

Fostering Community Collaborations, Ecological Identities, and Eco-Spiritualistic Ideologies

Facilitated and Authored by: **Angelica Rutherford-Nielsen**

Supervised by: **Chris Cavanagh**

A Report of a Major Project submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies
and the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master in Environmental Studies

Graduate Program in Environmental Studies
York University
Toronto, Ontario

July 2014

Supervisor's Signature – Chris Cavanagh

MES Student Signature – Angelica Rutherford-Nielsen

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FOREWORD

This major research project report encapsulates the accumulation of interdisciplinary environmental perspectives related to the development of my *Plan of Study* and curriculum within the *Master's in Environmental Studies* graduate program at *York University*. These topics include theoretical development of *Popular Education Praxis*, *Environmental Philosophy*, *Ecological Psychology*, *Developmental Studies*, and *Agricultural Studies*. My main research interest was to acquire a contemporary perspective on how our generation can cultivate deeper ecological values that may aid in promoting socially environmentally conscious ideologies, practices, and systems. By incorporating *Deep Ecology*, which is a foundational philosophical theory which emphasizes the intrinsic value of nature and ecological integrity, I aimed to investigate cultural development of eco-spiritualistic ideologies. Another main focus of ideological development within my *Plan of Study* is *Agroecology*, which is a sustainable agricultural practice that integrates biological cycles and systems within an ecological design. I utilized *Popular Educational Praxis* techniques which aim to dissolve structures of inequality, politicization, and classism, while encouraging cultural inter/intra-subjectivity between communities. In conclusion, the research curriculum I created decomposes the socio-cultural, educational, and experiential relationships participants have with developmental *Agricultural Studies* and progressive environmentalism within the framework of globalization. I have met a number of my learning objectives such as broadening my education on the theory and methodology of *Popular Education*, enhancing my facilitation experience, connecting community development with academic research, and lastly to gain a deeper understanding of our local-scale community developmental cultures relative to food sovereignty issues in Toronto, Ontario.

DEDICATION

*To my community, friends, & family on
Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada,
as well as around the world!*

*For valuing every living entity as well as cherishing every moment,
while inspiring greatness and the best in everyone.*

&

*Most of all to my Mother Stace Tatiana Nielsen,
my rock of rose quartz,
symbolizing endless love, honour, and support.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Jin Haritaworn and Cate Sandilands for guiding my intellectual and academic development while providing genuine support throughout the process of fine-tuning this interdisciplinary curriculum. I would also like to acknowledge the kind and passionate members of the faculty and staff of *Environmental Studies*, CAP (Community Arts Practice), *Regensis*, and IRIS (Institute of Research in Innovation and Sustainability) for aiding in building an environmental community at *York University*. Lastly, to my supervisor and lead inspirational figure in *Popular Education*, Chris Cavanagh, for your compassionate encouragement and creative energy.

I may also add that I am forever grateful for the friendships and connections I have made within the MES (*Master's in Environmental Studies*) program, at *York University*, and in the communities of greater Toronto, Ontario. We have been able to aid and guide each other through thick and thin then back again.

Although I have been at a great physical distance from my family and friends in British Columbia, I have received an immense amount of endless love and support from them. Thank you everyone for being actively a part of my personal, community, creative, and academic development!

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In expanding my theoretical and practical knowledge in fostering successful collaborative learning opportunities, my major project is an example of participatory arts-based action research. I was enthusiastically inspired to incorporate collaborative design and an active painting process into this research project, as I have been an avid community-oriented artist since a tender age. I was able to enhance my range of skills through large scale set design projects, municipal banners, graphic design projects, constructive sculpture, advanced painting, and drawing practices within my undergraduate degree in *Geography and Visual Arts at Vancouver Island University*. I am an advocate for the diversification of cultural development to encourage creativity and to increase our perceptive sensibilities. Individuals can achieve an internalized understanding of a particular area of study if they are fully engaged in the process, thus making the experience more influential.

By conducting interdisciplinary research in the form of a literature review of contemporary agricultural development, environmental philosophy, and popular education theory, I designed my major project to concentrate on communicating the urgency of socio-cultural and environmental justice embedded within transnational food sovereignty issues. Raj Patel (2009) describes in the *Journal of Peasant Studies* how a heavy “technocentric approach could exacerbate current conditions of poverty and inequity” due to a concentration of “power and privilege” within a “narrow set of world views at the expense of pertinent local knowledge and socio-cultural and political specificities” (693). The rapid growth of global agricultural development and lack of transnational education pertaining to ecological studies has greatly influenced cultural development, consumer behaviouralism, and expanding corporate ownership. There is an increase in the fragmentation of ecological stability within agricultural production

as well as a lack of ethical responsibility within the cultivation, distribution, manufacturing, and trade practices. In providing participant questionnaires and facilitating a collaborative mural project within my research, this series of popular education workshops aided in expressing sustainable cultural and educational activities. The results from the workshops encapsulated the diversity of perceptions participants had of contemporary agricultural and ecological development.

“They dreamed of an open, democratic education, one that would instill in their children a taste for questioning, a passion for knowledge, a healthy curiosity, the joy of creating, and the pleasure of risk without which there can be no creation”

(Freire, P., 2012, 122).

Paulo Freire (1921-1997) and his work as an educational theorist, influential author, and philosopher, has been a significant influence in the expansion of my own academic and personal ideologies. Upon developing this major research project, similarly to the progressive topics expressed in the writings on popular education and social justice of Paulo Freire, the purpose was to inspire critical thought, conversation, and creativity. I aimed to build cohesive interconnectivity, inter-relationality, and environmentalist phenomenological perspectives relative to '*just sustainability*'. The “crisis of sustainability”, as quoted by Robert Costanza (1987) in David Orr's *Hope Is an Imperative*, is more of a rational behavioural situation, a social trap, and a cultural avoidance tactic (Orr, 2011, 75). Additionally, Julian Agyeman (2003) within his text *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World* describes *just sustainability* as recognizing vast societal inequalities with references to “anthropocentrism”, “ecological democracy”, “feminism and gender”, “selective victimization”, “risk society”, “biocultural assimilation”, and “ecological modernization” (Agyeman, 2003). *Just sustainability* aims at finding a critical balance between environmental and social justice.

The organizational world we live in is structured and shaped into systems in all areas including our economies, governments, families, cultures, sciences, and individual selves. It is possible to transition from exclusive systems to more inclusive systems, where we can attempt to actualize our aspirations for “a fair distribution of power, human dignity, and a livable environment” (Merchant, xii, 1992). Within John P. Miller's (2013) text *The Holistic Curriculum*, he elaborates how our sense of individualism has “promoted the fragmentation as there is less attempt to define the common good, much less work towards such a goal” (pp. 48). Our world has become increasingly homogenized through the process of globalization, as there is a loss of diversity due to monocultural domination as opposed to ensuring the survival of “polycultural praxis” (Gonzalez, 2004, 447). It will require that our contemporary cultures value diversity, cultural sovereignty, and traditional inter-generational values. Within environmental education, to reach a deeper level of collective and collaborative understanding of these developmental issues we must embody the varying local sociocultural contexts, as well as the natural processes of the particular bioregions and ecological systems.

