TO BE BROKEN OPEN:
A CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO
INTERNATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
by

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The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, the dissertation entitled:

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Abstract

This manuscript dissertation consists of four independent but interconnected body chapters, framed by an introduction and conclusion, which offer scholarly grounding in the service-learning literature and a discussion of complexities and tensions of this research. Each chapter illustrates a different fragment of a research story about the impacts of service-learning and global engagement. Collectively, they pull back the curtain on the research process through not only a participatory photovoice study that set out to explore the community impacts of international service-learning in Kitengesa, Uganda, but also an exploration of: a) the literature in social justice-oriented service-learning, b) analysis of photovoice data, and c) a vulnerable, artistic narrative about the researcher’s experience with a critical injury that occurred during her fieldwork in Uganda.

This research is shared through different studies and laid out in the same temporal order that it occurred. Chapter 2 is comprised of a literature review and a theoretical conceptualization of the “Social Justice Turn”. Chapter 3 shares data and participant-led analysis from a collaborative photovoice study conducted in Uganda. Photos and their analyses, contained in the captions, are presented in the same manner that the Ugandan participant-researchers chose for their local photo exhibition in March 2017.

Ten days after that exhibition, the researcher had a critical accident in Uganda that catalyzed the creation of Chapter 4. Chapter 4 uses bricolage to piece together diverse data from her injury, which was a culmination of an E. coli infection, malaria, a broken jaw and broken hands. This piece demonstrates the importance of the researcher’s body in the construction of knowledge, the generation of relationships, and the interrogation of embodied politics in global settings. Chapter 5 shares selected findings of the photovoice research displayed in Chapter 3, but in a format more suited for academic scholarship, illuminating relationships as a key impact of an international service-learning program hosted in Kitengesa.

This dissertation extends the scholarship in service-learning, casting a focus on the host community perceptions and highlighting the methodological and epistemological importance of the researcher’s body and the many relationships that comprise the core of collaborative and embodied participatory research.
Lay Summary

This manuscript dissertation is comprised of four stand-alone, yet interrelated body chapters that critically examine the construction of knowledge in relation to service learning and global engagement. The first chapter uses a literature review of social justice service-learning to theorize and advocate for a “Social Justice Turn,” in which the field may diversify the voices of expertise, problematize charity, and embrace emotion. Chapters 3 and 5 share two distinct analyses of photovoice findings from a participatory study that explored the local impacts of international service-learning on a host community, Kitengesa, Uganda. Chapter 4, using artistic and autobiographical data from the researcher’s doctoral fieldwork accident, interrogates the role of the broken body in knowledge construction and global engagement, while attending to issues of love, risk, fragmentation, power, and privilege. Taken together, this dissertation offers insights on the roles of relationships, power, and the body in global engagement such as international fieldwork and service-learning.
Preface

Chapter 2 is comprised of a literature review and a theoretical conceptualization of a “Social Justice Turn” in service-learning. As lead author, I conceived the idea of the paper, and conducted the literature review and analysis, and did 95% of the work, writing, and revisions. The second author, Darren Lund, contributed a section on case studies, as well as a small portion of the theoretical framework. Chapter 2 has been published in *The Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning* (Grain & Lund, 2016) and has also been adapted as the Introduction chapter of the *Wiley International Handbook of Service-Learning for Social Justice* (Grain & Lund, 2018), of which I am the Assistant Editor.

Chapter 3 is comprised primarily of qualitative photovoice data and individual analyses as written by the following participant-researchers:

- Tonny Katumba
- Dennis Kirumira
- Rosemary Nakasiita
- Saudah Nakayenga
- Eseza Nankya
- Vicent Nteza
- Micheal Ssegawa

All visual and written data is attributed to the authors within the chapter, and I contributed the rest of the text outside of those attributed sections. Each co-author retains the rights and ownership of their own photography, and provided consent for their work to be used in this dissertation and related publications. Each photographer participated in multiple workshops about the ethics of consent and photography. Therefore, any photographs that show an identifiable face were accompanied by written or oral consent of the photo participant. Participant-researchers engaged in multiple conversations regarding the disclosure of their identity and all decided emphatically that they would like to include both their faces and names as participant-researchers. It is likely that the photography and selected analysis of photographs will be published in a local photographic book that will be housed at the Kitengesa Community Library. Portrait photographs of each participant-researcher were taken by former service-learning student and UBC alumnus, JJ Tee. The research contained in Chapter 3 was approved by University of British Columbia’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Certificate Number: H16-01341). The data shared in this chapter is from the same study as Chapter 5, and therefore gained ethics approval under the same certificate.
Chapter 4 is independent scholarship that employs diverse forms of data from my fieldwork accident in 2017. I conceptualized, researched, and wrote 100% of this paper, although I drew inspiration from many people and life-collaborators. It has not yet been submitted for publication but will be submitted to a qualitative research journal shortly.

Chapter 5 is a co-constructed study with seven co-authors, all of whom were participant-researchers in the Ugandan photovoice research project. The co-authors / participant-researchers are the same as those listed in Chapter 3. I explicitly acknowledge equal contributions of all eight authors, though these contributions took various forms that are not always recognized in academia. Although I wrote the paper itself, the co-authors were instrumental in guiding the research questions, providing hospitality and local expertise to the research, analyzing their own photographic data, and providing feedback and edits to the final manuscript. My contributions included: Forming the original idea for the research project (which transformed as co-authors joined and guided the project); gaining ethics approval; analyzing the data in relation to theoretical concepts; and writing up the results in keeping with the expectations and guidelines of academic journals and university policies. The research contained in Chapter 4 was approved by University of British Columbia’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Certificate Number: H16-01341). As of October 2018, this paper has been published in the Special Social Justice Issue of the Journal of Experiential Education (2019).

All research contained in this dissertation was approved by University of British Columbia’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Certificate Number: H16-01341).
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List of Abbreviations

CAD – Canadian Dollars
CSL – Community Service-Learning
IARSLCE – International Association of Research in Service Learning and Community Engagement
ISL – International Service Learning
LGBTQQ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning
UBC – University of British Columbia
Glossary

**Global Engagement**: A phenomenon that involves relational collaborations with communities beyond the geographical or conceptual borders of individuals and institutions. In the case of this dissertation, global engagement is meant to include international fieldwork, international research, international service-learning, and other cross-cultural forms of engagement where (often privileged, Western) researchers, students, staff, and/or faculty of an institution enter and interact with communities for the purpose of research, service, or education. Because this dissertation examines both international service-learning and also the researcher’s methodological, relational, artistic, and personal engagement with the process of researching this topic, global engagement is intended as a term that encapsulates both the topic and the process.

**International Service-Learning (ISL)**: In this study, ISL is understood to be a form of experiential education that integrates community-led service activities, academic instruction, and intentional reflection in an international or cross-cultural setting.

**Service-Learning**: In this study, service-learning is understood to be a form of experiential learning that combines volunteer community service activities, student learning outcomes, and intentional reflective inquiry involving critical analysis.

**Social Justice**: This dissertation does not subscribe to any one definition of social justice but instead draws upon Sensoy and DiAngelo’s (2017) “shared principles of social justice,” which include but are not limited to the following ideas: social groups are comprised of individuals and are differently valued in society; “social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to the resources in a society” (p. xx); “those who claim to be for social justice must be involved in self-reflection about their own socialization into these groups (their “positionality”) and must strategically act from that awareness in ways that challenge social injustice” (p. xx). Drawing on the critical and emancipatory work of Paulo Freire (1994, 2000), this dissertation sees social justice work as inclusive of the struggle to equalize unequal power relations and call into question hegemonic assumptions and processes. As outlined in greater detail in Chapter 2, our conception of social justice requires a strong sense of humility, an embrace of uncertainty, and a willingness to listen to and be led by others.
Acknowledgements

The acknowledgements section of a dissertation may bear the closest resemblance to a love letter out of any sanctioned form of academic writing. I have never been known - nor do I wish to be known - for brevity in my love letters.

A doctorate is an intellectual formality, replete with paperwork, presentations, fieldwork, and a long-term curiosity aimed at a tiny, specific topic. It is often lauded as a personal achievement, a moment of triumph. But my dissertation and my doctoral education have been a confluence of celebration, chaos, and collaboration – all three of which I have continuously shared with, and depended upon others. This dissertation is a product of those relationships, and also of the moments when I have been tempted to give up - the hidden moments of brokenness, disenchantment, or devastation (of which, for me, there have been a few during these years). To all my relations, human and otherwise, who guided and loved me through those times, I offer a humble and forever-standing thank you.

My thought leaders and doctoral committee on this journey have been a beacon of collaboration and collegiality. To Andre Mazawi, I owe thanks for his generosity of spirit and for instilling in me the importance of reading the acknowledgements section of any given work. I am grateful to Shauna Butterwick, my community engagement guru, for showing me what it is to be a fiery and compassionate scholar. Thanks also to Hartej Gill, my supervisor and friend who has given me perhaps the greatest gift any educator can give her student: an artful blend of encouragement and freedom. I also count Tam Baldwin as one of my blessings on this journey; She is one of the most knowledgeable and principled practitioners of community engagement whom I have ever learned from, and I deeply admire her commitment to living by the values she espouses. I also offer my thanks to Ido Roll, who has taught me almost as much about research as he has taught me about leadership and reframing our perspectives on life. I owe much gratitude to Kathleen Sitter, who generously shared her expertise in photovoice ethics throughout my research process. Thanks also to Tima Kurdi, the aunt of Alan Kurdi. She lost her nephew to war, forced migration, and global systems of inequality, and yet she made time to provide her feedback and blessings to Chapter 2, which invokes Alan’s image.

Much of my learning at UBC happened in a specific place, on land that has a history and a lifeblood all its own. It is a landscape that I feel deep attachment to, and it means a great deal to me to learn at the edge of the Pacific Ocean, among West Coast rainforest and wildlife. This land is the unceded, traditional, and ancestral home of the Musqueam people, and I extend my gratitude to them and all West Coast Salish peoples for their stewardship of this place.

This dissertation was funded by a number of grants and awards that helped me immensely. They include: The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship, the Micheal Smith Foreign Study Supplement, The Dean of Education Scholarship, the Joseph Katz Memorial Scholarship, and the UBC Four-Year Fellowship. I have been fortunate with financial assistance, and would not have arrived at this stage without it. My gratitude also goes out to my various UBC employers who have supported my education: The Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, the Centre for Community Engaged Learning, The Office of Regional and International Community Engagement, and the Office of Experiential Education in PharmSci. My work roles as a graduate student truly grounded my research in a space of “real life impact.”

Although I dedicate this dissertation to them, I share here my gratitude to Micheal, Rosemary, Dennis, Tonny, Eseza, Saudah, and Vicent: It is no exaggeration to say that without
them – their engagement, their expertise, their friendship - this dissertation would not have been written. To Ahimibisibwe Daniel and Amelia and all of their children, who brought me into their home and family in Kitengesa, I offer enduring gratitude and friendship. Thanks also to Dr. Harriet Mutonyi who graciously served as my in-country supervisor during my times in Uganda. And to the rest of my Ugandan friends and colleagues who work daily to improve education and well-being in their community, I offer my thanks and admiration.

When my accident occurred in Uganda, many people – strangers and loved ones alike – came to my aid. I wish to thank: the unnamed medical staff at Kampala’s Surgery hospital for their care; Tina and Will, the strangers who made me feel safe and cared for in the immediate aftermath of my accident; My brother, John-Erik, for being the first person I called during this crisis, and the person I can always count on; Dr. Barbara Main, who gave up the final days of her family trip to accompany me on an emergency flight home to Canada; the innumerable family and friends who showed up with soups, chocolate milk, flowers, and hugs; Gina, Andrea, Tanner, Mindan, Aaron, Kailo, and Kamaya, who infused my darkest days with laughter and playfulness; and André, who nurtured my healing through affection, connection, and adventures in nature - I am forever grateful for our time together. To my brothers, for the many lessons we have learned as family, together and apart, I say thank you.

To my fellow graduate students and PhD cohort: It has been an honour to learn alongside such incredible and diversely gifted women. Sharon Stein has consistently nudged me to deeper and more critical spaces of thought. Ashley Pullman has exemplified true friendship through track changes in myriad word documents, and especially through sunset walks when I needed them most; Her quiet support and tenacious ambition have kept me on track and pushed me to be better. And to my friends – on Costa Rica and Thailand beaches, at music festivals, deep in the BC wilderness, at conferences, in family homes, across East Africa, in our “whale house” on 17th Ave, buzzing around metropolitan cities, in cafes on Main Street or classrooms at UBC, and brightening this world through your unique brilliance – thank you for sharing yourselves, your struggles, and your joie de vivre with me.

And finally, special gratitude is in order for my parents, John and Kirsti Grain. My father, a loving man and former teachers’ union president, instilled in me many values, but I hold two particularly dear because they are evidence of his aptitude for balance: First, is his passionate belief that justice is worth fighting for; and no less important is his belief that in nature, we can gain peace and restoration whether by rowing on a quiet lake or walking among the pine trees. These two values have given me purpose in my education, and the clear heart that I need to “fight the good fight.” Speaking of nature, my mom is an exuberant force of it. She, all her life, has underestimated her own brilliance, value, and impact on the world. When I returned from my field research in Uganda with a broken body, she stayed by my side for a month: With gentleness and levity, she bathed me, administered pain meds, and brought me to tears with the delicious nourishment of an entire steak meal, blended into milkshake consistency so I could drink it through my wired-shut mouth. I am deeply thankful that my accident gifted me with the opportunity to witness my mother’s love through adult eyes.

In closing this acknowledgements section, I am reminded of Paulo Freire’s assertion that “education is an act of love.” If I have learned one thing through the moments and relationships that have comprised my doctoral education, it is this: love is truly an act of education.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Eseza, Saudah, Dennis, Micheal, Rosemary, Tonny, Vicent, and other Kitengesa community members who strive daily to strengthen their local community.
Prologue

The specific format of my dissertation is referred to as a manuscript dissertation. This manuscript dissertation is comprised of four stand-alone chapters that are conceptually interconnected in ways that are described throughout the Introduction and Conclusion (Chapter 1 and Chapter 6 respectively). Unlike a manuscript dissertation, a traditional dissertation is comprised of a standard set of chapters that include literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, discussion, and conclusion. A manuscript dissertation such as this, however, is a newly emerging approach wherein stand-alone chapters are designed for publication/already published in peer-reviewed journals or as book chapters. This means that components such as methodology, findings, theoretical frameworks, and literature reviews may be included throughout each chapter, but often without the same depth as is required in a traditional format. The introduction and conclusion chapters are intended to prepare the reader for the stand-alone manuscripts within the dissertation, as well as to articulate some of the conceptual and thematic connections between them.

In the document that follows, the reader will encounter the dissertation that emerged rather than one that was planned. Due to my critical accident, which occurred in Uganda at the end of my second fieldwork trip, the course of my life and the course of my meaning-making was altered in complex and profound ways. The fragmentation of my body not only changed the path of my life, but also the plan of my dissertation. As a result, through difficult knowledge and embodied writing, my body necessarily inserted itself as a part of this dissertation in Chapter 4, and in all of the analysis that followed. Therefore the reader will encounter multiple methodologies, including bricolage (Chapter 4) and Photovoice (Chapter 3 and 5). Both
methodologies are closely intertwined with the theoretical frameworks alongside which they are deployed. Simultaneously, the reader will encounter a fluid and shifting theoretical space in which I understand new knowledge – and the construction of that knowledge – differently over time. Although there is no linear path for the research contained in this dissertation, it does follow a timeline in that each of the four body chapters are shared in the same order in which they were written and generated. This progression and journey, as disorienting as it may be for the reader, is an intentional way in which I (and my co-authors) can illustrate the messy ways that knowledge is collaboratively and individually constructed in and with community. The sense of disorientation and fragmentation that was so foundational to my research journey is therefore purposefully reflected in the architecture of this dissertation.

If this dissertation journey had followed a standard path, I may have also had an additional chapter focused on methodology as it was connected to the larger study. However, given the unexpected turn of events and given the overall format of my dissertation including word counts of journals in which my work was published, Chapter 5 shares only a small glimpse of the richness of the data. This brevity, however, allowed for scholarly explorations in other realms of the research journey – notably, a theoretical and vulnerable exploration of brokenness (Chapter 4). Due to the unfolding of my embodied journey as a researcher (a critical accident in Uganda that resulted in hospitalization and facial reconstruction) and the rarity of embodied research specifically in service-learning literature, this became a crucial aspect that needed to be included. In the epilogue following the dissertation, I reflect further on areas that have not been included in the dissertation but are nonetheless meaningful to the overall understanding of this body of work.
Chapter 1: Introduction

“Quantitative research is like a skeleton in that it provides an important overall understanding of the structure of a phenomenon. But the blood, the sinew, the flesh that gives that phenomenon life, is derived through story” (T.K. Eatman, 2017). This manuscript has nothing to do with quantitative research, and yet, it is comprised of flesh and bones and blood and sinew. That is because, as a qualitative researcher, I am the skeleton and the structure of a phenomenon; the body through which knowledge is seen, shaped, heard, felt, understood, constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed. When Dr. Eatman gifted me with this metaphor in early January 2017, it did not yet carry the poignancy that it would eventually come to have. A few months later, at the end of my second fieldwork trip in Uganda on March 27, 2017, I experienced an accident in which I broke my jaw in three places, shattered a mouthful of teeth, split my chin open to the bone, chipped my kneecap, and broke my hands. This all happened as I was fighting both malaria and an E.Coli infection. I, along with my loved ones, wondered for a time whether I would survive the sudden onslaught of illness and injury. In a matter of days, my body unraveled, came apart, became vulnerable. My knowledge structures did too.

This turn of events occurred in the context of my doctoral research on the impacts of international service-learning in Kitengesa, Uganda (See Chapter 4). The original goal of my study had been to step away from the (abundantly researched) narratives of privileged, Western service-learning students in the field’s body of literature, and instead focus on the expertise of young host community leaders in Kitengesa who had witnessed and been involved in a long-term UBC service-learning program. The irony is not lost on me that my own White, Western, privileged narrative of transformation (albeit, transformation via brokenness) has become a central aspect of this dissertation. However, in the months following my injury – the details of which will be
explored in Chapter 4 – it became evident that my accident did not *interrupt or derail* my fieldwork, nor did it detract from my engagement with Kitengesa community perspectives. Rather, my accident *demanded* that - alongside my theoretical work in social justice service learning (Chapter 2) and the participatory research project in Uganda (Chapters 3 and 5) - I do the difficult, tension-laden, and deeply personal work too. The process of building this dissertation has transformed how I understand myself as a researcher. Through this work I have lingered with the question of how I might explore and interrogate my embodied identity, power, and privilege in ways that are complementary to forms of global engagement such as research, service, and learning with community members. I hope I have done so without perpetuating a colonial research practice of centering the privileged researcher’s own narrative. I intend for this dissertation to theorize not only the researcher’s relationship to the body but also the body’s relationship to power imbalances in global engagement work such as service-learning and international fieldwork.

1.1 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation critically examines service-learning and the role of the researcher’s body in global engagement and knowledge construction. It is also:

- A timeline that captures how my knowledge and understanding of service-learning has changed over the course of four years – each chapter a snapshot of a moment in time;
- A vulnerable, “insider’s view” on the messiness of fieldwork and global engagement;
- A commentary on the politics of privileged, White bodies that venture to places like Uganda for the purpose of research, service-learning, or other global engagement work;
- A form of resistance to traditional, prescriptive forms of academic writing that leave little room for collaboration and creative, emotive, and fragmented ways of knowing and being in the world;
• A space for the celebration of collaboration, relationships, co-authorship, and co-construction of knowledge with host community members in Uganda

• A stubborn and intentional “bracketing in” of personal moments / relationships that are intimately entwined in knowledge construction and academic research

At times throughout this dissertation, I share this experience of knowledge construction with colleagues, friends, co-researchers, and host community members, who have each had an indelible impact not only on the story of this work, but also on me as a human-in-relation-to/with-others. In the pages to come, I think about research and the sharing of research as an act of embodied story-telling. It is story-telling because it is one of many possible narratives about a phenomenon – in this case, a phenomenon that lives at the meeting place of service-learning, global engagement, emotion, social justice, and visual research. With the exception of the Introduction, this dissertation is structured in the same order that I wrote it and experienced it over time. In this way, it can also be read as a timeline of my understandings, my assumptions, and my relationships as they developed over three to four years.

Chapter 2 is an in-depth literature review of service-learning and social justice research, set against a troubling moment in global politics, when the body of three-year-old Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, washed ashore as his family attempted to gain passage from Turkey to Greece. His photo was splashed across newspapers and magazines worldwide, a visual representation of global inequities, and an emotion-laden catalyst for change in political, social, and educational arenas. Kurdi’s photo and the political landscape of 2015 prompted me to reflect on the field of service-learning and its role in educating for social justice. In Chapter 2, I analyze the research and literature in social justice service-learning and theorize a “Social Justice Turn” in service-learning: I contend that to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, service-learning must problematize
its roots in charity and salvationism, critique White normativity, actively diversify the perspectives and modes of expertise in the field, and embrace ambiguity and emotion. Chapter 2 offers a rich and thorough description of the theoretical lens through which I approached my dissertation research.

If Chapter 2 is a methodical literature review, replete with clear suggestions and a well-articulated theoretical framework, then Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 are illustrations of how I aimed to carry out some of those suggestions through my research. Chapter 3 shares selected findings of the research from Kitengesa. Chapter 5 is a collaborative, participatory paper that is co-authored with seven Ugandan participant-researchers, all of whom are youth leaders in Kitengesa, Uganda, where my fieldwork took place. Using photovoice as a methodology, we spent three months examining the local impacts of a long-term International Service-Learning (ISL) program. The participatory research, as guided by the participant-researcher team, highlighted three types of relationships: Friendships, educational relationships, and relationships that advance social change. These relationships are framed not as the precursors to strong service-learning, but as the impact in and of itself.

One could be forgiven for reading Chapter 5, in the larger context of this dissertation, as a critical commentary on the prescriptive manuscript expectations in many academic journals. Chapter 5 was written to fit the requirements of a peer-reviewed journal to which it was submitted for publication, and through this process, it was significantly sanitized into seemingly organized ways of knowing. As a researcher who was present for the journey through this fieldwork and beyond, I believe the findings lost much of their richness, critical analysis, and creative expression to strict word limits and other restrictive factors. Nonetheless, my co-authors and I are proud of this chapter/article, and we look forward to the spaces in which it may have an impact on
experiential education and higher education community engagement. In particular, I hope that my co-authors’ emphasis on relationships as a direct impact of service-learning will underline for institutions the importance of allocating resources and long-term commitments to programs that are hosted in communities like Kitengesa.

Chapter 4 departs from the traditional organization of a findings chapter in that its goal is a sharing of the photovoice research collected by the seven Ugandan participant-researchers in Chapter 5’s study. It pays little heed to publication requirements; instead, it forefronts the goals and analyses of the Ugandan participant-researchers with whom I conducted photovoice research. The chapter is organized as per the wishes of the participant-researchers: It offers a unique section for each individual’s photography and accompanying analysis in the form of captions in both English and Luganda. Such an approach aims to mimic the format of the 2017 Kitengesa Community Photovoice Exhibition, which participant-researchers and I carried out in order to share their/our research with local neighbours, friends, and family in March 2017. Participant-researchers were trained in the ethics of photography, as well as informed consent, and only shared photos of faces in cases where they obtained written or oral consent. The images shared in Chapter 3 are the same images displayed by participant-researchers at the 2017 Kitengesa Photovoice Exhibition in Uganda. Not long after that exhibition – approximately ten days – I experienced an accident that formed the topic and inspiration of Chapter 4.

If knowledge and understanding of the field of service-learning in Chapter 2 were a flower vase that I carefully sculpted, decorated, and gifted to the academic community, then Chapter 4 is a smashed vase – forever changed by the moment of impact between body and earth. In Chapter 4, my knowledge/understandings and my body are one and the same: Shattered, fragmented, and analyzed as such in relation to my fieldwork accident. I originally thought there was no place for
this sort of exploration in the body of a dissertation. If that was true at one point in time, then I have been able to do so in large part because of the many racialized, Indigenous, and innovative scholars before me who have used the dissertation – and research more broadly - as a space to “speak back” to oppressive traditions in knowledge creation (e.g. Anzaldúa, 2002; Gill, 2003; Verjee, 2012). While this embodied and creative type of exploration may be innovative in the realm of service-learning, it is certainly not new in scholarship more broadly (See Dancer, 2014; Darts, 2004; Shira, 2010; Springgay, 2004). For example, although I do not take up her concepts in great detail within my dissertation specifically, I am inspired by and intend to read more work by Gloria Anzaldúa. Anzaldúa is one of many scholars before me who takes up a fragmented exploration of pain and vulnerability as a path to transformation. She uses poetry and prose “fragments” to explore these concepts. I am particularly drawn to her notion of conocomiento, which is her theory of consciousness that involves seven stages, the first of which is el arrebato. Anzaldúa (2002) describes el arrebato in the following way:

\[
\text{[el arrebato] rips you from your familiar “home” casting you out of your personal Eden, showing that something is lacking in your queendom. Cada [arrebato] . . . turns your world upside down and cracks the walls of your reality, resulting in a great sense of loss, grief, and emptiness, leaving behind dreams, hopes and goals. You are no longer who you used to be . . . Exposed, naked, disoriented, wounded, uncertain, confused, and conflicted, you’re forced to live en la orilla—a razor-sharp edge that fragments you. (p. 546–547)}
\]

This poetic examination of woundedness is, aptly, a first stage to Anzaldúa’s process of transformation. In this way, I read the brokenness and fragmentation of this research story as the
end of old thinking that I needed to leave behind, and only the first moment in my journey of transformation as a researcher.

Although I approach my work from a different context and positionality, in the spirit of Anzaldúa’s *el arrebato*, Chapter 4 uses bricolage as a methodology to piece together the role of body in the construction of knowledge. Bricolage was selected because it allowed me to collect miscellaneous artifacts in order to generate something new. I analyze as data a collection of artifacts from my accident including doctors’ notes, poetry, photographs, and other miscellanea. The “something new” that is generated through the bricolage is an acute awareness of themes such as risk, brokenness, love, and chaos, and a political commentary on the privilege that I carried with me through all of it. That embodied privilege, I believe, which allowed me to navigate an accident with myriad safety nets and social supports, is a relevant topic for further exploration in the field of service-learning and indeed, any field wherein privileged people venture abroad for learning, service-learning or research: In what ways do bodies carry privilege and power across borders and into distant communities? How do those same bodies simultaneously build relationships, accept care, engage with disorganized and messy complexities, and connect to people in the context of global inequalities?

While Chapter 2 situates this dissertation in the field of service-learning and social justice (written in 2015/16), and Chapter 3 tells the visual methodological story of the collaborative photovoice project (gathered January to March 2017), Chapter 4 provides personal, artistic, and autobiographical insights into my experience of researching service-learning in Uganda (inspired by the events of March to November 2017).

Chapter 6, the conclusion of this dissertation, reiterates the contributions of the research, outlines limitations especially as they pertain to the power dynamics of my role as a university
researcher, describes implications of the scholarship, and suggests promising future research directions. Writ large, the dissertation aims to “pull back the curtain” on the research process, taking into account not only the collaborative, participatory research on international service-learning, but also delving into the role of the researcher (and her body), the implications of power and privilege in (especially international) fieldwork, the impact of visual and artistic forms of scholarship, and the relationships that are formed along the way. This dissertation is a temporal journey through research, a story of a body of knowledge as I have come to build it, break it, and reimagine it.

1.2 Situating the Research: A Review of Service-Learning Literature

In this section I aim to achieve five things: briefly illustrate the prevalence and background of service-learning in higher education today; provide working definitions of both community service-learning (CSL) and international service-learning (ISL); offer some key examples of activities involved in both service and learning as they occur within the framework of service-learning; outline central claims in the literature as to the benefits of service-learning; and touch on some key contexts that contribute to the variance and complexity of service-learning. First, I should point out that “service-learning” and “community service-learning” will be used interchangeably in this dissertation, while “international service-learning” is interpreted as a specific type of service-learning with many overlapping challenges and benefits, but also with a unique set of contexts. Therefore, much of the “CSL” or “service-learning” literature and research is essential to ISL, while some ISL literature – due to its complexities that arise from being international in nature - is not entirely relevant to more general or local forms of service-learning. My task here is not to compare the costs and benefits of CSL versus ISL, but rather to
delve into central contexts, processes, and theory in the field, which means drawing on broader service-learning literature as foundational to understanding ISL.

1.2.1 Prevalence in Higher Education

Service-learning has emerged as a popular form of experiential education in schooling institutions around the world. Canadian and American post-secondary institutions have adopted various types of service-learning to meet goals related to internationalization, global citizenship, student satisfaction, examination of power and privilege, and community engagement, among others (Bryan, 2012; Chapdelaine, Ruiz, Warchal, & Wells, 2005; Lee, 2017). In the 1980s, many universities began to introduce community service graduation requirements (O’Grady, 2000). More recently, in 2010-2012, Campus Compact, a coalition of American Universities committed to civic engagement, reported that 7% of all faculty in member institutions were involved in offering a service-learning course (Campus Compact, 2010; Campus Compact, 2012). With the increasing emphasis on internationalization in post-secondary institutions, international service-learning has become a means to address community engagement while also connecting students to global communities through “real-world” issues. Simultaneously, formal educational institutions have been charged with the responsibility of developing in students a sense of ethical global citizenship and intercultural understanding (Bryan, 2012).

In the Canadian context, service-learning has gained traction especially in the past fifteen years, as post-secondary institutions have taken note of American trends, and moved to include civic engagement, experiential education, and global citizenship in their official policies. In 2004, the Canadian Alliance for Community Service Learning (CACSL) was formed as a national network of post-secondary institutions engaged and interested in service learning (CACSL, 2015). Presently, at least thirty-five post-secondary institutions in Canada offer...
service-learning courses, according to CACSL research (2015). Jefferess (2008) notes that at his institution (UBC Okanagan), “fostering global citizenship has become a primary mandate of the academic plan” (p. 28). In British Columbia, according to the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer (2017), service-learning is considered a type of experiential education, distinctive from other types including practicums, internships, study abroad or exchanges, and co-operative education. Experiential education programs “have experience at their core, and are intentionally linked to the learner’s academic and professional goals, and are directed and monitored by the institutions so as to develop the learner’s knowledge, skills, and values” (Johnston & Sator, 2017, p. 1). Forms of service-learning, including ISL, have become a primary approach to experiential education aimed at achieving goals related to global citizenship and civic engagement for many institutions. University of British Columbia’s newest strategic plan, released in 2018, highlights aspects of service-learning in two out of four key areas of focus: Transformative Learning and Local and Global Engagement. Below are some examples of specific strategies that gesture to the importance of service-learning and international service-learning:

- Strategy 13: Practical Learning (“Expand experiential, work-integrated, and extended learning opportunities”);
- Strategy 14: Interdisciplinary Education (“Facilitate the development of Integrative, problem-focused learning”);
- Strategy 16: Public Relevance (Support “community-based and action research projects, and learning initiatives that place...students in community settings”);
- Strategy 19: Global Networks (Support “opportunities for students to study abroad through GoGlobal and other initiatives”);
• Strategy 20: Coordinated Engagement ("Increase support for students, faculty, and staff working with and in the community").

*(Shaping UBC’s Next Century*, 2018)

Concurrent with higher education’s turn toward global citizenship and civic engagement, there has been an upsurge of consumer demand for international “voluntourism,” which allows tourists to simultaneously see noteworthy destinations and experience local communities through volunteering on a specific project (Sharpe & Dear, 2013). Such market demand has resulted in the creation and bolstering of not-for-profits and businesses that offer volunteer placements in international locations that tend to focus on regions experiencing a high degree of poverty (Diprose, 2012; Sharpe & Dear, 2013). This consumer demand for voluntourism has also functioned as a catalyst in the turn toward ISL in post-secondary institutions, as they become increasingly driven to meet the desires of students-as-customers. Thus, while ISL draws heavily on work in the field of service-learning, it also borrows much of its international understanding from development education and international development literature (e.g., Devereaux, 2009; Diprose, 2012; Tallon, 2012).

### 1.2.2 Defining Terms

Defining community service-learning and international service-learning can be problematic because, like most terms, there is a profusion of opinions regarding qualifications and characteristics that comprise them. Iterations of service-learning can be done and *are continuously done* in creative, diverse ways that often elude an over-arching, rigid description. Thus, even in the instances where I provide a definition, I suggest that we continue to learn from
new ways of performing and researching service-learning, and we should aim to remain open to shifting our understanding of the term, and even – if our research and code of ethics calls us to do so – abandoning the term altogether in favour of something more apt.

For the time being, service-learning is broadly defined here as a form of experiential learning that combines volunteer community service activities, student learning outcomes, and intentional reflective inquiry involving critical analysis (Saltmarsh, 1997). Some scholars such as Bringle and Hatcher contend that service-learning is necessarily inclusive of credit-bearing activities (2011), by which it follows that volunteer community service without the course credit is simply volunteer work. Having worked in two Canadian universities’ offices for community engagement and having seen effective, intentional learning outcomes achieved even without official course credit (co-curricular service-learning programs), I will include these co-curricular programs under the umbrella of service-learning. In other words, service-learning in this research is not defined by an institution’s credit-bearing decisions, but rather by the collaborative and intentional learning outcomes that are embedded in programs. To be considered service-learning under this definition, programs must have intentional learning outcomes but need not necessarily be components of formal classes. This distinction bolsters the agency and importance of pedagogues, students and communities rather than that of institutional, administrative decision makers.

One additional qualification I will add to this working definition is in relation to what exactly service-learning is. I describe CSL as a form of experiential learning here but it can also effectively be described as a pedagogy, an approach, or a perspective, among others. Butin (2007) frames it as an intellectual movement that is thus strengthened by intensive critique. I acknowledge experiential learning in particular to highlight that field’s emphasis on learning
through active engagement, which, as it will become clear through Chapter 2, is intimately intertwined with the work of social justice. While most learning involves active engagement – often with ideas – it is the active engagement with people outside of academia that sets this form of experiential learning apart.

