Queer Crip Generativity

A Thesis Submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the Faculty of Arts and Science

TRENT UNIVERSITY

Nogojiwanong/Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

© Megan Hill, 2023

Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies M.A Graduate Program

January 2024

Abstract

Queer Crip Generativity

Megan Hill

Generativity, or a connection to and concern for future generations, is often premised upon the hetero-nuclear family structure and an elimination of disability, excluding queer and disabled individuals. In this thesis, I extend ideas about queer and crip futures by theorizing an alternative model of generativity that centers queer, and disabled experiences. I argue that queer crip intergenerational relationships contribute to and expand current understandings of generativity in terms of individualism, embodied knowledge, and temporalities. To do so, I used the arts-based participatory methodology, cellphilming. I worked with a group of eight queer, and disabled individuals across the life course in Fredericton, New Brunswick to create short films about aging, queerness, disability, and futures, and analyzed the films thematically. In the context of an ongoing pandemic and heightened backlash against LGBTQ+ rights, I present intergenerational relationship building as a way forward to overcome alienation and imagine a better future.

Keywords: generativity / intergenerational / aging / queerness / disability / crip / cellphilm / futures

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, thank you to my supervisor, Dr. May Chazan for your kindness, patience, and guidance throughout this degree. I couldn’t have made it through this process without you. Your thoughtful feedback and advice pushed me to be a better person and scholar.

Thank you also to my committee member, Dr. Karleen Pendleton Jiménez, for your teachings in feminist methodologies, creative writing, and the importance of centering lived experience. Your feedback helped shape my research from beginning to end.

This research would not have been possible without my generous funders: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Canada Research Chair Program, the Aging Activisms Collective, and the Aging in Data Project.

Thank you to my research participants for sharing your vulnerability and knowledges, I am so grateful for the time and space we shared. I will do my best to continue to share the lessons from our work together in our community. Thank you also to the organizations that helped make this happen: Fierté Fredericton Pride and ElderPride.

Thank you to my colleague and friend, Dr. Casey Burkholder, for your mentorship and for introducing me to the world of DIY art practices. Thank you to the Peterborough community and the Aging Activisms collective for welcoming me in the last two years.

Thank you to my partner, Ab, for your reassurance and comfort through the stress. I am so grateful for the warm food, tidy home, and laughter that sustained me throughout this process. Thank you to my family, both biological and chosen, for the perfect balance of procrastination and encouragement. And thank you to my softest, cuddliest companion, Jinx.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

I learned about the importance of intergenerational queer, crip community as a teenager in Fredericton, New Brunswick. As an overly anxious, closeted queer growing up in a rural, poor, and largely conservative province, I longed for examples of what a successful queer, mentally ill life course could look like. I did not see myself in the adults that I knew, had no queer or disabled role models in my family, teachers, or swimming coaches, and could not imagine a future for myself beyond graduation. As I came into my queerness and feminism, I met others like me and together we coordinated a youth activist group in our city. Although we gained so much from our years of organizing and networking, many of us were struggling mentally and physically throughout this time. In 2016, three of my closest friends attempted suicide in the span of six months. It was only through the support, open doors, warm food, and regular check-ins from older queer community members that I lived through that year.

It is not a coincidence that my friends and I did not see a future for ourselves. As Linn Sandberg and Barbara Marshall (2017) explain, queer and disabled elders are often depicted as having unhappy or non-existent futures because the construction of some as successfully aging depends upon the construction of others as failed, miserable, non-futures (p. 4). Within the common ableist imaginary, disabled futures are undesirable, tragic, and bleak, a fate worse than death. Cynthia Port (2012) extends this analysis to old age, arguing that the old, along with the queer and the disabled, are “figured by the cultural imagination as being outside mainstream temporalities and standing in the way of, rather than contributing to, the promise of the future” (Port, 2012, p. 3). As queer and disabled young people, there were no images of a joyful or successful future to aspire to.

The issues of no futures for queer crip elders is not exclusive to the realm of the imaginary. Through deliberate state policies, queer and disabled people have been erased, discarded, and killed, resulting in a much smaller population of queer and disabled older adults than if they lived in a society that desired them (Ware, 2022). Quantitatively, we are missing a generation of elders in the aftermath of both the AIDS epidemic and the COVID-19 pandemic. Becoming an elder is a privilege that many within queer and disabled communities[1] never inhabit.

Of those that survive into later life, many queer and disabled older adults are marginalized and alienated: from queer communities that prize youthful fit bodies, from crip culture which separates disability from experiences of old age, and from spaces of old age that are centered around heteronormative and ableist notions of aging well (Duncan, 2007; Marshall, 2014; Marshall & Sandberg, 2017). Fear-mongering narratives of aging as a “silver tsunami”, that paint older adults as undeserving consumers of and drains on economic, environmental, and medical resources and thus taking them away from younger, more deserving populations position us as in competition with one another. Queer expectations of the “body beautiful” mix with homophobic discourses to paint older queers as “predators” in queer spaces. Within COVID-19 discourses, the old and the disabled are seen as getting in the way of the lives, freedoms, and pleasures of the young and able-bodied.

---

[1] As I explore further in the literature review, there is a movement upon critical scholars to think through queerness and disability as deeply intertwined. There is a pervasive understanding in crip studies that we are all temporarily able-bodied and that disability is therefore relevant to everyone. There is a history of queerness being pathologized and treated as a disease, and similarly of disability being treated as a queerness, an otherness (McRuer, 2016; Kafer, 2013). Throughout my writing, I am both referring to actual people who are both disabled and queer, and also to a more conceptual interlocking of queer and crip theories.

In a time of crisis, I was fortunate to find a queer, crip community that cared for me, but many queer and disabled elders and youth are not so fortunate. As I have outlined, there are multiple overlapping contributing factors as to why there is a lack of intergenerational community between queer and disabled individuals: there is a lack of images of what it means to age into the future as queers and crips, there are fewer elders than what should have been, and our queer crip elders that survive are pitted against one another and younger generations (Jones et al., 2022; Chazan & Baldwin, 2021; Farrier, 2015).

This thesis is rooted in my own longing to connect and build community with my queer and disabled elders, with the lived experience of the significance that these relationships can carry. I take as a starting point that queer crip intergenerational relationships can be generative: creating a sense of meaning, community, and connection beyond the individual; nurturing and guiding younger people; creating a sense of futurity. At the same time, I turn a critical lens to this potential generativity and to the concept of generativity more widely, bringing intergenerational queer crip perspectives to bear on more dominant conceptual understandings (Chazan & Baldwin, 2021). In Aging Studies, generativity, or connection to and concern for future generations, is often premised upon the hetero-nuclear family structure and an elimination of disability (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017).

Building upon recent conceptual interventions into understandings of successful aging and generativity [see Sandberg & Marshall, 2017; Chazan & Whetung, 2022], in this thesis I will extend ideas about queer crip futures by theorizing an alternative model of generativity that reflects the experiences, knowledges, and body-minds of aging, queer, disabled communities. I will do so by arguing that queer, crip intergenerational relationships contribute to and expand upon current understandings of generativity in three important ways: in terms of individualism, embodied knowledge, and temporalities. First, I will explore the theme of queer crip grief that emerged in the research, challenging an individualistic conception of generativity and legacy-building to include a connection to community: growing old(er) for those who do not get to and the responsibility to share our unique and ongoing cultural history in their honour. Secondly, in a discussion of queer crip embodied knowledge as inheritance, I will reject a capitalist conception of generativity that relies upon intergenerational and familial material inheritance. Thirdly, I will trouble a linear, reproductive generativity that centres connections through biological families. I will draw on non-normative temporalities to imagine generativity beyond binaries where meaningful relationships and kinship come in all shapes and forms, exploring the role of the more-than-human natural environment as a space of learning and legacy. This queer, crip conceptualization of generativity will in turn help intervene in hegemonic neoliberal, ableist, ageist, and heteronormative notions of what it means to age well.

1.1 Focus and Scope

In August 2022, I gathered a multi-age group of queer and disabled individuals for a series of arts-based workshops in Fredericton, New Brunswick. The eight participants ranged in age from 16 to 76, all participants identified as queer and were diverse in terms of gender and sexual identities. Most participants also inhabited various forms of disability, both physically and mentally, and some claimed this as a marker of identity. Though diverse in terms of age, gender, sexuality, and ability, all of the participants, except for one, were white. In these workshops, I was guided by a research question about participants' resistance to successful aging and their experiences of queer, crip temporalities. To do so, I designed a qualitative research project to capture participants' stories, feelings, and images of aging, queerness, disability, and futures. I organized a two-part workshop series with the organization *Elder Pride* in Fredericton, New Brunswick. I began the first workshop by introducing cellphilming as an art practice for social change, and then facilitated an hour-long, recorded focus group discussion on the research topics. In the next workshop, participants created short films using mobile devices based on our conversation and the prompts I provided. We then shared our (un)finished cellphilms in an informal screening and discussed the ideas and stories shared. I transcribed the recorded conversations and films created in these workshops and analyzed the subsequent data using narrative, visual, and thematic approaches. Through the research process and guided by the contributions of participants, my research question shifted focus towards the concept of generativity. I set out to analyze: do the cellphilms of queer and disabled adults extend normative conceptions of generativity and how?

This research took place within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the process and the products created through this study. The workshops themselves coincided with the local Pride festival, the first in-person gathering of its kind since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. The celebratory, summer festival was marked by the grief and significance of coming together after being apart which also in turn influenced the tone and approach to the research workshops. Though I believe my thesis findings have implications beyond the local context, it is important to recognize the ways that the conditions of this time and place and the people that participated, with their unique backgrounds and perspectives, cannot necessarily be replicated nor generalized.

Fredericton is a small city on the East coast of Canada, on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Wolastoqiyik, covered under the Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1760. Overwhelmingly white and settler, Fredericton is situated between two reserves. Though situated within a conservative province known for resource extraction and rural poverty, there is a high percentage of queer people in Fredericton: in 2022 the Canadian census found that Fredericton was one of three cities with the highest proportions of trans and non binary people in the country (Statistics Canada, 2022). Despite the presence of queer people in Fredericton, it is not necessarily a safe and welcoming place. Historically, the city council had to be forced by the Human Rights Council to proclaim Pride Week in 1998 (Higgins, 2008). Recently, after years of purposeful defunding by the provincial government, Clinic 554, a family practice specializing in queer and trans healthcare and gender affirming reproductive services, closed its doors (Bell, 2020).

1.2 Methodological Rationale

In Spring of 2020, I found meaning and connection in an unexpected place that would soon change my approach to academia and art. At the time, I was finishing up my undergraduate degree, writing my honours thesis from a makeshift office in the corner of my bedroom. I would find myself struggling to focus, and instead looking out the window watching the trees come back to life, and longing for community like so many others in those early days of the pandemic. Through the exhaustion of uncertainty, "pivoting", and endless Zoom meetings, I found joy in the backyard of a coworker's house, making short films with Lego blocks and garden beds. It was here that I was introduced to the research *method of cellphilming; I was making DIY short films about queer sex education in New Brunswick with the founders of the Fredericton Feminist Film Collective: Casey Burkholder and Sabine LeBel [see Burkholder, 2020; Lebel, 2021]. As the weather grew warmer and the pandemic grew longer, it was these backyard filmmaking sessions that kept me grounded in community and hopeful about the future.*

I had never considered myself an artistic person before this. Though I had dabbled in film photography and zine-making as a teenager, I saw art as something made by professionals, and certainly separate from the crafts I made with my mom for holidays and birthdays. Yet, with cellphilming, the imperfections and homemade nature of the products we created were a vital component of their aesthetic. The wind would blow over a piece of our script or a bug would fly into the frame, and it would simply enrich the DIY films we made on our cellphones. Suddenly, artmaking felt so much more accessible and lower stakes than I had ever experienced before. I was able to create films about social issues that I cared deeply about. I had been advocating around access to comprehensive sex education since my Youth Feminists days, where I organized a "Sex Week" at my high school complete with a game of jeopardy about STBBIS and a DIY dental-dam making session. Plus, because they were so short and simple, the cellphilms we created were easily shareable through social media and over email. Through my introduction to cellphilming, I could see a way to bring together the community organizing I had done since my teens, the DIY art I was making in Casey's backyard, and my wider academic interests about aging, queerness, and disability.

This community-based research project took place over two years into a pandemic that has disproportionately affected the old and the disabled, in one of the most highly concentrated "senior" populations in the country (Shakespeare et al., 2021; Kembhavi, 2012). The social isolation caused by the pandemic as well as the provincial government's inadequate measures to protect marginalized groups in their responses have resulted in fragmented and lonely communities (Guillemet, 2022). Furthermore, in New Brunswick, in the context of the recent closure of Clinic 554, as well as the lack of queer spaces and events during the pandemic, the queer and disabled community is lacking opportunities and spaces to come together. My goals were to share a DIY art practice in the community, to bring a marginalized community together, to build intergenerational relationships, and to learn more about ourselves and each other. Conceptually, I wanted to imagine a future where queer and disabled people live into later life, to redefine what success looks like, and value queer, crip intergenerational relationships. This research pushes the fields of Sociology, Critical Aging Studies, Disability Studies, and Canadian Studies to consider more critically the experiences of queer, disabled elders.

1.3 Structure

In this introductory chapter, I have provided an overview of the background informing this research as well as the methodological rationale for conducting it. In Chapter 2, I will outline the areas of literature pertinent to the topic. In Chapter 3, I will examine the methodological approaches taken up in this research, with a particular focus on my positionality as a researcher as well as introductions to the participants. In the following two chapters (Chapters 4 and 5), I combine findings and discussion around themes, with each extending my thesis argument about a queer, crip generativity in a different direction. In these chapters of analysis, I will draw on the participants' cellphilms and contributions from the workshops to support my thesis argument. In

Chapter 4, I will examine the role of grief in queer crip generativity, and our responsibilities to learn and share our history across generations, pushing conceptualizations of generativity beyond individualism. In Chapter 5, I extend my argument in two important ways: looking at embodied knowledge of aging, queerness, and disability as a form of inheritance and pushing the temporal boundaries of meaningful, generative relationships to include non-linear movement of knowledge and the value of the more-than-human natural environment. Finally, in Chapter 6, the concluding chapter, I will put all of these chapters into conversation with one another and with the research question, suggesting some potential implications from the research and discussing any remaining questions and opportunities for further research. At the end of this document, I will include relevant paperwork to support my writing in the appendices, such as the recruitment poster and consent forms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To contextualize this research, I begin by outlining the popular neoliberal discourse of successful aging and the movements within critical aging studies to diversify studies of later life. First, I turn to the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ folks in aging studies, and then, to the more awkward relationship between disability studies and aging studies. I briefly outline the generative intersection of queerness and disability, and then, what happens when queerness, disability, and aging are considered altogether. Next, I introduce the concept of temporality, looking at critical alternatives in the fields of queer theory, crip studies, and aging studies. Finally, as a combination of research areas, I bring in the study of generativity and the recent scholarly interventions to queer and crip intergenerational relationships.

2.1 Successful Aging and the Critical Turn in Aging Studies

Successful aging is the dominant discourse of aging in Western colonial societies, rooted in a neoliberal capitalist mentality that favors individualized responsibility for remaining independent, active, and healthy in later life. Success in old age is characterized by a hostility towards decay, dependency, and death, relying upon individual lifestyle choices to manage the risk of the aging population (Hepworth, 1995). The urgency of youthful regimes of fitness, diet, and consumption is positioned against the alarmist demographic depiction of aging in North America, apocalyptic demography (Calasanti, 2020). In popular depictions of aging, the growing aging population is framed as a crisis, threatening to deplete social resources, especially healthcare and pensions, because of their so-called dependence on the state (Calasanti, 2020). The call for active, busy aging then, is a response to the concept that older adults are a risk to both themselves and to society, as a means to manage the risk of the aging body and a form of self-investment to distance oneself from decline and dependency (Shimoni, 2018). These risky aging subjects are expected to take up strategies of bodily surveillance, maintenance, and optimizations through investment in consumption, fitness, and lifestyle work (Laliberte Rudman, 2015, p. 12). Those who defy ageist stereotypes by remaining active and youthful in later life are celebrated, yet those who do not and can not fulfill these standards are disregarded.

Successful aging is an exclusionary and binary discourse: for some older adults to succeed at aging, others inevitably fail to age well. When success is located in the lifestyle choices of the individual, the social and material conditions that shape those choices are obscured. As Stephen Katz and Toni Calasanti (2015) explain, social inequities intersect with age relations, as “the advantages and disadvantages that accrue across the life course become more salient in later life” (p. 29). One’s gender, race, class, sexuality, and (dis)ability influence one’s access to and quality of healthcare, retirement, financial security, sexual and physical fitness, and other markers of successful aging. Under the guise of personal failure, a singular image of success emerges that is white, fit, wealthy, able-bodied and able-minded, and heterosexual. Further, the definition of what is considered “successful” is rooted in heteronormativity, compulsory able-bodiedness, whiteness, colonial-normativities, and financial stability (Marshall, 2018; Minkler & Fadem, 2002; Rajan-Rankin, 2018; Chazan, 2019). Critical aging scholars are increasingly responding to the limitations, assumptions, and exclusions of the successful aging discourse. Instead, some are doing away with the binary of success and failure in favor of alternative models of aging, such as Linn Sandberg’s (2013) concept of affirmative aging, which I will later expand upon in my analysis of the embodied knowledge of aging.

2.2 Queerness and Aging

The critical turn in aging studies has led to attempts to better understand the diverse perspectives of those left behind by the successful aging discourse and adding them to studies about aging. Empirical research involving marginalized older adults is often written from an exclusion framework [see Funk, 2016], for example, the ways that 2SLGBTQIA+ chosen families and kinship networks are excluded and discriminated within long-term care settings (Schwinn & Dinkel, 2015). Although this type of research about queer elders is useful in indicating the discrimination faced, queering and cripping successful aging is a different undertaking. As Linn Sandberg (2015) argues, it's not enough to just add queer elders into the mix, but rather "we must explore the production and maintenance of normativity in relationships, embodiment, intimacy, and what constitutes the good (later) life" (Sandberg, 2015, p. 19, as cited in Marshall, 2018, p. 364). Here both Barbara Marshall (2018) and Linn Sandberg (2015) are calling for a *queering of* heteronormative measures of success and of temporality, not merely representation of aging as a queer person. Together Sandberg and Marshall (2017) argue that heteronormative expectations of successful aging have an implicit link to futurity and describe the need to "actively imagine radically different aging futures that might accommodate difference and challenge normativity and structural inequality" (p. 8). Although my research centers queer people, I am also aligned with the call to *queer,* and *crip* aging research, by challenging heteronormative and ableist understandings of generativity.

2.3 Disability and Aging

Although scholars have begun to examine queer aging, and a smaller segment have begun to *queer* aging, the inclusion of crip theory in studies of aging has been a slower process. Sandberg and Marshall (2017) describe the relationship between aging studies and disability studies as “awkward” due to the resistance to conflating aging and disability (p. 5). Other scholars have argued that perhaps much of what is considered to be ageism, is ableism and a fear of disability due to the pathologizing of old age, suggesting a replacement of ageism with the “social imaginary of the fourth age” (Horst & Vickerstaff, 2021; Higgs & Gilleard, 2020). Chris Gilleard and Paul Higgs’ (2011) work on the fourth age is central here in their argument that the third age, which refers to busy, active, youthful older adults, exists against the fear of the fourth age as a social/cultural black hole (Shimoni, 2018). All of the abjection of old age is projected away from the young old, onto the old, old who embody disability, dependence, and decline in the terminal, inescapable, imaginary of the fourth age (Gilleard & Higgs, 2011, p. 138). Importantly, Sally Chivers (2011) charts the representations of old age and disability in her seminal book, *The Silvering Screen*. Leni Marshall (2014) begins to bridge the two disparate, yet closely related fields of aging and disability, where she argues that the “point of no return” (Gilleard & Higgs, 2020) is a common ground for the old and the disabled: “for aged and/or disabled human bodies, no matter how much physical therapy, medication, and effort go into it, the body will not—cannot—return to youth or non-disability” (Marshall, 2014, p. 23). A huge development in the intersectional analysis of disability in old age occurred with the publication of *The Aging-Disability Nexus* (2020), which features scholars at the forefront of the movement to bridge these fields such as Carla Rice, Nadine Changfoot, and Katie Aubrecht (Aubrecht, Kelly, & Rice, 2020). It is here at the intersection of old age and disability, the "point of no return" (Gilleard & Higgs, 2011), as the end point in a chronological progressive life course, that I'd like to employ the theoretical lens of queer temporalities.