I have also been inspired by a *Deep Ecological* critical pedagogy of *self-realization*, as described by author and Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess (1912-2009). Our goal is to enhance our collective understanding of the *self*, how we determine values, and what spirituality may mean in relation to one another, our communities, our historical nationalities, and our local and global ecological systems. Arne Naess in his interpretation of *self-realization* stated “the *maturity* of self has been considered to develop through three stages, from ego to social self, comprising the ego, and from there to the metaphysical self, comprising the social self” while incorporating nature and reaching the critical potential of the “ecological self” (Naess, as quoted in Drengson & Yuichi, 1995, 14). I aimed to include these ideals into a popular educational praxis in a participatory fashion through allowing participants to express themselves within the greater context of our environmentalist topics in a social community in the form of symbolism and artwork.

The structure of the design loom I developed aimed to empower critical educational dialogue with discussion-based action research and surveys. Topics covered include defining eight definitions: *Culture, Health, Globalization, Deep Ecology, Ecological Stewardship, Sacred Economics, Just Sustainability, and Agroecology* (See Ch. 3.2 & Appendix E). The intention of focusing on these terms was to aid in discussing diversity within environmental philosophy, deconstructing the complexity of agricultural studies, developing personal-communal ecological identities, as well as engaging discussions pertaining to fostering healthy sustainable cultures and communities.

This research design was reviewed and approved by the *FES Human Participants Research Committee* on behalf of *York University* for the year 2014. I held two successful workshops in two locations in Toronto, Ontario in May and June of 2014. Participant involvement in these workshops varied depending on personal availability and one's desired contribution to this major research. Participants were given the opportunity to contribute to a group discussion, a '*People's Dictionary*' popular education activity, a personal anonymously documented questionnaire, as well as collaborative mural design and painting. This study was completely voluntary and participants had the right to withdraw at any time. This collaborative arts-based action research project was an exciting activity to facilitate, as it gave participants an opportunity to share their stories and opinions, as well as elaborate upon their knowledge of agricultural and ecological studies while exercising their creative skill sets.

The content within the research interview questionnaire (*Appendix C*) was relative to each participant's personal contribution to the greater systems of agricultural development, their own moral value-based criteria associated with consumer products, dietary requirements or habits, and lastly if they had any relative practical/educational experience in agricultural production or ecological systems knowledge. Within rapidly globalizing urban cultures, an increasing fragmentation between nature and society can occur. More specifically, there can be a growing lack of transparency in relation to the origin, composition, and accurate social implications of our consumables, as well as to the integrity of

environmental health. We are expanding our agricultural production rates, though the margins of inaccessibility are increasing: “Last year record numbers of the world’s poor experienced hunger, this at a time of record harvests and record profits for the world’s major agrifood corporations” (Holt-Gimenez, 2009, 143). There is an increase in transnational corporate ownership of agricultural land and development, consequently a decrease in diversity, an increase in demand, and a lack of proper equitable distribution.

Our cultures and systems are continually evolving, this contemporary post-colonial developmental trend is due to “*ecological imperialism*”, a term coined by Alfred W. Crosby (1986), which describes the transformation of our physical, biological, atmospheric, and fluvial systems, as well as traditional societal structures and practices (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, 76). Similarly, the exponential rate of globalization has fostered an expanding global economic structure, while these developmental impacts have “perpetuated poverty, widened material inequalities, increased ecological degradation, sustained militarism, fragmented communities, marginalized subordinated groups, fed intolerance and deepened crises of democracy” (Scholte, 1996, as quoted in Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, 111). Though we claim to be fostering values of social justice, there are barriers to equality and a diminishing sense of responsibility on a global scale. We continue to disassociate ourselves from the biogeographical origins of our ingredients and natural resources, as well as the labour force and communities who increase the opportunities for prosperity and socio-cultural innovation in developed urban regions.

Primarily within my research, I obtained a substantial spectrum of anonymous data from my participant groups to assess the level of interest, intention, and awareness one may have of contemporary transnational agricultural and ecological issues. In a progressive lens, I aimed to inspire participants to broaden their imaginative minds and critical perspectives within the framework of an artistic practice. With literary, energetic, vocal, and creative contributions, I hope their experiences were positive on personal-communal, existential, and internal levels.

In fostering environmental stewardship and ecological literacy we are searching for “patterns, unity, and connections between people of all ages, races, nationalities, and generations” as well as between people and the natural world; embellishing a “tradition grounded in the belief that life is sacred and not to be carelessly expended on the ephemeral” (Orr, 2011, 260). As Gary Snyder (1990) once described in his article 'Ecology, Place, and the Awakening of Compassion' that an “ecosystem is a kind of mandala in which there are multiple relations that are all powerful and instructive”, while it can be described as hierarchical in terms of “energy-flow”, its basis relies on all entities as being equal and a part of a whole (Snyder, 1990, as quoted in Drengson & Inoue, 1995, 238). Our interwoven interconnectivity is a metaphysical and existential symbiotic system, similar to the socio-political ecologies we weave within the constraints of nature, therefore we must maximize our conscientious awareness of these intimate relationships.

Chapter 2

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, & PARTICIPATION:

2.1 - Participatory Arts-Based Research Structure and Community Developmental Intentions

The design of a community workshop is an organic process, as this structure was less formal in nature and more dynamic than a foundational educational course. The participants ranged in age, ethnicity, gender, socio-cultural affiliation, educational background, profession, and personality. My main objective was to understand how future generations can cultivate deep ecological values in relation to their own interpretations of agricultural and ecological studies. How may grassroots educational projects, which allow for creative participation, enhance the evolution of fostering sustainable cultures that aid in the preservation of biodiversity within agriculture, the integrity of ecological systems, and the conservation of wild natural organisms?

The intention of the visual arts aspect of my methodology is to design a symbolic and inter-subjectively defined composition, which was also collaboratively composed with a varying demographic of inspired participants (*Original design see Workshop #1 – Appendix A – Figure 1.2*). This design symbolically and graphically exemplifies a diversity of ideological perspectives relative to all of our cultural, biological, political, economic, and genetic connections to agroecological developmental evolutionary systems. Relative to previous research interests within environmental philosophy, primarily *Deep Ecology* which inspired this project, I aimed to inspire values of *ethical* and *just* ecological systems. In using the term ecological, I am not only referring to the ecological systems found in nature, though the use of the word is intended to be more meta-analytical, such as within the study of urban, suburban, rural, sociological, philosophical, and political ecologies.

Carolyn Merchant (1992) describes deep ecologists as advocates of “total transformation in science and worldviews” which values interconnectedness and reciprocity, rather than our current exploitative and mechanistic systems (11). My interest in formulating a workshop design which expressed the importance of transnational global awareness surrounding agricultural and environmental justice issues stemmed from my own participation and experience in local communities all over North America. Historically, ecological thinking embedded within community development has been highly influential in cultivating distinctive cultural methodologies, such as with local agricultural practices evolving to suit bioregional climates or complex urban issues.

I aimed to build a sense of comfortable community within the learning environment of this participatory research workshop. The increased inter/intra-relationality between members encouraged successful cross-cultural and collateral learning opportunities in the form of discussion, inspiration, and artistic expression. In relation to deep ecological ethics, this can increase the mutual sense of inclusion and understanding, and may also be broadened to encompass multi-faceted cultural mindscapes. For example, within the highland Mayan communities of southern Mexico there is a range and diversity of dialect and cultural heritage. Cross-cultural and inter-subjective recognition, beyond linguistic and analytical practice, can aid in increasing the inter-subjectivity between people, as they can see “others as extensions of self” (Groark, 2011, 1-2). By dissolving the economic and banking structure models, popular education can aid in building bonds between individuals and it can also aid in disseminating knowledge throughout communities. This can aid in strengthening social networks, relationships, and resources through raising awareness, as well as inspiring community motivation towards participation in local municipalities.

