A STUDY OF MUSIC AND ITS ABILITY TO GIVE VOICE: A PHOTO-ELICITATION PROJECT INVOLVING YOUTH IN-CARE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF VISUALS

A STUDY OF MUSIC AND ITS ABILITY TO GIVE VOICE: A PHOTO-ELICITATION PROJECT INVOLVING YOUTH IN-CARE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF VISUALS

By

BLAKE ANDERSON, B.A., B.S.W.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Social Work

McMaster University

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
McMaster University

(2017)
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: A Study of Music and Its Ability to
                                Give Voice: A Photo-Elicitation
                                Project Involving Youth In-Care and
                                the Interpretation of Visuals

AUTHOR: Blake Anderson, B.A., B.S.W. (McMaster
                                University)

SUPERVISOR: Christina Sinding, Ph.D

NUMBER OF PAGES: vii, 101

ABSTRACT:

In 2017 the Ontario government moved forward with new child welfare legislation, Bill 89, spelling out that the 47 Children's Aid Societies in Ontario will be much more 'child-centric'. I explore the historical context of the 'child-centric' language and commitments in the new Act, including tracing its origin by the Act's incorporation of the Katelynn Principle and Article 12 of the 1989 United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child.

How best to consult youth in-care is an essential, but a mostly unanswered question. Children Aid Societies across the province have a unique opportunity to implement alternative methods in engaging young people in consultation, should they pan out as viable and reliable strategies when consulting youth in-care. Tradition interview approaches are not always the best strategies when engaging youth. Visual research methods, such as photo-elicitation, have the potential of offering useful insights into children's perspectives and experiences.

The focus of my thesis is youth voice. I explore this topic through a study with young people in-care involved in a music group. I used focus groups and photo-elicitation as methods for data collection. An important question addressed by my thesis is whether a visual research method, such as photo-elicitation, helps in the consultation process with young people and whether some of the claims made about the approach are accurate when working with youth. Specifically, I explored claims made about photo-elicitation helping with increasing 'emotional type talk' and inquired into how the method may enhance the consultation process with young people. I consider these questions in the context of important epistemological and theoretical debates about arts-informed and visual research methodologies.

Five youth who had involvement of being in-care and were a part of a music group at a local Children's Aid Society participated in my study. My study found that the youth overall felt consulted and did feel a degree of influence in shared decision making with being in-care. My study also showed that although photo-elicitation did not generate more

'emotional–type talk', it does appear to enhance self–confidence, which seemed to support meaningful participation in the interview process. Although much more needs to be explored with the application of visual research methods, and social science researchers should be cautious in making exaggerated claims in support of the approaches, youth in–care can surely benefit from visual research methods such as photo–elicitation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction

Much has been written about how the child welfare system is broken (Swift, 1995, Swift, 1998, Trocmé et al, 2003, Margolin, 1997, Blackstock 2006/7). Many theorists have offered their solutions to how to fix the broken system. Some have proposed an 'evidence-based practice' solution, while others value ambiguity and uncertainty (Plath, 2006, Leonard, 2001, Parton, 1998). Others theorists advocate an anti-oppressive practice framework, in the form of political and structural change (Esposto, 2010). Applying the Sign of Safety model (Turnell & Edwards, 1999) has also been advocated, but authors have rightfully pointed out that this model is more a guide for practice, rather than something that which will change the "bones" of child welfare (Esposto, 2010, Blackstock, 2006/2007). Then politicians and lawmakers also weigh in on how to fix the child welfare system. For instance, the Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne, raising concerns about the system becoming increasing bureaucratic and lacking the necessary oversight, proclaims she would consider "blowing up" the system and "starting from scratch" (Toronto Star, 2015).

Regardless of the solutions proposed for fixing child welfare, most advocates, politicians, lawmakers, and researchers seem to agree that the views of the people most affected – the youth themselves – should be taken into account. The impetus (coming from many directions) to make child welfare more 'child-centred' is a central focus of my thesis. My thesis also explores the potential for visual research methods as a means to enhance consultation with youth. Specifically I am interested in claims made about photo-elicitation helping with increasing emotional type talk and how the method may enhance the consultation process with youth.

How the Art-Informed Visual Methodology Fits With My Vision, Skills and Expertise and Background to Why I Became Interested in Youth Participation and Visual Research Methods.

"Art attracts us only by what it reveals of our most secret self." – Alfred North Whitehead (brainyquote.com, 2016)

Prior to delving into my thesis, I wanted to preface how my research has been a deeply personal journey for me. I have always had a 'creative eye' for photography and been more artistic/ visually inclined. This journey started in my early teens, taking photos, expressing myself through writing, poetry and the arts. As I transitioned into university, I became interested in philosophy – attempting to answer the important questions of life. After completing my Bachelor of Philosophy Degree from the University of Saskatchewan, and starting work at a group home for at-risk youth, I developed an interest in various creative applications, specifically photography, to engage youth.

I have worked for over eleven years with young people and families, including four years in a variety of group homes working directly with young people as a Youth Worker. About eight years ago, I conducted a Photovoice project over a series of two months with a family serviced by the group home. I produced a video/ photo slideshow which was presented at the group home. After completing my Bachelor of Social Work, and then later starting my Masters of Social Work (MSW) and becoming a Child Protection Worker, I began to merge my three core passions – *photography, philosophy, and working with youth/ social work*. As I developed the idea of what I wanted to address in my thesis, I began to consider the potential of merging these three core passions into a master's thesis. The following, therefore, is my attempt to fuse my three core passions and interests. It is my intent to present a coherent and rigorous exploration into the topic of youth self-expression involving music and it relationship to consultation, using these three passions as the drivers behind my inquiry.

My interest in these areas emerges as well from my experience as a child protection worker and involvement with a youth-led video project. I have worked in child protection as a Family Service/ Intake worker for the last seven years. Roughly two and a half years ago, I produced a youth-led video project involving youth who were involved in-care at Brant Family and Children Services (FACS). The project was called 'Listen to Me.' The video asked youth their views relating to LGBTQ issues, anti-bullying and being in-care. Subsequently, this video was used to train educational staff at the Grand

Erie District School Board, child protection workers at Brant FACS and social work students at Wilfred Laurier University (Brantford campus). This project furthered my interest, which resulted in me conducting my literature review as part of my MSW course work on 'youth in-care shared decision making'. As the youth-led video project involved youth who were in-care within the child welfare system, and I have had experience working with this population, I decided to focus my thesis on youth who were or are in-care.

During the process of editing and planning for the youth-led video project, as well as doing research, I was increasingly intrigued about how innovative techniques such as visual-based research methods, might enhance social science research and consultation with youth. It was not until I fully engaged the topic and delved into the growing research, that I realized the growing body of research and the claims made about 'knowing through the arts' (Cole & Knowles, 2008). At the same time, I was interested in how we, as social workers, consult youth in a meaningful way and how the visual may enhance that process. What I am passionate and interested in is how we can engage youth in a manner which encourages their voice. My question, and what a major section of my thesis attempts to answer, is whether alternative art-informed/ visual approaches, such as photo-elicitation, offers useful insights into young people's perspectives and experiences and whether the approach aids in consulting youth.

Before delving into this question, I first review the political and legislative context as it relates to child-centredness and then I present my literature on youth in-care participation in decision making. This will provide an overarching context of my study and provide insight into the research questions I am attempting to answer.

The Political and Legislative Context: Making Child Welfare 'Child-Centred'

In this section, I look at the context of what led the Ontario government to describe their intention to "overhaul" and "modernize" child welfare to be more "child-centred" and

recently table their new child welfare legislation (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017; CBC, 2016). I cover aspects of the new Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2016 (CYFSA), which was just passed as of June 1st, 2017 in Ontario. I consider some of the players involved and I consider debates raised. I will mainly look at the Act's incorporation of the 1) findings from the Katelynn Sampson trial and 2) recommendations from Article 12 of the 1989 United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child (UNCRC)(Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017; Ontario.ca, 2017). I also share some of my own direct experience as a frontline child protection worker and shed some light on some current realities of child welfare as it pertains to child participation. Finally, I raise a contention I have with the Act's ambiguity, when it refers to 'due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'.

1) New Child Protection Legislation and Article 12 of the 1989 UNCRC

Article 12 of the 1989 UNCRC states that "children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account" (UNICEF, 1989). Canada ratified the UNCRC in 1992 (OACAS, 2010). It guides interpretation of the Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, our British Common Law, and most relevant for the purpose of my thesis, child protection legislation in Canada (Bala & Houston, 2015).

As child welfare is a provincial responsibility, each province legislates child welfare differently. In Ontario, the provincial government has moved forward with passing new legislation (Bill 89) to the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2016, which governs the 47 Children's Aid Societies (CASs) in Ontario (OACAS, 2017). In Bill 89, it states that the aim of the new Act "is to be consistent with and build upon the principles expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child" (preamble, Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017). Therefore, the proposed Act is said to be consistent with Article 12 of respecting the views of the child (UNICEF, 2015; Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017).

4

2) Katelynn Sampson Inquest Recommendations

Katelynn Sampson was a seven-year-old Toronto girl who was brutally beaten for months until she died from complications of her injuries at the hands of her two caregivers, who are now serving life sentences (CBC, 2016). Katelynn story is a tragic account of a little girl who 'fell through the cracks' of the criminal, child protection and education systems. Findings from the Ontario coroner's inquest concluded that this was mainly due to miscommunication between CASs, a failure on the part of the agencies to conduct safety checks on caregivers and lack of reporting from the professionals involved (CTV, 2016).

In November 2015, seven years after Katelynn's death, an inquiry by the Ontario coroner was conducted to discover whether the agencies involved could have done more to prevent the child's death. The coroner's counsel said in their submissions that the child was "unseen and unheard" by those whose role it was to ensure Katelynn's safety (CBC, 2016).

As part of the Coroner's Court inquest, which wrapped up in April 2016, the jury handed down several recommendations. Central among these recommendations has become known as Katelynn's Principle, a doctrine intended to ensure youth are "at the center" of the child welfare system (CBC, 2016; Office of the Chief Coroner, 2016). The recommendations of the inquest declared that a "child is an individual with rights: who must always be seen, whose voice must be heard and who must be listened to and respected" (p. 3). The recommendations go on to state that "actions must be taken to ensure the child who is capable of forming his or her own views is able to express those views freely and safely about matters affecting them" (p. 3). The recommendations specifically stipulate, that the upholding of the youth's views should take "their age or maturity" into account (p. 3). Furthermore, it states that "each child should be given the opportunity to participate directly or through a support person or representative before any decisions affecting them are made" (p. 3, Office of the Chief Coroner, 2016; CBC, 2016). Many of these recommendations are influenced by Article 12 the UNCRC.

The inquest into Katelynn Sampson's death is an examination into an incredibly tragic child death, where a

child's voice was largely "unheard". Unfortunately, it speaks to countless other incidents, in which a children's voices and views go largely ignored or undervalued within the child-welfare system. The recommendations and proposed policy changes are encouraging steps. However, much more must be done to ensure these recommendations become a reality and not merely a bold proclamation of intent. Accountability and oversight must also be built into the system to require that the agencies and ministry stakeholders follow these recommendations. Some of the modifications to the CYFSA, are the government's answer to addressing the systematic issues and incorporating recommendations from the coroner inquiry. Whether the new changes will, in fact, help positively impact the lives of youth in-care, so that their views are heard and they have power in shaping decisions in child welfare, is yet to be seen.

