USING ARTS-BASED COMMUNICATION TOOLS TO IMPROVE
FOOD PANTRY MODELS:ENGAGING FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS
TO CREATE CHANGE
THROUGH CREATIVE WORKSHOPS AND JOURNALS

by
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(Under the Direction of Abigail Borron)

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the benefits of arts-based research methodologies as a needs assessment tool in the food assistance field, by engaging food pantry clientele to co-create solutions for more effective food pantry models. This qualitative study used two arts-based approaches to communicate and engage with food pantry clientele; a researcher-led process, in which the researcher used collected data to create public art installations as a communication tool to showcase clients' experiences in food insecurity, and a participant-led process, in which clients created art pieces about their experiences through a series of creative workshops. Results showed the integration of art in the research process provided researchers and participants in a more engaging process, which challenged the artists to critically examine their experiences in new ways. As participants created art pieces, they took ownership over their stories, encouraging them to create actionable solutions in their own lives.

INDEX WORDS: arts-based research, creative toolkits, food insecurity, communication

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis document contains one introduction chapter, two manuscript chapters, and a summary conclusion chapter, all of which detail two studies that used of arts-based research methodologies in the food assistance field. These projects took place in the metro-Atlanta area food pantries in 2017 and 2018, with the intent of using art as an interactive, needs assessment tool with food pantry clients to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the current food pantry model. This qualitative study was conducted through the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences in partnership with the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Data collection consisted of focus groups, one-on-one interviews, written journals, visual artwork, and a questionnaire. These studies were framed through grounded theory and critical social theory, as both allowed necessary modifications to inquiry-based questions and techniques following interactions with clients while maintaining a critical lens on the experiences of those systematically oppressed in the current food assistance structure. Each manuscript represents one part of this study, using different methodologies and approaches that share the same intent, which is the co-creation of solutions for an improved food pantry model, based on client experiences.

Introduction

In qualitative research, a key component of rich data collection is open communication between researchers and participants. Communication can be hindered, however, when working

with vulnerable or at-risk populations. These communicative barriers may be due to social and environmental factors participants face, such as socioeconomic status, location, immigration status, ethnicity, lack of agency, or fear of stigma (Anna Sydor, & BMid, 2013; Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). In particular, individuals who may have had negative experiences surrounding community research in the past, or negative experiences with a community organization may be wary of entrusting their personal experiences and information again (Benoit, Jansson, Millar ,& Phillips, 2005; Shaghaghi, Bhopal, & Sheikh, 2011). In addition to these obstacles, vulnerable and low income populations also face difficulties with the time investment associated with research such as interview times, coordinating a group schedule, or consistent transportation (Withall, Jago, & Fox, 2011). If communication processes are compromised, then meaningful engagement strategies are also compromised. This inhibits an authentic understanding of these audiences, potentially pushing them further to the margins of community structures and resources (Bonevski, et al., 2014).

When traditional qualitative data collection methods compromise authenticity, nonverbal forms of communication frequently used in community-based participatory research have shown to be as, or more effective, than verbal communication in engaging individuals to express themselves and their lived experiences (Fraser, & al Sayah, 2011; Leavy, 2015), as well as a method for knowledge dissemination and production (Lapum, et al., 2014 & 2016). In addition to this, studies in the interdisciplinary health field have identified that allowing participants to choose from a creative set of communication methods provided participants with a sense of autonomy, shifting the power structure in a way that allowed them to take ownership of how and what they share (Lapum, et al., 2016).

Community–based participatory research has long been used in the field of communication as a respected research methodology for gaining insight into participants' lived experiences, as well as a more holistic approach to gathering qualitative data. Within this methodology, the experiential form of research known as arts-based research (ABR) has emerged. ABR uses visual forms of inquiry to communicate with participants and allows them to express themselves in ways that transcend verbal interaction. Studies have shown the process of arts-based research methodologies—an integration of verbal interviews and participant-led artwork—creates a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship between the researcher and participant (Leichner & Weiler, 2015; Mcintyre, 2003; Lapum et al., 2016).

Statement of the Problem

Food insecurity, which USDA defines as "a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food," affects 42.2 million people or approximately 1 in 8 households in America (USDA, ERS, 2017, "Definitions of Food Security," para. 35). Individuals experiencing food insecurity also face a multitude of social and economic factors that lead and contribute to a poor quality of life, which makes gaining a level of food security and overall stability extremely difficult (Lessa & Rocha, 2012). Due to this, many households turn to government- and community-funded food assistance programs, such as food pantries, to alleviate the financial strain of buying food. While countless studies have been implemented to measure food insecurity in the United States (USDA, ERS, 2017), the distribution rate of food assistance programs, and food assistance facilities (Feeding America, 2016), food assistance models have shown little improvement or long-term impacts on hunger (Poppendieck, 1999; Winne, 2008) despite a consistent incline of food bank and pantry output (Bhattarai, Duffy, & Raymond, 2005). Academic scholars in geography (Poppendieck, 1994),

agriculture (Tarasuk, Eakin, 2005; Allen,1999) and public health (Teron, Tarasuk, 1999) have all questioned the lack of change within the ineffective and short-sighted nature of "emergency" food assistance programs, which provide finite amounts of food, yet are not effective in creating long-term solutions in food security for users (Bazerghi, McKay, & Dunn, 2016). These critiques shed light on an essential, but less-studied facet of food security and food assistance literature: *How* do we figure out what sustainable changes need to be made in food assistance that results in long-term self-sufficiency? Ultimately, the answer to this question resides in effective engagement methods that foster meaningful dialogue and collaboration among those who have to negotiate the food assistance programs and resources regularly. By gathering rich data from those who participate in food assistance programs, we may better understand what obstacles need to be removed to allow efficacy.

While the goal of research is to collect rich and transformative data, the reality is that working with vulnerable populations, such as those who deal with varying degrees of food insecurity, can present challenges for qualitative researchers, who may encounter communicative barriers that inhibit open and healthy discourse between themselves and participants (Harris & Roberts, 2003; Kitzinger, 1995). Participants may be reluctant to communicate through traditional methods, such as interviews or surveys due to feelings of heightened vulnerability or lack of positionality that stem from economic status (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009), or they fear the social ramifications of voicing their opinions (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015), resulting in inconclusive or inaccurate data results. A quick look into the literature of arts-based research (ABR) shows a strong connection between the artistic process of alternative forms of expression, and creating an improved sense of ownership and autonomy for its participants (Leavy, 2015). Studies have shown self-expression is a key component of an

individual's sense of agency (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick,1995), affecting the demonstration of self-sufficiency and autonomy in the daily lives of individuals and among family members (Sidney-Ando, 2014; Gecas, 2003). The intent of ABR is to use alternative methods of communication among individuals who are "disadvantaged economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally" (Kay, 2000, p. 423), in order to create a deeper emotional connection and, therefore, a deeper understanding of their needs.

ABR also acutely takes into account the role of the researcher as it situates the analysis of held meanings on behalf of the participants directly through the voices of the participants (Eisner, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008). Traditionally, there is an underlying social dynamic within the researcher-participant interaction that assumes unbalanced power, where the researcher's positionality is comprised of physical position, rhetorical position, and power (Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2015). This often leads to varying degrees of social desirability bias on behalf of the participant, who may tend to gravitate toward answers perceived as positive or acceptable rather than negative or bad; and social desirability bias, or the desire to respond in a perceived favorable manner, has the tendency to increase when anonymity cannot be guaranteed during the interview (Althubaiti, 2016).

In the case of this research, ABR creates a discursive space among food pantry clients, the food assistance programs designed to serve them, and the researcher—a space often compromised due to stigmatization and lack of resources. This research explored the effectiveness and benefits of two forms of arts-based research approaches: (1) the researcher-led process and (2) the co-constructed, participant-led approach. Though both of these processes are focused and inspired by the experiences of food pantry clients, a researcher-led approach translates the experiences and stories of participants into visual stories through the creation of art

installations for a public exhibit, while a co-constructed, participant-led approach uses a series of art pieces created by participants in a workshop series in a public art exhibit, which is facilitated by the researcher.

Purpose and Research Questions

Individuals experiencing food insecurity are part of a highly vulnerable "invisible" population, meaning they are often ignored, overlooked, and stigmatized due to their socioeconomic status (McIntyre, Tougas, Rondeau, & Mah, 2016). When participating in food assistance programs such as food pantries, this "invisibility" manifests itself in the inability or fear of food assistance clients to express their desires and needs effectively to food pantry staff and volunteers in a way that will be heard and validated (Dutta, Jones, Borron, Anaele, Gao, & Kandukuri, 2013). This fear may stem from a negative experience of using a food pantry in the past, the social stigma of using a food pantry, or self-perceived lack of positionality in food assistance environments. This research aimed to demonstrate how the current food pantry model can be improved by creating a necessary and valuable dialogical space between food pantry clients and the staff and volunteers serving them regularly. Such a dialogical space has the potential to transform the current food assistance model in a way that situates the clientele, the food bank, and affiliated food pantry agencies as equal partners in a discussion that collectively re-envisions the food pantry model. By opening a space that encourages a more balanced relationship and power structure between these two parties, food pantry staff and food pantry clientele can create meaningful solutions together, and build relationships which encourage a solution building process for an improved, and more effective food pantry model.

This study is based upon the argument that arts-based, co-creative, visual communication strategies are a necessary and mutually beneficial part of engaging at-risk populations (Lapum,

2005; Fancourt & Joss, 2015) such as food pantry clients, whose knowledge and experiences can provide invaluable data to the process of conceptualizing and developing a new or improved food assistance model. The use of arts-based research methods functions as a communicative tool for creating alternative channels of discursive spaces with and around the lived experiences of low-income working families to better understand areas of food insecurity.

Throughout this research project, it is imperative to consider the role of the researcher in arts-based researcher, specifically as it relates to resulting art pieces that function as communicative tools within the new dialogical space. Therefore, this study is divided into two parts. Part one integrates arts-based methodologies, but situates the researcher as the developer of resulting art exhibits based on resulting data from in-depth interviews, focus groups, and a photovoice project. Whereas, part two--which also integrates arts-based methodologies, but situates the food pantry clientele and the researcher as co-creators in the resulting art exhibits. Collectively, this overall study investigates the effectiveness of arts-based research methodologies as a communicative tool to engage food pantry clients in critical and socially aware conversations around food assistance programs.

In fulfilling its purpose, this study was designed in two parts in order to answer the following research questions. Both parts incorporate an overarching research question, followed by two distinct researcher questions:

1. How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity?

Part 1 (researcher only):

2. What does arts-based research look like from a researcher-led approach?
3. How does researcher-led research affect public viewing and solution building?

Part 2 (client + researcher):

4. What does arts-based research look like from a co-constructed approach?
5. How does a co-constructed approach to research affect public viewing and solution building?

Context of Study

Almost 2 million, or 1 in 8 people in Georgia experience food insecurity and hunger-related problems, with an estimated 755,440 of those living in the metro Atlanta and north Georgia area alone (Atlanta Community Food Bank, 2014). The statistics for children are even more grim, with 1 in every 6 children in Georgia struggling with hunger and access to food (FeedingAmerica.org, 2015). The Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) plays a significant role in combating food insecurity in Georgia, with a reach that serves 29 counties in the greater Atlanta and north Georgia area through food distribution partnerships with over 600 food and community support agencies. Food distribution and nutrition support is a priority in the mission of ACFB; the organization has distributed 69.3 million pounds of food in 2015-2016, with 14 million pounds of that food being fresh produce (Atlanta Community Food Bank, 2014). Beyond providing food, ACFB also recognizes the need to support community members holistically, through community development programs such as providing school supplies for low-income families, education opportunities, benefits outreach programs, and community garden support. Despite this diverse set of support resources, ACFB realized that food insecure families in Georgia still consistently struggle to experience stability in their lives from month to month, due to a wide range of financial, time related, or health factors that are constantly in motion.

From this realization came the desire to better understand and address these issues of instability, in order to provide preventative support. The *Stabilizing Lives* research initiative, the

larger overarching study to this work, was designed to better understand the lived experiences of those who are economically disadvantaged and experience symptoms of poverty through a participatory process with staff and clients of five metro Atlanta food pantries to identify key factors that intersect with food insecurity to produce instability. Starting in fall of 2016, the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) initiated the three-year program *Stabilizing Lives* that focused on designing more holistic and concentrated services to partner agency clients to achieve food, housing, and financial security. UGA's role in this process has been designed in two phases:

- *Phase 1:* To help facilitate a participatory process with staff, volunteers, and clients at five participating agencies to identify factors that promote food insecurity; and
- *Phase 2:* To work in consultation with food pantry clientele to place the decision-making process and methods of social change into the hands of the clientele, emphasizing the capacity of participants to identify problems, emphasize and legitimize cultural meanings, and conceptualize and implement developed solutions.

Phase one of this study consisted of focus groups, interviews, and a photo voice project by clients that emphasized discussion topics about stability barriers, such as limited food pantry hours/usage, insufficient access to fresh or culturally appropriate food, transportation, and financial tradeoffs. From these discussions, clients also addressed new stability barrier topics, such as need for lifestyle and household items, female hygiene products, access to food for infants and elderly, and food allergies. These topics informed and guided the researcher in the creation of three public art installations, which were displayed at an interagency summit that presented the research findings. Each art installation was based on a prominent and recurring topic that was discussed at each location. Although the art pieces initially intended to be created

with clients, due to time constraints, clients were not able to directly take part in the creation process. Client photographs from the photovoice project were featured in two pieces, and client were asked to provide feedback on the pieces through a questionnaire given at the event. Other attendees were also asked to provide feedback; many responses voiced the desire for more inclusion of clients work and stories. This process and subsequent results are detailed in Chapter 3. In addition, this feedback acted as the conceptual springboard for phase 2 of this project, which will be addressed in detail in Chapter 4.

Significance of Study

This study was aimed to better understand the benefits of co-creation and art as a tool for verbal and nonverbal dialogue, through three arts-based methodologies: a) co-creation workshops b) creative toolkits/creative journals c) a client-led art exhibit. In these sessions, art served multiple functions:

1. Clients were given the chance to engage in a critical discourse of the food system, through dialogue with one another and researchers, as well as visual discourse through the making of art created each session.
2. The creative process as a therapeutic process, in which art was used as a tool of therapy for those feeling shame, fear, traumatic associations with negative experiences due to food access.
3. An informal environment, in which clients and researchers were able to discuss aspects of food security in a less intimidating research setting, which eased social tension for both parties, and resulted in a more emotionally intimate conversation.
4. Art as a platform to share intimate personal experiences with others, without fear associated with verbal public speaking.

It is important to note the Atlanta Community Food Bank approached the University of Georgia to design a collaborative research project and approach that would focus on designing more holistic and concentrated services to partner agencies clients to achieve food, housing, and financial security. Therefore, in the context of an arts-based research project, which is a subset of *Stabilizing Lives*, this project created a process for improving facilitated dialogue between food pantry clients and food pantry staff in order to create more efficient and effective food pantry models that is beneficial to both parties. This was done through the implementation of a pre-made, replicable communication toolkit; a printed handout that contained activities and discussion prompts that food pantry staff and volunteers used to implement open discussion and dialogue surrounding current food pantry models.

With the initiative of such a collaborative project on behalf of the food bank, this also directly involved the food pantry clients. Therefore, using an arts-based research design, agency clients should (1) gain a more intimate and meaningful dialogical space to share their lived experiences and ideas, (2) gain a platform for and an ownership of issues that ultimately directs and co-creates change with food assistance in their communities, and (3) be active participants in the use and refining of a replicable communication toolkit for food bank and food pantry staff and volunteers, which can be used as a communication tool for disadvantaged and difficult-to-reach populations.

The Role of the Researcher

Although I have an art background (BFA), I was unfamiliar with the concept of arts-based research until I began taking part in participatory research through the *Stabilizing Lives* initiative with the Atlanta Community Food Bank. My passion for food insecurity began after realizing that my hometown, Atlanta, had an extremely high rate of food insecurity and food deserts.

Through my research opportunities, I was fortunate to create an intersection of art and food insecurity in my thesis research. Soon after conducting focus groups and introducing clients to the concept of photovoice (the most commonly used form of arts-based research), I began considering the idea of integrating other forms of creativity as an alternative form of expression for the clients who many times seemed shy or uncomfortable with speaking about their experiences. Inspired by art therapy, which uses varying art mediums as modes of expression for experiences surrounding trauma, I began to research the use of art in the qualitative research field with at-risk populations. I soon discovered several fields used arts-based methodology; namely the fields of public health, psychology, and sociology. However, there was tremendous opportunity to contribute to the literature around food insecurity and communication research. This, in turn, inspired me to use my thesis as an interdisciplinary approach to addressing food insecurity and communication strategies with at-risk individuals.

As I have continually considered my role in this two-part research, I fully believe that the role of the researcher laces an emphasis on the need to critically examine the potential influence (good or bad) and the capacity by which a researcher can carry out this type of work. I believe strongly that, if approached with the idea of replicability in mind, such an approach can be applied to practitioners in the field of community engagement and development -- unbounded by the auspices of food insecurity, but inclusive of other outreach initiatives, such as the Cooperative Extension System.

Subjectivity Statement

My research interests lie in the intersection of two fields: arts-based research and food insecure populations. In particular, I am interested in using creativity and artistic practices as a means to open dialogue and create opportunities for nonverbal communication with populations

who are stigmatized and socially isolated by their experiences surrounding food insecurity. By participating in projects that allow a safe space for individuals to have control in how they share their experiences (verbal vs. nonverbal, photograph vs. drawing, use of color, etc.), they are able to gain a sense of autonomy, as well as a platform to voice their experiences and opinions.

My own experiences as an artist using art as a tool of self-expression have given me an inherent bias that creativity can be positive and powerful outlet for those facing food security to express themselves as well. I acknowledge that my own experiences socially and culturally, greatly differ from the experiences of the individuals I conduct research with, and that this may affect how they experience creativity and artistic practices as a whole.

As an artist, I have an inherent bias that creativity can be used as a positive tool for self-empowerment and as a means to connect with others. My own experiences in using art as a tool of self-expression for myself, as well young children in an informal classroom setting, have led me to believe that it can also be a powerful outlet for those facing food security to express themselves as well. I acknowledge that my own experiences socially and culturally, as well as the children I have taught, greatly differ from the experiences of the individuals I am conducting research with, and this may affect how they experience creativity and artistic practices as a whole. In addition to this, my experience as a graduate student in the college of agriculture, with experience in the farming industry, directly impacts my view of food, as well as my perceptions surrounding eating behavior and diet. Although I have experience with interacting with food bank and food pantry clients who face food insecurity, I should not let any socially held stigmas surrounding this population affect my observation of these individuals at any time throughout the research process.

I also acknowledge my experiences surrounding food may inhibit me from fully understanding the emotions, feelings and experiences individuals facing food insecurity hold, as I have never faced the feeling of food insecurity or had the necessity of using a food bank or pantry. I should be aware throughout this process that individuals throughout my research may have experienced significant social stigma and isolation, and that my research practices and the way that I interact with them should be sensitive to the lack of power they may feel and the positionality I hold as a researcher and in society. Although I have experience with interacting with food bank and food pantry clients who face food insecurity, I should not let any socially held stigmas surrounding this population affect my observation of these individuals at any time throughout the research process.

In addition to this, my experience as a graduate student in the college of agriculture, with experience in the farming industry, directly impacts my view of food, as well as my perceptions surrounding eating behavior and diet. Inherently, this view has led me to feel very strongly about the food experiences held by the food insecurity. This may affect my ability to remain objective, as I feel a great sympathy towards this topic. I must be careful when observing and interacting to simply listen to their experiences and not to alter those with my own thoughts and feelings.

Definitions

There are a number of terms that are often used when examining complex social issues, such as food insecurity in this area of research. Therefore, for the purposes of creating context and to ensure they are being operationalized consistently throughout the duration of this study and associated discussion, it is essential to provide an empirically supported definition of key terms:

- Arts-Based Research: A qualitative research methodology that uses visual and/or creative arts-based mediums such as photography, painting/illustration, poetry, music or dance as the basis of inquiry and reflection (Leavy, 2015).
- Co-creation: The process of creating an event, object, or idea with more than one party/stakeholder who share authority of power in decision making, planning and implementation. Used primarily in qualitative work (Greenhalgh, Jackson, Shaw, & Janamian, 2016).
- Community-based participatory research: A qualitative research methodology that gives participants an active role in research by using their knowledge as community members for the basis and direction of inquiry and progress in the project (Viswanathan, et al., 2004; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2006)
- Dialogical Space: a space in which one or more possibilities, voices, and viewpoints are shared around a singular issue (Habermas, 1984; Chappell & Craft, 2011; Hopkins & Todd, 2015)
- Discursive Space: A space in which individuals discuss topics and issues that are perceived to affect them and their perceived group (McCarthy,1978; Flores,1996 ; Kellner, 2013)
- Food insecurity: A state of being without access to the adequate amount of nutritionally appropriate food (USDA, 2017)
- Food pantry client: an individual who uses or used food pantry services for food or support

- Positionality: The acknowledgement of the position or viewpoint that an individual experiences the world, based on overlapping social factors such as gender, class, race, and sexuality (Bourke, 2014)
- At-risk populations: Populations who experience social risk and/or social isolation due to economic status, gender, race, literacy, or trauma (Chin, 2005)
- Vulnerable populations: Populations that are more susceptible to experiencing negative consequences of health problems, natural disasters, and financial crises due to their social & economic position, gender, and race and therefore are less likely to recover or cope with these issues (Chang, et al., 2004)
- Hard-to-reach populations: Groups that are difficult to reach or access due to their geographic and/or social location (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann 2015).

Limitations

The following limitations associated with this study are as follows:

1. Limited number of participants: Due to time limitations and participant fallout, while Article 1 project was conducted with 25 participants, Article 2 was conducted with only 2 participants. Although this provided more time to focus on gathering rich data for those participants, the ideas, thoughts, interests and experiences of these two individuals do not reflect the ideas, thoughts, interests and experiences of all food pantry clients.
2. Limited time: Due to time constraints in both project one and two, occured in an 8-10 week time period; this may have created obstacles in building trust, repertoire and critical thinking between researchers and participants.

3. Researcher bias: My experience in both art and food production may have led me to have an inherent bias toward the use of arts-based research methodologies, as well as its use in a field related to food.
4. Social acceptability bias: As the participants are considered a vulnerable population, and therefore experience lack of agency due to their economic status, they may have responded in ways they thought was pleasing to the researcher. Although food pantry staff were not present for interviews in project 2, as clients of the food pantries who were working with the researcher on this project, participants may have been worried to speak about the food pantries in a manner that could be perceived as critical or negative.

Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized in the following way: Chapter 2 will be a literature review of the theoretical frameworks, core arts-based methodologies, and concepts of co-creation from a researcher-and participants-led process that informed my process for this study. Chapter 3 will be addressing the first half of this project, which used data from client individual interviews, focus groups and a photovoice project as the basis for a researcher-led public art installation that represented a thematic set of experiences of food pantry clients. Chapter 4 will address the second study, which focused on the use of participant-led art installations, through a methodology of in person creative workshops and creative journals created by food pantry clients. Finally, Chapter 5 will address conclusions to both projects, along with recommendations for future research and practice.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Community-based participatory research has long been used in the field of communication as a respected research methodology for gaining insight into participants' living experiences, as well as a more holistic approach to gathering qualitative data (Garney, et al., 2015; Izumi, et al., 2010). Within this methodology, the experiential form of research known as arts-based research (ABR) has emerged, which uses visual forms of inquiry to communicate with participants on a level that transcends verbal interaction. Studies have shown the creative *process* of visual communication—an integration of verbal interviews and participant-led artwork—creates a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship between the researcher and participant (Mcintyre, 2003, p. 64). While arts-based research has not commonly been a commonly used methodology in the communication field, the intent of this project is to examine the potential impact ABR can have within the scope of a project focused on meaningful dialogical and discursive spaces as a means to gain a more thorough understanding of communities — particularly food insecure communities. This article will also demonstrate the relevance of these tools in the agricultural and geographical sphere, specifically examining the perceptions of clients and volunteers who use food banks as a source for food.