2.4 Queerness and Disability

Queerness and disability, on the other hand, has been a generative intersection of scholarly writing in the fields of queer theory and crip studies (Kafer, 2013; McRuer, 2006, Sameuls, 2003). Eli Clare (2015), one of the scholars at the forefront of this movement, writes about their own experiences of disability, mental illness and trauma, queerness, and rural working-class upbringing, weaving personal memoir with history, poetry, and politics. As Jane Gallop (2015) succinctly puts it, in Clare's (2015) writing, "disability *is* queer, queerer than queer, a more powerful way to resist normativity, a more radical way to affirm bodily difference" (Gallop, 2015, p. 326). Alison Kafer (2013), too, picks up the threads of disability and queerness, describing them within a political/relational model, wherein both queerness and disability are experienced in and through relationships and are a potential site for collective reimagining (p. 9). Queer and crip, she explains, are words that help forge a politic, citing Carrie Sandalh (2003), "cripple like queer is fluid and ever-changing, claimed by those whom it did not originally define" (Sandalh, 2003, p. 27 as cited in Kafer, 2013, p. 15). Here, crip studies scholars are forging the connections between queerness and disability as interconnected, political identities and experiences, namely because compulsory heterosexuality is intertwined with compulsory able-bodiedness (McGruer, 2016). Yet, things change when one adds age relations into the equation, as certain forms of disability and decline are to be expected in later life, invisibilizing the anti-normative edge of “crip”: “the combination of disability and age threatens to undo the queerness of disability” (Gallop, 2015, p. 327).

2.5 Context: Normative, Queer and Crip Grief

Grief is an emerging area of research within queer and aging studies [see Morris, Greteman, & Weststrate, 2022). As I will explore in **Chapter 4: The Grief of Becoming Queer Crip Elders**, grief emerged as an important theme in my research. This theme that I will later unpack, is informed by various ongoing and historical losses. The following section outlines critical scholars’ perspectives on grief, particularly in the context of queer history and the ongoing pandemic.

2.5.1 Normative Grief

Western, colonial culture is not good at processing death and grief. We live in a death-denying society. Some argue that this is part of why, as a culture, we are so afraid of aging and why the anti-aging industry is a billion-dollar industry [see Chivers, 2022]. The aged body reminds us of the “unknowability and uncontainability of our own bodies, of our vulnerability to injury and disease, and of the certainty of our death” and is thus marked as abject (Rice, 2018, p. 136). Darcy Harris (2009) explains that this relationship to death and grief is shaped by capitalism. Grief, loss, and death impede productivity, which is partly why there are so many norms around the proper ways to grieve. Such a raw display of emotion is meant to be brief and masked, as it represents a loss of control and rationality over one’s life and choices. Sophia Rose Longo (2021) explains that traditionally, one is expected to work through grief individually and internally as is reflected in the pervasive model of the five stages of grief, which occurs over a defined time period until the loss is resolved and the griever detaches from their loved one, moving on with their life. Normative grief, she argues, is “socially sanctioned, validated, and supported by others, and the result of circumstances surrounding a loss that are generally perceived as worthy of mourning, or easily grieveable” (Rose Longo, 2021, p. 7).

Grief and loss are often seen as the purview of the old. As one grows older and loved ones pass, a certain level of loss is expected and accepted. The names in the obituary gradually become recognizable. Take for example, a doctors’ reaction to Ellen Samuel’s (2017) experiences as a disabled person in their twenties: “You've lost so many things already in your life: your parents, your health, your independence. You have a level of loss we would usually expect to see in someone in their seventies." Here, the doctor equates disability with old age: painting an image of loneliness, decrepitude, and sadness. Though there is an element of the cycle of life in this understanding, death of the old and the disabled is framed as an acceptable loss: “the world doesn’t have language or a framework to understand the tragedy of their deaths” (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2022, p. 116). Common responses to disabled deaths are to assume that they are “finally in a better place”, implying that they do not belong in the world we have now. During the pandemic, the first question asked when provincial governments released statistics regarding COVID-related deaths was their age, as if old age negated grief.

2.5.2 Queer Grief: Then and Now

Queer grief is disenfranchised grief (Kheraj, 2022). Coined by grief counsellor and psychologist, Dr. Kenneth Doka (1989), disenfranchised grief is grief that does not fit into socially accepted norms, that which “cannot be openly acknowledged, socially sanctioned, or publicly mourned" (Harris, 2009; Kheraj, 2022, para. 2). Perhaps the loss isn't seen as worthy of grief: disenfranchised grief spans beyond literal death to include losses in many shapes and forms. Oftentimes, there is stigma associated with the loss, whether that is the relationship to the griever, the way the person died, or the way someone expresses their grief. Sometimes, the person is not recognized as a griever because they aren't biologically related or married (Cardoza & Schneider, 2021). Historically, this form of unrecognized and stigmatized grief occurred on a widescale within the queer community during the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 80's.

Without the right to marriage, queer partners of those dying with AIDS were excluded from official channels of grieving. These losses are measured quantitatively, for example, the CDC reported over 100 000 HIV-related deaths between 1981-1990, and since the beginning of the epidemic, The World Health Organization has recorded millions of HIV/AIDS deaths globally (CDC, 2022; WHO, 2021). At the time, an HIV-positive diagnosis was a death sentence, with the average life expectancy lasting just two years after diagnosis (Chauncey, 2009). A large group of young queer folks suddenly had to contend with death and its bureaucratic counterparts: power of attorney, estate planning, burials, and wills. "Couples whose relationships were fully acknowledged and respected by their friends suddenly had to deal with powerful institutions—hospitals, funeral homes, and state agencies—that refused to recognize them at all" (Chauncey, 2009, p. 96). While struggling with a devastating illness, hospitals refused queer folks the right to visit their partners and friends in hospitals, excluding them from consultation and information about their loved ones' medical treatment. In death, the biological family's plans were prioritized, even when they went against the wishes of the deceased, holding funerals in hometowns and churches that did not recognize their sexuality or cause of death. As unmarried partners, the survivors during this time had no legal rights to the estate of their loved ones, including the homes they shared. In a culture of shame and fear, queer folks were unable to partake in socially accepted rituals of grief and mourning.

Queer grief is not only in the past. When we separate grief from literal death and connect it to other forms of loss or lack, of acceptance, opportunity, ease; when we recognize that grief means missing something- whether that is a person, an animal, an object, friendship, experience, one begins to see that queerness is shaped by grief. As Aisha Mirza (2020) writes, “to be queer is to live in a state of perpetual grief, be that grieving biological family who couldn’t love us properly, grieving the freedom to be ourselves without fear, or grieving the erasure of our love” (para. 5). This grief is compounded in the context of widespread transphobic and homophobic violence at every level of society, such as the 2016 Pulse Mass Shooting in Orlando, Florida killing 49 and wounding 53 at an LGBTQ+ nightclub and the more recent 2022 Colorado Springs shooting at another LGBTQ+ nightclub, Club Q, resulting in the death of 5 and the wounding of 17 community members. At a state level, legislation across North America is being passed banning drag from public spaces, banning access to gender-affirming health care for trans youth, and preventing teachers from including LGBTQ+ people, issues, and resources in public school curricula [see ACLU, 2023]. Queer grief includes grieving a sense of safety and protection that we have fought for tooth and nail.

2.5.3 Pandemic Grief as Crip Grief

The COVID-19 pandemic has produced complex and multifaceted forms of grief that extend beyond death to include tangible and intangible losses (Statz et al., 2021). Tamara Statz, Lindsey Lobayashi, and Jessica Finlay (2021) outline some of the specific forms of grief experienced by older adults throughout the pandemic that have piled on top of the widespread deaths caused by the pandemic—sitting at over six million worldwide at this time (WHO, 2023). They write, for example, about the loss of routine and milestone celebrations, the loss of contact with friends, family, community, and strangers, and loss of a sense of control. They write, too, about wider societal divisions, and the grief, anger, and sadness that have resulted from the government's handling of the pandemic, loss of access to medical and dental care, loss of financial security and employment and large-scale concerns for humanity. This pandemic grief is especially pertinent for the old and the disabled.

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2022) explains that the pandemic brought the everyday realities of disabled people to the doorsteps of the non-disabled: "for the first time in a generation, everyone is experiencing the possibility that death may touch their lives—not someday, but now. This is knowledge that disabled people have often lived with for most of our lives" (p. 122). This is true, not only in terms of proximity to death, but also in ways of life: social isolation, a slowed down pace of time, self-monitoring and treating illness, DIY masking and filtering the air are all skills that had been long developed and honed by crip community that we relied upon in the early days of the pandemic. Yet, as the initial shock and fear of a pandemic wore off, and the push towards "normality" led to the rolling back of COVID protections, the pandemic grief has lingered with the immunocompromised and the old, in the knowledge that they are seen as disposable: "[t]here is a grief larger than lost friends and family. There is the grief of distance, isolation. There is the grief of realising we're not valued to the point of being disposable. How do we begin to mourn such loss?" (Hernández & Alland, 2021, p. 1). This push for normalcy, at the expense of the old and disabled is a source of queer crip grief.

Beyond the pandemic, crip community has a unique perspective and relationship to grief. Though many live long and happy lives with disabilities, the reality is that disabled people often face shorter life spans due to their impairments. There is inherently more loss within crip community. Ellen Sameuls (2017) explains that crip grief goes beyond losses of death and extends to the grief of a changing body-mind: "with each new symptom, each new impairment, I grieve again for the lost time, the lost years that are now not yet to come" (para. 10). Though not necessarily rooted in a desire for cure, there is a process of grief coming into new or changing disabilities for former versions of your body-mind or a body-mind you never got to inhabit. There is also the crip trauma of living as disabled people within an abled world. As Brianna Albers (2021) writes, "our dreams of a better world are rooted in, and inextricable from, our collective experience of grief" (para. 7).

2.6 Theories of Temporalities

2.6.1 Western vs Indigenous Temporalities

Temporality, a predominately philosophical term, refers to one's historical and political understanding of time (Amin, 2014, p. 219; Port, 2012). Within aging studies, this is akin to a life course perspective, which Laura Funk (2016) summarizes as a "series of transitions or changes through statuses and roles (e.g., marriage or retirement), which together constitute particular patterns or trajectories over time depending on the individual” which she goes on to explain are historically and institutionally shaped (p. 16). Western, colonial temporalities are understood as a linear, chronological progression of time, but as Sandy Grande (2018) demonstrates, this is not the only understanding of time and aging. Grande (2018) looks at Indigenous alternatives to settler hegemonic logics of time in regards to dementia not as a loss of one’s memory or mind, but as a fluid dynamic understanding of a person’s mind as being “elsewhere” (p. 174). Similarly, as explored in Chazan and Whetung’s (2022) recent work, spiral time is an Indigenous temporality that challenges colonial conceptions of linear time, which sees the present as living alongside future and past ancestors and descendants, experiencing time as cyclical (Whyte, 2018). A normative temporality of aging could be compared to fulfilling what Sara Ahmed (2010) calls “happiness scripts”—predetermined paths that promise happiness (p. 64), such as marriage, reproduction, or retirement.

In exploring aging and generativity, questions of time, temporalities, and futures are important. Dominant narratives of successful aging and the life course assume a forward-moving, linear temporality with particular temporal markers like retirement, becoming a grandparent, and even death as the acceptable trajectory of old age (McGuire, 2020). Scholars in queer and crip studies challenge these normative temporal assumptions which will become important in my analysis of queer crip generativity. Although limited, there is a growing call within crip, queer, and critical aging studies to theorize the connections between queer and crip temporalities with old age (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017; Bartlett & Kafer, 2020). It is here that my research question examining how queer, crip, aging temporalities can challenge the normative life course embedded within successful aging emerges.

2.6.2 Queer Temporalities

Queer temporalities are a burgeoning area of research in queer theory. Queer theorist, Lee Edelman (2004) published the key text *No Future* in which he argues that the figure of the child represents heterosexual "reproductive futurity", and that queers are therefore positioned as having no futures. Goltz (2010) traces this lack of queer futurity through popular culture representations of gay male aging, finding futures that are framed as dreaded and miserable (as cited in Sandberg & Marshall, 2017, p. 4). The following year, Jack Halberstam (2005) released *A Queer Time and Place* where he describes "strange temporalities", a queer use of time constructed in opposition to family, heterosexuality, and reproduction. The AIDS epidemic plays an important role in Halberstam's (2005) theorizing: the threat of the future, he argues, created a queer temporality in which there is an emphasis on the here and now, creating an urgency in the present. José Esteban Muñoz (2009) famously asserts, however, that the future is inherently imbedded in queerness as it is a mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the present: "queerness is essentially the rejection of the here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (p. 1). Here, one can see that queerness offers alternatives to a normative forward-moving chronological temporality that are useful when considering generativity in queer and disabled communities.

2.6.3 Crip Temporalities

Disability activists and scholars have been extending the theory of queer time to experiences of disability. Alison Kafer (2013) maps out what disabled people can expect from their futures: pain and isolation. Crip livelihoods are seen as not worth living- the elimination of disability is a commonly accepted goal, whether this is through pre-natal testing, the steadfast goal of cure, or medical assistance in dying (MAID in Canada) (Clare, 2017). In resistance to this popular understanding of disabled futures, Kafer (2013) writes about the temporal experiences of disability as crip time, which has existed within crip culture long before the publishing of her book, referring to a crip reorientation to time, a flexible standard for punctuality and the extra time needed to arrive and accomplish something, not just because of a disabled body, but also due to an ableist world (p. 26). Crip time, Kafer (2013) argues, exists in stark contrast to the normative temporality of "curative time" which assumes and expects medical intervention, rehabilitation, and cure as markers of progress. This is reflected in Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's (2018) assertion that disability is not a deficiency, but rather that disabled people develop crip emotional intelligence and skills within crip culture and community (p. 69). She goes on to describe the secret bliss of bedtime, as a result of chronic illness that forces one to rest, as a "dreamtime" making her a better writer. Dreamtime, she explains is "[t]ime for the stories to grow. Time that is not logical, rational, clock time, punch-the-clock time […] I give in to the bed, to the dreams, to the long, long sleeps and times curled up, the words curl close to me because of them" (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018, p. 184-5). Queer and crip temporalities provide an opportunity to better theorize the strange temporalities of old age.

2.6.4 Queer Crip Temporalities of Old Age

As laid out in her talk on the Age and/as Disability panel, Jane Gallop (2015) imagines the rich potentiality of combining queer crip temporalities with aging studies to resist decline ideology. Here, Gallop (2015) draws on Cynthia Port's (2012) earlier work, which argues that explorations of queer temporalities "suggest intriguing possibilities for reconsidering the temporalities of old age" (p. 2). Later, in her book *Sexuality, Disability, and Aging,* Gallop (2019) expands her exploration of this topic, through her own experience with what she calls "late-onset disability"—disability beginning in the middle years or beyond—as a threat to normative temporalities of sexuality. This movement is characterized by the recent dialogue between aging and dementia scholar Ruth Bartlett and feminist, queer, crip Allison Kafer (2020) where they ask: "how have ideas about the normative life course, one that presumes independence, and reproduction as key markers of value, been used as a way of marginalizing old, disabled, and/or queer folks?" (p. 255). It is here that my research question begins, examining how queer, crip, aging temporalities can challenge the normative life course embedded within successful aging.

2.7 Theories of Generativity

Generativity, which was originally coined as a goal of mid-life to refer to a concern with establishing and guiding the next generation, is embedded in theories of temporalities as it is about establishing a connection to the future and fostering intergenerational relationships (Erikson, 1963, p. 267). In popular representations of later life, generativity takes the shape of happy, healthy grandparents chasing and playing with their grandchildren, premised upon heteronormative systems of reproduction and marriage (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017, p. 4; Goltz, 2009, p. 8). Generativity in later life is often expressed through grandparenting and parenting to pass on values, leave a legacy, and make significant contributions to the next generation. Later life employment and volunteering also provide older adults with a meaningful role in their communities and fulfill their desires to give back (Villar et al., 2021).

This conception of generativity is confined by normative understandings of successful aging. As Barbara Marshall (2018) describes in an analysis of *Zoomer Magazine*, images of successful aging rely upon "heterohappiness" and reproductive success. Sandberg and Marshall (2017) extend this analysis, noting that the overcoming or eliminating of disability and illness are central to the enactment of a meaningful and positive later life. Queer and disabled older adults are excluded from this conception of generativity, as opportunities for intergenerational exchanges are rooted in "familial narratives of inheritance and knowledge transmission" (Baldwin, 2016, p. 2). Recently, scholars Chazan and Whetung (2021) have begun to challenge a normative conception of generativity, centering Indigenous and decolonial perspectives in their arts-based community research. They found that participants imagined relational aging futures with a connection to place, beyond hetero-reproductivity and human centrism, tied to cyclical temporalities. Kyle Bower and his colleagues (2021) extend the concept of generativity to LGBTQ+ older adults looking to experiences during the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a lack of role models, and religious conviction as areas where queer elders developed a legacy of resilience and a sense of generativity (Bower et al., 2021). Project Re•Vision, led by Dr. Carla Rice [see https://revisioncentre.ca], challenges dominant and singular stories of disability by facilitating the creation of digital stories by marginalized disabled people, including the old and the queer (Rice et al., 2015). Their work wrestles with themes such as the temporalities of bodies of difference and disability futurity yet does not explicitly examine the concept of generativity (Rice et al, 2017). My own research is situated among these works but is unique in that it is conducting with a completely queer group across the life course, in the unique setting of a small town on the East Coast of Canada, during the pandemic, and with a particular focus on disability and crip theory.

Drawing on data collected in a group of intergenerational queer and disabled individuals, in this thesis I will build upon these conceptual interventions into a heteronormative and ableist understanding of meaningful futures by mapping a queer crip model of generativity. First, I will challenge an individualistic conception of generativity and legacy-building to include a connection to community: growing old(er) for those who do not get to and the responsibility to share our unique and ongoing cultural history in their honour. Next, rejecting a capitalist conception of generativity that relies upon intergenerational and familial material inheritance, I will examine the queer, crip embodied wisdom of aging and the value of sharing it intergenerationally, in all directions. Finally, I will trouble a linear, reproductive generativity that centres connections through biological families through an imagination beyond binaries where meaningful relationships and kinship come in all shapes and forms, exploring the role of the more-than-human natural environment as a space of generativity, learning, and legacy.

Chapter 3: Methodologies

To imagine an alternative aging future that values queer, crip intergenerational relationships, I designed a qualitative arts-based research project in my community. In the summer of 2022, I recruited eight queer and disabled individuals, ages 16 to 76 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, including three elders to attend a series of workshops designed around the following research question: “how do queer and disabled people in New Brunswick challenge heteronormative and ableist notions of successful aging through their relations to temporalities?” In these workshops, I introduced the participatory art practice of cellphilming and facilitated a focus group discussion about queerness, disability, aging, and futures. Participants then made their own cellphilms based on these conversations which I later used to analyse broader questions about generativity and successful aging among queer and disabled individuals.

In this chapter I will begin by outlining the theoretical and personal connections I bring to this research. I will then situate this research project in some key methodological literature about cellphilming and qualitative research. Then, I will introduce the research participants, including their demographic backgrounds and short descriptions of the cellphilms they produced. Next, I will explain my approach to data collection, processing, and analysis. The following section will discuss the ongoing co-dissemination of the research materials, including the cellphilms. Lastly, I will discuss the ethical considerations taken in the planning and execution of this research project, along with some methodological limitations and tensions.

3.1 Research Values

In this research, I aimed to facilitate a queer, crip, feminist space by centering the values of lived experiences and emotions, relationships of reciprocity and care, a rejection of researcher-objectivity, and an orientation towards social change (Hesse-Biber, 2012). My theoretical approach is firmly situated within the nexus of feminist, queer, and crip theories, largely influenced by Kafer's (2013) *Feminist, Queer, Crip*. Throughout the research process, I have been dedicated to centering the needs and experiences of marginalized individuals and valuing the agency of the participants as co-producers in my research. As outlined by Potts and Brown (2015), anti-oppressive researchers have a responsibility to invest time, energy, and care into building relationships if they are to ground themselves and their work in the community. This is reflected in all aspects of the research design, analysis, and dissemination. Building relationships and community is at the heart of my work rather than the historically common extraction-based model of community research. As Jenn Cole (2019) so poignantly points out, sometimes this cultivation of relationships involves a lot of waiting, patience, and time to create. I reject a so-called unbiased, objective researcher-position, as I recognize that everyone's backgrounds, upbringings, privileges, and oppressions influence how we think, question, interpret, write, and present our work in the world. I also see this participatory research as an opportunity to enrich my own perspective with the teachings from participants, theorists, and researchers.