CYFSA, Youth Voice and Current Realities on the Frontline as a Child Protection Worker

Although there is legislation which governs child welfare, how a young person's actual voice is upheld in everyday child protection practice is another matter. I know from firsthand experience that daily child protection realities do not always match current day theory with practice. For example, being a child protection worker on the front-lines myself, I know first-hand how challenging it is to balance meeting existing realities of the various standards, agency protocols, mandates and demands in child welfare and at the same time to uphold the views of the child in the fullest sense. Countless child protection workers, lawyers, managers, resource workers, navigate their best within the system on behalf of the youth for whom they are responsible. Even despite the struggle to resist and advocate as an individual social worker, the reality is with increased caseloads, heightened ministry demands, and tightening budgets, it is increasingly challenging for CASs in Ontario to dedicate the necessary resources to make youth's voice a top priority (Toronto Star, 2016). My observations are supported by a paper I was a contributing author of by Damiani-Taraba, Sky et. al, (which is under review). The authors identify how current research identifies child welfare as being heavily slanted towards protectionism, which makes actual and effective child participation difficult

(Damiani–Taraba, Sky et. al, 2016).

Contentions With What Constitutes 'Due Weight' in the New CYFSA

During the process of my research on youth shared decision making and the CYFSA, what troubled me was the reality of the inherent power differential between child and worker, adult and young people and how that balance must be factored when consultation is implemented. For me, age and maturity, and what weight to give to the maturity, factored into that balance when considering youth participation. I found that the new legislation does not provide a clear enough guidance and definition into what constitutes 'due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. The UN Convention Article 12 definition, which is adopted by the Ontario's government's new legislation changes, does not provide an explanation in how that due weight is applied or considered either.

One central worry I have is the risk of the 'pendulum swinging too far' with the child centric focus. It is important there has been a shift towards making child welfare more child centric. My thesis is devoted to the subject. However, we have to be cautious in the process, not to go too far in any one direction.   There is risk of enabling potentially bad or risky decisions from youth and to not take into reasonable consideration child development when maturity and capacity is not factored. Although choices and the opinions from youth must be upheld, we also need to think critically about the fact that adults, those in charge, often have the insight, experience and responsibility to ensure that children and youth make choices which are safe and healthy for them. Therefore, simply saying that youth must be consulted and putting no limits or critical thought about how decisions occur, should be avoided. In short, a right balance of 'due weight' must be sought. The CYFSA does not provide a clear articulation of this due weight, therefore it is primarily up to the individual child protection worker to strike this balance.

We as child protection workers must factor into account the realities of variation among young people in age and maturity and capacity to appreciate the consequences of

decisions, which is a broad and complex issue. In short, it inevitably takes skill, expertise, experience and effort for the individual social worker to strike the right balance between allowing youth the autonomy in their decisions and at the same time ensuring these decisions provide for their overall well-being and safety.

A Conversation With the Minister Of Children And Youth Services And His Policy Team Regarding Bill 89

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to meet and begin an email dialogue with Minister of Children and Youth Services/ Anti-Racism, Michael Coteau and Derek Lipman, Senior Advisor of Strategic Initiatives. In that exchange, I received a response back from the Director of Child Welfare Reform Project, Esther Levy.

What Is 'Due Weight'? Youth Views and the Debate Over Age and Maturity

I asked the Minister a question about what constitutes 'due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. Ms. Levy, answering for the Minister, indicated "the proposed legislation includes the right for children and youth to be engaged through an honest and respectful dialogue about how and why decisions affecting them are made, and to have their views given due weight, in accordance with their age and maturity. The rights section also includes the right to be consulted on the nature of the services provided or to be provided to them and advised of the decisions made in respect of those services" (Levy, 2017). Ms. Levy quoted the proposed new Act. Questions remained however from Ms. Levy's response: what do the youth's views being given "due weight, in accordance with their age of maturity" in fact mean? This is what I was attempting to answer.

In summary, there is a growing recognition that children involved in the child welfare system should be active participants in their lives. The Ontario Government is in the process of ensuring child welfare is child-centred. This is at least what is outlined in the proposed Act and public comments made by the Minister, Mr. Coteau, the Premier Kathleen Wynne and the answers provided by the Director of Child Welfare Reform Project, Esther Levy. Whether the proposed changes become practice and a reality for children

and families are yet to be seen. An Act cannot solve all of what ails youth in-care. Despite this fact, a strong case can be made that such changes to the Act are a positive development for youth's views in shared decision-making about their lives. Nevertheless, there is still a considerable gap to fill to ensure the consideration of young people's perspectives becomes standard practice in Ontario.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Terms: 'In-Care' and 'Youth Shared Decision Making'

Before delving into my literature review, it is important I define the exact terms of what I am researching: '*youth participation*' and '*in-care shared decision making*'. By 'youth participation', I mean: the degree in which the young people were consulted and/or felt like their voices were heard in decision making with their workers. By young people being 'in-care', I mean youth who have come into child welfare care for a variety of reasons (i.e. due to neglect, abuse, family break-down etc.) and have become the legal responsibility of the province. These are children who have become the responsibility of the Children Aid Society's governed and mandated under the CYFSA. These youth are placed with extended family (kinship) 'in-care' placements, foster-care (with privately run or CAS-run homes) or group home care. Past CYFSA terminology used for youth who are 'in-care', included 'crown wards', 'society wards' or 'temporary wards' (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 2017). All these terms have different meanings depending on the decision made by the court. When I refer to 'out of home care', I mean placements which do not involve immediate or extended family. All decision in child-welfare are shared (i.e. decisions are often made between a variety of key stakeholders, including the youth, lawyers (OCLs), managers, direct worker etc.). Shared decision, are often between the child and their direct worker and may include decisions made about their placement (where they reside), what school they may go to, how often or if they see their parents or caregivers and many other important decisions.

Youth Participation in Out-of-Home Care Decision-Making

The topic of this section of my literature review explores

youth participation, primarily as it relates to children's participation in in-care decision-making and whether their voice results in meaningful change. I was fortunate enough to have two researchers at my office who assembled articles on youth participation. I used many of these articles to form the core of my literature review. I later built on this literature foundation by searching journal sources on McMaster Library website. I searched for 'youth participation in child welfare', 'in-care decision making' and 'youth consultation'. There were several 'hits' in my search. I choose the ones I thought which were most relevant to my topic, population, location and general articles which piqued my interest. Therefore, it was not a systematic search. I collected and reviewed fourteen articles in total. For future studies, a more comprehensive literature review is warranted.

Most of the articles I reviewed, focused on children who are or have been in out-of-home care. The exception was Stafford & Laybourn et al. (2003), which examined the topic of youth's view on consultation in general, by asking their opinion on public life and in the public policy process. Mitchell et al.(2009) are more narrowly focused on youth views and experience in the transition to foster care. All the authors conducted their own research; while Fox & Berrick (2006) provide a comprehensive overview of the literature.

Type of Study Designs Reviewed
All the articles are qualitative; however, Dunn et al. (2010), uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It should be noted, the majority of the articles use some aspects of quantitative methods in their approach. Papers covered in this literature review were from Europe (Britain and Scotland), United States, and Australia. Only one article was from Canada (Guelph, Ontario). About half of all the papers were retrospectively focused, in that the participants were asked about their past experience in-care. The other articles were conducted with youth presently in-care. Two studies were a combination of both.

The studies reviewed in the literature use a variety of methods to engage 'youth voice'. Only one considers the means of consultation itself. Four studies conduct individual interviews. Three use focus groups, two use a combination of

focus groups and individual interviews, and one uses a survey. On the data gathering, two studies involve 'youth leads' to work in partnership with the researchers in managing and interpreting the findings. Finally, one study used 'snowball–sampling', in that they had other youth encourage further participants to join the study. The effectiveness and fit of these methods to engage 'youth voice', is an important consideration for future research.

There were a variety of themes covered in the literature reviewed. Questions of power appear frequently. Two articles look specifically at the topic, while other authors note a gap in the literature as it pertains to consultation with youth. The positive trend in valuing youth voices is also covered in the literature review.

Themes:

1. Power and Shared–Decision Making
Two articles looked at how youth participation has not had a significant impact on current foster care policy and practice. The authors equate the use and existence of a power differential between young people and their workers and adults in the role as caregivers as the culprit of this occurrence (Nybell, 2013; Sinclair, 2004). For example, Nybell (2013), in her US study, investigates the micro–politics of voice related to youth experience of being in–care. Borrowing from Burman (2008), she declares that to "'give voice' to another can disguise power relations that are inherent in the interactions" (p. 1228). However, as she and other writers point out: "giving children and youth opportunities to comment on policies and programs can too easily become tokenistic, which legitimatizes adult perspectives or authorize limited programs of change" (p. 1228). Nybell (2013) observes the oversimplification of youth participation she frequently sees in the literature. In particular, she points to the fact that power is a major factor which is often overlooked or ignored: "scholarship that presents children's voices as "authentic" and unproblematic, risks underestimating the extent to which interactions with young people are shaped and constrained by the power–laden interactional contexts in which they are produced" (p. 1228, Nybell 2013). Similarly, Sinclair (2004)

summarizes what he sees as the current state of literature in relation to young people and power: "more is known about how to support young people to make participation more rewarding for them, but less about how that participation can bring about change so there is a more balanced emphasis between the agendas of adults and those of children" (p. 115, Sinclair, 2004).

The main finding from the literature reviewed was the consensus from youth they felt their participation did not sufficiently affect change when it comes to decision–making about their lives. For instance, Sinclair (2004) states "children within the care system indicated that they had the opportunity to express their views, but they do not believe their views are taken into account" (p. 114). These findings have important ethical and procedural implications for current studies on the subject. An important factor in which Sinclair (2004) cautions his readers is the risk of creating a "wave of participation activity" (p. 114). He argues this will most likely result "in short order by a wave of disillusionment among young people" (p.114). Sinclair points out that some studies have already coined 'consultation fatigue' after hearing some stories from youth about the lack of the results they experience from their participation (Sinclair, 2004). This comes down to the means by which power is shared with adults who make decisions about the children's lives. The sharing of authority has some complicating methodological and ethical factors, which I will briefly explore now.

Balancing Power: Roger's Hart's Ladder of Participation Model
A central model used in the literature to understand and help create a balance of power between adults and children as it pertains to youth participation is Rogers Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Participation Model' (Hart, 1992). The Ladder was created to facilitate the community's understanding of youth involvement (Damiani–Taraba, Sky et. al, 2016). As Bessell (2010), describes, the levels are as follows:

1. A child is consulted but does not understand; 2. A child is given information without an opportunity to express his/her views; 3. A child expresses his/her views but does not take part in decision–

making; 4. A child takes part in decision making
but not in any autonomous decisions; 5. A child
makes autonomous decisions but does not define the
problem; 6. A child defines the problem and makes
the decision. (p. 496)

Two of the articles reviewed highlight the problems of
Hart's Ladder of Participation Model (Bessell 2010; Sinclair,
2004). Some researchers criticize that Hart's ladder does not
fully account for the complexity that makes up sharing of
power (Damiani–Taraba, Sky et. al, 2016). Regardless, the
model provided a useful starting point in helping to examine
how to engage with youth.

Although the Ladder of Participation model is seen by
Bessell (2010) and Sinclair (2004) as useful in understanding
the power differential between adults and children, they also
do not see it as practical or appropriate when put into
practice. Furthermore, they explain that youth participation
is an elaborate affair which demands careful consideration.
They suggest the model falls short in this regard in that it
is too simple. Sinclair (2004) explains just advocating that
the ideal youth participation should occur at a 'level 5 or
6', is not always possible or appropriate when considering
shared decision–making. He argues we need to think about the
context and makeup of the people involved. He writes, "what
is appropriate for one group may not suit another; it is
necessary to design forms of dialogue and engagement that
start from the position of the child, whatever their age or
ability" (p. 109, Sinclair, 2004).