Communicative Barriers

It is not uncommon for researchers to encounter communicative barriers that inhibit open and healthy discourse between themselves and participants (Harris, Roberts, K. 2003; Kitzinger,

1995), who may experience feelings of heightened vulnerability or lack of positionality (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach,2009), or fear the social ramifications of voicing their opinions (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak,& Crann, 2015). One methodology that addresses these communicative barriers is a form of participatory research identified as arts-based research (ABR), which uses imagery, motion, sounds, and nonverbal expression as the basis of inquiry. Lafreniere and Cox (2012) further define this process as "an arrangement of symbols, such as words, forms or gestures, designed to convey experience, ideas or emotions… in a meaningful, vivid and imaginative way [using] literary, visual or performing techniques with the aim of provoking some effect in a reader or audience"(p. 322). This unique methodology offers a near infinite and customizable combination of ways to be administered in any context. Like community-based participatory research (Viswanathan M, Ammerman ,et al., 2004.). ABR has a malleable quality that allows it to fit multiple disciplines, cultures, and socioeconomic environments, naturally establishing space for co-creating solutions between researchers and participants. Within its epistemological foundation of knowing and inquiring through creativity and participation (McNiff, 1998), held meanings can be arranged and structured through various artistic media to generate authentic interaction between participants as creators, and researchers as viewers (Lapum, et al., 2015.).

As a result, ABR has gained recognition in healthcare (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2008), sociology (Cole & Knowles, 2008), social work (Huss, Kaufman, & Sibony, 2013), and art education fields (Darts, 2006) for its proficiency in engaging individuals who suffer from trauma to communicate more freely (Yohani, 2008; Latta, Thompson, 2011). While verbal or written communication has the potential to highlight social stressors associated with these perceived social hierarchies and positionality between at-risk populations and

community partners, the creative use of nonverbal communication has shown to be a promising means for "cultivating understanding" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26) and "democratiz[ing] meaning-making and decentralizing academic researchers as the 'experts'" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26) so that participants and researchers participate in a more balanced relationship.

Communicative barriers and "hard-to-reach" populations

This article details methodologies aimed specifically at "hard-to-reach" (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015, p.1) populations through the use of case studies. Ellary- Gray (2015) described the complexity associated with populations that are difficult to communicate with due to isolation related to 1) geographic location, 2) disenfranchised or at risk due to lack of socioeconomic status or lack of agency, and 3) inability to record and or speak out about traumatic experiences. The researcher attributed this lack of communication with participants into two categories: *individual barriers* and *sampling issues*. As it relates to individual barriers, four barriers are recognized and described:

1) Labeling the population -- A disconnect between the researcher's name for a particular population may not align with participants description of themselves, despite matching the characteristics the researcher desires. One example of this is labeling participants as assault or abuse victims; participants may refuse to acknowledge their experiences as abuse or assault due to shame or fear of admitting it (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015).
2) Mistrust of the research process -- details a common barrier in the research world; participants may be hesitant to take part in research due to negative experiences they, or someone they know have experienced in the past. In the case of ethnic minorities,

individuals may also believe that research findings would alter their community in a negative manner, causing them to be less likely to partake.

3) Participation risks -- Participants may also face exceptional risks, such as risking "loss of status, privacy, or reputation" (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015, p.3) within their community by taking part in a research process that identifies them in a particular label or social grouping, such as sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or ethnicity . Some participants also risk psychological distress from addressing research topics that call for "recalling and retelling painful, frightening, or humiliating stories" (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015, p.3; World Health Organization, 2001).
4) Participant resource constraints -- details the struggles participants may face in physically appearing at research events due to transportation problems, child care, or unexpected emergencies that may be placed at a higher priority than participating in a research project.

Solutions for these barriers include a more inclusive labeling system, a prescreening survey of a general population, avoiding stigmatizing or identifying language, conducting research in a familiar environment for communities and building a rapport with participants before recruiting (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). Researchers also suggested integrating "creative ways" (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015, p.4) of garnering trust, such as using informal language in recruitment, avoiding typing or writing while conducting interviews, and creating a secure and anonymized storage system for all data to protect identities.

The second category, sampling issues, were found to have two barrier categories: Snowball and respondent-driven sampling, and Derived Rapport. Researchers suggested to use snowball and respondent-driven sampling to recruit via social networks, which asked the initial sample member to recruit one or more individuals to take part in the research process as well. Using word-of-mouth referrals may result in participants who feel that they were recruited through a familiar source and, therefore, more willing to share their experiences. Derived rapport is considered a key part of conducting ethical research with at-risk and vulnerable communities, as connections must be made through local community partners, agencies, and organization (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015).

Common Arts-based Research Methodologies'

Arts-based research (ABR) has a multitude of methods by which art forms can be integrated into the research method. These include, but are not limited to, photovoice (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, Nievar, & Mccann, 2005), found poetry (Patrick, 2016), collage (Butler-Kisber,& Poldma, 2010) sculpture (Herbison, Lokanc-Diluzio, 2006), painting & illustration (Lapum, et al., 2015) , music (van der Hoorn, 2015) and theater (Liamputtong, Rumbold, 2008). Each of these forms enable a researcher to engage with a participant or group of participants in an alternative discussion and dialogic space that encourages a more hands-on approach on behalf of the participants. For the purposes of this literature review, only collage, poetry, and photovoice were addressed, as they were purposefully chosen for the research described in this article due to their approachability for "non-artist" individuals.

Photovoice

Photovoice, also known as photo novella (Wang, 1998), is an form of qualitative research using photography as a form of visual data collection to reach participants through non-verbal

communication that may not be achieved through solely verbal interaction and interviews (Harper, 2002). This methodology can commonly be found in fields of healthcare, psychology, and social work that use participatory action research or community-based action research with vulnerable or at-risk populations (McIntyre, 2003; Jurkowski & Paul-Ward, 2007; Sitter, 2017). The integration of the therapeutic process of self- photography and storytelling inherent to photovoice has proven itself an extremely valuable resource for both the researcher and participant, resulting in alternate forms of communication that are "outside [of] language" (Back, 2007, p. 18; Pilcher, Martin, & Williams, 2016, p. 689). In a study titled, *Using Methods That Matter: The Impact of Reflection, Dialogue, and Voice*, the researchers found photovoice to "[provide] insight into the lived experiences of residents…particularly the impact of positive and negative conditions", and the participants in turn, experienced "[confidence] in their ability to…take control of their own lives" (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, Nievar, & Mccann, 2005, p. 279, 282.). Photovoice also offers opportunities to effectively connect with participants who have lower literacy skills and little access to resources to communicate their life experiences, expertise, and knowledge to the world (Chilton, Rabinowich, Council,& Breaux, 2009).

Found poetry/Poetic Inquiry

Found poetry, or as it is also known, poetic inquiry, uses only selected portions of transcribed participant interviews as a the foundation for both researchers and participants to create poetry that reflects an emotional response, or a "poetic rendition of a story or phenomenon" (Lafrenière & Cox, 2012, p.10). Leavy (2010) described this methodology as a particularly impactful exercise in empowering at-risk populations by creating opportunity:

> to get at and express subjugated knowledge and the experience of those who are disenfranchised. Here the specific form or shape that poetry occupies becomes paramount to the articulation of marginalized voices...The poetic form can therefore help us access

> those aspects of a hierarchical society that may be further rendered invisible in traditional forms of scientific writing (p.4).

The process of creating poetry in a research context serves multiple purposes: To gather a deeper, multifaceted perspective of a problem, and to act as a therapeutic outlet that encourages an environment of authentic sharing (Latta & Thompson, 2011). Like other forms of arts-based methodologies, found poetry acts as source of reflection for participants and an opportunity to "[transform] the contents of [their] consciousness into a public forum that others can understand" (Eisner, 1997, p.4), allowing participants to share vulnerable emotions about their lived experiences in ways they may feel more natural and creates a space for abstract feeling associated with storytelling. The inherently reflexive nature of poetry, for both the reader and creator, encourages a deeper understanding of the story being told within the piece.

One significant aspect of found poetry is its capacity to act as a member-checking and triangulation tool by creating multiple layers of understanding and reflection for participants to review their verbalized thoughts and distill them into the most potent and necessary form of sentiment (Reilly, 2013). For example, in the study '*If you call it a poem': Toward a framework for the assessment of arts-based works*, three different groups were used throughout the "co-creation" process of found poetry: (1) The initial interviewed group of participants, (2) the researchers who established and sorted the interviews into themes, and (3) participants of the workshop who created or "'found' the poems within the text of thematic transcripts provided" (Lafreniere & Cox, 2012, p. 328). After being interviewed with prompted questions, the third group was given selected portions of transcribed interviews based on a theme, in the setting of a creative writing workshop. This use of layered groups created a multiplicity of potential data that was profound for gaining deeper understandings of perceptions surrounding marginalized groups

that deal with stigma-heavy associations, such as low-income residents, and both urban and rural food insecure populations.

Impact for participants and researchers. Although poetry as a form of inquiry has similar goals as many other arts-based research methods (addressing emotional vulnerability through creative autonomy), the process of the data collection itself is slightly more nuanced. The use of text as opposed to visual imagery creates a "method of discovery"(Cahnmann, 2003, p.29), that requires the creator of the poetry to thoroughly comprehend the emotions of participants, while still being capable of abstractly dissecting and condensing those words into a powerful narrative and accurate account of the interview. This reductive process, described by The Academy of American Poets as the "literary equivalent of a collage" (Latta, 2011, p.6), created a healthy environment for reflexive discourse between (1) the initial participants' perception of themselves, (2) the 'found poetry' participants' perceptions of the initial participants, and (3) the researchers' perceptions of both groups. For researchers, this multi-level assessment forced them to view the data "in different and sometimes unusual ways that can yield insights" (Prendergast, 2006, p. 235). The condensed literary quality of poetry also enables the researcher to create a compressed linear commentary of data, useful both as an "artistic tool…to aid…refinement of qualitative data" (Patrick, 2016, p. 394) and a means to assimilate participants' lived experiences in a format that is more interesting and easily understandable for audiences outside of the academic realm.

Initially, the impact of this process is less direct than other forms of arts-based research, for participants as they do not actively produce the poems themselves. However, the ability to provide the base, raw material for which the poems are created from, still allowed for the sense of autonomy in making lived experiences known and shared. Creators of the poetry arguably

experienced the greatest impact of this process, as they played an active role in the therapeutic and creative process of poetry writing, while also being given the opportunity to reflexively consider the information of transcribed interviews. Some potential barriers to this methodology could be literacy challenges for participants with limi ted literacy or learning disabilities, as well as discomfort that participants may feel in rereading conversations they had.

Found poetry as a tool in fighting food insecurity. The multilayered approach of found poetry lends itself to becoming a dialectal and ideological bridge to understanding for groups that have different cultural, socioeconomic and geographical backgrounds. As participants recreate the living experiences of other groups, they encounter the opportunity "to walk a mile in [other participants'] shoes", gaining a deeper understanding of their peers' struggles, triumphs, and every day encounters. This kind of reflexive discourse is an integral part of community-based participatory research, and makes it an especially powerful tool in the polarized social arena of food insecurity, consumer education, and producer and consumer disconnect.

Collage

Collage, the reductive- and restructured-additive methodology of recreating an image from other premade found imagery, has been proven to be an approachable, unstructured medium for encouraging creativity in individuals who may experience insecurity or intimidation by the concept of creating "art" (Landgarten, 1981 & 1993; Linesch, 1988; Wadeson, 1987, 2000; Raffaelli, 2016). A study conducted by Kagin and Lusebrink (1978) posited the effectiveness of collage is due in part to the small "reflective distance" or cognitive distance between the creator and the medium, resulting in sensory rich experience for those who use it (Yuen, 2016, p. 21).

Collage as an approachable tool for expression. Using ABR methods can often impose an initial sense of feeling intimidated with participants who do not identify as themselves as artists. To address this, Raffaelli and Hartzell (2016) conducted a study to better understand the effectiveness and approachability of arts-based therapy techniques for individuals who do not identify as artists. Participants were given the option of drawing or creating a collage to share with the group, guided by the prompt, "Tell me about yourself." After completing the collage or drawing, participants were asked to verbally explain the piece, and asked a series of open-ended questions:

> *What was it like being asked to make a piece of art about yourself? What was it like to use collage materials for this project? How easy was it for you to say what you wanted to say about yourself with collage? What was it like to use drawing materials for this project? How easy was it for you to say what you wanted to say about yourself with drawing materials? How would you describe any differences there might have been between the two approaches? What were the similarities between the two approaches? What informed your choice of using [drawing materials or collage] for your first piece?(p. 22)*

Sessions each lasted around an hour, and with interaction and interviews audio recorded and transcribed. Some themes found within the drawing session were anxiety about having to come up with an idea with which to fill the blank page, and the resulting need for control as reflected in the drawing materials selected.

Kagin & Lusebrink (1978) posited art processes can be organized based on an individual's response to the medium and experience (Raffaelli, 2016), and that various mediums can elicit different responses on a "a kinesthetic, sensory, perceptual, affective, cognitive,

symbolic, or creative level, or a combination thereof" (Kagin & Lusebrink,1978; Lusebrink, 1990; Raffaelli,2016, p. 21). Raffaelli provided the example of a chisel or a paintbrush that may cause a "reflective distance" between the user and emotional experience of creating art, emphasizing the importance of choosing a medium that will place individuals at ease, instead of creating or adding to their anxiety level (p.22).

Creative journals

Creative journals have been used as a learning support tool and intervention to support emotional expression in education, psychology, healthcare, and art therapy fields (Peterson, & Jones, 2001; Hammond, 2005; Mims, 2015); the methodology of using personal, visual diaries allows for flexibility in multiple disciplines, as well as creating a personal and intimate outlet for participants to share their thoughts. Depending on the field of study this methodology can be known as creative journals (Evans, 2007), visual diaries (Pilcher, Martin, & Williams, 2016), therapeutic journaling (Mims, 2015), and visual artifact journals (Sanders-Bustle, 2008), but conceptually it remains the same. Participants are given a physical notebook, which they use as a platform of expression throughout the duration of the project. Beyond this, the methodology can be used in multiple ways: The journal may actually function as the primary form of data collection and communication, or as a secondary form of support for gathering rich data. The incorporation of a visual medium is a key component of creative journals, as the visual imagery and written responses work together to create opportunities for multiple modes of understanding through a single object. For each participant, a provided journal acts as a creative-expressive outlet to communicate, reflect, and communicate thoughts in a nonverbal platform that is perceived as more private than other qualitative communication methodologies, such as focus groups and interviews.

Journals and communicative ownership. Another significant component of creative journals is the impact in participants' sense of agency and ownership over their thoughts, ideas and stories. By allowing participants a space to reflect and share in their own time, on their own terms, and in any mode of expression of their choosing, communication created in their journals becomes fully owned by them (Biondi, 2015). This communicative freedom stands in stark contrast to the top down approach for communication that is commonly found between academic researchers and participants who are not comfortable with academic research practices. This model of communication is particularly important for at-risk, hard to reach, or invisible populations that consistently suffer from social discrimination, isolation, mistreatment or trauma (Evans, 2013; Rose & Sweda, 1997).

Creative toolkits: An exercise in co-creation/codesign

A case study conducted by Lapolla (2014), used social media as a transformational strategy for co-creation as a part of creative toolkits, for connecting artists and non-artists showed promising results for the use of creative toolkits as a co-creative, arts-based methodology. This case study focused on the use of a creative, online platform shared by artists and non-artists as an inclusionary practice to "encourage active engagement" within a space that is easily understood and accessible for any individual with access to the internet. This creates an even playing field, and space to "invite non-designers into the beginning of the design process and allow further creativity to trigger different feelings, emotions and desires" (Sanders & William, 2001. Lapolla, 2014, p.1), which creates a beneficial relationship for both designer and non-designer. Throughout this collaborative process, customers and designers showed "significant ability to have a co-creative conversation both visually and in written language", creating a co-creative "visual dialogue" (Lapolla, 2012,p. 12). Overall, the study found the

partnership of visual and written communication was key in the co-creation process. This case study, though used in the fashion field, could easily be used in other exclusionary scenarios found between researchers and participants. Creative toolkits offer opportunities to create a replicable and flexible communication tool for interdisciplinary research in multiple fields creates a streamlined process for both researchers and participants.

Public art

The component of a public art installation methodology (Lapum, et al., 2015), which some researchers have referred to as a "novella approach" (Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2006) or "pictorial narrative mapping" (Lapum et al., 2015) can be used as another means to create a visual representation of participant's feelings and lived experiences, but also acts as an event that has two purposes: As a platform for participants to be acknowledged and their lived experiences and held knowledge to be legitimized in their community or a given issue; and (2) empowering participants to actively engage other members of the community, including local organizations and leaders, to listen and take part in shifting current practices or ways of knowing. Researchers found this form of "arts-based dissemination of knowledge" created an "emotive and embodied space for individuals to imagine the experience of another", while also successfully assimilating information between researchers and participants (Lapum et al., 2015, p.3). Using art as a platform to share information in a public space also creates the potential to engage and expose audiences that are not usually reached by academic research findings. This also creates another layer in a multi-layered research approach that can be used to gather data.

Leading the Research

Researcher-led process: Researcher as Artist

One common methodology for integrating art and research practices in qualitative

research involves the researcher taking on a dual role of artist and researcher (Finley & Knowles,1995). The methodology requires the researcher to take a purposeful and reflexive approach to both the creative and data collection process by combining the rigorous standards of qualitative research such as observations, field notes, and interviews partnered with the expressive, fluid and nonlinear approach to creation (Eaves, 2014; Leavy, 2015; Coemans & Hannes, 2017). Taking on this dual role serves multiple purposes: Challenging the researcher to become more aware and reflexive of the research process, and subsequently, the interactions (researcher and participant) held in the process (Spouse, 2000; Shipe, 2016), gaining a deeper understanding of participants' experiences through the reflective and expression nature of the creation process (Eaves, 2014) , and providing an approachable form of knowledge dissemination to non-academic audiences through visual, auditory (musical), or movement-based (re) presentations of client and researcher experiences (Feldman, Hopgood, & Dickins, 2013; Cole & Knowles, 2008; Cole & McIntyre, 2003). Another benefit of this process is the flexibility in which it can be used in the research process. Examples of varying modes of researcher-led art have been shown through public art exhibits designed and curated by the researcher featuring others artwork (researcher as curator), art pieces created by the researcher based on their experiences in the research process (researcher as artist), and art pieces created by the researcher based on experiences of participants (researcher as artist interpreter) (Stake & Kerr, 1995; Eaves, 2014; Cole & Knowles, 2008).

Participant-led process: Participant as Artist

An alternative to the researcher-as-artist methodology flips the co-creation process upside down to allow participants to lead and collaborate in the creation process, resulting in artwork that is predominantly, or solely, created by the participants. This process, identified as

Participant Led Research (PLR), is used almost exclusively in arts-based qualitative research in which the participants commonly are experiencing some form of oppression, isolation or exclusion from social norms (Wang & Burris, 1994; Pilcher, 2012, p.1). This methodology emerged in response to the top-down, 'follow the leader' model" (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017, p.87) that is predominantly used for quantitative and qualitative research. This unequal balance of power produces a problematic narrative that leaves participants feeling helpless or without agency in the system (academic & community research) that seeks to assist them (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017). PLR aims to provide participants an increased negotiation in social spaces and in research, by allowing them to inform and lead the research process through a series of exercises that are loosely facilitated by the researcher (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017). Stevenson & Holloway (2017) showed a clear example of this, through a PLR project which incorporated sound-based research with blind participants in their own communities. Participants and researchers went on community walks, while participants were able to record and identify sounds that were perceived as important or meaningful to them. These recordings were then used in an interactive exhibit which encouraged viewers to "view" or listen to their community from a different perspective. This model of provides an opportunity for "both parties to collaboratively act towards a free, equal and just society" (Malherbe & Everitt- Penhale , 2017, p.134), while also providing opportunities to move discourse outside of the academic realm, to a space where participants voices are heard (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1967) is an inductive methodology designed to make qualitative research more effective by creating a flexible and dynamic approach to theory

making and data gathering (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The methodology posits that the creation of theory should be generated, or grounded, in systematically collected data that follow a systematic set of procedures (Mace & Ward, 2002). As data is collected, and new discoveries and themes emerge over the course of the research process, the researcher updates and adapts the theory to fit the new set of information. This approach is referred to as the constant comparative method (Glaser 1965; Strauss & Corbin, 1994), a process described by Glaser as "continuous growth" (Glaser 1965; Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p.439), as the researcher constantly codes newly collected data, and new themes emerge from observations, interviews, and field notes. Grounded theory lends itself to the fluid, dynamic, and interaction-based nature of qualitative research, and has been used in fields that commonly encounter unpredictable variables such as art and creativity research (Mace & Ward, 2012), social justice fields (Singh, Urbano, Haston, & McMahan, 2010), and healthcare (Kushner & Morrow, 2003).

Critical Social Theory

Critical social theory focuses on analyzing and breaking free of oppressive structures that exist in society through daily interactions and the implicit perpetuation of oppression by adhering to social norms and assigned roles. Through this critical lens of society, critical social theory becomes a participatory process by which individuals take part in "reflective and critical assessment of the relationship between overarching social, economic or political systems…and everyday practices" (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010, p. 8).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity, the process of self-reflection by a researcher, has profound benefits on every aspect of the research process. Self-reflection provides the researcher with the tools needed to view the strengths and weaknesses of their research methodology, their own personal biases, and

most importantly, acts as a means to improve understanding on and engage with qualitative data from the view that the binary process of reading and typing interview transcriptions cannot (Kleinsasser, 2000). Faulker (2016) asserts that reflexivity moves the researcher from the static position of merely producing knowledge, by challenging " the view of knowledge production as independent of the researcher producing the knowledge and of knowledge as an objective entity" (Berger, 2015; Faulkner, Kaunert,Kluch,Koc, & Trotter, 2016 p. 198). The researcher is, therefore, not only engaged with the process, but also a critical part of that process. There are multiple ways that a researcher can practice reflexivity, with the most common being through written observation field notes, or a journal (Watt, 2007). However, studies have shown that art-based research methodologies, such as collage, poetry, and collective creative projects also have a place in reflexivity practices for a researcher (Faulkner, Kaunert, Kluch, Koc, & Trotter, 2016).

Conclusion

Arts-based research methodologies show evidence to support their viability as a tool in community-based research, particularly in fields related to social justice and equality that interact with hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations (Pilcher, 2012). By leveling the communicative playing field between participants and researchers through the use of simple, yet powerful, nonverbal creative practices, participants can experience ownership of their experiences and how they portray them. The adaptability of using varying artistic mediums creates almost endless possibilities in the manner that these methods can be applied, resulting in a methodology that meets rigorous qualitative standards, while being individualized to meet participants needs. In addition to increased rich data gathering, these methods, in any medium, provide participants outlets for emotional reflection, mental and emotional support, increased awareness of their own

and their community members' needs; an empowering outlet to create autonomy for individuals who may have little control in other areas of their life.