Specifically I framed my design loom (*Appendix D – Figure 4.1*) to be methodologically sound and flexible, while allotting time for unpredictable circumstances. I obtained signed consent forms, distributed and presented an introductory statement to the research project, as well as I provided all of the related documentation pertaining to the lineage of my project development (*i.e. Plan of Study*,

MES Research Proposal – Major Project, and Interview Questionnaire). I also provided information relative to my partner organization, *Regenesis* (<http://www.theregenesisproject.com/>), if members of the workshop were interested in expanding their participation in activities related to environmental and social justice. All of the deliverable forms and information were successful additions to the workshop, as well I was able to obtain twenty-two completed interview questionnaires to synthesize into this research report.

The opening activity was an introductory conversational ice-breaker for participants and myself to elaborate upon their reasons for participating and their individual backgrounds. I then continued the conversation in a facilitative manner in which I elaborated upon the deeper context of my research, specifically relative to *Popular Education, Arts-Based Participatory Action Research, Environmental Philosophy, Agricultural Studies, and Ecological Systems*. Thirdly, I described the process within the context of my design loom, as I would distribute necessary forms as well as that their participation was voluntary, leading into a discussion and question period. Next was our 'People's Dictionary Activity' focusing on eight comparative key terms including: “Culture”, “Health”, “Just Sustainability”, “Globalization”, “Agroecology”, “Deep Ecology”, “Sacred Economics”, and “Ecological Stewardship” (See Ch. 3.2). This was an open ended activity where participants could add to the content throughout the duration of the workshop.

After allowing for a sufficient break, our group dove into creation period where I had already prepared all the necessary painting supplies, partially pre-designed canvas mural, and inspirational materials including mandala designs and symbolism. I was able to hold two successful workshops in the Greater Toronto Area, the first *Environmental Mural Research Workshop (Appendix A)* on May 9th, 2014 at *York University* (HNES Room 018) from 11am to 5pm, and the second in *Kensington Market's Church of St. Stephen in-the-Fields* (103 Bellevue Avenue) from 7pm-11pm (*Appendix B*) on June 5th, 2014. Each participant had the opportunity to select their amount of contribution and time to

the project, and they were allotted the freedom to de-select or remain anonymous from any dialogue or activity throughout the duration of the workshop.

My primary method of advertising for participants to attend these workshops was done through online social media via facebook (*Appendix A – Figure 1.1; Appendix B Figure 2.1*), as well as through subscribed e-mail lists for members and associates of *Regenesis* (<http://www.theregenesisproject.com>). This was a fairly successful method of obtaining exposure and a variety of attendants, although there were a high number of 'attendees', 'maybes', and 'no response', which made it difficult to predict the accurate number of expected participants.

The intentions of these workshops was to gain experience in facilitating successful and meaningful participatory arts-based action research pertaining to self-actualization within the greater context of transnational agricultural and ecological developmental topics. Throughout the process of assembling this curricular plan of study, design loom, major research project concept plan, facilitating, collecting data, and compiling the results into a comprehensive report, I have gained a deeper appreciation for popular education praxis, participatory research, and community development.

Chapter 3

RESULTS, QUESTIONNAIRES, & DISCUSSION

Inspiring Critical Dialogue, Inter-Disciplinarity, and Creative Symbolic Development

3.1 - The Ebb and Flow of Productivity in the Workshops

The structure of the workshops varied, as participants could only commit to a specific number of hours within each session. This required the tempo and organization of the design loom to be amended according to the necessities of the group. They were both organized approximately three weeks in advance, and advertised through community e-mails and social media (*Regenesis Listserv and Facebook pages – Appendix A & Appendix B*). *Workshop #1 (Appendix A)* ran from 11am-5pm at York University on May 9th, 2014, and followed the layout rather precisely. The timing was relatively perfect, as we were able to adequately complete and follow the original design loom. A portion of participants could only attend the first half, or vice-versa, therefore we altered the order of a few activities for individuals to make up for any loss of contribution to the research. A total of eleven attendees fully completed questionnaires and consent forms.

Within *Workshop #2 (Appendix B)* from 7pm-11pm at *Church of St. Stephen in-the-Fields* (103 Bellevue Avenue) the tempo was slightly more unpredictable, as we had many participants coming in and out throughout the duration of the allotted time. In total there were also eleven completed questionnaires and consent forms, although others simply participated in the form of designing, painting, and dialogue. This workshop was slightly more hectic to handle, as I attended to the questions and aid of many. The energy of this session was much more exciting as there were many community members who knew each other quite well. This particular event is a weekly '*sacred art*' community gathering each Thursday

evening at the same location run by Veronica Campbell, an actress, community and theatre workshop facilitator, whom I approached to collaborate with for this particular date.

3.2 - The People's Dictionary – Deconstructing Critical Terminology

This popular educational activity was successful in fostering a dialogue surrounding eight key terms including: *Culture*, *Health*, *Globalization*, *Deep Ecology*, *Ecological Stewardship*, *Sacred Economics*, *'Just' Sustainability*, and *Agroecology*. The intention of focusing on these topics was to demystify the complexity of their meanings, giving participants the opportunity to re-define them, and lastly to critically analyze issues or questions about them within our mutual understanding of a each definition. Listed below are the dictionary and encyclopedia short form explanations of each statement (when applicable), and the results of our '*People's Dictionary*' participatory analysis activity can be viewed in the table below.

Each commonly defined term was explained as follows:

Culture - “:the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time: a particular society that has its own beliefs, ways of life, art, etc.: a way of thinking, behaving, or working that exists in a place or organization (such as a business)” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014).

Health - “:the condition of being well or free from disease: the overall condition of someone's body or mind: the condition or state of something” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014).

Globalization - “:the act or process of globalizing: the state of being globalized *especially* : the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014).

Deep Ecology - “:a movement or a body of concepts that considers humans no more important than other species and that advocates a corresponding radical readjustment of the relationships between humans and nature.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014).

Environmental Stewardship - Refers to responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices. Aldo Leopold (1887–1948) championed environmental stewardship based on a land ethic "dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it." (Wikipedia Online Dictionary, 2014)

Agroecology - "an ecological approach to agriculture that views agricultural areas as ecosystems and is concerned with the ecological impact of agricultural practices." (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014).

Sacred Economics - "Sacred Economics traces the history of money from ancient gift economies to modern capitalism, revealing how the money system has contributed to alienation, competition, and scarcity, destroyed community, and necessitated endless growth. Today, these trends have reached their extreme - but in the wake of their collapse, we may find great opportunity to transition to a more connected, ecological, and sustainable way of being." (Charles Eisenstein, "Sacred Economics", 2011).

Just Sustainability - "A more refined definition would be called **just applied sustainability**: the application of science and innovation to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems." "This new form of sustainable development prioritizes justice and equity, while maintaining the importance of the environment and the global life support system." (Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia, 2014).