While service-learning is itself a field of study with broad implications for higher education and community development, the study highlighted in Chapters 3 and 5 aims to hone in on a specific type of service-learning, which integrates the characteristic of international engagement. ISL is understood as a form of experiential education that integrates community-led service activities, academic instruction, and intentional reflection in an international or cross-cultural setting (Crabtree, 2008). Bringle and Hatcher describe ISL as an amalgamation of service-learning, international education, and study abroad (2011). They distinguish international education from study abroad because international education can be achieved through internationalizing the curriculum, whereas study abroad requires students to necessarily immerse themselves in a different culture, thereby leaving their comfort zones and embarking on a different type of learning that is beyond curricular (Bringle & Hatcher, 2011). Grusky notes that the majority of ISL programs pivot on “building reciprocal relations across the North-South divide,” describing ISL as:

An organized excursion taken by students (and often faculty of administrators) to different countries or different cultures where students and faculties live with local families and immerse themselves in a culture that is distinct from their own. Students work with local organizations to serve the community where they are staying, engage in a cultural exchange, and learn about a daily reality very different from their own (2000, p. 858-9).
For the purposes of this paper, I draw on the aforementioned ideas and Crabtree (2008) to define ISL as a cross-cultural experience which, like general service-learning, combines volunteer activities with learning goals and intentional reflection, but does so in an international context.

1.2.3 Service and Learning: Key Processes

As a form of experiential education, ISL carries a heavy emphasis on action-oriented aspects of the educational process. In this section I map out some primary processes in ISL, and I take my lead from the term “service-learning” itself by outlining processes connected to service, and those connected to learning. This is simply a means to organize ideas rather than an attempt to tidily delineate service and learning, which are by definition inextricably intertwined. The duality implicit in a term like service-learning is worth highlighting here: it was originally coined in 1969 by members of Tennessee’s Southern Regional Education Board, who aimed to combine tasks that addressed human needs with educational growth and development (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). We might, however, ask ourselves: Who really benefits from this “exchange” and which element is prioritized – the service to community or the learning of the student?

Within the service processes in ISL, I consider two practices that appear repeatedly in the literature: volunteer work and reciprocity. Concerning the second action-oriented process category of ISL – that of learning - I outline three significantly interwoven endeavours highlighted in ISL literature: facilitated sessions, reflection, and travel. This is not an exhaustive list of the many possibilities contained in international service-learning; Additional processes can involve the development of community partner relationships, emergency and safety planning, content development, travel logistics, memorandums of understanding, homestays, in-field transformative learning, and so on. While each process can be nuanced, and vital to consider depending upon the program, my locus of inquiry in this section is centred on those action-
oriented aspects that are most commonly cited in the literature and therefore, most pertinent in an overview such as this one.

As political and social contexts have transformed over the four decades since “service-learning” became a term, so too have the ideas related to service, and the international circumstances under which service is performed. The “service” component of this term has been highly problematized by critics because of the power and privilege embedded in its meaning. As Sonia Nieto aptly pointed out, “Community service: the very phrase conjures up images of doing good deeds in impoverished, disadvantaged (primarily Black and Brown) communities by those (mostly White people) who are wealthier and more privileged” (2000, p. ix). Nieto and other critics of the service aspect might ask: Who decides what comprises service? What are the structural and historical issues that have led to the inequities between the helper and the helped? How might the bolstering of this server/served dynamic perpetuate (socially, emotionally, structurally, economically, etc.) the inequities implicit in service?

The civil rights movement of the 1960s and 70s resulted in CSL shifting its gaze at times away from this server-served dichotomy and toward social justice-oriented service, which aimed not just at meeting community needs, but also at transforming inequitable systems (Butin, 2005). Today, the volunteer work component of local service-learning in higher education is diverse and can include short term projects like community clean-ups, serving soup at a local shelter, basic home construction, teaching ESL classes, and so on. Short-term projects, however, are heavily critiqued for their inability to either create long-term transformative learning for students or meaningful change for host agencies; there are considerable ethical issues associated with a steady flow of transient, lightly invested students providing services to marginalized populations who could benefit most from consistent, reliable relationships (Mills, 2012). ISL service-
activities, while still varied, are often longer term because of the travel and cost associated with international mobility. ISL volunteer projects depend upon the institutional learning outcomes, locations, and contexts, but can include activities like community health consultations, HIV/AIDS awareness and resources, educational programming, environmental sustainability projects, building design and construction, water and sanitation projects, etc.

While volunteer projects are endlessly variable depending upon time constraints, ethics, disciplinary background, and community contexts, the reciprocity and collaboration components of service function as processes that occur within, alongside, and through these activities. Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton (2009) propose that mutuality can be identified by its focus on exchange where all partners benefit, whereas reciprocity is more of an epistemological outlook, oriented firmly in the commitment to responsibility and authority. Chapter 5 offers a more in depth review of the literature in reciprocity and service-learning. Regardless, despite different conceptions of this term, it is widely acknowledged that service-learning should invoke reciprocity as an essential process to ensure that programs and approaches are concerned with the growth and development of all partners involved (Crabtree, 2008; Dostilio et al., 2005; Sharpe & Dear, 2013).

The learning process in ISL is embedded in and layered around the service process, however, it carries additional implications in that ISL without formal learning goals is simply “voluntourism.” Thus, the learning portion is comprised of multitudinous practices including reflection, reflexivity, pre-departure orientations, in-field sessions, post-program activities, and the many intense joys and disorientations that often accompany travel and immersion in a different culture. I highlight here three key processes: reflexivity, facilitated sessions, and travel.
Much ISL and general service-learning literature expands on the importance of reflection and reflexivity (e.g. Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014; Saltmarsh, 1997; Sletto, 2010). Reflexivity is distinguished from reflection in that it not only requires students to look inward, but it also – and especially – requires that students examine their own positionality politically, linguistically, culturally, and historically (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002). Thus, a reflexive learner is one who problematizes his or her own identity, and considers his or her own complicity in both inequities and in the construction of narratives pertaining to identity, injustice, self, and others (Sletto, 2010). A reflective student, on the other hand, is one who according to Coles (1993), reflects on “what they are doing, what they would like to be doing, and what they are having difficulty doing” (p. 147). Journal-writing and verbal narrative sharing in close, face-to-face contact can be both reflection and reflexivity activities, as suggested by some scholars (Goldsmith, 1995; Noddings, 1984; Saltmarsh, 1997).

Another set of learning processes related to ISL involves the cluster of facilitated activities that ensure intentionality in student learning. In particular, pre-departure workshops, in-field reflections, and re-entry activities are vital components in ISL programs (Berry, 1990; Bringle & Hatcher, 2011; Crabtree, 2008). Given that ISL participants enter into unfamiliar cultural, social, and geographical contexts through international programs, pre-departure workshops can prepare them to “expect the unexpected” and gain valuable content knowledge (language, customs, economy, culture, etc.) about the host community in which they will be sojourning. More importantly, pre-departure workshops can prepare students to think about issues of power, privilege, poverty, history, and their own positionality in relation to these topics (Kiely, 2004). Pre-departure workshops also allow facilitators to convey any content or background information that community partners and host communities request students to have.
an understanding about. Re-entry facilitated activities are considered of equal importance, as students often struggle to integrate their in-field learning with their lives in their home community (Crabtree, 2008). As Kiely (2004) points out, complex issues surrounding privilege, identity, and ethics are likely to appear after students return home – a fact that accentuates the significance of re-entry activities.

Finally, travel in itself provides students with experiences of disorientation, difference, and culture shock, all of which can contribute greatly to their overall learning if effectively facilitated. Educational travel experiences are said to promote transformative learning that transcends typical campus-based instruction (Stoner, Terrant, Perry, Stoner, Wearing, & Lyons, 2014). Travel comprises much of what distinguishes ISL from CSL, and this immersion experience adds an all encompassing element that varies greatly depending on the culture and customs of the given host community. The mobility required of students and faculty to be able to sojourn in areas – largely in areas affected by poverty – is also something that often distinguishes their position of power and privilege from that of host communities; As such, the process of travel – and the socioeconomic privilege associated with it – is simultaneously a potentially high impact learning activity, and also a problematic transaction in which the world’s wealthy may observe the suffering of others, exploit material and existential goods, and create unforeseen ripple effects that impact host communities in unpredictable ways. Conceived this way, the tourism portion of ISL is perhaps the most contentious of all the processes listed above, in its potential to perpetuate and exacerbate gross inequity.
1.2.4 Benefits of Service-Learning

This section outlines some key claims that CSL and ISL literature make about service-learning. Its perceived benefits are far-reaching, diverse, and context dependent, but I attempt to provide here an overview of the most frequent claims that tend to undergird the rationale for using this pedagogy in higher education. To begin, service-learning is shown to develop in students a sense of civic participation, responsibility, and global citizenship (Kiely, 2004, 2005; Kraft & Dwyer, 2000; Schensul & Berg, 2004). Research related to this idea contains a variety of terms such as “global citizenship,” “civic responsibility” and “civic engagement,” each of which denote great complexity and nuance. While a thorough exploration of each aforementioned term is beyond the scope of this paper, their interconnectedness and overlapping layers are illustrative of the institutional appetite for these ideals, and they function as a central reason for the foundation and development of service-learning in higher education. As Butin (2006) reminds us (in a tone of cynism), “service-learning is seen as the skeleton key to unlock the power and potential of postsecondary education as a force for democracy and social justice” (p. 476).

Beyond the development of citizenship and responsibility, service-learning is said to develop in students a sense of moral reasoning and a connection between knowledge and moral behaviour (Saltmarsh, 1997). Taylor, Jones, Massey, Mickey, and Reynolds’ (2018) longitudinal study of international service-learning offers compelling evidence that students are able to broaden their understandings of social identities as a result of ISL. Moreover, student transformational learning, which involves critical awareness and reformulation of assumptions and knowledge is also said to be achieved through service-learning (Crabtree, 2008; Kiely, 2004; Taylor et al., 2018). Research also suggests that service-learning has a capacity for bridging academic, abstract, theoretical learning with concrete, “real-world” issues, thereby enhancing
comprehension (Butin, 2006; Grusky, 2000; Schhalge, Pajunen, & Brotherton, 2018). In doing so, there is the added benefit of forming connections between campus and a plethora of communities that exist beyond institutional walls (Grusky, 2000). International service-learning is credited with providing students opportunities to experience dissonance and challenges via different political and cultural systems (Grusky, 2000; Taylor et al., 2018); meet and sojourn among diverse people (Grusky 2000); expand understandings of diversity (Camacho, 2004); and speak with community partners and host communities about a variety of issues related to poverty, the environment, and public services, etc. (Grusky, 2000). While service-learning benefits and results are frequently framed in aforementioned ways, they are greatly dependent upon its many variable contexts.

1.2.5 Service Learning Contexts

As this section has outlined, service-learning is incredibly diverse, inasmuch as it can be expressed in infinite ways, depending upon the combination of contexts such as: Community partners, location, relationships, personal and locational histories, student demographics, university politics, host community geography, university location, disciplines, political affiliations, funding, power dynamics, faculty approaches and demographics, host community complexities, etc. ISL is particularly context dependent based on issues of global poverty, international politics, geography, and mobility, among others. Analyses of service-learning contexts arise throughout this section, particularly in the discussions of service-learning critiques and narratives of purpose. Bearing that in mind, I have chosen to briefly highlight one particular service-learning context that should be emphasized separately, if not for its largely overlooked importance in the service-learning movement itself, then for a reminder about that which adds meaning and gives purpose to ISL: relationships and people.
Human relationships undergird every process, context, and narrative in ISL. They govern the success and sustainability of service-learning programs, animate and give life to student understanding, and where relationships are tense or fractured, they offer rich spaces of difficult learning and opportunities for transformed perspectives, policies, and approaches. If not adequately addressed, those fractured relationships can cause sustained damage to learners, institutions, and communities alike. Crabtree (2008) contends that human relationships are “the key to successful and satisfying international experiences” (p. 22). In short, relationships form the very foundation of service-learning: “At its core, service-learning is about relationships among faculty, students, the college or university, and community agencies, each group having different agendas, resources, and levels of power” (Chapdelaine, Ruiz, Warchal, & Wells, 2005, p. 15). This human-focused pedagogy is so resource-intensive because of its dependence on face-to-face interactions that can neither be mimicked through a computer program, nor replaced and made more efficient by any form of technology.

It follows, then, that community partners and host communities are not merely important in ISL, but rather, they are essential. Without community partners, their expertise, their willingness to teach and share, their commitment to reciprocity – ISL, and indeed service-learning, would cease to exist. In outlining the key claims of service-learning research, it becomes uncomfortably clear that there persists a proliferation of research on benefits to and impacts on students and a corresponding dearth of research on its benefits to and impacts on host and partner communities (See Kearney, Athota, & Bee, 2018). A report from Stoecker and Schmidt (2017) identifies that much of the research in international service-learning originates from “the institutional side of the relationship, especially on how service learning impacts students” (p. 34). This may be due to complicated ethical research guidelines, language and
cultural barriers, perceived relevance to the academy, or general researcher interests, and/or it may also represent a continued prioritization of institutional needs and desires over those of the community. The implications of power and privilege in ISL will be addressed further in a later section, but it should be explicitly highlighted that there is a risk of unethical practices and a lack of program sustainability when a program fails to assign relationships their due priority through listening to, being taught by, and sharing in dialogue with community partner and host community voices. This section then, as a review and reflection of key literature in the field of ISL, also sets the stage for the why of the doctoral research contained in this dissertation. This known gap in the literature motivated me to direct my research toward community voices and relationships.

### 1.2.6 International Service-Learning: Key Critiques

Having laid the foundation for an exploration of ISL literature, this section directs its attention to potential pitfalls within the field. In this section I map out three related areas of critique directed toward ISL: Prejudice and stereotypes, power and privilege, and instrumentalization and futility. These areas of critique are interrelated and vary depending on the many aforementioned contexts of the ISL program or research project in question. This is by no means an exhaustive list of critiques that are or could be formulated to problematize ISL, however, they provide a starting point for thinking about ISL not only as a high-impact pedagogy for educating college and university students, but also as a potentially harmful process that may undermine communities, exacerbate existent problems, or reproduce the very inequities that it strives to alleviate. It is worth noting that many of service-learning’s harshest critics are also its greatest advocates (See, for example, Butin, 2006; Grusky, 2000; Mills, 2012; Purpel, 1999). This highlights the importance of casting a critical gaze on the work of service-learning so that its shortcomings may
be addressed and its strengths bolstered. It also reminds us of the need for ongoing critique and self-reflection not only for service-learners themselves, but also for faculty and institutions.

1.2.6.1 Prejudice and Stereotypes

ISL offers students an intense, immersive experience that can engulf them in a different culture and environment than their own. This encounter is said to sometimes result in an emotional collision between expectations and reality, and between conflicting worldviews. Critics cite concerns that ISL and international volunteer projects, despite their intentions to problematize and reduce prejudice, can ultimately reify harmful stereotypes, perpetuate racist thinking, and/or expose community partners to culturally insensitive students (Diprose, 2012; Grusky, 2000; Purpel, 1999; Vaccaro, 2009). In her oft-cited article on central issues with international service learning, Sara Grusky writes,

> Without thoughtful preparation, orientation, program development and the encouragement of study, and critical analysis and reflection, the programs can easily become small theaters that recreate historic cultural misunderstandings and simplistic stereotypes and replay, on a more intimate scale, the huge disparities in income and opportunity that characterize North-South relations today (2000, p. 858).

When one considers the importance of providing students opportunities to encounter, confront, examine and resist inequities that are so often highlighted in ISL programs, it becomes clear that doing so effectively and ethically is a formidable task. Perhaps it is precisely the difficulty of this challenge that causes some programs or facilitators to steer clear of the most contentious discussions that confront historical, political and structural underpinnings of inequity, poverty, and the like. But as Grusky reminds us, when these issues are left unexamined, “service learning
can become little more than tourism—and the very privilege of traveling, left unexamined, can imply a passive acceptance of the huge socioeconomic disparities in our world” (2000, p. 861).

1.2.6.2 Power and Privilege

Intimately interconnected with issues of prejudice and stereotypes is a second area of ISL critique: power and privilege. Perhaps this section is best introduced by Guo’s perception of ISL, wherein he describes it as “allowing relatively well-off people in this world to travel long distances to experience other people’s misery for a life-enriching experience” (1989, p. 108). International programs frequently involve a temporary convergence of the globe’s most privileged and powerful students with significantly socio-economically disadvantaged communities. This is the case in some but not all programs. There is a widely held assumption that those in/from the Global North possess abundance while those in the Global South are lacking or somehow deficit. This deficit based thinking about the Global South can further contribute to negative narratives and the perpetuation of colonial narratives.

Nonetheless, expressions of power and privilege are embedded in a plethora of possessions, identity markers, words, and actions before, during, and in the aftermath of an ISL program: the types of technology that individuals possess; the passport they carry (if they have one at all); the education they can access; the language(s) they speak; their level of mobility (including access to a plane ticket); their gender, race, abilities; their access to clean drinking water and nourishing food; the ability to “help” others; etc. Power and privilege are expressed in many ways, and are influenced by history and historical injustices such as colonialism, slavery, and complex structures of inequity. Issues of power and privilege are illustrated in ISL literature through relationships and interactions between community partners, host communities, institutions, faculty members, and both students who partake in ISL and those who do not.
Taking this into account, one privilege-related critique aimed at ISL involves its relationship to student and faculty whiteness. ISL programs are expensive to operate in terms of human resources and planning, and the travel costs associated with it are prohibitive for many students. Thus, those students who are able to attend are already privileged enough to be enrolled at a higher education institution, and they must have additional financial capacities to attend an ISL program that is not (usually) required for their degree completion – a luxury that many cannot afford (Butin, 2006). In that sense, ISL is problematized for its tendency to cater to white, middle-to-upper-class students (Green, 2003; Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012). As Butin reminds us in his summary of the limits of service-learning in higher education, “service-learning may ultimately come to be viewed as the ‘Whitest of the White’ enclave of postsecondary education” (2006, p. 482). Building on this, Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law’s 2012 article cautions us that service-learning done poorly may become a “pedagogy of whiteness,” wherein programs embody “strategies of instruction that consciously or unconsciously reinforce norms and privileges developed by, and for the benefit of, white people” (p. 613). Consequently, as Butin (2006) points out, institutions and pedagogues sometimes make overarching assumptions that their service-learning students do indeed fit the normative identity described as “White, sheltered, middle-class, single,” thereby running the risk of further catering to a privileged group, while also not acknowledging the shifting demographics toward more diverse studentship (p. 481).

A second privilege-related critique pivots around an opposition to the “helping narrative.” The helping narrative is commonly associated with a charity approach to service-learning, and involves the troubling notion that “we”, as a group (of learners, volunteers, students, faculty) have something that “they”, as a distant, other group (of marginalized, impoverished, “at-risk”,
people) do not have, and so we aim to help them (Bruce, 2013). This deficit-model thinking reinscribes students and institutions as privileged and powerful, and recipient communities as lacking, thereby perpetuating a server-served dichotomy (Bruce, 2013). Global citizenship, as a frequently cited central goal in ISL, is critiqued for its implicit goal of helping the needy Other (Jefferess, 2008). In his sharp critique of modern theorizations of global citizenship, Jefferess (2008) frames global citizenship rhetoric as a form of modern day imperialism, contending,

The form of imperialism has changed: race discourse and the language of inferiority and dependence have been replaced by that of culture talk, nation-building, and global citizenship. The notion of aid, responsibility, and poverty-alleviation retain the Other as an object of benevolence. The global citizen is somehow naturally endowed with the ability and inclination to ‘help’ the Other (p. 28).

This inclination, he claims, is rooted in a sense of pity, and so it follows that service-learning as a pedagogy that invokes global citizenship, may be critiqued as such. The helping narrative in ISL is further problematized by claims that it invokes a new form of imperialism wherein good intentions of service only function to reiterate a striking power differential: “Many acts of helping within service learning projects...may in fact be acts of complicity in the reproduction of structural and cultural inequalities” (Bruce, 2013, p. 36). Building on Simpson (2004), Diprose charges international volunteer programs with “perpetuating colonial myths of modernization which reduce educative outcomes to ‘a simplistic ideal of development’ (2012, p. 189). Zemach-Bersin (2007) takes this a step further by suggesting that ISL students partake in a process of “extraction” wherein, much like colonial times, privileged and powerful populations extract resources from less powerful communities (p. 24). Thus, at their worst, ISL and international volunteer programs can be imperialistic, neo-colonial activities that, despite – and at times
because of altruistic intentions, promote agendas that may increase global inequity (Bruce, 2013; Devereaux, 2009; Diprose, 2012; Jefferess, 2008; Winkler, 2016; Zemach-Bersin, 2007).

1.2.6.3 Instrumentality and Futility

A third area of critique directed at ISL and quite generally to service-learning is the tendency to use it as an instrument for achieving student or university goals, which often coincides with futile service-learning projects that do little to benefit the host community. When ISL is used as a means to an end rather than as an intrinsically valuable process, its capacity as a collaborative, meaning-making, relationship-building process is overlooked and thereby undercut. For these reasons, critics caution against stressing too greatly the importance of service-learning as a tool for résumé-building, skill-building and the attainment of course requirements such as community hours (Mills, 2012). More broadly, service-learning as a field has been problematized for overemphasizing student impact, while undervaluing and under-researching impacts to community partners and host communities (Butin, 2003; Lund et al., 2014; Cruz and Giles, 2000; Stoecker and Tryon, 2009; Stoecker & Schmidt, 2017). Grusky (2000) points out that often, service-learning programs culminate as scenarios wherein host communities and agencies provide a service to students, rather than the other way around. In these circumstances, we see a tension between the goals and priorities of students/institutions and those of the host communities; Too often, a difference in priorities results in the more powerful partner (often the institution) achieving its goals at the expense of the community’s goals (Mills, 2012). On the other hand, it is not unusual for community partners and host communities to view themselves as equally powerful to or even more powerful than the institution (e.g. See Bain, 2014 and Chapter 6 section on implications). Service-learning is frequently framed as a way to strengthen students’ résumés, prepare them for future careers in their field, and to build specific
skillsets by practicing them on and with host communities. Alternately, when service-learning is not taken up in certain disciplines, it reifies the perception that it is a pedagogy for “soft” disciplines like education, social work, and sociology, but not for pure/applied fields such as chemistry or physics (Butin, 2006).

When ISL or CSL is used instrumentally for institutional or student-driven goals, the consequence can be detrimental to host communities in that research and activities are focused primarily on processes and results other than effective community and international development. As Diprose (2012) writes, “the prevalence of short-term projects to match consumer demand in the North shifts emphasis from knowledge transfer to personal development” (p. 186). Thus, ISL and CSL programs are sometimes critiqued for their futility: Do these programs really do anything to create sustained, meaningful change for host communities? Service-learners retain learning, course credit, and social capital as a result of ISL programs, but host communities are often left with little more than unforeseen impacts of globalization such as transformed social structures, new desires for mobility, and demand for new technologies (Rizvi, 2008).

Thus, while ISL has tremendous potential as a transformative pedagogy for higher education, its capacity for connecting unequal global communities renders it vulnerable to the re-perpetration or exacerbation of harmful patterns of engagement that highlight inequalities such as hegemony, ethnocentrism, ahistoricism, depoliticization, salvationism, uncomplicated solutions, and paternalism (Andreotti, 2012). ISL also risks contributing to the reification of the idea that the knowledge systems of the Global North are the only way forward. In this section I have attempted to identify and name some areas of critique that, when actively and thoughtfully addressed, can function to strengthen the field of ISL and ensure more ethical international
community engagement. The dissertation that follows was initially built upon this foundational understanding of service-learning contained in this section: primarily, the ideas that: a) there is a need to address a gap in the literature that focuses on impacts to host communities and b) international service-learning can be taken up in myriad ways that may perpetuate, interrupt, or interrogate harmful narratives and global inequities.

1.3 Conclusion

The introductory chapter has provided a metaphorical and conceptual grounding for readers of this dissertation. The research story ahead is not just about a participatory photovoice study that was conducted in Kitengesa, Uganda on the topic of international service-learning. Rather, it is a more holistic purview of this research, complete with characters, relationships, emergencies, and the messy-yet-rewarding chaos that can accompany global engagement work. Following the conceptual explanation, this introduction has offered an overview of the chapters, provided key definitions, and illustrated a research and literature grounding in the field of service-learning in higher education. The chapters that follow constitute my best attempt at rigorous research explorations that intimately embrace context, bodies, and relationships to the degree that they are indiscernible and inseparable from one another. I begin that exploration with a literature review of critical and social justice-oriented research. Using that literature as a foundation of my knowledge construction in this dissertation, Chapter 2 theorizes the “social justice turn” in service-learning and some recommendations for the field.
Chapter 2: The Social Justice Turn in Service-Learning: Cultivating Critical Hope in an Age of Despair

2.1 Introduction

It was grounds for despair. On September 2nd, 2015, a three-year-old Syrian boy named Alan Kurdi washed ashore on a Mediterranean beach. The drowning was not an unusual occurrence in the region, as news articles and witness reports had many times made second-page international headlines, warning of the exodus out of Syria, and calling alarm to the deplorable conditions of human trafficking boats. What made Alan’s story front-page news, however, was the graphic imagery that quickly invoked in citizens around the world an emotional connection to this victim of civil war and structural inequity. Alan was only one child of thousands lost to a set of broader circumstances, positioned firmly in a larger web of structural restrictions and political conflict. Nonetheless, through a photograph, he became every person’s child in the global imaginary. Countless public figures saw in Alan a child they knew and loved; former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper recalled the moment he and his wife saw the photo, and it evoked memories of their own son at that age (The Canadian Press, 2015). Social media forums erupted with the hashtag #AlanKurdi, mourning his death and the circumstances leading up to it, forming support groups for Syrian refugees, and organizing protests. The notorious photograph rendered the Syrian conflict and its consequences more than a distant political story; for many, Alan became an intimate personification of a civil war, and the face that ignited ethical debates about – among other things – who is granted the privilege of mobility, who has the power to patrol borders, what it means to work for social justice, and to what degree each individual, organization, and government is responsible for taking action when humans suffer.
These questions, catalyzed by the death of a child, became the *raison d’être* of this article. In tandem with the hateful rhetoric of far right parties in Europe and elsewhere, and popularized xenophobic responses to the global refugee crisis, the death of Alan Kurdi implored us to ask what the field of service-learning and community engagement can and ought to do in light of this emotionally charged, highly divisive historical moment. Service-learning is ideally positioned to put a human face to issues of inequity and human suffering; notions of mobility, power, privilege, and responsibility are especially vital to this field in a time when the global events of 2015 and 2016 have caused a heightened sense of urgency and a widening political divisiveness between constructed binaries of black and white, migrant and refugee, police officer and citizen, right and left politics, Republican and Democrat, and more broadly, “us and them.”

High profile suicide attacks in Lahore, Brussels, Ougadougou, and Nice (to name only a few), escalating racialized police brutality, mass gun violence, the polarizing rhetoric of political campaigns here and abroad, and the rising rate of political and environmental refugees, have all profoundly shifted the landscape in which service-learning in higher education operates, and therefore must influence how we respond as educators, scholars, practitioners, and citizens within a field that continually navigates border crossings of all sorts.

It bears accentuating that the challenging nature of our current historical moment is not presented here as a devaluation of the struggles that marginalized communities have faced for many generations. In fact, although the current political climate seems new partly because it has only recently gained momentum within popular media, issues of racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, misogyny, colonialism, exploitation, and oppression have been unrelenting for many years. Current injustices underlined by stories such as Alan Kurdi’s, in other words, are far from new, but rather have been in continuous development, each issue of injustice gaining quiet
momentum until a photo, a video, or a story finally grips the attention of mainstream media and a broader public. This recent shift – one of increased attention and intensity – demands that educators, practitioners, and institutions take stock; we argue that this has necessitated an organized, conceptual turn in higher education service-learning – one that is acutely aware of and responsive to inequities and dangerous rhetoric, and one that actively problematizes its own roots and blind spots.

With this increased attention to injustice in mind, we suggest in this paper that a social justice turn has (only just) begun in the field of service-learning, led by critical scholars and pedagogues; if developed intentionally and robustly, this turn will keep the field relevant amid the divisive politics of our current times. Without the social justice turn and its continued bolstering, service-learning, steeped in a history of White normativity and charity, risks becoming an outdated pedagogy; it could simply lapse into an approach that inadvertently exacerbates intolerance, leaves the heavy lifting to marginalized activists, and omits criticality in favor of naïve hope. This naïve hope, as Freire (2007) forecasts, leads only to despair because it lacks a foundation of political struggle:

Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle. But without the struggle, hope, as an ontological need, dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness. And hopelessness can become tragic despair. Hence the need for a kind of education in hope. (p. 3)

Service-learning is thus poised, via the social justice turn, to be a pedagogy that encounters injustice and, using as a catalyst these disheartening and enraging events that could comprise grounds for despair, instead fuels itself to engage in political action toward social justice.
In this paper we provide a working definition of our understanding of social justice situated within a critical conceptual framework, and outline research in which critical pedagogues and scholars have taken up related concerns within community engagement and service-learning literature. By enacting a social justice approach, service-learning has the potential to empower communities, resist and disrupt oppressive power structures, and work for solidarity with host and partner communities. Although themes related to power and privilege are far from new in service-learning, we suggest an immediate need for a shift from their marginalized position to a more central focus, thereby laying a foundation for an emergent social justice turn. In particular, we highlight three areas that signify a conceptual transformation in the field of service-learning that has already begun to take place in its earliest form: (a) the problematization of charity and salvationism; (b) a critique of White normativity paired with the burgeoning diversification of authors and perspectives; and (c) a pedagogical and curricular embrace of emotions – especially those related to tension, ambiguity, and discomfort. Finally, we offer “critical hope” (Bozalek, Carolissen, Liebowitz, & Boler, 2014; Freire, 2007) as a concept that can assist the service-learning field in moving through/working with the despair and cynicism that seems to have intensified in light of recent events.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Using a theoretical framework inspired by critical social justice pedagogy (Freire, 1970; Kumashiro, 2009; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017) and critical race feminism (Bannerji, 2000; hooks, 2003; Razack, 1998), we outline social justice service-learning scholarship that has pushed the field toward this conceptual turn, describe the key tenets of the proposed transition that have already begun to take place, and suggest further developments that our field must consciously enhance if it is to remain relevant in a politically divided global
atmosphere. We acknowledge that higher education institutions perpetuate inequities through hegemony, patriarchy, classism, and White normativity (Bannerji, 2000; hooks, 2003; Razack, 1998), all of which must be countered by higher education service-learning practices and scholarship (Verjee, 2012). Central to the extension of the social justice turn, we advocate for a continued diversification of voices in the field, and adopt a firm anti-oppressive stance toward the hate speech highlighted by outspoken politicians and social media groups. We offer the notion of “critical hope” (Bozalek et al., 2014; Freire, 2007) as a helpful tool for thinking about and moving through some of the “difficult knowledge” (Britzman, 1998) that service-learning participants (community partners, students, faculty, and staff) often encounter. When inequity is foregrounded in service-learning programs and in the broader society in which they are situated, it is these “pedagogies of crisis,” as Kumashiro (2009) describes them, with which service-learning participants and affected communities must grapple.

2.3 Literature Review: Social Justice in Service-Learning

The discussion of social justice is not new in the field of service-learning, as practitioners and scholars in the past decades have called for “justice-learning” (Butin, 2007), “a pedagogy of interruption” (Bruce, 2013), “critical service-learning” (Mitchell, 2008), “social justice sense-making” (Mitchell, 2013), and “antifoundational service-learning” (Butin, 2007). Some volumes have focused on the intersection of social justice and service-learning (e.g., Calderon, 2007; Cipolle, 2010; Grain & Lund, 2016; Tinkler, Tinkler, Jagla, & Strait, 2016) and various publications have pointed to the goal of using this approach as a project in the development of a citizens oriented in, expressing commitment to, and highly valuing social justice (Battistoni, 2002; Mitchell, 2013).
Unfortunately, the term “social justice” is sometimes used loosely to describe programs and approaches that – behind the label – are not foundationally premised on social justice at all. Therefore, our discussion of a social justice turn will be preceded by a working definition of social justice as we understand it. Beyond a general idea, what exactly does this term mean in the context of engaging collaboratively with community, and how can it encapsulate more than just an emblem for those issues of fairness that we claim to be important to service-learning? Too often, the notion is used vaguely, and with little analysis of its meaning, roots, and the myriad ways it is taken up. While social justice carries a rich academic and grassroots history, and has prompted innumerable debates, we define it following the tenets set forth by Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012), who refer to “specific theoretical perspectives that recognize that society is stratified (i.e., divided and unequal) in significant and far-reaching ways along social group lines that include race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability” (p. xviii). Working against social injustice means adhering to the following commitments:

recognizing that relations of unequal social power are constantly being enacted at both the micro (individual) and macro (structural) level, understand our own positions within these relations of unequal power, think critically about knowledge, and act on all of the above in service of a more socially just society. (p. xix)

Drawing on the emancipatory work of Freire (2007/1994), we see social justice goals as encompassing a struggle to equalize unequal power relations and call into question hegemonic assumptions and processes. By our conception, social justice requires a strong sense of humility in facing the unknown and the uncertain as well as a willingness to listen to those with whom we collaborate toward common goals. Service-learning as social justice often draws on the work of anti-racist, participatory action research, critical pedagogy, and feminist scholars to examine and
resist political, economic, and social inequities that permeate educational institutions and broader society (e.g., Freire, 1970, 1973; Gorski, Zenkov, Osei-Kofi, & Sapp, 2012; hooks, 2003; Kumashiro, 2009; Rosenberger, 2000). In our conceptualization of social justice, we also recognize that the very act of generating a definition can exclude multiple perspectives and render some voices unheard. Therefore, borrowing from Bruce (2013), we position the “relational” element of service-learning also as a characteristic of our form of social justice. In other words, while we see the importance of explicitly discussing the theoretical foundations and assumptions of the term in question, we also consider “social justice” open to transformation based on varying contexts and different lived experiences of (in)justice(s). This will be discussed in greater detail when we delve into the role of ambiguity and discomfort in the social justice turn. While the above topics imbricated in social justice are not new to the literature, there has been a recent proliferation of research that deals with them. With the staggering variability of programs organized under the banner of service-learning, it is unsurprising that the field may be critiqued for its capacity to reify harmful stereotypes, reproduce racism, and reinscribe the exhausted First- versus Third-World dichotomy, while promoting in mainly privileged university students a self-congratulatory sense of having altruistically helped those in need (Cipolle, 2010; Diprose, 2012; Grusky, 2000; Purpel, 1999; Vaccaro, 2009). Other critiques outline concerns over the community impact and exploitation (Butin, 2003, 2010; Cipolle, 2010), emotional voyeurism (Bowdon & Scott, 2002; Butin, 2006; Langstraat & Bowdon, 2011; Purpel, 1999), and the inaccessibility of the pedagogy for marginalized students (Butin, 2006; Verjee & Butterwick, 2014), among others. As Einfeld and Collins (2008) illustrate through their research with an AmeriCorps service-learning program, the exposure to inequality and the development of relationships with marginalized or underprivileged communities does not necessarily lead
students to a desire for social change. Many of the scholarly voices deeply critical of service-learning, however, are the same ones that point to its potential as a highly effective, emotional, and transformational pedagogy that serves community needs while also teaching students about diversity, power and privilege, social justice, responsibility, civic mindedness, global citizenship, and more (e.g., Catlett & Proweller, 2016; Cipolle, 2010; Grusky, 2000; Hartman & Kiely, 2014; Kiely, 2004; Kraft & Dwyer, 2000; Lund, Bragg, Kaipainen, & Lee, 2014; Lund & Lee, 2015; Schensul & Berg, 2004; Sharpe & Dear, 2013). Herein lies the greatest dilemma within the field of service-learning: It has the capacity to exacerbate inequity when done poorly, and to be a promising equalizing force when done well. Its effectiveness in advancing the goals of social justice, rather than causing harm, we argue, is contingent upon a conscious shift in the conceptualization of service-learning – the social justice turn – one that has already begun in three particular areas.