3.2 Positionality

My position as a young, white-settler, queer scholar with various chronic illnesses from the unceded traditional lands of the Wolastoqiyik is reflected in every aspect of my research project. Although aging is a universal experience, as a twenty-something-year-old studying old age and elderhood, my perspective is from that of an outsider. Young people in Western, colonial societies (although not the very young) are the standard against which agency, beauty, ability, and success of all others are measured. My capacity to make decisions for myself, to have my thoughts and ideas be taken seriously, and to be independent are not challenged due to ageist stereotypes about senility or incompetence, which may not be the case for older participants. In creating and leading an intergenerational research space, there were inevitable power imbalances and age-based assumptions due to the age discrepancies. Yet in coming together because of and in spite of these differences, these research workshops provided an opportunity to build multigenerational relationships and connections that are difficult to find elsewhere, particularly in queer communities (Baldwin, 2016).

As a white-settler on unceded and traditional lands of the Wolastoqiyik—the people of the beautiful river[2]—conducting research with an overwhelmingly white and settler group of participants, I am cognisant of the power relations of occupying space that is not mine. To me this means ensuring that all involved were aware and appreciative of the fact that we are on stolen lands and the responsibilities that white settlers hold to respect, center, and pay reparations to original inhabitants of the land, which was reflected in my land acknowledgement. Throughout the discussions in the workshop setting, I tried to make connections to Black and Indigenous led movements of resistance in our territory whenever possible, including Black Lives Matter Fredericton and the

---

[2] I'm thankful to my former teacher, Dick Paul, a Wolastoqiyik educator, for imparting his knowledge about the traditional name and meaning of our territory.

Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance. I was also cognisant of being respectful of the land as a group. I made sure that we left no trace when we were in nature and gave thanks to the land and its protectors. Though it didn’t occur in the time we were together, I was aware and monitoring conversations for any racist, colonial language and sentiments that came up and was prepared to take the encounter as an opportunity for intergenerational learning and solidarity building.

My own first-hand experience with chronic illness and queerness are a large motivation behind conducting this research and that I see as an asset in my connection with participants and in the interpretation of the data. As I have grown up in queer and disabled community in Fredericton, I have noticed the dearth of accessible queer spaces for all ages that did not center around alcohol. When the only queer spaces in a community are bars and drag shows, held late at night, in spaces with stairs, poor lighting, and no masks, disabled and older queer community members are excluded from queer social spaces. In conducting community-based research with queer disabled elders, I facilitated community building by recording experiences of an often invisible group in our community and fostering intergenerational exchange in the sharing of their cellphilms. Though, I understand that age and various other factors meant that our conceptualizations of queerness and disability differed, including the language we use to identify our inclusion within these communities, for example, one gay male participant in his seventies, Gene, described himself as a “pervert” in a group conversation [for more discussion of Gene’s participation, see Chapter 5].

I tried to find common ground with participants of this project by practicing vulnerability, stimulated by the sharing of my own cellphilm prior to the creation of their cellphilms. My cellphilm, titled Flux, juxtaposes clips of my naked body and stretch marks with images of the land, water, and trees [see Figure 5]. Beyond my literal nakedness in the cellphilm, the narrative shared through a voice-over and subtitles explores my relationship with my body, anxiety, chronic illness, and fear and hopes for the future. Carla Rice (2018) writes about the importance of maintaining self-reflexivity and vulnerability in research, particularly when working with communities whose bodies are constructed as abject. In a research setting with queer and disabled individuals across the life course, being honest and open with my own contradictory, difficult thoughts and emotions was an important step before asking participants to consider their own personal and lived experiences and emotions around aging, queerness, disability, and futures.

3.3 Cellphilming Methodology

My research seeks to center lived experiences and stories of queer and disabled elders because there is a dearth of stories by and for diverse populations of older adults. If you look to mainstream representations of aging, popular culture paints an image of aging that consists of strictly heterosexual white couples with nuclear families (Marshall 2018). Linn Sandberg and Barb Marshall (2017) are two scholars calling for a queering of successful aging, asserting the ways current frameworks of aging are ableist, heteronormative, colonial, and racist. There have been a small number of attempts to increase popular representations of older queer adults, such as the recent documentary *A Secret Love* (Fogel & Mason, 2020), yet as is often the case with marginalized peoples, their stories are filtered through authority figures, in this case, their younger, heterosexual family members (Hill 2022). Without diverse and first-person stories about later life, queer and disabled individuals of all ages cannot see or imagine a future for themselves.

It is for this reason that I was drawn to cellphilming methodology, which refers to short, participant-produced films made using cellphones as familiar and accessible technologies oriented towards a social issue (MacEntee, et al. 2016), and puts the power of storytelling into the hands of participants themselves.

Cellphilming is a feminist methodology in and of itself, which was originally developed in South Africa to explore issues of gendered violence and has been used in various contexts for social change (see Burkholder & Thorpe, 2022; Kendrick, MacEntee, & Flicker 2021; MacEntee et al. 2016). Cellphilming departs from traditional participatory visual methodologies that require researchers to act as an intermediary between participants and technology to tell their stories (MacEntee et al. 2016). Cellphilming draws on personal mobile technologies like cellphones and tablets as accessible, portable, and easy-to-use resources to allow marginalized communities to tell their own stories: “cellphilming is a means through which researchers might act as allies and in support of creative production by community members that speak to their own ways of knowing” (MacEntee et al. 2016, p. 8). Further, as co-producers of research, participants have direct control over their level of anonymity in their audio-visual materials and autonomy over how their story is shared and with whom (Burkholder et al. 2022). By actively involving participants as co-producers and co-disseminators, this research project centers lived experiences of those made invisible by dominant narratives of aging.

Cellphilming methodology democratizes the research setting by drawing on everyday technologies like cellphones. However, in designing this project with older adults in mind, I have wondered how familiar and accessible smartphones and tablets are for a population that is commonly framed as technologically illiterate as a result of the "digital divide" (Köttl et al. 2021). Furthermore, May Chazan and Madeline Macnab's (2018) work demonstrates the power dynamics at play between young and old in intergenerational research settings through assumptions around technological expertise and authority. In the context of a pandemic that has resulted in increased dependency upon technology for social connection, I wondered how or if these generational dynamics have shifted. Though this is not the focus of my research, in examining the creation process and finished cellphilms created by queer and disabled adults and elders, one could also see this research as a case study into intergenerational interactions with technology and expanding the methodology of cellphilming across the lifecourse.

3.4 Design

ElderPride is an intergenerational social program for 2SLGBTQ+ older adults (50+), organized by the local Pride organization, Fierté Fredericton Pride. Using convenience sampling, I recruited participants for the research project from the *ElderPride* organization. Though recruitment through pre-established organizations can limit participation to those that are the least isolated, already having connections within the community, this is also a risk-aversion tactic because those involved are already active in a semi-public capacity (van den Hoonaard, 2015). After contacting the group's organizer for permission, I attended an *ElderPride* meeting, in July 2022, preceding the workshop to gauge interest and to share a recruitment poster and consent form with group members. This meeting also served as an opportunity to introduce myself to the members and begin the relationship-building process. After this first meeting, the recruitment poster [see **Appendix A: Recruitment Poster**] was shared by a volunteer on Elder

Prides’ private Facebook group and was integrated into the concurrent local Pride festival, on the Fierte Fredericton Pride social media pages and physical schedule of events. Some interested participants reached out to the researcher via email, while others simply showed up to the workshop.

In my research, I used “queer”, ‘disabled” and “aging” in the broadest sense of the words. Queer, which is a commonly accepted umbrella term for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community among younger cohorts, can be an emotionally charged word for older adults who have experienced the word as stigmatizing (Kia, 2015). There is, of course, flexibility and variation in self-identification with language among the heterogeneous group of “older adults”, and for this reason, in research materials, including recruitment strategies, I used the word “queer” interchangeably among a long list of other identifying words that participants may see themselves in. This list includes, but is not limited to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, and homosexual. Similarly, as Kafer (2013) lays out, the concept of disability has historically been seen within confining contexts such as the medical and social models which have privileged certain types of physical disabilities over other forms of disabilities like cognitive disabilities, mental illnesses, and chronic illnesses. Disability in its broadest sense then, includes anyone with an impairment, disease, disability, mental illness, chronic illness etc. that impacts their day-to-day life, and is not dependent upon state measures such as receiving disability support. Disability, too, was listed among other words such as “crip”, “mad”, “mentally ill”, “chronically ill”, or “handicapped”, for participants to self-identify with whatever language fits. Participants were encouraged to self-identify as queer and/or disabled using any of the provided (or excluded) language in order to participate.

In August 2022, I held two in-person workshops during the local Pride festival in Fredericton, New Brunswick. With the support of *Elder Pride*, I hosted an intergenerational cellphilming workshop with approximately eight participants. We gathered in a lodge in a centrally located public park, with HEPA filters and masks, outdoor space, and food and drink. Each workshop was three hours in length, the first of which included an introduction to cellphilming and a focus group discussion guided by the researcher. The second workshop consisted primarily of solo work creating films and then an informal screening and discussion of our (un)finished cellphilms. All participants were provided with a one-time $50 honorarium as well as bus passes or taxi fare as needed for transportation.

Though this research project was originally designed exclusively for queer and disabled elders, categorized as 50 and over, in reality there were participants ranging in age from 16 to 76. This was partly due to an error: the researchers' use of the language of "intergenerational" on the recruitment posters and printed in the Pride festival pamphlets was understood to mean across the life course, rather than between older generations over the age of 50. Though this was not the vision I had in mind when I was designing the research project, having a small group of diversely aged participants opened up the research topic to unexpected findings, interactions, and connections.

3.5 Participants

Of the eight total participants, myself included, there were three elders all referred to the project through *Elder Pride*. One of these elders, Participant A, is an outspoken and passionate advocate around issues of ageism, racism, and homophobia and was just shy of 60 years old at the time of the workshop: a white queer woman with a brain injury (she/her).[3] Gene (he/him), the oldest in the group at 76 and the only cisgender, gay man in the group, living with memory loss and physical impairments, made an untitled cellphilm exploring dead and dying images of trees. T (she/her), in her 60's, is a quiet white butch lesbian that made a powerful and emotional cellphilm about community, loneliness, and the life course. In the group of elders that attended the research workshops, all were white and their ages ranged from their fifties to their seventies.

The rest of the participants were more diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity. Forrest, a participant in their early 30's, originally came to the group as an ElderPride volunteer, and later joined the group in discussion and film-making. Forrest (they/them) is a non-binary and queer white settler that made a poetic cellphilm titled, "Sanility: Queering Senility and Seniority". There was a couple that I knew personally, Jessi (she/they) and Charlie (they/them), that joined the group. Both in their mid-30's, Jessi, is a white neurodivergent, queer scholar and activist, and Charlie is a Chinese, non-binary, queer activist and technology whiz. Charlie made a beautiful film homage to their familial and queer lineages, titled, "Five Generations", and Jessi grappled with her contradictory needs and identities in her cellphilm "the Opposites That I Need to Thrive". There were two queer youth, both 16 years old, that stopped by the research workshop but did not officially participate, Z. and Chase, for which this event was their very first time attending a Pride event. Though they didn't stick around past the first hour of the

---

[3] In the workshops and consent process, participants had the choice of picking their own pseudonym, using their own names, or no names at all. Throughout the text, you will see a mix of actual names, pseudonyms, first initials, and simple descriptions which reflect their choices. For the participants who chose not to use a name, I have referred to them as Participant A and Participant B.

first workshop, their youthful, nervous, and excited energy was present in the research space long after they left. The last participant also joined the group as a Pride volunteer and became a participant after learning more about the project. In her late 20’s, Participant B is a fat and queer white woman who made a lovely abstract cellphilm about aging, family, and shifting values and identities.

3.6 Data Collection

In total, there were seven cellphilms created in these workshops, my own included, resulting in approximately six minutes of audio-visual materials for analysis, ranging in length from around 30 seconds to a minute and a half. Participants edited their own cellphilms to their comfort levels and abilities using free apps and features on their cellphones with support from the researcher. Aesthetically, the cellphilms featured a lot of paper and trees, reflecting the materials and environment surrounding the workshops. In terms of audio, most of the cellphilms did not include music or voice-overs, except for Forrest and Charlie’s films, who seemed to be the most technologically proficient in the group. Some of the overall themes from the cellphilms included: death and dying, intergenerational solidarities, capitalism, connection to the land, and contradictions.

The cellphilms produced in these workshops were an important part of, but not the only, source of data for this research project. The guided discussion in the first workshop acted as a focus group on the topic of aging, queerness, disability, and futurities. The hour-long recorded discussion loosely followed the following four questions: “Can you think of a time when you witnessed or experienced expectations about aging successfully? Did you feel like you met those expectations?”; “Has your body-mind and abilities changed over time? How has this affected your identity?”;

“Share a moment, place, quote, experience, or relationship that makes you think about the queer aging future you want.”; and “How do you challenge heteronormative and ableist notions of successful aging over the life course?”. Some of the overall themes from this discussion included ageism, grief, honouring our queer crip ancestors, the embodied wisdom of aging, the centrality of relationships, and challenging heteronormative expectations. This focus group discussion was transcribed verbatim in September 2022.

Besides this guided focus group discussion, the rest of the workshops were also recorded. Though not all of the recordings were legible nor relevant, the (re)introductions and opening discussion at the beginning of the second workshop where the group reflected upon our previous conversation was. Similarly, the screening of the finished cellphilms at the end of the second workshop which included discussion and reactions to the content of the films was a significant piece of data that I also transcribed. Together, these three discussions resulted in approximately two hours of recordings that were then transcribed and analysed alongside the cellphilms. Finally, I took occasional research notes throughout the research process and did some reflective writing in the weeks following the fieldwork, which have been incorporated throughout the analysis.

3.7 Data Analysis

The first step in my analysis of the data was familiarization (Nowell et al, 2017). While the workshops were still fresh in mind, I transcribed the recordings using Microsoft words’ transcription tool. Once transcribed, I read, re-read, and listened to the conversations alongside the cellphilms a handful of times. In this repetition, I paid close attention to any pauses, laughter, hesitations, and interruptions as much as the actual words that were spoken. This is an approach that I learned from narrative analysis:

looking both at what is said and how it is said (van den Hoonaard, 2015, p.189). Phoenix et al. (2010) argue that narrative analysis in the study of aging can create counter-narratives, producing “alternative maps regarding aging in ways that can potentially displace the dominant story about aging within Western society” (p. 3). Drawing from a narrative analysis approach, I was able to look at the specificity and particularities of individuals’ personal experiences and stories. This approach was also reflected in my free writing practice, where I focused on one participant at a time, piecing together various research moments to craft a narrative. When I was feeling stuck, this free writing in my research notes helped me gain insight on the participants, as Andreia Zakime (2018) remarks, writing is both process and product.

Next in my analysis of the data, I focused on the cellphilms as pieces of audio-visual data. As Claudia Mitchell (2015) explains, when working with cellphilms as a participatory visual methodology, analysis and meaning making occurs at three sites: by the producers, by audiences, and by the researcher. When I was looking at the cellphilms, I was triangulating my interpretation of the cellphilms themselves, with what the participants said about their own films and how the other participants reacted and unpacked the films in the research setting. In my process, I did this by writing descriptions of the films, along with any themes and messages that stood out in my research notes. I then listened to the recordings and recorded any descriptions, themes, and reactions from the workshops. The “Monitoring Educational Rights for Girls with Disabilities” research team, led by Dr. Xuan Thuy Nguyen (2016), provide an important set of guiding questions when analyzing cellphilms that focus on the narrative, images, sounds, and choices made in the cellphilms. They encourage a particular focus on any repetition, order and sequencing of sounds, images, and words.

Finally, I drew from more of a thematic analysis approach. I printed out the transcripts of the workshop discussions and coded them by hand. Here I used colour coordinated highlighters and sticky notes to take note of patterns, similarities, and significant ideas. I looked for repetition in language and topic as well as research moments that stuck out. Importantly, I took a reflexive approach to coding, recognizing that codes were not fixed, but rather, evolved throughout the process. Codes were redrawn, refined, combined, separated, and scrapped many times before settling on themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I grouped together significant codes to create themes, keeping in mind how they would fit within the literature on critical aging studies, disability theory, and queer theory. Here, I was acutely aware of the way my own positionality would influence the themes, recognizing that themes do not magically emerge, but rather, that as a researcher, I play an active role in constructing and generating meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The final themes that I landed upon are community generativity: becoming the elders we never had; intergenerational exchange of our embodied knowledge; and the fluidity of elderhood and kinship, which will be explored in depth throughout this thesis.

3.8 Dissemination

Importantly, the cellphilms created through this research project do not begin nor end with this thesis. Rather, with permission from their creators, these films will be used in future film screenings and workshops to facilitate discussion about diverse futures and teach others about the methodology of cellphilming. These films will be screened alongside other films created by queer and disabled individuals across the life course, for example, the cellphilms created through Pride/Swell+, an art and archiving research project with 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and elders in Atlantic Canada, upon which I have worked as a research assistant [see Burkholder et al., 2023]. Some of the cellphilms will also be accessible through the Aging Activisms website and archive for future use and analysis. As co-producers, the participants have control over when and where the cellphilms can be used. For example, I screened and facilitated a discussion about Charlie's cellphilm, "Five Generations" in a classroom setting at Trent University in January 2023, after checking in with the participant for ongoing consent.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Due to the nature of the work, the consent process consisted of multiple steps. First, I presented participants with an information letter [see **Appendix B: Information Letter**], which outlined the purpose and background of the research project, introduced the researcher and how to contact them, the potential risks and benefits of participation, and information about withdrawing. Next, participants read the consent forms [see **Appendix C: Consent Forms**]. Participants reviewed and asked questions about these forms, with particular concerns around confidentiality and pseudonyms. Participants were given the autonomy to determine whether they wanted their name, initials, a pseudonym (chosen by the participant themself), or none of the above to identify themselves throughout the research which were indicated on the consent forms. Significantly, their preferences changed depending on the context (including in workshop settings, in transcripts of workshops, in the cellphilms, public screenings, and archived materials) and changed throughout the two workshops. For instance, one participant started the first workshop indicating that they wanted to use their real first name, and later changed their mind and chose a pseudonym.

The next part of this consent process included a cellphilm release form [see **Appendix D: Cellphilm Release Form**], which were reviewed and discussed at the end of the second workshop. Here I reiterated that the cellphilms belonged to their creators and that I would not use them without their permission. Participants had the option to share their cellphilms on the Aging Activisms website, the Fredericton Feminist Film Collective's website, and/or the Queer Heritage Initiative of New Brunswick's archive. They could also choose to include their films in future public screenings and what level of contact information they wanted to share (if any) alongside their films. Some participants asked that I reach out for approval prior to using their cellphilms, while others were comfortable letting me do whatever I wanted with them. Some participants were comfortable sharing their cellphilms, so long as I cropped out their names from the credits. The flexibility in this process allowed participants control over their own anonymity and vulnerability. This process was also open ended, leaving room for future collaboration in dissemination, and open to change in levels of involvement.

3.10 Tensions and Limitations

Because I used a creative research method in a new context, there were many teachings that came out of the research process about cellphilming in an intergenerational group. Many of the limitations of my research methods came from the inherent boundaries of a master's research project, namely a lack of time, money, and personnel. Aside from one *ElderPride* volunteer that helped set up chairs and signage, I facilitated both research workshops on my own. Working with a group of eight participants as a single researcher meant that my capacity and depth of data were less than if I had worked with a research team. This is especially clear in my inability to fully capture the creation process in the research production. For instance, had there been more facilitators, I would have taken pictures, videos, audio, and research notes throughout the cellphilm creation and storyboarding processes in the workshops. Instead, I was caught up assisting various participants and answering questions during these periods in the workshops. I had audio recordings of these processes, but participants scattered during the creation process and movement around the recording device meant the recordings were not useable for this time.

