we are supporting also slide into other KMb roles. When knowers are learning about knowledge mobilisation, they take on the role of the audience/knowledge user. As knowledge brokers and consultants, we are the knowers who are moving information and knowledge in the KMb process. The awareness of how these roles are not static is helpful as it allows us to use knowledge mobilisation models, like the co-production pathway to impact, to better understand how to support knowers, audiences/knowledge users, and others involved in KMb. Moving forward, I will focus specifically on the knower since this is the role taken on by my collaborative partners.

When supporting a client (the knower), there is often a focus on the dissemination phase to ensure they have access to the details about knowledge mobilisation needed to complete their project (Phipps, 2019). When we work with a person or group over time in the role of knowledge brokers and consultants, we are in a unique situation. In these spaces we support the client in their role of knower in their project. However, we also take on the role of knower as we help the client (now in the role of audience/knowledge user) understand the process of KMb. In our role as knower, we support clients while they move through the uptake and implementation stages related to the use of KMb frameworks, models, and tools. The support we provide in these stages



is different from dissemination. Hence, we have another situation where a strong understanding of the uptake and implementation stages can help us give the best support possible.

Below, I will detail how my discussion and support for KMb changed while working with the internship partner. A shift from teaching the “what” and “how” of KMb to empowering the internship partner to use a more complex model than those used in their past projects. I will discuss how this shift in support occurred after I acknowledged the need to address the uptake phase of the co-production pathway to impact model. Finally, I will weave in the way exploring past projects was essential for me to identify how best to support the knower in their KMb project.

**The Shift.** During my work with the internship partner, I learned a great deal about how knowledge mobilisation is defined and presented. The focus on moving research evidence within this project influenced the original definition of knowledge mobilisation, which relied on academic meanings. While there is nothing wrong with academic definitions, the reliance on these definitions created a distance with the internship partner representatives. There was an overall understanding of what knowledge mobilisation was, but not how the internship partner could implement it within the context of the project. As a knowledge consultant, I needed to move my support from the dissemination to uptake phase. I will discuss how this shift in phases of the co-production pathway to impact model allowed me to alter my support to empower the internship partner to use KMb. To support this example, I will describe the process I used to find a concise way to explain KMb that also built upon the internship partner’s past work. I will explore the importance of connecting this past work to knowledge mobilisation, allowing the internship partner to build confidence in KMb, but also to consider less academic definitions.

The project began with the understanding that the internship partner had minimal experience with knowledge mobilisation, so the original focus was on building a basic understanding of this process, placing us firmly in the dissemination phase. As the work progressed, it became clear that they did have experience with knowledge mobilisation; it had just been presented without the support of a framework, limiting the effectiveness of the knowledge and information sharing process. Once this was understood, it became clear that moving into the uptake phase of the KMb process would benefit the internship partner as it would allow them to learn about knowledge mobilisation within the context of their own experience. Moving to the uptake phase opened up a variety of collaborative processes that permitted them to amalgamate their own experiences of KMb with the expectations of their funder.

When the internship began, the understanding of KMb was confounded by the pressure of a deadline for potential funding. The need to focus on a funding application left little time or resources to ensure that the internship partner representatives had a firm grasp on knowledge mobilisation. As a result, for the first portion of the internship, the definition of KMb was based on work related to research evidence: finding effective ways to share information and knowledge with specific audiences.

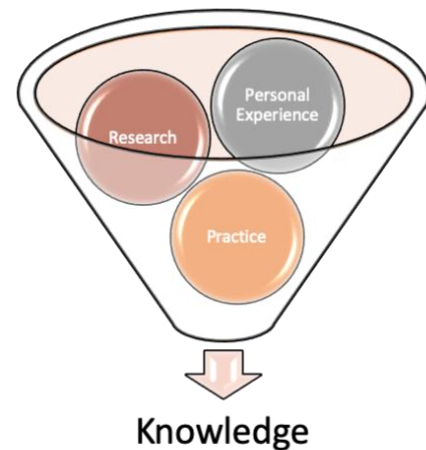
As a result of the funding application deadline, there was no time set for the internship partner representatives to formally learn about KMb; therefore, bits and pieces of knowledge mobilisation were shared when issues presented themselves. The pieces of knowledge mobilisation that were introduced depended on the context of the conversation. When the topic of knowledge mobilisation arose in the context of research evidence, conversations might focus on what is considered knowledge. Each conversation connected to KMb was used to build

awareness for the internship partner representatives. These conversations are all examples of sharing knowledge in the dissemination phase.

This piecemeal means of learning about KMb caused issues as the internship progressed. People directly involved in the project had to do a great deal of work to connect the different parts of KMb into a functioning whole (Blums, Belsky, Grimm, & Chen, 2017; Quinn, Smith, Kalmar, & Burgoon, 2018; Wang & Degol, 2016). Questions about knowledge mobilisation also continued to occur while working on other aspects of the project. The disconnection between learning something and asking for clarification created barriers to the learning process (Crawford, Macmillan, & Vignoles, 2017; Perry, Yee, Mazabel, Lisaingo, & Määttä, 2017). These issues also exemplify the difficulties faced when moving between the dissemination and uptake phases of the co-production pathway to impact model. As the dissemination of knowledge and information about KMb was not completed in a manner that encouraged the learning process, the internship partner representatives had difficulties taking up this knowledge and information; thus, they were unsure how to implement KMb within their project.

When the project was able to prioritise KMb a few things became clear. Even though a definition of knowledge mobilisation was understood, there was confusion about how this definition would integrate into the current project. Another issue was the lack of understanding of broad terms connected to KMb. For instance, the internship partner was expected to create knowledge products, but there was considerable uncertainty about what knowledge products were. It was at this point that I moved from offering support for learning about KMb from the dissemination to uptake phase. With this shift, I moved from helping the internship partner representatives learn about KMb in general to helping them figure out what knowledge mobilisation meant to them within this specific project.

In response to the above queries and shift to the uptake phase, there was a need to move away from broad definitions of knowledge mobilisation. While the internship partner was but one section of a larger KMb project and thus was influenced by funder expectations, they needed to consider what knowledge mobilisation would mean to their project. To start, the internship partner representatives and I considered what knowledge meant within their project.



*Figure 6: Knowledge Adapted from Appendix F*

We determined that an essential aspect was the inclusion of lived experience within what is considered knowledge, which is not part of the definition found in research evidence. To include lived experience as knowledge, the internship partner planned to use qualitative methods to gather lived experience and connect it to research evidence. We settled on a final definition of knowledge that blended lived experience, research evidence, and the effects of practice.

After creating an understanding of what would be considered knowledge in this project, the internship partner wanted a better understanding of knowledge products. I drafted a list of knowledge products that included examples. This list allowed those directly involved during the summer of 2017 to see the variety of ways knowledge can be shared (Appendix E). This list also included examples of knowledge sharing that the internship partner had used during previous projects. Seeing examples from past projects let people understand that they had experience in KMb that they could build upon during this project.

With this new confidence, internship partner representatives wanted to ensure that everyone involved in their project had the same understanding of knowledge mobilisation. They

also wanted this understanding to align with the funder's definition of knowledge mobilisation. As a result, we gathered details about the funder's definition of KMb and used it as the basis to build on the internship partner's experience and understanding of what is considered knowledge.

Inclusion of different sources into the definition of knowledge mobilisation for this project led to a broad definition of KMb:

Knowledge mobilisation is the connection of two processes: the creation of knowledge and the sharing of knowledge. Sharing knowledge is something that people do in their daily lives - from storytelling to teaching. People strive to find ways to share what they know with others. (Appendix F, p. 1)

Note that this definition identifies the sharing of knowledge as something every person does in their daily life. This direction for the definition was selected to ensure that KMb is understood as something everyone has some experience in. They needed to make it clear that while knowledge mobilisation is done every day, it is challenging to make sure knowledge is shared clearly. To clarify why they were using KMb, the following was added to the definition above:

Sharing knowledge is often a hard process. Knowledge is personal. For instance, two people who take the same class may create different knowledges based on their own past experiences and their understanding of the world. Thus, moving knowledge from a person into a different context is a complex process.

Difficulties with moving knowledge have created many theories within research and communities. These theories address what knowledge is and how it is shared.

Knowledge mobilisation is the name under which these theories live." (Appendix F, p. 1)

With this definition of knowledge mobilisation, the internship partner could build conviction among the variety of people engaged in the project—researchers, representatives from their organisation, teachers, partners, youths, and school administration—that KMb would be an effective way to meet their goals.

**Shifting Phases.** Based on the short definitions provided above, dissemination is the process of making information or knowledge available in a format an audience can use, and uptake is the use of information or knowledge (Phipps et al., 2016; Spaapen & van Drooge, 2011; Straus et al., 2013). Exploring who takes action within these definitions shows a significant change as the KMb process moves from dissemination to uptake. In dissemination, the knower takes action to produce knowledge or information in a format that is likely to be understood by the audience. Thus, in dissemination the active participant is the knower, who may be supported by a knowledge broker or consultant, communication assistant, or another professional in the process of knowledge sharing. In the uptake model, the active participant is the audience/knowledge user, based on the co-production pathway to impact model (Phipps et al., 2016). In uptake phase, the audience first engages with knowledge or information, then integrates it into their world view, creating a new version of this knowledge as adapted to the person and their local context.

A knower will not always have the ability to continue contact with an audience/knowledge user as they begin to integrate knowledge and information into their local context (Cook, 2006). Thus, we come to the importance of the bridge between dissemination and uptake. This bridge includes considering ideas, such as how audiences/knowledge users will best engage with knowledge and information (Phipps, 2019). In our context as knowledge brokers or consultants, we need to consider the adaptation of KMb to the projects of our

audiences/knowledge users. We must find a way to create a balance that involves clearly defining knowledge mobilisation without making the definition so rigid that it is difficult to adapt to a knower's project. This balance is part of our bridge between dissemination and uptake. We must present KMb in a way that supports a knower's project without limiting the ways knowledge or information are shared or what is considered sharable knowledge.

Ideally, knowledge brokers or consultants are present throughout a knower's KMb project. Ongoing support can assist with any difficulties adapting and integrating knowledge mobilisation frameworks into the project (Nutley et al., 2007; Straus et al., 2011). I found this need for support in the work done with the internship partner. These difficulties might have been more prominent as the KMb definition used was highly academic and the internship partner was a community organisation, resulting in the two not comfortably fitting together. This discrepancy was shown in the differences between what was considered knowledge by the internship partner versus the research evidence definition found in KMb. When the internship partner adapted this knowledge to their local context, the presence of a knowledge broker ensured that the process was based in knowledge mobilization.

Thus, we come back to the importance of the bridge between dissemination and uptake phases. A knowledge broker or consultant will not always be available to support the adaption or integration of KMb into a knower's project. As such, establishing a reliable but flexible definition of knowledge mobilisation, with easily accessible supports, can help to ensure that adaption and integration of KMb happen in a way that keeps the core tenants of knowledge mobilisation. This balance is difficult to achieve, but one that knowledge brokers and consultants should have experience in as it is a difficult phase that must be faced by any knowers we support.

My experience with both the internship partner and the disability partner highlighted for me the importance of having a strong understanding of the knower's past projects.

Understanding these past projects helps us provide grounding in the knower's local context, providing a basis for how to best create a bridge for moving from dissemination to uptake. With the disability partner, it was critical to understand not only the work of the organisation, but also the core organisers for the group. The organisers assisted in establishing how the disability partner worked. It was essential for me, as a knowledge consultant, to understand the context of this work to support the project.

For the disability partner's representatives and I to come to a mutual understanding, we had discussions on the form of organising done by the collaborative partner. A particularly important part of this conversation was about the use of language. As the disability partner used community-based collective means of gathering knowledge, there were language barriers. Through negotiation over language, we reached a mutual understanding of the terms that were used within the project (Patton, 2012; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). Some language, like collective agreement, was quickly adapted and replaced by Terms of Reference, as it maintained similar core principals. Other terms like consciousness-raising are not often found within KMb. The use of consciousness-raising as a core methodology for gathering knowledge and information meant that there was a need to ensure a broad definition of knowledge that reflected consciousness-raising in the understanding of KMb.

## **Crip Time**

When searching for materials connected to the concept of crip time, something I have heard discussed time and again within my disability communities, there was a clutter of materials from a medical model perspective. In the google search a total of 378,000,000 results were



found, and the first three pages of results focused on disability supports in different countries. This clutter is a factor that affects more extensive discussion on crip time. The voices of people who study disability are easier to access than the people who live with and learn from disability. We have to wade through ablest vitriol to find a nugget of knowledge that stems from disability communities, the weight of each bit of ableism adding up until we cannot move any longer. This process depletes our limited resources; we have to make it through another day, a week, a month, a year. We have to carefully consider the time and resources we provide to any project, including trying to learn more about crip time. When we cannot balance the time needed for survival with work or organising, then we are told we have “time management issues” because obviously everyone has the skills needed for this delicate balancing act. Instead of receiving comfort, when things are unmanageable we are told to push through, to get one more thing on our list done. We are told this with the assumption that there are resources that we have stored up in case of an emergency, but there are not; all emergency resources were used up long ago. We often are already working on depleted resources, with the simplest tasks taking hours to do. We live with senses of failure, frustration, and fatigue while trying to be kind to ourselves and those in our community. Remembering compassion becomes hard but vital to our survival.