Sinclair (2004) goes on to advocate what he sees is the
ideal way to think about youth participation as it pertains
to shared decision–making:

those involved will have an understanding of
complexities, so that they can match appropriately
the nature of their activity to its purpose and to
the decision–making context and the appropriate
level of power–sharing. Only when the adults have
thought this through are they going to be in a

position to engage honestly with children. (p. 111)

In short, what Sinclair is pointing out is that context and appropriateness of the youth's age and ability are factors which need to be considered. Oversimplifying youth participation for him and others underestimates the use of power in shared decision-making.

Further Issues of Power and Solutions Offered
The sharing of authority has some complicating methodological and ethical factors which are explored in the literature. I will not touch on all these factors, but only examine the most salient. The point made by Fox and Berrick (2006) is that there are significant barriers for case workers given high caseloads and the limits of the systems in which they operate. They state: "political, legal, financial, administrative, and pragmatic barriers all conspire to limit child welfare workers' ability to be regularly client-focused in their work with foster children" (p.50). While they freely acknowledge these limitations, they also point out that "child welfare practice that fails to incorporate children's perspectives may exacerbate their commonly experienced feelings of powerlessness and ultimately undermine positive outcomes" (p. 50, Fox & Berrick, 2006). To address systematic change, many authors suggest youth participation must be firmly embedded in policy and child-welfare practice, not just an add-on or up to the individual worker to implement (Newman et al., 2011; Fox & Berrick, 2006; Mitchell et al. 2009; Sinclair, 2004).

Another ethical implication articulated by Sinclair (2004), is how we as adults may misinterpret the messages children are sending to suit our agenda. He asks: are we just interpreting what they are saying so that they can contribute to an adult plan already defined? Here he argues there is a need for critical-thinking and introspection. A final point Sinclair makes is the risk of creating 'professional children' when considering representing their view. Other researchers also note that some youth may not feel like participating and may see certain decisions as an adult responsibility. Clearly, there must be a balance between allowing 'children to just be children' and involving them in decisions that affect their lives.

2. Gaps and Limitations in Literature: Direct Consultation With Youth, and Youth Diversity

A shared feature in almost all the articles is the finding that there has been a significant gap in the literature as it pertains to youth experience in-care and youth voices in directing their care. Many of the author's note, that the vast majority of studies have not fully considered the implication of youth participation in existing child-welfare policy (Dunn et al., 2010; Nybell, 2013; Rauktis et al, 2011; Strolin – Goltzman et al., 2010; Fox & Berrick, 2006; Mitchell et al. 2009; Stafford & Laybourn et al., 2003). As Mitchell et al. (2009) note, in their article 'We Care About Care', "the existing research on children's experiences in foster care is primarily based on the perspectives of social workers and foster parents, and secondary data analysis" (p. 176, Mitchell et al., 2009). Fox & Berrick (2006) in summarizing the evidence they gathered from almost two dozen studies examining children's experience in-care, concludes a similar finding: "only a few studies have included children as informants, in spite of their status as the primary clients of the foster care system" (p. 24). Fox & Berrick (2006) declare, "the 1983 book titled, 'No One Ever Asked Us', is largely true today" (p. 24, Fox & Berrick, 2006).

Many of the authors also indicate that more diverse and inclusive samples are needed to actually represent 'youth voice'. Fox and Berrick (2006) summarize these limitations well when they state: "to improve upon the research conducted to date, much tenacity, resourcefulness, creativity, agency and court collaboration is needed to bolster the overall quality of future studies. Larger, more representative samples are needed, so the experiences of foster children by race/ethnicity, class, gender, age, reason for removal, placement type, sibling characteristics, and a host of other potentially influential factors can be examined" (p.50). They argue that we as researchers and social workers must take into account a host of factors to give youth an important voice (Fox and Berrick, 2006).

3. Positive Trend and Skepticism in Valuing Youth Voices in the Literature Reviewed

Although to date there is a consensus that there is a gap

in the literature, many of the articles reviewed, share an optimistic view of the changes that are occurring. For example, several highlighted the growing sensitivity and trends in the literature focusing on youth decision-making (Bessell, 2010; Nybell, 2013; Sinclair, 2004; Stafford & Laybourn et al., 2003). As Sinclair (2004) notes "over recent years there has been a growing acceptance in Britain and elsewhere that children and young people should be more involved in the making of decisions that affect them" (p. 106, Sinclair, 2004). Bessell (2010) goes so far as to indicate that governments across the world have been taking steps to incorporate youth participation in out-of-home decision-making: "over time, there has been a gradual but profound change in the value placed on children's views. During the past decade, governments have begun to recognize that children are stakeholders in the out-of-home care system" (p. 496, Bessell, 2010). Similarly, Stafford & Laybourn et al. (2003) suggest the consideration of youth participation is also occurring across multiple-disciplines, not just in the field of social work.

Other researchers are more skeptical about the positive change. For instance, the degree to which children's voice is considered is not entirely agreed upon in the literature reviewed. Some authors suggested that participation and consultation with youth remain largely 'tokenistic' and primarily focused on an adult agenda and perspective (Newman et al., 2011; Fox & Berrick, 2006). As Stafford & Laybourn et al. 2003 state, "consultation should be a genuine attempt to listen seriously to young people's views and act on them, not just a window-dressing exercise conducted for the benefit of adults about issues already decided" (p. 366). Regardless of one's perspective on the nature and scope of youth voice within current out-of-home policy and literature, it is safe to say the shared aim of the articles reviewed is to counteract and challenge the status quo. They all share the goal of questioning existing policy and practice and further expanding research on this topic.

Why the Positive Trend in Valuing Youth Voices?
To understand the current state of knowledge in the field of youth participation as it pertains to out-of-care policy and practice, it is important to comprehend the historical

context of the topic. An interesting debate within the literature reviewed is why engaging and researching youth experience in-care has grown in popularity and acceptance over the last couple of decades. Sinlair (2004) offers three central reasons: 1) children are now increasingly understood as 'competent social actors', due to new paradigms in the social sciences 2) the growing influence of the consumer 3) and the child's right agenda. On Sinclair's second point, many of the articles support his finding of the 'growing influence of the consumer'. In two articles the researchers highlight that there is a growing recognition that youth offer valuable feedback (in a sense as 'consumers') to improve the existing child-welfare system. As Fox & Berrick (2006) note "viewed more specifically from a client-centered program evaluation perspective, foster children provide critical consumer feedback on the foster care service delivery system's processes and outcomes" (p.24). The most popular reason given for the increased recognition of the need to research youth participation is the fact that children have been explicitly defined as having rights as individuals under the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Bessell, 2010; Nybell, 2013; Sinclair, 2004; Mitchell et al. 2009; Stafford & Laybourn et al., 2003). The Convention declares that children have rights to both protection and participation. Most importantly, Article 12 of the Convention, indicates that children have the right to freely express and be heard about judicial or administrative procedures that affect them. This, as noted in the literature reviewed, is pertinent to young people's rights and participation in shared decision-making about out-of-home care (Sinclair, 2004; Nybell, 2013).

Overall, the review of the literature made me consider the youth voices differently and challenged assumptions of what I already thought I knew about youth engagement and their desired placements. In short, considering 'youth participation' became much more important in my practice because of my review of the literature. Consideration as to how to conduct my thesis, in the sense of how to engage youth and which methods to use, was also a factor I reflected upon.

This section of the literature review has looked at the topic of youth participation, as it relates to out-of-home

care. A variety of features were covered to give an overview of the current scope of knowledge on the topic of 'youth participation'. A gap in the literature was discussed as well as some of the historical context that contributed to that gap. Some emerging trends towards including youth participation in research and existing child–welfare policy and practice were also explored. Arguments were provided about why some think that participation remains largely 'tokenistic'. The issue of power was given as one reason for the limits placed on youth participation as well as other ethical and practical reasons. Finally, some solutions explored in the literature were considered, as well as some limitations. All in all, the research suggests that there are many important reasons to incorporate youth participation in out–of–home decision–making and within existing child–welfare policy.

3. METHODOLOGY, METHOD AND ETHICS

A. METHODOLOGY

A Word on Methodology
   Methodology holds a significant role in the research process. It is important to devote a portion of my thesis to an examination of the methodology to ensure I have a firm theoretical foundation for the study. Following this, I will proceed to considerations of method, the data–analysis and my research findings.

Taking a Step Back
   Broussine (2008) advises that before conducting any research, the researcher needs to take a 'step back' to develop an awareness of their methodological position. Knowles and Promislow (2008) argue that "understanding the deep structure of any methodology is vital" (p. 27). By developing a "methodological awareness" we as researchers "show our hand" and cultivate transparency about our methodological choices and assumptions (p. 5). It also encourages reflexivity, through all stages of the research journey (Broussine, 2008). It is with this advice that I explore the theoretical and epistemological elements of art informed/ visual research within the social sciences, in

particular within social work research involving youth.

The following section comprises the methodological and theoretical framework of my thesis. Art–informed and visual methodologies will be covered, setting the context for the methods section of photo–elicitation and focus group interviewing.

Setting context: Art Informed Methodology, Visual Research Methodology, Photo–elicitation and Critical–Visual Analysis
I will cover five main themes in this section: definition & scope of arts in qualitative research, art as constituting knowledge, recent developments in the field, art and its relationship to social justice/ change and potential research benefits. Travers' (2009) argument will be presented, as to why we should reasonably be critical of certain claims of 'innovation' by some alternative approaches, such as art–informed approaches. I will also introduce his meta–theoretical challenge against the field's broad adoption of postmodernism. I hope to provide the reader with a greater context in which visual research methodology is situated. Part 1 will thus cover art–informed methodology; Part 2 will outline visual research methodology. Ultimately, Part 1 and 2 will set the context for the method of photo–elicitation used by my study and the tailored version of Rose's 'critical visual methodology' which I adopted for my data–analysis and makes up Part 3.

PART 1: Art Informed Methodology In The Social Sciences

Definition Of Arts In Qualitative Research & Application To My Research
"Incorporating the arts into research methodology involves much more than adding a splash of color or an illustrative image or an evocative turn of phrase or a new media track. There is much more to methodology than method" – p. 27 Knowles & Cole (2008)

Arts in qualitative research is broad and expanding field with particular theoretical issue and benefits. A seminal handbook on the subject, which informs much of the following overview, is the 'Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative

Research' (2008). In this book, the editors, Knowles & Cole, advise that the arts in qualitative research, and the social sciences, in particular, is a burgeoning and growing field. They declare that this development is changing qualitative study and scholarship. The book explores both how art is a mode of inquiry and how it can be applied within a variety of approaches and perspectives across disciplines. Finally, the handbook outlines methodological and epistemological issues (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

The arts in qualitative research goes by many names and expressions: arts–informed inquiry, arts–inspired social research, art as inquiry, critical arts–based research, practice–based research, aesthetically based research, research–based art and a/r/tography (Osei–Kofi, 2013). The diversity of terms is likely due to the relatively new adoption of the arts in qualitative research (Knowles & Cole, 2008). Although these terms intermingle and share meanings – as a sort of 'cross pollination' of related methodological terminology – there are clear distinctions among them. One primary difference is between art–informed research (AIR) and art–based research (ABR) methodologies (Wehbi, 2015). My chosen research topic, method and data–analysis, is AIR methodology. The reason for this is that my research adopts aspects from the arts, but is not exclusively about the creation of art or the creative process per se (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

Although the topic of my study is about self–expression as it pertains to youth involvement with music, it is not primarily about their music playing or composing. Rather, I am exploring in greater depth the question of voice and self–expressions and using focus groups and photo–elicitation as a method for data collection. In short, music is a usefully related topic, with its methodological potentials and related theoretical issues, but not the central focus.