2.4 Social Justice Turn: Areas of Change

This section outlines three areas in which the social justice turn is actively taking place, and to which we suggest increased attention and action.

2.4.1 Critiquing Charity and Salvationism

The first and most notable sign of a social justice turn can be observed in the popularization of a critique of charity and salvationism. According to Bruce (2013), a charity approach to service-learning involves the troubling notion that we, as a group – typically learners, volunteers, students, and faculty – have something that they, as a distant, other group – of marginalized, impoverished, or “at-risk” people – do not have, and so we aim to help them. This deficit-model thinking reinscribes students and institutions as privileged and powerful, and recipient communities as lacking, thereby perpetuating a server-served dichotomy
(Bruce, 2013; Cipolle, 2010). Several publications contain warnings, preambles, and problematizations of a charity-based approach to service-learning – and in fact, it has become unusual to omit this vital issue in any major volume or publication in the field (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, 2011; Calderon, 2007; Cipolle, 2010; Gorski et al., 2012; Johnson, 2014; Morton, 1995; Nieto, 2000; Oden & Casey, 2007). While various scholars differ in their suggestion for where exactly the field should move, the resounding consensus seems to be oriented in a direction away from charity and salvationism, and toward, to some extent, an examination of power and privilege (e.g., Hartman & Kiely, 2014). Recent advances in service-learning on a global level, for example, cite the fact that international service-learning (ISL) is too narrow in its conception of crossing borders (Hartman & Kiely, 2014). Instead, Hartman and Kiely propose that “global service-learning” (GSL) is a “community-driven service experience” that examines power relations, inequality, and a broad set of global issues through critically reflective practice (p. 60).

In yet another example, the foreword to O’Grady’s (2000) edited volume on service-learning and multiculturalism contains the following statement: “This book challenges the perception of community service as charity, replacing it with the notion of civic responsibility in a pluralistic but unequal society” (Nieto, 2000, p. ix). While Morton (1995) offers three models of service, including charity, project, and social change, each with its own strengths, he suggests that the social change model particularly offers great potential for societal transformation. Others call assertively for a transition from charity approaches to a “social change” model that was taken up by the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and 1970s (Oden & Casey, 2007). Kajner, Chovanec, Underwood, and Mian (2013) share research that highlights the use of critical pedagogy frameworks to support students in activist community placements, while Lewis (2004) outlines the complexities of her own college’s attempted transition from a charity-based
approach – described as a consensus perspective of society – toward a social justice approach. This apparent bifurcation of aims is also reflected in Mitchell’s (2008) influential article, which distinguishes between traditional and critical approaches, the former of which underscores service and student learning without due emphasis on structural inequality, and the latter of which focuses on – and takes action against – structural and institutionalized injustice.

While charity and salvationism are frequently problematized in the literature, global citizenship, as an oft-cited central goal of service-learning, is critiqued for its implicit goal of helping the needy Other (Jefferess, 2008). In his sharp critique of modern theorizations of global citizenship, Jefferess frames global citizenship rhetoric as a form of modern day imperialism, contending that,

the form of imperialism has changed: race discourse and the language of inferiority and dependence have been replaced by that of culture talk, nation-building, and global citizenship. The notion of aid, responsibility, and poverty-alleviation retain the Other as an object of benevolence. The global citizen is somehow naturally endowed with the ability and inclination to ‘help’ the Other. (p. 28)

This inclination, he claims, is rooted in a sense of pity, and so it follows that service-learning as a pedagogy that invokes global citizenship may be critiqued as such. This helping narrative is further problematized by claims that it invokes a new form of imperialism and colonialism, wherein good intentions only function to reiterate a striking power differential: “Many acts of helping within service learning projects…may in fact be acts of complicity in the reproduction of structural and cultural inequalities” (Bruce, 2013, p. 36). The term “service” in fact has been contested for its negative connotations to the extent that Maas-Weigert (1998) suggested dropping it altogether and instead using the term “community based learning” to underline
reciprocity and community relationships. This popularized critique of service-learning – that, despite its best intentions, it has the capacity to do harm through its focus on “helping” or “serving” the broken Other – is a promising indication that the social justice turn is ripe to take place in the field.

The commitment to an ongoing problematization of structural inequality and charity-based notions of service-learning, while a key tenet of the social justice turn, does not come without its complexities and pitfalls; an underlying desire for innocence can subtly manifest as a key driving factor in social justice work. Drawing on the work of Stein (2016) and Tuck and Yang (2012), we can develop an awareness of our “moves to innocence,” which can be described as “those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all” (p. 10). Thus, while a subversion of charity approaches to service-learning are key to the development of the social justice turn, the critique itself is not enough; in fact, Stein (2016) cautions against the use of “critique as self-immunization,” whereby “we may position ourselves as outside of critique or complicity” (p. 18). She suggests instead, an awareness of our habitual moves to innocence, an approach infused with humility, and “a commitment to sit with, listen to, learn from, and even be undone by the discomfort of knowing that even as we seek to dismantle structures of capture and containment, we remain answerable for our differential complicity within them” (p. 20). In other words, even in our quest to “do the right thing,” we cannot distance ourselves from the complexity of our identity and positioning within constellations of structural inequities.
2.4.2 Critiquing White Normativity and Bolstering Diversity

Keeping complexity in mind, we shift our attention to a second indication of a nascent conceptual and practical shift in our field: the problematization of both entrenched White normativity and the underrepresentation of diverse voices. This awareness has resulted in not only the development of an important critique, but also a budding profusion of diverse topics and voices that present insights into issues of race, gender, ability, nationality, religion, culture, and many others. This section offers examples of literature that critique White normativity and proffer counter-narratives from diverse voices, people, and communities.

McIntosh (1989) wrote that White normativity is developed through a privileging of “White” knowledge and behavior as somehow neutral and ideal. ISL in particular has been problematized for its tendency to cater to White, middle- to upper-class students (Green, 2003; Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012; York, 2016). As Butin (2006) reminds us in his summary of the limits of service-learning in higher education, “service-learning may ultimately come to be viewed as the ‘Whitest of the White’ enclave of postsecondary education” (p. 482). Building on this, Mitchell, Donahue, and Young-Law (2012) caution us that done poorly, this approach may become merely a “pedagogy of Whiteness,” wherein programs embody “strategies of instruction that consciously or unconsciously reinforce norms and privileges developed by, and for the benefit of, white people” (p. 613). Consequently, as Butin (2006) points out, institutions and pedagogues sometimes make overarching assumptions that their service-learning students do indeed fit the normative identity described as “White, sheltered, middle-class, single,” thereby running the risk of further catering to a privileged group while also failing to acknowledge the shifting demographics toward more diverse higher education student bodies (p. 481).
Extending this line of inquiry, Bocci (2015) examines service-learning texts and the construction of historical narratives in the field to expose ways in which White normativity is expressed through both an overrepresentation of White voices (e.g., leaders, scholars, practitioners, and students) and a dominance of White narratives, histories, and ways of knowing. Her analysis illustrates how the field’s scholarship emphasizes the White conceptual roots of service-learning by highlighting White, Anglo founding theorists such as John Dewey and William James, while downplaying non-Anglo thinkers such as Paulo Freire, W. E. B. DuBois, and Alain Locke. A continuing history of White normativity and dominance is a key issue that critical pedagogues and scholars have begun to problematize in service-learning. Further, the urgency of this dialogue is made more salient with the silencing and marginalization of non-White voices, non-hegemonic perspectives, and bolstered by divisive global events of recent years that exacerbate the marginalization of some groups of people.

It bears stressing here that we write this article as White scholars in a field and academic culture that continues to be dominated at the institutional and societal level by White voices (see Lund & Carr, 2015). No social justice turn in service-learning can develop without highlighting this problematic reality, examining our own complicity in such inequity, and working to change it at a structural level. One way to do this is to draw on Butin’s (2005) assertion that the unit of analysis should not be service-learning programs themselves but rather the institutions in which they operate and by which they are constrained. Furthermore, our field can benefit from observing and asking questions of other fields and disciplines that have found success in their diversity and inclusion of many voices and multiple ways of knowing. Significantly, we can learn much from listening to the voices of those who choose not to engage in the field of service-learning for some of the reasons noted above.
Fortunately, the profusion of voices and perspectives in service-learning scholarship – while it still has a long way to go – is beginning to offer counter-narratives and important considerations for the progressive development of the field. Through her service-learning counter-storytelling research with women of color at the University of British Columbia, Verjee (2012) proposes “a transformative vision of service-learning engagement” which calls for institutional accountability and critical examination of hegemony as a prerequisite for genuine, mutually beneficial relationships with the community. Donahue and Luber (2015) highlight the heteronormative nature of traditional service-learning, calling for the “queering of service-learning.” They suggest that approaching community engagement work through the lens of queer theory and with attention paid to LGBT issues may trouble normative assumptions and lead students to unlearn binary thinking, often leading to moments of “crisis” as described by Kumashiro’s (2002) pedagogy of crisis. Furthermore, drawing on her extensive experience in community engagement and social justice work, Mitchell (2015) continues to push the field toward more critically reflective engagement with diverse students, staff, and communities; her work resonates with many, and she recently received a standing ovation for her keynote panel presentation at the 2015 IARSLCE conference in Boston. The examples above highlight a small portion of the myriad efforts being put forth by practitioners and scholars to present alternative narratives that enrich a rapidly diversifying field. This paper positions the profusion of these voices – and the many unheard people who work to engage marginalized and disempowered communities daily – as foundational to the social justice turn.

2.4.3 Embracing Emotion: Tension, Ambiguity, and Discomfort

A third change that evidences the birth of the social justice turn can be observed in the recent pedagogical and curricular embrace of critical emotion studies (e.g., Langstraat & Bowden,
and the focus on tension, ambiguity, and discomfort. There is little doubt that service-learning has the capacity to be an emotional journey in which participants, including students, community partners, host communities, faculty, staff, and others, may encounter varying types of difference and are necessarily put in a position to question their own ontologies, ethics, and ways of knowing. This is reflected in service-learning’s effectiveness as a transformative pedagogy rooted in Kolb’s (1984) notions of experience, action, and reflection. Transformation and questions of identity and being, however, can entail great discomfort, ambiguity, and tension – all of which are becoming increasingly embraced by practitioners and pedagogues in the early days of the social justice turn (e.g., Mills, 2012; Sharpe & Dear, 2013). Donahue and Luber (2015) point out that service-learning – and particularly those examples that invoke queer theory or work with queer communities – can enact what Kumashiro (2009) describes as a “pedagogy of crisis” wherein students’ critical examination and unlearning of outdated assumptions can cause great emotional distress. Emotional crises can arise when students come to realize that they have behaved in oppressive ways or have unfairly benefitted from – or been disadvantaged by – an inequitable system. Adding to the complexity, other students may encounter intense emotions when they feel they have been marginalized, or are expected to speak for/on behalf of a group they are perceived to represent. How are educators to respond to and teach through varying types of affective engagement? These possibly harrowing experiences, while seeming to be destabilizing in their discomfort, have great transformative potential, and service-learning scholarship confirms the expectation that students should encounter and grapple with discomfort.

Building on the field’s engagement with ambiguity, Butin (2007) proposes that service-learning is a “paradigmatic example of postmodern pedagogy” which effectively resists the quest for finality and closure, and “works to disturb students’ notions of static truth” (p. xiii).
Extending this notion, Bruce (2013) offers Biesta’s (2006, 2010) “pedagogy of interruption” as a way to frame service-learning that is “relational” in that it can neither be scripted nor provide any sense of closure or sureness, particularly pertaining to the meaning of justice. This notion of ambiguity, on the one hand, can stand in direct contradiction to some social justice approaches, which may at times over-emphasize the (often undefined) goals of empowerment, solidarity, and equity. On the other hand, our specific conception of social justice is rooted in a sense of humility, which recognizes that “justice” is differently defined, and that those who script the definitions and have the voice to publicly make claims, are not necessarily representative of those who experience injustice. Furthermore, in line with Bruce’s relational service-learning, justice may be conceived differently across varying contexts, and cannot be pre-defined previous to the encounter with the Other. The social justice turn recognizes the limitations of pre-defined notions of justice, and emphasizes in its conceptualization the important role of ambiguity, and an ongoing openness to new characterizations of social justice from a range of perspectives and throughout ongoing historical transformations.

2.5 Critical Hope: “An Action Oriented Response to Contemporary Despair”

Is there a way that those who struggle with despair in our present moment can find common ground – and work together – with those who remain hopeful? In writing this paper, we called up vivid memories of conference rooms, social situations, and service-learning field experiences, wherein – grossly simplified – individuals labeled as “idealists” came nose-to-nose with those labeled “cynics.” The former sometimes perceive the cynics as “killjoys” – outspoken radicals who struggle with the current neoliberal university environment and who do not recognize that service-learning is a win-win-win pedagogy that fulfills our university’s public service mandate, teaches students effectively through hands-on experience, and collaborates with communities on
projects that are important to them. The latter sometimes perceive the idealists as focusing too intently on the needs of the powerful institution and privileged students while devaluing historicity, identity, structural violence, and the voices and desires of partner communities.

Similarly, in the case of Alan Kurdi, for example, those labeled idealists might recognize the horror of this tragedy but position it simultaneously as a moment that can catalyze change, build bridges of compassion, and bring people together for a cause. The cynics, in response, might gesture to a long history of global exploitation and conflict leading to his death, the abhorrence of a system that stipulates who has rights to mobility and who does not, and the fact that there have been numerous victims before and after Alan who also deserve justice. “Critical hope” (Boler, 2004; Bozalek et al., 2014; Freire, 2007) offers a conceptual, relational space in which both perspectives – and the many nuanced, complex variations similar to them – can coexist simultaneously. In fact, it is very likely that versions of two such bifurcations will exist in simultaneity and in constant tension within the same individual.

Critical hope is, on the one hand, a conceptual and theoretical direction and, on the other, “an action-oriented response to contemporary despair” (Bozalek et al., 2014, p. 1). As an idea, it is inspired by the praxis and frameworks of critical theory, particularly those emerging from the Frankfurt School, neo-Marxist critiques, and the work of Freire (Bozalek et al., 2014; Freire, 1970, 2007). It can be summarized as “an act of ethical and political responsibility that has the potential to recover a lost sense of connectedness, relationality, and solidarity with others” (Zembylas, 2014, p. 14). We propose that the social justice turn in service-learning is premised on, and can be aided by, the necessary tension between criticality – of privilege, charity, hegemony, representation, history, and inequity – along with a hope that is neither naïve nor idealistic, but that remains committed to ideals of justice, reflexivity, and solidarity. The
criticality and hope that underlie the social justice turn in service-learning cannot be disaggregated but rather must work in tandem with one another at all times. Kezar and Rhoads (2001) identify a number of tensions that persist in the field, highlighting the question of service-learning’s central learning outcomes: Is it meant to bolster social responsibility, enhance understanding of multiculturalism and empathy, or foster thinking and writing skills? In short, these authors ask, is the pedagogy of service-learning approached with a cognitive or affective understanding of learning? Critical hope not only creates space for both, but insists upon their interplay as a foundational requirement.

Bozalek and colleagues (2014) outline two ways that critical hope can be used: First, it may serve as a “unitary and unified concept which cannot be disaggregated from either hopefulness or criticality” (p. 1), and second, it may function as an analytical concept that honors and theorizes the affective, the political, the spiritual, and the intellectual. Zembylas (2014), drawing on Boler (2004), Freire, (1994), and Duncan-Andrade (2009), distinguishes critical hope from other less progressive notions: “naïve hope” (Boler, 2004; Freire, 1994) that can be summarized as “blind faith that things will get better” (Zembylas, 2014, p. 13); “hokey hope” that is rooted in individualistic, tired narrative that folks who just “pull themselves up by their bootstraps” can overcome any barriers and live out their dreams (Duncan-Andrade, 2009); “mythical hope” that is premised on “the false narrative of equal opportunity, emptied of its historical and political contingencies” (Duncan-Andrade, p. 182); and “hope deferred,” which, while founded on progressive ideals, can get caught up in the process of critiquing inequitable systems and structures while stopping short of active engagement due to the belief that no pedagogical approach can have actual transformative potential because of the broader barriers
extant throughout and beyond the education system (Duncan-Andrade, 2009). In contrast with these notions, critical hope engages with both the critical and the emotional:

To say that someone is critically hopeful means that the person is involved in a critical analysis of power relations and how they constitute one’s emotional ways of being in the world, while attempting to construct, imaginatively and materially, a different lifeworld. (Zembylas, 2014, p. 13)

Overlaying some of the key tenets of critical hope onto our understanding of service-learning can assist those who feel torn between a strong sense of both optimism and pessimism. Service-learning, as a pedagogy that crosses cultural, racial, national, and disciplinary borders (to name only a few), is rich with opportunities to analyze power relations; such border crossing frequently generates intensely emotional experiences, which offers all partners occasions for reflection on the ways in which emotions are determined and affected by hegemony, privilege, and social conditioning. Finally, the aspect that distinguishes service-learning from other forms of experiential learning is oriented in the construction of what Zembylas (2014) calls “a different lifeworld” (p. 13) – service activities led by the communities most affected. In short, critical hope provides a conceptual space in which those invested in the social justice turn in service-learning may concurrently take into account both the despairing events of our current historical moment along with the varied, often unjust histories of those involved, while also moving forward with the development of programs and partnerships that may well generate changes that decrease suffering and dismantle unjust structures. After all, as Apple (2014) reminds us, “despair and cynicism only help those in dominance” (p. xvi).
2.6 Social Justice Service Learning: Three case studies

In our work, we see critical hope enacted through programs designed to do more toward fostering social justice through critical learning and systemic change rather than more temporary transformational experiences for individuals. One example of a promising community-engaged program is offered by Catlett and Proweller (2016) whose work reveals how “feminist-informed community-based service-learning experiences can be a vehicle for advancing social justice” (p. 65). They use critical feminist theoretical perspectives to engage university students in reflection and dialogue about youth relationship violence, activism, and community work. In particular, they work with students in a year-long engagement that involves both a 10-week service-learning placement and a deeper involvement with an established dating violence prevention program called “Take back the halls: Ending violence in relationships and schools.” The authors emphasize the importance of service-learning being “existentially disturbing” (Butin, 2010, p. 20) and unsettling in order to uncover the systemic nature of inequity, injustice, and complicity.

The program design and pedagogical approaches outlined by Catlett and Proweller (2016) include a number of components that both promoted and assessed learning through the university course and its service-learning component, while facilitating the anti-violence program with high school students. They enacted activities and assessments that appear to work toward a kind of critical hope with their course. Students engaged in in-depth qualitative interviews at the beginning and again at the end of the program, focusing on their lessons learned, their interest in the program on interpersonal violence, and the lives of urban youth. They also wrote reflective “Who Am I” papers at the beginning of the academic quarter, which they revisited and revised at the end of the term, exploring particularly their own multiple identities and life experiences as well as similar reflections on the lives of the students with whom they worked. All components
of the program were created and viewed through a feminist lens, fostering greater depth of
critical engagement toward social justice along with significant insights aimed at both individual
and collective transformation. As the authors describe it,

feminist-informed community based service-learning directs attention to the root causes
of social problems, compelling student learners to go beyond superficial examination of
social inequity to deeper exploration of the systemic bases of intersecting forms of power
and oppression… [with a focus on] accountability – identifying the ways in which we are
implicated in intersecting systems of inequality and developing criteria against which we
measure our accountability to the communities with whom we are engaged. (pp. 68-69)

Results of their research on this program show that “the learning environment should be an
authentic community in which students feel safe and supported to engage in non-judgmental,
open-ended inquiry, exploring critical connections between material learning in the classroom
and their personal experiences” (p. 85). Not surprisingly, students’ learning experiences were
uneven and disquieting, often fraught with discomfort, and data showed “evidence of confusion,
ambivalence, and even resistance” (p. 86) as students grappled with their own implication in
systems of inequity as well as empowered as part of a broader effort toward social change.

Another service-learning approach with postsecondary students that shows promise in
enacting the ideals of critical hope is through the development of critical social justice programs
involving co-curricular “alternative breaks” that afford students the opportunity to develop
crucial understandings of the root causes and complexities of social issues in host communities.
Sumka, Porter, and Piacitelli (2015) outline promising models and examples of this approach as
well as key components of the program. When designed to foster in students a nuanced
understanding of systems and the identities of those working within them, alternative break
program participants “are better able to address those issues with humility, a broader perspective,
and sensitivity to complexity…. to work with an eye toward structural change and capacity
building” (p. 13).

Creating a detailed plan for alternative breaks that includes components required by the
Break Away organization, for example, allows students to gain the quality and depth of
understanding that will foster greater success in attaining social justice goals. Their eight
components include the following: (a) strong, direct, “hands-on” service in activities that address
unmet social needs; (b) an alcohol and drug free environment; (c) attention to diversity and
social justice focusing on power, privilege, and oppression; (d) a strong orientation to the values
and mission of the community partner prior to departure; (e) effective education with multiple
perspectives on social issues; (f) adequate training in the skills and tasks necessary for the
particular project; (g) opportunities for reflection both individually and as a group; and (h)
reorientation to internalize and transfer lessons learned, sharing their experience to continue to
raise awareness on social issues as well as taking action through direct service and advocacy
(Sumka, Porter, & Piacitelli, 2015, p. 21). These programs share with community-based service
learning a commitment to reciprocal partnership development, attention to a critical
understanding of power and privilege, a strong educational foundation, and a commitment to
social action (p. 17). Aligning their work with the critical service-learning model articulated by
Mitchell (2008), the authors demonstrate how thoughtfully designed alternative break programs
can be part of the necessary social change that addresses “structural systems of inequality,
injustice, oppression, and marginalization” (Sumka et al., p. 18). They assert that
by engaging in community driven direct service that addresses root causes of social issues and preparing participants to continue the work of social change throughout their lives, alternative breaks can be part of the greater community working toward a more just society. (p. 18)

An underlying principle that guides these programs is the promotion of a critically informed active citizenship that attends to social justice through gaining a personal connection to social issues, an understanding of the root causes, and a commitment to collective action against oppression and inequity.

As a final example, and with some self-consciousness, we offer a community-driven university program that reflects how service-learning can work toward these goals, one in which we have both played central roles. Lund is co-founder of the Service-Learning Program (SLP) for pre-service teachers and continues to teach in the program at the University of Calgary, in Alberta, Canada, and Grain worked at a nonprofit agency that is a Community Partner in the program, and she served on the community-based Working Group that acts as a steering committee for the ongoing program. Founded in 2011 by Lund and Lianne Lee, along with a team of community and campus collaborators, the SLP (Lund, 2016) provides pre-service teachers with weekly opportunities to examine theory and engage in critical reflection and hands-on experiences with young people through community agency programs. The integration of teacher education for social justice, critical service-learning models, and anti-oppressive pedagogical approaches through a social justice framework supports students in translating their learning when they enter classrooms as teachers.

One of the most significant strengths of the SLP, and the collaborative model from which it was built, is its long-term focus on implementing system-level strategies that contribute to the
quality of life for diverse children and youth and their families. The SLP has taken a permanent place in the Faculty of Education and has grown to include agencies working with immigrant and refugee children, youth with disabilities, youth with LGBTTQ identities, and Indigenous children and youth. Each agency is offered the opportunity to send key leaders to participate in the Working Group to offer continual feedback into the program, now planning for its sixth iteration. Further, it includes a 5-year ongoing research component that includes pre- and post-semester interviews as well as classroom and field observations. This has resulted in a robust data set that offers rich insights into reciprocal community engagement, fostering cultural humility, and critical teacher education for social justice (e.g., Lee & Lund, 2016; Lund & Lee, 2015).

2.7 Tools for Social Justice Service-Learning

If critical hope calls for reflection and action on topics such as solidarity and equity, one of our key roles as service-learning educators and practitioners is to offer students experiences that interrogate their own assumptions in tandem with tools that assist them in accessing those assumptions and working to change them, move beyond them, and act upon them at a systemic level. A useful tool for the identification of relevant issues in social justice service-learning can be found in Andreotti’s (2012) “HEADS UP” framework, which is predicated on critical literacy in global engagement and uses an acronym to highlight the complexities of “Hegemony, Ethnocentrism, Ahistoricism, Depoliticization, Salvationism, Uncomplicated solutions and Paternalism” (p. 1). Andreotti (2012) suggests that HEADS UP can move learners away from naïve hope and toward a stance of “skeptical optimism and ethical solidarities” (p. 2) by prompting important conversations about the “problematic historical patterns of thinking and relationships” summarized by the terms in the above list. If service-learning students are able to identify and problematize their own complicity in a notion such as Salvationism (one of the
seven highlighted), they can extend their critical reflection by asking specific questions about that term, which Andreotti provides in her tool. For example, she offers this question in relation to Salvationism: “does this initiative acknowledge the self-centered desire to be better than/superior to others, and the imposition of aspirations for singular ideas of progress and development that have historically been part of what creates injustice?” (p. 2). Given the great diversity of student project placements under the banner of service-learning, this tool can be a catalyst for important modes of reflection and dialogue, particularly to consider not only how a given project can serve the goals of community members but also how a given project might inadvertently reify stereotypes or harmful ideas. In addition to these social justice considerations, and echoing what many social justice service-learning scholars have ideated, we suggest that service-learning steeped in critical hope attends specifically to a variety of identity markers that render some people marginalized or oppressed based on ability, race, gender, gender identity, sex, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion, mental health, and many more.

2.8 Conclusion

In conceiving and writing this article, we debated how to best integrate some global and localized events that have captured the hearts and minds of so many people around the world. What does the dangerous rhetoric in the wake of Brexit, for example, have to do with our relatively small and specialized academic field? How does the Black Lives Matter movement play out in service-learning research and practice? How does racialized police brutality factor in to our commitment to community engagement? How does the systemic problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women affect Canadian universities’ curricular, pedagogical, and community engagement practices? Why did an image of Alan Kurdi washed up on a Greek beach invoke us to reflect on our global responsibility in response to a distant civil war and
widespread Islamophobia? Weeks after Alan’s image first appeared in the news, and not long after, we observed too much social media Islamophobia to wrap our heads around, we settled into a kind of despair, and finally turned our attention to these questions. Our social circles seemed awash with fear, and people we had thought to be reasonably astute had become voices of intolerance. We wondered how service-learning could respond to issues that had come to paint an increasingly troubling social and political landscape in which we conduct our work. How can we, as educators, practitioners, and activists in service-learning, engage with diverse students and communities, some of whom are facing their greatest challenges of oppression and marginalization in recent history? And what of those practices in our field that inadvertently contribute to inequality and injustice? How are we ourselves complicit? We ask these questions not because we know the answers, but because now more than ever we seek the wisdom and solidarity of our service-learning partners and colleagues, and we deeply believe that our field needs to engage in the conversation about our proverbial tipping point that will individually and collectively move us along in the social justice turn. Each individual and community will respond differently to gripping news stories and personal injustice(s), so how might we begin a dialogue (and then move beyond dialogue) about those highly emotional learning moments that render us too devastated to be silent, too angry to be idle, or too frustrated to keep doing the same thing over and over?

The result of our reflection became this manuscript, an intellectually premised argument not only that a social justice turn has begun in service-learning, led by visionary critical scholars like Mitchell, Butin, Bruce, and others, but also an impassioned argument that a social justice turn must continue, not only as a reaction to “a world gone mad,” but as a continuous commitment to taking action and critically reflecting upon issues that affect us, our communities,
students, faculty, and local and global partners. The promising exemplars identified above provide merely a glimpse into the kinds of bold engagements that might continue to point us in the right direction. We believe that the future of the social justice turn – while it is fueled by initiatives that do work – could be equally strengthened by examining those initiatives that “backfired,” “failed,” or did not serve the goals of social justice within the field. In fact, we suggest that learning from our mistakes in the enactment of critical hope is as vital as learning from our successes, and such a task requires vulnerability and risk-taking. We do not attempt in this paper to create or reveal a new or universalizing solution to the highly contextual problems that plague our societies and our field; instead, this article is a reminder of an idea that is quite old: that as times change so too must our educational approaches. And times, changing (or rather, being exposed) as violently and swiftly as they have been recently, require equally responsive transformations – not simply individually, but also in our families, our faculties, our classrooms, our institutions, and our quiet, back-room conversations. Service-learning can remain highly relevant if it continues to shift away from charitable volunteer approaches and White normativity, toward an embrace of ambiguity and discomfort, and with an acceptance that hope and struggle toward social justice are contradictory yet complementary allies in our work.

Just as service-learning from a social justice perspective is not undertaken to absolve privileged individuals and communities of guilt or complicity in issues of inequity, the response to global injustices such as the death of Alan Kurdi must not be used as a strategy to absolve individuals and institutions of structural, self-implicating critiques. Alan represents a victim who invoked in many a highly empathetic and compassionate response because he is understood to be an innocent child. But what of victims who are not perceived as innocent, and with whom the masses have more trouble identifying and empathizing? The selective nature of compassion and
empathy is as vital a conversation as any in the future of the social justice turn in service-learning, and by extension, so is how to avoid using the narratives of innocent victims as a means to affirm the “goodness” of those who respond. Thus, key to the conceptual turn is the notion that service-learning must neither be centered on students’ and institutions’ desire to “do good” nor their own definitions of justice but, rather, it must be driven by community collaborations, common goals, and definitions that emerge differently over time and geography. In this way, as Bruce (2013) suggests, the pedagogy’s relational characteristic becomes of paramount importance; there are many (sometimes incommensurable) approaches to social justice that can neither be scripted nor predetermined, and yet it is vital to outline what is desired by all collaborators when service-learning is oriented from this perspective.

The social justice turn is simultaneously a conflict-ridden struggle against inequity, xenophobia, and oppression, and an insistence on education’s responsibility as a conduit of hope – not the naïve kind disaggregated from conflict, but the kind that understands struggle as a necessary component of change. This turn understands itself to be (as with education more broadly) continuously obsolete, and therefore, continuously “turning” conceptual curves in response to – and in anticipation of – broader global issues that determine our field’s priorities. As Butin (2007) reminds us, “if service-learning is to avoid becoming overly normalized, we must continuously question and disturb our assumptions, our terms, and our practices” (p. xi). The social justice turn is premised upon an ongoing cycle of critiquing, reimagining, re-acting, and responding to the issues highlighted by our current moment, and undergirded by varied histories of resisting oppression. Just because social justice dialogues and voices are becoming louder in our field and in mainstream media does not mean that institutions and broader structures themselves are changing – and this transformation we take as one of our key goals
moving forward. Building this struggle on a foundation of critical hope offers a conceptual space in which those who are justifiably immobilized, nonplussed, or enraged by continued examples of injustice may find solidarity with those who are stubbornly hopeful and oriented in the possibilities and potentialities of service-learning – and indeed education – to move through, with, and beyond despair.
Interstice: Embarking on the Research

In the months following my completion of “The Social Justice Turn” (Chapter 2), I organized my first (July 2016) and second (January – March 2017) fieldwork trips to Kitengesa, Uganda. I embarked on my research with the intention to enact at least some of the recommendations I had developed through my published article on the social justice turn: In particular, I aimed to avoid the centering of student perspectives in service-learning research, and instead focus my efforts on exploring how one host community felt about it. I hoped that my work could further diversify the voices in the field through holding space for participants as co-authors, should they wish to be involved as such. As Chapter 2 reiterates, a social justice turn in service-learning necessitates an embrace of ambiguity and discomfort – two elements that show up repeatedly throughout both the research and my own embodied engagement with the process. My memory of that time has been affected by my head injury – at least, I like to blame it on that. The bulk of my in-person doctoral fieldwork happened in 2017, over a three-month period when I stayed with Daniel Ahimbisibwe and his exuberant, welcoming family. I had a general plan for my research, and the plan was to stop thinking about it as “my” research; part of my task was to relinquish control and be guided by my participant-researchers in Kitengesa.