Crip time is a concept I spend a great deal of time thinking about. Having multiple disabilities that impact my ability to focus, complete tasks, and socialise means I have an intimate relationship with finding ways to survive while also engaging in a thriving life. This familiarity with crip time made me reflect on the experience of stoppages or slowing in the two collaborative knowledge projects I worked with. While the factors were not always disability-related, there is an excellent opportunity for projects to learn from the concept of crip time. In

this section, I will present but a small part of the discussion of crip time, focusing on providing a basis for crip time from community and academic perspectives.

Why does crip time matter to knowledge projects? The answer is simple: Sharing knowledge or information is not easy. Having passionate people invested in knowledge or information, who have the skills needed to move that knowledge to other groups of people, who can support those people to use that knowledge is vital to a successful knowledge mobilisation project. Thus, it is our responsibility as knowledge mobilisers to support knowers not only as they share knowledge, but as they navigate through the knowledge sharing process.

Understanding crip time is but one way we can prepare ourselves to provide this form of support and prepare knowers for the long-term, high investment processes often needed to share knowledge effectively.

I am writing this section with knowledge mobilisers in mind. To ensure there is a strong understanding of crip time I provide a theoretical background then open discussion on how this form of anti-oppression could have been used with the collaborative partners. This discussion will begin to show how crip time could assist knowledge mobilisers.

Before we move forward, I want to clarify the terms being used in this section, specifically the use of disability and impairment. While disability can be used as an umbrella term to denote a variety of forms of abilities that are not within the “norm,” this is not the definition used in this section. Instead, the meaning of disability used here stems from the social model. This model says that disability is not caused by variant abilities or bodily diversity but is a result of the barriers in the built environment and social beliefs (Withers, 2012). This definition of disability leaves a need for a term to describe the limitations a person experiences as a result of non-normative bodily functioning. This term is impairment. Impairments can cause

difficulties in completing tasks, but these difficulties are not what create disability (Withers, 2012). For example, a person with dyslexia will have trouble reading due to the way their brain processes language, an impairment to their daily functioning. This impairment, when combined with a lack of consideration in the formatting of written material and the social stigma related to limited reading capacity, results in dyslexia becoming a disability.

To begin an exploration of how crip time can assist knowledge mobilisation, we begin by considering three factors that influence the experience of crip time: barriers, impairments, and compassion. Barriers address delays that are not under our control. While impairments discuss the diverse experience of time influenced by a person's abilities, compassion reminds us of the need to have compassion for ourselves and others as we experience delays. After this discussion, we will begin to explore academic theories related to time, how social ideas of time cause the erasure of disabled people, and how crip time creates futures for disabled people. Once we have a clear understanding of these topics, we will discuss how to adapt our learning to our work on knowledge projects, and how compassionate building spaces create environments where personal needs are balanced with the objectives of a project. These changes ensure that volunteers and staff have the support needed so they are less likely to burn out, lose enthusiasm, or create low-quality products.

**Crip time: Barriers.** Often when people think of barriers, they think of a space that is not accessible for a wheelchair. Ensuring access to spaces for people who use assistive devices, like wheelchairs, is essential for this group of people; however, this narrow way of thinking limits the more extensive discussion on access to spaces for the broader disability community (Fritsch, 2014). Conversations about access are also complicated by the fact that a person can have more than one type of disability. For example, for a person with light sensitivity might also

use a mobility device, meaning that ramps and automated doors only address one portion of their accessibility needs.

Barriers, accessibility, and accommodation are complex topics that we are only going to begin to discuss. In particular, we will consider these three topics through the concept of time. We will examine how a variety of disabilities interact with barriers, accessibility, and accommodations and affect the amount of time it takes to complete a task. To do this, we must have some concept of measuring time. We will not measure the increments of time it takes for people to do the same chore because that is a research project of its own. Instead, we will use tasks that we presume each take a relatively similar amount of time to complete. This assumption is an imperfect set-up as travelling through space will take longer than entering the space; however, the aim is to show the increased effort and time needed due to barriers, accessibility, and accommodations. Thus, we do not need exact measurements of time, but a way to gauge the effort expended and time spent completing a chore. By breaking a chore into the individual tasks needed to complete it, we have a measure where the more tasks needed to complete the chore shows the need for more time and effort.

Our task is purchasing toilet paper. I will begin by outlining what tasks a person who is not dealing with disability-related barriers will do to buy toilet paper. I will then provide examples of the tasks need to be completed to address disability-related barriers, accessibility, and accommodations. The point of this exercise is to provide an example of crip time, but also to show that there are different requirements for different people to complete the same task. These different requirements might result in longer time being needed. We must remember that the need for different times to complete the same task is not a problem to be solved, but a fact of life that needs to be considered when using unpaid or paid labour.

*Able-bodied Tasks.* When talking about an able-bodied person, we have to make assumptions based on the built environment and the social expectations within that environment (Neto, Costa, Tanhoffer, Bottaro, & Carregaro, 2019; The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation & The Disability Alliance, 1975). To be considered able-bodied within a space means that a person can navigate that space without issue. They can move through the space without concerns. They can read and comprehend signage. They can communicate with other people within the space, and they can follow the accepted social protocol of a situation. Note that there are fluctuations in a person's able-bodiedness (Rapp, 2015; Solomon et al., 2018). When a person is sick with the flu, their ability to navigate a space they know well will be hindered, making the space less accessible to them. This fluctuation is similar for people whose impairments fluctuate with the progression of disability symptoms or changes in a space, such as an accessibility feature not working. While outlining the tasks needed to complete our chore, we must first consider the tasks needed to complete the chore when there are no issues with navigating spaces. With this assumption, there are 11 tasks required to buy toilet paper:

1. Realise that new toilet paper is needed;
2. Figure out where toilet paper can be purchased;
3. Make sure you have money to pay for toilet paper;
4. Get ready to leave the house;
5. Travel to the store;
6. Enter the store;
7. Find toilet paper;
8. Pay for toilet paper;
9. Travel back to the original location;

10. Enter the original location;
11. Put toilet paper away.

It is clear that the tasks associated with getting new toilet paper are ones that are not thought about a lot. This experience is considered a form of able-bodied privilege. An essential aspect of crip time is the fact that tasks cannot often be done without thought or planning. A disabled person does not have the privilege of assuming they can go to their local store to get toilet paper as the store might not be accessible to them.

***Disability Barriers.*** A core part of the social model of disability is the idea that a person with an impairment is not innately disabled; instead, they are disabled by the built environment that does not consider their needs and the social beliefs that uphold able-bodied expectations (The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation & The Disability Alliance, 1975). As a result of these factors, people with an impairment, whether physical, sensory, mental or otherwise, must learn to navigate around the barriers that create disability. These barriers will change depending on the impairment(s) and the environment. Before buying toilet paper, a person with an impairment must plan for potential barriers, which may include the following:

- Is the store accessible?
- Do I need another person to reach the toilet paper on the shelf?
- Is there a space to rest if I get tired or my pain gets to be too much?
- Are service animals allowed in the store?
- Will the store be crowded? Too bright? Too loud? Will I encounter heavy scents?
- Is the store clearly labelled?
- How much ableism will I have to deal with?
- Will people stare at me?

**Accessibility.** In an attempt to ensure that more people can access spaces, there are changes to the built environment (Government of Ontario, n.d.). A few examples are curb cuts, scent-free spaces, and set hours for reduced lighting. These changes are a form of accessibility. I have not mentioned the social beliefs that factor into changes in a space because it is difficult to control the actions of people. Changes in social beliefs often take time, sometimes generations, to alter (Dodd, 1994). Thus, accessibility often focuses on the built environment. In theory, accessibility should make it so there are fewer disability barriers to accessing all spaces. However, we cannot assume that all spaces are fully accessible. There are still tasks that need to be completed when considering the accessibility of spaces:

- Is the store website accessible?
- Does the website have the store's accessibility details listed?
- If I call the store, can the person I speak with answer my questions about accessibility?
- If the store is accessible, how do I access these features?
- How will I get to the store? Is this process accessible?
- Are any accessible features en route or at the store out of service?
- What are alternative routes or stores if there is an issue?

**Accommodations.** It is not always possible to make a space fully accessible. When accessibility cannot happen, a person might need accommodations. Accommodations are often defined as an adjustment to the environment or requirements made on an individual basis (Ontario Human Rights Commission, n.d.). To complete our chore of getting toilet paper, accommodations might include an agreement with people who share the space about divisions of chores. Thus, one person might pick up the toilet paper while doing another chore in exchange.

This agreement might be set up before the chore needed to be completed, but it still takes time to create. Some of the tasks related to creating accommodations include the following:

- Who do I contact to arrange accommodations?
- Do I need any documents to prove accommodations are needed?
- What will the conversation (in person, by email, or by phone) about accommodations be like?
- Is there agreement on the accommodations that will be offered?
- Has it been confirmed that accommodations will be ready before I arrive?
- Do I need to connect with someone for accommodations once in a space?
- Have the accommodations been altered in any way?

***Application of Knowledge Mobilisation.*** When trying to address barriers, find out the accessibility of a space, or gain accommodations, several extra tasks are required in order to complete a reasonably simple chore like picking up toilet paper. These factors can present themselves in any space, making even simple tasks take longer to complete. The increased time needed to complete tasks also means expending more energy; although these considerations are generally meant to make things easier, the number of chores that can be completed in a day is reduced given the extra time and energy needed to complete them.

What does this mean for knowledge mobilisation? How can we take this understanding of crip time caused by barriers, accessibility, and accommodations into our work? One piece that we can take into our KMb work is the way barriers, and even accessibility and accommodation, can impact the uptake and implementation to knowledge or information being shared. In Brown's (2000) work, there is a discussion about groups of people as they uptake knowledge and information. These groups are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and



laggards (Brown & Duguid, 2000). Categories like these present a bell curve that moves from people who pick up new ideas or technology before others to those who are unlikely to adopt new ideas or technology. Why does this happen?

Crip time presents us with a new way of considering those in the following groups, the late majority and laggards. If people within these groups have to spend a part of their day addressing barriers, finding accessible spaces, and accessing accommodations, where will they find time to engage with new knowledge, information, and technology? As knowledge brokers or consultants, how can we prepare knowers to engage with people whose time is limited? This question is vital not only for people who experience crip time. Many positions are fast-paced, allowing very little time to explore new knowledge or information. The need to find ways to share sophisticated knowledge with people with limited time is an essential component of knowledge mobilisation, one that crip time can assist us in understanding and addressing.

I find this conversation particularly interesting because I have issues with the term laggards. There is a history associated with words like laggards that implies harmful ideas to marginalised groups, including disabled people (Carlson, 2010; Lazo, 2015; Razack, 2000). This history leaves the impression that those within this category are to blame for their lack of engagement with new knowledge, information, and technology. Factors like crip time are presented as problems to be overcome by the individual instead of something that a strong knowledge mobilisation plan could address. These word choices can continue oppression and discrimination in subtle ways that push marginalised groups out of our spaces, away from the knowledge that is being shared (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; hooks, 2013; Weheliye, 2014). Consideration of terminology used within the field of KMB is an example of how an anti-oppression framework can reduce harms associated with knowledge mobilisation projects.

**Crip time: Impairment.** Crip time is not just affected by the creation of disability from external forces. Impairment as physical diversity or neurodiversity has an impact on a person's experience of time (Anne McDonald Centre, n.d.). By exploring the idea of crip time, we will develop a greater understanding of the effect impairment has on the experience of time. I will begin by considering how impairment has a practical effect on time, such as a higher chance of a person being late. I will then go on to explore how impairment can impact the way time is experienced. Finally, I will bring in a community theory called spoon theory, which is a means of explaining how these two aspects of crip time can affect people's daily lives.

**Time Delays.** As noted in the section above, there can be several external factors that disable a person, increasing the time and energy needed to complete a simple chore (Murray, 2017). There are also factors that impact time and energy as a result of physical diversity or neurodiversity. For example, chronic pain creates symptoms that affect both the body and the mind. Physical symptoms may cause issues with movement or staying in a single position for an extended period. Symptoms of the mind could include difficulty focusing. Chronic pain is also an impairment that can fluctuate, meaning the levels of pain a person experiences are not always consistent. Thus, the degree of impact from chronic pain is not always that same. Some days an impairment may have minimal effect on time, permitting a person to go about their day without others knowing that an impairment is present. Other days when pain is at its worst, possibly at the level of being debilitating, these impairments will have more significant effects on time, either limiting what can be done or causing nothing to be done.

Note that not all impairments result in a fluctuation of symptoms. If the disability necessitates a technological device to manage an impairment, that is not going to change without intervention. If prescription eyeglasses are needed to manage issues with sight, lacking access to

the glasses will affect the time it takes to complete tasks. Thus, crip time is built around the understanding of flexibility, as some people's experiences of time and energy need to address impairments while another person's experiences of crip time do not change (Kuppers, 2014). As we move forward, we will gain an appreciation for the flexibility ingrained within crip time.