Art as Knowledge
"Science states meaning, art express it." – Dewey's (1934)(p. 4, Knowles & Cole, 2008)

Art as a viable form of knowledge has not really been considered an important question within the history of

Western thinking. Even today there is still some debate in academia as to whether the use of arts in research constitute a legitimate epistemology (Knowles & Cole, 2008). The acceptance of art not forming knowledge, is primarily due to the influence of the positivist tradition, which gains much of its intellectual origins from earlier ancient conceptualizations of mind.

One of the primary influences and originators of Western theories of mind was the philosopher Plato, who equated the arts with the sensory aspect of human experience (Knowles & Cole, 2008). This was in contrast to reason. In Plato's famous cave allegory, the senses were impediments to the direct perception of truth. Elliot Eisner, in his article titled 'Arts and Knowledge', describes Plato's thinking on the subject in the following way: "[for Plato] the sensory systems that were stimulated through the arts were misleading; they lead one away rather than toward that form of critical rationality upon which truth depends" (p. 4, Knowles & Cole, 2008).

Positivism borrows much of its thought from thinkers like Plato and Aristotle, and later iterations from 'postpositivism' or 'postempiricism' philosophers such as Karl Popper (1902–1994) (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). The positivist tradition dominated Western philosophy during the first half of the 20th century (Knowles & Cole, 2008). Much of this tradition viewed the "arts as largely emotive rather than primarily informative" (p. 3). The arts were to be enjoyed or felt strongly, but something which had little to do with knowledge. Hence there was a separation of the arts from matters epistemological. The arts, therefore, do not have a very secure history in Western philosophical thought (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

Recent Developments: A growing sea change
Over the last several decades there has been a 'growing sea change' in the adoption of arts within social sciences. Social scientists adopting art-based/ art informed methodologies have shifted to embrace emotions as reliable sources of knowledge (Knowles & Cole, 2008). This new way of thinking originated with theorists such as Susan Langer, a philosopher, writer, and a pioneer ahead of her time (New

World Encyclopedia, 2016). She stated in 1957 that emotions are not just something an artist has, but qualities they come to know: "I think every work of art expresses, more or less purely, more or less subtly, not feelings and emotions the artist has, but feelings which the artist knows; his insight into the nature of sentience, his picture of vital experience, physical, and emotive and fantastic" (p. 7, Knowles & Cole, 2008).

It is these social scientists that differentiate their positions from prominent Western methodologies, which are almost exclusively based on verbal and mathematical skills (Cole & Knowles, 2008). As Rose (2011) states, visuals enact the ineffable. These researchers have begun to challenge the notion that positivist/ scientific tradition is the only way we can come to know the complexities of the human condition (Cole & Knowles, 2008; Osei-Kofi, 2013). As Langer states, the arts in social science research has allowed for the "structure of human feeling in its varieties..." (p. 8). She goes on to explain that "works of art enable us to know something about feeling that cannot read be revealed in literal scientific statements" (p. 8, Cole & Knowles, 2008). It is this shift in epistemological thought, which has led to a 'sea change' in qualitative social science research, leading to a growing body of articles and studies. In turn, this has resulted in new perspectives and novel ways to understand and give voice to the complexities of the human being.

Art and Social Justice/ Change
"Artists are the antennae of the race." – Ezra Pound (Mansaram at A Space Gallery, 2014)

An interesting example of a more broadly conceived use of the arts (i.e. beyond academia), is its close link to social change. According to Marshall McLuhan, in the book 'Understanding Media – The Extensions of Man', artists are often the first in reflecting emerging social developments. For him, artists are conceived as 'the antennae' to society. They perceive and express through their art, where we as a society are going – be it socially or technically. Thus, according to McLuhan, the arts can be prophetic, besides mere self-expression (Mcluhan Galaxy, 2014).

As artists can be prophetic of emerging social change, they can also open our eyes to newly evolving progressive matters, particular issues of social justice. Avant-garde artists have been using their art to create and reflect back to us larger social conversations for centuries. Today, in 2017, is no exception. In fact, such creative expressions and spaces have only accelerated, most like due to the information age (i.e. social media and visual media). My interest in highlighting this topic is to point out the contemporary cultural conversations that are occurring between the intersections of arts and social justice and how this may influence social science research. The relationships between contemporary art expressions, social justice and art-informed research, is not the focus of my thesis, but I am confident to declare they are intimately linked. Although Gillian Rose, a visual research writer I will cover extensively later, does not talk specifically about social justice, she does discuss the social trend between present-day visual culture and emerging visual research methods. In particular, she describes a connection between contemporary culture becoming 'hyper-visual' and the wide popularity of visual research methods in the social sciences. Therefore, at least for researchers like Rose, there is a direct relationship between larger social trends and social science research methods.

Benefits of the Arts

There are several contributions the arts make to social science knowledge. I will briefly outline *four* main benefits and contributions the arts makes towards research and epistemology. The arts can: generate empathy, challenge assumptions through new ways of seeing, lead to self-knowledge and encourage therapeutic results.

On generating empathy, Eisner notes that the arts can often induce "empathic feeling", which in turn can inspire actions (p. 11). Eisner's reasoning for this is that art can move us – move us to act, move us to be more empathetic. For Eisner, art does not merely reflect what is in the world, rather "life often imitates art" (p.11, Knowles & Cole, 2008). Art, therefore, influences life more than we may typically think.

A second reason the arts benefits research and contributes to knowledge is that art can help to challenge assumptions. For Eisner, the arts contributes to knowledge by forming new ways of seeing by encouraging us to challenge assumptions and conditioned ways of thinking. As Eisner explains, the arts can result in ensuring that "our old habits do not dominate our reactions with stock responses" (p. 11, Knowles & Cole, 2008). Sinding et al. (2012) build on this point in their article titled 'Social Work And The Arts': "art is also offered as a way to break 'bad habits': to interrupt patterns of seeing and knowing defined by stereotype and prejudice, to bring us to consciousness about these habits, and to create the possibility for new ways of knowing and relating" (p. 198, Sinding et al., 2012). As Eisner notes "to the extent to which we need to give up some of our old habits, the arts are willing and helpful allies in such a pursuit" (p. 11, Knowles & Cole, 2008).

Another benefit of the arts in research is that it can lead to self-knowledge. Eisner explains that "art helps us connect with personal, subjective emotions, and through such a process, it enables us to discover our own inner landscape. Not an unimportant achievement" (p. 11). As he points out "the arts are a way of enriching our awareness and expanding our humanity" (p. 11, Knowles & Cole, 2008).

A final benefit, and perhaps the most important as it pertains to my study, is the potential of the arts to be therapeutic. Much of this has to do with the ability of art and artists to communicate hard to express feelings. Sinding and colleagues (2012) wrote about what the art is said to do – about claims made about the arts in social work. They indicate that in the literature reviewed, the arts "'gets stuff out'– it offers a means to reach and bring forth 'what's inside' the individual or the collective (troubled feelings or memories and oppressive relations, as well as strengths and aspirations)" (p. 197, Sinding et al., 2012). This, the authors state, is the arts' ability to help translate complex or hard to express feelings into a more tangible and concrete form (i.e. be it a painting, photo or sculpture, etc.). Art, therefore, is often less direct and more easily shared. For as Sinding et al. indicate many researchers claim that art "sidesteps the defensiveness generated by familiar

communication; it captures experiences and phenomena too elusive for words" (p. 197, Sinding et al., 2012).

Criticism Of ABR/AIR Methodology – Marketing And Packaging Innovation?

I will now explore an argument against using an AIR methodology to justify my choice of using the visual method of photo-elicitation in my research.

Travers (2009) lodges two central challenges to qualitative researchers who present claims of "newness" and "innovation" in their articles and books. Travers' argument is that many qualitative researchers market claims of *'newness'* based on little to no evidence and use *technology advancements to justify innovation* in methods*.*

Travers' solution is to return to more traditional research approaches, such as 'classical symbolic interactionism' or 'Chicago School ethnography', not invent new ones with little to no established track-record. After covering his two central arguments and his subsequent solution, I will present his more serious meta-theoretical challenge against the field's wide adoption of postmodernism. My visual methodology and data-analysis sections, as well as an Appendix to this thesis, will wrestle and attempt to resolve Travers' argument, specifically his criticism of postmodernism's anti-realism and strict relativism.

Marketing Claims of 'Newness' Based On Little To No Evidence

Is the entire ABR/AIR methodology research cannon merely marketing and 'repackaging' of proven and established qualitative research techniques in academia? Are these methods innovative or is there little actual newness or novelty to them based on evidence? These questions are based on a criticism levelled by Travers (2009) in his article, 'New Methods, Old Problems – A Skeptical View of Innovation in Qualitative Research'. Travers' article is based on books he extracted from 100 Google Book searches using the keywords 'innovative' and 'qualitative research'. Travers' research came up with 1967 books and articles containing the phrases 'new methods' and 'qualitative research. Travers describes how these researchers using new approaches, specifically in Europe, are increasingly drawing attention to "breakthroughs

in methodology" and "innovations in methodological techniques" (p. 3). He argues that this development is linked to the marketing forces of capitalism. The reason Travers highlights capitalistic forces in qualitative research, is that for him, the same way any person sells in the capitalistic society (i.e. goods and services), qualitative researchers are doing a similar type of selling. The difference is researchers are selling to mass audiences of readers. They do this, he states, by increasingly using terms such as 'new', 'advanced' or 'improved', so people will read, buy their material and accept their grant proposals. His problem is not necessarily that these researchers are making claims of newness and innovation, but they are not backing up their claims with evidence.

Using Technology Advancements To Justify Innovation In Methods
Travers explains how technology is used to promote "newness" in qualitative research without necessarily demonstrating how it offers better techniques to answering long-standing research problems. For instance, Travers declares, "after learning the new technology, one still has to engage with familiar issues and problems" (p. 18, Travers, 2009). He uses such examples as internet ethnography and video analysis to prove his case. Travers would surely add visual research methods, such as Photovoice and photo-elicitation, to this list. In short, he is not convinced that technology itself is adding anything necessarily new or better to research but merely used to market newness and give the allure of innovation (Travers, 2009).

Not Building From A Historical Account Or Wrestling With Difficult Research Problems
Travers argues that qualitative researchers are often missing a historical account and often do not wrestle with challenging and long-standing problems. His central point is that "qualitative researchers, like sociologists generally, could do more in reflecting on long-term and difficult intellectual problems in addition to pursuing and celebrating innovation" (p. 4). He advises that the hyper focus on newness distracts from the research problems which should be under closer investigation using historically proven methods. It is therefore fair to say that Travers is more conservative in

his estimation about what qualitative researchers should be focused on. He is not convinced that many of the contemporary qualitative researchers adopting new methods have a sophisticated understanding of long-standing practices.

In conclusion, Travers' point is that there is not necessarily anything new or innovative per se with many of the emerging qualitative methodologies and approaches. Travers argues that technology and marketing of 'newness' distract from focusing on serious data analysis and methodological issues. For example, when speaking about how many contemporary qualitative researchers present their papers, "they flatter us into thinking that, because the methods are new or innovative, no further thought about methodological issues or how one analyzes the data is required" (p. 18). For Travers, the method becomes the new 'shiny tool' to distract us. The result is a superficial analysis of data and unexplored methodological territory (Travers, 2009).