In the chapter that follows, I share the findings from that study in a way that – as closely as possible – represents the research events and local dissemination of the participant-researchers’ work. On the one hand, Chapter 3 is not “for” academia or anyone expecting a structured or traditional findings chapter. On the other hand, that is exactly who this chapter is for because it is meant to disrupt those taken for granted ideas of what it means to do academic work and how to represent it. Because of this, Chapter 3 might unsettle some readers (especially in the academy), as it transgresses the traditional boundaries of what knowledge construction
looks like, and how it should be organized. It is a representation of the research dissemination that was done with/in/for the Kitengesa community. Chapter 3 is included here as a way to honour the legitimate and differently understood/imagined/organized data in ways that my participant-researchers chose to share it during their photo exhibition in Uganda. It is not until Chapter 5 that I share the academicized research and analysis – the literature review, methodology, theoretical framework, and analysis as it has been published in a peer reviewed journal. I have chosen this layout for two reasons: 1) I wanted to forefront the work and perspectives of my participant-researchers, Micheal, Rosemary, Eseza, Saudah, Dennis, Tonny and Vicent, and 2) I wished to present this dissertation temporally in order to illustrate qualities of research that are messy, complex, relational, embodied, multi-textual, and human-centered. By placing them in this order within the dissertation, I aim to illustrate the juxtaposition between what our research looked like in terms of local community (Kitengesa) dissemination (Chapter 3) and what our research came to look like in a format suitable to one peer-reviewed journal (Chapter 5). Chapter 4 is placed in between these two pieces because after the community photo exhibition in March 2017, my accident occurred and I generated my conceptualization of brokenness in the knowledge construction process. Organizing the chapters in this order was an important way for me to demonstrate that research doesn’t always happen in the linear and sanitized ways that it is often seen in final academic publications. It was only well after Chapter 4 was written that I distilled our findings into what is now Chapter 5 – a peer-reviewed journal article.

By way of orienting the reader to the chapter that follows, this photovoice study engaged eight co-researchers (seven Ugandan host community members and one Canadian university researcher - me) in a project that examined, from community members’ perspectives, the impacts
of a long-term ISL program facilitated by the University of British Columbia (UBC) and based in Kitengesa, a rural village in southeastern Uganda. The purpose was to investigate this initial inquiry that I brought to Kitengesa, and to be open to the directions that the participant-researchers found meaningful. Through “inquiry-in-action” (Reason & Bradbury, 2006, p. xxii) during the photovoice process, an additional (collaboratively developed) research question emerged: How do participant-researchers, as local leaders themselves, affect change in their community? Furthermore, how do they hope to affect change in the future?

Photovoice is a participatory research methodology that was conceptualized by Wang and Burris (1997) as a way to highlight a community’s strengths and concerns, generate meaningful dialogue among participants and with the broader community, and instigate action on an issue or set of issues. Chapter 5 contains additional methodological background about photovoice, should the reader wish to learn more before reading Chapter 3. Given the participatory nature of photovoice, it was methodologically essential that, although I approached Kitengesa with a general inquiry about the impact of service-learning, and although an additional research question was added in collaboration with the community, the local participant-researchers interpreted the questions and took the project in directions that they were interested in exploring. This means that data in Chapter 3 do not exclusively focus on the impacts of ISL, as my own individual research plan might have intended. Had the project only examined the impacts of service-learning, it may have unintentionally recentred and further highlighted the work of a transient and privileged cycle of service-learning students. Instead, as is often the case with photovoice, the community took up the research question in a way that was more meaningful to them. Thus, in the tradition of photovoice, which allows for flexibility and a responsiveness to shifting understandings, the photos were not exclusively focused on the
impacts of service learning. This resulted in a variety of directions: participant-researchers chose to highlight issues facing Kitengesa, illuminate what is beautiful about the community, and focus on some of their own leadership work that seeks to improve Kitengesa. The participants’ research contributions in Chapter 3 are responses to both the original research question and the emergent research questions, interpreted individually by each participant. Participant-researchers were moved to respond to the research questions, but also to share what was most significant to them in visual form. Thus, photographs and written captions include: leadership initiatives participants were engaged in, areas of concern in the community, changes participants were proud to share, people who were important to participants (including mentors), and various local representations of beauty or interest. As the reader engages in the next chapter, they will not see a traditional findings section; Instead, they will see photos and captions as they were shared with the Kitengesa community at the public photo exhibition. This organization and presentation of the data in Chapter 3 was done by the participants themselves in preparation for the exhibition, and I purposefully included this chapter in my dissertation as a way to honour their ownership of both the photos and the project. The impact of this work through the public photo exhibition was significant and is highlighted in Chapter 3 and in more depth in Chapter 6.
Chapter 3: Photovoice Process, Findings & Dissemination

The majority of the rich data and background processes from the Kitengesa photovoice study may not find their way into a peer reviewed journal or academic book chapter – and these avenues of dissemination were never the over-arching goal of the study. From the outset, Ugandan participant-researchers shared their hopes for the project and their main goals for dissemination: They wished to be co-authors of an academic article (See Chapter 5, which has been published in a peer-reviewed journal), and they wished to share their research (photographs and captions/analysis) with the community during an exhibition and celebration. In time, they also wish to create a book from their photos, which could remain in the Kitengesa Community Library. This chapter is a space in which participant-researchers’ work can be shared to the greatest extent possible without my (the university researcher’s) narrativization and analysis. Instead, Chapter 5 of this dissertation is an example of the ways that rich research findings are often diminished to that which fits into prescriptive academic requirements. Because the theory, literature, and methodology of this study is discussed more formally in Chapter 5, this chapter is a space that stays as true as possible to the participant-researchers’ vision for their work. This chapter is comprised of:

- Overview of Photovoice Events (e.g. Workshops, Planning Meetings, and Exhibition)
- Photovoice Photos and Captions, organized by participant-researchers (excluding the three photos that were included in Chapter 5)

In many ways, this section speaks back to systemic and structural confines within academia and some top tier journals that can often limit one’s ability to share the richest findings, experiences, reflections, and contexts of a participatory study. Some of these hegemonic structural limitations
that I have experienced speak to Dorothy Smith’s notion of the “gate keepers” in the academic community (1978). Gate keepers are those who set standards, produce knowledge, and decide on new directions of thought or values (p. 278). Spender (1981/2013) built on Smith and problematized from a critical feminist perspective the criteria for “scholarly excellence” in the academic publishing community. Although great innovations and progress have been made since the publications of Spender and Smith, scholars continue to take up questions of hegemony within academic publishing practices. Merilainen, Tienari, Thomas, and Davies for example, argue “that institutions of academic publishing are constantly reproduced through hegemonic practices that serve to maintain and reinforce core-periphery relations” (2008, p. 585). They suggest that scholars who operate from different geographical and social locations are continuously marginalized in recursive and cyclical ways. I have experienced and witnessed similar limitations, including: Restrictive word count limits of peer-reviewed journal articles; the reluctance of many journals to publish articles that are primarily photographic, artistic, or reflective in nature; prescriptive outlines and content guides for dissertations and journal articles; dominant understandings of what constitutes knowledge, rigour, and research; often eurocentric traditions regarding who is allowed to construct new knowledge and who holds expertise; positivist traditions of theoretical and literary analysis (which, therefore, often require analysis through the lens of the university researcher, even when participant-researchers have provided their own analysis of photos and findings). Although some of these traditions and expectations are valuable and indeed vital to innovation and knowledge construction, they can at times limit the inclusivity and innovation that they so aim to embrace. In response to such limitations, there are people and publication avenues that push these boundaries persistently, tapping at the glass ceilings and pushing down walls that exclude. Moreover, there are spaces being opened all the
time where more creative or less normative expressions of expertise are welcomed and shared.
This is not to deny, however, that the dominant discourse, in its exclusivity, could use some revisioning, rethinking, and reimagining.

3.1 Overview of Photovoice Events

After informed consent had been obtained from the Kitengesa community participants and they provided their initial thoughts on their own goals for the research project, we commenced a photovoice series that spanned three months and included five workshops. Previous to the first workshop, I connected and consulted with various community members about the project, particularly with the participant-researchers involved. The dates of the workshops were determined through prior conversations with participants and aligned with their schedules. All photovoice workshops and the community photovoice exhibition took place between January and April 2017:

Workshop #1: Introductions, photovoice, collaborative goal-setting

- Group introductions between participants (co-researchers) and myself
- Discussion of the photovoice process, the central role of participants, and goal of affecting social and/or policy change
- Discussion of the collaborative nature of the project (encourage the participant-researchers to make suggestions, disagree, offer new ideas throughout)
- Discuss the study, initial research question, and the concepts of service-learning and social change
- Collaborative development of timeline and community goals for the project, including preliminary discussion of photographic exhibition and sharing
• Written / oral reflections

Workshop #2: Camera equipment, ethics, and consent

• Disseminate digital cameras and discuss their basic functions, procedures for lost, stolen or broken equipment

• Teach participants about photographic components such as lighting, contrast, and perspective, and how these can help them to visually narrate their lived experiences

• Dialogue about issues of power and ethics in using cameras:
  o What is your responsibility when you carry a camera? (Safety, respect)
  o What does it mean to take a photo of somebody? (power, privacy, story-telling)
  o What are the rights of the people you wish to take photos of?

• Discussion about the importance of informed consent of the photograph participants (*All researcher-participants obtained informed consent either in written or verbal format from the photograph participants whose identities are shown in this study).

• Discussion of potential risks to participants and photo participants, and guiding principles on how these risks can be minimized (See Wang, 1999)

• Participants begin to take practice photos during session and for the following week. Prompt for photos: How has international service-learning impacted your community?

• Written / oral reflections

Workshop #3: Selecting, contextualizing, codifying
• Discussion of participants’ experiences with taking the first set of photos

• Selection: Dialogue about choosing photos that most accurately reflect participant concerns and experiences

• Contextualization: Participants verbally share what the photographs mean and the stories they tell

• Codification: Discussion about the ideas and themes that emerge in the group
  o Discussion: Emerging research questions? What would participants like to examine about their community? What are some key issues and strengths?

• Written / oral reflections

Workshop #4: Discussion of photos and community issues related to hope, criticality

• Introduction to SHOWeD framework:
  Seeing: What do you See here?
  Happening: What is happening here?
  Our lives: How does this relate to our lives?
  Why? Why does this situation exist?
  Doing: What can we do about it?

• Participants share photos and practice telling the story of the photo

• Discussion and initial planning of community photo exhibition: Where, who, what, how?

• Discussion of research directions: What would participants like to explore this week in relation to their community? What leadership roles do they play in Kitengesa and beyond?
• Written / oral reflections

Workshop #5: Final photo selection, photo analysis, social action plans, sustainability

• Participants choose their final 5-8 photos to share with the project and at the exhibition(s) (as per consent forms, they were able to choose not to include / share any of their photos with the research project, though all chose to share)

• Discussion of overall themes that emerged through the photos, reflections, and conversations

• Discussion of any changes participants would like to see to current social conditions or issues; action plan for how the photo project may address these

• Sustainability: brainstorm ways that participants could continue to use their cameras or newly honed skills in their own community organizations

Kitengesa Photovoice Exhibition Planning Meeting(s): Planning meetings occurred informally and formally throughout the duration of the project, leading up to the exhibition.

• Discuss the participant-researcher goals of the exhibition

• Develop timeline / plan for the exhibition and celebration

• Develop detailed budget

• Generate list of speakers, invitees, and translators

• Confirm Ugandan Sign Language translators for event

• Confirm and book location

• Invite community members (e.g. local high school students and teachers, other community leaders, neighbours, friends, other UBC students in the region, Harriet Mutonyi from Uganda Martyrs University)
Although all formal photovoice events were complete by the time this chapter was written, I remain in telephone, text, email, and skype contact with a number of the participant-researchers (e.g. participant-researchers reviewed Chapter 5 manuscript, shared it with others in the group, and provided specific feedback).

3.2 Photovoice Photos and Captions

This section contains up to seven photographs that each participant-researcher chose to share at the Kitengesa Photo Exhibition and beyond. During our final photovoice workshop, participant-researchers generated captions for their own photos as a form of analysis of their work. Participants who exclusively speak Ugandan Sign Language (Eseza and Saudah) generated their captions through this project’s paid translator and fellow participant, Rosemary Nakasiita. The remaining participants speak English fluently and generated their captions in English. Captions were later translated into Luganda by Rosemary Nakasiita so that both languages could be represented in the work, and so that local exhibitions could showcase both languages. Thus, captions are presented first in English since participants originally generated them in English, and second in Lugandan, since the Rosemary later generated Lugandan versions of the work. As per the vision of participant-researchers, this section is organized by contributor. Participant-researchers in this study underwent training on informed consent procedures for photography, as well as ethical standards for taking the photos of others. Each participant-researcher was responsible for gaining informed consent previous to taking the photo, and in instances where the photos were chosen for publication and sharing, participants also gained formal consent afterwards to use the image publicly. Consent was either written or oral, dependent on context, in instances where people’s faces are included in the final photos.
3.2.1 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 1, Tonny Katumba

My name is Tonny Katumba and I am the director of Lwannunda Childcare Foundation, a community based organization in Masaka District of Uganda. Our major goal is early childhood development for those aged 3 to 6 years. I am also the youth representative to a sub-county council. I was born here in this community and I was the only child of my mother, although my father has around 8 more children. I attended university at Makerere in Kampala, where I studied a bachelor of arts social sciences. After I graduated from there, I worked with an international NGO called GOAL, which works with refugee settlement and orphans. I returned to my home community because I wanted to start something to change people’s lives so I started a pre-school called St. Antony Lwannunda Childcare. One day, I hope to see a modern learning centre for young children in the community where their talents can be supported and they can have a professional start to their education.
Figure 3.1 Participant-Researcher, Tonny Katumba

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
(English): This is a picture of my mom. She is like my guardian angel. She is so inspiring. She is everything to me. She has supported me from childhood because my father has several wives and has never done anything for me. So my mom raised me up on her own. I take my mom to be one of the reasons the pre-school exists.

Figure 3.3 Tonny Photo #2

(English): In this picture some people from the community are using dipping wells to get their water. These same wells are being shared with the animals, and this is bad. Animals step in the water and they make it dirty so people get sick. Nowadays in some modern communities they use pipes and boreholes, not dipping wells. This motivates me to do more work in the community to change this.

Figure 3.4 Tonny Photo #3

(English): This is the Ugandan way of making bricks. This is one of the main economic activities the youth do in the community. To make the bricks, they dig up soil, they mix it with water, and after that, you put the mud in a wooden mold, and then you dry the brick, and you pile the bricks up like in this picture. Then, they burn the bricks with firewood until they turn red. This is an important job for the youth here. You can see the pile in the back is red so the bricks have been burned, but the pile in the front is a new one and they are preparing to burn the bricks.

Figure 3.5 Tonny Photo #4

(English) This is some of our community’s youth playing football. I believe that if we could invest in the athletic talents of the youth, we could reduce unemployment and poverty among the youth.

(Luganda) Bano beadamu ku bavubuka mu kitundu nga bazannya omupiira. Nzikiriza nti singa tuteka ensimbi n’amanyi mu byemizanyo mu bavubuka, tusoboleraddala okukendeeza ebbula ly’emirimimo n’obwavu mu bavubuka.
This is my rabbit breeding project, which I learned to do after reading a book at the Kitengesa Community Library. I found out that keeping rabbits is so easy and economical. This meat is in high demand because it’s free from cholesterol, and they are good because they breed and multiply very fast, and they are not easily affected by diseases. They can also be kept in a very small space. So it is also a good project for youth who are just starting up.

Eno ye pulojekiti y’okulunda obumyu gyenatandikawo oluvanyuma lw’okusoma obutabo bw’omu layibulale. Era ne nkizuula nti okulunda obumyu kyangu ate nga kivaamu ensimbi. Enyama yabwo eri ku katale nnyo olw’ensonga nti terimu masavusavu era obumyu buno buzaala mangu nebwala ate nga tebukwatibwa kwatibwa birwadde. Era osoboleraddala okubukuumira mukafo akatono kolina. Eno pulojekiti nnungi okutandikawo nga abavubuka.
Figure 3.7 Tonny Photo #6

(English): This photo shows a road in our community. The roads have improved over time and transport is becoming much easier than in the past.

(Luganda): Ekifananyi kino kiraga oluguudo mu kitundu kyaffe. Enguudo kati zikyusemu oluvanyuma lwa akaseera era ebyentambula bigenda byanguwa.
(English): Here we can see in the front there is a boda-boda, which is a way of transport here in Uganda. In the background you can see a Wednesday market, which happens only once a week when the people come together to sell their items such as food, clothing, chicken, etc. A boda-boda ride from Kitengesa to Masaka, the nearest town, costs 2000 Ugandan shillings ($1.20 Canadian).

(Luganda): Eno ye boda boda eyeyambisibwa mu byentambula mu Uganda. Era mukifananyi twongera okulaba akatale, kano kabeerawo omulundi gumu buli wiiki olunaku olwokusatu era wano abantu bakungaana nebatunda n’okugula ebirime nga emmere, engoye n’enkoko. Boda boda okuva mu kitengesa mpaka mu kibuga Masaka, kitwala nga enkumi bbiri (2000/=) ze ddola nga emu n’obutundu abiri ($ 1.20).
Figure 3.9 Tonny Photo #8

(English): In this picture I was teaching the pre-school kids the English alphabet at St. Antony Lwannunda Childcare. This girl is 4 years old and when she turns 6 she will go to primary school.

(Luganda): Mu kifananyi kino nali nsomesa abaana abato okusoma ennukuta ku St. Anthony Lwannunda Childcare. Ono omuwala alina emyaka ena (4) era bwanakula naweza emyaka mukaaga (6) aja kusoma pulayimale.s

3.2.2 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 2, Dennis Kirumira:

My name is Dennis Kirumira. Currently I am working at Kitengesa Community Library (Uganda) as the assistant librarian. I started working at the library in 2011 as a library scholar for two years. As a library scholar, I am given a tuition / school fees scholarship and in return I come to the library and help to do some work like cleaning and arranging books. After I
completed my high school. I was employed to be the assistant librarian for the past four years. Through the library I have gotten friends and I have read so many books, and I have been introduced to so many things. If it wasn’t for the library I wouldn’t have met Kari. Because of the library, I had tuition money so I could complete a diploma in computer science and information technology at Uganda Martyrs University. Now, I am the head of the IT department here at the library where I teach most of the computer classes. I hope one day I can go back to school to get a master’s degree in computer science.

Figure 3.10 Participant-Researcher, Dennis Kirumira

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
This is my grandmother, Nakalema. She was seated at home when I took this photo. My grandmother is calm and loving and she loves her granddaughters and grandsons. She has helped me in my education and she has inspired me that I can do it. Whenever I have some problems, she helps me. Even if I have money problems she sometimes helps if she can. My grandmother has been there for me in most of my life and that’s why I love her so much.

(English): This is my grandmother, Nakalema. She was seated at home when I took this photo. My grandmother is calm and loving and she loves her granddaughters and grandsons. She has helped me in my education and she has inspired me that I can do it. Whenever I have some problems, she helps me. Even if I have money problems she sometimes helps if she can. My grandmother has been there for me in most of my life and that’s why I love her so much.

Figure 3.12 Dennis Photo #2

(English): I love this photo because it shows a woman in a lumonde (sweet potato) plantation, harvesting some lumonde. She is getting the sweet potatoes from the garden and these are one of our local foods. The photo shows the nature of our community because different kinds of trees are shown. For example, the tall plants behind her are sugarcane trees. The tree on the furthest left is an avocado tree, and the one behind the sugarcane is a mango tree. Most of the women in our community do agriculture and very few of them have jobs so they are mostly involved in agriculture, growing, and rearing of animals.

(English): This photo shows many trees including a jackfruit tree, a mango tree, and a banana plantation. I like this photo because the vegetation is framing the blue sky and it made a nice looking shape.

(Luganda): Kino ekifananyi kiraga emiti mingi omuli ogwa ffene, omuyembe, n’olusuku lw’amatooke. Ekifananyi kino nkyagala kubanga kiraga obutonde obulungi n’enimiro ate kiraga n’obwengula obulabika obulungi.
Figure 3.14 Dennis Photo #4

(English): This is matooke, one of our local fruits. It is the most popular food here in the central region of Uganda. Matooke are like un-sweet bananas and we eat them mostly at lunch and dinner.

(Luganda): Gano matooke ekimu ku bibala byaffe. Ye mu ku mmeere esinga okumanyikwa n’okulibwa mu kitundu kyamakatti ga Uganda. Matooke gaba tegawooma nga teganyengera era tusinga kugala kyamisana na kyaggulo.
Figure 3.15 Dennis Photo #5

(English): I like this photo because of the environment. The time of day in which I took that photo was in the evening when I finished my work at the library. I was looking out the back door of the Kitengesa Community Library. When it comes to photos, late in the day and in the evening time brings the beauty of photography. This is because of where the sun is in the sky.

Figure 3.16 Dennis Photo #6

(English): This picture shows students from a local primary school. They came to the library for reading with the ISL volunteers, although they are not shown. After reading, we went outside and played some games. The photo shows the game called Cat and Mouse.

3.2.3 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 3, Rosemary Nakasiita:

I am a Ugandan girl born in 1997 in Rakai District. Although I was born in Rakai, I grew up in Masaka District with my grandmother, Mrs. Nsamba, who founded the Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. Therefore, I grew up among many deaf students and I can speak fluently in Luganda, English, and Ugandan Sign Language. I have been working on the photovoice project as a research assistant since the beginning when I met Kari. For many years I have been involved with the UBC international service-learning students at Kitengesa Community Library where I have been a library scholar since 2011. A library scholar is secondary student who works at the library in return for tuition at the nearby school. In my activities at the library, I run the sign language club where we teach hearing people from the community sign language and I also work with the Youth Leadership Team on local development issues. Other projects I participate in include computer classes, the women’s group, and a health camp. Currently I am a student at Makerere University, studying business administration. One day soon, I hope to go and study sign language interpretation at Kyambogo University. In the future I would like to work with both deaf people and hearing people to bring about social inclusion and a peaceful, loving, and welcoming community.
Figure 3.17 Participant-Researcher, Rosemary Nakasiita

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
Figure 3.18 Rosemary Photo #1

(English): This was the first PhotoVoice workshop we had at the library where we received digital cameras for the project. This is Dennis and Tonny practicing how to use their personal cameras after Kari showing us how to use each camera. We are to keep them with us even after the PhotoVoice workshop for our community projects.

(Luganda): Eno yeyali miitingi y’ebifananyi eyasooka era twali ku Layibulale mwetwafunira kamera buli omu gye tukozeseza mu projekiti eno. Ono ye Dennis ne Tonny nga bali mukwegezamu mu nkolaza yaazo oluvanyuma nga Kari awade ate nasomesa buli omu okukozesa eyiye. Era kamera zino, buli omu wakugisigaza oluvanyuma lwa pulojekiti eno nga ewedde.
Figure 3.19 Rosemary Photo #2

(English): She is one of my best, best friends at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. Eseza is a deaf student and a teacher of hairdressing, while learning sweater knitting, and tailoring. I grew up with her and I like her so much because she has been there for me and she cares so much about me. And she likes me too! In this picture she is doing some home chores and washing utensils as some of the activities that girls here do. The school teaches these home activities to prepare deaf students to live independently when they are finished schooling.

This is one of the best places in Kitengesa and also a great source of knowledge to community members and visitors. I have been a library scholar here since 2011, doing mopping, cleaning the library, preparing books, and hosting international service-learning students from Canada. I also help in different projects like youth leadership team, sign language and computer classes, and reading classes for local students.

(Luganda): Kino kyekimu ku bifo ebising mu Kitengesa ate aterekerero era ensulo y’amagezi eri abantu bo mu kitundu n’abagenyi. Mbadde nkola ku layibulale eno okuva mu mwaka gwa 2011, nga nongosa nokutereza obutabo. Era mbadde nyambako ku bagenyi abayizi okuva mu Canada abajja okukola naffe mu kitundu kyaffe. Era nyambako mu pulojekiti ezenjawulo nga eyabavubuka (Youth leadership Team), okusomesa olulimi olwobubonero ne nkozesya ya komyuta (sign language classes) awamu no kuyigiriza abaana abato okusoma oluzungu.
In the picture, there are two of the deaf students, Eseza and Sauda, who were walking up to the library. In the background is the community of Kitengesa and one of the roads that connects Good Samaritan School for the Deaf to the library. Also, this road connects the trading centre with a neighbouring village. We mostly walk everywhere we go because most people don’t have cars and many people prefer walking rather than spending money on a boda-boda (a motorbike taxi). You can also see the green vegetation portraying the beauty of Kitengesa. You are welcome to visit!

Figure 3.22 Rosemary Photo #5

(English): This is the Kitengesa Community Library band performing the traditional Maganda Dance. In the Maganda dance you put on special clothing and a cow skin on your back. You can do the Maganda dance at introduction ceremonies (engagements), weddings, other special occasions or when the Buganda king has visited the area. In the Maganda dance you always have both the drumming and the dancing together, never one without the other. The flags you can see are for Uganda and the Buganda Kingdom. Although I am not dancing in this picture, I enjoy doing the Maganda dance.

Figure 3.23 Rosemary Photo #6

(English): This is Kari and Richard. Kari was learning how to sign with Richard, who was a deaf student at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. Kari is a UBC doctoral student who had come to visit Good Samaritan for her research project. Richard was educated to be a Catholic preacher for the deaf, and he was sent to Good Samaritan to practice his preaching. I chose this picture because I would like to teach more community members and visitors Ugandan sign language.

(English): Here you can see some of the local primary students attending the reading classes at the Kitengesa Community Library main hall. One of the librarians, Micheal, is helping to read for the children to understand the story. Micheal carries out the programs at the library even in absence of the visiting students from Canada. He also helps the ISL students to carry out these activities when they are here. As a library scholar, I have also been helping in different projects like reading sessions. The librarians and the library scholars are becoming role models for the primary kids and some community members who come to the library.

The person in the photo is known as Jim Katz. He was once a library scholar at Kitengesa Community Library and when he graduated from high school he started up a successful business making rolex on the streets of Masaka town. A rolex is a fast food in Uganda made of chapatti (flour flat bread), eggs, and some vegetables. You can buy a rolex from Jim for 1500 Ugandan shillings (60 Canadian cents).

Omuntu ono ali mu kifananyi ye Jim Katz. Yali ko omuyizi ate ng’akola ku layibilale. Bweyamala okusoma siniya natandikawo omulimo gwe guno ogw’okufumba kyapati ne rolex ku mabaliri we kkubo mu kibuga Masaka. Rolex y’emu ku mmere eyanguwa mu Uganda ekolebwa chapatti, amaggi n’ezimu ku nva endiirwa. Osobola okugula rolex okuva ewa Jim Katz ku silingilukumi mu bitaano (1500), (mu ddola ze nnusu nkaaga).
My name is Saudah Nakayenga and my home village is Kyazanga. My mother and father live there with 8 of my siblings - 3 brothers and 5 sisters. Before coming to Good Samaritan School for the Deaf in 2007, my parents took me to a school with children who can hear. I didn’t like it there because I could not easily understand what the teachers were saying because they could only speak and they could not sign. They didn’t know my language. The hearing students would not allow me to play with them so it was really difficult. So when I came to Good Samaritan it felt good and I found people who I could share with and speak to in sign language. In 2013 I was chosen as a library scholar at Kitengesa Community Library, so they paid my tuition in return for me to work 8 hours a week at the library. In 2014 I joined the vocational school to learn tailoring, craft making, and hair dressing. I hope that I will get support from my parents and become a tailor. Here in Uganda it is very hard for deaf people to get jobs. I hope this will change.
Figure 3.26 Participant-Researcher, Saudah Nakayenga

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
Figure 3.27 Saudah Photo #1

(English): This is a photo of Rosemary and Eseza during the first PhotoVoice workshop when they received their camera. Rosemary is trying to use her camera and Eseza is watching. I chose this photo because it’s a nice photo and we will keep the cameras even after the workshops to use them to show what is happening in the community.

(Luganda): Kino kifananyi kya Rosemary ne Eseza nga bali mu lutuula olwasoka nga tuyiga ku ku kuba ebifananyi era muno mwe twafunira ne kamera. Rosemary yali agezaako kulaga Eseza bwanakozesa kamera ye mu ku kuba ebifananyi. Nonda ekifananyi kino kubanga kirungi ate nga ne kamera twakuzisigaza tuzikozese nga n’okunonyereza kuno kuwedde tusobole okukuba ebifananyi ebiraga ebigenda mumaaso mu kitundu kyaffe.
(English): This is a picture of me in the deaf salon at the vocational institute. I am cleaning a mobile sink after one of the customers had come to wash her hair. This is one of the activities that we do at the salon. Beside me is Mrs. Nsamba’s grandchild, who is a friend of mine. In the background you can see the beaded curtain and then some of the shops in the Kitengesa trading centre. That is the main road that goes from Kitengesa to Masaka town and other neighbouring villages.

(Luganda): Kino kifananyi kyange nga ndi ku saluni y aba kiggala ku somero ly’ebymikono. Nali ndi mu kulongosa kanabiro ka nviiri mwe tulongoseza enviiriza ba kasitoma. Oyo aninanye ye muzukulu wa Mukyala Nsamba, Isaac era mukwano gwange. Era mu kifananyi oyongera okulaba amadduuka g’omukitengesa era n’olugudo olutuuka mu kibuga Masaka n’ebyal ebirala.
Figure 3.30 (English): This is a picture of me at one of the flower bushes at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. I love flowers so much. Beside me on the ground is a banana leaf that has been put in the sun to soften up and to be used to prepare food. We wrap matooke (unsweet bananas) in soft banana leaves and steam them inside to cook.

This is a picture of Betty. She is a deaf student at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf vocational institute. Betty is uprooting weeds from the cabbage garden that is one of the gardens at the school. As part of our education they teach us how to do gardening. Not as a subject but as a basic skill that we need to have in order to be independent. They have also taught us to grow vegetables such as spinach and other greens. We also go to the farm to grow coffee, matooke, cassava, and other vegetables.

3.2.5 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 5, Eseza Nankya

My name is Eseza Nankya and I am a deaf teacher at the Good Samaritan School for the Deaf Vocational School. My family lives in Nkuke Village in Masaka District of Uganda. I was born hearing but at the age of 4, I suddenly became deaf without any sickness or anything. I don’t remember it well, but I remember that my parents were talking to me but I was just looking at their mouths moving and not sure what they were saying. So when I was 5 years old, I started school at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. In 2009 I graduated from primary school and then my parents took me to Masaka to learn hairdressing in a salon that employs deaf people. When I finished learning hair dressing, I came back to Good Samaritan to teach my fellow students how to dress hair. I am an unpaid volunteer teacher and I believe it is important to teach my fellow deaf friends because after they graduate, they can go back to their homes and find jobs for themselves. It is very difficult for deaf people to find any jobs, so my role as a teacher is important to our community.
Figure 3.31 Participant-Researcher, Eseza Nankya

(Photo by JJ Tee)
Figure 3.32 Eseza Photo #1

(English): This is a picture of my friend Betty, a vocational student at Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. Betty is a warm and happy person. She is my friend and we studied together since primary school, and now I teach her hairdressing at the vocational school. In the background is the kitchen where we prepare school at the deaf school.

Figure 3.33 Eseza Photo #2

(English): Here you can see a picture of the green vegetation in Kitengesa. The trees and the vegetation help to prevent the strong winds and rains from destroying the area. There is also a matoke (banana) tree, and an avocado tree, which provide us food.

(Luganda): Wano osobola okulaba ekifananyi ky’obutonde obwakiragala mu Kitengesa. Emiti n’obutonde obulala buyambako okuziyiza embuyaga n’enkuba eby’amanyi ebiyinza okwonona ekitundu. Mulimu n’ensuku z’amatooke, n’emiti gya ovacado, ebimu ku bimera ebituwa emmere.
Figure 3.34 Eseza Photo #3

(English): I took this photo of the materials in my hair dressing saloon. We use these in the deaf salon to dress people’s hair. For example in the large container is shampoo for cleaning the hair, and in the green containers you can see some conditioning for softening the hair.

(Luganda): Nakuba ekifananyi kino ekiraga ebimu ku bintu ebiri mu saluni. Tukoza ebintu bino mu saluni y aba Deaf okusiba abakyala enviiri okubanyiriza. Okugeza ekibaketi ekinene kyolaba kirimu ebizigo ebyeyambisibwa okunaaza enviiri, ate ebikebe ebyakiragala birimu ebizigo ebyeyambisibwa okugonza enviiri.
These are some artificial hair packages that we use to dress people’s hair. Almost every person comes in and uses artificial hair since our own hair does not grow too long.

Bino bye bimu ku bi paketi bye nviiri ebikole byetukoza okusiba enviiri zabantu ku saluni. Kumpi buli muntu ajja ku saluni akozesa enviiri zino enkole kubanga ezafe teziula kuwanvuwa nnyo.
The man in the wheelchair here is a leader in the World Vision organization. When he saw Mrs. Nsamba at this event with the deaf, he decided to come and greet us because his organization also works with people who are disabled. World Vision also funds some of the deaf students at Good Samaritan.

(Luganda): Omusajja ali mu kagali mu kifananyi kino, mukulembeze era akola n’ekitongole kya World Vision. Bweyatulaba nga tuli ne Mukyala Nsamba ku mukolo ogumu, yajja atubuzeeko. Era ekitongole kyakola nakyo era kikola n’abantu abalina obulemu. World Vision yali ewereddeko abamu ku bayizi bakigala ku somero lyabwe.

3.2.6 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 6, Vicent Nteza

My name is Vicent Nteza and I am a teacher at Hillview Nursery and Primary school in Kitengesa, Uganda. I show leadership in Kitengesa by leading my pupils, my school, my people, and my teachers, and to be an example to the community members, particularly parents. I am married with two children.
Figure 3.37 Participant-Researcher, Vicent Nteza

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
Learning was taking place in this photograph. The teacher requested for the pupils to stand up and repeat after him as one way of motivating a classroom environment. The students are to stand up and learn while standing. They are learning social studies which deals with geography of the community and the world. The students are around 9 to 10 years old, in Primary 5 class.