Above, I mentioned that an intervention might reduce or negate the need for support from a technological device, which we can presume would reduce the effect on time and energy. While an intervention might eliminate the need for a technological device, there are no guarantees that the full impact on time is also eliminated (Jacobs, McInnis, Kapeles, & Chang, 2018). As well, not everyone will want to undergo an intervention. Interventions are not without risk (Pantazakos, 2019). People will need to consider whether the risks are worth the potential benefits. Alternatively, a person's identity might be tied to their impairment or the technological devices they use. The Deaf community is an example of a thriving culture that has developed as a result of the limitations of communication in spoken languages and the limited societal support for learning sign languages (Altschuler, 2011). As a result of Deaf culture, some people do not want the current interventions available, like the cochlear implants (Paludneviene & Leigh, 2011). There are even some who reject the idea of giving children cochlear implants because of the potential side effects and the way these decisions in early life can take away the autonomy of the child to make decisions about their deafness. These situations show that even though there might be solutions to the way an impairment affects time, the solutions are not always wanted or effective.

The experience of crip time shows us the need to be flexible within our work and projects, not just with timelines, but in how we do our work and how we involve other people in our projects (Smith, 2018). This idea is essential when working with disability communities, but

also with community organisations and grassroots movements. These groups work on the ground, often with volunteer labour, and experience a variety of barriers that researchers and academics do not have to address. Thus, the amount of time and resources needed to complete a KMb project can be a barrier to community organisations and grassroots movements. As knowledge brokers or consultants, we benefit from having an understanding of crip time, which help us in understand limitations based on volunteer and staff resources.

*Strange Temporalities.* I have found ways to work around many of my disabilities, but there is no way to work around mental fog. Most people have probably experienced mental fog, maybe while sick. Mental fog can present itself in several ways: having a hard time concentrating, losing a train of thought, having issues with short term memory, finding it difficult to hold conversations, and experiencing time being altered. All of these symptoms and more affect the experience of time. While mental fog is a broad category, there are other symptoms from impairments that affect the experience of time, such as lethargy, mania, or disassociation. I focus on mental fog because it is a form of crip time I experience, which allows me to use personal examples to describe the experience of time alteration as a result of impairment.

We have all experienced the sensation of time moving by without our notice or seeming to slow to a halt (Droit-Volet & Damburn, 2019). The human experience of time is not constant, and it is affected by our minds, what we are focused on, and so much more. Impairments, both physical and mental, can change the sensation of time we experience, occasionally in extreme ways that impact our work and interactions (Di Lernia et al., 2018; Weissenberger, Klicperova-Baker, Vňuková, Raboch, & Ptáček, 2019). I have days of mental fog. On these days, time is a vague concept that I have difficulty grasping. Even when I have a schedule with reminders set on

my phone, I have a hard time understanding deadlines or remembering appointments. At times mental fog means I cannot keep track of what day it is, making me feel like it is Tuesday when the work week is already over. Alternatively, I will feel like a deadline is months away when something is due that day. I will not contact friends for weeks at a time because I think I just saw them yesterday. I will plan to go for a walk in the afternoon and suddenly find it is near midnight. These experiences of time affect every part of my life, from my relationships to my activist work to my research. I cannot plan for a mental fog because I may not experience one for months at a time and the experience is never quite the same.

The examples above are based on my personal experience. Different impairments will have different effects on the sensation of time, creating a variety of forms of strange temporalities (Murray, 2017). The variety of ways to experience the sensation of time means there is no easy way to describe the nuanced way different impairments create crip time. What is essential is that impairments, no matter the kind, can affect the sensation of time, making it more complicated to manage one's time, meet deadlines, or maintain relationships. As a result, crip time forces us to consider the experience of time by different people, and to build flexibility into expectations around appointments, deadlines, and social engagements.

***Spoon Theory.*** Spoon theory is a way of understanding the impact of crip time, both the external factors and the influences from impairments. Throughout this last section, I have mentioned energy, particularly concerning time. Spoon theory makes this idea of energy easy to talk about and explain. In spoon theory, an able-bodied person has access to a renewable energy resource, while people with impairments and who are disabled by society have a limited amount of energy to spend each day (Miserandino, 2003). This energy source is shown through teaspoons or tablespoons. Able-bodied people have a renewable number of spoons; when the

spoons become depleted, they can be washed for reuse. Thus, able-bodied people can go about their day with little or no concern for the amount of energy they use. In contrast, people with impairments or who are disabled by society have limited spoons, and those spoons might not easily be cleaned and reused (Miserandino, 2003). As a result, disabled people must think carefully about what they do throughout a day so as not to run out of spoons.

Let us go back to the chore of purchasing toilet paper. A person who fits within the narrow definition of able-bodied can efficiently complete the 11 tasks needed to get toilet paper; they do not have to think about what else they have to get done that day. As noted above, there are a number of ways a person might not fit within the category of able-bodied. To be able-bodied a person must be able to navigate the social and physical environment with ease, making them fully independent. Thus, when a person experiences any limitations to navigating the social and physical environment, they move outside of the bounds of the able-bodied category. The following examples show some ways non-disabled people can move out of the able-bodied category: being a child, being elderly, having an illness, being pregnant, being tired, or being distracted. Given the narrow definition of able-bodied and the way being able-bodied is dependent on the social and physical environment, there is no clear separation between able-bodied and disabled. The murkiness between these categories means that these are not easy categories to apply and they will change depending on the social and physical environment. Yet we can learn a great deal by considering how those outside of the category of able-bodied engage with social and physical environments. In the toilet paper example, we expect that a disabled person has to spend some of their limited spoons to prepare for this task and balance the completion of this chore with other chores needed for their survival (Schultz, 2017).

The number of spoons a disabled person has is not always the same either. If a person has a fluctuating disability, such as certain forms of mental health, some days a person might have 20 spoons, while on other days they might only have five spoons; this fluctuation makes the person's ability to complete chores, socialise, and work on a knowledge mobilisation project vary widely (Miserandino, 2003). As well, disabled people have to be careful not to overspend their spoons. Overspending does not mean that spoons have been taken from a reserve, but that the spoons have been damaged. If this happens there can be days, if not weeks, when it is necessary to manage with fewer spoons while those that were damaged are repaired (Schultz, 2017). During times when spoons are low, it can be impossible to manage chores, work and socialising. The person will have to choose how to spend their spoons in a way that is most important to their survival. To ensure that there are more spoons in the future, the person must prioritise their health, which might mean time away from projects or decreasing involvement (Miserandino, 2003).

Crip time presented itself during the collaboration with the disability partner. Both the disability partner representative and I were juggling paid work, multiple volunteer projects, disability flare-ups and other stressors. As a result, there were times when we both forgot about meetings or had to delay meetings. Our mutual understanding about spoon theory allowed us to be understanding when spoons were low, helping us to identify when goals were unreachable based on existing resources, both organisationally and personally. This understanding helped us to create flexible goals that we put into small, achievable sections. Sectioning the goals permitted us to focus on the next task to be done, instead of the overwhelming work needed to complete the project in the original timeframe.

For knowledge brokers and consultants, spoon theory can be a means to understand the variety of factors that affect how audiences/knowledge users uptake knowledge and information. It reiterates the need to consider audiences/knowledge users when thinking about and engaging in dissemination. It pushes us beyond thinking about how audiences/knowledge users will uptake knowledge and information, and moves us to consider factors that could present barriers to completing this uptake phase quickly and efficiently. For instance, when audiences/knowledge users are overworked, come from a marginalised community, and have multiple different sources demanding their attention, can we be confident that knowledge or information has been effectively shared? There is no way that knowledge mobilisers can ensure that audiences are in the space best suited for them to learn knowledge and information. Thus, we must consider how such barriers will affect the work we support, and begin to address concerns that will limit the spoons audiences/knowledge users have to devote to the uptake of knowledge and information.

***Conclusion to Impairment.*** Crip time has many factors that tumble over each other to create a different experience of time. The three factors presented above—impairment, strange temporalities, and spoon theory—describe how individualised factors play a role in crip time. Impairment creates extra tasks necessary to thrive in ablest spaces; strange temporalities affects the sensation of time; and finally, spoon theory details the need for careful consideration of what a person will and can do on a given day. By exploring each of these areas, we learn the need for flexibility when considering time as experienced by non-able-bodied people; we also learn that by considering barriers and the experience of time, knowledge brokers and consultants will be better able to adapt dissemination to address these concerns.

**Crip time: Compassion.** A core component of crip time is sustained compassion, both for self and for others (Anne McDonald Centre, n.d.). This compassion is needed because within



our western Canadian culture there is a constant pressure to do more, to be as efficient as possible. The pressure to use time efficiently weights on everyone, but especially on those who have no way to meet these demands (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 2018). While able-bodied people struggle, those with impairments and those who are disabled by society must deal with knowing they cannot consistently, if ever, meet these goals (Samuels, 2017). There is too much extra work required to complete similar tasks within the same timeline as able-bodied people, let alone trying to meet the difficult-to-reach expectations of society and business. Thus, a core component of crip time is compassion for self and others as people struggle within the socially normative construct of time.

Crip time compassion might present itself in a myriad of ways:

- understanding that we need more time than our able-bodied counterparts
- acknowledging how ableism within society creates barriers that we must address to complete our work
- being aware of the unrealistic time requirements established by society
- appreciating the depth of knowledge that results when more time is spent working on a project
- accepting that we can allow ourselves to mourn when we cannot go to a social event or do a particular activity

These forms of compassion allow us, a disabled people, the flexibility to acknowledge when our wellbeing needs to come before a project. It gives us space to consider how best to get people invested in a project after a break. Crip time compassion changes how we work and how we organise, and allows the projects and people involved in them to change.

**Academic Crip Time.** Crip time is a concept that has existed within disability communities for a long time. At its base, crip time is the consideration of the various external and internal factors that cause a disabled person to need more time to complete the same tasks as an able-bodied person (Kuppers, 2014). This understanding is not where crip time ends. In disability studies, crip time has been taken up in connection to time-related theories like queer futurity. Alison Kafer (2013) is recognised as the person who began the theoretical discussion of crip time in her book **Feminist, Queer, Crip**. In this book, Kafer (2013) explores disability and critiques feminist and queer theory. Queer futurity is used to consider connections between time, disability, and visibility. She critiques queer time-related theory for its use of disability, while also noting that this theory invisibilises disability. Kafer's (2013) work is essential in getting scholars to consider the presence of disability in spaces where it has historically been made invisible. She encourages the inclusion of disability in academic work in several ways, but it is her exploration and theorising of crip time we are interested in here. Kafer (2013) acknowledges that crip time has a long history within disability communities where it is used to describe the need for flexibility in scheduling, expectations, and pace as a result of external ableist barriers and impairments. Crip time challenges normative ideals of time as "crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds" (Kafer, 2013, p. 27) instead of forcing disabled people to adhere to social expectations of the time. Clearly crip time is valuable within community spaces.

Other disability scholars have worked with crip time and are part of the ongoing discussion on this concept (McRuer, 2006). In this section, I will focus on how crip time creates disability futurity (Baril, 2016). I explore disability futurity here because it expands on the idea that crip time influences the uptake of knowledge, information, and technology by marginalised groups, such as disabled people. Disability futurity helps knowledge brokers and consultants to

understand the reasons certain groups are slower to adapt knowledge and information; it also allows them to help knowers package their knowledge and information appropriately and in a way that adapts to barriers marginalised groups experience.

Disability futurity are not currently possible within ableist social imagery. For disability futures to occur, concepts like crip time must challenge the current temporal norms (Ferris, 2010). The ingenuity of crip time is as a means of survival in an ableist world. Crip time allows disabled people play a fine line when challenging social norms, like temporality, as people can lash out when we challenge social norms (Shapira & Granek, 2019). Thus, we must be careful of ableism and the violence it brings into the lives of disabled people.

Kafer (2013) critiques familiar narratives of disabled futures, which are overwhelmed with portraying disabled people as close to a normative able body as possible. How has the focus on an able body become our norm? To answer this question, we must think about how we understand time. There are external and internal factors that influence the experience of time. The external barriers that cause crip time come from ableist thinking stemming from the normalisation of able-hetero-bodies (Pierre, 2015). The predominance of able-hetero-bodies happened because of the exclusion of marginalised people from society, creating the idea that disabled people do not exist (Ben-Moshe, Chapman, & Carey, 2014; Fabris, 2011; Robertson & Larson, 2016). The erasure of disabled people occurred because of a period of eugenic ideas (Lombardo, 2018; Turcotte, 2018). Eugenics are processes where those viewed as extraneous to society are, at best, excluded or segregated from society in institutions, or at worst, not allowed to live or have children (Grekul, Krahn, & Odynak, 2004; Grue, 2010). The invisibility of disabled people let society develop belief systems that set a standard way of social engagement and use of space, creating the normative able-hetero-body.

These assumptions created an able-bodied ideal that has been used to design our built environment, which in turn influenced our social ideas on time and futurity—what Joseph St. Pierre (2015) calls straight masculine time. These standards have caused our world to be designed for a subgroup of the total population, creating a space where it is difficult for disabled people to exist (Titchkosky, 2008). The difficulty of existence is not a metaphor. Our built environment can make it nearly impossible for disabled people to access what is needed for basic survival, let alone have the ability to lead a thriving life; as a result, disabled people are often still excluded from society (Frazee, Gilmour, & Mykitiuk, 2006; Kama, 2004; Robertson & Larson, 2016).