CHAPTER 3

ARTS-BASED RESEARCH IN FOOD SECURITY: A DIALOGICAL TOOL FOR CREATING OPEN COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL CHANGE[1]

[1] Jourdan, H., Borron, A. To be submitted to the Journal of Agricultural Extension and Education

Abstract

In the fall of 2016, a metropolitan-based food bank approached a Southeastern land-grant university with a request to design a participatory research project that would inform the creation of more holistic and concentrated services to partner agency clients to achieve food, housing, and financial security. Focusing on a subset of the larger, collaborative research project, this paper examines the value of an arts-based research approach aimed to foster new avenues for dialogue creation and better understand held meanings and personal experiences related to food insecurity. The research questions included: (1) How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity? (2) What does arts-based research look like from a researcher-led approach? and (3) How does a researcher-led approach affect public viewing and solution building? Following the completion of a photovoice project, in-depth interviews, and two focus group discussions with clients, staff, and volunteers at five participating partner agencies for the larger project, the researcher of this study used the collected data to design a public art exhibition. This art exhibition was displayed at a day-long interagency summit event that was held at the food bank, and attended by nearly 100 area stakeholders, including partner agency staff and volunteers, other non-profit leaders, legislators, and agency clientele. As part of the art exhibition, three developed pieces represented three primary themes that came out of the data: (1) Helping self and others – which was represented by *MILK*, (2) Dealing with Health – which was represented by *Fresh*, and (3) Complexities and uncertainties of life – which was represented by *Non-Food Items*. Throughout the day, and during breaks, attendees were encouraged to complete a questionnaire that addressed viewer perceptions regarding the intended issue. Questionnaire responses revealed that viewers overwhelmingly enjoyed art as a narrative tool for client stories—while the exhibits served as key sources of dialog throughout the day.

Through the questionnaire responses attendees also addressed that the lack of client-made art was a weakness in the show. Ultimately, the design process of the research-led exhibit provided invaluable critical reflexive insight for the researcher, challenging her to continually reassess personal perspective versus client perspective; this perspective created a deeper understanding of participants experiences, resulting in increased empathy and more accurate qualitative data collection. Results from this project provide an opportunity to inform the role of co-created art installations in future research, as feedback from the survey from attendees, including clientele, indicated value in pursuing opportunities to share artwork designed and directly guided by food bank clients.

Keywords: *arts-based research, food insecurity, photovoice, food assistance program, food bank, public art, visual communication, researcher-led art*

Introduction

Food insecurity, which is defined as a lack of access to adequate amounts of nutritionally appropriate food, affects 42.2 million people or approximately 1 in 8 households in America (UDSA, ERS, 2017). Those who are food insecure also face a multitude of social and economic factors that lead and contribute to a poor quality of life, which makes gaining a level of food security and overall stability extremely difficult (Less & Rocha, 2012). Due to this, many households turn to government- and community-funded food assistance programs, such as food pantries, to alleviate the financial strain of buying food. In the U.S., there are 200 food banks that serve and support over 60,000 food pantries (Feeding America, 2016), enabling valuable touch points in communities and families in need. However, even with this infrastructure in place, the rate of food insecurity remains a persistent problem.

Studies have shown that self-expression is a key component of an individual's sense of agency (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995), affecting the demonstration of self-sufficiency and autonomy in the daily lives of individuals and among family members (Sidney-Ando, 2016; Gecas, 2003). Therefore, alternative approaches to food pantries and food assistance programs have emerged over the years, such as community kitchens (Tarasuk & Reynolds, 1999) and client-choice pantries (Martin, Wu, Wolff, Colantonio, & Grady, 2013).

However, while alternative approaches demonstrate positive outcomes related to coping skills and social support among those who are food insecure, they do not support a process by which sustainable change can occur from within. To begin to address approaches to sustainable change, this article explores the use of arts-based research in areas of food insecurity and the lived experiences of low-income working families. The intent of arts-based research (ABR) is to open alternative forms of communication among individuals who are "disadvantaged

economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally" (Kay, 2000, p. 423). In the case of this study, ABR creates a dialogical space among clients, the food assistance programs designed to serve them, and the researcher—a space often compromised due to stigmatization and lack of resources.

This article functions as a subset to a larger project in partnership with a metropolitan-based food bank in the Southeast United States. The larger project's aims were to (1) help facilitate a participatory process with staff, volunteers, and clients at five participating agencies to identify factors that promote food insecurity, and (2) to work in consultation with food pantry clientele to place the decision-making process and methods of social change into the hands of the clientele, emphasizing the capacity of participants to identify problems, emphasize and legitimize cultural meanings, and conceptualize and implement developed solutions. The food bank's interest was to target the "working poor" among the clientele – individuals who were in between jobs or struggling to make ends meet in their current job.

To keep in line with the larger project's aims, this article examines the value of an arts-based research approach aimed to foster new avenues for dialogue creation and better understand held meanings and personal experiences related to food insecurity. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity?
2. What does arts-based research look like from a researcher-led approach?
3. How does a researcher-led approach affect public viewing and solution building?

Literature Review

Arts-Based Research

It is not uncommon for researchers to encounter communicative barriers that inhibit open and healthy discourse between themselves and participants (Harris & Roberts, 2003.; Kitzinger, 1995), who may experience feelings of heightened vulnerability or lack of positionality (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009), or fear the social ramifications of voicing their opinions (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). To address these communicative barriers, ABR is a form of participatory research that uses imagery, motion, sounds, and nonverbal expression as the basis of inquiry. Lafreniere and Cox (2012) further defined this process as "an arrangement of symbols, such as words, forms or gestures, designed to convey experience, ideas or emotions… in a meaningful, vivid and imaginative way [using] literary, visual or performing techniques with the aim of provoking some effect in a reader or audience" (p. 322). This unique methodology offers a near infinite and customizable combination of ways to be administered in any context. Like community-based participatory research (Viswanathan et al., 2004.), ABR has a malleable quality that allows it to fit multiple disciplines, cultures, and socioeconomic environments, naturally establishing space for co-creating solutions between researchers and participants. Within its epistemological foundation of knowing and inquiring through creativity and participation (McNiff, 1998), held meanings can be arranged and structured through various artistic media to generate authentic interaction between participants as creators, and participants as viewers (Lapum et al., 2015.).

As a result, ABR has gained recognition in healthcare (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2008), sociology (Cole & Knowles, 2008), social work (Huss, Kaufman, & Sibony, 2013), and art education fields (Darts, 2006) for its proficiency in engaging individuals

who suffer from trauma to communicate more freely (Yohani, 2008; Latta, Thompson, 2011). While verbal or written communication has the potential to highlight social stressors associated with these perceived social hierarchies and positionality between at-risk populations and community partners, the creative use of nonverbal communication has shown to be a promising means for "cultivating understanding" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26) and "democratiz[ing] meaning-making and decentralizing academic researchers as the 'experts'" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26) between researchers and participants.

ABR has a multitude of methods by which art forms can be integrated into the research method. These include, but are not limited to, photovoice (Foster-Fishman et al., 2005), found poetry (Patrick, 2016), collage (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010), sculpture (Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2006), painting and illustration (Lapum et al., 2015), music (van der Hoorn, 2015), theater (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008), and public art exhibits (Lapum, et al., 2016; Cole & McIntyre, 2004). Each of these forms enable a researcher to engage with a participant or group of participants in an alternative discussion and dialogic space that encourages a more hands-on approach on behalf of the participants. To illustrate the key strengths of such approaches, photovoice and found poetry are described below.

Photovoice is a form of data collection that uses photography to reach participants on an emotional level that may otherwise not be achieved through solely verbal interaction and interviews (Foster-Fishman et al., 2005). While photographs or images can be presented to participants to support posed questions or discussion items during an interview, photovoice often is completed by participants taking pictures on their own time, outside of an interview and based on a given prompt. Photovoice has also proved to have observable positive impacts on participants, resulting in a greater awareness and understanding of their community's issues, a

heightened sense of personal agency (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, Nievar, & Mccann, 2005), and strengthening of social and human capital (Mcintyre, 2003). The process of being able to gather a visual representation of an emotion, or a visual representation of an object that allows the participant to share a personal story, creates a sense of ownership of the issues they face, as well as how they are perceived by the researchers (Foster-Fishman, Nowell, Deacon, Nievar, & Mccann, 2005).

Researcher-led process Public Art Exhibits

The use of art exhibits has been used in the art education, healthcare and psychology fields (Lapum, Church, Yau, David, & Ruttonsha, 2012) as a multipurpose tool for sharing knowledge with non-academic audiences to raise awareness around social issues, as well as providing participants an opportunity to share their experiences in an impactful way with their peers (Lapum et al., 2016). The methodology for art exhibits as inquiry in qualitative research can be presented in two ways; the first uses participant artwork as the focal point of the exhibit and is curated by the researcher. This process is the most common and can be identified as a co-created, participant-led approach. The second process is identified as a researcher led approach, and features artwork created by the researcher, which was directly informed and inspired by the researchers interactions with participants (Cole & McIntyre, 2004; Church, 2008). This methodology is unique, as the researcher takes on multiple intersecting roles, as the observant, objective researcher, the creative, and subjective artist, and a teacher/communicator (Finley, & Knowles,1995; Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008). This role has been labeled as researcher-as-artist (Cole, & Knowles, 2008), A/r/tographer (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2008) and artist/researcher. In this process, "research and researcher are no longer dichotomized and fractured but serve as an integrated whole" (Collins & Chandler, 1993, p. 182), allowing the

qualitative researcher to gather a deeper understanding of participants experiences, and in turn, reflexively analyze their own as a researcher (Lapum et al., 2012).

Predominately used in healthcare (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2008) and social work (Huss, Kaufman, & Sibony, 2013), found poetry—also known as poetic inquiry—uses selected portions of transcribed participant interviews to create a "poetic rendition of a story or phenomenon" (Butler-Kisber, 2002, p. 232). The process of creating poetry in a research context serves a dual purpose: To gather a deeper, multifaceted perspective of participant experiences, and to act as a therapeutic outlet that facilitates a discursive space for authentic sharing (Latta & Thompson, 2011). Like other forms of arts-based methodologies, found poetry acts as source of reflection for participants and an opportunity to "[transform] the contents of [their] consciousness into a public forum that others can understand" (Eisner, 1997, p. 4), allowing participants to share vulnerable emotions about their lived experiences in ways they feel are more natural and personally controlled, specifically if share in an abstract form of storytelling. The inherently reflexive nature of poetry, for both the reader and creator, encourages a deeper understanding of the story being told within the piece.

Co-creation vs. Researcher-led Creation

While ABR methods can often enable deeper understanding on behalf of the participant and researcher as it relates to complex social issues, it can also result in an artistic design that serves as a catalyst for public dialog (Bell & Desai, 2011; Lapum et al., 2015). In an ABR project, art is often co-created by the participant(s) and the researcher. The term co-creation describes an interactive research process, in which researchers and participants work in tandem to create solutions as a holistic unit (Boydell, 2011). If ABR takes on a researcher-led approach, the researcher uses participant data collected through such methods as observation, interviews,

and focus groups to design an art installation that represents the results of the project (Cole, 2004). For a project to be researcher-led, it perhaps places the emphasis on the researcher's interpretation of collected data, rather than a demonstration of an ownership of issues on behalf of the participants. While the co-creation of art based on collected data can open up valuable and critical dialogue during and after the creation process, the researcher-led creation does offer a conceptual dialogic medium that opens up additional space for participant feedback, confirming or negating the interpretation of data.

Role of Public Art in making room for discursive spaces. The component of a public art installation (Lapum et al., 2015) can function as a twofold qualitative tool: (1) an interdisciplinary data gathering technique that uses qualitative data to create a visual timeline or non-textual representation of experience (Lapum et al., 2015), and (2) as another means to create a visual representation of participants' feelings and lived experiences. Through a narrative study on individual reactions to the installation, researchers found that this form of "arts-based dissemination of knowledge" created an "emotive and embodied space for individuals to imagine the experience of another" while also successfully assimilating information to these participants (Lapum et al., 2015, p.3). Using art as a platform to share information in a public space creates the potential to engage and expose audiences that are not usually reached by academic research findings. This also creates another layer in a multi-layered research approach that can be used to gather data.

Critical social theory

Critical social theory is "a set of intellectual positions that examine social arrangements through the lenses of power, domination, and conflict" (Prasad, 2017, p. 44), More specifically, critical theory places an emphasis on analyzing and breaking free of oppressive structures that

exist in society through daily interactions and the implicit perpetuation of oppression by adhering to social norms and assigned roles. Through this critical lens of society, critical social theory becomes a participatory process by which individuals take part in "reflective and critical assessment of the relationship between overarching social, economic or political systems…and everyday practices" (Freeman, Vasconcelos, 2010, p.8).

Critical social theory functions under three assumptions. The first is that oppression is perpetuated by society in a way that presents oppression and inequality in society as "natural" occurrences (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010,.p. 9). This belief leads to greater inaction by those holding power and causes those suffering from oppression to remain powerless. The second is that theory and practice function as one unit, reflecting the way in which a person views the world. This directly affects the perpetuation of oppressive structures, as those who choose to remain unaware of these structures continue to be implicit in its continuation (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). The third is that of false consciousness (Fay, 1987; Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010) and banking education (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010; Freire 1970 & 1993) in which education becomes a form of oppression through the feeding of information into a person like an empty container, without any space for dialectal growth or response.

These assumptions create the framework for researchers to use critical social theory as a participatory act to enhance understanding through methods of engagement, create change through practice, and learn about social structures (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). This foundation of action-based research challenges researchers to engage with participants on an intimate level, opening channels for activism and social justice.

Methods

The larger food bank project incorporated a range of methodologies to meet project objectives, including two focus groups, in-depth interviews, and a photovoice project. All data was collected from February to May of 2017 at five partner agencies of the food bank, and all participant names were changed to ensure anonymity. In June, the food bank held an interagency summit that brought together participants from each of the five locations, including clients, volunteers, and staff. Also in attendance were community partners and food bank staff and volunteers. In all, 79 people participated in the day-long event. The research results, which include emerged themes, were presented at the summit by the research team.

In addition to the presentation of data through oral delivery and PowerPoint, one member of the research team also designed and presented three art exhibits as an alternative form of presenting data. To develop these exhibits, the researcher combined the resulting themes and findings (which are forthcoming in another article) along with field observations and critical reflexive journal entries (Cunliffe, 2004) that took place throughout the duration of the larger project. This data was then used to create three researcher-led art installments. While it was preferred to use the co-created method of participant and researcher to develop these art installations, time constraints and client schedules prohibited a pure co-constructed design.

Emerged Themes from Larger Project

The themes from the larger project are briefly described as follows:

Helping Others and Self. This theme encompassed client responses about feeling the need to help or contribute to others' quality of life. While this included immediate family and friends, it also included others in their community whom they knew or happened to cross paths with on

the street. To them, helping others involved sharing food, recipes, offering rides, or even babysitting.

Dealing with Health. Due to prevailing health issues, many clients struggled to find diet-approved food in food pantries. Therefore, while they were often able to access food, they or select family members could not eat it. Clients also expressed a desire for fresh meats and vegetables, in lieu of the more common processed, shelf-stable items.

Facing Complexities and Uncertainties of Life. Addressing the broader picture of food security, this theme identified the compounding problems caused by unexpected and inconsistent barriers that many times resulted in forced lifestyle tradeoffs by clients. These tradeoffs range from choosing between rent and medical bills, a lack of transportation to be able to visit a grocery store or food pantry, and the desire for non-food items, such as toiletries and feminine hygiene products.

Taking Ownership, Being Creative and Finding Solutions. Many times clients' financial restraints forced them to find creative solutions in their budget or grocery shopping choices, being forced to "make do" with the food provided through food pantries. Creative solutions included, but were not limited to, couponing and shared food resources, and strategically planning meals one to two weeks out, creatively using the food they received at the food pantry.

Attendee Survey

With the exhibits on display throughout the duration of the day-long summit, and in attempt to examine the discursive space and perception among the attendees, each person was provided and asked to complete a 14-question survey. This survey addressed each of the three installments and the attendees' perceptions of how the installments reflected the lived experiences of food insecurity among food pantry clientele. Of the 79 attendees at the summit,

39 completed and turned it in. Completed surveys represented 11 clients (2 of which identified as both client and volunteer), 6 food bank staff, 4 volunteers, 10 staff members of partner agencies, 1 staff member of a partner agency/food pantry volunteer, and 7 Community partners. All data was entered into SPSS and analyzed.

Researcher Subjectivity Statement

As an artist, my own experiences in using art as a tool of self-expression have given me an inherent bias that creativity can be a positive and powerful tool to address food security and give voice to those who are food insecure. I acknowledge that my own experiences socially and culturally, may inhibit me from fully understanding the experiences of the food pantries clients, who are each situated in a unique context based on their culture, race, geographic location and economic status. As someone who has never experienced food security, the creation of artwork surrounding this topic may not be fully reflectant of the experience of emotions of the individuals I worked with. My experience in creating art, and my artistic style may prevent me, and therefore my voice, from being completely absent in these pieces intended to reflect solely the experience of a food pantry client.

Researcher Observations and Journaling

In addition to taking field notes of client interactions in focus groups and interviews, the researcher (from here on referred to in first-person) also began keeping a critical reflexive analysis journal (Cunliffe, 2004) to document personal thoughts and perceptions surrounding client interactions and the meaning held within those interactions. I used this journal not only as a tool of accountability for ethical research (Finlay, 2002), but also as a way to assess the formative process of meaning I gained from each client meeting, which directly informed the pieces I created. I found that intuitive inquiry of my inward 'heuristic research' (Moustakas,

1990) challenged me constantly to refine my design process through a series of key questions: How can I portray their stories in a way that engages others while empowering and protecting the vulnerability of the clients? How could my decisions affect the clients' positively? And, in what ways could my decisions affect them negatively? One particular concern that consistently re-emerged in my reflexivity was creating pieces that made the clients feel singled out or act as painful reminders of their negative experience with food access. In one entry regarding the design of the installations, I noted:

> I am so concerned about misrepresenting the powerful stories of these clients. How will I do them justice? I know that I want these pieces to relate to food, but am concerned about displaying photos or food objects of food in a purely aesthetical way -- I do not want this to become another instance of seeing food, but not being able to physically access it. (4/28/2017)

This particular reflection became an "aha" moment (Cunliffe, 2004, p.410) or turning point for the design of one of the exhibits (titled "Fresh") in which I realized that an interactive art exhibit might be more appropriate. Using my critical reflexive analysis in conjunction with field notes, transcribed interviews, and thematic analysis created a triangulation of data (Krefting, 1991) that was extremely helpful in creating what I perceived as a credible, ethical, and holistic view of the food pantry experience.

Creation and Development of Public Art Installments

Throughout the two focus group (at each of 5 locations) and interview process, I began to take field notes of patterned conversation topics, and emerging themes that seemed to be prominent in the client's lives. Although each location seemed to experience similar problems to each other in the beginning, I realized that certain topics reemerged at particular locations. For

instance, all locations repeatedly and uniquely mentioned the significance of milk as a necessary food product, but difficult to obtain. Another placed a great emphasis on fresh food from farmers markets and their own garden. Finally, another location often concentrated on essential non-food items. The following paragraphs will detail how each of these three topics manifested themselves in three public art installations, which were exhibited at a metropolitan food bank space during a day-long interagency summit, that served to showcase the results from the research initiative. In addition, immediately following the description of each installation, the results of the survey given to attendees at the interagency summit are described, focusing only on client responses. All attendees' responses are addressed following the installation descriptions and results. This data is derived from 39 completed surveys (out of 79 total attendees), representing a 49.37% completion rate.

MILK

The first installation created, titled MILK (Figure 1), was based on repeated conversations at each location surrounding milk. The word "milk" was used a total of 93 times throughout two focus groups and client interviews at each of the five locations. The contextual conversations surrounding milk were different at each location, and fell under different themes ranging from the expense of milk, dietary and allergy restrictions surrounding milk, negative experiences with milk at food pantries, and milk as a means to share and connect with other community members. Milk became not only a prominent and striking topic in focus group conversations, but also a significant symbol of food access in the clients' lives. Therefore, the developing concept of MILK was based on the varied meanings, experiences, and values that clients held toward milk. Through the triangulation of data (field notes, transcribed interviews, and photovoice imagery) t I concluded that milk functioned as almost a sacred object in client

lives. To reflect this, I used halved recycled milk cartons to create a series of milk jug and non-dairy milk carton "lanterns," that were hand cut with a unique design. Because clients represented a variety of cultures and heritages, each lantern featured the word "milk" in a different language. Along with this, wooden cutouts of milk cartons featured excerpts from client interviews regarding milk. I displayed the milk cartons in a grid-like format meant to replicate the shelves at a grocery store, while the "lanterns" were meant to evoke a sense of quiet and calm.

Figure 3.1. "MILK." Client photographs and interview excerpts were displayed next to patterned milk jug lanterns. Right: Detail view of "MILK" milk jug lanterns, featuring patterns and word for milk in multiple languages.

Client perceptions of MILK. Out of 11 clients who completed the survey provided at the exhibit, only 2 noted that MILK was their favorite exhibit; both respondents also listed themselves as both a client and food pantry volunteer. The qualitative responses to this piece, addressed different parts of the piece. One simply noted "very artistic", seemingly referenced the aesthetic quality of the piece, and did not make any mention of the content or concept, while the other expressed an interest in the stories held within the piece, by writing " I enjoyed the

narratives, great perspectives". Despite a low number of client respondents choosing this piece as their favorite, 84.6% of client respondents felt that that the experiences of a food insecure individual and associated issues were represented very good to excellent through the piece. Client responses from this piece suggest that although they may have felt that facets of the food insecure experience were represented, it did not resonate with them personally, which raises questions of the accuracy of representation from the researcher/artist. In addition to this, the responses from clients who also acted as volunteers suggests that these individuals have a slightly different perspective than individuals who identify solely as food pantry clients.

General viewer response to MILK. Out of 39 responses, 17 (43.6 %) noted MILK as their favorite exhibit. Qualitative responses regarding the piece suggested that food bank and pantry staff, food pantry volunteers and community partners felt positively impacted by the piece, suggesting that the piece was thought provoking. For example, one respondent wrote, "... you often forget how big a part of milk can play in family's diet and budget". Other responses included that "[it] taught me that milk is more essential than I previously considered and the challenge of cost and allergies" and " it was thought provoking and really interesting" (personal communication, June,2017) . Some respondents also affirmed that the use of art was an impactful channel of communication by writing responses such as MILK appropriately "expressed variations of people's preferences and choices," "reinforces what I've heard from clients as well" and "... loved how it shows the pattern of insecurity through visual pattern" (personal communication, June, 2017) which suggests that visual media is a novel and impactful channel for sharing others experiences.

Fresh

“Fresh” emerged specifically from client interviews and photos, and was based on the clients’ complex relationship with fresh fruits and vegetables. Many times the conversation was focused on the expense of buying produce in a grocery store or farmer’s market, or the desire for their family to eat healthier. Clients’ stories included the use of coupons, creating new recipes from on sale produce or canned vegetables, and sometimes using container or backyard spaces to grow fresh produce or herbs, which referenced the *Dealing with health, Complexities and uncertainties of life,* and *Taking ownership, Being creative and finding solutions* themes that emerged in our thematic analysis from focus groups. When creating this installation, I began to envision ways in which it could provide an interactive experience for the viewer, in which they would be able to read, touch, taste, and smell different food items. I became very aware of the struggles and frustrations that clients felt when entering a grocery store with fresh produce, in which they could look, but not have, the fresh produce they desired to give their family. One client summed up her frustrating relationship with fresh food at a grocery store stating:

> I would do anything to be able to provide my own fruits and vegetables. Anything. I've tried it a couple times, but don't know what I'm doing. So we had broccoli, in November, in Michigan. Um, yeah, it was not good. If I had that education, my grocery bill could get cut in half. Fresh fruit and vegetables is, next to meat, is so expensive. So what, do you even have to choose when you go grocery shopping, do I buy a can of, stuff? Or do I buy this beautiful fresh stuff? Well the fresh stuff's twice as expensive, so you get stuck buying the can. Full preservatives full wallets, you know. And it's really hard because the healthy food is more expensive. (Lillian,personal communication, 2017)

This is one of many accounts from clients detailing their frustration surrounding fresh food; it felt out of reach in many ways: a) expense of healthy food items b) lack of knowledge of preparation c) desire to grow food, but lack of knowledge, space, or time. Therefore, as I observed focus group conversations addressing desires and ideas for healthy food, in juxtaposition with prohibiting obstacles, I desired to address each of these components in an artwork, titled, "Fresh".