(Luganda): Okusoma kwali kugenda mumaso, mu kifananyi. Omusomesa yasaba abayizi okuyimirira era okumudamu nga bwe basoma nga engiri emu eyokuyigirizamu abayizi okusoma. Mu kifananyi, bali basoma essomo lya Social studies; embeera z’abantu n’ebibetolodde. Abaana abali wakati we mwaka mwenda (9) ne kkumi (10), mu kibiina ekyo kutaano (P.5)
These are maize yields or harvests we got from our school garden. We always take the school children when the rainy season starts, and we do some agriculture with them. This food, we use it for the school purposes like having lunch and this lunch is in the form of porridge. For those who have money, they can pay 30 000 UGX (10 USD) per term for lunch (beans and posho). Posho is the food we get from maize flour and we eat this every day in Kitengesa. The students who don’t have money for lunch, they carry food from home and they receive a cup of porridge to have together with their own lunch.

Ono ye kasooli gwe twakungula okuva mu lusuku lw’essomero. Ebiseera ebimu abayizi bafffe tubatwala mu nimiro bayige okulima mu biseera nga enkuba ettonya, era balima emmere gye balya ku ssomero. Era kasooli ono tumukolamu obuwunga, netufumba obuugi n’akawunga kebalyya eri abo ababa basasudde emitwalo essatu (30,000/=) buli lusoma. Balirako ebijanjalo ku kawunga. Waliwo abayizi abatasobola kusasula ssente ezo, abo bbo betika emmere okuva ewaka era tubongerezaako ekikopo ky’obuugi nga balya ekyemisana.
Figure 3.40 Vicent Photo #3

(English): This is the school’s cook, who is preparing beans for the learners and teachers to have their lunch. She is cooking in a kitchen but the walls are breaking down as seen above her. The walls of the school are falling down because we do not have the funds to repair them. We do not have the funds because students and parents do not have the money to pay school fees.

(Luganda): Ono ye mu fumbi w’essomero, Josephine afumbira abayizi n’abasomesa enva z’ekyemisana ebijanjalo. Wano yali afumba mu kiyungu naye, ekiyungu kigenda kugwa kubanga
tetulina nsimbi kusobola ku kiddabiriza. Abazadde n’abayizi tebasasula bulungi bisale bya ssomero.

Figure 3.41 Vicent Photo #4

(English): This is one of our cows. We rear them, but currently, I have sold this cow to solve some school issues. We needed to pay some teachers’ salaries and pay a carpenter for the making of desks.
(Luganda): Eno y’emu ku nte zaffe. Tuzirunda, naye kati ente yange nabadde ngitunze okusobola okuddukanya essomero. Twetaaga okusasula omusala gw’abasomesa n’okusasula entebe abaana kwebatuula mu kibiina.

(Figure 3.42 Vicent Photo #5)

(English): The teacher here is serving porridge to the pupils at break time. The porridge is made from maize flour that we grow in the school garden. Sometimes they can also have potatoes and cassava, although those items are more expensive.

(Luganda): Wano omusomesa yali agabula bayizi buugi ku ssaawa nnya ez’ekyenkya. Obugi buva mu kasooli gwetulima mu lusuku lw’essomero. Ebiseera ebimu balya ne ku lumonde, ne muwogo newankubadde bino biba bya beeyi okubifuna.
These are the latrines at our school, Hillview Primary School. These latrines now, they are lacking privacy. They don’t have doors and the children have to wait one after the other to enter and even the ratio of latrines is un-proportionate. We have 546 pupils but only 2 latrines with 7 stalls.

(Luganda): Zino ze kabuyonjo eziri ku ssomero lyange, Hillview Primary school. Tooyi zino tezirina nzigi era tezimala, abayizi balina okulinda bannabwe bamalirize olwo nabo balyoke bakoze kabuyonjo. Tulina abayizi abatuuka mu bitaano ana mu mukaaga (546) naye tulina kabuyonjo bbiri zokka (2) eziriko obusenge musanvu awamu (7).
Figure 3.44 Vicent Photo #7

(English): This is the good kind of environment we have in Kitengesa. It favours the growing of our crops and our lives are okay because it is beautiful and we have some moisture. I chose this photo because it shows a good sky and a nice place to live.


3.2.7 Photographs: Participant-Researcher 7, Micheal Ssegawa

I was born in August 16, 1994 into a family of seven children. I am currently an assistant librarian at Kitengesa Community Library in Masaka District, Uganda. I also work with visiting UBC students and interns on activities such as home visits, youth empowerment groups, women’s groups, and other forms of training and education. Another role I have is the secretary and head of finance for the Lwanunda Self Help Group, which is a self-funded micro-finance circle of mostly women and a few men. Our activities help the members with saving and
investment, and the dividends go towards helping the needy people in our community including orphans and very old people. I have a bachelor’s degree in business with a major in finance and accounting from Uganda Martyrs University. I hope to pursue a master’s degree in business and to one day be an entrepreneur so I can employ youth in our community.

Figure 3.45 Participant-Researcher, Micheal Ssegawa

(Photograph by JJ Tee)
This is a photo of my sister, Lynette, reading a book in the Kitengesa Community Library. She likes reading a lot she hopes to become a nurse one day. There are many different age groups that come to the library to read.

(Kino kifananyi kya mwanyinaze, Lynette, yali asoma katabo mu layibulale. Ayagala nnyo okusoma era asubira okuba omusawo mumaso. Waliwo n’abantu abemyaka egyenjawulo abajja ku layibulale okusoma.)
Figure 3.47 Micheal Photo #2

(English): One of the activities of the library and ISL is community engagement. In this photo, they are enjoying their time as well as pursuing some skills. Here, Elizabeth is learning how to play Kari’s ukulele and showing her family her new skills.

(Luganda): Egimu ku mirimu gya ayibulale kwekugatta awamu abantu abenjawulo. Mu kifananyi, bali mu kunyumirwa akaseera kabwe akeddembe ate nga bwebafuna n’obukugu. Wano Elizabeth ng’ayiga bwe basuna akadongo akatono era ngalaga ne famile ye obukugu bwe obupya.
This is a picture of some AfriPads workers. AfriPads was started after a study on girls on the area that showed some girls were unable to attend school during their menstrual period. Today, AfriPads donors subsidize the cost of pads so that girls can afford them and don’t have to miss school during their periods. AfriPads also employs mostly women in the community and pays very well.

(English): This is a mural on the Kitengesa Community Library wall. It was painted by Hillview Primary School and Good Samaritan School for the Deaf students. The library aims to narrow or bridge the gap between the hearing community and the deaf community. You can see that the leaves of the tree are different students’ hands and fingers, and those of the librarians and UBC students. The library won an award for social inclusion from an international organization.

(Luganda): Kino ekisiige kiri ku bisenge bya layibulale. Kyasigibwa abayizi ba HillView primary school ne Good Samaritan school for the Deaf. Library elubirira okukendeeza ekibangirizi ekiri wakati w’abantu abatawulira/ bakigala n’abawulira. Era nga bwolaba ebikoola ebiri ku muti ngalo z’abayizi abenjawulo era nabamu ku ba kozi ku layibulale nabayizi okuva ku UBC. Layibulale yawangula engule eyobwegassi, okuba nga egattaa abantu abenjawulo (abawulira nabatawulira) okuva mu kitongole ekyamawanga agebunanyira.
The Kitengesa Community Library is one of the pioneer community libraries in all of Uganda. Here, I and Geofrey, a library scholar, are organizing the books on the shelves. Library scholars are students in secondary school who work in the library and in return they get their school tuition paid.

Kitengesa community layibulale y’emu ku layibulale eziluddewo mu Uganda yonna. Wano nze ne Geofrey, omuyizi era ayambako ku mirimu gya layibulale nga tutegeka obutabo mu ma ssa gab wo. Abayizi abakola ku layibulale basomera mu somero lya sekendule eririranyewo era layibulale ebayambako okubasasulira ku bisale by’essomero nga bwe bakola ku layibulale.
I took this photo on a home visit to one of the Lwannunda self-help group members, Kakeeto Rose. Here, she is feeding her ducks, which is one of her income generating activities. She borrowed the money for the ducks from the self-help group, and she has now paid the money back to the group.


3.3 **Kitengesa Community Photo Exhibition: Local Dissemination**

The photovoice study that we eight conducted together in 2017 was shared locally in the way that the participant-researchers envisioned through multiple focus groups and meetings: With a
celebration and photo exhibition held at The Kitengesa Community Library. Through many
discussions and planning sessions, a number of plans came to fruition. The exhibition involved a
90-minute formal sit-down presentation in the community hall area of the library. Attendees
were comprised of local high school students, invited local community leaders, families and
neighbours in the surrounding area, and various students and researchers from University of
British Columbia and Douglas College. The presentation included:

- Welcome Speech: Presented by Rosemary, Micheal, and Eseza as Ugandan Sign
  Language Interpreter
- Additional Speeches Presented by:
  - Library Director, Ahimbisibwe Daniel
  - Dean of Education at Uganda Martyrs University, Dr. Harriet Mutonyi
  - Doctoral Researcher on Photovoice Project, Kari Grain
- Individual speeches by each participant-researcher, discussing one chosen photo and its
  importance and analysis
- Local drumming, dancing, and singing performances
- Photo exhibition and walk-about
- Large community meal at Daniel Ahimbisibwe’s home
- Celebration and dance at Daniel Ahimbisibwe’s home

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter illustrates data that was gathered by participant-researchers, with as little of my own
intervention as possible. What became evident to me as a university researcher was that the
photovoice process was intrinsically valuable because it brought a group of people together for
meaningful dialogue and engagement on a range of local issues. As is evident in the photos and
narratives shared in this chapter, the Kitengesa dissemination and exhibition allowed Kitengesa community members to see not only the impacts of international service-learners, but more importantly, to address emergent questions regarding important community issues, local leadership projects, and hopes for the future. Other implications of this study are expanded upon Chapter 6, wherein I reflect on the project writ large.
Interstice: Brokenness and a Different Kind of Research

A week after the photo exhibition in Kitengesa, I said my tearful goodbyes to friends and colleagues, and set out for Kampala where I would spend four days before departing the country. The day I arrived in Kampala, I went to the hospital for a malaria test and discovered that I had both malaria and an E.coli infection. I hunkered down in my room with medicine, water, and biscuits. On March 27, 2017, some time in the afternoon, as I began to type out some reflections on my fieldwork, a different phase of my research began.
Chapter 4: To Be Broken/Open: A Bricolage of Brokenness

4.1 Introduction

This paper is an embodied exploration of brokenness in global engagement and knowledge construction. Just as I am broken open, I am dismantled. What made sense before the impact ceases to do so now that I have been shattered and rearranged. “You must be willing to be undone by your education.” I will be undone, disassembled, fragmented, until the last whisper of organized knowing has fled through the cracks, and a bright flood of loving disarray has rushed in. It will happen not as a punishment but as an inevitable disintegration of the structures that form my knowledge-identity, and later as an optional re-building.

As a facilitator, designer, and instructor of global service-learning courses, I have often touted the phrases, “get comfortable with discomfort,” “expect the unexpected,” and “be open to different forms of knowledge” with perhaps too little inward reflection on whether and how I personally had managed to do so. These topics and others emerged with acuity when I experienced a severe accident at the end of my second doctoral fieldwork trip, in which I had set out to research the community level impacts of international service-learning in Uganda. In that accident, on March 27, 2017, my face was broken open and in many ways my body was dismantled. I had been diagnosed with both malaria and E.coli two days before I fainted in the restaurant of my Kampala hostel. Upon contact with the tile floor, my facial flesh broke open to the bone, my jaw fractured in three places and came away from my skull, ultimately splitting in half between my two bottom, front teeth. I fractured my hands in multiple places, and shattered a number of teeth. My face and body were dismantled by abrupt contact with a floor in Uganda, forever changing my relationship with a place I had repeatedly returned to over the previous 13
years. As a researcher, learner, and human, I engaged in critical – and humbling - reflection on the nature of brokenness and its relationship to knowledge construction, privilege, and global engagement work.

This is an autoethnographic paper that uses bricolage as a methodology to piece together the educational relevance of my accident in the broader context of my research on international service-learning in Uganda. By including unconventional forms of data such as poetry, doctors’ paperwork, insurance claims, emails, visual art, journal entries, and more, I aim to elicit a sense of discomfort in both the reader and in myself because the forms of data push against the edges of academic expectations about how much a researcher ought to share. What is the (Political?/ Personal?/ Cognitive?/ Transcendent?) role of the researcher’s body in the construction of knowledge? What aspects of a researcher’s experience and inner world are relevant to the construction of knowledge? The findings are simultaneously graphic, humorous, distressing, and differently angled purviews of an event and its unfolding, which somehow form a multidimensional illustration of my positionality in the context of international fieldwork. Not only do the fragmented forms of data aptly illustrate what was a disorienting and distressing experience, but they also reveal insights about the nature of brokenness and the systemic processes that are catalyzed when a person of privilege is the one to be broken. Such insights carry broader relevance for (privileged/Western/and/or/White) people who do global engagement work as researchers, development workers, service-learning students, experiential learners, and volunteers.

To elucidate these ideas, I first describe my methodology and the motivation for using bricolage as a way of stitching together my social location, my research topic (international
service-learning), my bodily brokenness, and my international fieldwork. Bricolage - and its foundational commitment to borrowing from multiple traditions and disciplines - opens up a theoretical space that allows me to creatively explore notions without a rigid adherence to the tradition from whence they came. As a bricoleur of brokenness, I do not aim for a resolution of fragmentation. Instead, following Kincheloe (2005), I use bricolage to address the complexity of intertextuality, the ontology of relationships and connections, multiple epistemologies, and intersecting contexts, among others. Given the complexity of my fragmentation, the data presented here is an unapologetically shattered exploration of the un-expected, un-comfortable, and un-organized ways that knowledge may become constructed in the midst of the messy undoing of one’s body. I see this brokenness as a potential starting point for thinking about the parallel messy undoing of a privileged person’s structures of knowledge, values, and identity when they venture into distant communities with the purpose of service, development, learning, and the like.

Because of my embrace of brokenness, my findings and analysis do not appear in one stand-alone section but rather, appear throughout different areas, illustrating and giving flesh to theoretical notions in ways that are both disorienting and generative. Despite my embrace of fragmentation, I have (re)constructed my findings in this paper around four themes of my brokenness: Risk, Impact & Process, Love, and Generative Chaos. These components are neither clearly delineated nor bound to a specific sequence, but instead, they play out to varying degrees and interact uniquely. To borrow from Seyhan’s conceptualization of the relationship between fragmentation, chaos, and irony in Romantic poetics, “Each term is generated and reciprocally reconfigures the others” (1996, p. 137). The same is true of the components of brokenness that I
will explore - as they are constructed and illustrated, they simultaneously undergo a process by which they shape one another.

I finish this paper by foregrounding two self-critiques of this paper, and finally by asking a question for future exploration: How might the concept of brokenness be extended to the broader context of global engagement work? In this conclusion I place a specific focus on power and privilege – both my own, and that of the imagined service-learner or student-researcher who arrives in distant locations with varying intentions to learn, serve, research, or help. I wonder what it might look like for educational global engagement work such as international service-learning and international fieldwork to encourage in learners a sort of vulnerable surrender, or what Ivan Illich (1968) in “To Hell with Good Intentions,” called powerlessness – An active engagement with host communities where a roving person of privilege is metaphorically broken open, dismantled, and - even if temporarily or superficially – rendered powerless by their experience.

4.2 Methodology: A Bricolage of Brokenness
The day before I departed for my second fieldwork trip to Uganda, I found myself in a moving conversation with Timothy K. Eatman, a trailblazer in the field of higher education and community engagement. Having met him a few times previously, I was nonplussed to learn that he was a quantitative sociologist. He, who opens an academic conference with live music. He, whose language is infused with metaphors, and whose main method of communication is premised upon narrative. He had somehow managed to keep the soulful at centre of his work without sacrificing rigor, and his commitment to this pairing is something I hope to emulate. That day, Timothy gifted me with a metaphor that eventually came to guide the conceptualization of this paper. He said, in more poetic terms than I can recreate here, that to him, quantitative research is like a skeleton in that it provides an important overall understanding of the structure of a phenomenon. But the blood, the sinew, the flesh that gives that phenomenon life, is derived through story (T. Eatman, personal communication, January 3, 2017).

As you may have guessed by now, mine is a narrative chock full of blood and sinew. But as a qualitative researcher, I began to reflect upon what comprises the bones of my research. In an epistemological landscape supposedly free of – or at least unruled by – numbers and statistics, the spark of that answer became evident only when the structure broke apart. It took the literal shattering of my skeletal frame to realize that as a qualitative researcher, it is me – the inquirer – who offers up the bones. Thus, my pre-existing structure (me before the accident) and my fragmented brokenness (me after the accident) became a vital aspect of my study; and not only because the event serves as a poignant, if disturbing, metaphor, but also because it illustrates entrenched structures of power and privilege that are rarely exposed with such vividness in educational forms of global engagement. So although the bulk of my research attempts to engage with community based participatory forms of inquiry, in which I centre participants’ and
community members’ voices, this paper is something different. It is part and parcel of the important, critically reflexive work that is so valued in social justice oriented service-learning and community engagement work.

Given the importance of self-examination, in this piece I analyze my body as data. Through embodied inquiry I employ bricolage as a methodological means of sharing data and theorizing my broken body in the context of educational global engagement. Celeste Snowber asserts that embodied inquiry “enriches all the methodologies of research and practice…There is not one plan, method, or form to follow. Instead, there is an invitation to live through your body and to be open and opened by experience” (2016, p.xv). I could not tell the story of my brokenness using a unified, linear, or rigidly structured academic template like I have done with other academic narratives; too much changes when structures fall. Bricolage is a methodology built around a commitment to interdisciplinarity, resourcefulness, fragmentation, and the researcher’s identity. It is comprised of “particular configurations (or ways of relating) various fragments of inherited methodologies, methods, empirical materials, perspectives, understandings, ways of presentation, situated responsiveness, and so on into a coherent, reasoned approach to a research situation and problem” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 25).

If this bodily dismantling had been a component of the lesson plan in my doctoral experience, what were its learning outcomes? What could my own brokenness teach me about global engagement generally, and more specifically, what could it teach me about international service-learning and participatory forms of international fieldwork? Bricolage seemed to me the natural methodology to explore these questions because it most closely resembles the nature of my body in the aftermath of my accident: its state of fragmentation is as much an act of defiance against pre-existing structures as it is a vulnerable surrender to complexity and the unknown. In
fact, Kincheloe suggests that “The bricolage exists out of respect for the complexity of the lived world” (2005, p. 324). Bricolage does not pretend to be tidy, organized, or put together. Instead, it gathers the multimodal forms of data that are available, and it combines them to form a product in ways that they were not originally intended. Anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1966) initially used bricolage to describe the makeshift construction of mythological narratives in which the bricoleur uses his hands to gather whatever materials are available, and build something new. I also chose bricolage because it is premised on the idea of exposure. Kincheloe suggested that, “As one labors to expose the various structures that covertly shape one’s own and other scholars’ research narratives, the bricolage highlights the relationship between a researcher’s ways of seeing and the social location of his or her personal history” (2005, p. 324). When my jaw bone became exposed via my lacerated chin, so too did global structures of power and privilege that I had read about, taught about, and theorized, but had scarcely witnessed with such sharpness.

The literature on bricolage is replete with critiques. As Schwandt identifies, “Some might see [bricolage] as a sign of methodological and theoretical impurity in the field of qualitative inquiry – a symptom of a pathology that must be diagnosed, explained, and somehow remedied” (2007, p. 26). It is precisely this perception of its methodological illness that drew me closer to bricolage because somehow, in my own brokenness and illness, I felt an all-encompassing and undeniable sense of wholeness. And if that possibility exists for a body of flesh, then in my own imagination it was conceivable that it could also exist for a body of research.
4.3 Discussion

The findings of this bricolage of brokenness are (dis-)organized into four themes: Risk, Impact, Love, and Generative Chaos. The findings and analysis are varied in their format and interaction with one another.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Risk

4.3.1.1 Artifact 1: A Bath Tub Poem: The Risk of Re-Centering Whiteness

I am a White woman,
White and nervous
White and hopeful
White and educated
White and complicit
White and ashamed
White and insecure
White and overconfident
White and reckless
White and in love
White and rich /and/ poor
White and invincible
White and vulnerable
White and exposed
White and broken
White and broken open
White and in need of saving
White and rescued
White and unintentionally re-centering Whiteness

I am a broken white woman

In a white, sun-glazed bath tub,

Getting a warm water sponge bath

From three Ugandan nurses,

My blood tinting the water pink.

(Poem written post-facial reconstruction surgery, 2017)

4.3.1.2 Analysis: Risk and the Power/Privilege to Overcome It

Long before brokenness, or even the whisper of its possibility, there is a decision to be made: Do I take the risk? What that risk entails is different for each context. Nonetheless, a necessary precursor to global engagement work such as fieldwork or service-learning is the conscious act of exposing oneself to real and/or perceived risk. Seldom in these formulations previous to this accident, did I ever take into account the myriad risks that host communities take when they offer up their homes and their knowledges to a visiting researcher or student – A gap in my reflective practice that has now changed. Here, although I emphasize bodily risk, there exists another type of ‘hazard’ that I encounter when I transplant myself into an unknown place; it mimics the potential for bodily-structure harm, but it is instead the threat of breaking my existing structures of identity, values, and knowledge through experiences that present disorienting dilemmas and generate transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991). I see the identity-
oriented risk as an apt parallel because both are imbued with implications when the person who
takes the risk carries with them significant power and privilege, as is often the case in service-
learning, and as was the case when I arrived in Uganda for my fieldwork to study international
service-learning.

As a service-learner or researcher who ventures out of my daily routines and the
familiarity of my own community, institution, or nation, I make the decision to expose myself to
risks (e.g. malaria, E.coli) that are exceptional to me but may be daily realities for my friends and
colleagues living in host communities. Before embarking on trips of this nature, I typically
research government websites and scan global and local media for news about the region, I
connect with my community partners, and I judge a location’s relative level of safety. I check in
with my university, fulfill various safety abroad requirements, and purchase travel insurance.
Having facilitated service-learning trips for students to Uganda and Costa Rica, I have been
attuned to – and have helped to construct - extensive emergency preparedness plans that must be
in place should something go wrong. There are inherent risks involved in travel, and as a leader
or learner, I do my best to mitigate them for both myself and my students.

Although I had long viewed these measures as necessary logistical tasks, it was not until
my accident that I saw them as additional evidence of my personal and systemic privilege. When
I injured myself, it required only two emergency phone calls to Canada, a handful of text
messages, and I had pressed the “power” button on a global machine that extended to the
Canadian government, my university, my faculty, my family and social network, and my
financial institutions. Although I felt – and continue to feel – tremendous gratitude for the many
people and institutions who helped me in a time of crisis, I wish to highlight here a devastating
fact: Had this identical accident happened to my Ugandan friends, Micheal Ssegawa or Nakasiita Rosemary for example, they may very well have succumbed to their injuries. The cost of my one night of hospitalization alone – approximately $600 Canadian dollars – is similar to what an average Ugandan might earn in an entire year; Uganda’s GDP per capita in 2016 was estimated at $615.30 USD (The World Bank, 2017).

With each cost that arises as a result of my accident, and with the financial fallout that I continue to feel, I am engaged in ongoing reflection about how much more devastating and in fact, unmanageable, these costs would be to my friends in Uganda. Not only did I fly back to Canada assisted by a doctor to push my wheelchair and administer morphine along the way, but I also received an emergency facial reconstruction surgery upon my arrival in Vancouver. In the days and weeks following my injury, my mother was able to provide 24/7 nursing care, my university and department stepped in with emergency funds to support my family and I to rent a home for a month, and I was able to borrow many thousands of dollars from my bank for treatment costs, with no questions asked. These are only a few examples in a sea of moments that illuminated the systemic privileges that enable me to successfully navigate risks – because I am Canadian, because I am white, because I am a researcher at a prestigious university. Because – privilege and global inequity. Given my own narrative of brokenness, I have become acutely aware of the fact that global engagement work is at its foundation, embodied work; I arrive in distant communities not only with my possessions, but also embodying a pile of light-coloured flesh that is disproportionately valued when it becomes critically endangered. My body – and its brokenness - are differently protected by global safety nets that better position me to take risks and therefore reap rewards when I am able to overcome crises more safely. Occasionally, as in
my own experience, the inherent risks involved in global engagement work spiral into a crisis scenario.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Impact

4.3.2.1 Artifact 2: To Be Broken Open: A Poem

To be broken open,
Poetry pouring forth
Soiling white shirts
With crimson drops of trauma
Turning the whiteness I wear
Into the whiteness I wish to throw away,
But it stays.
In photos, in memory,
In the brightly lit place we all go
-so I’m told-
When our cells initiate shutdown,
Drowning happily,
Subterraneously,
In the whirlpool of loving spirit
I hear it still,
The whispering welcoming me,
The sea of hands
Where I landed,
Hovered,
And rose again,
Re-occupying my flesh,
Freshly emerging
Into urgency
An emergency
Shaped like broken teeth,
Broken hands,
Skinned knees and toes,
Towels against my severed chin,
Unruly bowels,
Crowds of faces painted
With traces of panic.

To be broken open.
To bear witness to the crumbling
Of a structure
That eluded me,
Uncaring about the bones
In my face
Until they failed,
Folded in half,
Diverged from the skull,
Pitted my teeth against one another,

Sundered and severed

I became the broken other,

The not-me:

The un-whole,

The un-useful,

The un-strong,

The not-me I learned to be.

(Poem written two weeks after the cessation of pain medications)

4.3.2.2 Artifact 3: To Be Broken Open: A Narrative

Date: March 27, 2017 (two days after leaving Kitengesa, my research community)

Location: Bushpig Backpackers Hotel Restaurant, Kampala, Uganda

Bodily feeling: Weak from malaria and E.coli, but ready to begin an intensive writing phase of my dissertation

I am sitting in a full restaurant, writing the following fieldnotes:

When I first began the earnest task of trying to wrap my head around my research findings, shortly after my departure from Kitengesa, I felt that it was impossible. Too many directions, too many tangents. PhotoVoice became its own living thing, somewhat divergent from the rest of my research. Although my general question was to understand the impact of a service-learning relationship between Kitengesa and UBC, I became uncomfortable with the degree to which the discussions centered the work of foreign students in the community. What emerged, aside from some interesting conversations about service-learning, was a focus on the community leaders who were participating in PhotoVoice. The first workshop began with a discussion of ethical
photography as well as ways in which participants were community leaders and the key issues they saw in their community. It was not until the third workshop that I asked more pointed questions about the impacts of ISL in Kitengesa. Upon hearing the participants speak so glowingly about the work and influence of ISL students, I also sought an understanding of some of the main challenges and drawbacks of...

I pause my writing because I feel strange and I am becoming disoriented. My body becomes data. My heart goes quiet inside my ribcage and I gasp for breath. I look down at my chest because I can’t understand why my heart has stopped. I claw at the cushions beneath me, grope at the air, and believe that I am dying. I feel betrayed by my body’s incapabilities. My consciousness and my body diverge in their experiences. My body, according to witnesses, tries to make a run out of the restaurant, but has gone limp and unconscious by the time I stand up. I go down, hitting my chin first on a wooden bench, and then the tile floor. In those moments, face bones are dismantled, kneecaps are chipped, and molars break away in sharp, circular craters, like rocks that have been smashed together. My left hand crumples awkwardly beneath the weight of my body, breaking the knuckle of my middle finger and the carpal of my pointer finger. My body falls in a series of places, scraping the skin first from my left toes, then from my knees as they bang the floor. My collarbone, my shoulder, my face. All of them bleed, all of them wound. My body is an unoccupied physical object that makes contact with another, harder object, and breaks as objects often do. But my consciousness is elsewhere.

I am somewhere ethereal, vulnerable, and exceedingly joyful. The only comparable feeling I have experienced in waking life is walking into a surprise party full of family and friends who have all gathered to greet me with hugs and warmth. But there are no people, and no embraces because bodies are nonexistent and unimaginable. Rather, I am sinking softly into a
bright whirlpool of spirit, deep beneath the earth. They swirl around me gracefully, powerfully, whispering and twittering excitedly at my arrival. I am held, greeted, welcomed home. And without any agency, I am lifted up by a gravitational rotation of love, and pushed up through the physical earth and into consciousness that is now (re)imbedded in my physical body. In a state of euphoria, I open my eyes.

A dozen strangers are gathered above me, around me, panic on their faces. In my mouth, blood and rocks. I spit them out and realize they are my teeth. Everyone is talking at me, but I am still adjusting to the new and less pleasant reality that is life in a broken body. I am confused and assume I have had a seizure. Someone is yelling, “She has malaria! She’s been sick!” A nice lady taking charge, telling me to look at her, asking if I know who I am, if I know where I am. “Kari,” I say, “Kampala. Uganda,” I respond. She’s telling me I had a fall. I am confused. I look around. So many people. I have to go to the bathroom. “I have to go to the bathroom!” – “OK sweetie can you just rest for a minute though?” – “No, I need to go now.” People carry me there, blood leaking from my face and down my white tank top. I am worried I will defecate in the restaurant. The nice lady comes into the bathroom with me and helps me undo my pants; I get sick in the toilet. I quietly quip, through a broken mouth, “Well if you didn’t know me before, you sure know me now.” I laugh half-heartedly. “Nothing I haven’t seen before,” she responds kindly, balling up toilet paper to try to stop the bleeding from my face. I discover later that she is a BBC camera woman who covers conflict zones. She tries to wipe some of the blood off my legs and arms. We exit the bathroom to a crowd of nervous people, insisting they need to take me to the hospital. Someone offers to go to my room and get a few things – I ask for my passport.

My teeth! I need somebody to help me find my teeth that fell out. I heard once that you should always keep your teeth if they break off because maybe the dentist can glue them back in.
My recurring dreams of shattered teeth have prepared me well for this material reality. The other restaurant patrons get down on hands and knees, looking around for pieces of my molars. They can’t find them. I had been holding one in my hand but I lost it during the sprint to the toilet. I am half-carried to the truck, guided by the nice lady who has a name now: Tina. She and the driver get me in, give me some ice and plenty of paper towel. They instruct me to put pressure on my chin where the blood is coming from, but when I do that, my whole face seems to shift and grind. It is broken. My face bones are broken. My teeth are broken. And I broke my golden rule about Uganda: Don’t seriously injure yourself. But my plans! For tomorrow and this month! A different voice within me calmly speaks: *Let them go. They are not your plans any more. That was never going to be your story. This is your story now.*

The driver has a name: Will. He turns around from the driver’s seat and says, “Kari, you’ve just injured yourself during Kampala rush hour. This is going to be a long and bumpy ride to the hospital, but I am taking you to the best hospital in Uganda. You will receive good treatment there, and I’m going to get you there as quickly as possible.” As promised, the ride is long. With every bump, I gain greater confidence that my face bones are indeed fractured. My left hand is not working well, its flesh volume doubling in size, ballooning in shape. Everyone is fixated on my bleeding face, but that is not what hurts. My fingertips. Each fingertip has somehow been razed off and is bleeding and raw, though clearly not severely injured. I am in some pain, but the challenge is in my head: How will I afford this? Am I very, very positive that I got health insurance coverage? Who will I call? I don’t want to stress my parents out until I know what’s going on. I’ll call my brother. Tina gets his number from my phone and dials it. I mutter to my brother through a half open mouth, “don’t tell mom and dad until I’ve figured some stuff out: I had an accident. I fainted and I am bleeding, I’m not sure what is happening but for
sure my face is broken.” He is distraught and doesn’t know how to help. He talks to Will, who reassures him. We hang up. Who else needs to know? Dan. My community partner from Kitengesa, Dan Ahimbisibwe. He is my closest friend in Uganda. I tell him, and he reassures me that the hospital we are headed to is the best in Uganda. He is on his way.

We arrive to a quiet and empty ward at “The Surgery” – they admit me immediately and want to stitch up my face, but I cannot lay down because the bones in my face seem to grind together when I attempt to do so. They try to insist that I lay down, and I assert that it will do more damage than good. We fight over it for a while. To keep the doctor from pushing me down and stitching me, I have to yell. I am not proud, but it is necessary. She does not understand the level of my brokenness. They stitch up the main wound with a number of sutures. They assess my bloody knees, my swollen hand, which is much larger now. They disinfect the bleeding spots on my collarbone, my shoulder, my toes. My TOES. How did a fall create this much damage? X-rays are next. But I can’t lay my face on the table where they need it because gravity seems to make it collapse on itself. This time, they do not make me yell. We adjust, tinker, and eventually find something that works without causing blinding pain. It involves me using my hands to hold my face in a sort of face-like formation even though it wants to fold in half. My hand has ballooned now. It is x-rayed. The technician is holding the x-ray, confirms: Yes, my jaw is broken. In 3 places: On the right and left sides, near my ear, and right down the middle of my chin, exposed by the laceration. They say it is dangerous to have an open break, and that I need strong antibiotics in case of infection.

I think my front bottom tooth is loose because it keeps shifting positions in my mouth, the gap between my teeth growing and shrinking with each movement. As it turns out, the tooth is not loose at all; it is in fact, securely attached to the right-side fragment of my broken jaw,
which is moving around loosely. I don’t have a loose tooth. I have a loose jaw. The doctor tells me the news about my jaw and adds that I have a broken hand. It too is broken in multiple places. She says I need immediate facial reconstruction surgery, but there is no doctor at this hospital who can do anything for you at this point. “There is one facial surgeon in Uganda. I can give you his number,” she offers, as if she is offering me the name of a decent mechanic she used once when she needed an oil change. I would laugh if I wasn’t so scared. [Later, I would reflect on the profundity not of my own inability to access a facial surgeon, but of an entire nation having one facial surgeon to call in an emergency].

Painkillers, anxiety meds, phone calls to parents and travel insurance companies. A few calls and texts, and a worldwide network of my people are activated, gathering information, talking to airlines, getting financial support. Tina and Will leave but promise they are a phone call away. They promise to return at dawn. I tell them they don’t have to but they insist. It is dark, and I am in a clean hospital room alone, on a wooden bed. The nurses give me medications but I don’t think they are working. I spend the night alone in my hospital room, believing that my heart has stopped again every time I forget to inhale or almost drift off. I imagine that my swollen face is cutting off my airways and suffocating me. [I learned weeks later that during this time I called my friend, Tam, the ISL director at UBC, to tell her that I was scared. She called the hospital and asked them to check on me.] All night I wonder if I will live or die.