Throughout the process of participants adding their amendments to the '*People's Dictionary*' there was an evolutionary shift in personal ideologies and opinions of how to re-define or expand upon each term. After a group discussion we used note pad paper to develop a visual chart to review the main concepts behind each phrase, issues with each definition, and any questions, concerns, or changes we may make. Participants were very vocal in the discussion, yet rather brief in their elaborations within this activity, especially within the last column. Overall, this group process was thought provoking, as well as challenging on an individual level in order to review the content of our discussion of foreign terms as this was expressed further within the questionnaire responses (*See Appendix E*).

The People's Dictionary

May - June 2014

<i>Term</i>	<i>Our Common Definition</i>	<i>Issues with Definition</i>	<i>Questions/Concerns/Changes</i>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared values and practices - Malleable to change (Not fixed) - Groups, identities, and relationships. - Beliefs, lifestyle, and ways of a certain group of people that sets them apart from other groups of people. - A lifestyle share by a group of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core values are being questioned and are being modified with each newer generation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do we preserve and create culture? - What to do when culture hinders positive progression? - What takes precedent: culture or protecting our future?
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding and being aware of ones own mental and physical being; achieving a healthy balance. - A state of total well being, not merely the absence of disease - World Health Organization Definition Holistic Wellness. - Being free of ailments and possessing the ability to thrive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to manage the social determinants of health. - Does not mention much about nutrition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to recognize non-humans.
Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compression of time and space - Incorporation of goods from the world to make it accessible to everybody at a fair price with fair ethical principles. - The spread of ideas, values and physical beings across the world. - The ability for countries to share resources, information, culture, and language with great ease. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will globalization end if oil sky rockets?
Deep Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmony between human society and nature, learning to co-exist under mutual respect. - Connection and Hierarchy; ecological cyclical diagram v.s. Pyramid diagram; non-anthropocentric. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incompatible with current views of humans as superior. 	
Ecological Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking responsibility for land, water and air. - Respecting our environment and resources. - Using natural goods and products respectfully without wasting them. - Learning to properly distribute and consume. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will this work with our growing 'individualistic' mentality where me is greater than we. 	

<p>Sacred Economics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A radical envisioning of a past capitalist world. - The idea that money is the sole master behind the way the social and environmental aspects of society run, and without it, our economy wouldn't be as prosperous. - Economic transactions with integrity and consciousness of others. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can 'Sacred Economics' compete with corporate capitalism?
<p>'Just' Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability – a focus on living that does not negatively impact future generations, equitable and inclusive. - Living in a better environment and quality of living, while respecting the eco-systems. - Finding a model that can be replicated in any context where appropriate; Social justice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we develop a model that can be changed and adjusted to meet circumstances (global warming). 	
<p>Agroecology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food within our environment; all connected. - Bringing ethical and ecological concepts into agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we assure societies can sustain these practices? 	

3.3 - Collaborative Creative Energy and Mural Symbology

Following our discussions surrounding our key interdisciplinary environmental terms, we had an appropriate time to have a break and then we proceeded to the artistic design, composition, and painting session of the workshop. Participants in the first workshop (*Appendix A*) were more conservative in the individual design process and actually preferred to work on filling in the preliminary design I had applied to the centre portion of the canvas. The intention of my original design was to exemplify a blending of contrasting dichotomous perspectives in agricultural development. I had entitled the original design '*Appropriation to the Origins of Life*' which refers to the human scientific and biological alteration to natural wild species. To accommodate the theme of social rights, diversity, activism and reclaiming the commons, relative to my area of research in agricultural production and food sovereignty, I chose to design a painting which exemplifies significant symbolic biological species

which contribute to our global ecosystem relative to scientific development and innovation. Access, affordability, education and conservation of our right to obtain and grow nutritious, culturally appropriate, and bio-diverse food resources is an important topic and prevalent issue in our modern day world and relevant to all nations. In understanding the ecological importance of how our food systems have developed over time, what the environmental and social impacts of these resources are, and how disassociated people have become from the origins of their food, my intentions of this work of art consist of raising levels of awareness in agricultural literacy, encouraging deeper critical analysis within environmental philosophical perspectives, and empowering ecological stewardship.

Beginning in the centre of the canvas, I aimed to portray an apple as a symbol of knowledge and an example of complete natural sustenance. Surrounding the apple are a series of four corn cobs and four tomatoes which embody the evolution of native heirloom species transforming into a procession of more homogenous and genetically modified species. Surrounding this centre piece of agricultural produce extends two directional evolutionary phases, to the right there are references to ancient cultivation practices, biodiversity, pollinators, and healthy ecological integrity. To the left of centre portrays the simplification of agricultural systems, genetic modification, industrial development, urban development, and existing risks associated with the loss of complexity and sovereignty in these systems.

In preparing for many hands to help in the evolution of the mural, I had also predicted that some participants may feel less secure with their artistic abilities. Within my past formal studies in Visual Art at Vancouver Island University, we conducted many warm up exercises and deliberated upon the diversity of painting techniques we could utilize in the process. I enjoyed facilitating and leading the group on an individual level, as well as a communal level at this stage. I assured there was sufficient guidance in colour mixing, stroking technique, and compositional theory. I also supplied a number of design templates which exemplified geometric patterns and a full referenced history on mandala symbolism for inspiration such as insect animal totems, land animal totems, celtic design, numerology, and colour significance.

Within the second workshop (*Appendix B*) participants were highly creatively charged and inspired to add their own symbolic elements to extend upon the previously expressed mural work. There were various forms of style and visual references added by this group, as we decided collectively to allow for creative freedom as appose to sticking to the original design outline. The theme of dichotomous polarity between agricultural industrialization and wild ecological systems was still a prominent focus.

3.4 - Compilation and Summary of Questionnaire Responses

“Participatory research fundamentally is about who has the right to speak, to analyze and to act” (Hall, 1992, 22). Within participatory research and popular education praxis, there are discussions surrounding the relationships between power, knowledge, and transformative results. The research I conducted gave a voice and artistic liberation to a diverse demographic, which has resulted in a compilation of collective ideas surrounding our topics of nutritional sovereignty, ecological stewardship, agricultural development, as well as personal-communal ideological identities. I have compiled twenty-two completed interview questionnaires into a visual chart to examine the results of the data collected during both workshops (*Original Interview Form - Appendix C*). Throughout the process of participants taking the time to critically complete the questionnaires, their own ideological frameworks have been exercised and their contributions to the greater body of work have diversified the qualitative data set. “The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and in 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory” (Gramsci, et al. 1971, p. 326 as quoted in Hall, 1992, 19).