Wanting to develop a living wall component, I initially envisioned a large living wall, lush, full of food and providing a hands-on experience for viewers to look, taste, touch and even take from the edible plants featured on the wall. I decided to build a series of small 15" x 15'' square modular boxes that could fit in small spaces and be arranged in a number of ways, making it more approachable for viewers to imagine using in their own homes. Each box featured a different edible plant, and filled a different cut out letter which spelled the word "food." Viewers were encouraged to interact with the boxes, by touching and smelling the plants in each box. Next to the living wall, client photographs (from the photovoice portion of the larger project) depicting fresh vegetables, home cooked meals, and farming experiences hung in glass frames. One selected quote from a client during the one-on-one interview, who expressed a deep passion and interest in farming and fresh vegetables, was listed with the photographs: "But I love getting in the dirt. It means a lot to me. Now we don't always eat that way, but at the same time, food is precious" (Rebecca, interview, 2017). Finally, all attendees at the interagency summit who interacted with the exhibit also encountered a small card table holding tomato seedlings, which they were encouraged to take, as well as a printed list of local farmer's markets that accepted and doubled EBT and WIC.

Figure 3.2. "Fresh." The installation was filled with edible plants, meant to be touched and tasted. Tomato seedlings were available to take along with a list of Farmer's market that accept EBT and SNAPS, and client photos.

Client perceptions of *Fresh*. Client responses will be addressed first, to gather an understanding of effectiveness of the art pieces from their opinion; overall viewer perceptions will then be detailed later in this article. Survey responses revealed that "Fresh" was the most liked piece by the clients, with 8 out of 11 clients noting this as the exhibit they enjoyed most. An open-ended, follow-up question allowed viewers to elaborate on why they enjoyed the piece. Responses such as "Fresh veg & fruits are very important in my families diet," "The fresher it is the better", and "way better for you, thousands of miles fresher" indicated that clients felt strongly about fresh and local food access, as well as providing supporting evidence for the format of this particular piece. The survey results also indicated that 76% of clients felt "Fresh" accurately represented a food access issue.

Non-Food Items

The third and final installation, *Non-food Items,* emerged from the second round of focus groups in which clients revealed the immense difficulties they faced paying for household items, such as basic first aid supplies and medicine for sick family members, cleaning supplies, feminine hygiene products for female participants and their daughters, and items for both infants

and the elderly. Of the five pantry locations, this discussion came about in two different locations, after a client noted the lack of age-appropriate items for seniors and infants in food pantries, which ranged from soft foods, baby foods, diapers, and incontinence products. One client expressed the difficulty of coping with "body changes" as she entered menopause, while her daughter entered puberty, and finding room in her budget for unexpected feminine hygiene products such as pads and tampons, as well as household products: "Those things that you need besides food, you can't get those items with food stamps. Like dish detergent, and large detergent to keep your clothes clean" (Rachel, focus group, 2017). Many of the clients who were mothers, expressed that they find themselves at the bottom of the ladder, as they provide for others in the family unit before they provide for themselves:

> Because once I pay bills, and then make sure my boys or my kids have their needs, I wouldn't have the resources to get what I need, you know. I'm a woman and, you know I'm trying to take care of kids, you want to make sure the kids first, you know what I mean? But it's like ... People tell me, "You always put your kids, what you going to do for yourself? How you gonna take care of your kids and then take care of yourself?" (Hannah, focus group).

I created a series of three small, mandala-like designs from everyday household objects. I wanted to design a pattern that was analogous to the "pattern" of instability clients felt when needing to buy non-food items, as well as create a visually appealing design that would not immediately register as household items. Just as most people do not recognize the important role that seemingly small items such as laundry and dish soap play in the pattern of daily life, the designs were meant to be viewed as patterned design until further inspection showed the individual pieces. A circular and repetitive design was chosen to simulate the cyclical nature of

food insecurity and associated aspects of systematic poverty, which clients described as constantly choosing between items they needed most, only to generate a frustrating pattern of not being able to afford all the items they needed.

Figure 3.3. "Non Food Items." Three small (8x11) framed photographs portraying varying non food items that clients expressed a desire to have access to in food pantries.

Client perceptions of Non Food Items. This piece received the least and most divisive feedback through the survey, with 8 clients noting that it represented a food access issue, and 3 noting that it did not represent a food access issue. This piece also ranked as the lowest in client viewer enjoyment with 2 out of the 11 clients choosing this as their favorite piece. Qualitative responses about the piece, however, indicated that clients felt that they related to the underlying issue; responses such as "save money and child healthy" support that hygiene and health are topics that should be considered in the larger picture of food security.

Interagency Summit Survey Results

The survey was given as a paper handout to all attendees of the event, and consisted of 14 questions, aimed at understanding viewer perceptions of arts- based research imagery as a narrative and communicative tool based off of clients' lived experiences. In particular, I was interested in understanding food pantry client's perceptions and opinions on the art pieces, and how well they felt their experiences were portrayed. This also aligned with two of my research questions: "Does the public viewing of research-led artwork influence the viewers' perceptions

of food security?" and "How do arts-based research methods inform and provide insight on food insecurity, that interviews alone cannot?" The survey contained questions regarding basic demographic information, along with questions regarding community and food pantry experiences, and both qualitative and quantitative questions regarding the representation of client experiences in the art installations.

All Attendee Responses

Out of the 79 attendees of the event, there were 39 of survey participants. The demographics of these 39 respondents were (25.6%) male, 28 (71.8%) were female, one non response to gender, with a median age of 45-54. In addition, 9 participants were clients of food pantries, 2 were clients of food pantry and food pantry volunteers, 1 was food bank volunteer and staff member of partner agency, 6 were food bank staff members, and 7 were community partners. A third (33.3%) of the participants responded that they have relied on a food assistance program at some point in their life. The small sample size did not allow for enough data to generate a statistical difference between the viewer demographics.

Viewer perceptions of exhibits

Participants were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 5 the amount of influence they held in food issues in their community. With a mean of 3.32, viewers felt that they held a "somewhat" to "very influential" role to create change. Overall, participants felt positively toward the representation in the art pieces; in response to the question "How well are the client voices and experiences represented in these exhibits?" 52% of viewers selected very good, and 28% selected excellent. Eighteen out of 24 viewers felt that public art could play a "moderate amount" to "a great deal" in addressing issues of food security. Out of the three exhibits, Participants were also given an open-ended question "As you look at the exhibits, how do they make you feel?"

Responses ranged from positive sentiments such as “appreciated/loved, and willing to serve others” to more somber thoughts “Depressed, yet more aware and more interested in solutions to address food security.”

Client perceptions. In response to the question “How well are client voices and experiences represented in these exhibits?”, 9 out of 11 clients responded “very good” to “excellent”, and qualitative responses regarding how the art pieces made them feel also provided positive feedback with answers such as “excited more is gonna be done for needs” and “ I feel creative, freedom of choice, a voice.” Clients were also given an opportunity to note important issues in food security that were not represented in the exhibit. Three clients provided the suggestions of “the pantry process, from the client’s perspective”, “consistent basic food supply” and “hot food truck/delivery to community.” Eight out of 11 Clients also responded that they “agree” to “strongly agree” that they were interested to be involved in activities related to food access in their community.

Conclusions and Future Implications

Although the timeline of this particular project did not allow for true co-creation of art pieces between participating clients and myself, the design process of a research-led exhibit provided invaluable reflexive insight for myself as a researcher, challenging me to constantly reassess my own perspective in order to see the perspective of the clients’, so that the art pieces would function as a platform for them to be able speak. Results from this project provide an opportunity to inform the role of co-created art installations in future research, as positive feedback from the survey from both public viewers and the clients provides support for pursuing opportunities to share artwork designed and directly guided by food bank clients.

Research implementing a co-creative arts-based research design methodology could provide opportunities for communication resource development tools in the food assistance field, that allow for community events that are co-planned and facilitated with clients. Projects such as therapeutic, creative workshops with food bank clients, and public art exhibits featuring client designed artwork could also form the basis for designing a replicable co-creative event toolkit. A creative toolkit which could provide food bank professionals with an effective communication tool to be used at partnering food pantries to engage with food insecure populations in more meaningful and impactful conversations that result in a shift of positionality.

CHAPTER 4

CREATING THE "PERFECT PANTRY" FROM ART AND FOOD OPPRESSION: THE USE OF CREATIVE WORKSHOPS AND TOOLKITS AS PLATFORMS OF EMPOWERMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING FOOD OPPRESSION IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS[2]

[2] Jourdan, H., Borron, A. To be submitted to Agriculture and Human Values

Abstract

Serving as phase 2 of an arts-based approach to engaging food pantry clientele in an effort to formulate solutions in regard to designing a new food pantry model, this paper details the shift from a researcher-led approach to a co-constructed approach with clientele. This study explored the benefits of a participant-led, co-created, arts-based methodology as a strategy for enhanced communication and critical thinking skills with vulnerable populations at two food pantries. The research questions that led this study were: (1) How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity? (2) What does arts-based research look like from a co-constructed approach? and (3) How does a co-constructed approach affect public viewing and solution building?

Throughout the study, each participant shared lived experiences about food insecurity through a series of creative workshops that involved collage, found poetry, and exhibit brainstorming and design; they also shared through individual creative journaling in between workshops. During each session, participants would talk through their experiences, concerns, and ideas as they worked on and shared the meanings behind their creations with the other participants. Each group's collective work culminated into a public art exhibit representing their associated pantry. These exhibits served multiple purposes, representing a source of pride and an empowering platform for clients to share their vision of a better food assistance system; and to also remove stigma around food insecurity, while casting a wider net of communicative engagement within the community.

The use of arts-based workshops resulted in clients' increased interest, emotional investment, and leadership in discussion topics as the workshop series progressed. One client took the initiative to exchange emails with the researcher and another client to discuss ideas

outside of the meeting times. The use of journals proved to be a valuable source for expression and critical thinking, as well as a prompt for discussions based on creating new programs for the food pantry. Clients at one pantry ultimately chose to use the concept of a garden space at the pantry as their focal point, creating a wooden pallet garden from recycled materials and creating an action plan for implementing a garden space. The resulting exhibits also emphasized client ownership of issues and ideas, which led to the design of engagement programs at their local pantry based on their own discussion topics, with two of the most significant being a pantry garden space and client-specific support groups.

Keywords: *arts-based research, food insecurity, co-creation, communication , visual communication, participant-led art*

Introduction

Food insecurity, which USDA defines as "a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food," affects 42.2 million people or approximately 1 in 8 households in America (UDSA, ERS, 2017). Individuals experiencing food insecurity also face a multitude of social and economic factors that lead and contribute to a poor quality of life, which makes gaining a level of food security and overall stability extremely difficult (Lessa & Rocha, 2012). Due to this, many households turn to government- and community-funded food assistance programs, such as food pantries, to alleviate the financial strain of buying food. While countless studies have been implemented to measure food insecurity in the United States (USDA, ERS), the distribution rate of food assistance programs, and food assistance facilities (Feeding America, 2016), little change or improvement has been made in food assistance models (Poppendieck, 1999) despite a consistent incline of food bank and pantry output (Bhattarai,Duffy, & Raymond,2005). Academic scholars in geography (Poppendieck, 1994), agriculture (Tarasuk, Eakin, 2005; Allen,1999) and public health (Teron, Tarasuk,1999) have all questioned the lack of change within the ineffective and short-sighted nature of "emergency" food assistance programs, which provide finite amounts of food, yet are not effective in creating long-term solutions in food security for users (Bazerghi, McKay, & Dunn, 2016). These critiques reveal an essential but less studied facet of food security and food assistance literature prompting the question: *how* do we figure out what sustainable changes need to be made in food assistance that results in long-term self sufficiency? Ultimately, the answer to this question lies in effective communication; by gathering rich data from those who participate in food assistance programs, we may better understand what obstacles need to be removed to create more opportunities for attaining self-sufficiency.

To begin to address approaches to creating more effective collaboration and solution building, this study explored the use of arts-based research as a communicative tool for creating discursive spaces with and around the lived experiences of low-income working families to better understand areas of food insecurity. Working with vulnerable populations such as food insecure individuals presents challenges for qualitative researchers, who may encounter communicative barriers that inhibit open and healthy discourse between themselves and participants (Harris & Roberts, 2003; Kitzinger, 1995). Participants may be reluctant to communicate through traditional methods such as interviews or surveys due to feelings of heightened vulnerability or lack of positionality (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009) that stem from economic status, or fear the social ramifications of voicing their opinions (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak & Crann, 2015), resulting in inconclusive or inaccurate data results. A quick look into the literature of arts-based research showed a strong connection between the artistic process of alternative forms of expression, and creating an improved sense of ownership and autonomy for its participants (Leavy, 2015). Studies have shown self-expression is a key component of an individual's sense of agency (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick,1995), affecting the demonstration of self-sufficiency and autonomy in the daily lives of individuals and among family members (Sidney-Ando, 2014; Gecas, 2003). The intent of arts-based research (ABR) is to use alternative forms of communication among individuals who are "disadvantaged economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally" (Kay, 2000, p. 423), in order to create a deeper emotional connection and, therefore, a deeper understanding of their needs. In the case of this research, ABR is intended to create a discursive space among food pantry clients, the food assistance programs designed to serve them, and the researcher—a space often compromised due

to stigmatization and lack of resources. This research explores the effectiveness and benefits of a co-constructed, participant-led approach between the research participants and the researcher.

This study was formed based on a need found in a larger, overarching study conducted with a large food bank in a metropolitan area that sought to better understand factors of stability in food insecure individuals' lives. The objective was to transform the current food assistance model in a way that situates the clientele, the food bank, and affiliated food pantry agencies as equal partners in a discussion that collectively re-envisions the food pantry model. As a subset of the larger study, this research investigated the effectiveness of art-based research methodologies as a communicative tool to engage food pantry clients in critical and socially aware conversations around food assistance programs. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity?
2. What does arts-based research look like from a co-constructed approach?
3. How does a co-constructed approach to research affect public viewing and solution building?

Literature Review

Communicative Barriers

It is not uncommon for researchers to encounter communicative barriers that inhibit open and healthy discourse between themselves and participants (Harris & Roberts, 2003.; Kitzinger, 1995), who may experience feelings of heightened vulnerability or lack of positionality (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009), or fear the social ramifications of voicing their opinions (Ellard-Gray, et al., 2015). Particular identifiers or social factors of these "hard- to - reach" populations that researchers should take into account when designing research are 1)

geographic location, 2) disenfranchised or at risk due to lack of socioeconomic status or lack of agency, and 3) inability to record and or speak out about traumatic experiences (Ellard-Gray, et al., 2015, p.1). Social isolation resulting from these environmental factors are directly linked to individual communicative barriers that inhibit open communication between researchers and participants. In order to find solutions to overcoming these barriers, it is imperative to first identify and assess these barriers. Prominent participant barriers to communication are researcher labels or mislabels of a particular population, a mistrust of the research process, perceived participation risks such as a loss of status or privacy, and participant resource constraints, such as lack of time, transportation or childcare (Boag-Munroe & Evangelou, 2012; Ellard-Gray et al., 2015; O'Reilly-de Brún et al., 2015)

Solutions for these barriers included a more inclusive labeling system, a prescreening survey of a general population, avoiding stigmatizing or identifying language, conducting research in a familiar environment for communities and building a rapport with participants before recruiting (Ellard-Gray, et al., 2015; Evangelou, Coxon, Sylva, Smith, & Chan, 2013). Researchers also suggested integrating creative approaches to garnering trust, such as using informal language in recruitment, avoiding typing or writing while conducting interviews, and creating a secure and anonymized storage system for all data to protect identities(reference?).

Dialogue and Discourse

Another key element of effective communication in research is the importance of dialogical space and discursive space as a means of producing meaningful conversations around positionality and solution building. Dialogical space refers to a living space (Lefebvre, 1991) and the subsequent knowledge that is created through reflection and co creation (Chappell & Craft, 2011), in which one or more possibilities,voices, and viewpoints are shared around a singular

issue (Chappell & Craft, 2011; Habermas, 1984; Hopkins & Todd, 2015). A discursive space refers to a space in which individuals are challenged to discuss topics that are perceived to affect them and their perceived group (Kellner, 2013; Flores,1996; McCarthy,1978)

Value of ABR

ABR has gained recognition in healthcare (Fraser & al Sayah,2011; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2008), sociology (Cole & Knowles, 2008), social work (Huss, Kaufman, & Sibony, 2013), and art education fields (Darts, 2006) for its proficiency in engaging individuals who suffer from trauma to communicate more freely (Yohani, 2008; Latta, Thompson, 2011). While verbal or written communication has the potential to highlight social stressors associated with these perceived social hierarchies and positionality between at-risk populations and community partners, the creative use of nonverbal communication has shown to be a promising means for "cultivating understanding" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26) and "democratiz[ing] meaning-making and decentralizing academic researchers as the 'experts'" (Leavy, 2015, p. 26), so that participants and researchers participate in a more balanced relationship. For the purpose of this article, the art forms included collage, found poetry, creative journals, and collaborative art making were addressed.

Collage

Collage, the reductive- and restructured-additive methodology of recreating an image from other premade found imagery, has been proven to be an approachable, unstructured medium for encouraging creativity in individuals who may experience insecurity or intimidation by the concept of creating "art" (Landgarten, 1981 & 1993; Linesch, 1988; Wadeson, 1987, 2000; Raffaelli, 2016). A study conducted by Kagin and Lusebrink (1978) posited that the effectiveness of collage is due in part to the small "reflective distance" or cognitive distance

between the creator and the medium, resulting in sensory rich experience for those who use it (Yuen, 2016, p. 21).

Collage as an approachable tool for expression. Using ABR methods can often impose an initial sense of feeling intimidated with participants who do not identify themselves as artists. To address this, Raffaelli and Hartzell (2016) conducted a study to better understand the effectiveness and approachability of arts-based therapy techniques for individuals who do not identify as artists. Participants were given the option of drawing or creating a collage to share with the group, guided by the prompt, "Tell me about yourself." After completing the collage or drawing, participants were asked to verbally explain the piece, and asked a series of open-ended questions, such as:

> What was it like being asked to make a piece of art about yourself?... How easy was it for you to say what you wanted to say about yourself with drawing materials?... [and] What informed your choice of using [drawing materials or collage] for your first piece? (p. 22)

Sessions each lasted around an hour, and with interaction and interviews audio recorded and transcribed. Some themes found within the drawing session were, a) anxiety about having to come up with an idea with which to fill the blank page, and the resulting need for control as reflected in the drawing materials selected.

Kagin and Lusebrink (1978) posited that that art processes can be organized based on an individual's response to the medium and experience (Raffaelli, 2016), and that various mediums can elicit different responses on "a kinesthetic, sensory, perceptual, affective, cognitive, symbolic, or creative level, or a combination thereof" (Kagin & Lusebrink, 1978; Lusebrink, 1990; Raffaelli, 2016, p. 21). Raffaelli (2016) provides the example of a chisel or a paintbrush that may cause a "reflective distance" between the user and emotional experience of creating art,

emphasizing the importance of choosing a medium that will place individuals at ease, instead of creating or adding to their anxiety level (p.22).

Found Poetry

Predominately used in healthcare (Fraser & al Sayah, 2011; Herbison & Lokanc-Diluzio, 2008) and social work (Huss, Kaufman, & Sibony, 2013), found poetry—also known as poetic inquiry—uses selected portions of transcribed participant interviews to create a "poetic rendition of a story or phenomenon" (Butler-Kisber, 2002, p. 232). The process of creating poetry in a research context serves a dual purpose: To gather a deeper, multifaceted perspective of participant experiences, and to act as a therapeutic outlet that facilitates a discursive space for authentic sharing (Latta & Thompson, 2011). Like other forms of arts-based methodologies, found poetry acts as source of reflection for participants and an opportunity to "[transform] the contents of [their] consciousness into a public forum that others can understand" (Eisner, 1997, p.4), allowing participants to share vulnerable emotions about their lived experiences in ways they feel are more natural and personally controlled, specifically if sharing in an abstract form of storytelling. The inherently reflexive nature of poetry, for both the reader and creator, encourages a deeper understanding of the story being told within the piece.

Creating multiple levels of understanding .Found poetry uses only selected portions of transcribed participant interviews as a the foundation for both researchers and participants to create poetry that reflects a emotional response, or a "poetic rendition of a story or phenomenon" (Butler-Kisber, 2002). Sandra Faulkner (Leavy, 2010) describes that this methodology is a particularly impactful exercise in empowering at-risk populations by creating an opportunity:

> to get at and express subjugated knowledge and the experience of those who are disenfranchised. Here the specific form or shape that poetry occupies becomes paramount

> to the articulation of marginalized voices...The poetic form can therefore help us access those aspects of a hierarchical society that may be further rendered invisible in traditional forms of scientific writing. (p.4)

The process of creating poetry in a research context serves multiple purposes; to gather a deeper, multifaceted perspective of a problem, and to act as a therapeutic outlet that encourages an environment of authentic sharing (Latta & Thompson, 2011). Like other forms of arts-based methodologies, found poetry acts as source of reflection for participants and an opportunity to "[transform] the contents of [their] consciousness into a public forum that others can understand" (Eisner, 1997, p.4), allowing participants to share vulnerable emotions about their lived experiences in ways that they may feel are more natural and creates a space for abstract feeling associated with storytelling. The inherently reflexive nature of poetry, for both the reader and creator, encourages a deeper understanding of the story being told within the piece.

One significant aspect of found poetry is its capacity to act as a member checking and triangulation tool by creating multiple layers of understanding and reflection for participants to review their verbalized thoughts and distill them into the most potent and necessary form of sentiment (Reilly, 2013). For example, in the study '*If you call it a poem': Toward a framework for the assessment of arts-based works*, three different groups were used throughout the "co-creation" process of found poetry: the initial interviewed group of participants, the researchers who established and sorted the interviews into themes, and participants of the workshop who created or "'found' the poems within the text of thematic transcripts provided" (Lafreniere & Cox, 2012, p.328). After being interviewed with prompted questions, the third group was given selected portions of transcribed interviews based on themes, in the setting of a creative writing workshop. This use of layered groups creates a multiplicity of potential data that is profound for

gaining deeper understandings of perceptions surrounding marginalized groups that deal with stigma-heavy associations such as low-income residents, and both urban and rural food insecure populations.