During my fitful overnight hospitalization, structures upon structures of safety netting emerge beneath me - social, financial, educational, and beyond. By first light, two last minute flights have been booked from Entebbe to Vancouver: One for me, and one for the Canadian doctor (the mother of an ISL student in Uganda) who will travel with me and administer my meds.
The sun rises. My anxiety falls away. A new doctor walks in. She has a European accent. She is thorough and compassionate, and she seems to study me when I answer her questions, as if she is looking for the emotional subtext beneath my words. “I know you probably think this is the worst thing that could have happened to you,” she says, “but it could have been much worse. I am surprised that the impact did not break your neck. And if you had made impact on any other part of your head, it would likely have killed you. Your jaw is about the only thing on your head that you can afford to break, and it may have saved your life.” Her words ground me in a state of gratitude.

“A Ugandan man is here to see you. His name is Dan.” I am relieved, and I tell the nurse he is my friend. He walks in, having driven three hours from Kitengesa to be by my side. He wears worry on his face like a wet rag, his usually cheerful features weighed down by concern. I can tell he doesn’t really know what to do, other than be present. And it is comforting. He sits on a stool across the room from my bed while I drift in and out of a half sleep. “Another man has arrived,” I am told. This one is a Mormon. A family friend in Canada had presumably contacted her church and they immediately sent someone. It is a very kind gesture, but I am too exhausted to fight off the word of God. More doctors arrive. This time, they are two doctors who I know as new friends – they are the parents of a UBC undergraduate service-learning student I had been staying with in Kitengesa. They and their three daughters heard about my accident. The mother has agreed to assist me on my flight back to Canada and serve as my medical escort. Amy takes one look at me and her face goes grey and limp. Her dad notices and reaches out in time to catch her before she faints. They feed her water, she sits on my bed with me, and at some point we all begin to giggle at the absurdity of it all. Despite my many previously uneventful trips to Uganda, I can’t help laughing at how fragile – and perhaps sheltered - we both seem in this context.
Amy’s mom consults with the ER doctor and organizes all of the medications and morphine I will need for my 30-hour flight home.

A few nurses enter and tell me it is time to get cleaned up. They bathe me in a sun-drenched room with a giant window. They are gentle, competent, and their eyes are filled with sympathy. The Ugandan staff take good care of me, their pace calm and steady. By now, they all know that I will depart tonight for Canada. Even in this strange sun-lit room, there is privilege. It whispers and hums. I am leaving their care because somehow, it is better, safer, to get on a plane and fly to Canada, than to stay here and receive medical attention from them. I feel a little embarrassed for leaving, a little ashamed. When Ugandan friends ask to come to Canada, I often explain how expensive it is to fly between these distant countries, but overnight, two one-way plane tickets materialized for the cool price of five-thousand dollars. Because I can. Yes, perhaps because I must. But because I can. If my parents didn’t have credit on their Visa, I would have put it on mine. If I didn’t have credit on my Visa, my brother would have taken it on. If he didn’t, it would have been insurance, or my university, or a friend. I. Could. Fall. Through. Many. Safety. Nets. And still, more structural netting emerges to take me across the globe into the operating room of a Canadian hospital. Here at the intersection of my nationality, my white skin, and my socioeconomic network, I may not be invincible, but I am mobile and undeservedly valued in a complex global system – crossing borders at will and choosing from multiple means of escape.

At some point on the flight from Entebbe to Amsterdam, I watch the sun rise over the Sahara desert. I am awash with relief because I am on my way home, euphoric at the opiate-induced pleasure of sunrise from the plane. I ponder what would have happened to my Ugandan friends, Micheal or Rosemary, if they had been the ones in this accident. Surely they would stay
in Uganda because they cannot go somewhere else. Perhaps they would call the one facial surgeon and discover that they cannot afford the surgery. Perhaps they would appeal to their UBC friends for a fundraiser. I wonder how much I would have donated. For someone who teaches and writes about power and privilege, I am unsettlingly grateful for mine in this moment.

4.3.2.3 Artifact 4: Discharge Paperwork from a Kampala Hospital

About: Ms. Grain, Kari

To whom it may concern,

The above named patient was admitted at our facility from 27-03-17 to 28-03-17. She presented after a fall and complained about pain in her jaw, loose teeth, and pain in her left hand. Before she fell, she was sitting on a chair, noticed that she had to go to the bathroom for a motion, felt like her heart stopped beating, she became short of breath, and then everything went black. According to others she lost consciousness for about 15-30 seconds. When she woke up reportedly she was oriented and didn’t have any amnesia. She was just recovering from malaria (took the last dose of duo-cotexin that night) and acute gastro-enteritis…

...She had a deep laceration of 3cm on the chin that was stitched. There was tenderness over both the temporomandibular joints and couldn’t fully open her mouth. She also had lacerations on her left shoulder, right index fingers and left knee, which were cleaned with normal saline and dressed with iodine…

We managed the pain with intramuscular pethidine (diclofenac and tramadol weren’t effective). We advised her to see a maxillofacial surgeon as soon as possible. She wishes to go back to her home country (Canada) for that. She is fit to fly, but we advise medical escort because she is still recovering from malaria, the cause of the collapse is not 100% clear and the patient is anxious.

Best regards, [doctor at “The Surgery” in Kampala, Uganda]
4.3.2.4 Artifact 5: Instagram Post, March 28, 2017

“When life throws you a curveball. And a broken jaw, and a broken hand, and malaria, and stitches. Yyyup.”

![Image of a bed with blue sheets and a window]

Figure 4.1 Blue Bedsheets and Brokenness

(Photograph by Kari Grain)

Sharon Todd (2014) asserts that moments in which powerful learning occurs “are pedagogical not because they occur in educational contexts…but these moments also constitute what is ‘educational’ about life: that through our encounters with others…we shift the borders of our self understanding” (p. 232). Although Todd speaks specifically about transformative moments in this
way, I borrow this idea to theorize brokenness: that the edges of our selves are shifted, permeated, and made vulnerable through impactful connections with difficult knowledge and the often unforgiving realities of a previously unknown place. Adding to this illustration, Knight-Diop and Oesterreich (2009) describe educational encounters with discomfort as a “unique third space in which emotions serve as sites of struggle and contestation, and possibilities for changing the status quo of inequities” (p. 2679). Such discomfort, bound in human feeling, is a key characteristic of my own bodily brokenness and also the fragmentation I experienced in relation to my identity.
4.3.3  Theme 3: Love

4.3.3.1  Artifact 6: Instagram Post, April 2, 2017

Figure 4.2 Broken Beams
(Photograph by Kari Grain)

4.3.3.2  Artifact 7: A Poem: We Are Not Just Broken Beams

We are not just
broken beams and rubble,
nor are we chiseled perfection.
We are the moment they lock eyes.
We are the people with dust
Under our fingernails
We are the taste of blood
And the voices
That decorate the soundscape
With urgency and care.
We are neither beauty nor ruin
But the insatiable love
That keeps them dancing.

(Poem written while on morphine, sometime in the days between arrival in Canada and facial reconstruction surgery)

4.3.3.3 Analysis: Love as an Act of Education

Paulo Freire asserted early and often that love is a foundational component of education. He promoted the idea that “Education is an act of love” (1973, p. 38). But as Schoder (2013) points out, “Freire did not offer a definition of love nor did he expound upon what it means to risk an act of love” (p. 3). What is clear, however, is that Freire associated love with liberation and freedom: “No matter where the oppressed are found, the act of love is commitment to their cause – the cause of liberation” (1970, p. 8). I neither see myself as the oppressed, nor do I see my role in host communities such as Kitengesa as contingent on liberation (since I witness the many ways that Ugandan community leaders are themselves helping to liberate their own communities). But I do, however, believe that my brokenness, in its vulnerability and rawness, opened up a pathway for acts of love that I had never anticipated – mostly because I had always seen myself as independent, helpful, action-oriented, and strong (the combination of which I
equated with not requiring the help of others). By shattering my skeletal structure, I also demolished my former understanding of my identity, and a specific lens through which I saw the world-in-need as mine to act upon, to learn from, to serve, to empower. In my brokenness, I had no choice but to be acted upon; to be the recipient of love; to accept the compassionate care of health workers, friends, family, strangers, teachers, and members of my host community in Uganda.

4.3.3.4 Artifact 8: A Poem: So That Light May Enter

To be broken open:

To allow light

To inhale and exhale

To relax,

So that Rumi would wax poetic,

“You see?”

with quiet glee,

he would chuckle,

even my knuckles,

swollen and sacked,

become sites of breath,

cracked,

like the gap between life and death,

opening depth and breadth,

so that light may enter.
4.3.3.5 Artifact 9: Email from a friend in Kitengesa

I hope that your health is now improving. It is so wonderful that your family is caring for you and the doctors also did the best during the surgery. I wish you a very quick recovery and good health. I might be late to wish you a happy Easter holiday, but I was praying that you get the best of it and your health is improved to enjoy the raise of Jesus. Happy Easter Sunday and Monday :-)

I do not consider myself a Christian or a religious person for that matter, but the email above engages with forms of love that include both friendship and divine love. It was – and continues to be – humbling to receive emails such as this one in which my friends and co-authors in Uganda mobilize the forms of love that resonate with them, in order to communicate caring toward me. I carry with me a particular internal narrative related to Jesus’ resurrection (Easter) because I remember a friend saying to me when I turned 33 that “This is your Jesus year!” – 33 is the age that Jesus was when he died and was resurrected. I remember saying jokingly, “hopefully I don’t die this year.”

Interestingly, I conceptualize my accident as a definite page-break in the story of my life. I had a terrible fall, experienced deep spiritual divinity that carried with it all the emotional markings that I have attributed to “heaven” or something like a partial crossing-over, and finally, I awoke again – broken and changed. I experienced, during my “Jesus year,” something akin to an ending and a resurrection. It is unlikely that my friend in Uganda realized this significance when she wrote me this message, but to know that she (and others) were praying for my wellness, despite the fact that I don’t share their faith – is to me one of the deepest forms of love a person can share.
Although this paper is not aimed at sharing the findings from the study that brought me to Uganda in the first place, there was a particularly relevant theme that arose consistently among my research with Kitengesa community leaders who host international service-learners. When I asked them about the impacts of a long-term service-learning program, participants often relayed touching narratives of friendship and love. I have reflected on how eager I was to apply critical theoretical lenses to my study, expecting to learn about inequity and change, and the complex tensions around global engagement work, and yet my Ugandan colleagues consistently wanted to discuss friendship: the rewards of friendship with Canadian students and professors, and sometimes, the pain of seeing them leave Kitengesa to return home. This is not to say that critical lenses have little to contribute to a discussion of friendship and love in this context, but I do mean to suggest the following: At times, I believe I carried around my “critical lens” like an ethical armour that somehow granted me the position of moral superiority over the doe-eyed, charity-oriented volunteers in Uganda and elsewhere. And I found that my Ugandan friends consistently and in varying ways, asked me to put aside this ethical armour to allow for a more disarmed connection, in which love and friendship was more worthy of my attention than the power and privilege I so scrutinized and wished to discuss. This focus on friendship was made salient when one participant, Micheal, recounted, “It hurts when you see people going because we are friends for three, four, six months and then you see them going. You feel bad but you have nothing to do. And most of the time when they are going, even themselves they cry, and ourselves, some cry.” When I departed from Kitengesa for the second time, two days before my accident, I also – unsurprisingly - experienced an overwhelming sense of grief at saying goodbye to Micheal and others. And when my accident occurred, I was flooded with text messages, phone calls, and emails from those same people. Dan Ahimbisibwe immediately drove hours to be at
my bedside in the Kampala hospital, thereby strengthening my understanding of global engagement work as a human construction built upon a foundation of relationships. In this way, it became clear that in fact, a critical approach to this work is tightly bound up in loving relationships because those human connections personalize and narrate diverse forms of inequity.

Nonetheless, my brokenness, I believe, was an act of (involuntary) disarmament that enabled the formation of deeper connections with not only my Ugandan friends, but also many loved ones who had rarely had the opportunity to care for me. On Mother’s Day following my injury, I wrote the following homage to my mom, who bathed me, administered my medications, and fed me liquid meals for months after my return home: “I didn’t know it was possible to cry from gratitude as much as I have done in the past 6 weeks over my mom’s 24/7 nursing care and seemingly bottomless well of compassion, joy, and generosity.” Just as Freire asserts that “education is an act of love” (1973, p. 38), I would argue that - especially in times of brokenness - love is an act of education.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Generative Chaos

“One fumbles into the pain and sometimes fumbles into the wonder. It is an improvisation in unforeseen territory. You must encounter the unknown to be known, the unforeseen to be seen” (Snowber, 2016, p. 30).

4.3.4.1 Artifact 10: Sympathy Card from a Family Friend

*Dear Kari,*

*Years from now when you are talking about getting your doctorate, and you tell the tale of falling on your face so very far from home…it will all be a great story. But for now, I’m sure the pain and fear and trauma is overwhelming. I am so sorry.*
4.3.4.2 Analysis: Generative Fractures and Fragments

If love is enhanced, given movement, or uplifted through brokenness, then so too is the possibility of generative chaos. At some point in the journey between Uganda and Canada, in and out of various drug-induced states, doctors’ offices, deep sleeps, anxiety attacks, and gently joyful moments with my family, friends, and lover, I began to stitch together a new idea of who I was, what I knew, and what my future might look like. “Fragmentation is not...a dissemination but is rather the dispersal that leads to fertilization and future harvests” (Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy, 1988, p. 49). The fragmentation of my body – but especially of my mind and my clipped and cloudy thoughts – transformed from a catalyst of frustration to a fresh and confusing landscape of new ideas. Seyhan wrote that “fragment...is the vehicle of an ironic inquiry about the reliability of representation and therefore, a mode of critical self reflection” (1996, p. 137).

This exposure to the chaos of fragmentation insisted that I: let go of my need for control and absolute knowledge; reflect deeply on myself in relation to others; and give myself permission to create something that did not bracket out my embodied fieldwork journey but rather put my body - the researcher’s body - under the microscope for all to see.

In Romantic poetics, the fractured reality of the world found its coincidental form of expression in the fragment. As a formal and figural representation of the unrepresentable, fragment became the progeny of generative chaos, for it implied the infinity of the forms of aesthetic expression. (Seyhan, 1996, p. 135).

4.3.4.3 Artifact 11: A Poem: Reciprocity, Blood, and Bone

To be broken open.
To leave pieces of my body behind
In the mindscape of Uganda,
A fitting trade,
Perhaps,
For what I took away
In wisdom and words;
Data and text;
Diagrams and degrees;
CVs.
Reciprocity works
In mysterious ways,
Plays like it’s optional,
But whenever you reap,
You must sow the earth again,
Even when
You pay in blood and bone.
It’s not personal-
The fallible human takes,
The vulnerable human breaks,
The broken human
Makes mistakes
Makes love
Makes something different than before.
In fragmented gore, we are reborn

Re-formed

Torn and tattered,

Blood spattered

And ready:

To be

Instead of

to know.

“Cracks in the discourse are like tender shoots of grass, plants pushing against fixed cement of disciplines and cultural beliefs, eventually overturning the cement slabs” (Anzaldua, 2015, p. 73).

4.3.4.4 Artifact 12: Facebook Post, April 14, 2017:

Life can change quickly. 6 weeks ago I had a very different set of plans for march and april than to deal with pain meds, drink meals through a straw, and watch Outlander on Netflix. I tried to let go of my plans – my travels, my writing productivity goals, my fitness goals – as gracefully as I could, and accept this new story as my own. It helps to be surrounded by love and compassion and kindness, and I am reminded of how much I have to be grateful for. It’s just a bump in the road, but thank you if you have helped to make it better.
4.3.4.5 Artifact 13: Instagram Post, May 25, 2017:

“Here is a pic from today of my broken-but-healing face. 4 things to note: 1) My awkwardly healing fracture on the far right 2) My new titanium plate and screws holding together my chin on the bottom left 3) My nose ring hanging in mid-air on the top left 4) My teeth don’t touch at the front so they’ll be re-breaking my jaw soon. Thank god for badass surgeons and nose-piercers.”

4.3.4.6 Artifact 14: Dental Treatment Letter Excerpt

As you know, Kari was in a recent unfortunate accident in Africa and had her jaw wired shut for a period of months. Today was the first hygiene visit she has experienced since the bars came off.
Kari had heavy amount of tenacious calculus present on her teeth, the most being around her lower dentition. She also had heavy stain on her teeth which was removed today.

(Dated June 29, 2017)

4.3.4.7 Artifact 15: Orthodontic Treatment Letter Excerpt

To Whom it May Concern,

Kari Grain suffered a traumatic injury in Uganda. At the time she was suffering from malaria, e-coli, and possible heart complications, which caused her to lose consciousness and fall. She hit a bench and then a tile floor which resulted in multiple mandibular fractures, as well as fracturing other body parts. With respect to her mandible (lower jaw), she suffered a mid-symphaseal and bilateral subcondylar fractures and broken teeth in the upper right quadrant. As a result of the complications from the trauma, she currently presents with a Class II division II subdivision left open bite occlusion, with contact only on her first and second molars. Due to her occlusion, she is only able to function on the left side. Correction of Kari’s malocclusion will require full orthodontic treatment, combined with orthognathic surgery which will be performed by [Doctor 1]. Her restorative needs for the fractured teeth will be handled by [Doctor 2]. Kari’s general dentist [Doctor 3] will handle her general dental care.

(Dated July 17, 2017)

4.3.4.8 Artifact 16: Prosthodontic Treatment Letter Excerpt

My evaluation of your teeth reveals:

- History of lower jaw fracture in three places
- Lower jaw trauma has caused the chin to deviate to the right
- Front teeth do not touch when biting down (open bite)
- Lingual cusp fractures on posterior teeth in the upper right quadrant
Ms. Grain was seen in my office on August 28, 2017 and September 12, 2017 for repair of chipped and fractured teeth, which were a direct result of her dental trauma. Further dental care may be required on a number of these teeth, including indirect, cuspal coverage restorations to protect from further breakdown. The need for further restorations will be assessed following her comprehensive orthodontic treatment and orthognathic surgery.

4.3.4.10 Artifact 18: Insurance Claim Excerpt

C4703 – We are unable to provide reimbursement for this expense. It is not a covered benefit under your plan.

C470D – This drug is not covered under your plan.

C540M – Unit Price Maximum is applicable for this service.

EOS01 – 99966- airfare for escort

C532A – We considered the drug cost portion up to the maximum your plan allows. The excess amount is not eligible under your plan.

PA008 – This drug may be eligible under PharmaCare’s Special Authority Program. Please consult with your doctor who may apply on your behalf. Send us a copy of PharmaCare’s approval and we will further review and advise of the eligibility for this drug.
Figure 4.4 "You will come away bruised"
(Daley-Ward, 2014)

4.4 Critiques and Risks

Had it not been for the encouragement of my doctoral committee and academic mentors, I would likely have omitted my injury experience from my doctoral research. Throughout the writing process I have encountered myriad insecurities about this piece, its level of vulnerability, and the strange spectrum of emotions it has surfaced. Below, I briefly outline two self-critiques of this paper in the effort to describe some of the many complexities and tensions that can arise in an embodied positionality piece such as this one.
4.4.1 Risk of Re-centering Privilege

My goal in embarking on a research project in Uganda was to centre community voices and perspectives in the narratives on global engagement work such as international service-learning. Too often, we research the many ways that service-learning and global engagement work are transformative for learners, and omit or ignore the perspectives of host community members. In the fieldwork that I carried out before my accident, I used photovoice to collaboratively explore the impacts of service-learning, and I included in the project young adult Ugandan leaders who consistently work with Canadian students but who are rarely asked about their own perceptions of the changes to them and their community. Collectively – and in a manner that was driven by the Ugandan participant-researchers themselves – we shared our research findings with the Kitengesa community at a public photovoice exhibition and celebration. Months after my return to Canada, and with my jaw still wired shut, I shared our participatory research at a community engagement conference with Daniel Ahimbisibwe, who traveled from Uganda to present with me. As a team of eight co-authors, we have also submitted a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal.

I share this background to underline the fact that I have strived to co-construct knowledge and centre community voices in my work, and I continue to believe in the importance of de-centering people of privilege who venture abroad – locally or globally - for research, service-learning, or other purposes related to community engagement. Nonetheless, this paper is an uncomfortable re-centering of me and my experiences with brokenness. I chose this avenue because critical reflexivity is a vital aspect of qualitative inquiry. Thus, the qualitative researcher is – transforming the metaphor that Timothy Eatman shared with me – the bones that comprise a (now fragmented) structure to the flesh of story. It is not enough to centre community voices in
global engagement work when my own privileged body is centred and disproportionately valued (cared for, evacuated at any cost) in times of brokenness; instead, it is my job as a researcher to recognize that, despite the gratitude, love, and new understandings that have arisen since my accident, it is an unacceptable state of affairs when my Ugandan friends would not have had the same chance to survive and thrive beyond their brokenness. Thus, I have come to realize that “centering” is perhaps an inadequate metaphor because it suggests that there is only room for one entity in the nuclear space of a study or exploration. There is space for critical self-reflection, just as there is space for a literature review and a description of one’s methods, and an exploration of host community perspectives – it is sometimes a matter of forging that space, and it is sometimes a matter of acknowledging its multi-layered presence.

4.4.2 Temporary Vs. Ongoing Suffering

I received many empathetic reactions to my injury, to which I often replied, “it’s not so bad.” And truly, it isn’t. Although I acknowledge the seriousness of the event I have described in this paper, I would also underline that this piece is not meant to shine a light on my (temporary) suffering. Not only do I know that it could have been infinitely worse, but I also continue to reflect on the countless individuals who live with conditions wherein medical care – even for treatable diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS - is unavailable or out of reach due to systemic issues and inequities. My temporary bodily suffering cannot be paralleled with the ongoing struggles that many people in both Ugandan and Canada live each day. Rather, I continue to mourn and examine my own complicity in conditions that cause inequities at global and local levels. Some of those conditions that affect health outcomes can include poverty, lack of medical care, limited access to nutritious food and potable water, and exploitative contexts due to an unequal distribution of resources and positions of power. For many people, physical illness is not
a one-time injury but rather, a continuous condition in one form or another. I share my story of brokenness here because writing has been a part of my healing process and, in the longer term, the reflections imbedded in my writing have constituted a significant aspect of my doctoral education. My temporary suffering has done much to reveal my privilege, and this embodied knowledge is crucial to my own capabilities as an educator, curriculum designer, and researcher.

4.4.3 Relational Care and Systemic Care

It is possible, and even advisable, to discuss love, care, and injustice in the same space. Nel Noddings (1984), for example, explored an ethic of caring that opposed normative ethics and their tendency to uphold principles more than people. In tandem with my vigorous examination of my privileged flesh and the systemic inequalities that played out, it behooves me to also illuminate what was easily the most defining theme of my experience with brokenness: relational care. That is, the care I received from other humans – strangers, host community members, and friends/family – when I was unable to care for myself. The relational care that I received before and after my accident in Uganda did as much for my holistic well-being as the systemic care I received in the Canadian healthcare system. Relational care does not require resources or government directives. Rather, it is bound up in cultural expressions of hospitality, warmth, and empathy. The relational care that I received in Uganda was exceptional and abundant, and it was in terribly short supply in the Canadian emergency room and surgical wards that I frequented post-accident. On the other hand, I flew home to Canada to receive systemic care: the type of care that is overseen by institutions and requires resources, specialized equipment, citizenship, MRIs, and highly trained maxillofacial surgeons to piece my face back together. I distinguish relational care from systemic care in order to highlight that my experience of care in Uganda carried a different texture and origin from the care I received in Canada. It was not better or
worse, but rather originated in the individuals and communities rather than in institutions and governments.

4.4.4 Conclusion

You have been trained how to read and write. I am calling you back to a place where blood turns to ink, and flesh seeps into your words so they sing and pulse off the page, dancing into your readers’ hearts and minds in a way that is truly re/membered. A kind of knowing that breathes vitality (Snowber, 2016, p. 10).

I have always resisted brokenness. I have a survival instinct which tells me to keep my body in one piece, and similarly, to keep my identity intact, in a recognizable form that reflects what I have always known. When I look in the mirror now, my face is different. Still recognizable. But my mouth won’t fully close, and my chin falls off to the right – the result, I am told, of my left mandibular bones stitching themselves together at the wrong angle. When the surgeons put my bisected chin back together with a plate and 4 screws, they did so at a thinner angle than before, so that in relation to my narrower jaw, my cheekbones appear to jut out prominently, giving my face an appearance similar to the shape of a delicate cartoon Frankenstein. One of many specialists I visited in the aftermath of my accident suggested that while I am getting my lower jaw re-broken (which will happen sometime in the months around my dissertation defense), I should consider having my upper jaw broken as well so that my face does not appear so asymmetrical. I laughed out loud. The notion of voluntarily breaking any bone in my body in order to fix a purely aesthetic asymmetry felt absurd.

I carry a strange sort of affection for my asymmetry, an embodied reminder of the Ugandan earth exacting its impact on my identity. There is a story that is not merely etched on my face in the form of a laceration scar, but that has literally changed its structure. Before the
brokenness, there was structure, symmetry, a plan, and a partial knowing. After the brokenness, there is a bricolage of chaos, flow, non-linearity, asymmetry, irreparable damage, spirituality, art, vulnerability, poetry, material insecurity, and a disquieting and ongoing not-knowing. These are qualities and fragments that make less sense in the traditional construction of academic knowledge, but that have enriched my life immensely.

My fractured body, in its asymmetry and reconfigured form, has become a kind of knowing. Each lump of scar bone at the site of my fractures is a poem. Each cyborg screw beneath my flesh an APA reference to the “pedagogy of discomfort” (Boler, 1999). Each anxiety attack that still goads me is a history book etching itself into my psyche. Taken together, I am a body of knowledge-lived. Tami Spry (2001), in her theorization of embodied methodological praxis, wrote that “The text and the body that generates it cannot be separated. Surely, they never have been. Postcolonial writing has not brought the body back, it has exposed and politicized its presence” (p. 726). Following her words, this bricolage of brokenness is equal parts catharsis, political critique, knowledge generation, and reflective exploration.

Edkins writes, “Dismantling the face opens up a world of unreason—a world of madness” (2013). Deleuze and Guattari envisioned the face as a political machine or system. As such, “If the face is a politics, dismantling the face is also a politics involving real becomings, an entire becoming-clandestine” (1987, p. 189). Edkins (2013) suggests that dismantling the face “involves forgoing the comfortable and comforting certainties we surround ourselves with, which give us the ‘solace of closure’ even as they oppress and objectify us, and opening instead to the possibility, indeed the inevitability, of living otherwise, living without guarantees (Hall, 1996, page 137). No wonder it is daunting.” (p. 540). And no wonder this commitment to discomfort and openness, so deeply imbedded in the political process of dismantling the face, has
significant implications in educational forms of global engagement such as international service-learning and international fieldwork.

If it is not clear by now, I do not suggest that learners venturing into host communities in global contexts should aim to break their bodies in order to achieve some sort of epistemological enlightenment via fragmentation and generative chaos. Instead, I see my accident as an exposé on the real risks of global engagement work, but also on the uncomfortable and unjust truths surrounding the privileged body and the multi-layered ways that a privileged body is repatriated and rebuilt by systems that favour it above the bodies of others. And in a realm entwined with, yet existing just beyond material realities, this bricolage of brokenness is about love and relationships – a fragmented reminder that love and relationships, as my Ugandan friends often teach me, are not just the foundation of global engagement work, but also constitute the impacts in and of themselves.

Thus, this bricolage exploration has prompted me to ask how we can apply themes presented in this paper to the development of a framework that: a) prepares students embarking on - and b) aids in the thinking of those returning from - global engagement work. Using brokenness as a starting point, I wonder how we can guide students to reflect on and dialogue about the experience of being so heavily impacted by a place and experience that it “shatters” what they thought to be true and in some cases, generates a sense of powerlessness. Boler (2013) discusses the “ethics of shattering worldviews” and Britzman (1998) unpacks what it means to encounter “difficult knowledge”. Both of these discussions in critical emotion studies, I believe, can give a theoretical home to the idea of brokenness in global engagement work. In particular Britzman asked, “What happens when that other war, the war within, meets the conflicts and aggressions enacted in the world outside?” (1998, p. 119). Perhaps these highly emotional
encounters, which sometimes feel violent to existing structures of privilege – can allow learners to be impacted, acted upon, and indeed, broken apart in ways that insist, absolutely and unequivocally, on structural change. It begs the question for further research: What are the responsibilities of those who manage or facilitate ISL to care for those who are broken, undone, or shattered by their experiences? Perhaps this structural change, in its messiness and uncertainty, can serve as a reminder that both the construction of knowledge and global engagement work are, in their bones, acts of embodiment.
I was invited and even encouraged to take leave from my doctoral program in order to heal from my injuries, deal with my medical tasks, and generally prioritize wellness before work/education. I never felt drawn to that option, however, because I felt strongly that my injury was an experiential component of my doctoral education. I completed the previous chapter in October 2017 and believed somehow that my dissertation was practically finished. It was not.

Despite the emotional challenges I faced in writing the previous chapter, it was in some ways the easiest part of my dissertation to complete. I operate more naturally in a space of creativity, disorganization and intense emotion. The findings chapter that follows is what haunted me most in the process of writing this dissertation. I had absolutely no idea how I would distill rich and complex findings from the entirety of the Uganda project into one tidy “findings” type of article or paper. I re-wrote it two times over many months, gathered feedback and changes from my co-authors and committee members, and eventually, after consulting with the co-authors on its final form, had it accepted to a peer-reviewed journal. The revisions I was asked to complete for the journal involved, mostly, cutting down the word count, and a specific request to cut out the Luganda translations of the captions and analysis. Although I understand the practicality of that request – namely, that most readers won’t be able to read Luganda, and that the article needs to lose 2000 words – the symbolism of that gesture feels uncomfortable to me. I justify our compliance with this request in two ways: One is that the (hearing) co-authors speak English, so they will still be able to read their own publication. Two is that their captions were originally spoken or written in English and subsequently translated into Luganda. Eseza and Saudah signed their captions in Uganda Sign Language, and Rosemary – the official translator – directly translated them into English rather than Luganda. I am coming to
understand that there are some places and moments in which we “choose our battles” within academic structures of knowledge construction. I also see this dissertation as a means of illustrating not only the findings of these explorations, but also the ways that richness, complexity, and the uncomfortable beauty of brokenness/chaos can become stripped bare through prescriptive systems.

The chapter that follows is the article we submitted to the peer-reviewed journal previous to the exclusion of Luganda translations and additional context that remains important to share. It is not the only storyine that emerged through the findings. Instead, it is one version of many stories that can be told about research in international service-learning.
Chapter 5: International Service-Learning in Uganda: A Photovoice Study to Explore Local Impacts on Host Community¹

5.1 Introduction

“Kitengesa is special,” Ahimbisibwe Daniel muses quietly in regards to his community. We sit on his front porch, looking out at a napping orange kitten, some palm trees, and a maize crop beyond. Dan is a central community leader and organizer in Kitengesa, and a mentor to local youth. “We have many good programs and strong leaders here.” Dan lists off notable figures who have gone on to Ugandan politics, university, and international development work, pointing in the direction of their plot of land, and describing certain features of their home or family life. Among the people he talks about, he mentions a small group of young adults who have grown up since adolescence in consistent interaction with Canadian international service-learning (ISL) students for up to ten years since a UBC program began in Kitengesa. As he describes them, he outlines their strengths, the important work they do in the community, and the close relationships they have built with various Canadian students and faculty who have spent time in Kitengesa. Those young leaders who Dan described to me - a university researcher - comprise seven out of the eight authors of this article.

The social justice goals of many higher education international service-learning (ISL) programs are often described as being contingent upon strong, equitable relationships with community partners and host communities. Given this common narrative, it is necessary to

extend our understanding of relationships in ISL and the ways they are constructed and
maintained, particularly when conceptualized in terms of the impact to the host community, and
by host community members themselves. This photovoice study engaged eight co-researchers
(seven Ugandan host community members and one Canadian university researcher) in a
participatory project to examine the impacts of a long-term ISL program facilitated by the
University of British Columbia (UBC) and based in Kitengesa, a rural village in southeastern
Uganda. Using thematic analysis of data from photos, interviews, and focus groups, this paper
reveals the primary impacts of ISL in Kitengesa to be premised on three types of relationships:
educational relationships, friendships, and relationships that foster social change. Our findings
and analysis illustrate a host community conceptualization of ISL that firmly positions human
relationships not as a precursor to ISL done well, but as the success in itself. This host
community perspective has significant implications for higher education institutions that often
assess the impact of ISL programs in terms of student learning and measurable community
outcomes. Underlying the discussion of ISL relationships is the potential for a deeper analysis of
power relations as they pertain to race, colonial histories, and socioeconomic status, among
others. Although many programs aim to build relationships, the following study deepens our
understanding of their multidimensional form and how they are produced, conceptualized, and
sustained.

This paper is organized into six sections that elucidate the findings and analysis, but also
the complexities and context in which this collaboration has taken place. As Grain and Lund
(2016) contend, service-learning scholarship and practice that claim to be oriented in social
justice must advance the goal of the diversification of voices in the field – an ambition that
renders the construction of knowledge accessible not only to academics and institutions, but also
to host community members who are, among other things, teachers, friends, and experts. More broadly, Roberts (2012) points out that the field of experiential education can be critiqued for white normativity and considerable emphasis on the scholarship of White, Western scholars. In this way, social justice is less the topical focus of this article, and more its foundation and raison d’etre: knowledge pertaining to experiential education begins with the people engaged in its construction and the ways they negotiate meaning together. Given the emphasis we wish to place on the multiple perspectives that informed this study, we explore the complexities of this collaboration, offer a description of the Ugandan context, and share a literature review of ISL research that has taken up the notion of relationships. The methodology section describes the research process and theoretical framework that guides our work. Finally, we will share our findings that describe three types of relationships that are central to the impact of ISL in Kitengesa. We close with analysis and discussion of the broader implications of our work, particularly for higher education institutions that engage in ISL through a social justice lens, and suggest future research directions for community-centered service-learning studies.