Because cellphilming was new to all the participants, and due to the time restraints of a set three-hour workshop, many participants did not completely finish their cellphilms in time for the informal screening. Although I encouraged participants to complete and share their cellphilms following the second research workshop, no one did. Looking back at some of the cellphilms, it is difficult to decipher their intention and meaning. An additional measure I could have taken in this workshop would have been to encourage participants to write a short description of their cellphilms and how they answered the prompt. This way, even in their unfinished state, I could have had a piece of data to help explain some of the decisions and intentions in the cellphilms.

Finally, in an intergenerational group, it was clear from the beginning that participants’ levels of comfort and familiarity with technology varied. Charlie, for instance, was chatting about using Instagram and TikTok upon entering the research space, whereas one of the elders did not know how to open the camera or app store on their cellphone. In hindsight, particularly upon focusing my analysis on intergenerational relationships, it would be interesting to have grouped participants together to help one another create their cellphilms. This would have facilitated a sharing of technological expertise across generations (and not necessarily just in one direction), and also helped build deeper relationships in the cellphilming process. This also would have freed me up as the researcher to do some of the work of data collection to capture process rather than just the finished products.

3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the eight participants in this research project: Gene, Participant A, T, Forrest, Jessi, Charlie, Participant B, and my own positionality as a researcher and participant. We came together in the Summer of 2022 to share the art-based methodology of cellphilming, to have group discussions about aging, queerness, disability, and futures, and to make short films based on these conversations. In the next chapters, I draw from the data collected in these workshops—the transcripts of the conversations, the cellphilms produced by participants, and my reflective notes from the process—to theorize an alternative model of generativity that centers queer disabled people.

Chapter 4: The Grief of Becoming Queer Crip Elders

In the weeks after the research workshops, I have been spending some time with Participant A's words from the first workshop, where she brought a fierce, thoughtful analysis of ageism in her everyday life as an older, queer, disabled woman and she discussed the layers of negative messages of being undervalued, irrelevant, and insignificant since surpassing the age of 40. Her question, "how do you age well in a society that doesn't value you?", has stuck with me.

This has been particularly relevant in the context of a conversation I had with a co-worker earlier this week. Z is a racialized, working-class single mom and I respect and admire my co-worker even though we have differing perspectives on the ongoing pandemic. It was a slow afternoon between services when Z asked me why I was still wearing a mask. "Do you intend on wearing that thing forever?" she asked. Although my mask wearing has been far from perfect over the last three years, I am careful to wear my KN95 at my public facing service industry job, especially since my boss started letting symptomatic and COVID-positive kitchen staff come into work. We got into a conversation about the risks of (re)infection and long-COVID and protecting the immune-compromised when Z brought up the all too familiar talking point of over-population and how "it's probably a good thing that this air-borne virus has wiped out thousands of peoples off the earth—there's way too many of us anyway," she argued. We talked about climate change, and global inequalities, and the way that marginalized populations are the first to be seen as disposable in proposed solutions to "overpopulation". "Well fine", she conceded, "I guess we should just kill the rich and stop letting people live past the age of 65." I don't think I said anything particularly *intelligent in the moment, my training in Sociology and Aging Studies about the myth of over-population went out the window. I managed to say something like "that's not fair! I believe that we are capable of changing our lifestyles instead of choosing groups of people to kill," but that piece of the conversation has stuck with me all week.*

How has our perspective of later life become so twisted that the old are seen as no more than a burden on society, our healthcare, economy, and planet? As a barrier to and in the way of a liveable future? Why are the old equated with the 1%, as if they have the same levels of consumption? It's like the old are at once hoarding resources, while simultaneously worthless and disposable. Just shy of the marker of 65, it's no wonder that this older participant was grieving—popular messages in the pandemic have framed her as worth sacrificing in the name of maintaining normalcy.

This excerpt comes from my research notes from the month following my fieldwork. Here, I reflect upon Participant A's expressions of grief and frustration with ageism against sentiments of eco-fascism that I encountered during the pandemic. Both the old and the disabled have been positioned as disposable through public discourses—about COVID-19, about climate change, and even within queer communities. Judith Butler (2009) explains that "grievability is the presupposition for the life that matters (p. 14)". Queer, disabled, and older adults are not valued in our society, and thus, are not seen as worth grieving when we are sick, dying, or dead. In what follows of this chapter, I will unpack the messages of disposability participants faced in their everyday lives and their expressions of grief in response, connecting this to a collective, community-based form of generativity. In an intergenerational group of queer and disabled individuals, expressions of loss and grief were shaped by the context of wider and deeper griefs rooted in our histories and ongoing marginalizations, introduced in the literature review [see **2.5 Context: Normative, Queer and Crip Grief**].

In the two research workshops I noticed a recurring theme of loss and grief. All of the eight research participants brought a form of grief and loss to the conversation and/or cellphilms, some more explicitly than others. I did not necessarily set out to study grief and loss as a major theme when I started; yet, in the context of the broader social conditions including the pandemic, rising queer hate, and the disposability of the old and disabled in our culture, it makes sense that participants expressed grief as we imagined otherwise (Davis, 2007). Grief has also been a central theme in other studies of crip/queer futurity and generativity even before the pandemic context. Dustin Bradley Goltz (2009) traces popular representations of gay male aging and found that they were repeatedly framed as “doomed to a future of sadness, misery, isolation, and perpetual loss” (p. 3), particularly through tropes of older gay men as sexual perverts, the absence of intergenerational mentorship, and gay men as sacrificial victims. Alison Kafer (2013), too, writes about how even feminist visions of the future are founded on the elimination of disability (p. 74).

Though, following May Chazan and Melissa Baldwin (2021), I am cautious to not characterize queerness and disability in an intergenerational group by negative emotions, I do think it’s important to begin my analysis by recognizing the hard emotions that participants were processing in the research space before looking at the more creative and hopeful approach in the next chapter of embodied knowledge. In this chapter, I offer an analysis of the particular ways grief was expressed in this research, divided into four sub-themes: (1) our missing elders, (2) our possible futures, (3) our changing body-minds, and (4) mobilizing change. Throughout my analysis, I will draw on select scholarship in order to further contextualize the findings and build toward the first part of the argument I make in this thesis: that queer crip generativity is connected to community and informed by grief and loss. This chapter will begin to push models of generativity to include growing old(er) for those who do not get to and the responsibility to share our unique and ongoing cultural history in their honour.

4.1 Findings and Discussion

4.1.1 Our Missing Elders

The first area I saw grief come into the research space was in an interaction with T during the focus group conversation about queer elders. I first met T in July at the ElderPride meeting I attended to introduce the research project. In her 60's, T is a white queer butch woman and an ElderPride regular. She is often pitching in to help the organizers set up chairs and tables or assemble food for the group. I was a little nervous that T was not enjoying her time in the research space because she was quieter than I remembered her, and she didn't contribute much in the first 15 minutes of the group conversation. My own ableist expectations of what engagement should look like meant that I was caught off guard when she opened up and was emotionally vulnerable with the group. I had asked the group, what can we do to centre and honour our queer ancestors and elders? T's shaking voice pierced the silence in the room when she confessed "I never had any queer elders". Up until that point, the conversation had felt relatively light and theoretical, yet T's statement echoed in the room, the absence of the oldest elders felt palpable in the research space. I reflected and followed up:

> *Yeah, I think there is just like a deep grief that isn't, that we don't often think about or like, acknowledge, yeah, I didn't have... there were no queer grandmothers, there were no lesbian grandmothers you know, in my extended family. There were no gay men that lived through the AIDS epidemic to tell the tales, in my family or in my parents' like, you know childhoods, you know, there was none of, there's none of that folklore. And that's something that I think, it's just taken for granted. Like we don't even think about it, it's hard to think about what we don't have, right, if we've never had it.*

T nodded and responded: "Exactly." Here, the interaction between T and I reminds us that there is a hole in queer lineages that meant they didn't grow up knowing any queer adults or elders and this interaction raises the question: what does it mean to become queer elders when we never got to have any ourselves?

Charlie, a trans and Chinese participant in their thirties also expressed a sense of grief and longing for missing queer elders in their cellphilm, titled "Five Generations". Alongside a slideshow of various photos of their extended family and their queer idols, their voiceover says: "I learned how to grow old from my family, but to be queer, I had to learn elsewhere. How do I bring you all together? Because I want to grow old and queer with you." Here, alongside a love for their families, biological and chosen, I see a grief that they have to look outside of their

Figure 1: Screenshot of Charlie's cellphilm, depicting a photo of them with Ivan Coyote (middle) and Sara Quinn (left).

Figure 2: Screenshot from Charlie's cellphilm depicting a family photo with their elders sitting up front.

culture and family to see themself reflected in elders. They have had to create a mental patchwork of what it means to be queer, trans, and Chinese as they age. The images from their cellphilm, seen below, reflect white Canadian queer and trans public figures like Ivan Coyote and Sara of Tegan and Sara [see Figure 1] as well as the cis, straight elders in their family [see Figure 2]. Where are the Chinese queer elders? What would it mean for Charlie to be surrounded by elders in their culture that are both queer and Chinese? Here, Charlie’s cellphilm reminds us of the diversity among queer elders that is also missing from our wider culture.

Here, participants expressed a disenfranchised grief for a generation of elders and ancestors they never got to know. These possible elders were not necessarily blood relatives, but rather, community members that we were never in community with. There are no dominant processes of mourning to recognize or process these losses. Though it is well-known that there is a missing generation of queer elders, there is not much literature looking at the intergenerational experiences of grief in the queer community generations after the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Matilda Berstein Sycamore (2021) has begun the work of compiling personal essays of a generation having grown up in the shadow of the AIDS crisis. Primarily written from the perspectives of those who lived through the crisis, Bernstein Sycamore’s (2021) *Between Certain Death and a Possible Future,* touches on the disenfranchised grief left to the survivors and those missing queer elders:

> Grief is not something you can steal. You can silence it, yes, and I think that's what our culture has done—dominant culture, gay culture, queer and trans cultures. The grief has been internalized, and the consequences have been devastating--intimately, interpersonally, culturally, and communally (p. 16).

Participants in this research project have begun the work of vocalizing this internalized grief. We extend this work of exploring the rippling effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic by expressing grief for missing elders—particularly in the context of a small town in Canada that is not often framed as a center for queer history [see Batt & Green, 2022].

4.1.2 Our Possible Futures

The second area of grief and loss explored by participants throughout this research project pertains to grieving the limited and limiting futures they are looking forward to, often based on trends they saw about aging in the present around them. Participant A, approaching 60 years of age, was explicit about the ageism that she sees and experiences in her everyday life. Early in the focus group discussion she shared:

> *Part of aging in, I speak from North American culture, is [laughs] you are under valuable****, you’re undervalued, you're dismissed, you’re invalidated, you’re delegitimized you... You basically are just pushed to the side*** *instead of being embraced in your knowledge and your wisdom. And certainly, your journey ends at 40 and then you're completely irrelevant, insignificant, and you encounter this almost everyday sometimes like I can tell that in interactions that I have and things that people are relating to me as somebody who's my age [...]* ***aging well... how do you do that in a society that doesn't value you?***

Here, when asked how she sees aging well, she turns the question back around and asks, how could I possibly age well in an ageist and ableist society? She later turns the conversation towards a more practical perspective of aging futures and a source of fear and grief for many in the room: access to safe and affordable housing:

> *I think about like practical things too, like you need... Like for me, I want financial security. I want to know that I'm going to have decent, safe, adequate housing. [group hums in agreement] That if I have to go, um I do not want to—especially with COVID—and I never did, but I do not want to go into a for profit, for-profit long-term care facility, I don't want to go into one of those places* ***and have things done to people that are done in there for the sake of profit.***[4] *And like, there's all sorts of, really harmful stuff like that, you know and then when you go into those places, a lot of people go back into the closet. There's all sorts of articles, like there's uh, SAGE in Ottawa, Ontario*[5] *and older people in there in the studies about how they have to go back into the closet after years of being out 30, 40 years, but now they're not sure they're gonna be safe from staff, from other peoples' families, from other residents. So that's* ***that's pretty traumatizing that you need to start denying who you are again****.*

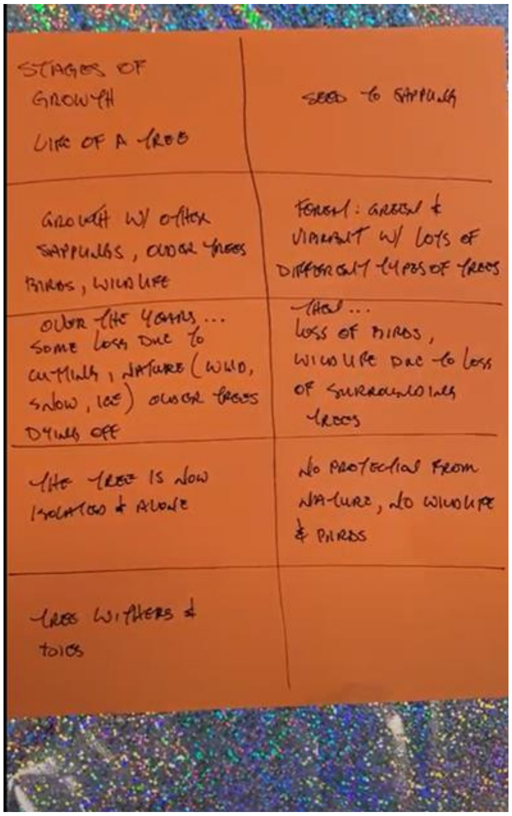
In this conversation about housing, it seemed like for-profit long-term care (LTC) was an inevitability in the current economic and political landscape. In Participant A's voice and words, you could hear the grief for the elders left behind and lost in long term care during the pandemic and the violence that queer elders face in these places. She continued to express worry for her possible future later in the focus group when she shared: "So about the future, what the hell kind of supports are there going to be for me when I'm 75? 80? These processes around will be accentuated in this society [housing, healthcare, etc.], and I'm going to be so expendable." In her thirties, another participant, Jessi, spoke about long term care as an alienating potential future. Jessi explained that LTC represses sexuality for all residents, not just queer folks. Depending on residents needs and availability in the facility, couples and loved ones may be split into different rooms, floors, or even buildings within long term care facilities. This, Jessi said, is "devastating and ignores later life sexuality". Looking towards their aging futures, both participants expressed fear and dread regarding LTC and were longing for alternatives.

---

[4] See Morrocco et al, (2021)

[5] See Boulé et al., 2019

As is reflected in Figure 3 and Figure 4 below, T’s cellphilm dealt with loss and death and expressed grief for the future. Second to share her cellphilm in the group screening, and after a few comments and questions about her lack of technical and artistic abilities, I wasn’t sure what to expect from T’s cellphilm. I asked her to share a bit about her film before we watched it and asked if she could read the words from her storyboard, mostly for the sake of accessibility [see Figure 3]. She began to explain her analogy of a tree in a forest, beginning as a seed, explaining that the tree represented herself. The group nodded along, humming in support and agreement as she explained the diversity of the forest and the sense of community that came from being surrounded by different types of plants and animals. As she explained the loss, loneliness, and death at the end of the life cycle, she began to choke up and the room grew silent. She shared that in the life cycle of the tree, they would face losses due to harsh conditions like ice storms and strong winds, due to cuttings of trees to sell and profit from, and from the dying off of the older trees. These losses surrounding the tree would result in a loss of biodiversity, the birds and wildlife would leave the tree



STAGES OF GROWTH LIFE OF A TREE	SEED TO SAPLING
GROWTH W/ OTHER SAPPLINGS, OLDER TREES BIRDS, WILDLIFE	FOREST: GREEN & VIBRANT W/ LOTS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF TREES
OVER THE YEARS... SOME LOSS DUE TO CUTTING, NATURE (WIND, SNOW, ICE) OLDER TREES DYING OFF	THEN... LOSS OF BIRDS, WILDLIFE DUE TO LOSS OF SURROUNDING TREES
THE TREE IS NOW ISOLATED & ALONE	NO PROTECTION FROM NATURE, NO WILDLIFE & BIRDS
TREE WITHERS & DIES	

Figure 3: T's Storyboard, the first image in her cellphilm.

isolated and alone. Without the protection from community, the tree would eventually wither and die, depicted in Figure 4. Although we had discussed ageism and exclusion and the inevitability of death the week before, it was from a distance. Yet, as she spoke, it was obvious that T was speaking from experience: that she felt lonely, excluded from community, unsupported, and was grappling with her future and mortality. I managed to thank her for sharing before screening her film and we all watched in stunned silence as her simple but powerful images of a tree progressed with a sparkly tablecloth in the background. The juxtaposition of the joyful colours and bouncing light against the rather pessimistic view of queer aging futures and the life course felt even sadder. After the video, we all clapped, but it seemed like participants didn't know how to react to such a raw display of emotion. When asked to reflect upon a queer future, T pictured dying alone.

Figure 4: Screenshot of T's Cellphilm (1:05)

My own cellphilm, titled "Flux" also explores grief and uncertainty about the future. I was nervous about sharing my cellphilm with the research participants—particularly the nakedness of it all, both physically and metaphorically. Visually, my cellphilm juxtaposes images of my partially naked body, with multicoloured lines gradually appearing over my stretch marks, against a wrinkly, white cotton sheet in the background, with images of the Otonabee River flowing in similarly fluid and imperfect lines. I made this cellphilm in the month or two leading up to my fieldwork, during a time when I was really struggling with my body image. As was the case for many, I gained some weight over the pandemic and I struggled with the changes I saw in my body. I grew out of my entire wardrobe and had to find a way to feel comfortable in my own skin and identity in unfamiliar garments. I grew stretch marks, purple in their newness, all over my torso and legs. My body sagged and widened in different ways. My body felt foreign and I wondered if I would ever feel at home with myself again. I was also dealing with some fresh physical and mental health diagnoses during the pandemic. My previously unidentified gastrointestinal issues had been diagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), which felt more like a non-diagnosis than anything else. My lifelong struggles with perfectionism, anxiety, and accepting change had recently been (partly) contained by the label of Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder (OCPD), which left me feeling seen and exposed. I struggled to make sense of these new understandings of myself. I wondered, does this make me disabled? Will I ever learn to trust and rely upon my fluctuating body-mind?

Figure 5: Screenshot from Megan's cellphilm (0:29) that depicts her stretchmarks fading into an image of the Otanabee River.

The voiceover in my cellphilm here says:

> *My body-mind lives in a state of anticipation of the future. Stuck, anxiously awaiting the what mays, what coulds, and what ifs. Day by day, I exist at the mercy of my unpredictable and uncontrollable body-mind,* ***aging into an increasingly uncertain future****.*

My own uncertainties in my body coincided with wider societal uncertainties about the planet, about the pandemic, about systemic racism, about rising anti-LGBT hate. The unknowability and uncertainty of the future, what it would look like, if I would get to survive into it, led to feelings of loss and grief. I wondered; will I ever get to be an elder?

Though wider discourses frame queer, crip, and aging futures as undesirable and bleak [see **Chapter 2: Literature Review**], there is limited literature that is looking at how these assumptions of unhappy futures are affecting queer and disabled people firsthand and on an emotional level. Jess Boulé and her colleagues (2019) conducted focus groups with LGBTQ older adults in Ottawa, Ontario and found that participants were worried and fearing their futures, particularly regarding access to safe medical care and housing and the wider context of shifting political climates. Participants in this research echoed their sentiments and extend their findings by explicitly naming some of the systems of power influencing their grief for the future, such as ageism and for-profit long-term care.

There is a growing area of research on the effects of climate disaster on mental health, known as climate grief. According to psychologist, Andrew Bryant (cited in Allen, 2020), climate grief is a relatively new and unique form of grief that is existential in nature and is difficult to process because it is ongoing. He sees climate grief as a form of disenfranchised grief too—since there are no cultural rituals or public acknowledgement to help people work through it. Importantly, the participants in this research remind us that it is not just the young that are experiencing climate grief. It is a common trope in climate justice movements and research to frame youth as those inheriting the grief, fear, and responsibilities of climate change, while older generations are in the way of and detrimental to the cause (Chazan & Baldwin, 2019). Older and younger participants alike shared uncertainty and grief for the future in this research.

Significantly, participants' fears and understandings of climate change were intertwined with other systems at play such as housing, ageism, and homophobia.