Impact for participants and researchers. Although poetry as a form of inquiry has similar goals as many other arts-based research methods (emotional vulnerability through creative autonomy), the process of the data collection itself is slightly more nuanced. The use of text as opposed to visual imagery creates a "method of discovery"(Cahnmann, 2003, p.29), that requires the creator of the poetry to thoroughly comprehend the emotions of participants, while still being capable of abstractly dissecting and condensing those words into a moving, and articulate account of the interview. This reductive process, described by The Academy of American Poets as the "literary equivalent of a collage" (Latta, 2011, p.6), creates a healthy environment for reflexive discourse between the a) initial participants perception of themselves, b) the 'found poetry' participants perceptions of the initial participants, and c) researchers perceptions of both groups. For researchers, this multi-level assessment forces them to view the data "in different and sometimes unusual ways that can yield insights" (Prendergast, 2006, p. 235). The condensed literary quality of poetry also enables the researcher to create a compressed linear commentary of data, useful both as an "artistic tool…to aid…refinement of qualitative data" (Patrick, 2016, p. 394) and a means to assimilate participants lived experiences in a format that is more interesting and easily understandable for audiences outside of the academic realm.

For initial participants, the impact of this process is less direct than other forms of arts-based research, as they do not actively produce the poems themselves. However, the ability to provide the base, raw material for which the poems are created from, still allows for the sense of autonomy in making lived experiences known and shared. Creators of the poetry arguably

experience the greatest impact of this process, as they play an active role in the therapeutic and creative process of poetry writing, while also being given the opportunity to reflexively consider the information of transcribed interviews.

Creative Journals

Creative journals have been used as a learning support tool and intervention to support emotional expression in education, psychology, healthcare and art therapy fields (Peterson, & Jones, 2001; Hammond, 2005; Mims, 2015); the methodology of using personal visual diaries allows for both flexibility for multiple disciplines, as well as creating a personal and intimate outlet for participants to share their thoughts. Depending on the field of study this methodology can be known as creative journals, visual diaries, therapeutic journaling (Mims, 2015), and visual artifact journals (Sanders-Bustle, 2008), but conceptually is remains the same. Participants are given a physical notebook, which they use as a platform of expression throughout the duration of the project. Beyond this, the methodology can be used in multiple ways: The journal can function as a may actually as the primary form of data collection and communication, or as a secondary form of support for gathering rich data. The use a visual medium is a key component of creative journals, as the use of a personal artifact creates opportunities for multiple benefits through a single object; the journal acts as a creative-expressive outlet to communicate, reflect and communicate thoughts in a nonverbal platform that is perceived as more private than other qualitative communication methodologies such as focus groups and interviews.

Creative Workshops

Creative workshops have been used multiple fields (Leitch, 2006; Castagna, et al., 2013 ; Richards, 2012; Piana, et al., 2010) as a group solution and trust building tool to gain better understanding of participant perceptions and experiences. The methodology consists of a

participant group setting of one or more and integrates researcher or artist facilitated arts-based activities, such as drawing and painting, dance (Gregory, 2010), theater (Richards, 2012) , sculpture (Piana, et al., 2010) or journaling (Castagna, et al., 2013). The workshops may hold one art medium multiple times, or use multiple art mediums throughout the duration of the workshop series. The function of these activities is multifaceted; using arts-based activities generates deeper data collection (Peek., Tobin-Gurley, Cox, Scannell, Fletcher & Heykoop, 2016), as the participants become the storytellers or creator of sharing their experiences. By placing participants as the storytellers of their own lives, researchers are able to flip the usual top down model of information dissemination---creating a position in which participants have control and ownership over their stories, and therefore the knowledge that they hold.

Theoretical Framework

Grounded Theory

The modes of data collection were conducted using grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1967), which is an inductive methodology designed to make qualitative research more effective by creating a flexible and dynamic approach to theory making and data gathering (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). In addition, because this research was focused on food insecurity and the individuals often faced with a variety of challenges within the context of their community and society, the lens of critical theory was used to frame areas of inquiry and workshop activities.

Critical Social Theory

Critical social theory focuses on analyzing and breaking free of oppressive structures that exist in society through daily interactions and the implicit perpetuation of oppression by adhering to social norms and assigned roles. Through this critical lens of society, critical social theory becomes a participatory process by which individuals take part in “reflective and critical

assessment of the relationship between overarching social, economic or political systems…and everyday practices" (Freeman, Vasconcelos, 2010, p.8).

Methodology

Using an arts-based approach that placed the participants and the researcher in a co-constructed working relationship, this research examined methods intended to foster a discursive space around food insecurity and solution building among food pantry clientele. Participants in this study were two female individuals, named Lillian and Rebecca (pseudonyms) who relied on services provided through a food pantry in the Southeastern United States. Both participated in a larger previous study with a food bank and multiple food pantries in a metropolitan area, and were middle-aged mothers, who were both married.

Access to audience(s)

Permission to work with participants in this project was gained through previous interaction in a larger project with a food bank that provided access to metropolitan area food pantries, and subsequently, some selected food pantry clientele. Through the larger project, the researcher was able to form relationships and establish trust with food pantry clients, who were asked to be a part of the creative workshop research process.

Workshop design

The workshop series was designed around selected arts-based methodologies that were supported by literature to build and develop discourse, ideas and solutions with at risk or vulnerable populations by using a partnership of verbal discussions and visual or written creative activities. Although the series was designed using a grounded theory framework (which allowed for flexibility) each arts-based method was purposely chosen to be used in a particular order to

facilitate expression and engage participants in the creative, solution building process. The rationale for each workshop methodology is detailed below.

Rationale for Workshop Design

Workshop 1

The first workshop began with collage, as the supporting literature showed it was an approachable, yet impactful medium for individuals who both had little experience in art or were intimidated by the art-making process, and who were unaccustomed to expressing themselves to others. Materials provided in the first workshop consisted of recycled magazines, construction paper, glue or glue sticks, scissors and markers. The use of magazine images and text provided participants with access to multiple outlets to visually represent their ideas without the pressure of having to create an image "from scratch"; their final image, however, which consisted of multiple images would be a visual story that was unique to them and their vision. This easy-to-use mode of visual expression would act as an icebreaker, providing an outlet of expression, while also acting as a therapeutic prop to calm their minds while we held our discussions.

Workshop 2

The method chosen for the second workshop was found poetry. This method was chosen to follow collage, as it held the same concept for the creative process: making something new from an already existing source. Although participants had encountered this concept with visual imagery in the first workshop, the use of a written "literary collage" (Latta, 2011, p. 6) would challenge them to begin to critically and creatively think about the creative process as it intersected with their own thoughts and experiences from a previous interview they took part in. The text provided in this workshop were three interview transcript excerpts for each participant, a printed example of found poetry, a handout which provided overview of the found poetry

process, a blank found poetry template, sharpies, highlighters, and scissors. The reflexive nature of found poetry was intended to introduce and facilitate participants in solution building.

Workshop 3

Although originally intended to be photovoice, the third workshop was used as a brainstorming and creative thinking session for the final project piece. This decision was made based on client feedback and the researcher's assessment of the project timeline. Using a grounded theory framework, the first two workshops were planned with specific topics and goals in mind; the last two workshops were intended to change and be informed by the changing ideas and interests of the participants. A wide range of materials were provided at this workshop, to encourage participants to think creatively, and to inspire them. These materials included markers, pens and pencils, paper, recycled food containers, paint, and paintbrushes.

Workshop 4

The final workshop was informed by the brainstorm and creative thinking session in workshop three. Using grounded theory, and a participant-led process, participants decided to use recycled materials and live plants as the inspiration for the final piece; a vertical wooden palette garden which would be affixed with recycled food containers, which would act as planters. Although the method in the final workshop was decided and informed by participants' ideas, the final piece was always intended to be a collaborative art piece between clients. The use of a collaborative art piece was intentionally planned as the last piece in the series for two reasons: 1) to provide an opportunity for initiative and trust building between participants that would provide a platform to continue this work outside of the project 2) to provide a final challenge and experience to truly co create an art piece with others; until this point, participants would be collaboratively thinking, but still creating their own singular art pieces. A collaborative

piece represented the culmination of participants creating and building solutions together. Materials used in this workshop consisted of varying recycled food containers (egg cartons, milk cartons, cans), a wooden pallet, acrylic paint, paint brushes, and glue.

Co-creation: Leading the Research

An important component of agency for participants in qualitative research relates to the concept of co-creation between researchers and participants in the data collection and solution building process. Co-creation in a research context means the power structure, knowledge give and take, and solution building are meant to be shared between researchers and participants; this balanced relationship differs from the top-down approach commonly found in the research process. ABR particularly emphasizes this shared process of knowledge making through using nonverbal communication processes that differ from normative verbal interactions; by using arts-based communication such as imagery, poetry, music or movement, ABR shifts the power to the creator of the artwork, giving participants a sense of ownership and validity to their unique experiences. From this methodology, two approaches can be taken in co creation of art work and knowledge: A researcher-led process, or a participant-led process. Below the value of both will be discussed.

Researcher-led process: Researcher as Artist

One common methodology for integrating art and research practices in qualitative research involves the researcher taking on a dual role of artist and researcher (Finley & Knowles,1995). The methodology requires the researcher to take a purposeful and reflexive approach to both the creative and data collection process by combining the rigorous standards of qualitative research such as observations, field notes, and interviews partnered with the expressive, fluid and nonlinear approach to creation (Eaves, 2014; Leavy, 2015; Coemans &

Hannes, 2017). Taking on this dual role serves multiple purposes: Challenging the research to become more aware and reflexive of the research process, and subsequently, the interactions (researcher and participant) held in the process (Spouse, 2000; Shipe, 2016) , gaining a deeper understanding of participants' experiences through the reflective and expressive nature of the creation process (Eaves, 2014), and providing an approachable form of knowledge dissemination to nonacademic audiences through visual, auditory (musical), or movement-based (re)presentations of client and researcher experiences (Feldman, Hopgood, & Dickins, 2013;Cole & Knowles, 2008;Cole & McIntyre, 2003). Another benefit of this process is the flexibility in which it can be used in the research process. Examples of varying modes of researcher- led art have been shown through public art exhibits designed and curated by the researcher featuring others' artwork (researcher as curator), art pieces created by the researcher based on their experiences in the research process (researcher as artist), and art pieces created by the researcher based on experiences of participants (researcher as artist interpreter) (Stake & Kerr, 1995; Eaves, 2014; Cole & Knowles, 2008).

Participant-led process: Participant as Artist

An alternative to the researcher as artist methodology turns the co-creation process on its head to allow participants to lead and collaborate in the creation process, resulting in artwork that is participant created. This process, identified as participant-led research (PLR), is used almost exclusively in arts-based qualitative research in which the participants commonly are experiencing some form of oppression, isolation or exclusion from social norms (Wang & Burris, 1994; Pilcher, 2012,p.1). This methodology emerged in response to the top-down, 'follow the leader' model" (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017, p.87) relationship between researchers and participants that is predominantly used for quantitative and qualitative research. This unequal

balance of power produces a problematic narrative that leaves participants feeling helpless or without agency in the system (academic and community research) that seeks to assist them (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017). PLR aims to provide participants an "increased negotiation in social spaces and in research" (Stevenson & Holloway,p.87), by allowing them to inform and lead the research process through a series of exercises that are loosely facilitated by the researcher. Stevenson & Holloway (2017) show a clear example of this, through a PLR project which incorporated sound-based research with blind participants in their own communities. Participants and researchers went on community walks, while participants were able to record and identify sounds that were perceived as important or meaningful to them. These recordings were then used in an interactive exhibit which encouraged viewers to "view" or listen to their community from a different perspective. This model of collaborative research provides an opportunity for "both parties collaboratively act towards a free, equal and just society" (Malherbe & Everitt- Penhale , 2017, p.134), while also providing opportunities to move discourse outside of the academic realm, to a space where participants voices are heard (Stevenson & Holloway, 2017).

Subjectivity statement

I acknowledge my experiences differ from the experiences of the individuals with whom I conduct research, and that this may affect how they experience creativity and artistic practices as a whole. I also acknowledge that my personal and privileged experiences with food may inhibit me from fully understanding the emotions and experiences that individuals facing food insecurity hold, as I have never experienced food insecurity nor been in a position of having to rely on food resources on behalf of a food pantry.

Rationale for each workshop design

The following details the discussion topic and artistic mediums integrated into a series of four creative workshops with food pantry clients. Workshops incorporated three arts-based methodologies: collage, found poetry, and a collaborative art project. Throughout the series, clients were challenged to build solutions to create an improved food pantry model by drawing on their own experiences to reimagine the components of the ideal food pantry. In addition to the workshops, clients were also given a creative journal toolkit, which was used as a secondary source of reflection and visual expression.

Workshop 1: Envisioning change through collage

The first workshop in the series began with the introduction to incorporating arts-based projects in a focus group setting by providing the clients with their "creative journal toolkit" and welcome letter. Clients attending these workshops had previously worked with the researcher(s), which resulted in familiarity and rapport that was helpful in beginning discussion. As the researcher began to address the project goals, clients were asked to create a "vision board" collage visually describing the ideal pantry. There were no limitations set on this; clients were encouraged to be as ambitious or realistic as these chose to be. The table was set up with scissors, glue sticks, markers and recycled magazines. Over the course of two hours, researchers and clients slowly collected imagery relating to their specific vision as the one researcher loosely facilitated discussion to begin to address the concept of solution building regarding in regards to the current pantry model, as well as in reaction to clients' previous discussions related to regarding negative experiences or identified problems with the food pantry.

Collected data and process of analysis consisted of qualitative data from workshop discussions, which were recorded and transcribed; visual data from client artwork in workshop

sessions, and imagery featured in client creative journals, written responses from client journals and found poetry, and researcher reflexive analysis and found poetry created from workshop discussion transcriptions. Creative workshop discussions were transcribed, and then coded using a thematic analysis. Visual data of creative workshop artwork and creative journal imagery were coded based on subject matter and content and cross compared to emerged themes in the thematic analysis to triangulate data. Written data consisting of client journal entries and found poetry were coded based on subject matter and topic and compared to emerged themes from the thematic analysis. Finally, researcher field notes, reflexive analysis, and researcher created found poetry from workshop discussions were coded using a thematic analysis; this data, along with found poetry from client journals and researcher workshop found poetry were compared to triangulate and member checking the coding the process.

Workshop 2: Found Poetry

The second workshop addressed the methodology of found poetry. Clients were given researcher- chosen excerpts of their own transcribed interviews from an earlier, overarching project in which they addressed experiences they had and obstacles they faced regarding food pantry use (see APPENDIX K & L). In addition to the interview excerpts, clients were also given two printed worksheets to facilitate in the poetry creation process (APPENDIX I & J), one which provided examples of found poetry, and the other provided a blank template to create found poetry.

After reading through the transcripts, clients were asked to choose specific phrases or words from the transcript that related or resonated with them as it related to "food and frustration." Clients circled, highlighted, or used sharpie to select phrases directly on the printed transcript, which were then transferred to the found poetry worksheet. Once clients had

completed their first attempt at found poetry, they were asked again to reflect on the process. Researcher-facilitated prompts were: *Would you like to share about the process? How did it make you feel? Did anything interesting come out of rereading things that you have said?*

Workshop 3: Wild Card Week

This project used a ground theory framework to design the creative workshop process, with the intention of designing the last two workshops around the discussions held in workshops 1 and 2. This provided the researcher with the flexibility to facilitate the creative process in the workshops in a way that best fit the needs of the clients in that particular time. In light of this, Workshop 3, which had originally been loosely planned around recycled object sculpture or photography, was maintained as a "wild card week," such that its content was determined by the participants needs and progress based on discussions held in the previous workshop.

Creative Journals

Another integral part of the co-creative process was the use of creative journals. In the first workshop, clients were given a "creative journal toolkit" which consisted of a gallon zip lock bag containing a small 8 x 11" sketchbook, 2 unsharpened pencils, 2 ballpoint pens, a 12 pack of watercolor pencils, a set of 5 brushes of varying sizes, a pencil sharpener, a glue stick, and a welcome letter detailing the project. Clients were able to take this toolkit home with them, with the intention of using them in time off between workshop meetings to address any ideas, concerns, or thoughts regarding their experiences or discussion topics in meetings. Each meeting they would also be given a printed creative journal prompt to accompany the art medium and topic of the previous meeting; this prompt would act as a springboard for expression and creative content in their journals.

Journal 1

Journal Prompt 1:

After creating a vision board for the perfect pantry to warm you up, let's create another one! Imagine what your idea for a community art exhibit would like at the end of this project.

Directions: Create one small collage (words, pictures, colors from any material) of what you would like to be included in the art exhibit. Write a brief description of what you would like the art exhibit to be like, what you think about being part of an art exhibit, and what your collage represents.

Some questions to think about:

1. What would your idea for a perfect exhibit for community art be?
2. Where would it be?
3. What kind of building?
4. What kind of things would you want to talk about, and who would you want to invite?
5. What kind of colors or music would you like to have?

Journal 2

Journal Prompt 2:

This week we are going to use elements of collage to by creating a found poem from food item labels.

Directions: Using the same process for found poetry as in the workshop, label and space for 12 lines in your journal. Throughout the week, begin looking for words on food labels, advertisements and any food related item that represent an element of frustration that you feel regarding food or your experience with food pantries. Use these collected words to create a found poetry piece in your journal, and write a brief reflection on the process.

You can fill out the worksheet first to organize if that will help you.

Some questions to think about:

1. What are situations that I encounter with food that stress me out? Frustrate me?
2. Is it spending large amounts of time shopping?
3. Waiting in line?
4. What are some things that you feel could relieve your stress or frustration?

Results & Analysis

Two food pantry clientele participated in the four organized workshops. Both were Caucasian women, married, and had children at home. One had a part-time job (known from here on out by her pseudonym Rebecca), and one was a stay-at-home-mother (pseudonym: Lillian); and the husbands of both women worked full or part time outside of the home. Using the constant comparative analysis method, four themes emerged from the culmination of data collected. These themes included: 1) Identifying problems into actionable items; 2) comparing the food pantry environment to client life; 3) taking ownership of artwork, ideas, and roles; and 4) giving importance to fresh food. Below is a brief description of each theme, followed by an overview of what came out of each workshop, all of which are pointed back to applicable themes.

Emerged Themes

1. Identifying problems into actionable solutions: Almost immediately in this project, clients began to shift from simply describing problems or issues they faced with the food pantry and explicitly acknowledged that they wanted to be directly involved in creating change to prevent these problems in the future. Examples of topics from this theme include a client's description what she perceived to be a lack of communication between food pantry staff and clients regarding hours of service; from this discussion, we decided a way to improve this could be an email sign up list for clients to get news from the

pantry. In the context of art making, clients shared stories, memories or ideas for this project based on imagery or phrase from their own or others artwork, leading us to topics of discussion around solution building that otherwise, have not been directly addressed by the researcher.

2. Comparing the food pantry environment to client life: Many conversations were focused on the direct relationship between the food pantry environment and clients' quality of life, in both positive and negative ways. Creating a solution to improve clients' quality of life became a source of direction for the vision in the final project. For example, clients suggested a small garden space to improve clients quality of life while they waited in long windows of time to be served; the garden could provide an "inspiring environment" for clients, expose them to fresh food and growing practices, and potentially provide a space for childcare/child play area.
3. Taking ownership of artwork, ideas, and roles: Conversation that included clients self-identifying their strengths and valid and unique roles in this project, and in creating change with the food pantry and surrounding community. For example, in one discussion, clients began to recognize each other's strengths and identify specific ways in which they could be used to assist in the project. The theme was also emphasized in moments the researcher became aware of specific strengths and unique roles that clients could have in the process. Another important element of this theme is reflexivity and self-reflection, which stemmed from art pieces and led to discussions regarding their positionality or their effect on others around them.
4. Giving importance to fresh food: The importance of fresh food access was central as topic of discussion throughout this project. Both clients were passionate about

incorporating, or growing fresh vegetables in their daily lives. One client had experience in small organic farming, and felt strongly about assisting others through education on growing practices. Another client dealt with extreme dietary restrictions due to health issues with herself and her family members; these health issues were a catalyst in her interest to access and learn more about growing fresh produce.

Workshop 1: Envisioning change through collage

While participants had been acquainted prior to the start of this first workshop, they did not know each other well. Therefore, throughout the workshop, became more acquainted with each other and the researcher based on discussion prompts from the researcher. Themes that began to emerge during this workshop were: 1) Identifying problems into actionable items; 2) comparing the food pantry environment to client life; and 4) giving importance to fresh food. One moment in this workshop, was the first researcher identified moment of turning a problem into an actionable solution. Lillian mentioned that she had difficulty keeping up with the changing holiday hours of the food pantry, as she noticed a small handwritten sign that was posted on the door of the food pantry during the workshop meeting. From this, discussion, emerged the simple, but effective idea for a sign up email sheet for food pantry clients. During the collage activity, conversation included a range of topics from swapping resources for food preparation and sharing of childhood memories to critically assessing modes of change for the food pantry. As they reflected about the importance of gardening in their own childhood years, they also shared the same desire that their own children have the same experience.

> *Rebecca*: But my memories [of being in a garden], yeah I do have some. I have played in the dirt for quite a while and there's a lot of satisfaction in it for me… I think it really needs to be integrated into the children's schools , like the

> greenhouses, there needs to be more interest in it, its needs to start at the children's level because the parents are always so busy and you know the next generations [needs it].

From this first discussion, a consistent and clear vision for a garden space emerged that would eventually become the final project for the group. The last 30 minutes of the discussion were used to discuss client vision boards, which included visual elements for a garden space, and a desire for fresh vegetables and an availability of spices in food pantries. In addition, participants also addressed a need for a mobile food pantry targeting elderly individuals and community members who lack transportation, as well as a need to design a communication strategy to engage unreached Latino populations in the area. Rebecca noted that as an employee of the school system and volunteer/client at the food pantry, she saw Latino students in need of food, yet did not see Latino community members using food pantry services. An excerpt of her concern and suggestions are below:

> *Rebecca*: there are families in need...can they send em flyers to share? Not just here, but where the food banks are, cause I see these kids every day; I know who's got money and who doesn't and you know, sadly I know this. But when there is kids that come up for 4 or 5 days and [are charging lunch accounts] ...you're concerned. There's a different level that's not being addressed, across the board, there's the seniors, the kids, and the adults who you know who are responsible for them and I think we could reach out a little bit more in that area.

Image 4.1- Workshop 1 Collage. Collage created in the workshop reflected an emphasis on fresh food and a positive atmosphere, which was also reflected in discussion topics.

Workshop 2 : Found Poetry

When participants were provided their researcher-selected portion of their transcript from a previous in-depth interview, their initial reaction to the transcript was uncomfortable and hesitant; both clients verbalized that they felt self-conscious of how their spoken conversations appeared to translate in a written format. Rebecca had difficulty even reading her transcript, as she felt that her speaking style made her seem unintelligent; at one point exclaiming "I went to school, I swear I did! Oh it's horrible!" Lillian who was usually very talkative and identified as a creative person, remained unusually quiet throughout the exercise. When prompted, she reluctantly shared "I don't know, it was ok. I don't like listening to myself...I wanted to correct every mistake, instead of concentrating on the assignment." After reading through the transcripts, clients were asked to choose specific phrases or words from the transcript that related or resonated with them as it related to "food and frustration." Clients circled, highlighted, or used sharpie to select phrases directly on the printed transcript, which were then transferred to the found poetry worksheet. Once clients had completed their first attempt at found poetry, they were asked again to reflect on the process. Researcher-facilitated prompts were: *Would you like to share about the process? How did it make you feel? Did anything interesting come out of rereading things that you have said?* However, once both of the participants completed the

exercise, their reaction were notably more positive, with both participants agreeing that the found poetry process was one of reflection for them; this led to a pivotal discussion regarding the difference between talking about a problem and identifying a problem to create a plan of action or a needed solution. The following is an excerpt from this discussion:

Researcher: Other than [feeling uncomfortable initially], did you think anything interesting came out of it? Rereading things you have said?

Rebecca : Yeah, I think I could've condensed myself, and just got the point across

Researcher: Well that's kind of what we're trying to do with the poem

Lillian: Get at the main point. Yeah I like that, cause some of it, it's like did I really need to give em that much information though?