5.2 The Meaning of Social Justice

Social justice is a term wrought with debate, political undertones, and philosophical and practical disagreement. It is a term with such diversity of meaning and perspectives that it has no central unifying theme, perhaps other than a broad quest for fairness – however an individual may define it. Social justice in this paper does not prescribe to one particular definition, but is conceptualized from a critical theory perspective and premised on Sensoy and DiAngelo’s (2017) “shared principles of social justice,” which include but are not limited to the following: social groups are comprised of individuals and are differently valued in society; “social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to the resources in a society” (p. xx); “those who
claim to be for social justice must be involved in self-reflection about their own socialization into these groups (their “positionality”) and must strategically act from that awareness in ways that challenge social injustice” (p. xx). Given our understanding of social justice, we pay particular attention to our positionality as a research team in the section that follows.

5.3 **Positionality: The Research Team**

All participants in this project are also co-researchers – a characteristic that is essential to the photovoice methodology (Latz, 2017). When participants become co-researchers, it “validates and privileges the experiences of participants, making them experts and therefore co-researchers and collaborators in the process of gathering and interpreting data” (Given, 2008, p. 599). This article is comprised of eight perspectives, each person with a unique set of lived experiences and a potentially different understanding of Kitengesa and the implications of global engagement work that occurs there. Nonetheless, given the university researcher (Grain)’s position within academia, much of this article is organized through her understanding of the expectations and conventions of a manuscript fit for both public scholarship and an academic audience. Following Kathleen Sitter, “Participation doesn’t mean we have to contribute the same things, that we share the same skills, the same gifts, etc. Many times, being present is also a form of participation” (K. Sitter, personal communication, February 2, 2017).

Beyond Grain’s positionality as a university researcher and its associated potential impacts on the analysis process, her positionality as a White, western visitor in Kitengesa is of considerable importance in the discussion of the research dynamics overall. Despite being in a different role than the many service-learning students and faculty members who sojourn in Kitengesa, she nonetheless occupied an outsider status of significant power and privilege, often referred to as “mzungu”. Thus, the efforts that she took to encourage collaboration and
participation from Ugandan co-authors are still marred by a broader social context that, certainly in Kitengesa, often understands “mzungus” to carry expertise even when they do not. Such power imbalances in the research process likely impacted factors that may never come to light, but could include: a reluctance to disagree with the university researcher due to the perception that “they know better”; a fear of commenting on negative aspects of service-learning in Kitengesa, especially given the tremendous economic benefits of hosting students; an overall agreeability because of the social benefits of being in alignment with a foreign visitor.

As a group, the authorship team discussed this challenge of representation as well as many details of the study and its dissemination. In the end, the team agreed that Grain would write the manuscript and integrate each co-researcher’s perspectives and expertise using qualitative data from focus groups and interviews, as well as ongoing communication that occurred during and since the project.

5.4 Context

This study took place in Kitengesa, Uganda, a small rural community located in South Eastern Uganda in the Masaka District. Once called Buganda or the Buganda Kingdom, Uganda, as it is known now, is a small, landlocked nation that shares its borders with South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of the Congo. With a population of 40 million and an annual GDP per capita of roughly $615 USD (World Bank, 2017) Uganda has gained popularity as a destination for tourism as well as various forms of service-oriented travel and sojourn. Uganda has two official languages, English and Luganda, and it is also home to more than thirty languages and dialects (Kasozi, 1994).

Uganda was annexed by Britain in 1894, at which time Buganda was joined together with a number of nearby kingdoms including Bunyoro, Ankole, and Toro, among others (Kasozi,
1994; Pulford, 1999). For the next seven decades, until independence in 1962, Britain ruled Uganda as a colonial possession (Kasozi, 1994; Pulford, 1999). Colonialism is widely understood as the primary cause of a number of devastating impacts and consequences across Africa. Namely, even three decades after independence, many African nations including Uganda were still “afflicted with poverty, exploding populations, corruption, arbitrary rule and crumbling infrastructure” (Pulford, 1999, p. 9). It is within this complex local and historical landscape, situated within a history of problematic and unequal relationships between foreigners and Ugandans, that many travelers, sojourners, volunteers, and learners visit Uganda. It is also within these contexts that countless Ugandans host visitors and are sometimes tasked with the facilitation of service-learning programs for higher education students in their homes and communities.

The University of British Columbia first began their service-learning partnership with Kitengesa in 2007, approximately ten years before this study began. The cornerstone of the community is often cited as the Kitengesa Community Library, which began in 1999 as a “box of books and 13 students” (D. Ahimbisibwe, personal communication, February 5, 2017). Since that time, its many achievements include: the expansion of services to educate hundreds of local students, several awards from Ugandan library associations, and the attention of BBC World News (See BBC, 2010). Notably, the Library also received an EIFL Award (Electronic Information for Libraries) Award for the inclusion of Deaf/Disabled Persons. The Kitengesa Community Library was also the site of our photovoice workshops, interviews, and the Kitengesa Photo Exhibition, where we shared our research publicly with the wider community.
5.5 Literature Review: ISL and Relationships

ISL is a form of experiential education that integrates community-led service activities, academic instruction, and intentional reflection in an international or cross-cultural setting (Crabtree, 2008). Grusky noted that the majority of ISL programs pivot on “building reciprocal relations across the North-South divide,” describing ISL as:

An organized excursion taken by students (and often faculty and administrators) to different countries or different cultures where students and faculties live with local families and immerse themselves in a culture that is distinct from their own. Students work with local organizations to serve the community where they are staying, engage in a cultural exchange, and learn about a daily reality very different from their own (Grusky, 2000, p. 858-9).

Literature in service-learning and community engagement has increasingly called for social justice- and critically-oriented approaches that highlight issues of power and problematize charity-oriented roots of service-learning (See Butin, 2007; Baldwin, Grain & Currie, 2018; Grain & Lund, 2018; Grain & Lund, 2016; Mitchell, 2008). For the purposes of this paper, we draw on the above ideas and Crabtree (2008) to define ISL as a cross-cultural experience that, when done well, combines service activities with learning goals and critical reflection in an international context that reconceptualizes the constructed boundaries between classroom and community, the local and global.
5.5.1 Reciprocity and Relationship Typologies

“At its core, service-learning is about relationships among faculty, students, the college or university, and community agencies, each group having different agendas, resources, and levels of power” (Chapdelaine, et al., 2005 p. 15).

The ways that relationships are approached and framed in ISL can greatly affect dynamics related to power and privilege, including learners’ narratives about their engagement, and host community members’ narratives about the program. Relationships and partnerships have been widely discussed in service learning and community engagement literature, and there is a nascent but growing interest in the examination of relationships and impacts from the perspective of host community members (See Lee, 2017; Tinkler & Tinkler, 2018). Much of the research pertaining to relationships and partnerships have been conceptualized in terms of reciprocity and a variety of typologies aimed at conceptualizing and organizing their format. Reciprocity is lauded as an important foundational goal in service-learning programs; although it has been defined in myriad ways, Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton (2009) offer the following description:

Reciprocity signals an epistemological shift that values not only expert knowledge that is rational, analytic and positivist but also values a different kind of rationality that is more relational, localized, and contextual and favors mutual deference between lay persons and academics. (p. 9-10)

Despite a common general understanding of reciprocity, Dostilio, Brackmann, Edwards, Kliewer, and Clayton (2012) contend that it is a concept in need of deeper examination. The authors explore various conceptualizations of reciprocity throughout the literature and cast a
critical gaze on the erroneous conflation of reciprocity and mutually beneficial relationships. Arguing for a slightly different distinction – that of reciprocity versus mutuality - Saltmarsh, et al. (2009) propose that mutuality can be identified by its focus on exchange where all partners benefit, whereas reciprocity is more of an epistemological outlook, oriented firmly in the commitment to responsibility and authority.

Dostilio et al. (2012) map out three orientations to reciprocity, briefly understood as: Exchange (“participants give and receive something from the others that they would not otherwise have” [p. 19]); influence (“a relational connection that is informed by personal, social, and environmental contexts” [p. 19-20]); and generativity (participants and community work together as co-creators to develop a new understanding or product that did not previously exist). Conceived this way, Dostilio et al. do not make claims that position one reciprocity approach as superior to another, but rather, they underline the importance of explicit articulation with regards to the meanings we assign something as vital as reciprocity. Thus, despite different conceptions and critiques of this term, it is widely asserted that service-learning should invoke reciprocity as an essential process to ensure that programs and approaches are concerned with the growth and development of all partners involved (Crabtree, 2008; Dostilio et. al, 2012; Sharpe & Dear, 2013).

Some scholars, however, are skeptical of service-learning’s reliance on reciprocity as a guiding value. Clifford (2017) argues that solidarity should replace reciprocity as a central goal of community engagement work if it is truly oriented toward social justice goals. Referencing Mitchell’s (2008) distinction between traditional and critical service-learning, Clifford (2017) asserts that traditional forms of service-learning can actually reinforce and perpetuate neoliberal values, which: centre the individual, rather than a collective community, as an agent of change;
and conceptualize public life and democracy as actors in a capitalist marketplace. Despite the valid critiques and complexities of a concept such as reciprocity within the discussion of relationships, findings in this study generally illustrate participants’ sense that mutually beneficial relationships constitute key impacts of the ISL program under examination.

Beyond a discussion of reciprocity, myriad scholars in community engagement and service-learning have theorized relationships and partnerships – sometimes using them interchangeably and at other times, defining them as distinct concepts (See Bringle, Clayton & Price, 2009, p. 4; Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Hug, & Morrison, 2010; Jacoby, 2003; Thompson & Jesiek, 2017). Various typologies and distinctions have been developed to expand our understanding of these notions. For example, Bringle et al. (2009) describe a relationship as a “general and broad term to refer to all types of interactions between persons” (p. 3) and partnerships as “relationships in which the interactions possess three particular qualities: closeness, equity, and integrity” (p.3). Furthermore, their “SOFAR” framework identifies five key stakeholders in service-learning, including students, organizations in the community, faculty, administration, and residents of the community (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 4).

Thompson and Jesiek (2017), on the other hand, delineate two types of relationships within service-learning literature: Inter-Organizational Relationships (IORs) and Interpersonal Relationships (IRs). Their work explores relationship typologies in the context of engineering engagement programs, ultimately offering up a new typology: the “Transactional, Cooperative, and Communal (TCC) Framework.” The TCC Framework suggests that: (a) transactional programs are those that “separate the community from the program and its students” (p. 92) and have a central goal of ensuring that the needs of all constituencies are met by the partnership; (b) Cooperative interactions are those that aim for all stakeholders to be involved and functioning as
one whole, even where the roles and contributions may differ; and (c), Communal interactions are those that expand the “we” mentality to include the broader community through public events, town halls, and information sharing (p. 93). Stoecker and Beckman (2009) suggest that service-learning ought to be premised on community development framework, particularly with respect to its foundational goal of building participatory relationships. Participatory relationships in community engagement work are those that “empower community members as a collective” (2009, p. 5).

For the purposes of this study, we have chosen to use the term “relationships” as opposed to “partnerships” because from the community co-researcher perspective, there is less attention directed at the organizational, formal, or structural nature of the partnership, and more of an emphasis placed on relational human engagement. Often, participants discuss relationships in terms of the individual’s name and specific memories, rather than with a conscious connection to the associated institution or the program type (e.g. service-learning, volunteering, etc.). Although the relationships described in this study may include closeness, equity, and integrity – descriptors assigned by Bringle et al. (2009) as characteristic of partnerships, we are more inclined to frame relationships in terms of their personal and community impacts – that is, what aspects of community life the relationships most significantly affect in Kitengesa: friendship, education, and/or social change.

5.6 Methodology

Photovoice was selected as the methodology for this project because of its participatory nature, its roots in critical pedagogy and social justice, and its accessibility for participants who are both hearing and deaf. Kari Grain initially saw photovoice as a visual means of foregrounding the perspectives of host community members, particularly because community
voices are often marginalized or left out of service-learning research (Reynolds, 2014; Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). Photovoice is a form of participatory action research that uses a visual methodology originally developed by Wang and Burris (1997) for three particular purposes: To enable people to capture and highlight their community’s strengths and concerns, to encourage critical conversations about important issues, and to affect policy making. Considered a community-based research method, Wang, Burris, and colleagues constructed photovoice on a foundation of three theoretical sources: Paulo Freire’s education for critical consciousness, feminist theory, and documentary photography. Freire’s writings often discussed the potential of the visual image to generate critical thinking and reflection about social and political structures that affected people’s lives (1970).

This photovoice research project was developed with a foundational goal of collaboration and shared decision making among participants and the university researcher. Collaborative research typically includes characteristics such as the construction of useful knowledge, a commitment to both process and content, shared development of research question(s) and analysis, and shared ownership over the project. In total, seven participant-researchers took part in the photovoice study and its related activities such as interviews, focus groups, analysis conversations, dissemination of findings, and a local photovoice exhibition and celebration. Of the characteristics above, all were met in this study with the exception of the original research question. In other words, the original research question was generated by the university researcher before she entered the field context: How do community members perceive the impacts of international service-learning? It was only after she arrived in Kitengesa and built relationships with the participant-researchers, that the emergent research questions were
Emergent research questions included: How do participants, as leaders themselves, affect change in their community? How do they hope to affect change in the future?

Although two participants identify as deaf and thus do not speak any languages verbally, both are fluent in Ugandan Sign Language and were provided with a translator for all photovoice workshops and related events. The translator, Rosemary, was also a participant and a paid research assistant. Given that two of the participant-researchers identify as deaf, photovoice was a particularly inclusive methodology that offered them an opportunity to contribute their perspectives in visual, artistic, and non-verbal ways. Photovoice, along with other participatory visual techniques and methods, offers the opportunity to integrate into rigorous research an ‘emic’ view, which highlights the perspectives of those being researched.

Having hosted and worked with Canadian service-learners for a number of years, each of the participant-researchers have both witnessed and been active agents in the changes that have occurred in Kitengesa. Thus, Kari Grain was initially interested to explore: a.) The impacts of ISL from the perspective of community members, and b.) How the participants, as leaders themselves, affect change in their community and how they hope to affect change in the future. These initial questions served merely as starting points in a fluid “inquiry-in-action” (Reason & Bradbury, 2006, p. xxii) that quickly became guided through dialogues among the group.

Recruitment was carried out via snowball sampling as guided by Daniel Ahimbisibwe, the Kitengesa community partner and Director of the Kitengesa Community Library. All participant-researchers: (a) were between the ages of 20 and 38 at the time of the study, (b) had interacted with UBC ISL students (as well as many other Western students and researchers) over the past ten years, (c) identify as community leaders in Kitengesa. The photovoice study was comprised of five three-hour workshops over the course of three months. Embedded within the
workshops was a combination of: educational content (photography skills, ethical frameworks); research activities (focus groups, photography and analysis); and dialogue (democratic decision making, reflection, discussions about community issues, and casual, unstructured conversations). Outside of workshop time, participants also engaged in one-hour interviews with the university researcher. See Chapter 3 for more details on the photovoice workshops and related events.

The analysis of research findings takes two forms: (a) Collaborative (comprised of analysis that occurred during and after the photovoice project while all eight co-authors were together in Kitengeza) and (b) Individual (Comprised of individual perspectives on the project and its findings). Individual perspectives are illustrated through participants’ direct quotes in the findings section as well as through the university researcher (Grain)’s analysis of the data in the context of existing academic research literature. This project generates new knowledge in the field of international service-learning in ways that include participants not only as photographers, but also as interpreters of their own data and agents of change. Participant-researchers in this study simultaneously directed their own research, participated in photographic analysis, and decided where and how their work would be shared.

5.7 Findings

The photovoice workshops, in combination with follow-up semi-structured interviews, revealed three interconnected areas in which participant-researchers articulated the greatest impacts of ISL in their community, the majority of which were centred around 3 types of relationships: Friendships, educational relationships, and relationships that foster social change. Photovoice data in this section is presented in both written form (transcribed interviews and focus group excerpts, written photo captions), and visual data (photos taken as part of the photovoice project). Findings suggest that ISL has impacted Kitengeza not only through those
relationships forged between students and host community members, but also through the collective relationships that persist among Kitengesa groups (e.g. The Lwannunda Self Help Group; The Kitengesa Youth Leadership Team).

5.7.1 Relationship Theme 1: Friendship

Friendship is a seldom examined aspect of service-learning partnerships, although it has been discussed in community-based and participatory action research (See Leeuw, Cameron & Greenwood, 2012; Mayan & Daum, 2016; Minkler, 2004). Within the broad theme of relationships and community building, it appears that friendships between participants and ISL students are highly valued, especially in instances where students return more than once.

[2 ISL students] felt much love for us and they’ve come back twice to visit us and also [an ISL student] came back last year to visit the deaf school… I felt so happy because many of the students who come here promise to come back and they never come back. But this was really so nice that they came back and the bond between us and them grew even more.

(Eseza)

Host community members in this study articulated the impression that despite deep bonds of friendship, ISL students often have intentions to return but they rarely follow through on these plans. This sentiment is echoed by Vicent:

And the challenges? They rarely come back. When they go, they go for good. All the time, we make them our true friends, our brothers and sisters, but when they go back, actually they forget to come back or to say hello.
Micheal shares a similar sense of pain at the process of saying goodbye:

> It hurts when you see people going because we are friends for three, four, six months and then you see them going. You feel bad but you have nothing to do. And most of the time when they are going, even themselves they cry, and ourselves, some cry.

Although long-term friendships and return visits from ISL students are highly valued, participants also point to a general desire that library patrons have to befriend “mzungus.” A mzungu is a Kiswahili word most often associated in modern East African usage with the term for “white person,” but with a historical usage applied to 19th century European explorers who wandered aimlessly. Interestingly, even ISL students who identify as people of colour are labeled as mzungus by the majority of Kitengesa community members. The following quote illustrates the sense of curiosity and novelty imbedded in the possibility of making a mzungu friend:

> Community members started coming at the library more often than before when there were no ISL students. Because when they see a mzungu coming, they are like “yeah let’s go and see” and they are now accessing more of the library services in computer classes, English literature classes, youth. Why do they come when the mzungus come? I think they like talking to mzungus and making friends. They take it to be something special. Seeing someone from some other country coming here, they would like to know what is really happening in their home countries and that’s why they make friends. (Rosemary)

Here, the potential for friendship with a mzungu is a motivation for some community members to engage with library programs and develop educational relationships with ISL students.
5.7.2 Relationship Theme 2: Educational

Explorations of ISL’s impacts in Kitengesa reveal an ongoing emphasis on the mutual teaching and learning relationships between ISL students and community members. The most prominent educational fields identified by participants as having significant impacts in Kitengesa include: Computer literacy, general literacy in reading English, health and nutrition, and financial literacy pertaining to saving and spending. Interviews and photovoice conversations also reveal areas where participant-researchers felt they had taught service-learning students. These included: Ugandan sign language, Ugandan culture, and local traditions and knowledge. For example, Eseza states, “the ISL students have taught us computers, and also the internet… We have also taught them sign language and we can still communicate to them through sign language when we are on Skype”. Eseza’s acknowledgement that the education and teaching has been multi-directional is a promising narrative, especially given the danger that international service-learning can sometimes be seen by host communities as little more than charity and volunteer work. Mutual teaching and learning is also exemplified by the programs facilitated at the community library. As Micheal points out,

They teach us how to start teaching people without any origin of writing or reading. And actually some of the students have started writing simple books about their families for the library, with the help of the UBC students. So this is a change. Somebody who didn’t know how to write can come up with a book.

Such activities as those described above illustrate a perceived benefit of literacy and of the creation of locally made books and stories. Below, Tonny outlines academic skills and confidence as the two benefits that parents seek when their children engage with ISL students and other volunteers:

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Our learners, they know that the whites, they give us knowledge. And even the parents themselves, they don’t know them as volunteers. They know them as mzungu. Once they see them it is a sure deal that the learner will get some skills via academics. And confidence. The whites are very confident when they are talking. So our learners learn much from the volunteers. They realize that water is a problem; we used to fetch water from a well and it was not all that clean. And they set up a program to get a black tank that can accommodate many litres, in which neighbours, we can go and use that water. Those people encouraged us to make some home gardens. The idea began with them. That you find a small plot of land at your house but you find that some partitions make some gardens of veggies, cabbages, green peppers, which can help to improve nutrition of someone’s health and also to save money. Those three things for me, I have to say the volunteers have impacted something in our community. (Tonny)

The framing of white students as givers-of-knowledge and the catalysts of positive change in Kitengesa is a tension-laden finding that carries differing meaning for the co-authors. On the one hand, Ugandan participant-researchers in this study perceive this as a positive narrative of ISL in their community. On the other hand, the university researcher (Kari Grain) perceives this narrative as significantly harmful in its tendency to perpetuate a charity-oriented view of the ISL relationship. There are, of course, underlying historical reasons (e.g. colonialism, neocolonialism, etc.), that mzungus possess levels of confidence and academic training that are disparate to those of many Ugandans. Nevertheless, participant-researchers identify what they see as positive educational effects resulting from service-learning programs and students in Kitengesa. Some of those teaching and learning effects pertain to health and nutrition:
There is a change in diet…So they have changed their diet and they have been taught to eat a balanced diet. Some vegetables. So you find somebody was eating maybe porridge and posho for lunch but they are just only carbohydrates. Somebody is missing the other two vitamins and proteins so for them they didn’t know about that. But when the UBC guys came we drew up a chart. We drew a circle so that every day you should eat a protein, a vitamin, and a carbohydrate. So they are adding greens now to their food. (Micheal)

Another area of teaching and learning impacts, according to Micheal, is that of financial literacy:

Another thing is…home economics…for example the recent survey that we made with [an ISL student], we looked at how people spend in their homes versus how they earn. Though he has just left but I think it has already impacted people and their families. So people when they come together in self-help group, now people come with a budget. “I want this money and I want to do this.” Before they were just borrowing and they were failing to pay back because of not having plans but now they have plans. (Micheal)

While much of the emphasis is placed on the teaching work of ISL students, some participant-researchers also highlight their own leadership skills in educating visiting students. For example, Saudah explains,

I’ve been involved in working together with the ISL students in their different activities at the library since I was a library scholar… I worked with [two UBC ISL students] in 2012 and 2013 when they were here, mostly in teaching them sign language. I taught them sign language and by the time they left they could fully speak sign language and in 2014 I also
worked with [an ISL student] in teaching the deaf vocational students computer lessons at the library as well as the school.

As evidenced repeatedly, Saudah and Eseza express profound pride at having taught ISL students to speak Ugandan Sign Language:

There is more reading than before. When [ISL students] come here we deal with a couple of schools. And also those ones that are not yet school-going. As I told you we go to homes. So when I had just come here there were no young children coming to the library. But now they bring them here to the library and they read and you find that young kids bring themselves to the library and they pick books. I think that one is from all those activities that we do. When we go to their homes we read for them. When UBC students go to classes, they read for them. I think they have developed their interest and they are now interested – they come on their own to the library. People used to fear the library but now they just enter. (Micheal)
(English): This is photo of me, Dennis, teaching computer training at the Kitengesa Community Library. These are students of Kitengesa Comprehensive Secondary School, and they come twice per week to the library for computer training. Here, I am teaching Microsoft Word to the students. This will help them to pass their exams and to be computer literate.


5.7.3 **Relationship Theme 3: Social Change**

While friendships and educational relationships are the most salient themes that arise in the data, relationships that foster social change are more nuanced and complex. Social changes in
In this context are those that alter existing power relationships and shift the social fabric of the community. Findings suggest that service-learning has impacted Kitengesa in the following ways: The destigmatization of the deaf community; enhanced and increased community mobilization; enhanced and increased community relationships. Interestingly, there are some social changes – such as the cessation of corporal punishment - that participant-researchers identify as short-term, in that the community changes while the ISL students are present, but that they revert to their usual ways after the students depart. One relational social change that participant-researchers point out is that more people come together in the community than before. It is unclear whether all those involved see the increased social connections and communal meetings as a direct impact of ISL programs, but Micheal suggests a strong link:

There are more communal meetings…So in the week you can see ladies coming in [to the library hall] and some of them are just brought by the projects we have done with the past volunteers…So more people come together in the community than before. And I think they share more than just craft making when they come here. (Micheal)

As a photographic depiction of community meetings, Micheal took many photos of gatherings that he participated in. Below, is one photo that he decided to share and discuss:
Figure 5.2 Lwannunda Self Help Group

(English): This is a photo of a meeting of the Lwannunda Self Help Group, which is a self-funded micro-finance circle of mostly women and a few men. Our activities help the members with saving and investment and the dividends go towards helping the needy people in our community including orphans and very old people. The members were getting some guidance on how to learn successful microfinance from UBC students.

(Luganda): Kino kye kifanannyi kya miitingi y’ekibiina kyo bwegassi ekya Self Help Group, ekyeteekamu ensimbi okusobola okwekulakulanya nga bamemba abasingamu bakyala, abaami batono. Emirimu gyekibiina kwekuyamba ba memba mu ku kunganya ensimbi n’okuzisiga era amagoba agavaamu gagenda mu kuyamba abantu abali mubwetaavu mu kitundu kyaffe; omuli bamulekwa, n’abakadde. Ba memba bali bafuna okulungamizibwa ku ntereka nenkozesi yensimbi ouva eri abayizi ba UBC.
Perhaps the most often-cited relationships described by Eseza and Saudah, who identify as deaf, are those that foster social change through the destigmatization of the deaf community. Despite some flourishing organizations and programs that are aimed at supporting Ugandans who are deaf (e.g. Uganda National Association for the Deaf; Deaflink Uganda), Kitengesa residents expressed that in the past, there was a dearth of accessible local programming until the Good Samaritan School for the Deaf (GSSD) opened its doors. Eseza and Saudah emphasize the historical marginalization of deaf people in Kitengesa and other Ugandan communities. However, they and others point out that along with the fierce leadership of GSSD founder, Mrs. Nsamba (pictured in Figure 3.3), local ISL programming – and in some cases, the photovoice process itself – has catalyzed a growing degree of inclusion and de-stigmatization of deaf people.

The ISL students have also brought an impact at Good Samaritan where we now have a library scholar whom the library funds for her tuition. We can now communicate with the hearing people in the community. The ISL students are helping the school and our parents to prepare seminars for sign language so that our parents can learn our language to communicate with us. (Eseza)

Saudah’s interview revealed similar sentiments, as she attributes much of the local destigmatization process to ISL students. When asked the question, “What changes have you seen in Kitengesa since the service-learners began coming?” Saudah responded:

One, the deaf have been more and more included in the society. It’s mostly the ISL students who bring us to face the community, for example at the library. Many of the visiting students have learned sign language and also they have helped our parents to learn the language by financially supporting the sign language seminars that take place at the library or the school. The deaf students, we have also been able to learn how to use
computers, to read books in the library and the news and improve our English… I am proud of seeing other people, that they can communicate in our language, especially the ISL students and our parents and other people in the community. I am proud that I helped to teach them. (Saudah)

As a hearing person, Micheal also notices a change among the relations between the hearing and the deaf. As evidence of the discrimination faced by the deaf, he mentions the existence of a “bad word to refer to those people,” and describes how the collaborative programming of both ISL students and local leaders has changed his behaviours.

Before, even me myself, I could pass by Good Samaritan School and nobody I knew there, but I knew it was the school for deaf people. And in Uganda here we have a bad word to refer to those people. But…since I worked with [UBC students], the deaf people started coming at the library and then Nakasiita, me…we started conducting sign language club because we were seeing that people were just shouting at deaf people. And she started teaching some basics and then the secondary school students started learning and now at least 80% of them can at least greet the deaf people. So from then even me, I started practicing and I am good now. I can chat, I can do everything…So they can now come on their own to the library and they feel that the community is theirs. So they come and read, and that is good. I see it as good…and that was started by UBC volunteers. (Micheal)
This is Mrs. Nsamba, the director and founder of Good Samaritan School for the Deaf. I took a picture of Mrs. Nsamba because she is one of the people who have helped me become the person I am. She taught me at the school even when my parents could not afford tuition, and she is still feeding me, dressing me, and taking care of me and many other deaf students. She is there to provide everything and she is so patient to our parents and to us, the deaf people.

Ono ye Mukyala Nsamba, omukulu era omutandisi w’essomero ly;abana bakigala (Deaf). Nakuba ekifananyi kino kubanga Mukyala Nsamba y’omu ku bantu abanyambye ennyo okufuuka kino kyendi. Yansomesa mu somero lye nga ne bazadde bange tebasasula yadde ekikumi, era akyandabirira, andiisa n’okunyambaza. Era alabirira ne banange abalala bangi. Ye wali era yewayo okutulabirira mu buli kyasobodde, mu gumikiriza eri ffe abaana bakigala ne bazadde baffe.
5.8 Discussion & Conclusion

The findings in this study are wrought and rich with tensions that reconceptualize the nature of relationships in the context of ISL. On the one hand, host community participant-researchers identified positive impacts in their community that centre around increased and enhanced relationships involving friendship, education, and social change. By any account, these findings reveal that host community members who participated in this study perceive UBC’s ISL program as having positively impacted the relationships, education levels, and social inequalities in Kitengesa. Broadly speaking, these are the types of impacts that many ISL programs – particularly those that orient themselves from a social justice foundation, strive for. On the other hand, there are deeply complex questions about the nature of these relationships and historical and political reasons that ISL students are able to affect such significant changes in a community like Kitengesa: Why are ISL students understood as the catalysts and drivers of positive social change when it is the local community leaders who carry the programs and initiatives before, during, and after the ISL students’ sojourns? Given these questions, two particular tensions arise in these findings: (a) Change Catalyst Perceptions: Positive changes are often attributed to ISL students rather than to local Kitengesa leaders who continue the work year-round; and (b) Unequal Social Influence: Mzungus and ISL students are described as highly influential, important, and knowledgeable in relation to local community members.

The host community narrative about who generates or catalyzes social change is of vital importance to a meaningful understanding of relationships in ISL. Despite warm friendships, service-learning work well done, or students well-prepared through decolonizing frameworks and critical self-reflection, the community level narrative about who catalyzes positive changes exists at - and perhaps forms - the crux of tensions in international development work: Do host
community members envision themselves as capable of making meaningful changes or does a community believe that they need the “help” of Western visitors? Although the answer is rarely a clear binary and most often contains deep complexities, the direction of this narrative among host communities can engender the difference in a community’s outcomes in instigating change. For this reason, ISL programs and higher education institutions can direct resources and conscious pedagogical efforts not only to the narratives that ISL students form about their relationships with host communities, but also to an enhanced awareness of – and reflection upon - the differently formed narratives that host communities form about those same relationships. Imbedded in these narratives is inevitably a set of power dynamics and perceived capacity for driving social change, both of which can have tremendous implications for how higher education institutions impact a host community such as Kitengesa.

The second tension – that of unequal social influence – is closely connected to the first tension. The difference, however, lies not in a community’s perception or narrative of who can make change, but in the social and historical consequences of who possesses influence in the Kitengesa context. For example, it is broadly understood to be a positive social change that ISL students’ close friendships with deaf students have shifted local Ugandans’ feelings and assumptions about deaf people. Deaf participants in this study are explicitly grateful to ISL students for having helped the broader Kitengesa community to become more accepting and tolerant of deaf people. On the other hand, the historical reasons for ISL students’ possession of influence in Kitengesa are problematic, extending from white supremacy imposed by colonialism, and the post-colonial vestiges of white/western privilege that continue to express themselves in diverse ways. This comes up repeatedly throughout the study – an outcome that is seen as positive by participant researchers (e.g. higher literacy levels, increased attendance at
library programs, and inclusion of the deaf community) carries with it problematic historical and social roots that render ISL students— and most mzungu visitors— disproportionately influential. ISL students carry privileges that are oriented in any intersectional combination of race, socioeconomic status, nationality, education level, and this power-laden identity inevitably affects relationships and the impacts that students have on social relations.

This paper builds on recent efforts that have been made to attend to community voices and relationships in ISL scholarship. Relationships, as we can see in the literature, are framed as key to ISL from the perspectives of researchers and practitioners, but rarely do we hear from host community members as authors of those conceptualizations. In the case of our research, relationships are described not necessarily as the precursor to, or the foundation of, an ISL program, but rather as the ISL program’s core impacts in and of themselves. This host community reading of relationships serves as a refreshing reminder that relationship categorizations and typologies that abound in the literature are of less importance to our co-authors than specific memories, people, and experiences that have altered the social fabric of Kitengesa— often through friendship, mutual teaching and learning, and the act of working together for change.

Such changes in Kitengesa are understood by participant-researchers to be positive and progressive, contributing to greater equity and education in their community. Simultaneously, however, such transformations are imbued with tensions and complexities regarding the privilege— in this case, significant agency and influence - that ISL students carry with them into communities such as Kitengesa. Thus, as higher education institutions seek to expand and enrich their experiential education programming, it behooves them to consider not only how much social justice content is being conveyed to ISL students in preparation for their placements, but
also to consider how power relations are enacted in the quest to generate equity and construct
ew knowledge - who is afforded the power of catalyzing social change? Of conceptualizing and
sharing narratives? Beyond the examination of seminal texts such as Illich’s To Hell with Good
Intentions (1968) and helpful preparatory articles that urge a critical awareness of ISL (e.g.
Mitchell, 2008; Grusky, 2000), how can higher education institutions who engage in ISL do
more to exemplify their broad and often unarticulated goals of social justice? One place to start
may be in highlighting the perspectives of host communities and preparing students through
sharing host community narratives – in this case, particularly as they pertain to relationships in
ISL contexts.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

The concluding chapter of this dissertation includes a discussion of the following components: contributions and key findings, applications in Kitengesa and higher education, limitations, implications, and future directions for research.

6.1 Contributions and Summary of Key Findings

This dissertation has demonstrated that the body of the qualitative researcher cannot be disentangled from the body of knowledge the researcher generates or the bodies of others with whom she connects. Furthermore, embedded in my Ugandan co-authors’ sense of loss is a form of embodiment – a geographical separation of bodies that have come to exist as friends or colleagues from distant and unlikely points on the globe. In international service-learning, as with the fieldwork that I undertook to study it, there is a coming-together that, relative to the regular distance between which our bodies usually exist, is intimate in nature. Bodies that once (and for most of their years) live and breathe approximately 14 000km away from one another are, for a few months, in close enough proximity to hug, to work at the same table, to walk together down a red dirt road. The intimacy of that closeness is nothing if not profound. And the grief that can accompany the loss of that closeness is worthy of deeper examination in future research.