4.1.3 Changing Body-Minds

The next sub-category of grief and loss in the data is about the feelings associated with changing, ageing body-minds. Participants in this group knew the grief of a changing body-mind, particularly the elders.

> *Once I hit 40*, T explained in the focus group, *then the changes really started to happen to me. And not in a good way. [laughs, pause]. Yeah, 40 was tough. Then as I get closer like every year now, I wake up with a different ache or whatever. I just find the time frame is getting worse as things start to deteriorate, right? It's cold, aches, and pains and not being able to do [things].*

For T, these changes in her body-mind as she ages were a largely negative experience, especially when they impacted her everyday activities.

Gene, another elder in the group, commiserated with T: "Oh, I know what that's all about!". Gene was the only cis man in the group and the oldest in the room at the age of 76. He seemed to be having a hard time hearing throughout the workshops and was quite repetitive in his comments throughout the focus group discussion. I almost missed his disclosure of health issues between this repetition when he said: "I had a stroke three months ago." When I asked how this had affected his life, he responded:

> *No, no I'm getting back, you know, I'm getting back to myself. I'm getting out there again. And I don't know what the reasoning for it is, but as I said, everything I believe everything happens for a reason.* ***I don't know what the reason for it was****. I'm getting back to out there again.*

Here, the repetition of "I don't know why it happened" read as a form of grief, like he was wondering how he could have had a stroke when he has been taking all the right steps. This was reiterated later in the conversation when Gene shared his extreme exercise regimen:

> *I remain just as active as humanly possible* ***with I'm known to walk like six, seven, eight hours a day,*** *but I want to do that, I wanna, my age doesn't matter. I want to continue taking each moment as they come and live them to the absolute fullest,* ***instead of complaining about them.***

Here, it seemed like Gene was repeating dominant messaging about overcoming disability and practicing active aging by suppressing his feelings of grief and loss about his aging and changing body-mind, dismissing it as "complaints".

Participant A also expressed grief regarding her changing body-mind, particularly after acquiring a brain injury:

> *I know like my I had acquired a brain injury that is from my work and then [year] that whole thing changed and so that changed and it's hard when your body changes especially I consider myself an athlete and instructor.*

She goes on to explain how her changed body-mind influenced her identity and everyday life:

> *I deal with it it's a chronic condition, so that has implications for me about where I can go, where I can move, you know I used to do a lot of traveling in [continent]…like health care starts to matter, there's all sorts of considerations that you can't just do two year stint here and two year stint there anymore, but you think about what the healthcare would be like, the housing, just because health is more important, some people thinking that I've downgrade but I think it's just because I'm older.*

Here, this older lesbian participant explains that she had to grieve the changes that her disability and old(er) age has had on her life, specifically her ability for spontaneity, travel, and sport. She also named 40 as a turning point in her aging, not just in her physical body, but in how those around her treated her: "you're very easily dismissed once you’re over 40 where I know they may not know your age, but they know that you’re past the phase where they need to listen to you.” Here, a solidarity between the old and the disabled is established through their grief and loss: both in their embodied experiences and in their marginalization in an ageist and ableist world.

It wasn’t just the elders in the room that expressed grief and loss regarding their changing body-minds. Charlie, a non-binary trans person, talked about their experience with transitioning in their thirties and comparing their body to others. “In more recent years,” Charlie explained, “I’ve thought a lot more about how my body looks than I had in my teens.” As they came into their non-binary identity, including having gender-affirming surgery, they reverted into a teenage self-consciousness about their body. This was exacerbated by the visibility of certain types of queer bodies in the media:

> *And there's also a lot of visibility on social media. So, lots of people taking pictures of like their post-surgery bodies and Instagram putting it on TikTok. So on one hand, there's a lot of visibility and it's really great, but at the same time that visibility has become very focused on a certain type of body that's like young and able-bodied and athletic and thin and that has also I think it's causing a lot of body anxiety in the community and also like for myself.*

Though the changes in their body were self-inflicted and initiated to affirm their identity, the visibility of their trans body post-surgery led to a loss of confidence and new standards that they felt they were failing to live up to.

Charlie’s partner, Jessi, also expressed the ways that their body-mind has shifted over time. Jessi had recently discovered their neurodiversity at the time of this workshop and was grappling with the violence they had faced after years of being forced to fit within neurotypical ways of being. In the focus group, Jessi shared the following:

> *I think about how um, my body and ability and mind have changed through time, um and I'm kinda going through the thing where when I was* ***trying to fit into sort of a more normative way of living can actually cause irreparable harm****, and also to the point where, I've discovered that actually like now that I pushed aside like those expectations, my quality of life and ability to do all kinds of things is greatly improved by setting a lot of that aside.*

Here, Jessi and Charlie's grief(s) about their changing body-minds wasn't necessarily about the changes they were seeing in their embodied selves, but rather the changes in their understandings of their body-minds. Importantly, most of the participants above talked about their changing body-minds not just from an individual perspective, but also how the world around them perceived and treated their non-normative body-minds. Embodiment scholars have been writing about the body as unfinished spaces of transformation and becoming for many years now (Budgeon, 2003; Gill et al., 2005). Laura Hurd Clarke and Alexandra Korotchenko (2011) argue that experiences of aging are "invariably embodied" (p. 497). Katy Pilcher and Wendy Martin (2020) recently explored the gendered practices of body work of aging embodiment that required their participants to live in a "state of impermanence, of continual becoming" (p. 714?). Broadly, participants in this study were dealing with the realities of living with a body that is always becoming. This sub-theme helps push the work of embodiment scholars towards experiences of trans, queer, disabled, and old changing bodies.

4.1.4 Mobilizing Change

The final area where participants discussed grief was as motivation and mobilisation towards change. First and foremost, I saw this in Forrest's cellphilm. Forrest is a queer, trans 30-year-old who came to the research project as an ElderPride volunteer. They initially planned to sit back and observe, but with encouragement decided to join the group as a participant. They ended up writing a poem for their cellphilm titled "Sanily: Queering Senility and Seniority" which featured a one-shot-shoot of the roots, trees, and dirt in a fluid pan of the camera. They express grief when they said: "The current runs strong with much debris, whipping me into the shape of things, constantly shaping me". Here I see an acknowledgement of the homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and ageism in the world around them and how it shapes their identity and lived experiences. Their poem goes on to say:

> *As the water settles into place, the flotsam and jetsam form sentiment and sediment and I see the footsteps that form before me, left before me, for me, shaping the way I leave my own.*
>
> *The continued legacy along the coast, up through the roots, uproot the roots that place us in lonely pots, separated for the enjoyment of others.*
>
> *In the forest, I am beautiful, aged and enclosed with those I love*
>
> *Our arms branching out across the divide.*

Here, you can see a reflection of the focus group conversation about long-term care reflected in their reference to "lonely pots" where folks are separated from one another for the enjoyment of others. Yet, despite and because of this grief and despair, Forrest brings forward the importance of "branching out across the divide", in building intergenerational relationships, in honouring our elders and ancestors, and creating space where everyone across the lifespan, ability, and identity belong and is welcome. You can also see the language of roots and branches reflected in the imagery of Forrest's cellphilm [see Figure 6]. This, again, echoes

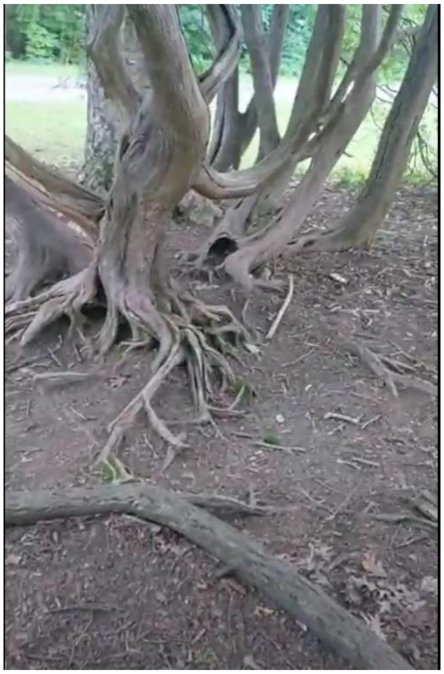


Figure 6: Screenshot from Forrest's cellphilm, an image of dirt, branches, and roots

the focus group conversation from the week before where elder, Participant A, expressed that "younger people seem to forget whose shoulders they stand on". Forrest responded to that sentiment by sharing:

> *We need to honour all of the queer people who have come before us and keep carrying that torch and keep working on that like fight, and right to thrive, and then pass that on, and you know, think of the generations still coming as well.*

In response to the grief that was shared about being forgotten and left behind by the younger queer community, Forrest, sees continuing the fight for social justice as a way to honour and extend the legacy of our ancestors.

The group agreed that the way forward through this grief was to build intergenerational connections. Gene reiterated this point on intergenerational connections in the focus group where he talked about aging as a process of learning and acceptance and that we must pass along those learnings in order to know who and what we are. It is through sharing our knowledges with others that we can begin to know ourselves and our histories. Charlie also named relationships as a source of hope through grief: "I think with the climate disaster, with housing and affordability, with all that, what will endure and will get us through everything is these relationships." Looking forward towards an uncertain aging future, Participant A also shared that "[intergenerational queer and crip] community is gonna be even more important I think for our happiness".

Participants use of grief as a mobilization towards change echoes Arundhati Roy's (2020) assertion that this pandemic is a portal to the next world (Roy, 2020). Grief has long been politically motivating, like in AIDS-related social movements such as ACT UP. See for example, David Wojnarowicz infamous ACT UP protest sign on the back of a denim jacket that reads “If I die of AIDS—forget burial—just drop my body on the steps of the FDA (The David Wojnarowicz Foundation, 2023)”. Grief is political. Another powerful embodiment of the convergence of activism and grief is the 1985 AIDS Quilt, a giant memorial quilt, made up of individual blocks made by the loved ones of those who died with AIDS, including their names, birth and deaths dates, and archival materials representing their lives (Bravo, 2022). Every time this quilt is displayed, its enormity acts as a living monument to those lost to HIV/AIDS and the complacency of the government. Action in the face of loss reiterates Devich-Cyril’s (2021) important reminder: “joy is not the opposite of grief. Grief is the opposite of indifference. Grief is an evolutionary indicator of love—the kind of great love that guides revolutionaries (para. 18)”. Participants’ griefs—for lost elders, for unpredictable futures, for changing body-minds—demonstrate a love and care for their communities, the world around them, and their bodies.

4.2 Conclusion

Participants felt a sense of responsibility to and kinship with their ancestors and elders that they didn’t get the chance to know. Despite and because of the grief of these missing connections, participants yearned for intergenerational connections where they could carry on the work of their ancestors. They strive to become the elders they didn’t have, and to share the unique and ongoing cultural history in their honour. Rather than seeing their legacy as an individual affair, the queer crip elders in this research space saw generativity as a community responsibility. Our future as a community depends upon the lessons from our histories, which necessitates intergenerational exchange. Queer, crip community can harness the grief of a missing generation, of fear and lack of safety in the future, of changing, aging body-minds in an ableist and ageist world, and of being disposable throughout this pandemic to build intergenerational relationships and opportunities for exchange. Participants experiences and lessons about grief and loss help extend dominant understandings of generativity beyond individualism, towards community and intergenerational connections.

Chapter 5: Embodied Knowledge as Inheritance

"*Elders are not just storytellers and teachers, but guardians of cultural heritage and stewards of spirituality*" (Todd Joseph Danforth, 2022, *Queer Inheritance*)

What often comes to mind when one considers inheritance are the tangible and financially valuable items that are passed down between generations: land, houses, family cottages, sums of money. As queer theorists have noted, inheritance and its corresponding legislation, is built around heteronormative models of family, reproduction, and generational succession that excludes most queer people (Sorainen, 2014; Halberstam, 2005). Jack Halberstam (2005) writes about inheritance as an orientation to time which "connects the family to the historical past of the nation, and glances ahead to connect the family to the future of both familial and national stability" (p. 5). Queer people have been erased from these stories of the past and imagined futures. Yet, an alternative and creative model of inheritance is developed in the absence of traditional models. Through intergenerational relationships and connections, outside of heteronormative kinship systems, embodied wisdom and knowledges are shared in all directions. Scholars mapping alternative theories of temporalities (see **2.6 Theories of Temporalities**) help us understand the myth of progress, and instead the ways that experiences in time are repetitive, cyclical, and non-linear.

Perspectives of aging, disability, and queerness are often from a vantagepoint of loss: loss of youthfulness, loss of mobility, loss of a happy future. As I outlined in the last chapter, there is certainly an aspect of queerness, aging, and disability informed by loss and grief, but it is important to recognize that this is not the entirety of this intersection of experiences. Rather, participants emphasized the irreplaceable wisdom, experiences, and knowledges gained as one grows older. Significantly, this queer crip aging wisdom is embodied, located in the body, sometimes beyond what words can convey. In this chapter, I will explore the following three sub-themes to further my argument about queer crip generativity: (1) embodied knowledge, (2) non-normative temporalities, and (3) expanding intergenerationality. Valuing this queer, crip, embodied wisdom and sharing it intergenerationally in all directions, challenges a capitalist conception of generativity that relies upon material exchanges- often the transfer of wealth- as a way to solidify a legacy into the future. The sources and direction of knowledge transmission also challenges a colonial and heteronormative conceptualization of temporalities and kinship.

This theme about the sharing of embodied knowledge intergenerationally came from a grouping of three different, yet interconnected sub-themes. The data in this chapter, in contrast to the last, comes primarily from the focus group conversation rather than the cellphilms and also draws more heavily from my own contributions in the group discussion. The first sub-theme, expressed by six of the eight participants was the explicit naming of the embodied wisdom developed with age and disability. The second theme was regarding non-normative temporalities, particularly about aging, elderhood, and the life course which was taken up in different ways by six of the eight participants. The third and final subtheme was about expanding understandings of intergenerationality to encompass relationships not just with people, but also with the land which I saw reflected in five participant contributions. Taken together, these sub-themes help chart a form of generativity and inheritance that is knowledge-based and shared in all directions within diverse and non-blood-related kinship networks.

5.1 Findings and Discussion

5.1.1 Embodied Knowledge

I first met Jessi when I was fifteen when she taught my friends and I a queer focused sex education workshop at our feminist group meeting. She was in her twenties, working for a local AIDS-service organization and wearing her uniform of a chopped-up t-shirt with multi-coloured hair. She was awkward and charming, winning us over with her signature move of stretching a condom over her head, making a DIY dental dam, and cutting out the elastic to use as a hair tie. Over the next two years, Jessi became a mentor to me. I volunteered with her to teach presentations about STBBIs across the province (or Sex, Drugs, and Rock and Roll, as we lovingly called it). She invited my friends and I to her monthly potlucks where we met queer adults and elders, had bonfires, and talked about books. Eventually, it was Jessi that helped me write scholarship applications and get into university. After I graduated high school, Jessi moved across the country to complete her PhD, and we stayed in occasional contact over social media. It was a pleasant surprise when Jessi and her partner showed up at my research workshop.

Jessi and Charlie had recently moved to Fredericton for work and were living with a lesbian couple in their sixties on the outskirts of town. Long-time political activists and prominent figures in the fight for reproductive justice in New Brunswick, their queer crip elder wisdom, knowledges, and histories were present in the room through their relationship with Jessi and Charlie. For instance, Jessi shared a story about one of these queer elders trying to buy a bike. They had a terrible time at the local bike store because they had a well meaning 19-year-old giving them all the wrong advice. No, she exclaimed, I need to talk to someone who knows what knee pain feels like! There’s an embodied experience that cannot be replicated, Jessi explained, which is why the conversation that she later had with a worker in their forties was completely different and they were able to set them up with a new, adapted bike. This is not to say that only old(er) people can understand knee pain, but rather, that living in a shifting, disabled, aging body-mind creates valuable embodied knowledge and solidarity that is shared across generations. There is a wisdom accrued through living with pain, by rolling with constantly shifting abilities and mobilities, and by coming up against ableist and ageist barriers. It was Jessi, informed by her intergenerational connections, that coined this group language of embodied knowledge: "There is this very embodied knowledge—and it's not just stuff that we can't do anymore—it's replaced with all the other experiences and also embodied knowledge and things that… matter" (Jessi).

As a scholar themself, Jessi was explicit in their framing of embodied knowledge in the context of disability studies:

> *I think often we talk about like in disability studies we get to talk about the gaps and the thing in disability as inherently from a place of lacking and we can't imagine all the things that replace what's not in our experience like we get to talk about aging in the same way.*

Here, Jessi draws a connection between aging and disability as a process of loss and lack. This led to a realisation for me in the group conversation:

> *Yeah, aging isn't like, it's not about losing, right? It's not about, you're losing your youthfulness, you're like losing your energy. You're also like you're gaining this embodied knowledge and you're gaining, uh, yeah, like sometimes like more comfort in your own self and body and relationships. Yeah, I love that. Seeing it not as a lack in the same way as like disability and crip culture, not something that's lacking, but uh, like a new form of embodied knowledge.*

It was in conversation between Jessi and I, that I began to understand her conception of crip, queer, aging knowledge and identify it in the stories of other participants.

Participant A took up this idea of embodied knowledge through the language of wisdom. “As you get older, you realize this wisdom, that comes in many forms…and if you have one thing, you can’t replace personal experience.” Older adults have so much to offer to others, she explained: “you’re this living breathing person who’s done so much!” However, she explained, this wisdom that is developed with age is not very respected in Western culture, and we must get in touch with that wisdom in order to age well. Gene, too, saw aging as a process of gaining new perspectives:

> *Now as we get older, we look at things differently and I find we look at age differently. I turn 76 in three weeks and I just look at everything out there differently now. And I I look at everything differently. I learned so much, you know, with age and and uh... So what does aging mean? For me, it means you learn a lot more. To me, that's important. That's how I look at it.*

You can see a repetition and emphasis in Gene’s words about thinking differently and learning with age. To Gene, there is a form of knowledge that is unique to older adults that develops through familiarity with oneself.

Though it was more abstract, this wisdom gained over the life course was reflected in Participant B’s cellphilm. Participant B, a white, fat, queer woman in her thirties, came to the second research workshop as an additional Pride volunteer and decided to join in on making a cellphilm as a participant. Her cellphilm

Figure 7: Screenshot from B's cellphilm, multicoloured confetti falling out of a mason jar on a white background.

was approximately 30 seconds long and used stop motion with multicoloured paper arranged in a variety of different ways. The cellphilm starts with a drawing of a nuclear family on a white piece of paper, the picture is then covered with black ripped pieces of construction paper. The next frame depicts multicolour sticky notes moving around the screen, ending in a straight line in the middle of the frame. The sticky notes are then crumpled up and reappear as tiny pieces of paper cut up into confetti [see Figure 7]. Participant B briefly explained her cellphilm during the screening in the second workshop as representing a process of learning and unlearning. “As you age,” she explained, “you gain clarity about who you are and what you believe. You can start to separate yourself from the values that were taught and imposed on you.” Though not named in her explanation of the cellphilm, the image of the nuclear family and the discussion about learning who you are, evoked a process of coming out and into yourself as a queer person.

This group conceptualization of embodied knowledge is reflected in Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha’s (2018) assertion that disability is not a deficiency, but rather that disabled people develop crip emotional intelligence and skills within crip culture and community (p. 69). They explain that deficiency is the dominant narrative of disability, viewing disabled people as damaged goods, as lacking something, in need of a cure. The understanding that disabled people have their own unique skills, sciences, technologies, and cultures stands in direct opposition to the deficiency model. Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018) outlines many examples of this crip emotional intelligence: in cutting each other slack, in patience and creativity of finding alternative modes of communication, in not making assumptions, in sharing resources and showing up for one another (p. 70-1). Harriet McBride Johnson reiterates this explaining that “we [disabled people] have something the world needs” (Johnson, 2005, p. 207-8 as cited in Clare, 2017, p. 26).