Rebecca: We ramble too much, we ramble….we really need to get it focused, if we're gonna make it anything happen. I think it's for me narrowing down what needs to be accomplished. And we can talk about our struggles all day long but we really need to get to the matter, because everybody struggles.

Lillian: the struggle shouldn't be the focus, the solutions should be the focus.

Rebecca: Exactly

Lillian: We all struggle and need to be able to empathize with people that struggle but we really need to ---

Rebecca: Figure a better way

Lillian: You know get past that, to get over that, and to overcome the struggles and move on rather than keep you know falling down that pit of despair.

In this exchange, participants created a shift in their positionality in this workshop, that was absent in the previous workshop. By identifying their roles as ones participating in active

change, they began to take ownership of the discussion, the project, and the valuable part they played in creating change.

As the discussion continued, clients were asked to share their found poetry pieces aloud. Each piece revealed the unique experiences held by the clients; one client chose to share the importance of getting kids involved in the cooking process and a small garden in her apartment courtyard, while another showed the clear frustration of budgeting, buying and feeding for a large family on an impossibly small budget.

Rebecca Found Poem

frugal
stockpile
toothpaste
six months
make your dollar stretch
family
small courtyard
growing family
what's for dinner
I like to get the kids involved
they need to know it's not just grab and eat
a few cans from the pantry
onions tomatoes
teaching her how to
froze the rest
when it gets cold,
pull it out
planted a few radishes,
teaching
humbling and exciting too

Lillian Found Poem

how much I have to spend
it breaks down even smaller
kind of profound
it's really hard for somebody
it's a profound thing
not a lot of money when you think about it

can't feed your family for $10 a day
add extra for extra people
it's not always easy

The remainder of the workshop consisted of the participants holding a discussion about ways to improve the quality of life for clients during wait times at the food pantry, or ways to make waiting times into a more useful and enjoyable experience. These ideas consisted of creating a more effective, separate waiting process for elderly and handicapped individuals who could not withstand long hours of standing in line.

Workshop 3: Wild card week

This project used a ground theory framework to design the creative workshop process, with the intention of designing the last two workshops around the discussions held in workshops 1 and 2. This provided the researcher with the flexibility to facilitate the creative process in the workshops in a way that best fit the needs of the clients in that particular time. In light of this, Workshop 3, which had originally been loosely planned around recycled object sculpture or photography, was maintained as a "wild card week," such that its content was determined by the participants needs and progress based on discussions held in the previous workshop. After workshop 2, client journal entries, and workshop transcriptions were reviewed to inform the direction of Workshop 3. This review indicated that a brainstorm session for the design of the group project and exhibit would be beneficial for both the researcher and clients. A session devoted to planning and design was chosen to ensure that client voices and visions remained the guiding force for the project. In addition to this, clients would have the opportunity to ask any questions they had about the project for the researcher.

This discussion supported and further expanded all four themes: 1) Identifying problems into actionable items; 2) comparing the food pantry environment to client life; 3) taking

ownership of artwork, ideas, and roles; and 4) giving importance to fresh food. Discussion topics began through reflection about the previous week's journal entries (Found Poetry; see Creative Journals), regarding client-to-client interaction in the waiting room area of the food pantry. Clients reflected on their instinct to judge others and trying to make sense of personal identity, despite being in the same space of the food pantry waiting room. Ultimately they began to critically reexamine these feelings of judgement, and shift their frustration instead to the "system" or current food assistance structure that seems to trap those are forced to take part in it, including in their own lives. The following is an excerpt from one particular exchange regarding this topic is listed below:

> *Lillian*: and there's such a fine line, between it, you know? Because there's like this border, one loaf of bread, can make or break somebody. You know, today I have enough groceries, but tomorrow, I might not have any so, it's such a fine line, because one minute, you're looking at this person over here and you know that they're eating cat food at home, and you see this person over here and they're talking about going out to Red Lobster, and you see both sides and it's hard, because you wonder, where exactly do you fit in? Am I taking advantage like the Red Lobster queen? Or am I a week away from nutritional labels on cat food and dog food? You know, cause it's cheaper, you know….
>
> *Researcher*: Well, I think the fact that you are thinking about that at all, means that you're kind of examining that in a way that maybe before you weren't.
>
> *Rebecca*: Well, but I mean, I've heard it said too though. Somebody might pull up in an Escalade,....however, you can get them used.
>
> *Lillian*: Could be paid for
>
> *Rebecca*: And, they could have bought it when they were employed

Lillian: and now it's paid for

Rebecca: Right. So..you can't always judge a book by its cover

Lillian: Exactly, you don't wanna judge them, because they could've lost their jobs three weeks ago.

Rebecca: Exactly

Lillian: And if they sell their car, then how are they gonna get to a new job?

As clients shifted to begin talking about the final project and exhibit format, they began to take a clear ownership and leadership of the project; the researcher provided minimal facilitation of discussions by challenging clients to envision what they wanted the final piece and exhibit to accomplish. Using the importance of fresh food as an inspiration, clients discussed and traded design ideas on using recycled containers as planters to be affixed to a pallet vertical garden. This piece could then be used after the exhibit in the food pantry space, to create a more relaxing and inviting environment for the clients while waiting to be served.

Workshop 4: Final group piece, creating a vertical garden

Over the course of this project, three recurrent topics or themes emerged in conversation: 2) comparing the food pantry environment to client life; 3) taking ownership of artwork, ideas, and roles; and 4) giving importance to fresh food. Many solutions that clients suggested were strongly related to these themes. By the last two workshops, clients were asked to identify and create a final group project based on a felt need (based on their discussions) for the food pantry. Ultimately, clients felt that a garden space for the food pantry could meet multiple needs by providing the following services: A small supplementary food source that created opportunities for future community engagement (garden volunteers, cooking classes, or gardening classes), a positive environment for waiting clients, a potential learning and recreation space for client

children to safely interact as their parents waited for food. After identifying the need for a garden space, clients decided to create a small vertical garden from a wooden pallet (donated by food pantry staff) and recycled food containers to act as the final piece of functional art that could be used in the pantry space after the exhibit. Clients decorated cans with paint, created decorative egg carton flower chains, plastic bottle garden towers and birdhouses from soy and almond milk cartons in the final workshop. One client's child also became involved, and created hand painted decorative flowers from paper plates to add to the project. Due to time constraints, clients were not able to fully assemble the pallet garden; at the end of the workshop, clients gave the researcher clear instructions regarding paint color for the palette and the format of the pallet garden for the researcher to assemble before the exhibit.

In the final workshop discussion, clients were also asked to envision the curation or the presentation of the piece in the exhibit space. Researcher questions to prompt discussion included: *How would you like it to be presented?...lying flat, hanging, leaning against a wall or as part of some of your other pieces? What would you like viewers to get out of this piece, and how do you want to convey that?*

After discussing varying ideas, clients decided to present the piece in a "mock garden space"; ideas for this space entailed creating an isolated area for this piece, in which the pallet garden would be presented with real plants and garden decorations, such as the milk carton birdhouses, plant markers, jars holding compost, herb and plant scented air fresheners, and sounds associated with outdoor spaces. Clients also concluded that an important part of this piece would be an interactive element to engage viewers in some facet of food; suggestions for this included a seed planting station, compost in jar, or a snack table with fresh veggies and herbs.

Image 4.2 - Workshop 4 art pieces. Above: (from left to right) Milk carton birdhouse, milk carton bird feeder, hand cut and painted honey bee and recycled cardboard packaging

*Image 4.2 - Workshop 4 art pieces (cont.)*Above: (from left to right) hand painted planters from recycled cans, hand painted egg carton "flower chains"

From Problems to Solutions in Workshops

Clients identified several problems in this project, and through discussion and creative workshop projects, began to critically assess ways to form actionable solutions to those problems. Examples of this process is listed in the table below:

Identified Problem	Outcome	Actionable Solution
Food pantry hours not always	Clients' time is wasted	Create an email list to send

consistent; changes shared through sign on site or through word of mouth	traveling to closed food pantry. Frustration, wasted time, gas (money)	clients updates on schedule changes or news updates
Extremely long waiting hours to be serviced/Inefficient Wait Line System	Clients forced to wait in small waiting area or outdoors for extended periods of time. This creates an environment of stress and competitive, social tension between waiting clients.	Create a more pleasant and useful space for clients while waiting : Visual/Emotional: Garden space to create a peaceful environment Educational: Show educational, nutritional videos in waiting area Hold education workshops during waiting time
Waiting area not a child friendly space	Parents must arrange for childcare or avoid going to food pantry due to difficulty	Create partnership with local college to gather childcare intern Designate a child play area in food pantry
Clients feel disconnected from community	Clients become socially isolated, poor mental & emotional health	Create a monthly support group for food pantry clients, led by a former food pantry client
Clients & children of clients lack knowledge of food growing and preparation	Creates a cyclical pattern of poor nutrition and diet	Food pantry garden classroom: Nutrition/Cooking education Gardening and Self sufficiency education
Elderly or handicap clients are forced to stand in line or lose their place by sitting.	Doors leading up to entrance make it difficult for elderly or handicapped	Mobile food pantry that delivers to particular communities

		Create a handicap accessible entrance

Table 4.1 – From Problems to Solutions

Creative journals results

Journal Week 1

Collage was chosen in the first workshop and journal entry due to it's approachability. Proven to be an impactful methodology with individuals who are unable or unwilling to verbally express themselves, the additive and reductive process of collage allows participants complete control of the imagery they produce, without the anxiety of creating an image by hand through painting or drawing.

Participants were challenged to create a vision board or collage of what they wanted to be included in the art exhibit held at the end of the project, followed by a small written reflection. Prompt question from the researcher included: *What would your idea for a perfect exhibit for community art be? Where would it be? What kind of building? What kind of things would you want to talk about, and who would you want to invite? What kind of colors or music would you like to have?*

Participants brought their finished entries with them to Workshop 2, and presented their pieces as a springboard to start the discussion for that workshop. Participant entries were visually and conceptually very different. Lillian created a "pop up collage" that represented the components of the exhibit she wanted to address, such as seating for viewers to "sit and ponder" on the meaning of the exhibit, using herb scented air fresheners as an immersive experience for viewers near an art piece that addresses fresh food, and providing a space for a mock food pantry that promotes self-sufficiency. In addition to this, she also described a detailed and complex

description of the representative and symbolic qualities in her collage; she identified that each piece of the imagery also represented the process of struggling for stability as a food pantry client. Through the discussion held about this entry, participants began to critically examine the relationship between personal expression, art, and the ways in which that art could engage and affect others.

Rebecca showed an extremely detailed hand drawn garden plan. She had prior experience in organic farming and a passion for growing food, which in turn, resulted in her vision of the perfect pantry as a food pantry that incorporated a large garden space for clients and children to learn, grow and nourish themselves from. The discussion from her piece resulted in participants' ownership over the idea of a garden space. Their enthusiasm for this idea challenged them to begin thinking of barriers and solutions to a food pantry garden space such as zoning issues, available land, and attracting small pests and animals.

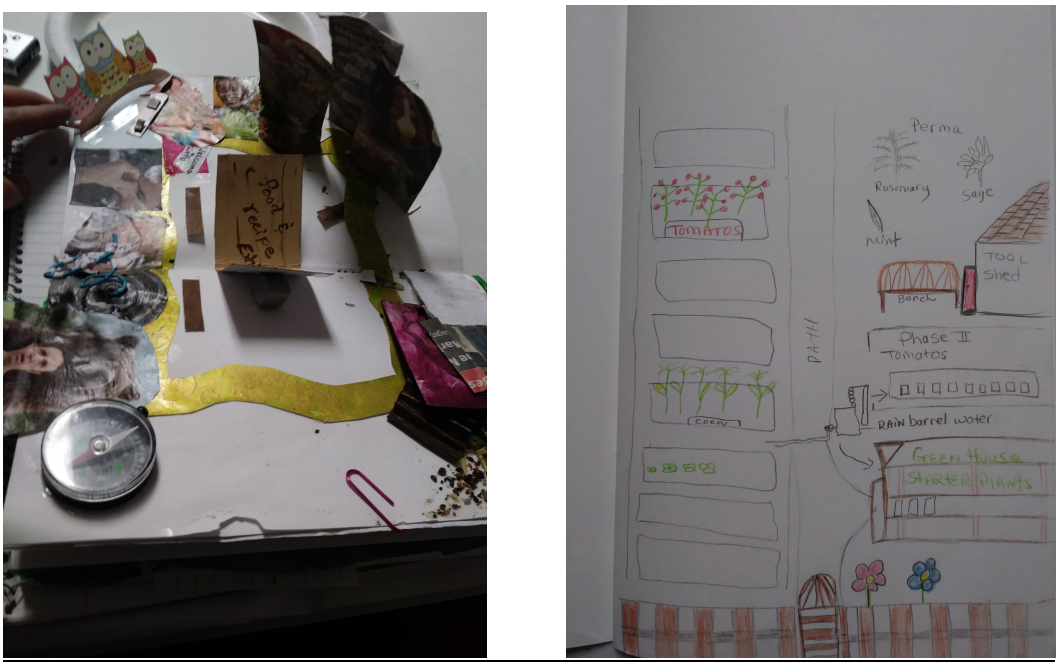

Image 4.3 Journal entry one artwork. Above: (left to right): Left- A pop up collage, which acted as a symbolic set up of the perfect pantry featuring a bridge, compass, keys and essential oil

sprinkled on the pages. Right- The perfect pantry for this client included a large garden space; she drew a detailed garden plan complete with garden decorations.

Journal Week 2 :

Found poetry was used as the methodology for journal entry #2, as the reductive process of creating found poetry, was akin to the process of collage. Clients could condense, rearrange or even rewrite the narrative of their own words through the use of found poetry, creating a "literary collage" (Latta, 2011) to reflect their story. Found poetry was chosen instead of a free creative writing poetry format, due to its research benefits as a member checking and triangulation tool (Reilly, 2013) and for its inherently reflexive nature to encourage participants to reflect on their own words.

In this discussion, clients addressed positive impact of the process of found poetry. Rebecca noted the condensed quality of the process, saying "I think it helps...the words were all there, like I was sayin, I had to rearrange everything but basically it's 'we're broke, how're we gonna make it?'...I think that doing this, it does put it all in perspective." (personal communication, 2017) Lillian spoke on the reflective nature of the process:

> So, it's really exciting for me to be able to do this kind of stuff, and to sit down and it really makes you think a lot more. I go through a lot of stuff, you know, I don't always go through what I'm doing, I don't think about every detail. So it had me kind of stop and think about how you feel, and what this really make me feel? I know right now, I'm real miffed off, but what's the reason behind it? Or I know right now I'm really worried, but what's the real worry?

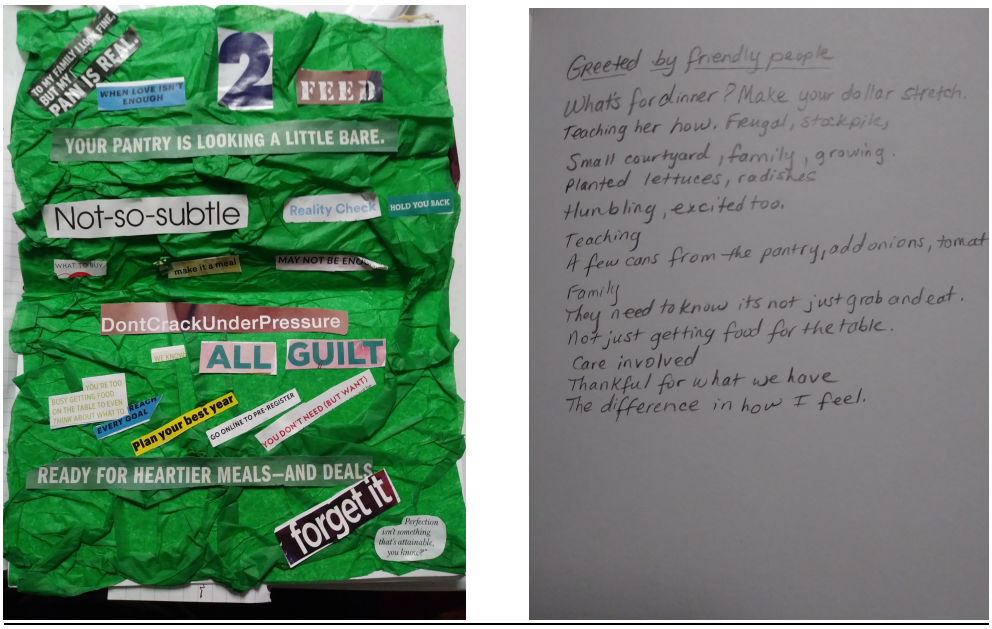

Image 4.4 Journal entry two poetry. Above: (left to right) Lillian and Rebecca's found poetry journal entries show insight into their lived experiences, but also show the personality and style of each of them. Left- Lillian used magazine clippings, eye catching phrases and bright colors to share her story, which was reflective of her friendly and vibrant personality. Right- Rebecca who was soft spoken and analytical, used a simple handwritten format for her poem.

Researcher Reflexivity

Throughout the duration of the project, the researcher used two methodologies for reflexivity: The first, a Creative Reflexive Analysis journal, which consisted of written observations and critical assessments of the interactions and held meanings in the workshops, and particularly a critical assessment of the researcher's role in this process. This was an integral part of ensuring validity of research, and as a means to ensure the researcher was ethically engaging in the participant-led research process.

As with other forms of collected data, researcher reflexivity was analyzed through constant comparative analysis, which resulted in two themes over the course of the workshop

series: 1) Flexibility and allowing space, and 2) Positionality and engaging the research process. In *flexibility and allowing space*, the researcher began to fully acknowledge the need for an organic emergent process. This included constant reminders to release the control of the of a rigid research process and allow participants and the creative process to inform the direction of the project. An example of this, can be found in an excerpt from the researcher's journal, which discussed the uncomfortable moments of consciously allowing the third and fourth workshop to remain largely unplanned or unstructured, while recognizing the benefit of this process.

> I had initially planned for this workshop to function as all the others, by introducing a new artistic medium, but a few day before decided to use this time as a brainstorm session to focus on the final project and art exhibit. I was worried about not getting anything "accomplished", but I really wanted to focus on giving Rebecca and Lillian time to think and explore ideas for the final project that was directed by them, instead of me leading them to an idea. Because of this, I left the discussion completely unstructured, and unscripted other than to ask about the final project and the art exhibit. In past discussions, I have noticed an unspoken hierarchy or acknowledgement of discussion leadership, in that Rebecca and Lillian look to me for direction, or ask what I am looking to get out a particular discussion. In this workshop however, there seemed to a shift; Lillian and Rebecca began making suggestions to each other, and making directive statements about the future of their project. I did little other than listen in this workshop, and I was happy to see some significant interests/themes emerging from their ideas. (Creative Reflexive Analysis)

In *positionality and engaging the research process*, the researcher was constantly challenged to question and critically examine the positionality of all individuals in the research

process. In particular, the positionality of interactions between researcher and participants, the interaction between participants and the artistic process, and between the researcher and the artistic process. As this project aimed to place emphasis on a participant-led, arts-based research process, many of the critical reflexive analysis entries were focused on reflecting the boundaries and role of the researcher in facilitating a participant-led process. Ultimately, this was centralized on the autonomy and level of communicative freedom held by the participants in the workshop process.

> Lately I have been wondering about my role in this as a researcher. It is in my personal nature to become emotionally engaged and invested to others, as I am a passionate person and works best when I am passionate about a topic. However, I'm not sure where the line of emotional investment ends. I know realistically, I won't be able to work at this site forever, and there is a chance that after June or July of this year, I geographically will not be able to assist them any longer. I want to help in making this project successful, and I know that it will not be a short process. I also am very worried about facilitating Lillian and Rebecca to be invested in this project, and then having to leave them to work on this themselves….I suppose in the end, I am worried that this project will be just another disappointment for them, and I hate the thought of that. I think my next priority in this project should be to help them facilitate a large group or co-op for change in Covington. I think creating a network of community partners will help this. (Creative Reflexive Analysis)

A second methodology used in the reflexive researcher process integrated found poetry into transcribed workshop discussions as tool for reflection and to create a distilled and synthesized version of the larger discussions. This process was helpful in understanding the core

topics of each discussion, and used as a member checking tool for thematic analysis of emergent themes.

Discussion

This research adhered specifically to an ABR approach that placed the participant directly in the role as co-creator with the researcher. Combined with grounded theory, the researcher engaged participants in art activities with the intent that the participants would drive the conversation that ultimately led to an ownership of ideas and personal roles as it related to a potential food pantry design and model. Through exercises in collage and found poetry, participants had the opportunity to place their voice in alternative outlets, creating a new discursive space that showcased their varying degrees of human capital between them, such as in-depth knowledge of gardening and available community resources. In this discursive space, the resulting depth and evolution of ideas and solutions that built upon themselves from workshop to workshop demonstrated a strong connection between the artistic process of alternative forms of expression, and creating an improved sense of ownership and autonomy for its participants (Leavy, 2015). This was significant because, as participants began to brainstorm the feasibility of possible solutions, they also demonstrated an increased sense of internal agency, such as Rebecca describing how she began researching county ordinances related to land use for community gardens. Again, this supported other studies that have shown self-expression as a key component of an individual's sense of agency (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995)

The results from this project provide positive indications that a participant-led, art-based methodology is beneficial in providing participants a space to create agency over situations in their own lives and their community through creative and critical thinking. The use of varying art mediums challenged participants to conceptually think in alternative ways and critically engage

in the relationship between their positionality and barriers to self-sufficiency--encouraging the participants to mentally shift from simply identifying a problem to creating an actionable solution to address an identified problem. The use of personal art pieces and creative journals provides clients with an outlet for expression, critical thinking, brainstorming and stress relief, which can positively impact the mental and emotional health of participant and provide a higher quality of life. A collaborative art project encourages social connections and relationship building between participants, which provides a platform for trust an initiative building for the future. It should be noted that the artwork created in the workshop series and through journal entries will be used in an art exhibit; this exhibit will function as a platform for food pantry clients to share their ideas, experiences and solutions for change in their community with community members and food pantry and bank staff.

Future Implications & Recommendations

The following recommendations are given for the use of an arts-based participant led research project such as creative workshops and journals:

Extend the time period of workshop series to 6-8 sessions to provide participants more processing time, solution building, trust building and familiarity with use art or creativity as a communicative tool. Providing more workshops allows participants to engage more deeply in the solution building and critical thinking mindset that arts-based methodology encourages; an extended time period for workshops could also provide more time for participants to co create a collaborative final art piece, resulting in an exhibit that is more impactful for viewers and community members.

Larger participant group sizes could provide a more diverse skill set and experience base, which could aid in creating effective solutions for a larger range of clientele base. Groups

recommended to be no larger than 8, to ensure that each client/participants voice and experiences are heard by facilitator.

Replicated toolkit for food assistance staff and volunteers to be used as a training tool for cultural sensitivity or compassion training. This would consist of a printed set of materials with directions, prompts and appropriate activity sheets to aid in facilitation of the meetings. Food pantry staff could take part in creative workshop process to gain certification to administer the toolkit materials.

Use as a needs assessment tool for other food pantry locations, with food pantry clients and staff to identify problems into actionable solutions. The reflexive and interactive nature of this methodology makes it an ideal tool for evaluation for individuals of varying backgrounds; allowing for engagement of individuals with different socioeconomic status, gender, and race to provide a more comprehensive and holistic view of the food insecure experience.