**“Fostering Community Collaborations, Ecological Identities, and Eco-Spiritualistic Ideologies”
Interview Questionnaire Response Chart**

Questions	Workshop #1 Responses May 9th, 2014	Workshop #2 Responses June 5 th , 2014
<p>1. Which options would you describe as being most important in terms of your food, cuisine, or product purchases? <i>(Rate 1-6, 1 being most important)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organic (No pesticides, Herbicides, GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms)) ○ Local/Home grown (Local Economy/Personal Garden) ○ Fair Trade (Supporting other economies & communities for a fair price) ○ Biodiversely Sustainable (Supporting alternative species and intentionally crafted products) ○ Ecologically Cultivated (Supporting permaculture projects, ecological agriculture, traditional/ethnic cultivation practices) ○ Low Carbon/Ecological Footprint (Limiting the distances shipped or negative ecological impacts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic, Local, Fair Trade, BioDiverse, Low Ecological Footprint, Ecologically Cultivated. • Local, Organic, BioDiverse, Fair Trade, Ecologically Cultivated, Low Ecological Footprint. • Ecologically Cultivated, Organic, Local, BioDiverse, Fair Trade, Low Ecological Footprint. • Organic, Local, Fair Trade, Low Ecological Footprint, BioDiverse, Ecologically Cultivated. • All Equal! • All Equal! • Local, Fair Trade, Organic, BioDiverse, Ecologically Cultivated, Low Ecological Footprint. • Fair Trade, Organic, LowEcological Footprint, BioDiverse, Local, Ecologically Cultivated. • All Equal! • Organic, Local, BioDiverse, Ecologically cultivated, Low Ecological Footprint, Fair Trade. • Ecologically Cultivated, Organic, BioDiverse, Local, Low Ecological Footprint, Fair Trade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local, Low Ecological Footprint, Organic, Fair Trade, Ecologically Cultivated, BioDiverse, • Local all the way. • (Ecologically Cultivated & Low Ecological Footprint), (Local & Fair Trade & BioDiverse), (Organic) • (BioDiverse & Ecologically Cultivated), (Organic & Local), (Fair Trade & Low Ecological Footprint) • Fair Trade, Low Ecological Footprint, Organic, Ecologically Cultivated, Local, BioDiverse. • Local all the way! • Local, Low Ecological Footprint, BioDiverse, Ecologically Cultivated, Organic, Fair Trade. • Local, Organic, Fair Trade... (BioDiverse, Ecologically Cultivated, Low Ecological Footprint). • BioDiverse, Local, Fair Trade, Organic, Low Ecological Footprint, Ecologically Cultivated. • Organic, Local, Fair Trade, BioDiverse, Ecologically Cultivated, Low Ecological Footprint. • BioDiverse, Local, Organic, Low Ecological Footprint, Ecologically Cultivated, Fair Trade. • All Equal!
<p>2. Do you have specific dietary requirements or consistent habits? (i.e. Pescetarian, Vegetarian, Omnivore, Flexitarian, Locavore, Vegan, Freegan?)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegan – Flexible/Open to ethical free range, local & dairy. • None. • Vegetarian (eating out), wild, home cooked meat. • Flexitarian, limited dairy, growing/preserving vegetables, no soy, as much “organic” as possible. • Carnivore (not everyday). • No. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. Grateful for a full tummy. • No. Could be better. (Paleo at one point) • 70% Vegetarian • N/A • Flexible, yet less meat; Part-time Vegetarian. • Reduced meat, vegetables and fruit for juicing, unpasteurized

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempting vegetarianism, difficult to obtain necessary proteins. • No. • Consistent in sustainable & ethical choices, though there are limitations and barriers, cultural emphasis on sharing and engaging with food. • Vegetarian. • Natural Products. 	<p>honey, more tea than coffee, & composting waste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetarian – Vegan – Locavore. • Omnivore – Inconsistent. • Ominvore. • No. • Flexible Vegetarian. • Local hobby farm meat & eggs, Organic.
<p>3. Do you have any background education, field experience, or traditional knowledge of agricultural production, farming, or global agricultural/ecological systems?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent research, Workshops, Community. • No. • Yes, growing food and learning from family. • Practical farming/gardening with family, toured permaculture farms in the Carribean. • Gardening, working and leading workshops for public community gardens. • Yes. • Studied organic farming in the developing world (Brazil); working on farms. • Minimal. • Spent the past 3 years learning and growing as much as possible. • No. • Farmer and a researcher in the process of ecological agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, Grandparents own a farm in Manitoba. As a child I would explore the fields, equipment and machinery. Worked for a meat packaging plant. I am conscientious. • No. • No. • Basic training at OMAF. • Some workshops. • Amazonian forest product gathering, processing Cassaya to make Farine, Cassaya bread, piwari (Cassava Alcoholic drink), Curare, suing traditional grater, Metape (wicker basket for squeezing grated Cassaya for the juice), gathering local roots, seeds, fruits. Gather local herbs and medical plants, & harvesting mushrooms. • Family farming, lived in agricultural town, permaculture in the GTA. • Had chickens on a farm in Ireland. • Ecological practices at Fleming College. • Home gardener. • No. • Grow locally, buy local – learn from friends and family.
<p>4. Do you have any background education, experience, or traditional knowledge of biological implications of nutrition or health studies? (i.e. Farming/Permaculture Experience, Nutritional science, Natural Medicine)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • No • Permaculture • Independent studies of natural health products, consultations. • BA Global Studies, Economics of food, Eco-justice topics • No. • Experience with homeopathic remedies. • Nursing student, taught some. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. I am interested in permaculture. • I am a midwife. Nutritional education with many diverse people/needs. • No. • N/A. • Workshops & cultural events. • Making a fish poison that stuns fish for food gathering,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in farming/permaculture, (corporate control over nutrition and health) • First Year Nursing. • No. 	<p>harvesting palm hearts as a food source, harvesting Lilanas for ropes, basketry. Braining palm leaves for baskets and to thatch roofs. Building techniques of Benabs (huts). Fermenting roots for hallucinogens for traditional ceremonial use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent experience regarding organics, prevention diets, blood type diet. • Acupuncture. • No. • No. • No. • Permaculture workshops, natural medicines.
<p>5. Did you learn anything new from this workshop? What was your personal experience?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyed the dialogue, learning terminology and formal contexts. • Deep Ecology, Ecological Stewardship, Sacred Economics, Agroecology. Enjoyed painting and discussion. • Flexitarianism, enjoyed mural painting. • Appreciate wide range of MES research possibilities. • Enjoyed painting and connecting with other participants. Great visual piece! • Food and reproduction are intimately connected. • Enjoyed the workshop, the organization of it, and defining concepts! • N/A • Learned of the importance of engaging with others, listening to other experiences, and perspectives on issues I have strong opinions about; and importance of creativity! • N/A • Yes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A. • N/A. • Flexitarianism. • N/A. • How to paint, discuss ecology, & events. • N/A • Met new people and learned about colour symbolism, as well as biodiversity! • Intense vibrations, community reforming, alchemical symbols, celtic mandalas, and continual exploration! • Great fun! • N/A. • Learned about local initiatives in Toronto! • Everyone has their own unique style, flavour, and together we are unified with a wild and beautiful theme!

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS & REFLECTION

4.1 - A Personal Assessment of Project Results, Challenges, and Achievements

Timothy W. Luke (1997) in *Ecocritique: Contesting the Politics of Nature, Economy, and Culture*, describes the new world order of localism as diminishing in the shadows of transnationalism, “commodified cyberterrains”, “mass mediascapes”, and homogenized global standardization (Luke, 1997, 180). As environmentally minded individuals and communities still struggle to conserve virtues of a local-scale production and economy, it seems these very communities may be disempowered as capitalistic scales of industrialization are gaining momentum on a global scale. Though Luke (1997) describes the resiliency of building communities around a geographic place, “accepting it on its own ecological terms”, and “working to adapt a sustainable way of life in it” (Luke, 1997, 181). This can be described as a cultural movement which proceeds in reaction to larger national-transnational agendas in an ecologically sustainable way. Similarly, in the data collected from my demographic sample of participants, I have noticed a trend of fairly formally educated and globally conscientious responses, which emphasize localism as opposed to transnationalism.