Similarly, popular culture often frames aging as a deficiency: a process of decline and dependency, contributing to the myth of apocalyptic demography. In this popular approach, the growing aging population is a crisis which will deplete social resources, particularly healthcare and pensions (Calasanti, 2020, p. 201). Here, older adults are a burden on younger generations and on healthcare, housing, and the environment. An alternative, yet still problematic approach to aging attempts to reverse this negative discourse of decline by placing the responsibility of aging successfully onto aging individuals themselves [see **2.1 Successful Aging and the Critical Turn in Aging Studies**]. Linn Sandberg (2013) challenges this binary of decline or success with her language of “affirmative old age”. As a concept, affirmative aging takes the material body as its starting point and the changes and differences of the aged body as a positive and productive force (Sandberg, 2014, p. 19). Sandberg (2013) examines affirmative old age in the context of later life sexuality, noting that impotence for example, is commonly understood as a loss of function, masculinity, and personhood (see Marshall & Katz, 2002), but was negotiated by her older male participants as leading to a greater appreciation of intimacy and touch (p. 23). Affirmative aging seeks to recognize the potentials of aging embodiment: “in contrast to successful aging, [affirmative aging] does not aspire to agelessness or attempt to reject and fight old age, but instead seeks a conceptualisation and acceptance of old age in all its diversity” (Sandberg, 2013, p. 35).

Here, the embodied experiences of difference—both in old age and disability—are seen as valuable rather than a problem to be fixed.

I build upon these critical disability and aging scholars to bring together the intersectional experiences of aging, queerness, and disability under the concept of queer crip embodied knowledge. Challenging deficiency models of understanding, participants saw aging as a process of gaining knowledge, clarity, personal experiences, perspectives, and adaptability. Although queer and crip individuals are more likely to live in poverty, and live in homelessness (The Trevor Project, 2021; Wall, 2017), they still have plenty to offer within intergenerational relationships. This conception of embodied wisdom helps further queer crip aging generativity to include the passing down (or across or above) of valuable embodied wisdom accrued over a lifetime.

5.1.2 Non-Normative Temporalities

Although Participant B's cellphilm, much like T's cellphilm, depicts a linear and progressive process of aging and development, many participants referenced a non-linear understanding of time and aging throughout the project. This occurred most clearly in the first workshop when Charlie challenged the groups' understanding of what constitutes an elder:

> *I think like there are role models that I have who are younger than me, but they've had certain experiences, they've come to realize certain things earlier, like people who are trans—and that's not a word that I grew up hearing—but there are many younger people who have been living out as a trans person for many years before I even realized that it could be something to me. So anyway, there's some people I see as kind of queer elders but they're not necessarily older than me.*

Here, Charlie asserts that one doesn't have to be old to be an elder, challenging the idea that knowledge transfer occurs linearly and in one direction. This is especially pertinent in the context of the AIDS epidemic and the COVID pandemic which have diminished our populations of queer and disabled elders: there are elders of all ages in our community that have embodied wisdom to share across generations. An elder participant agreed with Charlie, referencing "eternal old souls" as carriers of wisdom early in life.

Similarly, Forrest questions who gets to define what is "old", "young", or "middle aged" in their cellphilm when they said:

> *What defines a midlife crisis? A quarter life crisis?*
>
> *Who gets to decide or define how much life they have left?*
>
> *I'm 30 rings into my tree. Am I a sapling or a home for those newer than me?*
>
> *How deep do these roots go? And is there rot along the pathways that have planted me here today?*

At 30 years old, Forrest is arguing that age is relative. We don't know how long we will have the privilege of living, so who is to determine that we are young or old? In the context of queer and crip community, who is to say that we are either a receiver of knowledge as a youth or a knowledge giver as an elder? Can't we be both at once? Forrest is describing a queer crip temporal approach to the life course and challenging a binary understanding of young and old, elder or youth.

Jessi and I both brought a queer crip temporality to our understandings of aging and the life course. Jessi, for instance, in reference to her newfound neurodiversity, talked about failing to meet the expectations of a neurotypical life course, and explained that by pushing aside normative expectations of doing things, she has a better quality of life.

Jessi went on to explain that, “a big strength of our community is like how much how many rules everywhere else seems to have… I think a lot of what we strive for and succeed at is built around disrupting those arbitrary rules”. I echoed Jessi’s statement in the focus group when I expanded upon some of the expectations of the life course that I felt weren’t achievable:

> *Yeah I love that. Yeah, if we’re not trying to push ourselves in, or if we’re constantly failing at, at getting inside of the normative timeline of your life course, it’s like, you know, graduating in four years and then, you know, getting a permanent job for the rest of your life, and then buying a house and getting married and having kids, all of which are like not even possible anymore right? Like in the current, in the current financial landscape. And then retiring, you know, at 65, and then having savings and you know there’s a life course you’re supposed to fit into and instead of failing, as queer and disabled people, what if we just like throw that away and make our own, you know?*

Here, we were talking about accepting and celebrating a “doing” of life that may not fit a preconceived order or speed. For instance, Charlie shared, in reference to a story about their grandfather still having hopes at 90 years old to see his grandchild graduate, that they had dropped out of school.

As an older gay man with memory loss, Gene both discussed and embodied a non-linear approach to time and the life course. This can be seen in his cyclical and repetitive comments throughout the group discussion such as his statement that: “with age, we look at things differently”, which he repeated seven times throughout the course of the one-hour conversation. He also repeatedly brought up the importance of accepting the way things are, which he did six times in the focus group discussion. Throughout his interactions and in this repetition, Gene demonstrated a non-linear relationship with time, what some scholars conceptualize as “dementia time”. He also expressed an understanding of time that does not move at the same speed for everybody: “the older you get, the faster it goes. My grandfather taught me that and he’s been dead 62 years.” To Gene, time doesn’t move the same way for all people. His understanding of time also did not seem to begin and end with life and death: “I’m not a religious person but I believe it leads on to something else… it goes on. The earth is a billion years old. God wouldn’t put us here for 70 years overall, it goes on. That’s the way I look at it.” Though he recognized that death was inevitable, Gene didn’t seem to fear death—there are things that were here before us and will continue afterwards and to him, that was comforting.

Considering how the ideas shared in my research resonate with broader themes in the literature, I now draw connections between queer, crip, and aging scholars and the findings explored above. Sandy Grande (2018), an important Indigenous scholar on aging and temporalities, writes about age not as a crisis, but rather as a source of possibility, and a portal to alternative ways of being. In Grande’s (2018) Dakota community, elders are not defined by their chronological age, but rather, are those identified by their community as knowledge keepers and resources for generational continuities. Charlie’s conception of queer crip elders as those who have lived with an experience for longer than them, builds upon Indigenous definitions of elderhood in a queer context. This wisdom can move in all directions, not necessarily just from the older to the younger. A forty-year-old can share that wisdom with a sixty-year-old, as was the case with Jessi’s story about the adapted bike. A young disabled person can share that wisdom with a newly impaired older adult, and vise versa—a process that is referred to as crip doulaship in crip literature (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018).

Charlie's experience of learning new language about their queerness in their thirties from queer youth, is echoed in the lived experience of Peterborough-local crip queer artist and scholar, Derek Newman-Stiles (2022). In a public talk, *Disabling Queerness,* Newman-Stiles (2022) described coming into their queerness in their forties after learning about the term "non-binary" from their undergraduate students. Here, both Charlie and Newman-Stiles (2022) expand this lived, embodied wisdom to transness. Living in an embodied fluidity and transition- gender or otherwise- challenges a linear temporality. Vanessa Fabbre (2015) writes about gender transitions in later life as a process of accepting failure to live up to normative expectations and defining success on new terms such as through feeling respected in their identities. Successful life courses look different for queer and disabled individuals, challenging a linear, chronological progression of time.

Queerness is compelling, according to Jack Halberstam (2005), because of its "potential to open up new life narratives and alternative relations to time and space (p. 2)". As introduced in **Chapter 2: Literature Review**, Halberstam (2005) defines queer temporalities as a queer use of time constructed in opposition to family, heterosexuality, and reproduction; lives lived outside of heteronormative markers of life such as "birth, marriage, reproduction, and death (p. 2)". The AIDS epidemic plays an important role in Halberstam's (2005) theorizing. The threat of the future, he argues, created a queer temporality in which there is an emphasis on the here and now, creating an urgency in the present. Halberstam (2005) also explores the stretched-out adolescence of queer culture, disrupting the binary between youth and adulthood and a clear transition out of childish dependency through marriage and responsibility. I see Halberstams' (2005) "stretched-out adolescence" reflected in Jessi's developing understanding of her neurodiversity, and Charlie's on-again-off-again relationship with higher education, both in their thirties.

In a public talk at Trent University, Sandy Grande (2022) spoke about caring for her mother through the progression of the so-called 'disease' of dementia. She argued that the very young and the very old are closer to the spiritual realm—gaining mobility between realms and traveling through time. Here, Grande (2022) is rethinking colonial biomedical model of "loosing one's mind" and instead seeing memory loss as a journey elsewhere. Celeste Pang's (2021) research with LGBT older adults with memory loss also found evidence of dementia time as cyclical, what she refers to as looping. She recounts a reoccurrence with Lucia, a queer older woman with short term memory loss living in long-term care, where they repeated a similar conversation every time they met. These "loops" as Pang (2021) calls them, got deeper every time they met, growing in different directions even if they were not cumulative in nature. These loops were a queer encounter in which Pang (2021) and Lucia could dwell in time with the privilege of revisiting, building a relationship not centered upon memory and cognitive coherence. Grande (2018; 2022) and Pang (2021) help frame Gene's repetitive comments throughout the workshop as meaningful and produce a focus on the temporality of here and now.

Rather than seeing inheritance and generativity as unidirectional, and occurring at the end of life, this sub-theme regarding non-normative temporalities helps expand queer crip generativity as occurring in all directions. This extends May Chazan and Melissa Baldwin's (2021) finding in a research project about queer aging futures that "participants depicted multidirectional relationships of care, learning, and advocacy throughout their queer lives and networks" (p. 94). Participants in this project depicted queer, crip, and dementia temporalities, which challenge a linear and chronological progression of development, including the passing down of knowledge. Instead, we can consider the ways that queer and crip inheritance moves in all directions—across, above, down—and throughout the life course, from knowledge holders who may or may not be old by chronological standards of age.

5.1.3 Expanding Intergenerationality

This final sub-theme looks at how participants defined and understood intergenerationality in the broadest sense of the word. For queer, disabled, participants across the life course, 'familial' relationships span beyond arbitrary markers like bio-medicine or marriage to include relationships with multiple people at once, relationships with exes, with community, and with the land. A lively and generative conversation about queer-relationship structures broke out at the mention of particularities of relationship building within the queer community. Forrest shared a book title to explain their approach: "there's this book that I read called um, 'The Ex-Girlfriend of My Ex-Girlfriend is My Girlfriend"[6]. The whole group broke out in laughter and agreement. Forrest went on to explain, "In queer communities, a lot of the time… that kind of relationship might fall apart AND we know it's how important community is that we still maintain pride or connections with [them] sometimes". Jessi agreed and took the notion quite seriously:

> *I think you're right. I think the kind of big strength of our community is how much how many rules everywhere else seems to have about not so much how to build*

---

[6] See Maddy Court's (2021) "The Ex-Girlfriend of My Ex-Girlfriend is My Girlfriend: Advice on Queer Dating, Love, and Friendship"

> *relationships but like who you have to disconnect from and how we have to push people away. I think a lot of what we strive for or succeed at is built around disrupting like being friends with exes and being friends with like… I don't know, sometimes it sounds silly when you say it like that but, [laughs], it matters.*

Outside of heteronormative relationship structures and rules, queer people can and do build meaningful relationships, communities, and chosen families with ex-partners.

Charlie shared a story about breaking out of the rules of relationships within hetero and colonial structures. They came out to the group as polyamorous and explained how that also affects their queer relationship structures:

> *My younger cousin is like a sibling to me, she's living in my home. And we started having a conversation, like, I identify as polyamorous, but I'm not out to a lot of people that way, but my cousin was starting to kind of talk about maybe feeling that way and then I get to be like, "yeah!", and she's like "I wish I didn't have to live in these boxes." And we're like, "I've lived it!", "it's OK!" And she's like "really?". So, I think like helping people like helping each other, it doesn't matter how old you are, and I could be doing that for her, right? So, for another person, I think like helping each other,* ***giving each other courage and encouragement to break out of boxes that don't work,*** *I feel like that helps, that will help build the queer future that I want.*

For Charlie, there is room in their life for a multiplicity of deep relationships, through which important knowledges are transmitted.

A significant moment in the focus group discussion—for me, at least—came when T began speaking about her experiences attending the women-only Michigan Music Festival. Founded in the 1970s', the Michigan Music Festival was an important early space for building lesbian feminist community.[7] Hearing T speak about this

---

[7] There were, of course, issues with a women-only space. There was a lot of transphobia (such as the rule of only including 'womyn-born-womyn') and gender policing that created division within the queer community and ultimately led to the closure of the festival in 2015. See Currans, 2020 for a discussion of Mitchfest, transphobia, and the myth of linear progress.

historically significant music festival in queer history gave me a feeling of joy and connection, reminding me of a similar experience in my honour's research when a participant went on a tangent during an interview, describing the ACT UP kiss-ins he had attended in New York City during the AIDS epidemic. Attending this festival seemed to be a turning point in T's life:

> *It was amazing! There's nothing...and it's all women. Only women. No offense against guys, but it's just women and they came from everywhere. And to go there just see that whole 3 or 4 days, however long we were there, and have that freedom not have to worry about where you went, who you were, you could go topless, you could go naked, you could do whatever you wanted. It was a total freedom. You know, everybody showered 'cause the shower stalls weren't [gesturing], the odd one had a curtain if you were really shy, but it was just such a... freedom. And to move here, that would be, perfect… And a lot of women I met straight women, gay women, whatever. And a lot of had abuses, domestic abuse, sexual, physical, whatever, and but everybody was safe there… It was just amazing.*

T found safety and freedom in a lesbian feminist community. Coming together as a queer community created special bonds and relationships. Participant A also spoke about 70s' inspired lesbian communities: "I talk to my friends all the time, laughing, saying you know, it's true whatever happens we're gonna be living on the same plot of land, whatever happens, there's gonna be lesbian communes everywhere, all over the place, [laughs]". Participant A cautioned, however, that these Lesbian utopias are imperfect in practice, historically they have been taken up unequally, excluding racialized and poor community members. These community relationships and experiences held special places in T and Participant A's lives, both in the past and in the imagined future.

Finally, participants spoke of and demonstrated relationships with the land in their conversation and in their cellphilms, expanding intergenerationality to include the more-

Figure 8: Screenshot from Gene's cellphilm, depicting a dead tree with its limbs cut off, against a background of green grass and a blue sky.

than-human. Gene’s cellphilm [see Figure 8] consists of a compilation of short clips of different trees in the park surrounding the research workshop location, which he explained represents his “love for dead trees and nature and finding the beauty in things”. Though Gene needed a lot of technological support compiling his clips together into a cellphilm, the imagery, angles, shakiness, and heavy breath in the background of the videos were all him. Gene was drawn to the dead and dying trees in the park, which is particularly interesting in the context of his earlier remarks about death and how “life goes on” after we are gone.

There was also imagery of trees in T and Forrests’ cellphilms. T’s cellphilm follows the life cycle of a tree, from sapling to kindling, and as she explained in the screening of her film, she saw herself in that tree. Throughout the film, she explored the sense of community amongst the trees with the birds, earth, and plants surrounding them. The imagery in Forrests’ cellphilm was made up entirely of trees, roots, and dirt. The following excerpts from their poem also demonstrates a loving and reciprocal relationship with the land:

> *I know these roots return me to the water underground, above, within, and it is to the water I will turn to explore what aging means today in this ring around the sun*.
>
> *In the forest, I am beautiful, aged and enclosed with those I love, our arms branching out across the divide*.

Trees, for Gene, T, and Forrest seemed to provide a sense of comfort, home, and stability.

I also saw a reflection in Forrest's cellphilm about being rooted in nature in an early group conversation about my cellphilm, Flux. In the imagery of the cellphilm, I had intentionally contrasted images of my stretch marks with similarly flexible lines that I found in the moving water, in wind through leaves, and in the bark of trees. It wasn't until Charlie pointed it out in the focus group that I realized its significance: "I liked the contrast between nature and the body". I responded: "For me, I was like, trying to think of the ways that our bodies are reflected in nature, right?". Jessi chimed in and pointed out the similarities: "and the focus on like the water? Like kinda matched the marks that were naturally there, and also like maybe drawn onto the skin?". It was here that I connected the dots:

> *Yeah absolutely. And also, like if you think about, like the discourse of like fatness and disability as being unnatural, or even queerness, even, as being unnatural, but then when you look at it against nature where there are no straight lines… it's like actually, we are natural, we are meant to be here, right?*

In conversation with the group, I realized that it was with the land that I feel a sense of belonging in my fatness, disability, and queerness. Taken together, these queer and crip ways of building relationships with one another, with community, and with the land, help us extend intergenerational thinking to include more diverse relationships.

Systems of inheritance and knowledge transfer across generations occur in unique relationship structures in queer and disabled communities. For instance, Charlie talks about polyamory, which refers to a multiplicity of relationships (sexual and non-sexual) at once and is an important political deconstruction of heterosexuality. Kim Tallbear

(2019), writes on her blog, “Critical Polyamory”, about the ways her Indigeneity informs her relationship with being poly:

> In my Indigenous and Dakota translation, polyamorous multiplicity is not only about human relations. It is an ethic that also focuses on multiple relations with place, and values the hard work of relating to and translating among different knowledges. In my ways of relating with human, earthly, and conceptual loves, I reject the usual definition of “promiscuity” as random and indiscriminate. In my redefinition, "promiscuous" is to seek abundance through partial connections. It is openness to multiple human loves, and/or to deep connection with other-than-humans, with the lands and waters of our hearts, and with different knowledge forms and approaches that enable us to flourish as Indigenous Peoples. (para. 5)

Here, Tallbear (2019) eloquently explains the connection between poly relationships, relationships with the land, and the multiplicity of knowledges. In line with Nadine Changfoot and colleagues’ (2021) findings regarding embodied relationalities, participants situated themselves “amidst multiple relationships and diverse landscapes outside the nuclear family form” (p. 7).

May Chazan and Madeline Whetung (2022) also identified relationships with the land as a significant feature of imagined futures with a diverse and intergenerational group. They found that, “the importance of place, land, and place-based relationships identified in this research clearly challenge narratives of happy aging futures as placeless, extra-local, and individualistic. They also supersede biological and material notions of relationality” (p. 7). In this research, the land was a source of knowledge, as reflected in Forrests’ cellphilm where they turned to the water to learn about aging, as well as a place to learn about oneself, as was the case with my own cellphilm, Flux. Importantly, these relationships with the land were occurring between settler participants with stolen Wolastoqiyik lands. Respectful and reciprocal relationships to the land are at the heart of many Indigenous knowledges and philosophies and are threatened by current systems of settler colonialism and exploitations of natural resources. Land back is the way forward to help nurture healthier relationships with the lands and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous inhabitants in this territory [see Yellowhead Institute, 2019].

5.2 Conclusion

Taken together, these three sub-themes further a queer crip conception of generativity that shares knowledges across generations within unique relationship structures. In this research project, I found that inheritance happens through queer and crip communities outside of conventional wealth transfer models that occur within biological families. Instead, participants in this project want to leave behind the knowledges and wisdoms acquired throughout their lives, both young and old. These transfers of knowledge do not happen unidirectionally, simply from the old to the young, but rather occur in all directions, cyclically and non-linearly. Finally, queer and crip kinship systems do not fit the boxes formed by heterosexuality—our knowledges and knowledge transfers come from and occur within relationships of many forms. Our legacies form through our knowledges and relationships.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

When I think back to the intergenerational relationships that helped me through my tumultuous times in high school, I feel incredibly lucky. So many queer kids face trauma and oppression without the safety net of queer and disabled community to care for and protect them. We all need access to those connections to survive. That being said, those relationships were far from perfect. There were many times as a young, queer, disabled activist that I felt exploited, tokenized, and used by the adults in my life—in the pursuit of personal, professional, and social gains. Coming to the end of this study, I have wondered: how do I balance the deep longing and need for intergenerational community relationships while also holding onto the complexities of those relationships that are often formed in the context of grief, loss, and trauma? How do I recognize the significance of queer crip generativity, while resisting putting additional pressure on those relationships?