Extension field training or development tool for extension agents, or as a solution building tool in rural communities.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this thesis is comprised of two independent manuscripts which are Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. To avoid repetition, this chapter contains brief summaries of the conclusion and discussions of each article, three brief anecdotes to highlight the strengths of the methodology, and a discussion regarding the importance of researcher reflexivity. Executive conclusions and recommendations are listed below.

Purpose and Research Questions

This study is based upon the argument that arts-based, co-creative, visual communication strategies are a necessary and mutually beneficial part of engaging at-risk populations (Lapum, 2005; Fancourt & Joss, 2015) such as food pantry clients, whose knowledge and experiences can provide invaluable data to the process of conceptualizing and developing a new or improved food assistance model. The use of arts-based research methods functions as a communicative tool for creating alternative channels of discursive spaces with and around the lived experiences of low-income working families to better understand areas of food insecurity.

Throughout this research project, it was imperative to consider the role of the researcher in arts-based research, specifically as it relates to resulting art pieces that function as communicative tools within the new dialogical space. Therefore, this study is divided into two parts. Part one integrates arts-based methodologies, but situates the researcher as the developer of resulting art exhibits based on resulting data from in-depth interviews, focus groups, and a photovoice project. Whereas, part two—which also integrates arts-based methodologies—

situates the food pantry clientele and the researcher as co-creators in the resulting art exhibits. Collectively, this overall study investigates the effectiveness of arts-based research methodologies as a communicative tool to engage food pantry clients in critical and socially aware conversations around food assistance programs.

In fulfilling its purpose, this study was designed in two parts in order to answer the following research questions. Both parts incorporate an overarching research question, followed by two distinct researcher questions:

1. How does an arts-based approach open up the discursive space around food insecurity?

Part 1 (researcher only):

2. What does arts-based research look like from a researcher-led approach?
3. How does researcher-led research affect public viewing and solution building?

Part 2 (client + researcher):

4. What does arts-based research look like from a co-constructed approach?
5. How does a co-constructed approach to research affect public viewing and solution building?

Article One

[Below is a summary of conclusions and recommendations for the first manuscript. Please refer to page 36 of this document for the complete version.]

An arts-based participatory research project was used to conduct research with five metropolitan area food pantries to better understand the barriers that food pantry clientele face from reaching self-sufficiency in their lives. At each location, food bank and pantry staff, volunteers and clientele took part in two focus groups, interviews, and a photovoice project. All discussions in these activities were centered around better understanding the lived experiences of

food pantry clients, in order to gain a deeper understanding the patterns of food insecurity that add to the financial, health and wellness, and overall denigration in quality of life for food insecure individuals. Based on the local knowledge from these clients, a large metropolitan food bank hoped to create a more effective food pantry model that, by providing necessary support frameworks, would increase food pantry clients' opportunities to reach self-sufficiency in their daily lives.

Through data collection, field notes and observations, and critical reflexive analysis, a process for using art as a communicative tool emerged. This process, identified as a researcher-led process, used food pantry client's stories, experiences and images from the photovoice project to directly inform three art installations created by the researcher. Each piece was created based on prominent concepts, themes or conversation topics from collected data.

The pieces were installed and shown at the food bank during an interagency summit event, which revealed the findings from the study to attendees as a call for action and awareness. Attendees consisted of food bank staff, food pantry staff, volunteers, and clients, community partners, and partner agencies. During the event, attendees were asked to walk around the space and view three installations; an accompanying questionnaire was also handed out at this time, to gather information on viewer perceptions of the effectiveness of art as a communicative and storytelling tool, as well as to gather feedback from food pantry clients on the accuracy and portrayal of their stories and the experience of a food insecure individual.

Findings from this questionnaire revealed overwhelmingly positive feedback for the use of art as a tool for communicating food insecurity to viewers. However, feedback also revealed that viewers were more interested in artwork that was directly created by food pantry clients than

researcher made art. This information directly informed the subsequent research, which used a co-creative approach to the art making process.

Article Two

[Below is a summary of conclusions and recommendations for the second manuscript. Please refer to page 62 of this document for the complete version.]

In response to data collected from a previous participatory, arts-based research project involving food pantry clientele, a research study was designed to facilitate a participant-led co-creative, arts-based communication strategy with food pantry clientele at one metro area food pantry. The study aimed to create alternative channels of communication with food pantry clientele, to facilitate client led discussions based around identifying problems into actionable solutions to improve the food pantry model. This model was intended to place clients' local knowledge and lived experiences at the center of discussions, to authentically engage in co-creative communication; in doing this, clients were given ownership and authority over the direction of the project, while the researcher served the role of facilitator for clients' thoughts and ideas. These discussions were facilitated through a series of four creative workshops over the course of two months.

Clients were introduced to and participated in different arts-based projects in each workshop, with each art project corresponding to a topic of discussion related to clients' food pantry experiences. Art mediums were purposefully chosen through supported literature for their effectiveness in engaging hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations through nonverbal communication. In addition to these workshops, clients were also given a "creative journal toolkit" consisting of basic art supplies, a journal, and weekly prompts to facilitate expression

and reflection. Clients were asked to use the journals in off weeks between workshop meetings; this consisted of a small form of visual or creative expression, partnered with a written reflection.

Collected data consisted of client artwork in each workshop (collage, found poetry), four transcribed workshop discussions that were two hours in length, creative journal imagery and written reflections, and researcher critical reflexive analysis. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis from imagery subject matter and topic and from emerged themes in transcribed discussions. Client found poetry excerpts were also used as a tool for triangulation and member checking of themes.

Emerged themes were: Identifying problems into actionable solutions; Client quality of life and food pantry environment; Using Creativity to build solutions/Visual Images to Verbal Communication; Ownership of ideas, roles and artwork, Reflexivity and self-reflection; and Fresh food importance.

The process of using creative workshops in conjunction with creative journals provided positive results that strongly supported the methodology as an effective tool for expression, critical thinking and solution building; the use of personal art pieces provided an outlet for participants to gain agency and ownership over the barriers that they identified in the food pantry model. As participants took ownership of their ideas and solutions that emerged through the art pieces and workshop discussions, they also began to take ownership over the project as a whole, rejecting the idea of simply identifying a problem by going beyond to create actionable solutions to those problems. Through this project, participants were able to find and communicate several interventions to food pantry staff for the improvement of the food pantry. These suggestions were received positively, and adopted for future food pantry practices; In particular, food pantry staff initiated a client only support group to be held on site, and led by a food pantry client, who

also volunteered at the pantry. The garden space was also made a priority, as a "garden planning committee" was formed to design a garden space on site. This committee included Rebecca and Lillian as members to inform and guide the decision making process in a way that would best represent clientele. Finally, it should be noted that the artwork from this series is to be used in public art gallery space, to bring awareness and provide a discursive space for engaging in issues surrounding food security.

Stories from the Research

The conversations from this research revealed significant findings that showed a deep impact on the participants' sense of autonomy and excitement in taking action to create change in their own lives through taking initiative in this project. Below, three anecdotes will be shared, to highlight the importance of these meaningful conversations in qualitative research.

Found poetry was one of the most interesting and surprising methodologies used in the workshop series. It challenged participants to face their own words from previous conversations, and strayed from other tactile and visual mediums incorporated in the series. When it was first introduced, neither Lillian nor Rebecca seemed to enjoy the process. Rebecca, in particular, seemed horrified at how she appeared in her transcript excerpt, and did not seem to be excited by the idea of poetry. After each went through the process, Rebecca had a noticeable shift in her enjoyment. She proudly shared her poem, and expressed her enjoyment at creating poetry through this process. At one point in the conversation, she said "I love it! Who knows? I may go back to college!" This moment was extremely meaningful, as it signified a moment in which Rebecca began to think outside of the normal confines of her life, and consider opportunities that both excited her and could improve her life in the future.

A significant impact of using art during workshop discussions was the emergence of individual styles, personalities, and consequently the strengths, of the participants through their artwork. Early in the workshop series, I was able to identify unique skill sets and strengths that Lillian and Rebecca had that could be used for the future of the project, and for job opportunities in their future. For instance, Rebecca initially was extremely self-conscious about the idea of being creative; she stated multiple times that she did not think she was "artistic." Her artwork and journals, however, revealed that she was an analytical thinker, and great at brainstorming solutions, while recognizing potential barriers. Her journal was filled with lists, and a detailed and meticulously organized garden plan illustration. In contrast, Lillian was a visual thinker and quite expressive; her journals and artwork consisted of vibrant colors, tactile and three-dimensional mediums, that all worked together to share her story and ideas. Together, they created a wonderful balance of different forms of expression and ideas for the future. After mentioning this to them, they began to recognize their differences as strengths that could work together, and even began to discuss ideas for holding an "Art in the Garden" workshop at the food pantry; Rebecca would take the lead in showcasing gardening and garden planning skills, while Lillian would hold a class on making creative garden décor from recycled materials.

As the workshops progressed, it became commonplace for Rebecca and Lillian to begin the meetings by sharing and talking about the interesting or frustrating moments of their week. This seemed to not only be a product of becoming more comfortable with each other in the workshop setting, but also a signifier of building trusting relationships. On the last workshop, both Rebecca and Lillian had had particularly difficult days. They spent the first part of the workshop venting their frustrations, supporting each other, providing suggestions, peppered with laughter. During a lull in conversation, Rebecca expressed how much she had enjoyed the

workshops, as weekly form of relaxation and therapeutic outlet to share her frustrations. She suggested to Lillian that they exchange numbers and create a crafting group to continue the environment of the workshops, after the project came to an end. Lillian enthusiastically agreed, and mentioned that her neighbor would also be interested. From this, they began to discuss the idea of getting a group of women together for a craft night, and began to take the lead in creating a community support group that could be sustained beyond my role or timeline as a facilitator.

Researcher Reflexivity

Reflexivity held enormous importance to the quality and progression of the research process. By using a multimodal reflection process through a critical reflexive analysis journal, and reflective found poetry of workshop transcriptions, I was constantly challenged to reflect on my role and positionality as a qualitative researcher, and the impact of my actions and decisions in the workshop process on the participants. This process acted as a sounding board for engaging in an ethical, rigorous and flexible research process, ultimately leading me to progress from a researcher-led process to a client-led process. In other words, by practicing reflexivity I was able to empathize with client experiences in a way that resulted in recognizing the need for a change of methodology that would shift the attention and authority of the creative research process from myself to the participants. As an artist, I enjoyed the researcher-led process of creating art. In reflection, however, I realized that impact and power of providing clients opportunities to create their own art and take charge of their portrayal to the public through their art pieces. This realization ultimately led me to a process that was extremely rewarding, meaningful and effective in creating opportunities for participants to take initiative in the research process and their own lives.

Executive Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the two phases of this project and the unique research approach applied to each one, there are a number of ways in which the findings of this project lend themselves to refining the ABR toolkit for the workshop series, as well as application to future research beyond the area of food insecurity. The following recommendations are given for the use of an arts-based, participant-led research project such as creative workshops and journals:

Extend the time period of workshop series to 6-8 sessions to provide participants more processing time, solution building, trust building and familiarity with use of art or creativity as a communicative tool. An extended time period for workshops could also provide more time for participants to co-create a collaborative final art piece.

Larger & culturally diverse groups could provide a more diverse skill set and experience base in participants, which could aid in creating effective solutions for a larger range of clientele base. Groups recommended to be no larger than eight, to ensure that each client/participants voice and experiences are heard by the facilitator.

Replicated toolkit for food assistance staff and volunteers to be used as a training tool for cultural sensitivity or compassion training. This would consist of a printed set of materials with directions, prompts and appropriate activity sheets to aid in facilitation of the meetings. Food pantry staff could take part in creative workshop process to gain certification to administer the toolkit materials.

Use as a needs assessment tool for other food pantry locations, with food pantry clients and staff to identify problems into actionable solutions. The reflexive and interactive nature of this methodology makes it an ideal tool for evaluation for individuals of varying backgrounds;

allowing for engagement of individuals with different socioeconomic status, gender, and race to provide a more comprehensive and holistic view of the food insecure experience.

Use in Extension field as a training or development tool for extension agents, or as a solution-building tool in rural communities. This process could be administered by extension agents as a solution and initiative building tool for rural communities, who may expression social or economic isolation due to their geographic positionality.

Arts-based research has the potential to create unique opportunities in qualitative research for more engaging and effective interactions between researchers, participants, and communities, ultimately providing the field of communication with more effective and ethical practices that benefit both researchers and the communities they intend to work alongside. The integration of multiple forms of communication, creates inclusivity for groups that traditional forms of research many not reach or engage with, such as at risk populations, with varying literacy or language barriers, varying cultural backgrounds, racial or gendered discrimination, or individuals experiencing trauma.

One of the greatest strengths of arts-based research lies in the power to create safe and welcoming discursive spaces through the creative process; these discursive spaces both place the participant in a position of autonomy and authority in decision making in their own lives, while also challenging them to critically engage with the structures and barriers that prevent them from self sufficiency. Ultimately, what sets a participant-led, arts-based process apart from other qualitative methodologies, is the process of solution and initiative building that encourages participants to take leadership over the process and continue sustainability of the solution building process outside of the research time line and without the role of researcher, resulting in participants who become effective communicators in their own communities.

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APPENDIX A

Qualitative Informational Consent Form 1

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
CONSENT FORM – Audio Clips & Public Exhibit
Art and Food Oppression: creative workshop and creative journal project

Researcher's Statement
I am/We are asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Abigail Borron, Dept. of Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communication
706-542-7102 / aborron@uga.edu

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is based on a partnership that began in January of 2017, with the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) that wants to improve client services, as well as help clients find ways to meet needs in food, housing, and financial security. UGA's purpose is to provide opportunities to food pantry clientele, volunteers, and staff to share their experiences and perceptions related to food insecurity in their local communities through a series of creative workshops. These workshops will provide an outlet to creatively and nonverbally share experiences and emotions associated with those experiences.

Study Procedures
If you have agreed to participate in this portion of the project, then you will…

- Provide a spoken statement to key issues that you personally addressed during the larger focus group discussion
    - This statement will be audio recorded, where all or a portion of the audio recording will be incorporated into a public exhibit, taking place on Spring of 2018 (in which you are encouraged to participate).

  Listen to a playback of the recording you complete to ensure that your voice and your ideas and opinions are to your satisfaction.

Risks and discomforts

- I/We do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research.

Benefits
The benefits to you participating in this study is that you have the opportunity to share your experiences, opinions and concerns related to experiences addressing food insecurity needs personally or locally. Information collected from your interviews and photos, along with your ideas and guidance offered to the researchers, will inform the research team, as well as food pantries, and the ACFB of how to improve client services and associated needs.

Incentives for participation
As a participant in this project, you will be provided with : a $10 gas card or MARTA card per meeting. You will also be provided with light refreshments and beverages at each meeting.

Audio/Video Recording
To ensure accuracy of all data collected, this audio recording will be maintained for exhibit purposes only. Each audio recording will also be transcribed and coded for research purposes. A final document will contain themes supported by quotes of participants in the study.

Privacy/Confidentiality
While this audio recording will maintain your voice, your identity will be associated with a pseudonym (a fictional name) on the audio file name. With the transcription of the audio file, personal identifiers will be kept only during the coding process of the study. Once common themes have been identified from transcriptions, the identifiers will no longer be necessary. The identifiers will serve to keep order of the transcriptions while coding is taking place. Identifiers will also be useful when supporting the themes in the final written document for this study. All transcriptions will be stored on a password protected device, and once all transcriptions have been coded and common themes have been identified, the audio files will be deleted. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

USE OF AUDIO AND ARTWORK : The audio recordings of interviews and group discussions, as well as art produced will be used as part of Hillary Jourdan's graduate thesis research project to be presented in May of 2018.

Taking part is voluntary
Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your participation decision will have no bearing on any service you receive from this food pantry.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

If you have questions
One of the main researchers overseeing this study is Dr. Abigail Borron, an assistant professor at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later,

you may contact Dr. Borron at aborron@uga.edu or at 706-542-7102. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX B

Qualitative Informational Consent Form 2

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
CONSENT FORM – Planning Team Members
Art and Food Oppression: creative workshop and creative journal project

Researcher's Statement
I am/We are asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Abigail Borron
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication
706-542-7102 / aborron@uga.edu

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is based on a partnership with the Atlanta Community Food Bank that is seeking to improve client services, as well as help clients find ways to meet needs in food, housing, and financial security. UGA's purpose is to provide opportunities to food pantry staff, volunteers, and clientele to share their experiences and perceptions related to food insecurity in their local communities.

Study Procedures
If you agree to participate, you will be asked to …
- Participate in 4 group creative workshop 2.5 hours in length.
- use a creative journal for 1 hour per week outside of workshop meetings.
- Share your experiences and perceptions as it relates to food insecurity in your local community.
- Allow the researchers to audio record the discussion for transcribing later.
- Allow the researchers to take notes during the discussion.
- Participate in a public art exhibit with resulting artwork.

Risks and discomforts

- I/We do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research.

Benefits

The benefits of the food pantry planning team members participating in this study are that they have the opportunity to share their experiences, opinions and concerns related to experiences of addressing food insecurity needs personally or locally. Their collected narratives will inform the research team, as well as food pantries, and the Atlanta Community Food Bank of how to improve client services and associated needs.

Incentives for participation

As a participant in this project, you will be provided with : a $10 gas card or MARTA card per meeting. You will also be provided with light refreshments and beverages at each meeting.

Audio/Video Recording

In order to ensure accuracy of all data collected, the focus group discussion will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes. All transcriptions will be stored on a password protected device, and once all transcriptions have been coded and common themes have been identified, the audio files will be deleted. The final document will contain themes supported by quotes of participants in the study.

Privacy/Confidentiality

Interviews will be recorded on audio files. Participants will be identified by a code (i.e., 1-S-A) or a pseudonym (a fictional name). The identifiers will be kept during the coding process of the study. Once common themes have been identified from transcriptions, the identifiers will no longer be necessary. The identifiers will serve to keep order of the transcriptions while coding is taking place. Identifiers will also be useful when supporting the themes in the final written document for this study. All transcriptions will be stored on a password protected device, and once all transcriptions have been coded and common themes have been identified, the audio files will be deleted.

Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

Taking part is voluntary

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your participation decision will have no bearing on your role as a planning team member or any service you provide/receive from this food pantry.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

If you have questions

The main researcher overseeing this study is Abigail Borron, an assistant professor at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Borron at aborron@uga.edu or at 706-542-7102. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX C

Qualitative Informational Consent Form 3

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
CONSENT FORM – Photovoice, Interviews, & Photo Sorting
Art and Food oppression: a creative workshop and creative journal project

Researcher's Statement
I am/We are asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." A copy of this form will be given to you.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Abigail Borron, Dept. of Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communication
706-542-7102 / aborron@uga.edu

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is based on a partnership with the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB) that wants to improve client services, as well as help clients find ways to meet needs in food, housing, and financial security. UGA's purpose is to provide opportunities to food pantry clientele, volunteers, and staff to share their experiences and perceptions related to food insecurity in their local communities.

Study Procedures
If you agree to participate, you will be asked to …

- Participate in a series of 4 creative workshops, which will include (2.5 hours):
  - Meeting 1: Introduction to project, followed by group discussion and 1st art project :collage and poetry , given creative journals for take home
  - Meeting 2: group discussion and 2nd art project
  - Meeting 3: group discussion and 3rd art project
  - Meeting 4: A group meeting to overview art pieces, and discuss exhibit details.

  Participate in a weekly creative journal, to be used for 1 hour per week outside of workshops.

  Allowing the researchers to audio record the interview & group meetings for transcribing later.

  Allowing the researchers to take notes during the interview and group meetings.

Risks and discomforts

- I/We do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research.

Benefits

The benefits to you participating in this study is that you have the opportunity to share your experiences, opinions and concerns related to experiences addressing food insecurity needs personally or locally. Information collected from your interviews and photos, along with your ideas and guidance offered to the researchers, will inform the research team, as well as food pantries, and the ACFB of how to improve client services and associated needs.

Incentives for participation

As a participant in this project, you will be provided with : a $10 gas card or MARTA card per meeting. You will also be provided with light refreshments and beverages at each meeting.

Audio/Video Recording

In order to ensure accuracy of all data collected, the interview and group discussions will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes. All transcriptions will be stored on a password protected device, and once all transcriptions have been coded and common themes have been identified, the audio files will be deleted. The final document will contain themes supported by quotes of participants in the study.

Privacy/Confidentiality

Interviews will be recorded on audio files. Participants will be identified by a code (i.e., 1-S-A) or a pseudonym (a fictional name). The identifiers will be kept during the coding process of the study. Once common themes have been identified from transcriptions, the identifiers will no longer be necessary. The identifiers will serve to keep order of the transcriptions while coding is taking place. Identifiers will also be useful when supporting the themes in the final written document for this study. All transcriptions will be stored on a password protected device, and once all transcriptions have been coded and common themes have been identified, the audio files will be deleted. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent unless required by law.

USE OF ARTWORK: The final set of art pieces (to be created and selected by you and others on your planning team) may be used in publications/presentations, public exhibits (by UGA) or promotional material (by ACFB).

Taking part is voluntary

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your participation decision will have no bearing on any service you receive from this food pantry. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

If you have questions

The main researcher overseeing this study is Dr. Abigail Borron, an assistant professor at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Borron at aborron@uga.edu or at 706-542-7102. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:
To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX D

Agency Permission Forms

Dear ACFB Food Pantry Director,

The goal of this study (running from Fall 2017-Spring 2018), in partnership with the ACFB's larger "Stabilizing Lives" project conducted this past spring, is to conduct a focus group with the agency planning team (comprised of staff, volunteers, and clientele) at your location, along with a series of creative workshops with clientele from the team. Such a study will provide opportunities to pantry staff, volunteers, and clientele to continue in sharing their experiences and perceptions related to food insecurity in their local communities, as well as providing opportunity to plan and implement a community based event. Further, this developed understanding will lend itself to enhancing community engagement on behalf of the Food Bank and its partner agencies with local community members in need.

The creative workshop portion of the project is intended to encourage food pantry clientele to speak candidly and openly about their experiences and provide input on solutions for moving forward in community initiatives based on their suggestions in the "Stabilizing Lives" photovoice project that took place this past spring. In these workshops they will be experiencing and creating varying mediums of art, as well as be given a creative journal to take home with them. Both the workshop and journal are meant to act as a tool for expressing themselves in ways which they may not be accustomed. Each workshop will be accompanied by a researcher led discussion about these art pieces and the relation they have to food.

The result then is a collective conversation that is brought to the forefront through a public exhibit and community event (Target date: early spring 2018). This event will share ideas, needs, and obstacles articulated by the clients themselves and presented by the planning team. As a result, ownership of ideas and solutions are local and meaningful to the clients. Our role as researchers is to foster collaborative spaces and create community capacities for community-based conversations and decision making.

I am requesting your approval to conduct this study at your agency location, and would appreciate your cooperation in sharing the relevance of this study with your agency planning team. Their participation and involvement in this study will help to examine in depth the understanding and practices that go into "stabilizing lives."

In addition, I am seeking permission from you to utilize space within your agency location to conduct the focus groups, in-depth interviews, and photovoice project. I will provide you with a recruitment flyer that will be targeted to agency clientele who are interested in participating in the project with us.

If you have any questions regarding our research, please feel free to contact me as one of the co-investigators on this project (706-542-7102 / aborron@uga.edu)

Agency Permission: If you agree to the parameters of this research project, and the voluntary involvement of select staff, volunteers, and clientele at your agency, please indicate by printing and signing your name below.

Agency Name: _____

Name (print): _____

Name (signature): _____

Title: _____

Sincerely,

Abigail Borron
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Agricultural Leadership,
Education, & Communication

APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol and Guide

Interviewer Guide and Questioning Route – Interviews (Teachers) Creative Workshops & Creative Journals

Note: The script and organization of workshop 2, 3, and 4 will be determined by each proceeding Workshop, as each workshop discussion inform the next. Therefore an exact script for them is unable to be identified until its passing.