Skepticism and Acceptance Of Travers' Challenge For My Data Analysis
One may reasonably ask: is there room in Travers' argument where common research issues and problems can be successfully explored (i.e. as in producing reliable knowledge) using new alternative perspectives, technologies, methods and methodologies? Is it truly the case that these new research approaches do not offer novel and useful ways of seeing old problems? In other words, should we take up Travers' advice and base research on more traditional and 'established' approaches? Or is Travers simply not open-minded enough to consider new research perspectives and methods which may challenge his more conservative estimation of evidence?

Some researchers have pointed out that creative ideas are sometimes seen as intimidating and are therefore dismissed. They may challenge the status quo of research. For example, a study by Boudreau & Guinan et. al. (2016) found that people in charge of evaluating scientific grant proposals, consistently gave lower ranking to highly original proposals, even when controlling for quality. In an article titled 'Most People Are Secretly Threatened By Creativity' Jennifer Mueller, shares similar conclusions. The article states that:

"by and large, we tend to be threatened by creativity – and eager to shut it down" (Quartz, 2017). The author goes on to state how this is occurring in academia, business and the culture at large.

Answering To Travers' Criticisms By My Defence Of Visual-Informed Research

We could easily substitute visual research methods, such as photo-elicitation, as a category of 'new' qualitative approaches which Travers would argue is guilty of dispensing similar academic marketing jargon. Although photo-elicitation is a long-standing and established method in visual sociology and anthropology, it is a newer method in the social sciences broadly (Rose, 2012). Therefore, I am sure Travers would not dismiss photo-elicitation or photovoice as methods out of hand. He would ask if claims of newness using the techniques are justified. For Travers', some researchers might justify the newness claim well, others likely would not.

Going into my research, I had the assumption that ABR/AIR approaches, more specifically visual research methods, such as photo-elicitation, offered innovative approaches to social science knowledge. However, after reading Travers, and other accounts against postmodernism research, I was left with my own skepticism about whether visual research methodology in the social sciences had a solid epistemological foundation to pull from to conduct my data-analysis. I also recognize that visual research in the social sciences is still relatively new, and therefore I thought it was normal that there would be this skepticism and consequently a gap in the literature. I also knew that Social Work in particular, has dealt with ongoing questions of epistemological justification and respectability since its origin (Larkin, 2006). In short, I did not accept that Travers' skepticism gave a crucial blow to visual research methods in the social sciences. However, I wanted to ensure that my study claims were based on evidence, not the alleged exaggerated and unsubstantiated claims levelled by Travers.

It is for this reason I focus my next sections on the question of proof – to justify how I may make knowledge claims with visuals with youth. I will explore whether a visual

research technique, such as photo-elicitation, offers the possibility of 'innovative' knowledge with youth. Whether these epistemological concerns will be resolved, will be up to the reader. When justifying adopting a visual-informed data-analysis with youth, it was imperative to be able to account for these theoretical challenges. In short, not to shy away from or pretend they do not exist. It would be misleading, and frankly wrong, to assume these methodological issues are resolved or have little importance to the overall visual research study design.

PART 2: Visual Research Methods And Use Of Visuals Within Social Science Research

Many social science researchers may just adopt a visual research method, with the idea that it is 'innovative' or the new 'research darling' within the social sciences. Jumping right into the study by using a visual analysis method, and skipping a lot of the theoretic problems and considerations of visuals in social science research, may be the more practical and easier strategy. But the hard issues remain. I would argue, that at least having some conceptual understanding around these theoretical issues, is essential when making claims and arguments using visuals as part of one's research. In my case, I would argue such analysis grounds my thesis (study and evidence) in a conceptual understanding of the theoretical issues within visual research methodology in the social sciences. In short, spending more time on the visual research methodology and data analysis aspect of my thesis, especially given it is such a new field, was an important intellectual and personal research venture. My thesis attempts to offer an analysis of the use of images as part of social science research, specifically whether those images produce any reliable and useful knowledge. The following is an exploration of that topic.

Much can be discussed about visual studies as a discipline (visual studies is an entire field on its own) and visual research methods within social studies research. For the following section, I will offer a brief overview of some of the most salient themes as it pertains to my research,

including the value of images in social science research and current developments and debates regarding the use of images in social sciences research. The end goal is to provide an essential theoretical context for the method, data-analysis and discussion sections of my thesis.

Variety Of Applications Of Visuals In Social Science Research; Photography And Photo-Elicitation As The Most Popular

The range of ways in which visuals are used in social science research is as diverse as there are words to describe them. According to Rose (2012), there are various types of visuals used in visual research methods. Photographs are the most popular, but there are diagrams, relational maps, self-portraits, video diaries, maps, drawings, photo journals etc.. Rose advises that "different methods can theorize, contextualize and analysis those visual materials very differently" (p. x, Rose 2012). Photo-elicitation and participatory methods using photography are the most common. Furthermore, the ways in which visuals are sourced are diverse as well. Some are 'researcher produced', others come from the participants ('participant produced') and others form 'found material'. Finally, the ways in which the researcher chooses to disseminate or present the visuals in their final academic report or article can differ as well: some researchers put images in final reports, others do not. Those that do may make the photos central (Rose, 2012). According to Newbury (2012), visual images serve three different purposes in visual scholarship: illustration, analysis, and argument (a topic which I will return to in greater detail in my data-analysis section). Therefore there is diversity in the way visuals are sourced, disseminated, analyzed and presented in social science research, with photographic images and photo-elicitation being the most popular and widely used (Rose, 2012).

Defining Visual Research Methods In The Social Sciences

Visual research methods are defined as the use of visual mediums to produce and convey knowledge to answer social science research questions (Banks, 2001; NCRM, 2012). Visual research methods span a broad range of social science disciplines, including social work research (Newbury, 2012).

It is important to note that the primary roots of visual research lie in visual anthropology and visual sociology, both fields being well-established, especially the former (Banks, 2011). According to Laplante (2012) "visual sociology and visual anthropology are grounded in the idea that valid scientific insight in society can be acquired by observing, analyzing, and theorizing its visual manifestations: behaviour of people and material products of culture" (p. 3, Pauwels, 2011). In the social sciences, visual research methods are mostly commonly used as a qualitative methodology and are primarily dominated by photo-elicitation and participatory frameworks (Rose, 2012). In fact according to Rose, at a visual methods conference she attended, in which she was on the program committee deciding programming for, out of the 300 abstracts submitted, two-thirds to three-quarters of them were about various kinds of photo-elicitation and participatory image making (NCRM, 2012).

Social Sciences' 'Visual Turn' And The Canonization Of The Field
There has been a growing interest in visual research methods in the social sciences over the last decade or so. In fact, some authors have described it as a newly emerging 'visual turn' within the social sciences (Rose, 2012). As Rose declares in her keynote lecture at the '5th ESRC Research Methods Festival Conference' put on by the National Centre for Research Methods (2012): "visual research methods, I think, must count as one of the most striking developments in the social sciences over the past decade or so" (NCRM, 2012). Rose also goes on to describe that this new visual research is being facilitated, "by a range of handbooks, textbooks and now an international visual research method conference" (NCRM, 2012). In her lecture, she describes this development as the 'canonization' of visual research methods. She states that although visual research methods are "not quite mainstream, they are certainly not the marginalized oddities that they once were" (NCRM, 2012). Thus, the 'visual turn' in the social sciences is a growing field of research.

Rose questions the timing of the growing adoption of visual research approaches in the social sciences. She asks, why now? Why the growth? A preliminary speculation she explores, which she cites as being popular by many visual

research theorists, is that the emergence is due to the quickening of technological advancements, by such devices as digital photography (i.e. the ease and wide availability of technology for capturing and sharing photos). For Rose, this argument is not persuasive enough. For her it does not coherently account for the rapid rise and interest even when these devices existed in the past. The methods she describes (i.e. photo-elicitation), do not rely on technological advances per se, for the cameras have been accessible for some time. Rather the sudden emergence requires an entirely different explanation. Rose flags a Foucauldian discourse analysis influence behind her explanation. She suggests that the growing development requires a genealogical explanation, which helps clarify why the emergence of visual method research has developed at this time in human history.

The Value Of Visuals In Social Science Research
    Rose states a few particular advantages of using visual research methods. For her, these methods offer access to 'other' evidence, especially in interviews. The 'talk', as she calls it, occurs when visual materials are discussed, which she cites as being "better at evoking the sensory, affective and emotional" (NCRM, 2012; Weber, 2008). She also states how visual material can generate more talk and produce reflection about what is often "hidden in the ordinary and taken-for-granted" (NCRM, 2012). Rose's position echoes Laplante's account when he quotes Schwartz (1989): "photographs can convey contents that words can only approximately represent, and can represent subjects that might be invisible to the researcher but visible to the interviewee, triggering unforeseen meanings and interpretations" (p. 2, Laplante, 2012). Another benefit Rose cites is how such talk can lead to the empowerment of participants when they explain their photos. Such a process challenges the power-differential between researcher and participant. Finally, and most important for my study, Rose states visual research methods can engage with people who find talk challenging (e.g. children, adults with learning difficulties, etc.) (NCRM, 2012).

Our Hyper Visual Culture And Its Influence On Visual Research Methods
    Rose also agrees with explanation put forth by other

researchers: that mass culture has become more broadly "hyper-visual" (NCRM, 2012). For Rose, this social development has led to social sciences becoming more visual-minded. This is the heart of her work and her prominent book in the field, 'Visual Methodologies – An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials' (2001). She is delving into the relationship between visual research methods and visual culture. Rose defines visual culture as "how people make and encounter visual images, and what happens in those encounters" (Rose, 2016). Her thesis is that the growing visual sensitivity in the culture at large is giving rise to the popularity of visual research methods in the social sciences. Therefore for Rose, visual method research growth can be attributed, non-coincidently, as a part of wider cultural shifts (NCRM, 2012).

In conclusion, Rose challenges and critiques the claim that visuals are an improvement. For instance, she is interested in the claim that visual research methods are positioned as a natural development, "existing within a narrative of progress within the social sciences never ending quest for better data" (NCRM, 2012). Rose takes the position that the rise of visuals in the social sciences are a movement worth noticing and studying. For her, visual research methods may or may not have advantages over other more traditional approaches. Others writing about visual studies and visual research methods in qualitative research (Newbury, 2012; Pauwels, 2011) appear equally conflicted about some of the strong claims about visual research. They are less certain about the ultimate validity of visual material within academic and social science research. They are less willing to proclaim that visual data produces better data. This is in part due to ongoing skepticism, both within and outside the field of visual studies and visual research methods in social sciences, regarding the underlying validity of the visual in knowledge generation (Pauwels, 2011), a topic which I will now explore.

A Field In Flux – Justifying Epistemology And Determining A Coherent Definition

The visual research methodology field struggles in defining itself and justifying its epistemology, according to Pauwels, both for itself as a discipline and as it relates to

social sciences' dominance by the written and numerical (Newbury, 2012; Pauwels, 2011). In regards to justifying its place in the field, Banks (2001) explains "it is quite common for visual researchers in the social sciences to claim that they work in a minority field that is neither understood, nor properly appreciated by their colleagues" (p. 2, Banks, 2001). Even for Newbury (2012), speaking over a decade later: the field often must push against the thinking externally that "images are less knowledge-bearing than words or numbers" (p. 2, Newbury, 2012). Malherbe, Suffla, et al. (2016), supporting a similar account, suggest visual research methods within the social sciences hold a different knowledge than what can be acquired through the written word. For them, this different knowledge is widely ignored and therefore lost within the social sciences (Malherbe, Suffla, et al., 2016).