I want to note that the able body is but one part of the social understanding of how people move through the world. As discussed in Chapter 3: Theory, there is a western norm based around a male person who is white, straight, and able-bodied (Asch, 2001; Haritaworn, Kuntsman, & Posocco, 2014; Pierre, 2015; Wing, 2003). The social understanding of time and futurity discussed here is what is considered the norm. While exploring crip time, we are focusing specifically on how the norm of the able body affects disabled people's experience of time and their future (Baril, 2016; Kafer, 2013; Murray, 2017). Furthermore, time is experienced differently when a person deviates from any of the categories that create the norm. Intersectionality tells us that time will be experienced differently, again, when a person deviates in more than one of the categories of the understood norm (Haraway, 2014; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). What we have is a narrow definition of time that suits a limited portion of the population. This narrowing causes anyone who is outside of the male, white, straight, and able-bodied experience of time to have difficulty meeting these expectations, which limits their ability to fit within the socially accepted future (Kafer, 2013). Time and futurity theory are a large area that

has a great potential for anti-oppression work; unfortunately, we only have space to explore crip theory in this dissertation.

Crip time is a way for disabled people to demand flexibility of scheduling, expectations, and pace, a direct challenge to the social norms of time (Samuels, 2017). However, crip time is also a way for disabled people to become visible in society. By forcing clocks to adapt to the needs of disabled people, crip time demands that society create space for us—a space outside of the margins (Hartblay, 2015; Schultz, 2017; Turcotte, 2019). While we focus on using concepts like crip time in the present to ensure that disabled people are included in society, we eke out a future where disabled people not only exist but thrive.

Disability futurity helps us, as knowledge brokers and consultants, to be aware of the impact when we do not address barriers that make it harder for certain groups to take up knowledge and information. While there are barriers to learning from knowledge and information, knowledge mobilisers work to address many of these obstacles. One barrier I have rarely found addressed is how the temporality of different groups, particularly marginalised groups, affects their uptake and adaption of information and knowledge. Instead, we single out these people and label them as having a harder time adapting knowledge and information. When knowledge brokers and consultants make these assumptions, it is easy to accept that these people fall within the categories of people who adopt all knowledge and information later than others (Brown & Duguid, 2000; Brown & Strega, 2015).

Concepts like crip time challenge these ideas, showing that many factors can influence how, when, and why people use different paces to engage with knowledge and information (Kafer, 2013; Koppers, 2014; Titchkosky, 2010). When we begin to consider normative temporality, which is designed around a specific subgroup of the population, we can

acknowledge that late adoption of knowledge and information is not caused by individuals themselves, but a complex process of external barriers, social constructs, and individual abilities (Withers, 2012). With this understanding, we can begin to explore how these factors affect the uptake and implementation of knowledge and information based on knowledge mobilisation. This new understanding will help us to develop stronger KMb plans, or in cases where these factors cannot be addressed, being aware of the limitations they create.

**Final Thoughts on Crip Time.** Beginning a conversation about the use of crip time in knowledge mobilisation was inspired by the breaks, slowing, and stops that occurred in the KMb projects with both collaborative partners. By exploring crip time, knowledge brokers and consultants have a chance to consider how a variety of factors can affect the flow of time on a KMb project. By considering the external and internal factors of crip time, we learned that even processes meant to create ease of access can make a process take more time (Miserandino, 2003). For example, we discussed how accessibility and accommodations, both meant to reduce the impact of barriers, must be included within the understanding of crip time as they do not always eliminate barriers. With impairments, we learned that some people do not move, think, or sense things in the typical way, leading to the need for flexibility. Flexibility, in crip time, moves beyond expecting things like people to be late to events and moves into reconsidering how we organise events and engage with the material (Baril, 2016). Adapting normative time to the needs of disabled people demands compassion for ourselves and others. When we bring compassion to the consideration of time in our KMb projects, particularly when combined with flexibility, we learn how to understand and build support when projects slow down or stop. This permits us to create a space where extensions are not considered gifts, where people can share responsibilities when needed, and where investment in projects that have slow periods or breaks can be re-

established quickly. Together compassion and flexibility assist in creating a form of resistance within KMb projects that benefits disabled people, but also society at large. These examples offer ways that is but one way anti-oppression can be weaved into the work of knowledge mobilisation. These subtle forms of anti-oppression are just as necessary as those that blatantly create space, such as prioritising the inclusion of people from marginalised groups within our spaces and events.

Disability futurity is another crip time concept that can support knowledge mobilisation. This concept addresses the social barriers that have led disabled people to be made invisible, creating an ableist society where disabled people do not exist and therefore do not have a future (Kafer, 2013; Pierre, 2015). Acknowledging the impact of these social barriers on disability futures creates an argument for why disabled people, and other marginalised groups, need to be considered within KMb projects. Without the consideration of disabled people and marginalised communities, we will likely produce knowledge products that are best suited for the normative body (male, white, heterosexual, able-bodied) (Baril, 2016; Pierre, 2015). When we do not take into consideration the effects on time when a person does not fit within these categories, we create a situation where certain people, often from marginalised communities, will have less chance to engage with and learn from the knowledge and information we share. This situation challenges the idea from knowledge mobilisation that suggests some people will engage with knowledge and information later than others. By considering the obstacles some people face when accessing, learning, and adapting knowledge and information, knowledge brokers and consultants can explore how to best address the barriers within their scope.

## Conclusion.

By using the discussion from earlier chapters, we began to explore the ability of knowledge brokers and consultants to support community organisation and grassroots movements in their KMb projects. This exploration considered three areas of support. The first area focused on the knowledge and skills that knowledge brokers and consultants use as support during the dissemination, uptake, and implementation phases. I found there was a great deal of support for the dissemination phase, less support for uptake, and minimal support for implementation. A focus on the dissemination phase can support certain forms of KMb projects, particularly those happening at the end of a research project. However, there are KMb projects that focus more on sharing and uptake of knowledge over the creation of new knowledge, such as the project being completed by the internship partner. The skills and knowledge for KMb projects focused on sharing and uptake were found to be inadequate, though there was hope in research that is exploring factors and barriers to research uptake.

We then moved into discussing the need for knowledge brokers and consultants to understand uptake and implementation better. We specifically explored my work with the internship partner, which demanded I move from disseminating what KMb was to supporting the development of an understanding of knowledge and knowledge mobilisation that would work with their project and with the funder's understanding of KMb. The process of moving through the stages of KMb was essential to a deeper understanding of knowledge mobilisation For all those involved. Signs suggested that limited space for learning about KMb at the beginning of the project led to confusion and uncertainty about how this process could support the internship partner's work. It was only after I shifted my view to that of audience/knowledge user and learned more about the internship partner's past projects that I could work with them in the



uptake and implementation phase. This section made it clear that knowledge brokers and consultants need a strong background in all the phases of KMb, but also need the ability to move out of this expert role to best support collaborators in their projects. Moving out of this expert role lets knowledge brokers and consultants gain in-depth understanding of the KMb work collaborators have previously done. With this understanding, knowledge brokers and consultants can identify not only what collaborators might or might not know, but also how a KMb framework can strengthen the work collaborators do.

Finally, based on the stoppages and slowing of KMb projects, we explored crip time. This concept has a long history in disabled communities and has been used to talk about the need for flexibility in the work we do. This flexibility is seen in building compassionate spaces where people are comfortable talking to others about what they can and cannot accomplish, even if these abilities drastically change over time. It also includes building understanding that projects will not always flow smoothly, letting people move to other projects or self-care when needed and making space for people as they move forward. We considered how the recognition of crip time could create energised people, volunteers, and paid staff who could sustain their enthusiasm over a more extended period. In addition, energised and enthusiastic people increase the likelihood of uptake, adaption, and implementation of knowledge or information.

Crip time, particularly discussions on disabled futurities, allowed us to reflect on how language, like laggard, can restrict knowledge brokers and consultants to effectively manage barriers. By considering crip time and disabled futurities, we begin to understand that there are often factors not under a group's control that affect their ability to engage with new knowledge or information. For example, the history of eugenics have erased disabled people from society, making it harder for them to survive, let alone have the time or energy to learn and adopt new

knowledge or information. We explored these topics with anti-oppression in mind, letting us grasp the need for knowledge brokers and consultants to consider barriers for marginalised groups when they are planning a KMb project. This process can be used to address specific barriers or to better understand how these barriers can affect the uptake and implementation of knowledge and information among different groups. As a result, we can resist the urge to blame lack of uptake and implementation on specific groups and instead understand better how oppression and discrimination can affect the KMb process.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

When I began this research project, I wanted to explore how the field of knowledge mobilisation, particularly knowledge brokers and consultants, could support the sharing of knowledge and information in community organisations and grassroots movements. This interest stemmed from my personal experiences working in community-based activism as a person with disabilities. My disabilities mean that I work on crip time, with less time and energy to give to community projects. Working on crip time has often led me to feel as though I am not doing enough or that effective change cannot happen. Through learning about knowledge mobilisation, I realised that these feelings and the difficulties making social change happen are not only found within community spaces. Academics often experience difficulties finding effective ways for their knowledge and information to influence society. This connection led me to believe that KMb might be an area where communities and academics can engage and learn from each other.

This research project asked this question: How can knowledge brokers and consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations? I considered three sub-questions connected to the research question: (a) How can knowledge mobilisers, knowledge brokers, and knowledge consultants bring anti-oppression into their work? (b) How do community organisations and grassroots movements currently engage with knowledge mobilisation? (c) How can knowledge brokers and knowledge consultants support the use of knowledge mobilisation within community organisations and grassroots movements?

To explore these questions, I worked on four knowledge mobilisation projects, but only two were led by communities. Thus, only two of the KMb projects were included in this dissertation. The organisations were quite different. The first organisation, referred to in this thesis as the internship partner, was well established, had access to ample funding opportunities,

had a significant number of volunteers with different forms of experience, and was well organised. The other organisation, referred to as the disability partner, was barely two years old, had access to limited funding, was establishing an organisational structure, and had limited volunteers and resources. The drastic differences between these two organisations provided a good contrast in terms of the access community organisations and grassroots movements have to resources. As such, these collaborations provided ample opportunities for me to gain an understanding of the wide variety of barriers and complications that can affect community-based KMb projects.

PAR methodology—which focuses on the development of a relationship between academics and communities in order to focus on working with communities instead of researching the community itself (Anderson, 2017)—was explored as an option for addressing the barriers that can occur during this process. This form of research aims to ensure that communities have input at all stages of the process of research, from creating a research question to analysing research materials to sharing the knowledge or information created (Lawson, Caringi, Pyles, Jurkowski, & Bozlak, 2015). While PAR is an excellent way to get communities invested in research knowledge and to disseminate knowledge to communities partnered with a research project, it does not solve all issues of sharing research evidence (Elliott, 2011; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). In fact, when I discussed PAR with the research partners we talked about some of the controversies related with this research methodology, including how to handle times when there are no clear boundaries on community inclusion or when a community has divisions within it (Long, Ballard, Fisher, & Belsky, 2016). It is unclear what happens after the creation of knowledge in PAR. Does the community partner use knowledge? Do the academic partners stay involved to assist with implementation? PAR is a research methodology, meaning it

focuses on how to create research knowledge, not what to do with it once you have it. Thus, relying on PAR as a sole or limited means of KMb will have limited benefit for academics and communities.

To explore KMb in depth I used a mixed methodology that focused on methods where the opinions and decisions of community partners were paramount. Ethnographic refusal ensured that the community partners enthusiastically approved the research material and the shared results (McGrانhan, 2016; Simpson, 2017). Reflective research encouraged me to regularly consider how my personal views changed; it also helped to negate any harmful impacts on my relationships with community partners, the research material, and the possible outcomes (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2018). These methodologies aligned with the core tenants of the anti-oppression framework, helping to put my anti-oppression disability theory into action. I am pleased by how the methodologies guided me to be a better researcher by focusing on the development and maintenance of relationships with community partners and by slowing down my research process in a fast-paced academic space.

I was worried about the fast-paced expectations of academia because of a few of my disabilities can slow down or halt my work. However, this environment is a concern for many people, even those without disabilities. Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber (2016) talk about the debilitating nature of academia because of its fast-paced environment in their book **The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy**. They stress the importance of embracing the slow movement within academia as it assists in improving the understanding of topics, keeps people passionate about their research, and builds community between researchers and communities (Berg & Seeber, 2016).

By slowing of the pace of my work, particularly in the area of analysing research materials, I was able to identify assumptions that I held. For instance, I began this journey with the belief that the work of community organisations and grassroots movements is different from academic research, at least when it comes to sharing knowledge. I thought that knowledge mobilisation from academic spaces would have a drastically different understanding of how to share knowledge and information than from community spaces. I realised that this belief stemmed from my understanding of the ways academics and communities define knowledge. In academia, I understood knowledge as research evidence, which relies on a rigid framework that ranks research findings based on the type of methodology used (Davies, 2004). Within communities, I understood the creation of knowledge to happen through collective processes, such as community intelligence. In such processes, there is no single means of forming knowledge (Thomas, 2016). Instead, knowledge can adapt and grow with changes in the community.