I began this study by reflecting upon the life-saving qualities that intergenerational relationships in queer and disabled communities carry, and I have ended thinking about their complexities. Throughout the entirety, though, I have never lost sight of their significance. We live in an alienating colonial society that separates the young and the old, that sees the disabled as disposable, and that continues to view queer and trans people as Other. I outlined some of the important bodies of literature that support these statements: critical studies of successful aging, the intersection of aging with queerness and disability, and the relationship between queerness and disability itself. Though not always studied or thought of all together (Marshall, 2018, Bartlett & Kafer, 2020), queer, disabled, and older adults face overlapping systems of oppression, and this intersection of experiences offers an important opportunity to challenging normative understandings of aging, embodiment, temporalities, and intergenerational relationships.

In this thesis, I set out to examine queer, disabled elders' relationships to temporalities and how they challenged ableist and heteronormative models of successful aging. In this chapter, I will revisit this original research question, looking to queer crip generativity as a response. I will begin by reiterating why this research question is worth studying, looking back at some of the pertinent literature. I will then outline my overall argument about generativity and how my two discussion chapters help support a queer, crip conception of generativity. I will then consider how this study contributes to the fields of Canadian Studies, Aging Studies, and Gender and Feminist Studies, opportunities for further research, and limitations in this project. I will consider what tangible actions could or should be taken as a result of this work and reflect upon the ways this research has changed me as a scholar.

6.1 (Re)Situating the Research Question

Successful aging is an exclusive discourse that lifts up some older adults as successful at the expense of others—the queer, disabled, poor, racialized, and fat older adults. Though successful aging seems to offer a potential future for aging that is not rooted in decline and negativity, it is a limiting vision of the future: "because in the end, an ageing future was really only possible for a limited few" (Jones et al., 2022, p. 2). The queer and disabled individuals centered in this study are inherently excluded from this vision of the future—outside of the heteronormative structures of family, reproduction, and generativity (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017); excluded from the ableist standards of health, fitness, and activity that measure successful aging (Katz, 2000; Allain & Marshall, 2017).

Generativity, as an aspect of successful aging, pertains to a concern for future generations. This is an inherently future-oriented goal, to foster relationships of mentorship, parenting or grandparenting, and teaching, to impart values, stories, material objects and wealth, securing their legacy in the future (Bower et al., 2021). Normative conceptualizations of generativity are situated within heteronormative and able-bodied/able-minded conceptions of family—often between parents and children or grandchildren (Sandberg & Marshall, 2017). Generativity is often centered around an individual securing their legacy to process death and dying, inextricable from colonial beliefs of individualism and the self (Alexander et al., 2008). Generativity is rooted in a psychological narrative of linearity and progress [see Erikson, 1962], a normative temporality and life course. Importantly, generativity often involves intergenerational transfers of wealth, passing along land, houses, businesses, and money, after the older adults passes away.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The first analysis chapter in this thesis explored participants' expressions and depictions of grief and how this grief motivates a sense of generativity rooted in community. Participants shared feelings of grief and loss having not had connections or access to queer crip elders throughout their lives and in looking forward to and becoming the elders we never had. Living in an ageist, homophobic, ableist society and through an ongoing pandemic, climate disaster, and war, participants grieved their potential futures (or lack thereof) as well as a sense of safety. As their bodies changed—with age, with new and changing disabilities, with gender transitions—participants expressed grief and loss about their own bodies and about how their bodies are perceived by others and themselves. These experiences of grief and loss anchored the importance of building intergenerational relationships. Participants emphasized the importance of relationships to help us through tough times and passing along knowledge and lessons in honour of our lost elders and ancestors.

The second analysis chapter explored the interconnected concepts of inheritance and generativity and framed embodied knowledge as a form of inheritance. I began by outlining the conception of embodied knowledge coined within the group, valuing disabled and aging wisdoms gained through lived experiences rather than exchanges of wealth. I found evidence of non-normative temporalities in participants stories and perspectives—queer, crip, aging, dementia temporalities—that challenges a linear progressive model of knowledge exchange from older to younger. Importantly, participants proposed a rethinking of the term “elder” within queer and crip communities away from chronological age, and towards markers like knowledge and experience. Finally, participants described relationship structures and kinship networks outside of heteronormative and colonial understandings of family.

Taken together, these two chapters chart a queer crip conception of generativity. Unlike normative conceptions of generativity, this research points towards a fostering of intergenerational relationships that is motivated by a historical and ongoing disconnection from our ancestors and elders. This queer crip generativity is rooted in community rather than individual legacy, and is centered around valuing and sharing queer, crip aging embodied wisdoms, rather than the passing down of material goods. Generativity, from this perspective, moves in all directions and spans beyond heteronormative and colonial boundaries of family. As the participants in this research emphasized, it is intergenerational queer and crip relationships that will endure and get us through the future. This work extends the findings of critical, feminist scholars such as Chazan and Whetung (2022) whose work on aging futures and generativity unsettles colonial capitalist understandings of intergenerational connections and located generativity in Indigenous teachings of seven generation thinking.

6.3 Significance

On June 8th, 2023, the New Brunswick provincial government made national news with their announcement to revise and rollback educational Policy 713, a document setting out the minimum requirements to provide a safe and affirming school environment for LGBTQIA2S+ peoples (NB Media Co-op, 2023). Published in 2020, Policy 713 set out that school personnel must use the preferred name and pronouns of students and allow students to participate in extracurriculars in line with their gender identity (Mazerolle, 2023). In the weeks following the announcement, the provinces' political leaders, including the conservative premiere, Blaine Higgs, have been drawing on homophobic and transphobic discourses in the legislature and media, including beliefs that trans people have “unfair” advantages in sports, that gender dysphoria is “trendy”, and that Policy 713 is contributing to the “erosion of the family” (Kalman-Lamb, 2023; Lapointe, 2023; Mazerolle, 2023). There has been an immediate resistance among the queer community and our allies to this political homophobia and transphobia, as well as a lot of fear and anger about what this could set as precedence. This ongoing public hatred of the queer community in New Brunswick drives home the importance of imagining better futures for the queer and disabled community and building intergenerational relationships.

As we continue to be left behind by those in power, it is our community relationships that will persist. The elders and ancestors that have lived through similar fights for legal protections from the government have lessons to share, as do the youth that are creating GSAs and gender-neutral washrooms in the schools have wisdom to help us through these times. The queer crip conception of generativity that I have outlined in this thesis helps us recognize the relationships that already exist as generative and helps outline their significance in hope to facilitate the building of more of them. Queer and disabled elders and youth can and do resist ableist and heteronormative standards of success by building relationships together—overcoming the alienation between young and old imbedded in our colonial society and imagining a better world based on our embodied wisdoms.

This research project set out to build intergenerational queer, crip community. Though these research workshops and the sharing of the cellphilms have begun to create some connections, there is certainly a need to continue this work of fostering intergenerational relationships in the queer and disabled community of New Brunswick. The work of bringing together marginalized communities, young and old is happening in small pockets across Canada. The Aging Activisms Collective in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough, Ontario, for instance, has been facilitating storytelling gatherings over the last ten years, with the most recent workshops involving change makers with an age range of 10 to 100 [see agingactivisms.org/youthstories]. *ElderPride*, the local organization with whom I conducted my research workshops, has recently shifted their programing to be more intergenerational in focus. They are launching an intergenerational pen pal program, Proud Pals, as a way to build relationships between young and old in a primarily rural province, which builds upon my findings nicely [see frederictonpride.com/ongoing-programs].

Through this research, I also discovered a need to process and discuss experiences of grief throughout our community. Importantly, these communal and individual experiences of grief are interconnected with the ableist, ageist, and homophobic society that we are living in, and must be considered in any attempt to come together. As Karen Morris and her colleagues (2022) with The LGBTQ+ Intergenerational Dialogue Project have found, grief and heartache are a generative, empathic form of learning and a powerful way to strengthen queer intergenerational community. I see Toronto's BIPOC grief circle, organized by queer and disabled racialized women and trans folks, as a great example of organizing that centers and processes grief. Their group page is framed by a banner by artist Molly Costello that reads: "Mourning the world that's ending// Building the world that's on it's way" [see Facebook page "BIPOC Grief Circle"]. I see a need for similarly insider community groups, where folks feel safe enough to be vulnerable and share in their grief within queer and disabled communities in my local community, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that continues for some and is forgotten by most. The impact of grief and trauma on intergenerational queer and disabled community and relationships is an area for further research.

This research contains lessons and recommendations for the adjacent fields of Canadian studies, Aging studies, Gender Studies, and Crip studies. Aging studies scholars in particular should consider the alternative ways that queer and disabled folks build generative intergenerational relationships which are rarely represented or studied. This thesis argues for an ongoing analysis at the intersections of aging, queerness, and disability, and the unique knowledges, relationships, and temporalities that can emerge when examined together. Broadly speaking, this research encourages critical scholars to center those at the margins, particularly the old, the disabled, and the queer. This research was also significant because it occurred during a period of rolling lockdowns and new COVID variants which made gathering queer and disabled elders difficult to do safely and it begins the work of charting the experiences of a marginalized group during the pandemic. Though taken up imperfectly, I believe that the rich findings from the cellphilms demonstrate the importance of participant-driven and arts-based research methodologies, particularly when working with marginalized individuals.

6.4 Final Thoughts

As I have looked back at the data, findings, literature, and methods of this research project, I can’t help but dwell on the imperfections. I wish I had more to show from my workshops, more completed cellphilms, process photos, video interviews with participants. I wish I could have scaled up, inviting more diverse elders into the room, and a wider age range, including youth. I am trying to remember that this project is only a beginning—a process of learning for me as a researcher and student, as well as for the participants, many of whom were meeting for the first time and learning a new method of storytelling. Furthermore, this project is situated within a constellation of similar work like Aging Activisms, ElderPride, and Pride/Swell+ that are continuing the work of building diverse intergenerational connections. I am left feeling proud of my small contribution to this field, an action towards a better future—an interdependent, intergenerational, queer crip future.

Bibliography

Ahmed, S. (2010). *The Promise of Happiness*. Duke University Press.

Albers, B. (2021). In ‘Care Work,’ Grief Is the Garden of Our Dreams. *BioNews*. https://smanewstoday.com/columns/grief-dreams-disability-justice/

Alexander, B., Rubinstein, R., Goodman, M., & Luborsky, M. (2008). Generativity in Culture Context: The Self, Death and Immortality as Experienced by Older American Women. *Ageing & Society*, *11*(4), 417-442.

Allain, K., & Marshall, B. (2017). Foucault Retires to the Gym: Understanding Embodied Aging in the Third Age. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, *36*(3), 402-414.

Allen, S. (2020). Is climate grief something new? *American Psychological Association*. https://www.apa.org/members/content/climate-grief

American Civil Liberties Union. (2023). Mapping Attacks on LGBTQ Rights in U.S State Legislatures. *ACLU.org*. https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights

Amin, K. (2014). Temporality. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *1*(1-2), 219-222.

Aubrecht, K., Kelly, C., & Rice, C. (2020). *The Aging-Disability Nexus*. University of British Columbia Press.

Baldwin, M. *Queer(ing) Intergenerationality*. In CAST 5701; Trent University: Peterborough, ON, Canada, 2016.

Bartlett, R., & Kafer, A. (2020). Thinking into Aging-Disability Nexuses: A Dialogue between Two Scholars. In Aubrecht, K., Kelly, C., & Rice, R. (Eds.), *The Aging-Disability Nexus*. (pp. 251-265). UBC Press.

Batt, M., & Green, D. (2022). *Len & Cub: A Queer History*. Goose Lane Editions.

Bell, M. (2020). The Closing of Clinic 554. *The Brunswickan*.

Boulé, J., Wilson, K., Kortes-Miller, K., & Stinchcombe, A. (2020). "We Live in a Wonderful Country, Canada, but…": Perspectives From Older LGBTQ Ontarians on Visibility, Connection, and Power in Care and Community. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *91*(3). 235-252.

Bower, K., Lewis, D., Bermúdez, M., & Singh, A. (2021). Narratives of Generativity and Resilience among LGBT Older Adults: Leaving Positive Legacies despite Social Stigma and Collective Trauma. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *68*(2), 230-251.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*, 77–101.

Bravo, T. (2022). The AIDS Memorial Quilt remains a shattering work of grief and activism 35 years on. *San Francisco Chronicle.* https://datebook.sfchronicle.com/art-exhibits/the-aids-memorial-quilt-remains-a-shattering-work-of-grief-and-activism-35-years-on

Budgeon, S. (2003). Identity as an Embodied Event. *Body & Society*, *9*(1), 35-55.

Butler, J. (2009). *Frames of War: When if Life Grievable?* Version.

Burkholder, C. (2020). Exploring participatory visual research methodologies with queer, trans, and non-binary youth in a research for social change framework. *Antistasis*, *10*(10), 130-142.

Burkholder, C., Thorpe, A. & Pride/Swell. (2023). Facilitating gender-affirming participatory visual research in embodied and online spaces. In Burkholder, C., Schwab-Cartas, J., & Aladejebi, F. (Eds.), *Facilitating visual socialities: Enacting ethical practices in visual research facilitation*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Burkholder, C., & Thorpe, A. (2022). Facilitating gender-affirming participatory visual research in embodied and online spaces. *Visual Studies*, *37*(1-2), 37-46.

Calasanti, T. (2020). Brown Slime, the Silver Tsunami, and Apocalyptic Demography: The Importance of Ageism and Age Relations. *Social Currents, 7*(3), 195-211.

Cardoza, K., & Schneider, C.M. (2021). The Importance of Mourning Losses (Even When They Seem Small). *NPR.org*. https://www.npr.org/2021/06/02/1002446604/the-importance-of-mourning-losses-even-when-they-seem-small

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *HIV Surveillance Report: Statistics Overview*. https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/overview/index.html

Changfoot, N., Rice, C., Chivers, S., Williams, A., Connors, A., Barrett, A., Gordon, M., & Lalonde, G. (2021). Revisioning aging: Indigenous, crip and queer renderings. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*(2-3), 1-9.

Chauncey, G. (2009). *Why Marriage: The History Shaping Today's Debate Over Gay Equality*. Basic Books.

Chazan, M. (2019). Unsettling aging futures: Challenging colonial-normativity in social gerontology. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, 1-29.

Chazan, M., & Baldwin, M. (2021). Queering generativity and futurity: LGBTQ2IA+ stories of resistance, resurgence, and resilience. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, *15*(1), 73-102.

Chazan, M., & Baldwin, M. (2019). Granny Solidarity: Understanding Age and Generational Dynamics in Climate Justice Movements. *Studies in Social Justice*, *13*(2), 244-261. 10.26522/ssj.v13i2.2235

Chazan, M., & Macnab, M. (2018). Doing the Feminist Intergenerational Mic: Methodological Reflections on Digital Storytelling as Process and Praxis. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *19*(2), 1-19.

Chazan, M., & Whetung, M. (2022). "Carving a future out of the past and the present": Rethinking aging futures. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*, 1-10.

Chivers, S. (2022). Episode 4: Aging for Mortals [Audio Podcast Episode]. In *Wrinkle Radio.* VoicEd Radio.

Chivers, S. (2011). *The Silvering Screen: Old Age and Disability in Cinema*. University of Toronto Press.

Clare, E. (2017). *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure.* Duke University Press.

Clare, E. (2015). *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*. Duke University Press.

Cole, J. (2019). Relinquishing Expertise: Notes on Feminist Indigenous Performance Methodology. *Canadian Theatre Review*, *178*, 68-71.

Danforth, T. J. (2023). *Queer Inheritance.* https://www.danforthphotos.com/projects/queer-inheritance

Davis, A. (2008). How Does Change Happen? *University of California Television.*

Devich-Cyril, M. (2021). Grief Belongs in Social Movements. Can We Embrace It? *In These Times*. https://inthesetimes.com/article/freedom-grief-healing-death-liberation-movements

Doka, K. (1989). *Disenfranchised Grief: Recognizing Hidden Sorrow*. Lexington Books.

Duncan, D. (2007). Out of the Closet and into the Gym: Gay Men and Body Image in Melbourne, Australia. *The Journal of Men's Studies, 15*(3), 331-346.

Edelman, L. (2004). *No future: Queer theory and the death drive*. Duke University Press.

Erikson, E. (1963). *Childhood and Society*. [2nd Edition]. Nortan.

Fabbre, V. (2015). Gender Transitions in Later Life: A Queer Perspective on Successful Aging. *The Gerontologist, 55*(1), 144-153.

Farrier, S. (2015). Playing With Time: Gay Intergenerational Performance Work and the Productive Possibilities of Queer Temporalities. *Journal of Homosexuality, 62*(10), 1398-1418.

Fogel, A. & Mason, B. (Producers), & Bolan, C. (Director). (2020) *A Secret Love.* [Documentary].

Funk, L. (2016). *Sociological Perspectives on Aging (Themes in Canadian Sociology Series)*. Oxford University Press.

Gallop, J. (2019). *Sexuality, Disability, and Aging: Queer Temporalities of the Phallus*. Duke University Press.

Gallop, J. (2015). The View from Queer Theory. *Age, Culture, Humanities: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 2,* 325-330.

Guillement, J. (2022). Premier Higgs needs protect most vulnerable as he removes COVID restrictions. *Green Party New Brunswick News*.

Goltz, D. (2010) *Queer Temporalities in Gay Male Representation: Tragedy, Normativity and Futurity*. Routledge.

Goltz, D. (2009). Investigating Queer Future Meanings: Destructive Perceptions of “The Harder Path”. *Qualitative Inquiry, 15*(3), 561-586.

Gill, R., Henwood, K., & McLean, C. (2005). Body Projects and the Regulation of Normative Masculinity. *Body & Society*, *11*(1), 37-62.

Gilleard, C., & Higgs, P. (2011). Ageing abjection and embodiment in the fourth age. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *25*(2), 135-142.

Grande, S. (2021). *The Indigenous Elsewhere of Aging: Elder Epistemologies for Decolonial Futures*. Stephen Katz Distinguished Scholar Lecture, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

Grande, S. (2018). Aging, Precarity, and the Struggle for Indigenous Elsewheres. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *31*(3), 168-176.

Halberstam, J. (2005). *In a Queer Time and Place.* New York University Press.

Harris, D. (2009). Oppression of the Bereaved: A Critical Analysis of Grief in Western Society. *OMEGA*, *60*(3), 241-253.

Hepworth, M. (1995). Positive Aging: What is the Message? In R. Bunton, R. Burrows, & S. Nettleton, *The Sociology of Health Promotion: Critical Analysis of Consumption, Lifestyle, and Risk* (pp. 176-190). Routledge.

Hernández, E., & Alland, S. (2021). SORE LOSER: a chronic pain and illness zine on queer disabled grief. *Disability Arts Online*.

Hesse-Biber, S. (2012). Feminist research: exploring, interrogating, and transforming the interconnections of epistemology, methodology, and method. In *Handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (pp. 2-26). SAGE Publications.

Higgs, P., & Gilleard, C. (2020). The ideology of ageism versus the social imaginary of the fourth age: two differing approaches to the negative contexts of old age. *Ageing & Society*, *40*, 1617-1630.

Higgins, R. (2008). The Rainbow Flies over Atlantic Canada. *Xtra Magazine*. https://xtramagazine.com/power/the-rainbow-flies-over-atlantic-canada-38521

Hill, M. “A Heteronormative Lens of a Lesbian Life Course: A Critical Review of *A Secret Love*.” Unpublished Manuscript, 2022.

Horst, M., & Vickerstaff, S. (2021). Is part of ageism actually ableism? *Ageing & Society*, 1-12.

Hurd Clarke, L., & Korotchenko, A. (2011). Aging and the Body: A Review. *Canadian Journal of Aging*, 495-510.

Johnson, H.M. (2005). *Too Late to Die Young: Nearly True Tales from a Life*. Picador.

Jones, R., Marshall, B., & Sandberg, L. (2022). Virtual roundtable discussion of ‘Revisioning ageing futures: Feminist, queer, crip and decolonial visions of a good old age’. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *63*, 1-5.

Kafer, A. (2013). *Feminist, Queer, Crip*. Indiana University Press.

Kalman-Lamb, N. (2023). COMMENTARY: Political transphobia (through sport) comes to New Brunswick. *NB Media Co-op*. https://nbmediacoop.org/2023/06/20/commentary-political-transphobia-through-sport-comes-to-new-brunswick/

Katz, S. (2000). Busy Bodies: Activity, Aging, and the Management of Everyday Life. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *14*(2), 135-152.

Katz, S., Calasanti, T. (2015). Critical Perspectives on Successful Aging: Does It “Appeal More Than It Illuminates”? *The Gerontologist, 55*, 26–33.