There is widespread skepticism that images have validity in the generation of primary data. Malherbe, Suffla, et al., (2016) declare that the current state of visuals within social sciences are often "reduced to illustrative devices, seldom forming any kind of analytical site. … The analysis of visuals within this sort of research tends to be unexpected, secondary and superfluous" (p. 2, Malherbe, Suffla, et al., 2016). The authors go on to explain that social science studies that consider images as holding analytical value are underpinned by sociological or anthropological epistemologies, both established fields of study (Malherbe, Suffla, et al., 2016). Even visual studies, an area on its own, "has theoretical discussions about images and their intellectual respectability" (p. 2, Newbury, 2012). In short, the field of visual research methods in the social studies continues to generate debate on its theoretical and epistemological respectability. One may reasonably speculate that images only hold intellectual respectability within the social sciences when they are 'contained' within sociological or anthropological epistemologies.

Debate Between Openness And Standardization Within Visual Studies
One debate within the visual research method field in the social sciences is determining how visuals produce knowledge. An example of the two extremes is the difference between positions held by Malherbe, Suffla, et al. (2016) and Pauwels

(2011). For example, Malherbe, Suffla, et al. (2016), argue that although visual research methods can be considered 'messy', as visuals are less standardized than oral language, visual methodologies are bound by particular rules. These rules, according to Malherbe, Suffla, et al. (2016), allow for a "radical kind of freedom and simplicity of expression" (p. 3, Malherbe, Suffla, et al., 2016).

The crux of the debate is that Malherbe, Suffla, et al. argue for a less standardized conceptualization of visual research methodology within the social sciences, while Pauwels (2011) offers a more precise and tighter assessment of what he sees the field needs. Pauwels advocates for a more scientific and standardized approach and provides less space for the "radical kind of freedom" advocated by Malherbe, Suffla, et al.. Pauwels indicates that "most social scientists are unaware of the existence and potential of visual methods in sociology and anthropology" (p. 2, Pauwels, 2011). He, therefore, is a champion of an approach rooted in these traditions. However, it is clear that Malherbe, Suffla, et al. have a broader conceptualization of visual studies than offered by Pauwels. One way to think of these two different arguments is to think of them as representing two opposing theoretical poles. Pauwels represents a more modern pole, while Malherbe, Suffla, et al. represent a more postmodern pole. These opposing 'visual conceptual poles' of visual research is a topic I will return to in my data–analysis section.

Answers Provided As To Why Visual Studies Is In Flux
Newbury offers a provocative answer as to why visual research in the social sciences may struggle to define itself and justify its knowledge. He is arguing for visual scholarship more broadly, but outlines that visual research has yet to embrace how to *care* for images completely. Newbury explains there is a systemic lack of attention for visuals in image–based studies. For Newbury, caring for images would be to not to take a casual approach to visuals in scholarship, but to wrestle with them and to devote the time and effort to critically evaluate them and use them in or as arguments. Sharing his personal account of not caring for his photographic negatives in his past university photography classes, Newbury implores visual researchers to heed the

advice that was provided to him by his tutor at the time: "care about, and for, images" (p. 2). Caring for images for Newbury is significant, for academic research involves complex communication and expression (p. 2, Newbury, 2012).

Pauwels also offers an answer as to why the field of visual studies in the social sciences has yet to develop a coherent definition and epistemology. Pauwels is reacting towards a visual research methodology field that he sees as not sufficiently comprehensive and integrative. For him, visual research methods are constantly being reinvented without much consideration for historical precedent. Echoing Travers (2009), he argues that many contemporary visual social scientists are adopting an ahistorical account. He states: "visual methods … seem to be reinvented over and over again without gaining much methodological depth and often without consideration of long–existing classics in the field" (p. 2). He declares that despite the 'dispersed efforts', there has been a stunting of a more mature methodology from developing, which could easily make social and behavioural sciences more visual (Pauwels, 2011). Pauwels suggests that less energy should be placed on 'celebratory accounts' and 'appropriating the field', which for him translates as effort spent on renaming and relabeling perspectives and techniques. In short, Pauwels is reacting to a similar account levelled by Travers, that of qualitative researchers who celebrate strong claims of the advancements of visual research, but do not necessarily ground those claims in evidence. The answer, according to Pauwels, should be a "more cumulative and integrative stance" (p. 2). Pauwels wants to rid the visual research in the social sciences of the "ambiguous labeling, the lack of oversight and the methodological and conceptual vagueness" (p. 2) and replace it with a more rigorous and comprehensive approach. He sketches out his 'Integrated Conceptual Framework For Visual Social Research' (2010) in an attempt to bring clarity to these worrying trends (Pauwels, 2011). In the data–design section, I will cover in greater detail how my study fits within Pauwels (2011) 'Integrated Conceptual Framework for Visual Social Research'.

Overall, the growing field of visual research in the social sciences offers lots of potential, but there are many unanswered visual research theoretical questions particularly

as it pertains to epistemology. I will now define more particulars of my study design, focusing on Photovoice and photo-elicitation, as well as covering focus group interviewing. I will then cover my data-analysis.

B. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS FOR MY STUDY

Choice of Method

When first starting out my research, I was planning to conduct a Photovoice project with the youth. However, after doing my research, I came across the distinction between Photovoice and photo-elicitation. It became clear that given the time allotted for my study and the nature and scope of inquiry, photo-elicitation was better suited for my study and research questions. Both methods share similarities (i.e. both see visual images as powerful tools and are under the same umbrella of visual research methodology), yet, there are some important distinctions.

I will first cover 1) Photovoice and photo-elicitation. After cover these two methods, I will include some historical context and benefits of working with cameras with youth and how child development may factor into it. Finally, I will cover 2) focus group interviewing, which is also an important aspect of my study.

1) Photovoice vs. Photo-elicitation

A crucial distinction made by Rose (2011), is that Photovoice involves following a group of participants for an extended period (few months to years). Photo-elicitation takes place over a period of a few weeks and typically involves just two interviews (Rose, 2011). The former is also often aimed at community empowerment. It is not to say that photo-elicitation does not have empowerment elements. However, this empowerment is primarily contained in the relationship between the researcher and participant. Rose states, "while photo-elicitation also speaks about empowering research participants, this usually refers to the relation between the researcher and the researched, not the relation between participants and the wider society" (p. 305, Rose, 2011).

Before outlining the tenets of photo—elicitation, I will outline the method of Photovoice, as the method includes several key aspects which are shared with photo—elicitation, most importantly participatory action elements.

Photovoice

Definition

Photovoice is a qualitative participatory research method (Woodgate, Zurba, et. Al., 2017), which enables "persons with little money, power, or status", to document and reflect on their community's strengths and concerns through photographic images and critical discussion (p. 49, Stack, Magill et. al., 2004). What participants take pictures of can vary from something very particular, possibly introduced by the researcher, to something of a more general and open nature. Participants identify common themes through dialogue about and based on the shared viewing of pictures taken from their community (Wang & Burris, 1997). Through these visuals and discussions various community themes are developed. According to Wang & Redwood—Jones (2001), these topics have the potential to introduce "new or seldom—heard ideas, images, conversations, and voices into the public forum" (p. 561, Wang & Redwood—Jones, 2001).

One of the primary goals of Photovoice is to provide a platform for the participants to communicate their knowledge about community issues to policymakers and community stakeholders. The stories and imagery shared by Photovoice projects often come from the most vulnerable members of society: displaced, disempowered and disadvantaged people likely most directly affected by government policies and significant social issues. Photovoice attempts to overcome these systematic barriers and challenge the power balance inherent in society by bringing forward these voices (Wang & Burris, 1997; Osei—Kofi, 2013). Its creator, Caroline Wang, envisioned that the power of the participant's images and stories may affect real and tangible change at both a policy and systemic levels (Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang & Redwood—Jones, 2001; Sanon, Evan—Agnew et. al, 2014; Strack, Magill et. al, 2004).

Diverse Application

Photovoice has been used with a variety of geographical and culturally different groups, including refugee youth, immigrant workers, homeless adults, persons living with HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities and young people and adults living in poverty. Several other types of groups have participated in the Photovoice process, adding to a rich array of voices and imagery (Brazg, Bekemeier et. al, 2011; Foster-Fishman et al., 2010).

Participatory Research

Photovoice is considered a participatory research method, which involves participants' involvement in all or some of the research process. According to Rose, "the point of action research is not just to study something, but to engage research participants and researchers in a process of social learning, analysis and empowerment, in the hope of eventually changing the social situation itself" (p. 305, Rose, 2012). According to Brazg, Bekemeier et. al, (2011) a full participatory action research study "encourages community participation at all phases of data collection, analysis, and dissemination" (p. 503, Brazg, Bekemeier et. al, 2011). Participatory action research is a collaborative tool which allows communities to integrate the knowledge of researchers and participants. It often highlights and examines ecological issues, such as social, political, gender, cultural and economic factors and how they play themselves out in the community (Foster-Fishman, Law et. al, 2010). It is designed to create greater community buy-in and help to create mutually agreed upon solutions to address problems in the community (Foster-Fishman, Law et. al, 2010; Brazg, Bekemeier et. al, 2011).

The articles I drew from, tailored the Photovoice method primarily for youth participants. Only a few of the studies (in a total one out of six) conducted a full participatory research approach involving all phases of implementation with the youth (Foster-Fishman, Law et. al, 2010). The majority of studies implemented a streamlined version focusing mainly on the data collection and analysis phase. My research was not an extensive overview of the literature, but it is safe to say that Photovoice is applied in many ways, with various levels of participatory action. Photovoice, therefore, is a

tool that can be taken up and used in interesting and productive ways by researchers without any commitment to share leadership of the project. In summary, participatory action research, encourages involvement from participants in all or some stages of the research process, with the end goal of creating social change.

Photo–elicitation

Definition:
Photo–elicitation interviewing (PEI) is defined as photographs that are introduced as part of an interview (Rose, 2012; Lapenta 2012; Possser & Burke, 2011). The approach is currently the most widely adopted form of a visual research method implemented across the social sciences (Rose, 2011) and has been employed across various disciplines and populations (Rose, 2012; Epstein, Stevens et. al., 2006).

The aim of PEI is to uncover the meaning or significance of the images with the respondent. These can be images which are created by the interviewee, drawn from the archive or produced by the researcher (Fleer & Ridgway, 2014). In my case, the participants are creating the images that are introduced and discussed (a topic which I will cover in my study design section).

History Of The Approach:
PEI has a long and rich history in academic research. The approach has been used extensively by Visual Anthropologists for several decades, and more recently, to a lesser extent by Visual Sociologists, such as Harper (1997, 2002) and Banks (2001)(Lapenta, 2012; Epstein, Stevens et. al., 2006). John Collier Jr first described the approach, in his 1957 paper: 'Photography in Anthropology: A Report on Two Experiments', as 'Photo Interviewing'. Collier later developed and perfected his approach with colleagues, describing photo–elicitation as a variation on open–ended interviewing (Lapenta, 2012). Open–ended interviewing provides greater space for personal responses and interpretations of the interviewee. It is a non–directive method, as it encourages collaboration between researcher and respondent (Lapenta, 2012).

The PEI approached developed out of this theoretical and methodological debates, which as Lapenta (2012) describes, "questioned the tenets of classic structured interviews/surveys, the nature of the researcher–respondent relationship, and any knowledge that this interaction was supposed to produce" (p. 2, Lapenta, 2012). These debates lead to the discussion of why photo–elicitation has potential advantages over more traditional approaches, although also an approach not without its challenges.