The process of reflective research and considering my biases made me realise that these forms of knowledge, while different, are both rigorous. When these forms of knowledge (details created through personal engagement) and information (independent details that are easy to move) are shared, there is still a knower, knowledge or information, an audience, and impact—four of the seven essential pieces to KMb I defined in [Chapter 2: Literature Review](#). Thus, knowledge mobilisation as a process is already present in academic and community spaces. Gaining this understanding encouraged me realise that while academic and community KMb might be different, they share many details and can learn a lot from each other.

**Limitations.** While these interwoven methodologies assisted in addressing the needs of this research project, there were still limitations. For instance, although I used PAR, because the

collaborative partnerships were each done separately, the partners had limited influence on the development of the research question or how the research was analysed (though they each read and approved the sections of this dissertation connected to their project). This means that while I aimed for this project to have benefits for community organisation and grassroots movements, the actual benefits might not be as impactful as expected. As well, the limited number of collaborations used in this research project, a total of two, means these are not the only community experiences with KMb; there is room to further explore, leaving room to further explore the ways KMb specialists can support the use of knowledge mobilisation in community organisations and grassroots movements.

### **Anti-oppression and Knowledge Mobilisation**

To work with the two community organisations, I developed a disability anti-oppression framework. I felt it was essential to have a disability anti-oppression framework because harmful social norms can make their way into all our work, both academic and activist (Driskill, 2011; Mohanty, 2015; A. Simpson, 2014). The presence of anti-oppression frameworks reminds us to be cautious and critical of the work we do. More importantly, I engaged with a community organisation and a grassroots movement that were created and run by people from marginalised communities. Having been a marginalised person in research myself, I understood the importance of having the means to monitor my actions and opportunities for other people to express concerns. The anti-oppression framework I developed is outlined clearly in [Chapter 3: Theory](#) and focuses on drawing awareness of oppression from disability experience and theory. This awareness is weaved together with anti-oppressive frameworks like anti-racism, disability, feminism, human rights, Indigenous, queer and social justice (Driskill, 2010). The weaving together of these different anti-oppression theories created an intersectional framework that

focused on collaborations that empowered co-researchers. While this framework cannot address all forms of oppression that might intersect with this research project, it empowered me to do my best, while being open to learning how I could do better. This anti-oppression framework supported me to challenge assumptions related to research and knowledge mobilisation, it influenced how I worked with the community partners, and it had a significant impact on how I dealt with research materials.

I was also interested in how anti-oppression can enter KMb. In Chapter 2: Literature Review, I discussed how decolonisation could help knowledge brokers or consultants address issues related to power and the valuing of certain types of knowledge over others. The decolonisation framework I recommended came from the work of Tuhiwia Smith (2012) in **Decolonizing Methodologies**. I noted a set of questions that knowledge mobilisers could ask themselves to help ensure that their work challenges concerns related to the presence of power in KMb and what types of knowledge are given more value in academic and political spaces. The disability anti-oppression framework has less direction but is specific to this research project, helping to ensure that my work with partners and my writing in each chapter engaged with these topics of power, marginalisation, and the valuing of knowledge. This dissertation shows that anti-oppression can enter a KMb project in a variety of different ways.

I struggled with anti-oppression in knowledge mobilisation in two ways. One concern is how to create a way for the variety of forms of anti-oppression to exist within different knowledge mobilisation projects. I used disability oriented anti-oppression, but other forms of anti-oppression focused through anti-racism or heteronormativity could also be used. I might use a different form of anti-oppression for a different KMb project. Alternatively, the anti-oppression framework might change depending on the concerns of any marginalised group connected to the



project. Given the need for anti-oppression to adapt to the needs of the project or the groups connected to the project raises the following question: How do we take this complex topic and bring it in to the process of knowledge mobilisation?

My second concern comes from the position that knowledge brokers often hold. When a knowledge broker works on a project, they are often a consultant. As a result, knowledge brokers are rarely in charge of the direction of research projects, the forms knowledge products might take, or the supports put in place to encourage uptake. Essentially, knowledge brokers are not in charge, and that limits their say on the presence or form of anti-oppression within the KMb project. Given the role of knowledge broker as a consultant, how or when might it be appropriate to raise concerns about anti-oppression? I have no clear answers to these questions, though I have mentioned a few options. In my definition of KMb I noted that the inclusion of political objectives and harmful impacts might encourage people to think about anti-oppression in relation to knowledge mobilisation. I also used disability-related theories like crip time to start conversations about how anti-oppression might come into KMb.

Crip time is a disability theory that stems from a notion created through collective intelligence. Within communities, disabled people have shared experiences of time that differ from those of able-bodied people (Anne McDonald Centre, n.d.). The concept of crip time has been taken up in disability research through temporality theory to explore the future of people with disabilities (Kafer, 2013). The exploration of KMb through crip time, both as a form of collective intelligence and academic theory, challenges core ideas about KMb. For instance, crip time makes us question the categorisation of people as they adopt knowledge, information, or technology. I expressed particular concern around the specific term “laggards” due to the harmful connotations connected to this word and the history of words being used to oppress

marginalised groups. Crip time also allowed me to explore the factors that could affect a knowledge user's ability to engage with knowledge products, thus affecting the uptake phase. I argued that when knowledge brokers or consultants are not aware of factors that can impact a knowledge user's uptake, they risk placing people with unsure futures into categories like that of laggard. When that happens, these people—who are often marginalised in some way—become unimportant, no longer thought about as potential knowledge users.

The exploration of crip time theory in this dissertation shows that anti-oppression can be used to make knowledge mobilisation better. Anti-oppression within KMb is something I believe is vital. I will continue to explore anti-oppression within knowledge mobilisation in the years to come. What I do believe is that anti-oppression theories, like crip time, are concepts that can lead us to question assumptions in the field of knowledge mobilisation, leading us to a greater depth of understanding of the KMb process. When we challenge these assumptions, we can begin to delve into the unrecognised factors that might lead to harm from the knowledge mobilisation process.

Another area that emphasises the need for anti-oppression in KMb is the entwined nature of knowledge mobilisation and research evidence (Barwick, Barac, Akrong, Johnson, & Chaban, 2014; Barwick, Peters, & Boydell, 2009; Campbell, Pollock, Briscoe, Carr-Harris, & Tuters, 2017; Hickman et al., 2018). I acknowledge the aims of research evidence, which strive to ensure that research findings influence the development of social policies. However, I have mentioned practices around research evidence that risk promoting forms of knowledge that disparage other ways of knowledge production, both inside of academic spaces and within community spaces (Denzin, 2009; Geri LoBiondo-Wood & Judith Haber, 2018). Making a topic seem better by putting other groups or topics down is something that intersectionality is concerned with (Hill

Collins & Bilge, 2016). These concerns arose because action for social change has a history of focusing on only one portion of a marginalised group. For instance, feminism has historically focused on the rights of white women, leaving concerns of women of colour aside, or pushing women of colour or trans women out of feminist organisations or movements (Harding, 2004; Mohanty, 2015; Weheliye, 2014; Wendell, 1996). While the experience of social organising cannot be directly applied to defining knowledge within the field of research evidence, it is essential to critically consider how centralising this particular definition of knowledge could affect the understanding of knowledge from marginalised communities.

Collective intelligence is one form of knowledge that is pushed to the side by the focus on research evidence. This form of knowledge production has a long history of influencing social policy in complex ways and is vital to marginalised communities (Englart, 2000; Thomas, 2016). Collective intelligence is a naturally occurring process that happens when people with similar life experiences come together; the sharing of their experiences allows for the identification of problems and possible solutions (Cultivate Coop, 2015). The sway of collective intelligence is strong; it has been the centre of many activist movements, including the disability and civil rights movements (Clapham, 2015; Gleeson, 1997). Marches, rallies, and raids are not the only way collective intelligence affects social policy. While politicians are influenced by many factors when voting or crafting social policy, they have to listen to their constituents if they plan to maintain their position (Drover, Moscovitch, & Mulvale, 2014). Thus, the consensus of the population on a topic influences social policy and is another way for collective intelligence to affect change in society. To change the opinion of the general population, collective intelligence builds awareness and allies through relationship building (Milan, 2015; Vannucci & Singer, 2010). Research evidence must find a way to include the importance of knowledge created

through research while limiting harm to other forms of knowledge creation, like collective intelligence, that have historically been essential to social change.

### **Knowledge Mobilisation and Community Knowledge Sharing and Uptake**

Using the KMb model called the co-production pathway to impact, I began a discussion centred around three phases of the KMb model (Phipps et al., 2016): dissemination, uptake, and implementation. These three phases provide context for how knowledge or information can move from a knower to an audience/knowledge user to be used to create impact (Phipps et al., 2016). The dissemination phase focuses on the knower, who must find ways to package their knowledge or information into a format that the audience/knowledge user can access and learn from. There are no limitations to the form a knower might use for their knowledge or information (Phipps et al., 2016). For instance, knowledge or information might be packaged as an infographic, a journal article, a piece of art, a video, or a workshop (Gaetz, 2014). What is vital in dissemination is that the knower explores formats the audience/knowledge user will engage with and learn from (Carlile, 2004).

Considering the ways the audience/knowledge user will engage with knowledge or information occurs in the dissemination phase. Packaging of knowledge is not the only factor that impacts the uptake phase. The uptake phase is affected by a variety of factors affecting the audience/knowledge user; these factors can make it easier or harder for them to engage with and learn about the knowledge or information (NGL Consultants Ltd., 1991). While a knower can create knowledge products to support an audience/knowledge user's knowledge or information uptake, they cannot control the variety of internal factors (e.g., illness) or external factors (e.g., an unsupportive work environment) that audiences might have to contend with (Baril, 2016). When an audience/knowledge user has engaged with knowledge or information enough, they can

put this knowledge or information to use; this happens in the implementation phase (Phipps et al., 2016).

Putting knowledge or information to use happens in different ways. An individual can put the information to use by changing how they engage with people in their daily life (Cunningham et al., 2014). Change might happen at an institutional level, for example when an organisation puts a new workplace bullying policy in place to change the work environment (Barwick et al., 2005; Caponecchia, Branch, & Murray, 2019). Finally, change at the social level can occur when enough people decide that something needs to happen. This change can be seen in the conversations about #metoo that have led to discussions about sexual harassment on a cultural level, creating space where institutions must hold perpetrators accountable, as well as discussions about how rape culture creates harmful cultural norms for all genders (Philipose & Kesavan, 2019).

By exploring the co-produced pathway to impact, the connection between academic knowledge mobilization and research evidence, and the use of KMb training, frameworks and tools, I discovered that KMb focuses primarily on the dissemination phase. The reasons for this focus are complex. Some reasons for this focus are external factors, such as expectations from funding sources, institution policies, and preferences for peer-reviewed publications. As well, there is a history of knowledge translation, which focuses on linear frameworks that influence the training and tools we have today. The overwhelming focus on the dissemination phase is evident in the array of knowledge, support, tools, workshops, and courses that are designed to assist knowers in working through this phase of KMb (Barwick, 2008; Conklin, Lusk, Harris, & Stolee, 2017; Knowledge Mobilisation Unit at York University, 2019; Open ED, University of

Guelph, 2019; The Hospital for Sick Kids, 2019a, 2019b; Zarinpoush, Sychowski, & Sperling, 2007).

Communities are not under the same external pressures; thus, they can stay engaged with KMb projects for longer. For example, many community organisations run programs and knowledge sharing projects from within the community (Hovmand, 2014; Parks, 2018; Worton, Loomis, Pancer, Nelson, & DeV. Peters, 2017). As a result, they have an interconnected relationship with knowledge, information, and the impacts made. Communities are often in a space where they can try to implement knowledge or information, but if something does not work, they can further explore how to ensure that they had it right or make changes to implementation (Poell, 2015). The process of trying out and altering knowledge and information is a vital part of the community-based knowledge creation processes, like collective intelligence. Thus, we find that community-based mobilisers spends more time in the uptake and implementation phases of KMb than academics.

It is clear that the need for different supports for knowledge mobilisation between academics and communities stems not only from their different understanding of what is considered knowledge, but how they engage with the different phases of KMb. Academics focus on the dissemination phase while communities, depending on their project, engage with dissemination, uptake, and implementation to different degrees. Since the field of knowledge mobilisation has been focusing on the dissemination phase for a long time, the phases of uptake and implementation have only begun to get the attention they need to be well understood. Thus, community organisations and grassroots movements engaging in a KMb project might not have access to the supports they need from due to the limited awareness related to the uptake and implementation phase.