Interviewer reads: Hello and welcome to our workshop today! Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion about art and your experiences with food access. It is wonderful to see you all again for this second round of interviews and discussions. My name is Hillary Jourdan and I am a graduate student with the University of Georgia.

Before we begin, let me share some things that will make our discussion easier. There are no right or wrong answers---we are not looking for any kind of specific response, and your unique opinion is what is important for this project, so keep that in mind! Please feel free to share your point of view, and ask questions at any time. Please speak up clearly. We are audio recording the session because we do not want to miss any of your comments. The tape will not be heard by anybody other than myself and the other members of the research team. Once the tapes have been transcribed, the audio recordings will be destroyed. We will be on a first-name basis, and in our later reports your name will not be attached to the reported comments. You may be assured of confidentiality.

My role here is to ask questions to start a discussion and and listen. I will be providing guidance for an accompanying art- related activity, which we will work on while we discuss our topics. I will be asking around 5 questions. Our session will last about two hours.

Let's get started!

Introductory Information

Workshop 1: Collage and Found Poetry

Interviewer reads: Let's find out some more about you. Share your name, where you are from, and one interesting fact about yourself. While we are doing that, i would like for you to write your name on this Index card and decorate it however you like. Then we will begin our first project.

- Please share your decorated name tag with the group. What about your decorations represents your personality?
  - Is it your favorite color? Did you pick a specific pattern or shape for a reason?

Topic: Food and community: Where do you fit?

- Now that we have reaquainted ourselves with each other, let's begin our first session!

Today we are going to be working with collage, and using magazine clippings and newspapers to create a larger picture.In front of you are any of the materials you need to create your collage: pictures, tape, glue sticks, etc. Before I begin,I am going to start our discussion by reading from two interviews from our last project: [excerpt (the individual's identity will not be shared)] I am going to start our discussion with one or two questions and while we are discussing,I would like for you to start looking over the imagery and text on the table.

  - Why do you think food is an important part of your community?

- As we continue discussing, start picking out images that stand out to you. It could be words, colors, or pictures. Choose pieces that interest you and represent your food community.

○ In a perfect world, what would the food scene look like in your community

■ Prompts:

● what kind of food outlets? More grocery stores, a farmer's market, a community garden?

● How could a food pantry fit in your community food scene?

○ Partner with a farm? A food truck? cooking classes?

● What is your role in community food?

○ How so?

○ Is there a role you would like to have in community food?

○ Now, envision the perfect food pantry:

■ what kind of items would it offer?

■ Where would it be and what would it look like?

● in a pop up shop or wheels?

● in a school?

● in a store?

● Remember, there is no right or wrong way to create a collage! This is just another way to share your vision of change in your food community.

○ Now let's take some time to share our visions with each other. As we go around, I want each of your to briefly describe your collage, and what it means to you personally.

Creative Journals

● I am now going to hand out your creative journals. These will serve as a way to keep track of your thoughts and allow you the opportunity to explore expressing your thoughts in creative ways. Each journal comes with the art supplies in front you. Use these however you like; you can draw, paint, write, add color, tape pictures and items in your journal. Although there are no "rules" to these journals, I would like you to journal at least two times a week about your food experiences with at least one visual response (drawing, painting, collage). We are not expecting any particular response from you, we just want to hear about your interests and weekly moments around food. Each week you will be given a prompt for your journal, to help you respond and spark a discussion. The following week, we will discuss our entries and how that might help inform our next discussion.

Exhibit discussion (Last 15 minutes)

Workshop 2: Color and expression/ Found Poetry

Interviewer reads: Hello everyone, welcome back to our second workshop! I want to start off by going over our creative journals.

- I would like to go around the table and hear about everyone's first experience with the journal.
  - How did journaling make you feel?
    - Did you have any exciting or frustrating moment that journaling helped you express?
    - Did you enjoy it?
- Now let's talk about an experience from the journal.
  - What happened?
  - Why did you choose this experience to journal?
  - What kind of visual expression did you use?

● Today we are going to be using two techniques together. One will be using color, and the other poetry. For our color exercise, I would like for us to listen to two recordings:

- ○ (one is excerpt from interviews [identity will be anonymous])
- ○ (one is music)

● As you listen, I want you to think about how this makes you feel. While you are doing this, I would like for you to pick the first color that catches your eye. With this color, I would like for you to start slowly covering your page with this color. As you continue listening, pick colors to add.

- ○ why did you choose this color? how does it make you feel?
- ○ Does it remind you of a specific event or experience?
  - ■ what experiences have made you feel [stated] emotion?

Exhibit discussion (Last 15 minutes)

Workshop 3: Poetry Found / Clay / Recycled Materials

Interviewer reads: Thank you for taking time out of your day to share your opinions. Your participation is greatly appreciated and has provided valuable information.

Exhibit discussion (Last 15 minutes)

Workshop 4: Final Group project and discussion of exhibit

● Welcome to our final workshop today, everyone. Thank you so much for being a part of this process--- your input is invaluable.

Exhibit discussion (Last 30 minutes)

● What would you like the exhibit to look like? ○ What kind of building? ○ Who would you like to invite? ○ Will there be food? Music?

APPENDIX F

Welcome Letter

The Perfect Pantry Project Creative Toolkit

Hello!

Welcome to the first Perfect Pantry Workshop, we are so excited to have you take part in creating change in project with us! Enclosed in this bag you will find your personal creative toolkit, which is made up of:

- A sketchbook/journal
- 2 pencils
- A pencil sharpener
- 2 pens
- A set of watercolor pencils
- 5 paint brushes
- A glue stick
- Tape

Think of this "toolkit" as your at-home art supply kit for this project. The sketchbook is intended to be used as a creative journal, to document your thoughts and experiences related to the topics we discuss from week to week. Although there are no rules, there will be a prompt that goes along with each week's discussion topic to help get your creative juices flowing, that will ask you to use the techniques we covered to express your thoughts. In addition to this, we encourage you to write, draw, paint, or tape pictures or items in your notebook. PLEASE remember there are no expectations regarding your artwork! Your creativity and thoughts are the MOST valuable part of this process, so try new things and have fun.

Important things to know:

1. We ask you use the creative for at least 30 min in the week between workshops, but there is no limit to how much you choose to use it
2. Please bring your journal with you to workshops each week
3. Be prepared to share! We will be sharing thoughts and art from journals to start each weeks workshop
4. There is no wrong way to respond to the prompts in the journal, and no wrong way to use a creative journal! This is just another way to share your thoughts
5. Feel free to include any suggestions, frustrations or happy moments

APPENDIX G

Things to Keep in mind

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. There are no expectations for this project---there will be no grades or judgements.
2. We are not interested in the end product (how it looks), we are interested in the PROCESS (how you feel, and your thoughts).
3. We want YOUR vision for change in your community, and we are here to help you achieve that vision
4. Have fun, explore, try new things!
5. Respect the pieces made by others

APPENDIX H

Found Poetry worksheet

Found Poetry

Definition: A type of poetry that is created by taking words or phrases from other sources (books, articles, etc.), and rearranging them into the form of a poem (usually free verse).

How to create a found poem:

1. Select and read a text to inspire your poem.

2. Select a central idea, theme, or topic that will be the focus of the poem.

3. Select words, phrases, or sentences from the text that convey your idea, theme, or topic.

4. Rearrange the words, phrases, or sentences to form your poem.
    - The lines should flow and have a logical sequence.
    - You should not add any additional words that are not present in the quotes you have chosen.
    - Remember: poems do not always rhyme.
5. Give your poem a creative title.

Example: A found poem uses language from other texts and turns it into poetry. Think of it like a collage of words and phrases. Writing this type of poetry is a kind of treasure hunt. Search for interesting scraps of language, then put them together in different ways and see what comes out. Putting seemingly unrelated things together can create a kind of chemical spark, leading to surprising results.

FOUND POETRY

treasure of scraps of language
words and phrases
put them together
in different ways
spark surprising results

Independent Reading Found Poem
You will be creating a found poem focused on a theme, idea, or topic from your novel.

Turning In: staple together this handout, the quotes worksheet, and your poem.

Guidelines:

- The poem should be at least 15 lines long.
- Use at least 10 different quotes from the book to select words, phrases, or sentences.
- Follow the steps on the "Found Poetry" handout to create the poem.
- The poem should be typed. You may use any font as long as it is legible. Don't forget your MLA header!
- The quotes selected should be written on the following worksheet and turned in with the poem
    - Underline or highlight the parts of the quote that were used in the poem.
    - Use correct parenthetical citation.

  Present your poem to the class.

Found Poem Checklist

Use the checklist below to make sure that you have followed all of the guidelines for creating your found poem.

- The poem is at least 15 lines long. (30 points)

- At least 10 different quotes from the book have been used to select words, phrases, or sentences. (2 points per quote=20 points)

- Follow the steps on the "Found Poetry" handout to create the poem. (10 points)
    - The poem represents the central theme, idea, or topic.
    - The poem flows and follows a logical sequence.
    - All words in the poem are from the quotes selected.
    - The poem has a creative title.

- The poem is typed. (5 points)
    - The font is legible.
    - MLA header.

- The quotes selected are written on the worksheet. (15 points)
    - Underline or highlight the parts of the quote that were used in the poem.
    - Use correct parenthetical citation.

- Present the poem to the class. (10 points)

Found Poem Quotes

Directions: Write the ten quotes that you have chosen for your poem on the lines provided.

Make sure to cite them correctly!

Topic/Theme/Idea Chosen:

_____

Quote 1:

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Quote 2:

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Quote 3:

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Quote 4:

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Quote 5:

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Quote 6:

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Quote 7:

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Quote 8:

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Quote 9:

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Quote 10:

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APPENDIX I

Found Poem worksheet

Found Poem Worksheet

A Found Poem is made with words and phrases from something you read or hear. It uses someone else's words, but the poet combines them in a new way. Write a Found Poem following these directions.

1. Reread through the transcript and look for key words or phrases that you used. Have a theme or main idea (frustration) for your poem as you select your words and phrases.

2. Choose a minimum of 20 words or phrases that go with the theme you have chosen for you poem. Write your words or key phrases on the bottom portion of this worksheet.

4. Arrange these words or phrases in a pleasing and meaningful way to make a poem.

5. Type the poem using a variety of fonts in different colors and sizes.

Key words or phrases:

_____

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APPENDIX J

Rebecca Found Poetry Transcript Excerpt

Excerpt 1:

Rebecca: Being more frugal ... I mean I've, I've had to learn how to do it so shopping and couponing, and couponing watch. I mean, not as much as some people. I don't have a stockpile you know, except for toothpaste. I did get about six months supply of that. But umm

Speaker 2: Nice.

Rebecca: Umm ... learning how to be, to make your dollar stretch.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: I mean, that to me is something I've done for years but at the same time, I mean, getting the family involved, they, you know. Growing certain [00:02:30] things. You know, that I can. I have a small courtyard so there's only so much I can actually grow, but ...

Speaker 2: It's still something.

Rebecca: You know, yeah exactly. A few things. Umm don't know. I, we enjoy it.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah good, good.

Rebecca: But yeah.

Speaker 2: So, so when, in terms of getting the family involved

Speaker 2: Is it that ... I imagining it's that, the moment of taking the picture sort of creates something to talk about.

Rebecca: Yes.

Speaker 2: Is that what you mean?

Rebecca: Like this. Like, my husband is a good boss so I said can you take a serious picture. He said, 'I don't know' because [00:03:00] when I came home with the groceries all he wanted to know was what's for dinner because there's a new batch, you know, new stock. So [Laughter]. He's like can we take the picture or are you starting cooking so.

Speaker 2: Right, right.

Rebecca: So umm I'll always love a picture of the family though.

Speaker 2: Yeah, nice.

Rebecca: If friends coming over. You know, this is my daughter's friend and I know she didn't have her consent so that's why you can only see the side of her.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Rebecca: But, you know, getting the kids involved in cooking.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: I mean, she, my daughter's 10 and, you know, she cooked biscuits last night to go with potato soup in [00:03:30] the, she cooked in the toaster there.

Speaker 2: Ah, yeah.

Rebecca: But this is obviously ... I like to get the kids involved.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: They need to know that it's not just grab and eat and that's the end of it. She needs to know, I mean she needs to learn.

Speaker 2: Correct

Rebecca: And that's what, you know, this is chili. A few cans from the pantry.We tweaked a little bit with our own onions and added tomatoes and stuff like that you know. Like teaching her how to.

Speaker 2: That's good.

Rebecca: You can take a small amount.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: And you can make big.

Speaker 2: Right.

Rebecca: You know, and then we didn't need it all so I froze the rest of it.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: You know later when it gets cold like it is now. Pull it out.

Speaker 2: Yeah, Yeah.

Rebecca: I think that's one of my favorite things. I mean, like I mean this is the only picture I had at school and I don't really have his consent but at the same time he knew he was having his picture taken that day so. But um, I mean, I cook all day for 800 kids. You know what I'm saying. Like you know how to do it. Food is a big part of our life.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah.

Rebecca: And it's in, what we started with the kids. Some of it I don't agree with. Some of it I don't think is the best healthy choice for the kids but at the same time seeing the kids [00:04:30] and knowing my part in their life and feeding ... you know 2 meals a day. I mean ,I'm involved in that so that's something ... like I said I mean food from the minute I get up to when I go to bed is a big part of our life right now.

Speaker 2: Right, right

Rebecca: Yep. And there are challenges but we could, we're still, we're still happy. You know.

Rebecca: We don't. We haven't ever ran out of food. We've always been fed.

Speaker 2: Thankfully.

Rebecca: So we're very thankful for what we have, yeah.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yeah. Great.

Rebecca: Like this the other night, I didn't feel like doing nothing so I threw pizzas in the oven. [Laughter]

Speaker 2: Frozen pizzas, yeah?

Rebecca: They're not the best choice but hey. It gets us fed.

Excerpt 2:

Rebecca r: We planted a few things, a few lettuces, radishes and that sort of stuff and things actually started sprouting in this week we only have about 3 or 4 that are still left. They're, you know, I'm surprised the cold didn't kill them yet.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: My sunflowers are doing great there. But taking her and showing her the different things that maybe we don't grow, you know what I mean?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Speaker 2: And teaching her. I mean she know because of the farm experience or whatever. She knows about a lot of foods that a lot of people don't know about.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: But you know seeing which ones she [00:16:30] recognizes and which ones she's had before. You know and getting her to pick some too. I mean that was fun.

Speaker 2: Mm-Hmm

Rebecca: That was fun. We loved, we always go by the gardens when we're over there so

Speaker 2: I do too.

Rebecca: Just see what they have.

Speaker 2: It doesn't matter [inaudible 00:16:41]

Rebecca: And I was very disappointed because they didn't have ... Georgia has two growing seasons. You can grow in the Spring and you can grow again the Fall.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: So you've got two cycles you can go through.

Rebecca: Going Home Depot in, you know, February and seeing, they hardly had no plants out there and the ones they had I think from back, [00:17:00] you know, I don't know maybe the Fall.

Speaker 2: [crosstalk 00:17:00]

Rebecca: Because they were horrible looking. So to not have a big selection, you know, outside in the garden center that was kind of frustrating to me.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Huh.

Rebecca: Why do you only put it out like right about now. You know what I mean.

Speaker 2: Yeah, yup

Rebecca: And then it it's gone ...

Speaker 2: Correct.

Rebecca: ... in a few months. That doesn't make sense to me.

Speaker 2: Correct.

Rebecca: But um ... but she knows it all starts with a tiny seed. I mean she understands that.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: She understand it takes time and you might lose stuff, like like we have. And you're like, You know. And it takes more than just going to the store.

Excerpt 3

Speaker 2: So, and I think about like the pantry here, there's a flow, the food comes in and it goes out and it feeds people and it makes people happy and you know, the kind of things that you are describing in your family are to some extent happening in a place like this as well but I don't know, I wonder if you could just so juxtapose, how you, how you situate food in your world with your family in relation to how you think of it here? How similar, how different?

Rebecca: [00:21:30] Mmm. [Pause] Well, like, like when I come here to get food? Like the difference in how I feel

Speaker 2: Yeah, sure.

Rebecca: Like in coming. I

Speaker 2: Yeah, I mean you're obviously someone who thinks a lot about food. You use it there. It's in your day.

Rebecca: [crosstalk 00:21:43] yeah. Umm. It's humbling coming here. I hate it. I mean, I'll, you mean I'll. Umm I get excited though too. You know what I'm saying, I really don't want to have to go but I have to. You know I mean like I know [00:22:00] it's, when it's the end of the month or something whatever.

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: Those times it's like you know, but I always know when I come here that I'm going to be greeted by friendly people. I mean, I've been to other places in the County and I'll be honest even, I don't know it's something about, about the personnel.

Speaker 2: Yeah

Rebecca: That, that, there's a little bit, there's a lot of care involved. You know what I'm saying.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Rebecca: And they're very, they've been very helpful to [00:22:30] me in the past few months. You know as far as encouraging me because I was having a few other things going on and ...

Speaker 2: Yeah.

Rebecca: So you're not just getting food for the table. You know what I'm saying.

APPENDIX K

Lillian Found Poetry Transcript Excerpt

Excerpt 1

Lillian: Okay. This was kind of like, I was budgeting because we were getting paid, and had everything we had to do, and I like sat down and really figured out, "Okay, we get this much a month, [00:08:30] but how much does it break down?" You know? And when I do that, then I can kind of figure out how much I can spend like when I'm shopping. So, I need to buy this much meat, this much of that, and this is how much I have to spend on those things. And we feed a family of six on $17 a day. And then it breaks down [00:09:00] even smaller, and it tell you, tells like, you know, how much per person per meal and stuff.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian : And I mean, there's leeway, because some of the kids go to school and get free, you know, lunch at school.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian: So some of the days we don't have to provide all the meals, and then there's other days where they're on vacation or something and we have to do double time and snacks, 'cause ...

Lillian: That's hard.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian : And I just thought that that was kind of profound, when you sit down, and I mean, it-it didn't print [00:09:30] really, really nice, so you could see all the, um, numbers real clearly,

but like our outgoing expenses, um, or our income was only $1375, and our outgoing was $1462, and that was before laundry soap, shampoo, toilet paper, and those things too.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian: Because, you know, you get help with food, but it's really hard for somebody to say, "Here's some dish soap and a [00:10:00] bottle of bleach."

Interviewer e: Right. Right.

Lillian: You know, so I thought that, that was kind of a profound thing. You know, wow, you know, this is six people, and there, that's a-

Interviewer: Yeah.

Lillian: Not lot a money when you think about it.

Interviewer: No.

Lillian: You know, um, a lot of the recipes are usually, you know, ten dollar. You feed your family on ten dollars a day, but they're only figuring four people.

Interviewer: Mmm (affirmative).

Lillian: So you've got to add extra for those extra people, too.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: And so- You know, we try, but even when I try it's still, it's not always that easy.

Excerpt 2:

Lillian: And I took a friend who had never couponed, or stacked and [inaudible 00:11:50] sale shopped, and I didn't give them my coupons or Kroger card ahead of time. I let her see the total and I said, "Now you've got to see the magic."

Interviewer: (Laughter).

Lillian: Like, "This is the best part," you know? And I [00:12:00] gave him my card and everything, he just went whoosh, and she, and her eyes just bugged out. She never even thought. You know, she would have just handed them her card.

Lillian: You know? And I'm like, "No, you have no idea." You know, so ...

Interviewer: Awesome.

Lillian: So that was really exciting. And the only problem was, was we were running out of food and we only had three dollars left.

Interviewer: Mmm (affirmative).

Lillian: Nothing on our food stamps, and it was like, what do we do with that money? [00:12:30] Do you use it for groceries? Do you use it for gas?

Interviewer: Mmm (affirmative).

Lillian: We had, tha-that's it. That's all the money we have, (laughs). What do we do with it?

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: You know, and so, it-it's like one of those things where you really have to plan. You really have to plan, and then when something comes up, it messes everything.

Excerpt 3

Lillian: Um, bottles of water, this church will occasionally give out. They've done some things where they've handed them out, which has been pretty awesome because I try to keep my kids away from pop, and we will take bottled water and refill it and put it in the fridge.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian: And they will drink it more readily if it's cold and in the fridge than if they have to make a class and put ice in it. But plastic nowadays, you've got to be careful with doing that, so we

only fill them up, you know, maybe one or two times before we throw them out, because we don't want them ... I don't even know how much to believe.

Interviewer: But it seems like you're very aware of food related, [00:42:30] you know, any issues or anything like that.

Lillian: I've taken a lot of classes. I've taken a lot of nutrition classes, especially with our son, with his allergies and stuff, and he has a weakened immune system, so I have to be really careful about food safety. Because, you know, my husband can eat potato salads that's been out for half an hour. I wouldn't even want my son to smell it.

Interviewer: So can you tell me a little bit more about that-

Lillian: My son?

Interviewer: The, the kind of things that you have to do, precaution wise?

Lillian: We have to... We use a lot of bleach at our house. (Laughs). My son is missing part of his immune system, and he is allergic to soy, severely, um, nuts, eggs, and milk. So, we have to alter a lot of our foods. Um, prepare meals separately. Uh, deprive him of things, because you just can't afford it. You know, he can't have peanut butter and jelly. He could have almond butter, but it's eight dollars a jar, so he just doesn't get it. Um, I did take a picture the other day where we were at the store, because he wanted ice cream. He really, really wanted ice cream. Well, they have ice cream that he can tolerate, but it's like four dollars for a pint.

Interviewer: Mmm (affirmative).

Lillian: Whereas, um, you know, regular people ice cream, you can get a whole gallon for two something.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: You know, so you've got a lot of extra expenses. And then he, uh, he doesn't like to try things, and I don't like to buy garbage, so we have a lot of, um, headbutting. Which is where getting him involved in stuff helps.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: Because he would rather eat chicken nuggets every day, but we're not going to eat chicken nuggets every day. Buying regular milk, a gallon of milk was $1.95.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lillian: Do you see the almond milk behind it, and the prices?

Interviewer: Yup. That's a big difference.

Lillian: And that's just [00:45:00] ... Coconut milk. And I-I got the one with the rice milk. Rice milks $3.14, you know, and rice milk is really high in sugar. So if he eats too much of it, or drinks too much of it, he'll get diarrhea, and his stomach will get really upset.

Interviewer: Wow.

Lillian: So you've got to watch that too. Well, I can't afford, you know, because that's not a gallon of milk either, for three something.

Lillian: That's like a quart. You know, and then, you could buy a gallon of milk for two bucks.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: The kids at our house, they go through, they go through a gallon of milk every couple days.

Lillian: And then we've got Brayden who wants to have some milk, wants to have these things, but he can't because I can't afford that extra bit. You know, um, we try to do things like take, uh, fruit juice and make popsicles and stuff [00:46:00] out of like that, but even there you still have to read every ingredient.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: And, um, I took that pic- a picture of that too, because you just sit there, we ... They were really, really super excited because, um, Kroger had a new brand of red beans and rice. Well, that is something that we can really stretch for our family, is some red beans and rice, and it was fifty cents cheaper, so I was like, "Yes!" Pull up the two labels, and he can't have it.

Lillian: He's got [00:46:30] to have Zatarain's. (Laughs). You know, until I can figure out the right seasonings to make it from scratch.

Interviewer: Right.

Lillian: You know, and I try. I try. But it's, it's really hard when you go grocery shop 'cause, first of all, we only have so much money. I have to plan a menu, plan snacks, plan for a couple days that don't go as planned.