Current Application of Photo–Elicitation:

Historically PEI has been on the fringes of social science research. Recently it has become more widely adopted, although not necessarily mainstream, like other visual research methods (Rose, 2012).

There is a particular gap in photo–elicitation social sciences literature as it pertains to the method being conducted with certain groups. For example, not much has been researched about the use of photographs in interviews with children. However, there has been some recent develops which incorporate more photo–elicitation with youth (2006, Epstein, Stevens et. al.). The adoption of photo–elicitation with youth corresponds with young people being seen as competent social actors, worthy of participation (Kelly & Kamp, 2015).

In summary, photo–elicitation has a varied history with some unique methodological aspects. As part of my study, I prompted the youth to produce their imagery or visual representations as a response to their music playing and self–expression. I then used 'photo–elicitation interviewing' to draw attention to those pictures and discuss their music playing/ creating with them (a topic I will cover in my study design section).

Benefits Of Using Photo–Elicitation Interviews:

There are several benefits of using PEI, specifically with youth. Collier sees the approach as sharpening participants' memories and eliciting longer and more comprehensive interviews (it should be noted, that my study did not bear this out, which I will cover in my discussion section)(Epstein, Stevens et. al., 2006). Although not an

exhaustive or completely inclusive summary of the potentials of photo-elicitation, Epstein, Stevens et. al. (2006) provides a succinct overview of what they see as the approach's benefits: "PEI in its various forms can challenge participants, trigger memory, lead to new perspectives, and assist with building trust and rapport" (p. 1, Epstein, Stevens et. al., 2006).

Rose (2011) discusses two main benefits: that of 'generating talk' and producing different types of knowledge. In regards to 'generating talk', Rose explains that photo-elicitation provides an opportunity to gain insight into social phenomena, which is different from what oral or written data can provide. According to her, this 'talk' often draws on "different things in different ways" (p. 305), which a researcher cannot always get at with talk-only interviews (Rose, 2011). She states that the speech is often "more emotional, more effective and more 'ineffable'" (p. 305, Rose, 2011).

Benefits of Working With Children With Cameras and Using Visual Methods
Now that I have covered photo-elicitation as a method, I want to briefly review more benefits of giving children/ youth cameras. I will also cover child development issues.

According to Jon Prosser and Catherine Burke (2011), "visual research with youth is particularly well placed as it gives voice to children's worlds" (p. 257). Child-focused researchers have taken advantage of these strengths and relatively new cultural manifestations and developed a growing field of child-centric visual studies. Not much has been researched about the topic, but in 'Childlike Perspectives', Jon Prosser and Catherine Burke (2011) explore engaging youth in the research process using visual methods. According to them, youth are more easily to engage using visual methods as "children often feel more confident in creating drawings, photographs, and videos than words" (p. 257, Prosser & Burke, 2011).

At the center of giving young people cameras is the idea of passing control to them. Driven by their natural imagination, researchers explore with the children their rich

narrative of their world, which can in turn also empowers the youth (Prosser & Burke, 2011). By engaging youth in the research process, Posser and Burke state it leads to empowerment of the youth. No longer are youth considered passive objects of research, but by using such approaches, youth have "the right as well as the ability to enter into discourse about the construction of their lives" (p. 258, Prosser & Burke, 2011).

Many children of the 21st century are familiar with the technology of image production using the internet, cameras on their smart phones and social media apps. This new technology allow them to quickly alter and share pictures (Prosser & Burke, 2011). I know from my personal experience working with youth and anecdotally with my interest in technology, that from very early on young people are capable of being image makers themselves simply by their smart phone in their pockets. This topic is an enormous inquiry on its own. An entire paper could be written on the subject. However, suffice to say, children and youth in 2017 are embedded in a visual culture with them as image artisans, producers and content creators. The potential of this is yet fully realized, specifically in the social science research context and how 'voice', 'participation' and 'self-expression' is concerned. Ultimately this has the potential of giving young people greater voice and self-expression, as they so easily have access and the skills to use these technologies and the internet.

Visual methods draw on the strength that children's visual skills they develop early in life. According to Prosser & Burke (2011) "since children display critical capacities through their photography and are able to access physical and mental territory not available to adults, there is a case for perceiving them as fellow researchers" (p. 262). Thus, there is a strong case for perceiving young people as fellow researchers. I will briefly touch on child development considerations of using visual method with teenagers.

Child Development Consideration

Piaget Stages of Development: Formal Operational Stage
The teenagers in my study belong to what development

psychologist Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980), called the 'formal operational stage', which develops from age eleven to sixteen and onwards. Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980) pioneered a hallmark theory of cognition developmental. Piaget's formal operational stage primarily involves the development of abstract reasoning. Youth at this stage develop abstract thought and can think logically. For instance, many can use logical symbols in such areas as science and algebra. Children in the formal operational stage display further skills oriented towards problem solving. They also can consider abstract relationships and concepts such as justice (Hopkins, 2005). Many of these developmental capacities are inherent to my study, a topic I will cover in further detail in 'Description of Participants' as part of my Study Design section.

2) Focus Group Interviewing

Focus group interviewing is developed for a small group and involves an investigator leading a discussion on a particular subject(s) or topic(s). There are many purposes of facilitating focus groups, but one purpose is that the researcher attempts to uncover and collect people's conscious, subconscious, unconscious or any number of psychological and sociocultural processes. According to Berg (2007), "when focus groups are administered properly, they are extremely dynamic. Interactions among and between group members stimulate discussions in which one group member reacts to comments made by another. This group dynamism has been described as a "synergistic group effect"" (p. 146, Berg, 2007). Another way of putting it, is essentially the 'the sum is greater than the parts' when synergy occurs in a focus group setting. I know from my own personal experience, and participation and facilitation of groups within social work settings, that this phenomenon is very much real. When ideas and opinions are built on one another, there is often a mysterious and powerful synergistic group effect outlined by Berg and other researchers. This occurrence produces potentially rich data. I think some of this occurred in the two focus groups I conducted with the youth.

There are particular advantages and disadvantages often associated by the focus group method. For example, a few

advantages according to Berg (2007) are, focus group interviewing can be highly flexible (in regards to number of participants, groups duration and cost). It can generate insights into subjects previously not well understood. It places participants in a more equal footing with each other and the researcher. Finally, it the method does not require complex sampling strategies and it can generate large amounts of information in a relatively short periods of time. However, there are particular disadvantages associated with the technique. These include, the data which is generated is highly influenced by the skills of the facilitator. The duration is often quite short (30–60 minutes) (although longer focus groups do occur). Finally, there is a limited number of questions which can be reasonably asked during each focus group session.

Focus group interviewing has been used extensively in the business world, but in the social sciences, the method has relatively recently emerged as an adopted technique. During the 1980s and early 1990s, focus group interviewing was sometimes referred to as group interviewing in the social sciences (Berg, 2007). According to Berg (2007), in the 2000's, focus group interviewing was being implemented in a variety of social science research contexts, but was still not widely used. Berg (2007) goes into the historical context of why this is the case. He points out that with the rise of the internet, online focus groups, has the potential of taking off and being more widely adopted by social science researchers. Yet, it is unclear the degree in which this in fact occurred. Berg published his article in 2007. I would question the overall utility of using the internet to conduct focus groups. I would be skeptical that such a medium would allow the same level of 'synergistic group effect' spoken about by Berg. However, I am sure as conferencing technology improves (i.e. group video conferences, virtual and augmented reality) there will be particular advantages of connecting with groups who may not be in the same location over the internet.

In my case, I am asking questions associated with the youth's voice and self-expression, as well as their interest and passion for music. My study involved both a traditional focus group process of questions and answers in a discussion

context, but also the involvement of photo—elicitation. In my following study design section, I will outline in greater detail how I conducted the photo—elicitation and focus group procedures.

PART 3: Approaches to Data Analysis in My Study

My data analysis consists of thematic analysis and visual analysis. I will cover thematic analysis and then I will cover my visual data analysis. How these approaches are applied will be covered in my next 'Study Design' section.

Thematic Analysis:

We talk about themes in text, painting, photography, music and movies. However defining and determining what a theme is in the research data (in my case recorded dialogue and photos) is harder to achieve. Ensuring that the youth's voice is represented in the major themes, is an important part of my investigation. Therefore, the following section will offer a brief definition by Ryan and Bernard (2003) of what a theme is in qualitative research, with particular attention paid to how the youth voice will be represented in those themes.

For Ryan and Bernard, "themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that link not only expressions found in texts but also expressions found in images, sounds, and objects" (p. 87). Thus, in my case, themes can be developed across the written material from the youth, photos that were taken by the young people and recorded dialogue from young people in the focus groups. From what Ryan and Bernard describe, themes come from both the data (what they term an 'inductive approach') and from the researcher's methodological or theoretic understanding (what they term an 'a priori approach') (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

An important side note, is Ryan and Bernard (2003) discussion of the importance of the researcher being explicit about how a theme became adopted. They explain how they rarely see descriptions of how researchers came to choose a given theme they report in their article (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

Core to Ryan and Bernard's assessment is their historical account of how themes have evolved in research. Much of this early literature on the use of themes, occurred by researchers describing themes derived by 'expressions' in data. Expressions are described by Ryan and Bernard as characteristics which can be found not only in texts, but in images, sounds and objects (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Themes are what link expressions. Original work from Opler (1945) observed that "themes are only visible (and thus discoverable) through the manifestations of expressions in data" (p. 86). Opler noted that "some expressions of a theme are obvious and culturally agreed on, while others are subtler, symbolic, and even idiosyncratic" (p. 86–87). According to Ryan and Bernard, social scientists still discuss the connection between themes and their expressions, but they use different language to do so, be it 'codes', 'categories', 'segments', 'data bits' or 'thematic units' (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

Visual Data Analysis

The movement within social science research, which may be termed a 'visual turn', did not appear until very recently. In social work, the term 'visual' did not appear in subject headings within key word searches of qualitative social work research until the last several years. Social work, in other words, had very little to do with visual research and other related creative/ artistic modalities, except for rare instances, over the last decade (Clark & Morriss, 2015). Therefore, visual data analysis in the social sciences, the exploration of how images should be interpreted and used as data, is still also in its infancy.

In this section I will discuss a few social scientists' theoretical, epistemological and methodological positions (Huss, 2011; Foster–Fishman et al., 2010), borrowing primarily from Rose (2012), regarding the visual analysis of images. I will explore how an image can be interpreted and how that interpretation can be used as knowledge.

Visual Literacy As A Researcher

Prior to starting any research on visuals, I came across the assertion from Pauwels (2011) that being an effective visual researcher takes visual knowledge and skill. According to him, when researchers "are using visual elements in one or more stages of their research and scholarly communication, more active visual knowledge and skill is required, since all technical or medium-related decisions have epistemological consequences" (p. 6). For Pauwels this visual skill takes a "visual scientific literacy" (p. 6), which is generated from a form of visual thinking and acting throughout the entire research process. Pauwels is not prescriptive or explicit in how a researcher develops visual thinking and acting, but does emphasize that visual researchers benefit from the "continued fertilization between theory and practice, thinking and doing" (p. 6, Pauwels, 2011).

Making Arguments with Images

Newbury's article, 'Making Arguments with Images: Visual Scholarship and Academic Publishing', is primarily concerned about visual scholarship and how to "treat images with the same seriousness and rigour as we apply to other materials" (p. 6). He states that there is false dichotomy between "aesthetic matters over the serious business of research and knowledge" (p. 3). For Newbury, the aesthetic cannot be separated from the intellectual. Quoting Wilson Duff (1975), he states "images seem to speak to the eye, but they are really addressed to the mind. They are ways of thinking, in the guise of ways of seeing" (p. 2). If we take Newbury's argument seriously and literally, he is imploring us to account for images as research and knowledge. Images for him are "ideas in disguise" and "intellectual propositions" to be discovered and studied (p. 2, Newbury, 2012).