There is excellent research exploring the effectiveness of knowledge products and the factors that influence uptake and implementation (Arribas Lozano, 2018; Baljko & Hamidi, 2013; Barwick et al., 2009; Campbell et al., 2017; Gaetz, 2014; Hering, 2016; Rodway, 2015; Rycroft-Malone et al., 2016). This research is vital to our understanding of knowledge mobilisation and how to support both academics and communities. How does this vital research fit within the scope of KMb overall? This research begins to give us a foundations from which to develop a better understanding of the process of uptake and implementation. Understanding this process helps us break down uptake and implementation into essential parts that we will create tools to address. For example, the Knowledge Translation Planning Template, designed for the dissemination phase, is an example of a tool that could be adapted for uptake and implementation phases (Barwick, 2008). We need tools that are focused on uptake and implementation because, as was seen with both collaborative partners in this project, dissemination tools do not fit the needs of projects focused on uptake and implementation.

While the development of these tools happens, it is vital to explore how community organisations and grassroots movements plan for uptake and implementation projects. Communities organisations and grassroots movements have been running knowledge sharing projects for decades and have had conversations about how to move knowledge more effectively (Milan, 2015; Poell, 2015). Their experience with KMb projects focused on uptake and implementation is a source that knowledge mobilisation cannot neglect. Evaluations of community-based projects are a valuable source of information that must be considered. As well, we must gain an understanding of how processes like community intelligence address difficulties with knowledge sharing projects and adapt to local circumstances; this information will be

essential for knowledge mobilisers who want to learn more about the uptake and implementation phases of KMb.

When I started this project, I wondered how knowledge mobilisation could assist community organisations and grassroots movements. I have found that KMb has the potential to support these groups as they learn the differences between knowledge and information (which is a pervasive issue in communities and among some academics); learn about the models, frameworks, and tools connected to the process of moving knowledge; and adapt KMb products to audience needs. These forms of awareness of these KMb processes along with others can support the social justice aims of community organisations and grassroots movements. However, there is a focus within KMb on dissemination, which limits the use of knowledge mobilisation for community organisations and grassroots movements. The focus on dissemination is a limitation as community organisations and grassroots movements are likely to engage in the uptake and implementation phases of KMb.

While there is an exploration of uptake and implementation underway in the field of KMb, the current focus on dissemination has caused its frameworks, theories and tools to focus on this one area of knowledge mobilisation. This focus is a limitation to anyone using KMb, but mainly to community organisations and grassroots movements whose work focuses on the uptake and implementation phases of knowledge mobilisation.

## **Final Thoughts**

While working on this PhD project, two other concepts came up for me that I believe are vital to my work with KMb. The first relates to the history of privileging certain forms of knowledge and how this is reflected in research evidence. I was quite concerned about the presence of power differences and how this would affect the work I completed. I was also



concerned about the type of knowledge or information KMb currently focuses on. Knowledge mobilisation, being closely connected to research evidence, aims its work at the sharing of knowledge created through research. By working with community organisations and grassroots movements, it became clear that this focus limited the usefulness of KMb to these groups. It also made me question why the processes of knowledge creation within community spaces, like community intelligence, were not acknowledged within research evidence or knowledge mobilisation.

These questions about community knowledge processes strengthened my resolve to include anti-oppression theory and frameworks within KMb. Since beginning to work in KMb as a knowledge translator—taking academic articles and translating them into a clear language format—I struggled with how to address my concerns about oppression, discrimination, and the effects of colonisation within academic work. I found that working in KMb meant that I often had no control over the methodology or theory connected to a research project. Instead, my work aimed to support the completion of research to move knowledge and information to audiences/knowledge users effectively. This experience raised the following question: how do they engage in a process that promotes work that empowers communities and addresses oppression, discrimination, and the effects of colonisation? Throughout my PhD and four KMb projects, I have not reached a conclusion about how anti-oppression can come into the work of knowledge brokers or consultants when there is limited control over the ways knowledge and information are being produced. I hope that this dissertation will begin a broader discussion into anti-oppression within knowledge mobilisation.

As knowledge brokers or consultants begin to have more extensive discussions on anti-oppression in KMb projects, we must also consider how anti-oppression integrates into the KMb

field as a whole. I aim to bring anti-oppression into my work by engaging with media that challenge my viewpoints, learning about the lived experience and theories related to marginalised experience, uplifting marginalised voices, and regularly checking in with myself to ensure I'm doing this work. While these are some strategies that might work on a personal level, they would be unwieldy to implement in KMb projects. To bringing anti-oppression into the KMb field, we need to focus on its presence in knowledge mobilisation models, frameworks, tools, and understandings of KMb. With this preceptive, the discussion of crip time in [Chapter 6: Discussion](#) is a good example of the work we should strive towards. Through this exploration of lived experience and theory connected to crip time, I showed how crip time can create more inclusive knowledge mobilisation theories frameworks, and tools. I look forward to similar discussions within KMb as we move forward.

Finding ways to explore anti-oppression within our work as knowledge brokers or consultants is vital to challenging the histories of oppression and discrimination embedded within the structures we work within. Challenging our ways of knowing and the ways we privilege knowledge are also critical to ensure that knowledge mobilisation is a field that works effectively not just for academics, but for the communities we collaborate with and other groups who use KMb. Beginning these conversations now, while we are still exploring the nuances of knowledge mobilisation, will help us establish a field that not only welcomes marginalised folks, but actively provides space where their knowledge and wisdom are respected.

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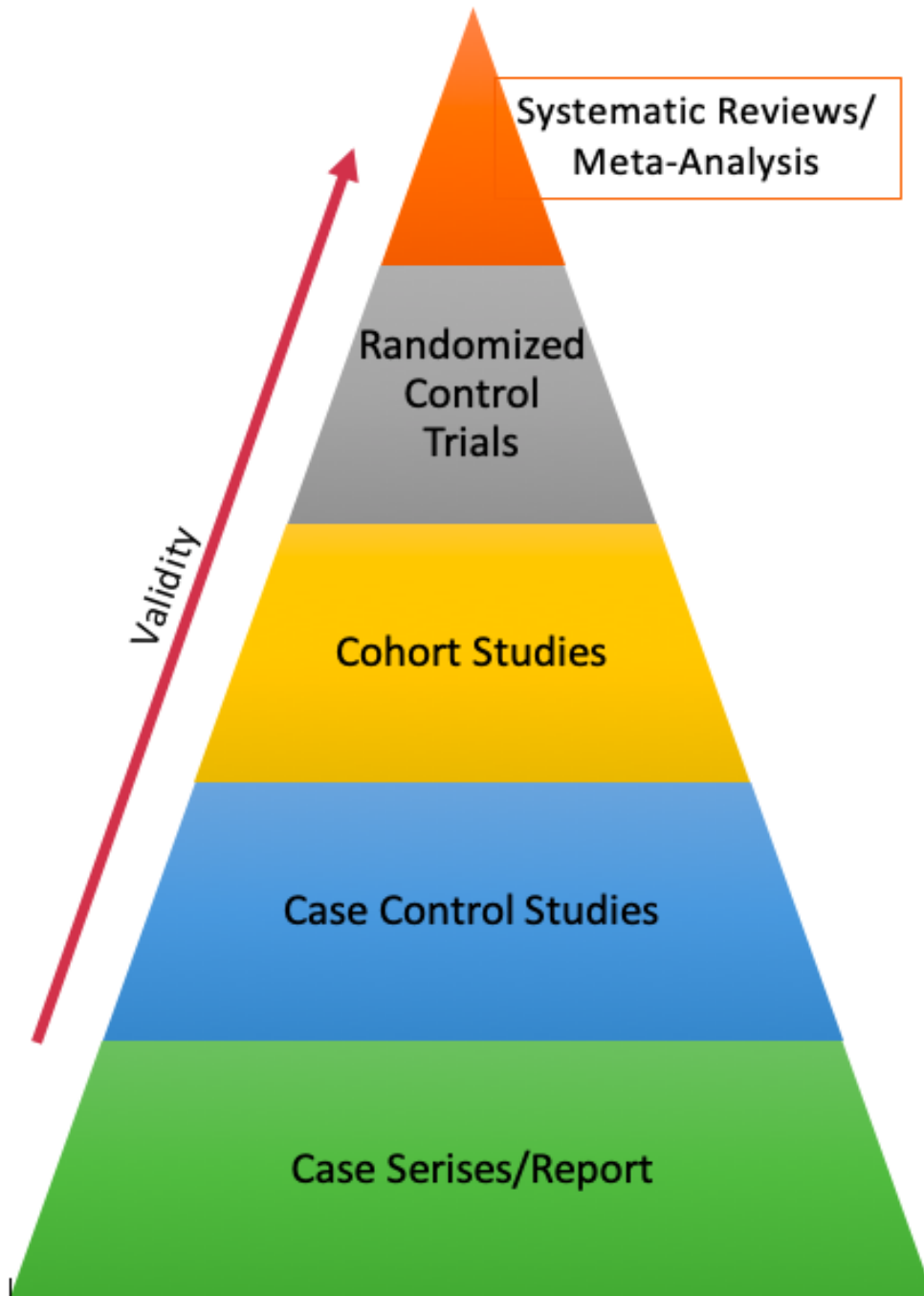
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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Hierarchy of Research





## Appendix B: Definitions of Terms

**Ableism:** discrimination against people with physical and/or mental impairments

**Able-bodied:** a person who does not have physical impairments or mental health concerns

**Alienation:** the processes through which a person becomes disconnected from their work, the goods they produce, their community, or species-being (Marx and McLellan, 2000)

**Anti-oppression:** a theory through which action can be taken to reduce the oppressive behaviours and structures integrated into daily life

**Audience:** a group of people who have knowledge or information shared with them

**Biopower:** a theory that describes the process through which those with powers of social control gain power over the bodies of other people (Foucault, 2004; Rabinow and Rose, 2006).

**Cis:** a term used to denote when a person's sex assigned at birth matches their gender

**Community collaborator:** a community organisation or grassroots movement that works with a researcher on a project

**Community research organisation:** a community organisation that focuses on producing and gathering academic and lived experience knowledge to create positive social change for a specific geographic area

**Co-researchers:** non-academic partners who work with researchers to complete a research project.

**Cultural imperialism:** the practice of establishing a specific culture as the “norm” for society while surprising other cultures that do not fit within the “norm” of society (Young, 2011)

**Dehumanisation:** the creation of narratives that cause groups of people to be considered less than human

**Decision-making power:** term that describes when one person can make decisions that affect the lives of many people (Young, 2011)

**Disability partner:** term used to identify disability grassroots organisation that collaborated on one of the KMb projects included in this research project

**Disciplinary power:** description of how people are moulded into members of society through the use of punishment when they do not adhere to the institution's rules (Bakan & Enakshi, 2014)

**Distributive justice:** concept of justice that focuses on redistribution of monetary and non-monetary resources within a society (Falk, 2000).

**Domestic power:** work done by those within a family to ensure the survival of the family as a unit (Vogel, 2013)

**Dominator power:** the social phenomenon through which groups of people are given different levels of power, letting one group have more influence over society than the other (hooks, 2013)

**Dominant group:** a group that, in certain situations, has more power to make decisions than others (hooks, 2013)

**Exploitation:** when people are not compensated fairly for their work (Young, 2011)

**Feminism:** an umbrella term under which various grassroots movements fight against patriarchy

**Flesh:** is used to discuss the duality of oppressions of groups to the point that they are considered 'living dead' and the actions taken by these groups in their 'afterlife' such as reimagining their world and dreams of freedom.

**Grassroots movement:** a movement in which organising occurs at the community level to address joint concerns held within society

**Hard refusal:** when a community partner excludes specific knowledge within certain publications or forms of knowledge sharing (Simpson, 2014)

**Heteronormativity:** unspoken social norm that says there are two binary sexes and genders, and that only people of the opposite sexes and genders should have children (Puar, 2007)

**Homonationalism:** dual national narratives in which the narrative of the mythical queer person is used to suggest acceptance, while a second narrative uses stereotypes to vilify queer people so they are seen as a threat (Puar, 2007).

**Homophobia:** irrational fear of people who have a romantic and or sexual attraction to people who are not the opposite gender or who do not fit within the gender binary (Haritaworn, Kuntsman & Posocco, 2014)

**Internship partner:** term used to identify a community collaborator for this research project

**Knowledge broker:** a person who helps increase awareness of knowledge mobilisation, connects a community's collaborators and researchers, assists in the creation of knowledge mobilisation plans, and makes research knowledge into an easily sharable form (Cooper & Shewchuk, 2015)

**Knowledge holder:** a person who has directly engaged with a source of knowledge and has created their understanding based on their standpoint

**Knowledge mobilisation:** an umbrella term that is used to include the many different ways of sharing knowledge between different groups

**Knowledge mobilisation network:** a social network created to help with the sharing of research knowledge on a specific topic

**Knowledge mobilisation plan:** detailed outline of how knowledge will be shared that includes information about the audience and the promotion of the knowledge sharing products

**Knowledge mobilisation consultant:** a person who is hired to assist with some form of knowledge mobilisation

**Lived experience:** knowledge created through a person living their life

**Living dead:** a group of people who have been deemed unimportant and are not considered to require the same rights as others in society (Haritaworn, Kuntsman & Posocco, 2014).