The contributions of this work extend beyond embodiment and take up the political facets of research. Any aim to “centre community voices” in a research endeavor, especially in relation to service-learning, must be accompanied by a researcher’s deeply personal work of unpacking privilege, problematizing organized ways of knowing, and grappling with the often unforeseen risks and consequences of global engagement work. Furthermore, I – along with my
collaborators - have demonstrated multiple ways in which knowledge construction is not just enriched, but founded upon relationships that develop through co-construction of knowledge and through global engagement efforts such as international service-learning and international fieldwork. While Chapter 2’s conceptualization of the “social justice turn” in service-learning calls for the diversification of voices in the field, I respond in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 with a co-authored piece with seven Ugandan community members. Similarly, just as I (in Chapter 2) call for a critique of salvationism in the field of service-learning, my collaborative study in Uganda offers a community-led framing of service-learning impacts – primarily, the idea that the key impacts of ISL in Kitengesa are founded upon relationships. And importantly, in Chapter 2, I suggest an embrace of emotion, discomfort, and ambiguity – all components that are woven throughout the dissertation but especially embedded in Chapter 4’s exploration of brokenness.

Of particular importance in the broad conceptualization of this dissertation has been the theme of brokenness. To be broken open in my research process was to be gifted with a humbling disintegration of my structures of knowing. To be broken open in this research process was to relinquish control of a story I was trying to write, surrendering instead (being open) to the embodied story that writes me. The story that wrote me was authored by Ugandan hospitality, loving relationships, awareness of inequity, moments of violent impact, vulnerability, and at times, chaos. Put simply, the messiness of this research has constituted its rigour. Had I sanitized this research of its messiness in order to fit into prescriptive and organized ways of knowing, it would offer little more than some bleached literature, theory, and findings devoid of context, pain, joy, complexity, and – for me at least - beauty.

The general research question that I brought to Uganda was: What are the impacts of international service-learning in the host community, Kitengesa? Through Chapter 3 and Chapter
5, my co-authors and I discovered that service-learning had generated the following impacts, among others:

- Development of relationships: Primarily friendships, educational relationships, and relationships that foster social change
- Decreased local stigma around deaf individuals in the community
- A sense of loss and grief at the departure of service-learning students-turned-friends
- Enhanced and increased opportunities for local community members to be engaged in international projects
- Enhanced educational services around literacy and financial literacy

As Chapter 5 explains in detail, relationships were conceptualized by participant-researchers as the most prevalent impact of service-learning in Ktiengesa.

The inquiries that participants’ photovoice projects highlighted, as a result of the collaboratively developed research question, included: What leadership roles do participant-researchers have in the community? What issues or concerns still require attention? What is beautiful about Kitengesa? What do participant-researchers hope for? These questions are taken up in Chapter 3 by participant-researchers in distinct ways depending upon the individual.

Participants see themselves as leaders through their roles as teachers, family members, host for service-learning students, and involved citizens. Their photos illustrate what is beautiful about Kitengesa through images of maize fields, local workers, and vast landscapes. Each individual articulates different hopes for themselves and for Kitengesa, most of which relate to the alleviation of poverty, the improvement of education, and opportunities to be happy and have a meaningful career path. Once again, as with the dominant narrative outlined in Chapter 5, the
emergent questions of the photovoice study highlighted relationships with family members, friends, and neighbours. It is this relational element of service-learning and life in Kitengesa, which dominates the findings.

6.2 Applications

The research in this dissertation possesses myriad avenues for application of concepts and knowledge. I organize these potential applications into two categories: Kitengesa Community Applications; Higher education applications.

6.2.1 Applications: Kitengesa

One of the foundational tenets of the photovoice methodology is that it contributes to social change and/or policy change as identified by the participants. There are multiple ways in which this research has already worked toward such a goal. First, the participant-researchers who took part in this study organized a community event, the Kitengesa Community Photovoice Exhibition, in which they shared their photographs and analysis. This event was instrumental in highlighting local leadership and expertise in relation to social change within Kitengesa – and doing so for and within their own community. Participants organized the event months in advance, integrating such thoughtful elements as: hiring the local high school drumming and dance troop to perform; having Eseza speak Ugandan Sign Language alongside Micheal and Rosemary during the welcome speeches; having Rosemary translate the entire event to the deaf community in Ugandan Sign Language; inviting the Lwannunda Self Help Group to sell some of their locally made crafts at the event; inviting local politicians, neighbours, school children, and community leaders; choosing their favourite photos of the community and printing them off for the exhibition. The stories that are told about who leads social change, and who has the right to
speak publicly about issues is of deep interest and significance to me because I witness and partake in so many moments where colonial stories are re-told, time and time again: well-meaning Westerners visit the Global South to “develop” something that is perceived to lack development. They talk as experts, describe or highlight a change they have instigated, and they re-tell the story that change is made by Western outsiders. Even when I myself aim to subvert and resist this colonial narrative, I have sometimes unknowingly been a part of it. I remember vividly during one of the photovoice workshops, when a participant-researcher gestured to all of the books surrounding us in the Kitengesa Library. With a sweeping, circular motion of his hand, he expressed his dismay that most of these books surrounding us were written by Whites. He light heartedly described how Whites love to write books about everything. We all laughed because of the truth embedded in his observation. He went on to advocate for the community photo exhibition and the co-authorship of our team in a publication.

I recount this story because during the Kitengesa Photovoice Exhibition, I had a sense that the participant-researchers were telling their own stories: about service-learning in the community, but moreso, about issues, people (relationships), and beauty that gives meaning to their lives. There was so little White authorship to that day - So little of me and my story, that I took it to be a success in participatory research. Although I did speak, I was the fifth person to do so, and I simply shared the preliminary findings of our study, as well as my own experience of working together with the group. I am aware that my positionality carried with it a different meaning, perhaps, than the speakers who went before and after me. For example, Dan Ahimbisibwe and Harriet Mutonyi, during their speeches, mentioned my work and their excitement that this project would contribute to my doctorate. There were certainly moments where I was celebrated or centered that day, for reasons both earned and unearned. But as each
participant-researcher and local community leader shared photos and either spoke or signed (in Ugandan Sign Language) about their research to the local community, I sensed a subtle revision to the salvationist narrative of development.

In this way, the application of this research in Kitengesa seems to be locally relevant. The participant-researchers have a photographic exhibit that remains in the Kitengesa Community Library, and they will soon have authorship of a peer-reviewed article to add to their curriculum vitae. Having said this, I have personal doubts about the currency of this type of publication for their own careers, but it has meaning for them and therefore, it has meaning for me. If they choose to, however, they may draw upon their own photography skills, their existing photography work, and their participation in this project to build their own suite of experiences.

The second key application of this research in Kitengesa lies in the methodological “ripple” effects of a photovoic project that included both deaf and hearing community members. Eseza and Saudah both pointed out after the project that they had never been at the same table as hearing people. Although there have been numerous programs specifically for the deaf in Kitengesa, Eseza and Saudah expressed that this was the first time they had been invited to participate together with hearing people in any program or project. I cannot predict how this experience will apply to their future endeavours, but as Chapter 5 documents, the months-long interactions between group members appeared to affect the perceptions of both hearing and deaf participants and decrease social barriers between the two.

6.2.2 Applications: Higher Education

Higher education continues to employ forms of global engagement such as service-learning and international research as a means of both educating students and providing valuable experiential opportunities. As outlined in Chapter 1, The University of British Columbia, together with many
Canadian and American universities aim to offer such opportunities as those I have described in my dissertation. However, as the popularity of community engaged work grows, and as universities such as UBC integrate – and sometimes mandate – such experiences within degree programs and strategic plans, a sense of urgency arises because more and more communities will inevitably be impacted. New questions ought to be considered: What do powerful institutions know about their impacts in “vulnerable” communities, both locally and globally? To what degree do powerful institutions reflect on the tensions embedded in labeling or viewing communities as vulnerable in the first place? (Who decides?). As the market demand for global engagement experiences increases and more students desire such opportunities, what checks and balances are in place to ensure that higher education institutions engage ethically with external people and communities? How can the narrative extolled about such people and communities illuminate their power as local leaders and change makers? How can people and communities be heard in the plans and policies of higher education institutions in ways that illuminate their expertise? What recourse do partner organizations and communities have when they disagree with the institution? I also wonder to what degree students and faculty members are prepared to think through the grief that their presence-and-subsequent-departure causes host communities. How can programs mitigate this grief?

The research in this dissertation – particularly that which was co-created with community members, can be used to inform policy makers at institutional levels. As my co-authors prompt us to think more deeply about the power of relationships in service-learning, I suggest that institutions consider allocating greater funding to reciprocal gestures that ensure expertise of host communities is recompensed fairly. No university-community relationship can be sustainable and steeped in social justice if host communities are expected to educate university students for
free while students’ tuition dollars stay primarily within the institution. To be clear, I don’t believe that is an issue for the program I researched within this dissertation, but it is certainly a pervasive issue with a vast number of university-community engagement programs. I see this case of international service-learning in Kitengesa to be a model for other programs within and beyond UBC. I say this because my own impression is that a healthy and sustainable relationship has been developed over twelve years not through institutional means, but through the humans – particularly one human, Tamara Baldwin, who is committed to reciprocity and solidarity.

One publication that I contributed to during these past four years, which is not featured in this dissertation, is a co-authored book chapter with Tamara Baldwin and Dawn Currie, in which we describe pedagogical means by which practitioners can keep social justice at the centre of international service-learning (Baldwin, Grain, & Currie, 2018). In that publication, led by Tamara, we share specific activities and learning outcomes that ISL students are required to fulfill in their preparation and participation in service-learning. Through this publication, we describe a form of service-learning that has little to do with “service” and is instead founded upon a de-centering of the student, and a difficult and often uncomfortable critical reflection on one’s own positionality, privilege, and complicity in global systems that perpetuate inequities. The point is not to render students immovable with guilt, but to push them to think about “service” beyond a band-aid solution to community-level manifestations of inequity. Instead, service can mean a problematization and reconfiguration of systemic and historical causes of poverty. Service also can entail the difficult personal work of positioning oneself in relation to global issues. Building on the ethic of care, service can also mean a mutual sense of caring that does not ignore politics, but rather holds the political to be foundational to care.
Thus, the application of my/our research within higher education can inform community engagement policy and external relations, but it can also take the form of curricular and pedagogical content in courses. Faculty members and students who wish to engage with community through research or service-learning may benefit from Chapter 2’s literature review and concrete suggestions for taking up the cause of social justice in a quickly changing political landscape. Faculty members and students, especially those who are dissatisfied with traditional or prescriptive forms of research and knowledge construction may benefit from Chapter 4’s theorization of the body’s relationship to research. Even the discussion of ethics in participatory research is a worthy area for discussion in relation to Chapters 3 and 5, wherein I engage with some of the tensions between my own power and privilege, my responsibilities to do no harm as a researcher, and my participatory commitment to being led by community.

6.3 Limitations

Building on some of the tensions present in the participatory research portion of this dissertation, this section explores some limitations of my work. Of constant consideration in this project is my presence as a White, Western researcher, which likely altered the behaviours and attitudes of participant-researchers in ways that may never fully be revealed. I was, and continue to be, aware that my outsider identity and the power and privilege that I embody in Kitengesa has the potential to obscure participant-researchers’ responses, opinions, and data. Given these power dynamics and the history of colonialism in Uganda (and its continued vestiges today), all data in this study can be seen as problematic and in flux. As with much collaborative research and the relationships that are formed, I do not see this study as “closed” at any point. Participant-researchers continue to own their images and their work, although casting them into a public and academic domain generates some form of permanence.
One particular dilemma that arose for me in this study was a moment in which I was forced to reflect on a seemingly oppositional relationship between my researcher role and my role – intentionally or not – as an agent of change in Kitengesa. Recent trends in the field of service-learning and community engagement advocate for a “diversification of voices in the field” (See Chapter 2) and increased engagement with community partners as collaborators and co-authors. This move is framed as a more socially just approach to the construction of knowledge, and it is primarily my connection to the intersection of social justice and service-learning that attracted me to my original research question in Kitengesa (Namely, what are the community impacts of a long-term international service-learning program in Kitengesa?). Since much of the research in ISL and community engagement focuses on student impact and student learning, I sought to address a gap in the literature that examined what host community members gain (or lose) from their involvement in ISL. I saw this research direction as a complementary partnership between my researcher-self and my activist-self; I aimed to address a gap in the research while also holding space for community voices.

As often happens in fieldwork, my assumptions about this general direction of the research were overturned. It became clear by the end of our first photovoice workshop that participant-researchers involved in the study were enthusiastic about sharing all the positive ways that ISL students had changed their community. Because of this UBC student, we learned this. Because of this UBC student, our community did this. Because of this UBC student, our youth now have this. To my dismay, I realized that I, a White, educated, and high profile researcher in Kitengesa, had gathered together a group of Kitengesa’s most promising youth leaders – deaf teachers, library scholars, and school administrators who truly generate ongoing positive changes year-round in Kitengesa - and I was (initially, at least) asking them to discuss
the many ways that visiting ISL students had changed their community. How could I have been so foolish? I was, I realized then, re-centering the narrative of Western ISL students-as-change-makers. In the process, and in my quest to hold space for host community members’ perspectives, I was actually ignoring and silencing their own stories of leadership. If I didn’t change course – if we didn’t change course – this participatory research project could do precisely the opposite of what I had intended to do: it could reify harmful stereotypes, it could reinforce the story of Western-visitor-as-saviour.

In ways that are not entirely clear to me even now, I shifted the direction of my curiosity. Even as I continued to work alongside the participant-researchers as co-decision-makers in the process, my own power and privilege still played a role in the direction of the project, and I stopped asking as many questions about ISL in Kitengesa. Instead, I began asking my friends and participant-researchers about their own stories of leadership and the ways that they themselves affect change in Kitengesa. To the greatest degree possible, while still sharing decisions about the direction of the project, I inquired more and more about local leadership, local initiatives, and the ways that initiatives are given continuity before ISL students arrive and after they leave. The findings, I believe, illustrate a rich mixture of perceptions about who leads change in Kitengesa, and how ISL has impacted the community. Although I often encouraged participant-researchers to discuss less complimentary impacts of ISL in Kitengesa, they rarely did. This could be because they genuinely felt entirely positive about the impacts, and this could also be due to the power I hold as a UBC researcher, a known friend of the ISL Director, and more generally, a White, Canadian woman. Given the significant economic contributions that the ISL program makes to Kitengesa annually, it is not difficult to imagine that participant-researchers might have felt
cautious about saying anything that might critique the program or result in its discontinuation. My understandings, therefore, have been, and will always be incomplete.

This “incompleteness” of knowledge is vital to the meaning I have made of my doctoral research. Just as I was given access to the Kitengesa community in large part because of my power and privilege, so too is my knowledge limited because of that same power and privilege. My positionality inevitably affected what was shared with me through this process, and the limited time that I have spent in Kitengesa means that I have experienced only a small window into the lives of my co-authors and host community members. I continue to sit uncomfortably with the fact that the goal of my research had been to “decentre” the privileged outsider in the construction of knowledge about service-learning. Instead, the journey of this dissertation has positioned me firmly as a central character in the narrative – and I understand now why that is so essential. Perhaps it is an inaccuracy or oversimplification to believe that any research can truly decentre the researcher – even when great attention has been paid to collaboration and co-authorship. In the end, it is I who has compiled the dissertation in a way that suits my needs. It is I, even in participatory research, who has decided at which points and to what degree my own thoughts can emerge alongside or instead of those of my collaborators. In my consistent focus on power and privilege (and the critical theoretical framework that goes along with it), what might I have missed or not heard from my community partners who do not view the world in such a way?

The tensions and dilemmas I faced pertaining to my power and privilege in this project have not reached any resolution, nor do I expect them to. Similarly, the vulnerability that is woven throughout this work is, to me, both intimidating and necessary. I continue to believe in the educative power of discomfort and the importance of remaining uncomfortable with persistent inequities that learners and researchers witness and participate in.
6.4 Implications

The implications of this research can be organized into methodological and theoretical categories. Methodologically, Chapter 4’s autoethnographic bricolage approach has implications for research writ large. It asks researchers to consider how their body – broken or not – is involved in the construction of knowledge. How does one’s health affect the research trajectory and story? How do one’s injuries or illnesses “interrupt” research plans, and how might these occurrences change epistemologies at their core, prompting a sense of knowing through brokenness and fragmentation rather than through wholeness and tidy organization? Following a different thread, Chapter 4 asks researchers to consider how bodies carry power and privilege differently across borders, contexts, and circumstances. In my case, the whiteness of my skin had enormous impacts on my access to communities in Uganda, my access to healthcare, and the data I was able to gather. The nationality of my flesh – my Canadianness – guaranteed me a certain level of free healthcare once I arrived back on Canadian soil; it also continues to impact most aspects of my life from socioeconomic status to social networks to education levels. In short, Chapter 4 makes the case that research is an act of embodiment, and therefore the researcher’s body ought to be considered in the process of knowledge construction.

The photovoice study that Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 are founded upon carries implications for collaborative, participatory research, especially as it occurs in the Ugandan context between Western researcher and host community members. Myriad articles and books in service-learning – particularly critical and social justice oriented service-learning – call for the involvement of community partners and host community members to be involved in authorship and collaboration. This is partially because it is widely accepted – at least in recent scholarship - that the citational politics in service-learning reflect a normative whiteness that needs to be addressed
through the diversification of authors (e.g. See Verjee & Butterwick, 2014). I took this to heart when I sought to involve Micheal, Rosemary, Dennis, Tonny, Vicent, Eseza, and Saudah in the photovoice project. However, despite some valuable insights about international service-learning, our photovoice study also unearthed some deeper questions about the assumptions that underlie this quest for greater community involvement.

I fear that, despite good intentions, we in the university research community often assume: a) that community partners want to be involved in formal university-level research; b) that community partners have time to be involved in research; c) that research – as a university researcher conceptualizes it - is valuable in and of itself; d) that participatory and collaborative research somehow equalize what is a tremendously unequal playing field. These assumptions need to be problematized and brought to bear directly with potential community collaborators. Moreover, researchers such as myself need to consider how the involvement of community members in research may have unintended consequences for them and their community. For example, the photovoice study had the potential to create or perpetuate harmful narratives of Western ISL students in Kitengesa as saviours and agents of change. Another possible consequence was that the time they spent on the study detracted from the time they could spend earning an income or doing their regular local leadership activities.

The theoretical implications of this dissertation are first developed substantially in Chapter 2, wherein I propose a social justice turn in service-learning that responds to an increased awareness of global inequalities. It is evident that the term “service-learning” is losing traction among many of those who identify as critical social justice scholars, particularly because of its association with charity-based approaches to education, and accompanying notions of salvationism. In some international contexts of service-learning, this problem is exacerbated
because of colonial histories and consequential continued racial, social, and socio-economic inequalities. In suggesting the “social justice turn” in service-learning, I suggest that current events factor into our field’s consideration of roles and responsibilities moving forward: How can our work in service-learning and community engagement go beyond a conceptualization of service that is rooted in the self-gratifying desire to help? The social justice turn renders service-learning obsolete when it fails to engage in critical questions such as these.

The theoretical implications of this dissertation, I hope, extend beyond the margins of community engagement and service-learning, however. My aim has been to explore a topic in depth, but to bracket in the personal work, the confusion, and the unexpected stories that wrote themselves through the act of research. In doing so, I began with a foundation of critical theory and the work of scholars such as Paulo Freire, and Sensoy and DiAngelo. For example, I took as a starting point social justice principles that social groups are differently valued in societies, and that some social groups have less access to resources if they are assigned less value (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Furthermore, I took to heart their assertion that those who are “for social justice” – especially those who possess considerable privilege - take part in the dismantling and restructuring of systems that perpetuate inequality (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). One system I have sought to restructure, even in miniscule ways, is the traditional academic system of knowledge construction, especially as it pertains to the inclusion or exclusion of community expertise, and the inclusion or exclusion of one’s body and relationships with others. I join others who also tap at the edges of what we consider research, rigour, or new knowledge. I argue that there is rigour in the examination of brokenness: Perhaps not in a brokenness that remains unexamined, but in a brokenness whose cracks and fractures are illuminated with beams of critical reflection, artistic expression, and moments of connection. The body through which I
have co-constructed knowledge in this dissertation has been rearranged through that process, and as it happened in my body, it also happened in my theoretical understandings of social justice and global engagement.

Finally, there are implications of this work that are distinctly emotion-oriented in nature. Some fieldwork scholars are beginning to advocate for the inclusion of the researchers’ emotional encounters as a rich form of data. Monchamp (2007) problematizes the frequent exclusion of emotions from ethnographic fieldwork, noting that researchers are often trained to keep their fieldnotes separate from their personal journal. She effectively argues, however, that “fieldwork is based on information gathered through relationships, and therefore the emotional elements of those associations are relevant to the ethnographic writing that is produced” (2007, p. 1). “Fieldwork is often not so much a method but an anti-method; it must evolve, it must exist in its own context, and thus is always a unique combination of the fieldworker and the field” (p. 5). Both of Monchamp’s previous statements are true in the context of this dissertation. Had I omitted the emotional connections throughout, there would be far less context for understanding the tensions related to unequal power and privilege. There would be no chapter about my fieldwork accident. And importantly, there would be a minimal focus on relationships and the complexities imbedded in them. Emotions of love, fear, anxiety, guilt, and joy have bound me not only to my research but also to my participants and co-authors in ways that would have occurred regardless of whether I wrote about them – but that may have been lost from the “data” had I chosen to bracket them out.
6.5 Directions for Future Research

There are several promising research directions that sprout forth from my inquiry into brokenness, critical service-learning, and global engagement. Below are some directions that warrant further investigation in light of what I have discovered thus far:

- Discomfort and Risk: Research in education outlines the benefits of these affective intensities in the process of experiential education (e.g. Knight-Diop and Oesterreich, 2009; Langstraat & Bowdon, 2011; Mills, 2012; Sharpe & Dear, 2013). If learners can benefit from pushing beyond their comfort zones and engaging with new ideas and contexts, then in what ways can researchers glean similar benefits? Methodologically, how can discomfort and risk inform the research process and the construction of knowledge? Pedagogically, how can programs generate opportunities for learners to engage with these feelings, but to remain safe from critical injury? How do spatial metaphors help us to understand these affective intensities in experiential education (e.g. “get out of your comfort zone”; “risky territory”; “a space of vulnerability”)? What are the institution’s ethical responsibilities toward communities who host students or researchers, and who may also encounter discomfort, risk, and vulnerability through their engagements? Moreover, what recourse and resources can host communities draw on if they are harmed through such engagements?

- Bodies in Global Engagement: Forms of global engagement such as international service-learning and international fieldwork, as I have argued in this dissertation, are embodied endeavours. Learners, educators, and generally privileged Western bodies who venture into distant communities such as Kitengesa carry with them differently coloured flesh and a host of social implications derived from that flesh. Methodologically, how might a
researcher’s body affect the research process and findings? What is the relationship between one’s body and one’s power, either in the context of research or service-learning? Pedagogically, how might universities or other institutions who run community engaged programs nurture in learners a critical reflection on the political, relational, and power-laden ways that their bodies affect – or create – their learning experiences? How do the embodied experiences of host community members affect their well-being and their engagement with ISL students?

- Brokenness and Borders: Brokenness in this dissertation has been conceptualized as a difficult transformation that is often seen as devastating or inconvenient, but has also created new spaces for understanding. Often, these “broken” ways of knowing and being do not fit tidily into categories, theoretical frameworks, timelines, or prescriptive traditions. In this way, brokenness not only crosses borders and boundaries, but sometimes violently shatters them. Methodologically, how can fragmentation or brokenness be taken up in the research process in ways that are subversive but also rigorous and legible? Pedagogically, how can educators help students to draw on their own crises in the field as moments of learning? Furthermore, whose brokenness counts, whose brokenness is given resources for healing, and whose brokenness has the power to cross or shatter borders? How does the brokenness of a privileged body elicit different outcomes than the brokenness of a marginalized or othered body?

- Ethic of Care: The concept of care arises throughout this dissertation, sometimes in relation to critical theory, my injury and recovery, and the ongoing sentiments between myself and my co-authors/friends in Kitengesa. The idea of an ethic of care has been raised by feminist scholars such as Noddings (1984), Ruddick (1989), and more recently,
Tronto (1993, 2010). Tronto (1993) suggests that “caring be viewed as a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web” (p. 103). Caring, conceived this way in the context of global engagement strategies such as service-learning and international participatory research, offers one inroad to the discussion of engagement that is simultaneously relational and critical. To avoid the risk of paternalism, Tronto (2010) proposes that explorations of care must entail an examination of purpose, power, and particularity. Perhaps the field of service-learning, so haunted by its historical roots in charity, and set adrift by the critique of the helping narrative, can benefit from the application of an ethic of care – what does it mean to care and be cared for by host communities? More importantly, how might institutions take up an ethic of care that prioritizes the ongoing relationships embedded in service-learning partnerships both locally and globally? What is the difference between helping and caring in the context of global engagement? Beyond the role of caring within service-learning, how might the integration of researcher emotion, vulnerability, spirituality, and embodied experiences affect institutional research and knowledge construction that are founded upon objective, rational thought? This question leads to my final future research direction: Vulnerability as political action.

- Vulnerability as political action: It is perhaps clear by now that this dissertation is one replete with vulnerability. I have shared my self-doubts, a wide range of emotions, tenderness about relationships with others, poems that invoke spirituality, and narratives about my body and its bodily functions in the wake of a devastating fieldwork injury. I
have discussed love and guilt and fear and my insecurities pertaining to my Whiteness. For me, it seemed only appropriate that if I was asking my Ugandan participants to be vulnerable in their interviews and focus groups, I also open myself in such a way. I wonder if being “broken open” through my accident and subsequent reflection was an opportunity to deepen that exposure in ways that pushed me far beyond my comfort zone. The vulnerability and the associated emotionality of this dissertation has not been for the sheer intrinsic purpose of sharing my learning journey. Rather, it has also been an intentional political action in learning about solidarity through research. In other words, this dissertation is not about emotions or vulnerability but rather about the political outcomes of exposure. I would argue that by invoking emotionality and vulnerability in purposeful ways, we can achieve new political horizons that prompt higher education institutions to consider knowledge not just as the outcome of rational thought, but as the outcome of being in exposed solidarity with others. Given this perspective, perhaps the field of service-learning could benefit from research that explores the role of vulnerability as political action. How might learners’ position themselves within service-learning placements so that their level of emotionality and vulnerability is equal to that of their host communities? How might students come to see learning about solidarity as a form of service? How do host communities envision a narrative of solidarity that they would like visiting students to take on?

6.6 Conclusion

This is not the story I had set out to tell. Just as a research narrative can animate a phenomenon with flesh and sinew and life, the flesh itself – not merely as a metaphorical device
but as an element of a tangible body - has poetic and visceral ways of animating a research story.

This is a story about learning in international and contexts, although as a reader, you may have been surprised to find yourself, in each of the “body” chapters, shifting between perspectives, positionalities, methodologies, epistemological standpoints, and theoretical currents. It may have been disorienting. It has been disorienting. It is not my desire to bleach and sanitize that which derives its beauty – and maybe even truth - from being muddy, soiled, and earthen. It is not my calling to sweep up shattered bone fragments if they may nurture new life where they have landed.

To pretend that these fragmentary changes and explorations did not occur over time and through the research process would be to write a false – or at the very least, incomplete - tale about my doctoral journey in the construction of knowledge.

The purpose of my doctoral research was certainly to gain insights about the impacts of service-learning from community perspectives and beyond those of the privileged student. Methodologically, the purpose was to explore knowledge construction (pertaining to service-learning) in participatory ways that integrated community members as decision makers, analysts of their own data, and authors of their own narratives.

In the research contained in this dissertation, I did not just tell a story; the story told me. I did not intend for my doctoral journey to be infused with misfortune but as this story told me, this series of events was anything but misfortunate: it is instead the flesh and bones of my research narrative, the body through which I read the world, and through which the world reads me. Through this body, I have been given the gift of vulnerability and connection with others, the discomfort of my own embodied privilege; and relationships that have constituted windows of knowledge in and of themselves.
Epilogue

As I reflect now on my personal research journey from the past four years, and the dissertation I have collaboratively constructed with colleagues, friends, and co-authors along the way, I am struck by the absurdity – and yet the absolute necessity – of the academic process. My engagement with the existing research and literature in areas such as social justice, service-learning, photovoice, and community relationships, has been personally enlightening and has required that I do the work of knitting my research into the vast, mostly unknowable academic landscapes. Sir Isaac Newton famously wrote, “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants” (Newton, 1675) and this is clear as I begin to merely scratch at the surface of innovative scholarship in my intersectional fields.

One area that I would have liked to excavate and explore in more depth within this dissertation is that of artistic and embodied inquiry. I realize looking back that initially I felt insecure and even fearful about integrating what I have called in this dissertation “unconventional” ways of doing and disseminating research. Through this deeply uncomfortable process of sharing my embodied and artistic ways of knowing, my own body nudged me toward a sense of academic liberation. To be socialized in this Western education system, for me, has been to uphold rational knowledge and scientific evidence as the pinnacle of truth. It could be argued, then, that this exploration – the kind my body insisted that I do – has indeed been a process of liberatory unlearning: I have begun to unlearn the silencing of embodied and creative ways of knowing and being in academia. This unlearning has been thanks to critical feedback that there is plenty of artistic inquiry being published in academic circles regularly. Where I have indicated in this dissertation that the work is unconventional, I would add that it is unconventional moreso in the field of service-learning. I would also clarify that it is less accepted
and under-acknowledged in comparison to more traditional ways of doing and thinking about research. It’s important to clarify here that there is a long and rich tradition of poetic, artistic, and embodied inquiry in academia, which I have not tapped into within this dissertation. I look forward to the many books I will read that lay just beyond the horizon of graduation. At times, I still catch myself feeling uncomfortable with the foregrounding of these more vulnerable types of inquiry, but as I often tell my students regarding community engagement and global education, “if you’re uncomfortable, that means you’re doing it right.”

After all, comfort is often a result of satisfaction at the settled nature of knowing. I continue to be unsettled, however. In a different but related arena, I consider what this dissertation has meant for me as a person who adheres to social justice principles, and who aims to dismantle systems of inequity in whatever ways I can. Strangely enough, in my attempt to dismantle or even toggle with the standard ways-of-doing-things in a doctoral dissertation, I realize, looking back, that I have still privileged the literature review (Chapter 2) even before the voices, views, and perspectives of my Ugandan participant-researchers. To theorize all about social justice and the many privileged scholars who have published on it, even before I engage the bulk of participants’ work is, for me, a point of tension that I continue to sit with. My flourishing engagement with social justice however has become supplanted with – or perhaps joined by - a budding profusion of questions about coloniality in this work.

Although I gestured to histories of colonialism in the dissertation, I was careful not to call this dissertation decolonizing research because I did not begin with that framework, nor did I explore decolonization scholarship in any depth that would justify that label. I still, however, would like to dig into the data of this project with a specific decolonizing lens and the intention of unpacking quotes about whiteness, mzungus, and the impacts of service-learners in Kitengesa.
The dilemma – one of many – embedded in participatory research is that different ethical principles tend to bump up against one another. Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 (the photovoice chapters) are certainly different manuscripts than they would have been if I was the sole author operating under a more normative methodology. I might have explicated in great academic detail why participants’ analyses were demonstrations of neocolonialism living through the subaltern who may or may not be able to speak. But co-authoring with others entails a certain respect for their worldviews – even those, unfortunately, which I take to be bound up in a colonial history. I wonder whether it is more colonial for me to: a) respect my participants’ arguably colonial worldviews, or to b) use my position of power and privilege to override / overwrite their colonial perspectives using dense academic literature and the words of the “giants” before me: “Oh, the community members say that they love hosting Canadian students and the whites bring them knowledge, but educated folks who know better understand that the colonization of Uganda in 1860 has resulted in a legacy of internalized racism and white supremacy that has been passed down through generations of Ugandans right up until today.” I sit precariously on a precipice between unsavoury options, myself as the colonial agent from the Global North in both cases.

The intersectional nature of identity is another theme that arose with great acuity through this work, but which I was not able to address explicitly in the dissertation. This was due mainly to the lack of in depth concrete data with regard to the participant-researchers’ and ISL students’ identity. Although issues of racialization and disability – deafness in particular – are discussed in Chapter 5, emphases on other intersecting factors with regard to identity and positionality are not taken up in great detail. This decision was made in order to avoid assumptions and essentializations, and in order to honour the perspectives of my co-authors so that I did not overwrite their perspectives with too much academic analysis. I do however share my own
positionality, highlighting intersections of whiteness, class, and privilege (e.g. social, cultural, and economic capital). Thus, future iterations of similar research studies could interrogate particularly the intersection of race and class, and how this plays out in global engagement contexts such as service-learning.

I also sit uncomfortably with the notion of risk-taking - what it means to visitors like me from the Global North, and what it means to host community members in the Global South. I think back to Dan Ahimbisibwe’s concerned face as he sat next to my hospital bed in Uganda, worried for my life. What are the risks that host community members take on when they see themselves as responsible for students’ lives in Uganda and elsewhere? What psychological and emotional harm might be done to them through the burden of this work? What forms of emotional labour (on the part of the host community) go unrewarded or unrecognized in global engagement programs? Caring is a beautiful phenomenon, and yet it requires so much of the caregivers. Dan’s service to me was to sit with me. Service as sitting with. Service as being beside. Service as silent presence.

The final reflections I have shared in this epilogue emerged from the valuable discussions at my doctoral defence, through thoughts and ideas shared by committee members, university examiners, and the external examiner. These bones of mine broke upon abrupt contact with Uganda and imaginatively created a place of opening, a place of access to deeper truths that once lay buried beneath layers of history and words. The external examiner for my dissertation, Dr. Celeste Snowber, startled me with the beauty of her spoken poetry during my doctoral defense in March 2019. Her words are the final ones I will write in this dissertation: “This is a philosophy with flesh on it – philosophy that was born in your bones.”
References


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Touch.