Katz, S., & Marshall, B. (2002). Forever Functional: Sexual Fitness and the Ageing Male Body. *Body & Society, 8*(4), 43-70.

Kembhavi, R. (2012). Research Note- Canadian Seniors: A Demographic Profile. *Elections Canada*.

Kendrick, C., MacEntee, K., & Flicker, S. (2021). Exploring Audience Engagement and Critical Narrative Intervention with the Celling Sex Film. *Health Promotion Practice*, *22*(2), 33-43.

Kheraj, A. (2022). Why queer people need to talk about disenfranchised grief. *GAY TIMES*. https://www.gaytimes.co.uk/life/why-queer-people-need-to-talk-about-disenfranchised-grief/

Kia, H. (2015). Hypervisibility: Toward a Conceptualization of LGBTQ Aging. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, *13*(1), 46-57.

Köttl, H., Gallistl, V., Rohner, R., & Ayalon, L. (2021). "But at the age of 85? Forget it!": Internalized ageism, a barrier to technology use. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *59*, 1-8.

Laliberte Rudman, D. (2015). Embodying positive aging and neoliberal rationality: Talking about the aging body within narratives of retirement. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *34*, 10-20.

Lapointe, S. (2023). N.B trans advocates say premier wrong to call gender dysphoria 'trendy'. *Global News*. https://globalnews.ca/news/9774659/nb-advocates-premier-comments-gender-dysphoria/

LeBel, S. (2021). Lesbian processing at the end of the world: lesbian identity and queer environmental futurity. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, *26*(2), 159-173.

Longo, S.R. (2021). Even as a Dream: Feminist and Queer Grief, Ritual, and Futurity [Master's Thesis]. *San Francisco State University*. https://doi.org/10.46569/20.500.12680/b8515v03d

MacEntee, K., Burkholder, C., & Shwab-Cartas, J. (2016). *What's a Cellphilm?: Integrating Mobile Phone Technology Into Participatory Visual Research and Activism.* Sense Publishers.

Marrocco, F., Coke, A., & Kitts, J. (2021). Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission: Final Report. *Queen's Printer for Ontario*. https://www.ontario.ca/page/long-term-care-covid-19-commission-progress-interim-recommendations on

Marshall, B. (2018). Happily ever after? 'Successful ageing' and the heterosexual imaginary. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 363-381.

Marshall, L. (2014) Ageility Studies: The Interplay of Critical Approaches in Age Studies and Disability Studies. In: Kriebernegg, U., Maierhofer, R., Ratzenbock, B, (Eds.), *Alive and Kicking at All Ages: Cultural Constructions of Health and Life Course Identity*. Bielefeld: Transcript-Verlag, 21–40.

Mazerolle, J. (2023). What is New Brunswick's LGBTQ student controversy all about? *CBC Explains.* https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/policy-713-explainer-1.6890043

McGuire, A. (2020). From Boomer to Zoomer: Aging with Vitality under Neoliberal Capitalism. In: Aubrecht, K., Kelly, C., Rice, C. (Eds.), *The Aging-Disability Nexus*. University of British Columbia Press.

McRuer, R. (2016). Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Experience. In Davis, L. J. (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader*. [5th Edition]. (pp. 88-99). Routledge.

McRuer, R. (2006). *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*. New York University Press.

Minkler, M., & Fadem, P. (2002). "Successful Aging": A disability perspective. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 12*, 229-235.

Mirza, A. (2020). Queeries: everything is going back to normal but what do I do with all this grief? *Gal—Dem.* https://gal-dem.com/queeries-everything-is-going-back-to-normal-but-what-do-i-do-with-all-this-grief/

Mitchell, C. (2015). Looking at Showing: On the Politics and Pedagogy of Exhibiting in Community-Based Research and Work With Policy Makers. *Educational Research for Social Change*, *4*(2), 48-60.

Monitoring Educational Rights for Girls with Disabilities project (MRGD). (2016). *Final report on the educational rights of girls with disabilities in Vietnamese schools*. Halifax: Mount Saint Vincent University.

Morris, K., Greteman, A., & Weststrate, N. (2022). Embracing queer heartache: lessons from LGBTQ+ intergenerational dialogues. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *35*(9), 928-942.

Muñoz, J. (2009). *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York University Press.

NB Media Co-op. (2023). NB debrief: Review of Policy 713 puts queer and trans kids in danger, education experts say [VIDEO]. *NB Media Co-op.*

Newman-Stiles, D. (2022). *Disabling Queerness.* [Presentation]

Pang, C. (2021, December 3). *"Doing the Loop with Lucia": Queer Aging and Continuity*. [Online Seminar Presentation]. Temporalities of Dementia.

Pilcher, K., & Martin, W. (2020). Forever 'Becoming'? Negotiating Gendered and Aging Embodiment in Everyday Life. *Sociological Research Online*, *25*(4), 698-717.

Phoenix, C., Smith, B., & Sparkes, A. (2010). Narrative analysis in aging studies: A typology for consideration. *Journal of Aging Studies, 24*(1), 1-11.

Potts, K., & Brown, L. (2015) Chapter One: Becoming an Anti-Oppressive Researcher. In Brown, L., & Strega, S., *Research as Resistance: Revisiting Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches.* Canadian Scholars.

Port, C. (2012). No Future? Aging, Temporality, History, and Reverse Chronologies. *Occasion: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities, 4*, 1-19.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. (2018). *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. (2022). *The Future is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

Rajan-Rankin, S. (2018). Race, embodiment and later life: Re-animating aging bodies of colour. *Journal of Aging Studies, 45,* 32-38.

Rice, C. (2018). Volatile Bodies and Vulnerable Researchers: Ethical Risks of Embodiment Research. In S. Batacharya, & Y.-L. Renita, *Sharing Breath: Embodied Learning and Decolonization* (pp. 135-160). Athabaska University Press.

Rice, C., Chandler, E., Rinaldi, J., Changfoot, N., Liddiard, K., Mykitiuk, R., & Mundel, I. (2017). Imagining Disability Futurities. *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, *32*(2), 213-229.

Rice, C., Chandler, E., Harrison, E., Liddiard, K., & Ferrari, M. (2015). Project Re•Vision: disability at the edges of representation. *Disability & Society*, *30*(4), 513-527.

Roy, A. (2020). The pandemic is a portal. *Financial Times.* https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca

Samuels, E. (2017). Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *37*(3).

Samuels, E. (2003). My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *9*(1-2), 233-255.

Sandberg, L. (2015). Towards a Happy Ending? Positive Ageing, Heteronormativity and Un/happy Intimacies. *Iambda nordica, 20*(4), 19-44.

Sandberg, L. (2013). Affirmative old age - the ageing body and feminist theories on difference. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, 11-40.

Sandberg, L., & Marshall, B. (2017). Queering Aging Futures. *Societies*, *7*(11), 1-11.

Sandalh, C. (2003). Queering the Crip or Cripping the Queer? Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance. *Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *9*(1-2), 25-56.

Schwinn, S., & Dinkel, S. (2015). Changing the Culture of Long-Term Care: Combating Heterosexism. *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, *20*(2), 1-1.

Shakespeare, T., Ndagire, F., & Seketi, Q. (2021). Triple jeopardy: disabled people and the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Lancet*, *397*(10282), 1331-1333.

Shimoni, S. (2018). 'Third Age' under neoliberalism: From risky subjects to human capital. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *47*, 39-48.

Sorainen, A. (2014). Queer Personal Lives, Inheritance Perspectives, and Small Places. *Lambda Nordica*, *19*(3-4), 31-53.

Statistics Canada. (2022). Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and non-binary people. *The Daily*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220427/dq220427b-eng.htm

Statz, T., Kobayashi, L., & Finlay, J. (2022). 'Losing the illusion of control and predictability of life': Experiences of grief and loss among ageing US adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Ageing and Society*, 1-24.

Sycamore, M.B. (2021). *Between Certain Death and a Possible Future: Queer Writing on Growing Up with the AIDS Crisis.* Arsenal Pulp Press.

Tallbear, K. (2019). Critical Poly 100s. *The Critical Polyamorist.* http://www.criticalpolyamorist.com/critical-poly-100s.html

The David Wojnarowicz Foundation. (2023). *About*. https://wojfound.org/about/about/

The Trevor Project. (2021). *National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health 2021*. https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/?section=Introduction

van den Hoonaard, D. (2015). *Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer*. Oxford University Press.

Villar, F., Serrat, R., & Pratt, M. (2021). Older age as a time to contribute: A scoping review of generativity in later life. *Ageing and Society*, 1-22.

Wall, K. (2017) Low income among persons with a disability in Canada. *Statistics Canada*.

Ware, S. (2022). Foraging the Future: Forest Baths, Engaged Pedagogy, and Planting Ourselves into the Future. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *28*(2), 236-243.

Whyte, K. (2018). Indigenous science (fiction) for the Anthropocene: Ancestral dystopias and fantasies of climate change crises. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, *1*(1-2), 224-242.

World Health Organization. (2023). *WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard*. https://covid19.who.int/

World Health Organization. (2021). *HIV data and statistics*. https://www.who.int/teams/global-hiv-hepatitis-and-stis-programmes/hiv/strategic-information/hiv-data-and-statistics

Yellowhead Institute. (2019). *Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper*. https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/

Zamike, A. (2018). What is process writing?. *What is ELT?* [Online].

Appendix A: Recruitment Poster

Join *ElderPride*
in a two-part
workshop

INTERGENERATIONAL
QUEER CELLPHILMING
WORKSHOP

August 14th & 20th, 2022
5:00pm-8:00pm
Odell Park Lodge
Open to 2SLGBTQIA+ Elders 50+

This event is a part of a SSHRC funded research project, approved by the Trent University ethics board, file #28056. Please contact the researcher, Megan Hill, for more information at mhill@trentu.ca
Venue is wheelchair accessible. Masks required.
Food and honourarium will be provided.

Appendix B: Information Letter

Information Letter

Thank you for your interest in the research project "Queer Crip Aging Resistances: Exploring Aging Temporalities through Cellphilms". In this letter, I will answer some important questions about the nature of this project and what it will involve for participants.

This research project has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board, file #28056. If you have concerns about the ethics approval process, please contact Jamie Muckle, Trent Research Ethics Compliance Officer at jmuckle@trentu.ca.

If you have any additional questions about the research project after reviewing this letter, please contact the researcher Megan Hill at mhill@trentu.ca / [phone number] or her supervisor, May Chazan at mchazan@trentu.ca.

Who is conducting this research?

Megan Hill is leading this research project. She is a master's student at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario in the Canadian and Indigenous Studies program. Megan is from Fredericton, NB and is a graduate of St. Thomas University.

Megan is being supervised by Dr. May Chazan. May is a Canada Research Chair in Gender and Feminist Studies at Trent University and is the leader of the research group Aging Activisms in Peterborough, Ontario.

What is the purpose of this study?

Megan designed this project to learn about the experiences of aging of 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or disabled older adults and ways that they resist the popular narratives of successful aging. Specifically, I am looking to hear stories told through visual art about understandings of time, success and failure, and futures. This study will be drawing upon the method of cellphilming to share participants stories, which refers to short easy-to-make films created on personal portable electronics like cellphones and tablets.

What does participation in this study entail?

By participating in this study, you are signing up to engage in two group workshops in August 2022 where you will learn how to create cellphilms, participate in group discussions, and create your own cellphilm. You will also be invited to share these cellphilms with the group, where you will have the opportunity to pose and answer questions about the content.

Who can participate?

Participants must identify as queer and/or 2SLGBTQIA+ (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual +), aged 50 and above, English-speaking, living in or around Fredericton, New Brunswick, and have access to a smart phone or tablet.

Are there any potential risks to participating?

When telling stories and making art about ourselves, our bodies, and identities, painful or traumatic memories and feelings may surface. There will be an assistant facilitator available for peer-support throughout the workshops and a list of local resources should you need them.

Participants are instructed to maintain the confidentiality of those in the group by protecting the stories and experiences they share. I will use the name that you wish in all workshops and research materials. However, I cannot control what other participants do when they leave the workshops.

Following the local public health requirements at the time, these workshops may occur in person, meaning there may be a risk of transmitting or catching COVID-19 in a small group setting. I will do my best to avoid this by screening for COVID symptoms, masking, meeting outdoors when possible, maintaining a low number of participants, keeping track of contact tracing information, and preparing to meet online if we decide to do so as a group.

Are there any potential benefits to participating?

I hope that in participating you will meet and build relationships with other queer and disabled elders in our community, you may learn a new skill (cellphilming), and you will have the opportunity to share your thoughts and experiences on aging, queerness, and disability in a group setting.

What if I change my mind?

If you chose to participate, you will have the right to refuse to take part in any activity. You can leave the study at any point with no penalty. Withdrawal from this project will not interfere with your participation with ElderPride, or any other Fredericton Pride groups, programs, or facilities. Please reach out to Megan by phone, email, or in-person if you decide to leave the study, and you will have the choice to remove or include your contributions to workshops in my writing.

How will my information be used?

The group discussions from the workshops and the screening will be recorded and transcribed. These conversation along with the cellphilms created in the workshops will be used in the writing of my masters thesis. Please note that unless you specify otherwise, your age, sexuality, gender identity, and disability status may be included in the researchers' analysis and writing.

With your permission, the finished cellphilms may be shared in a public screening in the future and/or stored on publicly accessible websites such as Aging Activisms, Fredericton Feminist Film Collective, and The Queer Heritage Initiative of New Brunswick websites where other similar interviews and art pieces are stored. The sharing of your cellphilm outside of the workshop setting is optional and will be subject to a separate consent process.

How will you protect my information?

You will have the choice to include your real name, a portion of your name, a chosen name (a pseudonym), or no name (ex. "one participant shared…") in the research materials. So long as there is no risk of harm to yourself or others, your contact or identifying information will not be shared, unless previously discussed. I will store all private information on a password-protected device in an encrypted file.

Is there any compensation for participants?

As a token of appreciation for your contributions, I will give you a $50 gift card at the beginning of the first workshop. This compensation will be yours to keep even if you choose to withdraw from the project later on. I can also cover any parking or transportation costs to attend the workshops.

Thank you for your interest! I look forward to hearing from you.

Appendix C: Consent Forms

Research Consent Form

For Participants: Thank you for your interest in “Queer Crip Aging Resistances: Exploring Aging Temporalities through Cellphilms”, a two-part research workshop held in partnership with *ElderPride* in Fredericton, New Brunswick in August 2022 as part of Megan Hill’s masters research at Trent University.

Instructions: Please check each statement that you agree with. Leave blank any statement you disagree with and Megan will follow up with you to discuss.

Megan can be contacted at mhill@trentu.ca or [phone number] to discuss any questions or concerns. Megan’s supervisor, Dr. May Chazan can be contacted at mchazan@trentu.ca.

- ○ I understand that the workshops will be recorded and transcribed.
- ○ I understand that my contributions and participation may be discussed in the researcher’s master’s thesis.
- ○ I understand that I can leave the workshop at any time, refuse to answer any question I am uncomfortable answering, or withdraw completely without jeopardizing my relationships with the researcher, other participants, and Fredericton Pride and Elder Pride.
- ○ I understand that if I chose to leave the study, I can choose to have my contributions (in discussions and cellphilms) to be included or excluded from the research project.
- ○ I understand that I surrender no legal rights by participating.
- ○ I understand that with in-person workshops, there is a risk of contracting COVID-19, and agree to follow the precautions in place to avoid this, including wearing a mask when meeting as a group indoors.

- ○ I understand that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed because this is a group process and Fredericton is a small community.
- ○ I understand that the researcher will hold what I share in workshops in confidence and will be careful to maintain the confidentiality of other participants, including when they share personal or private information.
- ○ I understand that I can choose a fake name (pseudonym), use my real name, or have no attribution at all (ex. "one participant shared…") in the publications from this study. If I use my real name, people who read the thesis will know I took part in this study and they will know that I identify as 2SLBTQIA+ and am over the age of 50.
- ○ I agree to having my age, gender, sexual identity, and disability status included in the analysis of the research project.
- ○ I consent to having my photo taken in the workshop setting.
- ○ I understand that this research project has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board, file #28056, and that I can contact the Trent Research Ethics Compliance Officer, Jamie Muckle at jmuckle@trentu.ca for more information.
- ○ I have reviewed and understood the information letter, I have asked any questions I had about the study, and I understand the answers.

I would like the following name, initials, pseudonym, or none of the above used in this study to refer to me (please include if you would like the same or a different name in the group workshop setting, in your cellphilm, and in public screening or online settings):

My pronouns are (please include if you would like the same or a different pronouns used in the group workshop setting, in your cellphilm, and in public screening or online settings):

The researcher can contact me at this phone number and this email address:

My signature indicates that I understand this form and would like to take part in this study.

Signature: **Date:**

Upon consenting to this research project, a copy of the information letter and consent form will be sent to you via email for your records.

Research Facilitation Assistance Confidentiality Agreement

Thank you for your contribution to the research project “Queer Crip Aging Resistances: Exploring Aging Temporalities Through Cellphilms”, led by Trent Master’s student, Megan Hill. This research project seeks to centre the experiences of those currently left behind in mainstream heteronormative, ageist, and ableist discourses and representations of later life examining how queer older adults challenge normative expectations of the life course. Using cellphilming methodology, the researcher aims to generate counter-narratives created by queer older adults that challenge the dominant discourse of successful aging, about understandings of time, success and failure, and queer futures.

As a leader of Elder Pride, your role as an assistant facilitator may include: sharing the recruitment materials with members of your organization, attending both three hour workshops, taking photos during the workshops, providing peer-support and sharing resources with participants who need it during the workshops, and helping participants with technical difficulties in creating cellphilms.

During these research workshops, it is likely that you will be exposed to personal and identifying information about participants, including their age, gender, sexual identity, and their health status, as well as stories about their lives, bodies, and identities. Please note that all research information must be kept confidential, meaning you must not share information in any format with anyone outside of this project. Participants must have the autonomy over their own stories and experiences and whether or when they would like to share them.

This research project has been approved by the Trent Research Ethics Board, file #28056. If you have concerns about the ethics approval process, please contact Jamie Muckle, Trent Research Ethics Compliance Officer at jmuckle@trentu.ca.

If you understand and agree to the above statements, please sign below. If you have any questions about your involvement or the research project, please contact Megan at mhill@trentu.ca or her supervisor, May Chazan, at mchazan@trentu.ca.

Signature: **Date:**

Appendix D: Cellphilm Release Form

Cellphilm Release Consent

For participants: As part of your participation in the research project "Queer Crip Aging Resistances: Exploring Aging Temporalities through Cellphilms", you have the choice to share your cellphilm beyond the workshop setting in online and in-person contexts.

Instructions: Please check each statement that you agree with. Leave blank any statement you disagree with. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Megan Hill at mhill@trentu.ca / [phone number] her supervisor, Dr. May Chazan at mchazan@trentu.ca.

- ○ I understand that I am not required to share my cellphilm outside of the research setting as a part of my participation in "Queer Crip Aging Resistances."
- ○ I agree to have my cellphilm shared online on websites including but not limited to Aging Activisms, the Queer Heritage Initiative of New Brunswick Archive, and the Fredericton Feminist Film Collectives' websites.
- ○ I agree to have my cellphilm included in public screening settings for educational and social justice purposes.
- ○ I understand that there are risks associated with sharing any personal information online and/or in public screenings, for example, health information, sexual and gender identity, socio-economic location etc.
- ○ I understand that I can change my mind at any time in the future about sharing my cellphilm shared outside of the research project. If I would like to remove my cellphilm from online websites and/or excluded from public screening settings, I will email Megan at mhill@trentu.ca to withdraw.
- ○ I understand that if I choose to withdraw my cellphilm once it has been posted online, others may continue to have access to the information after it has been removed. (Once something is online,

individuals can download and save materials to their personal devices).

- I understand that this research project has been approved by the Trent University Research Ethics Board, file #28056, and can contact the Trent Research Ethics Compliance Officer, Jamie Muckle at jmuckle@trentu.ca if more information is required.

Would you like the researcher to contact you each time your cellphilm is being included in a public screening for your approval?

What contact information, if any, would you like accompanying your cellphilm in online and/or public screening settings?

My signature indicates that I agree with the statement on this form and would like to share my cellphilm online and/or in public screening settings.

Signature: **Date:**