**Marginalised community:** a group of people who have had their decision-making power limited through a process of dehumanisation

**Medical model of disability:** theory of disability that limits the understanding of disability as being based on the physical limitations of the human body (World Health Organization, 2011)

**Necropower:** expansion on the concept of biopower that includes those people whose bodies are not controlled through social institutions, instead they are not considered important enough to be cared for (Mbembe, 2003)

**Neurodiversity:** the idea that brains process information in a variety of ways, meaning there is no “normal” way of thinking

**Online learning partner:** term used to identify the community collaborators who engaged with this research project through an online learning space

**Othering:** See Dehumanisation

**Owner:** term used to denote the individual or business in the capitalist mode of production who lays claim to the base materials used to make a product (Marx, 1889)

**Power:** term used to describe the amount and scope of a person's influence (Asch, 2001)

**Powerlessness:** category in which groups in society have little ability to create social change through social structures (Young, 2011)

**Productive labour:** the essential work needed to create a product (Tremain 2005)

**Prospective reflectivity:** as part of reflective research, the understanding that the researcher's beliefs impact research outcomes (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009) and that their understanding of these beliefs might change during engagement in a research project

**Queer:** term for LGBTQIA2S people that has been used in the past in a derogatory manner but is in the process of being reclaimed by LGBTQIA2S academics and communities

**Research materials:** taken from ethnographic methodology, the term used in place of “research data” to broaden the understanding of what research produces and the process of analysis (Barbour, Pope, & Rinehart, 2013)

**Research partner:** term used to identify collaborators that were directly involved in a KMb project with me as part of this dissertation

**Reflective research:** a methodology that demands that a researcher be aware of several factors that can impact a research study, including their own beliefs and relationships with partners (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009)

**Regulatory power:** a form of power enacted on people through policies that focuses on the health and welfare of large groups of people (Gutting, 2005)

**Retrospective reflectivity:** acknowledgement of the ability of people engaged with a research project to learn and the ways it can affect a research project as it moves forward (Attia & Edge, 2017)

**Shunning:** an active process where a person is deliberately not included in family or community events, or they are discussed differently and not defended, or they present in a social space but are engaged with in a way that is different from the majority (Schulman, 2009)

**Social determinates of health:** a set of social, political, and economic factors that have been proven to affect the health of people (Farmer, 2004)

**Social model of disability:** a way of understanding disability as not caused by limitations of the body, but instead caused by the built environment and social beliefs about people with disabilities (Withers, 2012)

**Soft refusal:** from ethnographic refusal, verbal or non-verbal responses by co-researchers or participants that suggest a topic needs more discussion or to be excluded from academic results (Zahara, 2016).”

**Species-being:** concept from Marxist work that separates actions completed for survival from non-vital activities, both of which are considered essential to wellbeing (Bakan & Enakshi, 2014)

**Straight:** lay term that indicates a person is heterosexual

**Structural violence:** the physical or emotional violence that is caused by social structures (Farmer, 2004)

**Supercrip:** term used within disability studies and disability activism to indicate a person with a disability who overcomes their disability with minimal assistive devices or personal support (Hartnett, 2000)

**Tactical knowledge:** forms of knowledge people do not often pay attention to (O’Reilly, 2012), including sounds, feelings, sights, or non-verbal communication

**Trans:** shortened version of transgender, used as an umbrella term to include all people whose gender does not fit that which they were assigned at birth

**Worker:** from Marx's (1889) work on capitalism, term that denotes a person who engages in labour to create a product but does not own the product once it is made,

**Violence:** emotional or physical harm to a person or group (Young, 2011).

**Zine:** a self-published magazine shared within local communities (Art Gallery of Ontario, 2018).

## Appendix C: Call Out

### INVITATION: KNOWLEDGE SHARING PARTNERS

#### What you need to know

I'm a PhD student doing research to understand how grassroots organization share their knowledge. I want to partner with a grassroots disability organization learn how they share what they know. During the partnership, I will offer skills I learned working in the field of knowledge mobilization. There will be no fee for the services provided, but I will use these experiences to do my PhD thesis. I also want to create wide spread learning about knowledge sharing. Thus, I will be posting updates about the project and posting blogs that explain the projects process.

#### Who I am

Hello, I'm Hilda Smith. I'm a trans queer disabled person. I'm also a PhD candidate who is passionate about helping activists make social change by sharing their lived-experience, or knowledge. I am eager to take skills I learned in the field of knowledge mobilization and use them with disability activists.

I must acknowledge my whiteness and the privilege gained from access to a university education. I want to recognise that my research, and this project, takes place on stolen land. As a white treaty signer, I strive to address my privileges and the oppression experienced by marginalized groups. This means I strive to break from histories of colonization. In this process, I work to uplift voices of the complex voices of marginalized peoples.

#### Knowledge Mobilization:

The skills I will bring to this project stem from the field of Knowledge Mobilization (KM). This is a field developed in academia. The goal of this field is to help academics move their research knowledge to other groups, mainly politicians and practitioners, to ensure decisions are influenced by evidence.

#### Expected Timeline

The project will aim to be done in fall 2018.

Hilda Smith, PhD Candidate

#### Types of Partnerships

There are two forms of partnership. The Research Partner and the Online Learning Partner.

- Research Partner are invited entail working closely with me to complete a project related to sharing knowledge.
- Online Learning Partners are invited to follow the work completed during the project to learn about knowledge mobilization.

#### What would your organization gain?

The Research Partner gains access to services to help plan and share the knowledge(s) of a grassroots organization. Some of these services could be:

- gather and plan to share knowledge,
- sharing lived-experience(s),
- making documents easy to read,
- using social media.

Online Learning Partners monitor the project and have access to blogs that give in-depth details of the KM process. Engaging with these tools can promoting learning about KM planning, KM skills and tool.

#### Expectations of the Partner Organization?

Research Partner will meet with me about once a month. The Research Partner can

Critical Disability Studies, York University

## INVITATION: KNOWLEDGE SHARING PARTNERS

select one or two representatives from the partner organization to attend these meetings. These meetings will address:

1. progress and issues,
2. next steps and problem solving, and
3. questions about experiences with the project.

Knowing that people in grassroots organizations are volunteering their time I will compensate representatives for meetings by providing TTC fare and a 10\$ honorarium per month.

Online Learning Partners can learn about KM, see what works and doesn't work for a disability organization, and learn how to deal with issues that arise in KM planning.

### Decision on Partner

The process of accepting a research and online learning partners will be completed by December 7, 2017.

If you have any questions about the project or expressing interest, please contact me at

### Ethics

Because this work is part of my PhD process, myself and the partner organization must meet the ethical requirements of York University. This may include obtaining ethics approval for the joint project.

I have already complete ethics through York University to work with a grassroots disability organization. If you have any questions about your rights as a research partner, please contact York University's Office of Research Ethics at:  
Or

### How to Express Interest?

To express interest in a partnership, please send the following information to [hsmith@yorku.ca](mailto:hsmith@yorku.ca)

Name of Organization	Name of contact person
Types of Partnership	Contact Information

And answer these questions:

1. What kind of knowledge sharing project does your organization want to do?
2. How confident are you that is your organization is prepared to complete this project?
3. How will your organization ensure that there is a representative at each meeting?
4. Why does your organization want to be partner with me?

Details must be sent in a word document by November 4<sup>th</sup> at 11.59pm.

### More Information

For more information about my work and this project please see my personal blog:

Hilda Smith, PhD Candidate

Critical Disability Studies, York University



## Appendix D: Internship Partner's Network

This table describes the community research groups that were part of the internship partner's network.

Each group was assigned a number to keep them from being easily identified. As well, populations have been divided into three categories: large population centre (over 1,000,000); medium population centre (between 30,000 and 999,999); and small population centre (10,000 and 29,999).

Community Research Group	Population Centre Size	Staff / Board / Projects / Funders
1	small population centre	2 staff members 9 board members 11 projects unknown funders as of January 2019
2	medium population centre	7 staff members 9 board members 10 projects 5 funders
3	medium population centre	8 staff members 10 board members 6 projects 3 funders
4	small population centre	3 staff members 7 board members 5 projects 4 funders
5	small population centre	12 staff members 7 board members 14 projects 9 funders
6	small population centre	unknown staff as of January 2019 17 members 4 projects 4 funders
7	small population centre	3 staff members 9 board members unknown projects as of January 2019 4 funders

<b>Community Research Group</b>	<b>Population Centre Size</b>	<b>Staff / Board / Projects / Funders</b>
<b>8</b>	small population centre	2 staff members 6 board members 5 projects 3 funders
<b>9</b>	medium population centre	7 staff members 6 board members 5 projects unknown funders as of January 2019
<b>10</b>	medium population centre	no information found as of January 2019
<b>11</b>	large population centre	29 staff members 14 board members 20 projects 10 funders
<b>12</b>	medium population centre	1 staff member unknown board as of January 2019 3 projects 3 funders
<b>13</b>	small population centre	4 staff members 11 board members 2 projects unknown funders as of January 2019
<b>14</b>	medium population centre	5 staff members 7 board members 3 projects 7 funders
<b>15</b>	large population centre	15 staff members 5 board members 10 projects unknown funders as of January 2019
<b>16</b>	large population centre	no information found as of January 2019
<b>17</b>	medium population centre	15 staff members 11 board members 13 projects 2 or more funders
<b>18</b>	large population centre	14 staff members 13 board members 12 programs 2 or more funders

## Appendix E: Internship Document 2017 a



### About this document

Upon the request, of the [REDACTED], this document was created. It was asked for a list, and examples, of knowledge mobilization products. I, Hilda Smith, have also included some brief details on what knowledge mobilization.

Hilda Smith is a PhD Candidate at York University. She is studying knowledge mobilizations use in community organizing. She held an Intern position with the Knowledge Network of Student Wellbeing during the summer of 2017.

[REDACTED]  
Ontario, Canada  
Summer 2017.

### What is knowledge mobilization?

Knowledge mobilization (KM) is the process by which knowledge “gets to the right people in the right format at the right time” (FoodARC’s Knowledge Mobilization Working Group, 2014, p. 5). To understand this definition, we must first understand what knowledge is.

### What is knowledge?

Knowledge is created through an individual’s experiences, and is shaped by internal beliefs and external social forces. This combination of experiential learning, personal views and external influences makes knowledge difficult to remove from an individual.

Essentially, KM is the process of assisting a knowledge holder to share their knowledge in a format that can be easily understood by their intended audience.

### Knowledge mobilization and Power:

The process of KM is important because it can begin to deconstruct the oppressive power dynamics that have historically related to learning and knowledge. Brown (2000) noted that a common issue with the movement of knowledge is the power that comes with holding knowledge, but there are also issues with the privileging of certain types or sources of knowledge.

### Knowledge mobilization planning:

There is a history, within academia, as well as other areas, of difficulty with sharing knowledge. Creating a knowledge mobilization plan is a process of identifying issues that could surface while in the process of sharing know.

I, Hilda, believe that a strong knowledge mobilization plan has the following:

1. Building Investment in the Audience
2. Creating Knowledge Products/Processes
3. Sharing Knowledge Products/Process
4. Evaluation/Making Changes

I have added the word processes to number 2 and 3 above, because not all knowledge mobilization is about creating new products, but the process by which knowledge is shared to make change within a system.

### Types of KM outputs:

Below is a list of different forms knowledge mobilization products or processes. They have been broken into eight categories. These categories are:

1. Knowledge Products
2. Knowledge Processes
3. Knowledge Sharing
4. Social Media
5. Mentoring
6. Skill Development
7. Empowerment
8. Art Based

Each category has a list of different forms the knowledge products or processes. A brief definition is provided, and if possible an example is linked to.

This list is not exhaustive of all possible knowledge products or processes.

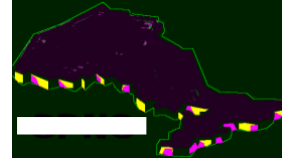
Type of KM Output	Definition	Examples
<b>Products</b>	Typically, a form of knowledge transfer.	
Research Snapshots	Clear language summary of a research paper. Usually between 2-4 pgs.	<a href="#">Research Impact</a>
Research in Brief	A summary of a published research paper. Usually between 2-4 pgs.	<a href="#">Ontario Education Research Exchange</a>
Report	A long document that provides details on research (government, organization, academic, etc.) project.	<a href="#">Ontario's Equity and Inclusion Education Strategy</a>
Executive Summary	Summary of a larger document. Size varies.	<a href="#">OEIES Quick Facts</a>
Presentation	Combination of verbal/visual communication of knowledge.	
Seminar	Combination of verbal/visual means of generating discussion around a topic if knowledge.	
Webinar	Any form of verbal/visual knowledge sharing that takes place in an online space.	
Info Graphics	Visual representation of, a small portion, research knowledge.	<a href="#">Full Day Kindergarten (ON Gov.)</a>

Immersive Project	When an activity is created to ‘recreate’ the experience of a marginalized group.	<a href="#">Blue/Brown Eyes experiment by Jan Elliott</a>
Toolkit	Skill based resource to assist a group in doing something differently.	<a href="#">Parental Engagement</a>
Assessment Package	Guide for completing an assessment on a certain topic, or a report based on an assessment on the topic.	<a href="#">Self-Assessment Tool for Principals</a>
Framework	Outline of core principles that can be adapted to local context. Helps to bring consistency and reduce time to implementation as base work is started or completed.	<a href="#">Leadership Framework for Principals and vice-principals</a>
<b>Processes</b>		
Champions	A person who is passionate about a topic and has credibility within a field.	<a href="#">Example from the addiction area</a>
Networking	Developing relationships between people or groups to share knowledge and exchange ideas.	<a href="#">SPNO</a>
Participatory Action Research	A form a research that makes community members co-researchers to ensure that research addresses concerns of the community and to increase investment in the research finding.	
Communities of Practice	Gathering people together to share, learn, and exchange ideas about a topic.	
Implementation	The process through which a program is taught, put into used, and evaluated.	
Capacity Building	Learning what knowledge is missing and collaborating with a group to create ways to learning and exchange knowledge on a topic.	
Organizational Development	Learning what knowledge or processes are missing from an organization. Then working with the organization to create change to adapt the new knowledge of process.	
Professional Learning Communities	Communities made up of people who share a profession. These communities are centered around exchanging knowledge between members to improve the skills and knowledge of all engaged with the PLC.	