Many participants were introduced to new terminology throughout these sessions, with concepts such as 'Deep Ecology', 'Agroecology', 'Ecological Stewardship', and 'Sacred Economics' (*See Questionnaire Chart above - Ch. 3.4*). Other interests included permaculture, indigenous cultivation methods, vegetarianism, veganism, local-scale production, an emphasis on organic cultivation, and ecological agricultural initiatives. I was surprised that not as many people were adamant about raising issues of enforcing more ethical fair trade agreements for imports, animal rights regulations, and ethical immigrant worker policy amendments, in which I vocalized in our collective conversation. There seems

to be a lack of critical awareness surrounding socio-cultural ecological speciation rights, as well as transnational trade agreement and labour issues.

“The industrial metabolism of global exchange will never become ecologically sustainable until bioregionally sensible communities and Earth-wise individuals politically insist on producing their own economies and cultures outside of the currently installed abstract machineries of global corporate commerce” (Luke, 1997, 194). As the gears of capitalism cease to become completely ethical in nature, and in certain circumstances even more abstractedly exploitative, Luke's (1997) statement resonates in the ideological frameworks of the general demographic of a developed nation. Though David Orr (2011) would argue that it is a federal and municipal governmental responsibility to instill systems of sustainability, stating “only governments can implement strategies of resilience that enable the society to withstand unexpected disturbances” as resilience is a form of greater self-reliance in a well-informed resilient society (2011, 70). “The transition to sustainability will require learning how to recognize and resolve divergent problems, which is to say a higher level of spiritual awareness”, one which will “allow us to face our own mortality” and lead us to a place of “gratitude and celebration” (Orr, 2011, 71-72).

These realizations are what inspired my concentration on incorporating deep ecological values and eco-spirituality into my curriculum and research. Freya Mathews (1991) with the chapter 'Conservation and Self-Realization: A Deep Ecology Perspective' describes that *Deep Ecology* “permits us to believe that we can enhance nature” as it is a “matter of attitude, a spiritual matter, calling for an outright affirmation of nature, that can be expressed in an infinite number of possible ways”, we simply have to embrace these deeper ideologies and behavioural characteristics as a collective cultural society (Mathews, 1991, as quoted in Drengson & Inoue, 1995, 134). Through the process of assembling popular educational workshops which encapsulate such environmental and philosophical values, it was a successful educational and community building project.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

“The meaning of life, and the joy we experience in living, is enhanced through increased self-realization, that is, through the fulfillment of potentials that each of us has, but that are never the same for any two living beings. Whatever the differences between beings, increased self-realization implies a broadening and deepening of the self.”

~ Arne Naess (cited in Drengson, A. & Devall B., *The Ecology of Wisdom*, 2008, 82).

Through the process of developing this major research project I have gained a deeper understanding of how collaborative arts-based research and experiential education can enhance a collective societal appreciation for the intrinsic worth of agricultural systems and ecological studies. Comparatively, I have noticed the gap between a '*developed*' world ideology and the intensity of '*developing*' world struggles. As our transnational relations within the agricultural industrial complex continue to develop, the increase of shared global knowledge relative to agricultural systems are integral to ensuring food sovereignty, social equity, ecological integrity, and environmental justice.

An environmental philosopher and academic who has influenced my contemporary voyage through literature, Heesoon Bai (2010), states: “Yet we may forget who we are, and have lost our way – not in the forest but in the discursive languages that take us away from our senses and presence. Ecology is an art of homecoming for lost souls...” (Bai et al., 2010). The fragmentation of information, morality, identity hinders our common connections to our natural descendents. In a way this fragmentation has led us to resurrect forms of interconnectivity and old-growth relationships found deep within philosophical and ecological studies. In relation to deep ecological ethics, popular education and community development can increase a mutual sense of inclusion and understanding. These

environmentalist movements may also broaden to encompass and encourage multi-faceted cultural mindscapes to strengthen our sociological support systems.

Holistic and collaboratively designed curriculums, with a focus on philosophy, psychology, sociology, and spirituality, can enhance the success of learning models within a variety of cultural environments. “Holistic education attempts to bring education into alignment with the fundamental realities of nature” (Miller, 2007, 3). Participatory action-research models allow participants to be active collaborators in the formation of the physical design and final qualitative results. Participatory action can also be described as “an empowering process”, which can aid in “nurturing community strengths and problem-solving abilities” (Minkler, 2000, 92). This form of collaborative and communicative community development may help foster forms of socio-political awareness and motivation. These interactions and unions may also aid in enhancing ecological spiritual awareness and relationships. An introduction to environmental philosophy can enhance potential recognition of ecology, biodiversity, and ethical practice within agriculture on a local and global level.

The process of designing a cohesive educational community arts workshop strengthened my skill-set in organizational and community facilitation. I was challenged by the multiplicity of tasks involved in preparation for these participatory arts-based research workshops and I am satisfied with my decision to pursue this as my major project. The results I was able to obtain from the questionnaires, group discussions, and 'people's dictionary' activity were enough to grasp a diverse sample from my participants. In a qualitative sense, the responses from participants also exemplifies a wide range of ideological perspectives. These results ranged in opinion relative to our cultural, ethical, political, and economic experiences. Answers could be influenced by each individual’s relationship to personal-communal nutritional lifestyle choices, contemporary agricultural developmental experience, and their interpretation of the importance of ecological systems.

Our personal-communal decisions are key elements to maximizing accessibility to bio-diverse nutrient-rich resources, enhancing socio-ecological values, as well as minimizing our environmental and

social impacts. The systems we advocate for also greatly influence the physical, political, cultural, and economic health our communities will ultimately support. By spreading awareness and promoting participatory practices, we will enable our communities to become more self-reliant, healthy, ethical, and biologically diverse agriculturally as well as culturally. In supporting community-oriented popular education workshops, we can focus on dissolving structures of inequality, politicization, and classism while promoting sustainable cultural development.

Within a deep ecological perspective, there is an inter-relational analysis necessary to increase our collective conceptual frameworks of interpretative skills to achieve a deeper critical understanding of the intrinsic worth of all that is life, rather than commodifying elements of the earth and ourselves as tools of utility. Earth-based spirituality and holistic value-based environmental education models can aid in teaching the deeper lineage of ecology within context of intra and inter-generational traditional knowledge, as well as sociocultural practice and place-based spatial geographic histories. In terms of developing ecological ethics within the resurgence of traditional practices, Patrick Curry (2011) emphasizes that “local ethics can connect up to become effectively global, but the latter cannot exist without the former” (174). In providing the opportunity for socio-cultural collateral learning, values of respect, reciprocity, tradition, and humility can be integrated and shared within the process (Berkes, F., Colding, J., Folke, C., 2000, 1253). Traditional ecological knowledge can be seen as a mixture of “ecological wisdom, spiritual values and corresponding ritual practices” which re-embodiment traditions, preserve knowledge, and “reconnect in new ways with a very old sensibility” (Curry, 2011, 175).