<b>Knowledge Sharing</b>	Developing a relationship between groups to encourage learning on all sides.	
Symposium	A large group of people gathering to discuss a specific topic.	<a href="#">Public Education Symposium</a>
Forum	Public meeting where people share ideas related to a topic.	
Meeting	Meeting of a smaller group of people to share knowledge. Often to plan for wider spreading of the knowledge.	
Brainstorming	Process that allows groups to generate ideas related to a topic.	
Roundtable	Moderated discussion between invited guests around a specific topic.	
<b>Social Media</b>	A means to share small bits of knowledge to interest more people to explore a topic or specific resources more.	
Website	A central space on the internet that organizes knowledge being shared and information about an organization.	<a href="#">Homeless Hub</a>
Videos	3-6 minutes' films that share a perspective on a topic. Needs a plan to ensure wide spread viewing of videos.	<a href="#">ON Government</a>
Twitter/Facebook	Short posts, images, or videos that motivate people to become interested in a topic.	<a href="#">MOE</a>
Events details	Means of sharing details on events that are being held.	
<b>Mentoring</b>	Developing skills needed in future leaders and champions	
Conferences	Intensive days of knowledge sharing and skills development in a specific area.	<a href="#">Ontario's Educators Conference</a>
Mentoring	Personal relationships between a few people to help them learn about a topic and learn how to act towards it.	<a href="#">Ontario Principal's Council</a>
Coaching	Helping future leaders to take skills they have and become better and more confident with them.	
<b>Skill Development</b>		
Training	A set of activities done over a set period that will ensure that people learn about an area they didn't know before or to advance their skills.	<a href="#">Teacher Learning and Leading Program</a>
Workshops	A brief, few hours to a few days, intensive introduction to a topic.	<a href="#">Minecraft</a>

Learning to read research		
Certifications	A set of classes or workshops, which when completed should ensure competencies with a topic.	<a href="#">Ontario College of Teachers</a>
<b>Empowerment</b>	Supporting a groups, generally marginalized groups, to build skills needed to make changes in their environment,	
Helping communities do own research	Teaching groups research skills so they can complete their own research projects and developing leaderships skills within the communities so they can share the knowledge they produce.	<a href="#">Students as Researchers Conference</a>
Creating Space	Creating a structure and system that brings the voices of marginalized communities to be heard.	<a href="#">MOE Student Advisory Council</a>
<b>Art Based</b>	Sharing knowledge, often from marginalized community, with a wider community.	
Visual Art	The sharing of some form of visual art (paintings, sculptures, graffiti) in public spaces to share life experience or to build discussion	
Films/Books	Fictional or 'based' on real life stories that are shared with a mass audience.	<a href="#">I, Daniel Blake</a>
Documentaries	Story, generally based on interviews with people from different backgrounds, on a topic.	<a href="#">The New Public</a>
Photo projects	Public displays, or book production, that helps to share the experiences of a group or views on a topic.	
Plays	Based on life experiences, generally, that are used to show the barriers people experience.	<a href="#">NeroDevNet</a>
Dramatics, like spoken word	Using arts based tools to develop a space where people share experiences in a supportive environment to address personal and systemic issues.	<a href="#">Button Poetry</a>
Music	A means to challenge or support POV with a combination of instruments and vocals.	





## Background Information on Knowledge Mobilization

### Knowledge Networks

The Knowledge Network for Student Well-Being is part of the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research (KNAER) (<http://www.knaer.ca>). These networks bring people and organizations together to address issues in education through “state-of-the-art knowledge” (pp.ii). This summary gives a brief overview of knowledge mobilization (KM) as understood by

### Everyone Does Knowledge Mobilization

Knowledge mobilization, simply put, is the connection of two processes: the creation of knowledge and the sharing of knowledge. Sharing knowledge is something that people do in their daily lives - from storytelling to teaching. People strive to find ways to share what they know with others.

Sharing knowledge is often a hard process. Knowledge is personal. For instance, two people who take the same class may create different knowledges based on their own past experiences and their understanding of the world. Thus, moving knowledge from a person into a different context is a complex process.

Difficulties with moving knowledge have created many theories within research and communities. These theories address what knowledge is and how it is shared. Knowledge mobilization is the name under which these theories live.





### What is Knowledge?

Knowledge, in the past, has been viewed as coming from research. ... notes that knowledge is a complex process that comes from many spaces. Thus, experiences from practice and communities are also viewed as forms of knowledge. As well, ... believes knowledge must recognize local context.

### Some Knowledge Mobilization Definitions

Knowledge mobilization (KM) is an umbrella term, a broad category that contains different definitions and processes. Below are three ways to understand KM. One is a


broad definition and the other two are from funders. Each definition has an example of KM that has occurred in Ontario schools.

1. Community: the process of moving knowledge, in a useful format, to people who can use the knowledge, at a time where it can make a difference.<sup>ii</sup>  
 Example. Community concerns about the number of racialized students moved out of the main classroom due to learning issues. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) assessed these concerns. The assessment found the concerns were true. These findings pushed the TDSB to agree to exploring policy reforms related to this issue.<sup>iii</sup>
2.  KM is a process of knowledge about community's concerns flowing to researchers, then a collaborative project between researchers and communities, before knowledge flows to some or all: communities, practitioners, and policy makers.<sup>iv</sup>  
 Example.  funded 44 programs that fall into four categories in their 1<sup>st</sup> phase. One category was *Building or Extending Networks*. These projects brought people together. All group members were concerned about the same topic. Together they found research and created ways to share it. Finally, they made plans to push knowledge out.<sup>i</sup>
3. Ministry of Education: Focus on evidence-based decision making. This means knowledge must be supported by research. Thus, choices made about the education system are made based on research evidence.<sup>v</sup>  
 Example. Research findings suggested that grade repetition did not help students over the long term. These findings resulted in the Ontario Government creating a new policy that restricted or removed grade repetition.<sup>vi</sup>

Other examples of KM in schools are the introduction of research brokering networks to school districts<sup>vii</sup> and principals becoming leaders to bring evidence-based practices into their schools.<sup>viii</sup>

## Knowledge Mobilization Models

There are three main models of knowledge mobilization. They are linear, relationship, and systems.

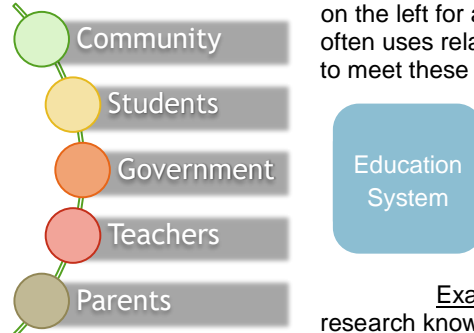
1. Linear models of KM are a one-way process. Knowledge is created and then shared with others. This model of KM relies on the expert to create new knowledge.  
Example. When a doctor gives a patient information on a medical condition. 
2. Relationship models of KM expand on the linear model. This model builds and improves links between people and organizations. Thus, knowledge must be allowed to move in more than one direction. For instance, teachers will tell



researchers the limits of their work, which then impacts what these groups do together.

Example. Building a community of practice where those concerned about math education in Ontario work together to change curriculums in schools.<sup>ix</sup>

3. Systems models of KM aim to create change in all levels of a system. See figure on the left for an example. The systems model often uses relationships based on co-creation to meet these aims.



Example. Encouraging the use of research knowledge in education by making teachers co-researchers, creating research knowledge leaders in principals, making best-practices include research knowledge, and having government buy-in.<sup>x</sup>

In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, [redacted] used a relationship model, but plans to move towards a systems model in 2<sup>nd</sup> phase.

<sup>i</sup> Campbell, C., Pollock, K., Carr-Harris, S., & Briscoe, P. (2014). KNAER Final Report. Ontario: Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research.

<sup>ii</sup> FoodARC's Knowledge Mobilization Working Group. (2014). *Knowledge mobilization in participatory action research: A synthesis of the literature*.

<sup>iii</sup> Parekh, G. (May 2017). Advocacy from the Inside Out: Employing School Board Data to Advance System Change. Presented at WERA Per-Conference Community Advocacy in/for Education, Toronto: Ontario.

<sup>iv</sup> Campbell, C., Pollock, K., Carr-Harris, S., & Briscoe, P. (2014). KNAER Final Report. Ontario: Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research.

<sup>v</sup> Ontario Government. (2014). *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario* (pp. 1–23). Ontario.

<sup>vi</sup> OECD. (2012). *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*. OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264130852-en>

<sup>vii</sup> Rodway, J. (2015). Connecting the dots: Understanding the flow of research knowledge within a research brokering network. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 23(123), 1–27.

<sup>viii</sup> The Council of Ontario Directors of Education. (2014). *Equity and Inclusive Education: Going Deeper* (Working Document) (pp. 1–35). Ontario.

<sup>ix</sup> Mathematics Knowledge Network (2017). Retrieved from: <http://www.knaer-recrae.ca/knaer-networks/math-network>

<sup>x</sup> Ontario Government. (2014). *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario* (pp. 1–23). Ontario.

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# Autistiqueers Colab.

Wednesday, July 25th, 2018

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## Attendees

Bridget Liang, *Autistiqueers Rep.*  
Hilda Smith, *KM Researcher*

## Agenda

- Sign Consent Forms and Update As Needed
  - Not Needed
- Discuss information to be posted on online learning form.
  - ❑ Website
    - ❑ Joint post has been confirmed for August 29th.
  - ❑ Update on promotion of website
    - ❑ No promotion in last Month
  - ❑ Update from Autitiqueers
    - ❑ Leadership/Zine Planning
      - ❑ People have expressed interest in leadership, meeting must be set-up to plan who will be taking on leadership duties. This is for both the group itself and the Zine.
      - ❑ There were two main leaders who are swamped with health issues and pay work. Meeting to get people set up will happen in July.
  - ❑ Update on Zine Project
    - ❑ On hold until new leadership has been trained. Hoping to be done in July.
  - ❑ Next Meeting.
    - ❑ July 25th at 2:00pm.

## Action Items

1. Hilda to look into the changes of views on web-site verus twitter.
  2. Bridget to set meeting to set-up new leadership duties with people in AutistiQueers.
-

## Appendix H: Example of Ethnographic Journal

<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	January 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2018 at 1:00pm (Next Feb 7 <sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm)
<b>Place</b>	NA
<b>Duration</b>	1.5 hours
<b>Observes</b>	H.S.
<b>People</b>	CG1 (first community group member to sign confidentiality contract)
<b>Event</b>	First Meeting: Getting to know & Planning
<b>Agenda:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (D) Discuss and Sign consent forms,</li> <li>2. (D) Community Group (CG) share info about org and project,</li> <li>3. (D) Learn what CG wants from collaboration,</li> <li>4. (D) Talk about researcher's role,</li> <li>5. (D) Discuss timelines,</li> <li>6. (D) Talk about information being posted online.</li> </ol>	
<b>Setting</b>	Informal space where both parties had been before. Adjustment had to be made to space to ensure CG1 was comfortable.
<b>Atmosphere</b>	Negotiations of working partnership was difficult as both parties know each other socially.
<b>Raw Notes:</b>	
<p>I was aware that moving into a collaborative relationship with people I know socially (from the disability academic and activities communities) would not be easy I had not prepared for how difficult it would be. A great deal of the meeting was based around how to work in this collaborative relationship. We dealt with this by trying to step back and went through the learning process (of the org and the research) as though neither of us had previous knowledge. This helped to reorient both parties and the meeting went smoother after this step was taken.</p> <p>It became clear during the meeting that the CG is in a state of change in their operation. They started with three founding members. They now have one main member and one support member. This is causing struggles with them moving forward with the project. I made it clear that I cannot institute change, but could share information I have on collaborative organising for them to consider. This was accepted.</p> <p>Another concern that came up was the use of the zine to be shared with medical professional. I expressed concern about this format being used with professionals and suggested it might be used to build solidarity with allied groups. This idea will be brought back to the CG to be discussed. In the meantime, I will explore the use of zines for moving knowledge into professional areas. If zines are used to share with professionals I will strongly encourage an evaluation take place to gauge the effectiveness.</p>	
<b>Key Points:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore impact of collaborative/boards on working with communities</li> </ol> <p>Any information on the impact of zines on knowledge movement.</p>	