As we evolve to build collective and collaborative methodologies, we move beyond an anthropocentric lens of individualism and into a deeper ecological understanding of “unity, interrelation, and reciprocity between language and psychology, landscape and mind” (Sheridan, J. & Longboat, R. D., 2006, 366). Discussed in Elaine Riley-Taylor's (2002) *Ecology, Spirituality, and Education: Curriculum for Relational Knowing*, is the influential impacts of standardized commodification in the form of production and consumption within the industries of agribusiness and biotechnology (128). The

persistent exploitation of environments, species, and communities for profit is disintegrating the depth and diversity of all that exists in our world. To assist in communicating the importance of relationality between humans, other species, our ecological systems, the elements, and the earth, “ecospiritual praxis” can aid in creating a shift from an “ego-centered perspective to an eco-centered one” (Riley-Taylor, 2002, 127). I aim to continue building upon these value systems within myself to become more ecologically minded and spiritually centred.

As a popular education facilitator, artist, and community member I will strengthen my methodological practices, theoretical development, and value systems within my work. Traversing beyond the invisible barriers we have created to realize our innate holographic mutuality and allow our senses to become invigorated, re-awakened and thus enrapture our minds, hearts, bodies, and souls. May the ripples of our intentions resonate positively within the energies, actions, and temporal landscapes for generations to come.

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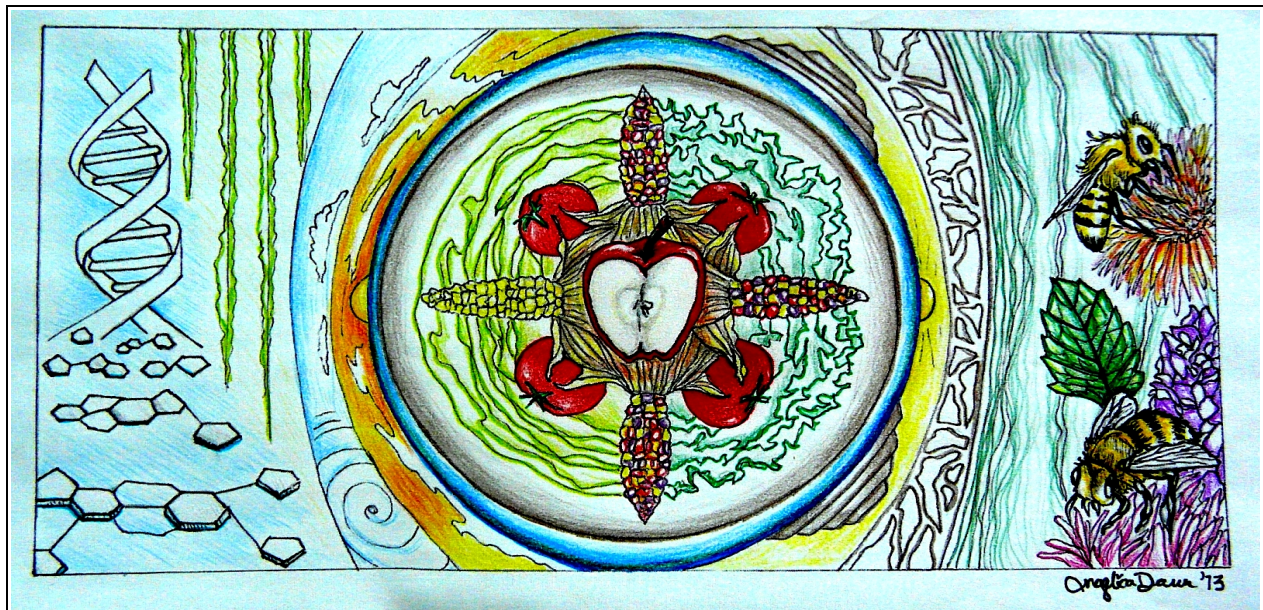
APPENDICES
Appendix A - May 9th, 2014 Workshop

Figure 1.1



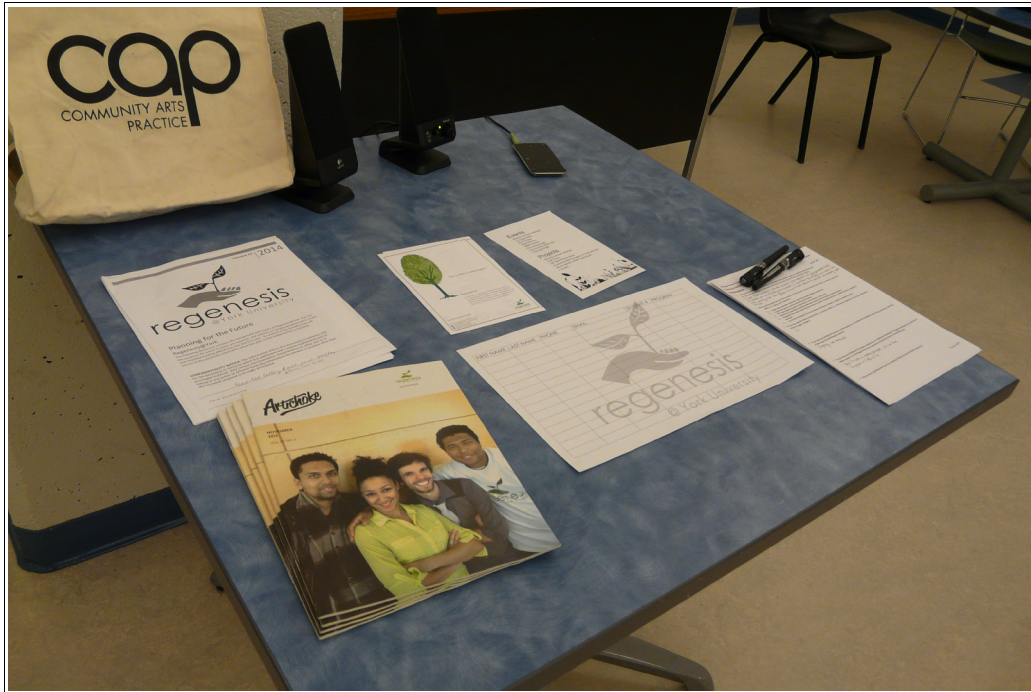
(Facebook event page preview via Regenesis at York University, May 8th 2014)

Figure 1.2



(Original mural design entitled 'Appropriations to the Origins of Life', May 2013)

Figure 1.3



(Regensis e-mail newsletter sign up list & research interview questionnaires, May 9th, 2014)

Figure 1.4



(Painting participant, May 9th, 2014)

Figure 1.5



(Painting participants, May 9th, 2014)

Figure 1.6



(Myself painting, May 9th, 2014)

Figure 1.7



(Myself facilitating with participants, May 9th, 2014)

Figure 1.8



(Participant painting, May 9th 2014)

Figure 1.9



(Mural painting in process, May 9th, 2014)

Appendix B – June 5, 2014 Workshop

Figure 2.1

JUN 05 Sacred heART Jam; Environmental Mural Project!

Public · Hosted by Angelica Dawn and Veronica Campbell

Going ▾ Invite Edit ...

Thursday, June 5 at 7:00pm - 11:00pm
5 days ago

Church of St. Stephen in-the-Fields
103 Bellevue Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2N8 [Show Map](#)

7:00 Doors Open
PAINTING! Music! Dance!
Environmental Mural Project

Veronica, Haroon and 10 other friends are going

GUESTS		
72	85	637
going	maybe	invited

(Facebook event page via community arts facilitator Veronica Campbell, June 5th, 2014)

Figure 2.2



(Participant filling out interview questionnaire, June 5th 2014)

Figure 2.3



(Inspirational geometric designs, paint, and participants, June 5th, 2014)

Figure 2.4



(Participants painting in Church of St.Stephen, June 5th, 2014)

Figure 2.5



(Participants and myself painting in Church of St. Stephen, June 5th, 2014)

Appendix C – Interview Questionnaire

Figure 3.1

Angelica Rutherford-Nielsen

“Fostering Community Collaborations, Ecological Identities, and Eco-Spiritualistic Ideologies.”

Interview Questions - MES Major Research Project

May 9th 2014

1. How would you describe your personal contribution to the greater systems of agricultural development? (i.e. Do your own research, Grow your own food, Buy Local, Buy Fair Trade, Volunteer, Teach?)

2. Which options would you describe as being most important in terms of your food, cuisine, or product purchases? (*Rate 1-6, 1 being most important*)
 - Organic (No pesticides, Herbicides, GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms))
 - Local/Home grown (Local Economy/Personal Garden)
 - Fair Trade (Supporting other economies & communities for a fair price)
 - Biodiversely Sustainable (Supporting alternative species and intentionally crafted products)
 - Ecologically Cultivated (Supporting permaculture projects, ecological agriculture, traditional/ethnic cultivation practices)
 - *Low Carbon/Ecological Footprint (Limiting the distances shipped or negative ecological impacts)*

3. Do you have specific dietary requirements or consistent habits? (i.e. Pescetarian, Vegetarian, Omnivore, Flexitarian, Locavore, Vegan, Freegan?)

4. Do you have any background education, field experience, or traditional knowledge of agricultural production, farming, or global agricultural/ecological systems?

5. Do you have any background education, experience, or traditional knowledge of biological implications of nutrition or health studies? (i.e. Farming/Permaculture Experience, Nutritional science, Natural Medicine)

6. Did you learn anything new from this workshop? What was your personal experience?

Appendix D: Design Loom

Figure 4.1

Design loom: MES Major Research Project - “Fostering Community Collaborations, Ecological Identities, and Eco-Spiritualistic Ideologies.”	Angelica Rutherford-Nielsen
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Dream list of goals/outcomes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate a successful participatory arts-based action research project including accurately and adequately presenting the project intentions, content, and relevancy to the MES program, agroecological systems, community development, and ecological spiritualistic ideologies. • To obtain evaluation in the form of interviews and/or survey questionnaires. • To produce a collaborative and symbolic mural which exemplifies the interpretations of participants within the subjects of agricultural and ecological studies? • To document the workshop for a media representation (i.e. Photographs, Film, Audio). • To analyze results and formulate a final output report for my MES degree~!

Brainstorm list of possible activities:

Principles activities	Warm-ups/Energizers	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent forms • Introductory Presentation & Ice Breaker • Group Discussions/Question period • “People’s Dictionary” • Group Presentations/Discussions • Artistic Renditions/Visual/Symbolic Development • Mural Drafting/Painting • Individual Interviews/Survey Questionnaire 	<p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>What does your ideal system of world trade, labour practices, agricultural systems, consumer products, and economic ecology look like?</p> <p>How could we achieve these results?</p> <p>With our current systems how might our future pan out?</p> <p>(Transnational trade/ corporate power/NGOS vs. localization/grass roots/small businesses; medium sized businesses)</p>	<p>Introduction to Project/Workshop outline, Events, Facilitator & Participants.</p> <p>Why I chose these topics: I am interested in ecotoxicological issues – individually, locally, nationally, internationally, hydrologically, atmospherically.</p> <p>Transnational trade & labour issues. Urban vs. Rural.</p> <p>GMO, industrial agricultural domination/development history (slave trade/labour).</p> <p>Loss of sovereignty in our personal-communal health – relative to 'developing' and 'developed countries'.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Questionnaire • Final Output Report • Photographs & Film

Appendix D: Design Loom

Figure 4.1

Design loom: MES Major Research Project - “Fostering Community Collaborations, Ecological Identities, and Eco-Spiritualistic Ideologies.”	Angelica Rutherford-Nielsen
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TIME	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	WHO
11:00 – 11:15 am	Introduction to the “Major Research Project”, objectives, consent, expectations.	Hand out/read consent forms, project statement and interview sign-up sheet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I intend on presenting and facilitating an introductory icebreaker, supply consent forms, an interview sign-up sheet, and allow participants to elaborate on themselves and their reasons for participating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent forms MRP Introductory statement Camera Computer 	Participant Selective Group
11:15 – 11:30 am	To elaborate on the deeper content of my research (Environmental Philosophy, Agroecological Systems) & options for participation.	Conduct a presentation, supply relevant materials and facilitate a group discussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present on the main topics (Environmental Philosophy, Popular Education, Arts-based Participatory Action Research, Agroecological Systems) Elaborate on participation process (Consent, Feedback, Artwork, Interviews, Final Output, Documentation) Facilitate a question period and group discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant materials (books, internet-based media, imagery, maps) 	
11:30-12:10 am	To actualize our group discussion into a visual/literal expression.	People’s Dictionary Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand out materials for participants to contribute to a “People’s Dictionary” with the terms: “Culture”, “Health”, “Just Sustainability”, “Globalization”, “Agroecology”, “Deep Ecology”, “Sacred Economics”, & “Ecological Stewardship”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sticky Notes Writing Utensils (Markers) 	
12:10 – 1:30 am	Elaborate, Evaluate, and Examine our definitions	Allow participants to choose a particular definition to present/discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically interpret, analyze and present our definitions, thoughts, and epiphanies. Facilitate group presentations for each definition. Facilitate questions, additions, and amendments. Relate to literary/academic/dictionary definitions of our discussed terms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sticky Notes Writing Utensils (Markers) 	
1:30 – 1:45 am	BREAK	***	****Allow participants to have a break, indulge in snacks & beverages, discuss their ideas****		
1:45 – 2:20 am	Express our concepts visually in a universal/symbolic format	Allow participants to draft visual representations for the mural design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply examples and backbone mural outline. Inspire participants to create visual/symbolic translations of our conversations and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper Art/Writing Utensils Visual Examples 	
2:20 am – 3:30 pm	Plan and translate our images into the collaborative mural design	Facilitate participant contribution/artistic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow participants to finalize images and symbols onto the canvas mural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art supplies (Markers, Paint) Canvas Mural Cleaning supplies 	
3:30 – 4:45 pm	Facilitate the completion of the Mural	Distribute supplies, provide help and direction/discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute pre-mixed colours, brushes, and cleaning supplies. Allow participants to paint their illustrative designs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paint, Brushes, Cleaning supplies. 	
4:45 – 5:00 pm	Clean Up, Organize Follow up Interviews/Surveys	Facilitate Group Clean up and Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean-up/Schedule future times/dates for project completion and follow up procedure (i.e. internet survey, hand out survey, interview, evaluation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning supplies Survey Questionnaires Sign-up Sheet/Contact Information 	

*** Each participant will have the opportunity to select their amount of time which they contribute to the project and workshop. They can de-select from activities and they can also remain anonymous in any part of the process. There will be an opportunity to be interviewed and recorded, or anonymously contribute to an online survey, e-mail survey, or hand-out survey/questionnaire which can be completed ASAP or at a later date. ***