Analysis of images – how to interpret

"A picture ... may not only be worth a thousand words, but it can be apprehended almost instantaneously at a glance, whereas those thousand words require time to listen to or read." – Sandra Weber (p. 43, Knowles & Cole, 2011)

Images are something which we apprehend immediately – a quality or combination of qualities which strikes us as

beautiful, powerful, meaningful, aesthetically pleasing or any number of descriptors we ascribe. For a more nuanced understanding of that image however, it may take time and effort to parse the rich data which make up the image. In order to do an image justice – to represent its richness, truthfulness, social context, beauty and/ or meaning(s) – we need, as Eisner describes to "learn how to see as well as learn how to read" (p. 10). For him and other theorists, art and images will "reveal to the individual a world he or she may have not have noticed but that is there to be seen if only one knew how to look" (p. 11, Knowles & Cole). Therefore, it is in the 'how' of looking and 'what to look for', which is at the *heart* of visual methodologies within the social sciences.

Multifaceted; multilayered
If we start with the premise, as many researchers have, that "there is no single way to analyze visual data" (p. 1448, Huss, 2011), what logical conclusions can we draw about the proper way to conduct visual analysis research? In Rose's (2012) influential book 'Visual Methodologies" she explains that there are "a very large number of philosophical, theoretical, and conceptual discussions of visuality and images" (p. 1, Rose, 2012). She is quick to point out early on in her book that "images are never transparent windows onto the world. They interpret the world; they display it in very particular ways; they represent it." (p.2). In other words, photo taking is not, as Rose describes, a "truthful instrument of simple observation" (p.2). Rose concludes that images are not simply just capturing 'what is' or an objective reality 'out there', rather imagery is rich with meaning and interpretation: "some critics suggest that photographical technology does indeed capture what was really there when the shutter snapped. Others find the notion that 'the camera never lies' harder to accept" (p. 27). Borrowing from Slater (1995), she encourages the reader to discover a world beyond the immediate or obvious to a world which is "magical and strange" (p. 21, Ross, 2012).

Layers of Meaning
One of Rose's central points, is that visual analysis is multifaceted and multilayered – there is not one or objective interpretation. Rather "meanings may be explicit or

implicit, conscious or unconscious" (p. 26, Ross, 2012). Other authors share Rose's perspective on understanding imagery. For example, Foster–Fishman et al., (2010) also explain the multifaceted view of visual analysis. They use a metaphor of 'layers' when describing how an image can be understood. For example, speaking more specifically about Photovoice interpretation, they declare:

Attention to the layers of meaning within a data set is particularly important when using a Photovoice process. Photovoice data have multiple levels of meaning that can be explored, including: (1) the visual meaning of the photos themselves; (2) the meaning behind the photographer's story about the photo; and (3) the multiple meanings within this story and photo that are explored in the group discussion (p. 75, Foster–Fishman et al., 2010).

Another author who shares a similar perspective is Huss (2011). In his article 'What We See and What We Say' he explores possible connections between the visual and the verbal components of research, specifically within the clinical social work setting. Huss is interested in how images offer multiple views of the clients and social worker's identities. He argues that such a pluralistic understanding minimizes stigmatization, in that it enables the expression of multiple aspects of personality.

If we take it that analysis of photo–elicitation process is multilayered and multiperspectival, we understand the rich endeavour of visual research. Yet, we are still left with how to prioritize certain meanings over others or how to make better or more critical distinctions. With respect to my research, and more precisely the data–analysis stage, this point 'strikes at the heart' of my task and challenge: *how I am to interpret the imagery data, to extend what the youth are saying, so as best understand, represent and capture what is occurring for the youth?* This is why such an exploration is so significant and worthwhile. Rose offers guidance in this area.

Production, Image, Audience
Rose defines three central categories or 'sites' of interpreting an image's meaning: 'The Site of Production',

the 'Site of the Image Itself', and the 'Site of Audiencing'. Rose explains that these different sites lead to a variety of different interpretive perspectives (see figure 1). The Site of Production is defined as the 'how it was made', including the four W's (Who?, What?, Where? and Why?). Rose also describes this as the circumstances that contribute toward the effects of the images. The Site of the Image refers to a number of formal components (i.e composition) of the image. The site of audiencing "refers to the process by which visual image has its meaning renegotiated, or even rejected, by particular audiences watching in specific circumstances" (p. 30). It is attention to these three sites that makes Rose's 'critical visual methodology' such an inclusive and comprehensive model for interpreting image (Rose, 2012).
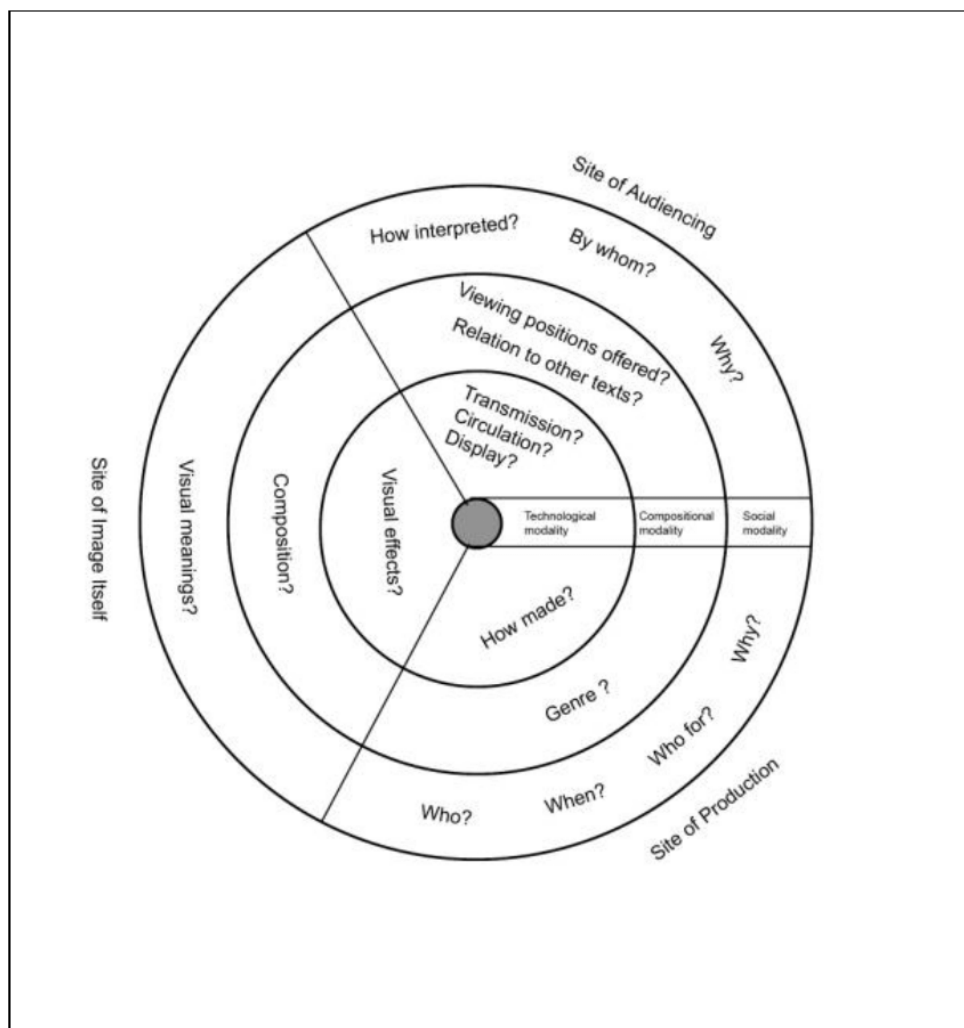
(Figure 1)(Rose 2012)

Criticism of Rose and My Data-Analysis Approach:
   Much can be used by Rose's critical-visual data analysis; I will incorporate aspects of her theory in my approach. However, there are some fundamental problems with her approach. Primarily, the ambiguity around extreme relativism and an anti-realist accounts of visuals. There is much to unpack about these two concerns, so before critiquing Rose's argument and presenting my data-analysis, it is importance to articulate to the reader why visual data analysis matters to social science research. This will provide context to my overall criticism and be able to present my approach more articulately.

   When making claims about visuals, challenging epistemological and ontological concerns of what makes up an image become apparent, i.e. questions arise about whether photos have any inherent 'essence' or 'trace' that produces knowledge or whether it is merely a 'social construct' and meaninglessness. Furthermore, once we land on our conceptualization of images, concerns around the scope of what we, as visual researchers, can reasonably and justifiably say about those pictures, becomes an important matter. Different theorists and social science researchers have often different conceptualization of pictures and the knowledge these images do or do not generate. Many contemporary social scientists appear, at least according to one of the leading theorists in the field, Gillian Rose, to conclude that images are inherently meaningless. More accurately and concerning my participatory visual research study, these scholars see images as merely a social construction – a socially agreed upon phenomenon between the researcher and participant. According to Rose, who counts herself amongst one of them, these researchers are less concerned about the 'essence' of the image (many would argue there is none) but are much more driven by the concept of using visuals as tools. In other words, visuals are tools, and what they produce is what is important. However, for me, I am not satisfied with an epistemology of visual merely based on a social constructionist philosophy.

   The theoretical foundation in which my claims are made about pictures, is to me, as necessary as the result my study

produces. I think Rose gives in to a certain social subjectivism and anti-realism, based on her social constructionism of visuals, without seriously wrestling with the ontological and epistemological nature of visuals. She is more comfortable advocating for a more pragmatic position, which is already being adopted by many visual research methods. I will argue that the crux of the issue, is her theory relies on larger axioms which constitute a larger meta-framework of postmodernism.

Even if the exploration of determining a proper visual-analysis creates more questions than answers, I think it is a worthwhile venture. If I do not have a deep enough theoretical and methodological understanding of visual research methods, in this case, the process of photo-elicitation and the subsequent visual data-analysis of the youth photos, then the insights I gather from the pictures will most likely be superficial and at best novel musings of my predetermined suppositions. I of course do not assume that I have a complete understanding of how an image is to be understood as knowledge; I am sure my position will continue to evolve as the field grows. I will argue that my approach, specifically my visual data-analysis, is ultimately a more coherent strategy than that of Rose's critical-visual methodology.

In summary, I am resistant to merely erase any 'essence' of the image. I therefore argue that some of our focus as visual researchers should be concentrated on analyzing the picture itself and what it may tell us about the youth's voice under question. I argue that images can be used as extensions of what the youth participants are saying, both as an agreed upon 'constructs' between researcher and participants, but also that real and tangible qualities or traces can be pulled from those images as well. For me, this constitutes taking both a modern and postmodern interpretation of visuals. I elaborate the specifics of my visual data analysis approach in the Study Design section.

For readers who wish to understand my theoretical arguments better, see Appendix 1, titled 'Postmodernism and Rose's Critical Visual Methodology'. In the appendix, I address where I see Rose's position falling short by her

adoption of a postmodern meta-framework.

C. STUDY DESIGN

The following study design section is split into *four* main aspects: 1) recruitment and ethics, 2) description of participants, 3) procedures of study 4) approach to data analysis in my study.

1. Recruitment and Ethics

I approached the facilitator of a music group at a child welfare agency. I had previously worked in this agency, but had no association with these particular youth. With the endorsement of the music group's facilitator, I also approached the youth who were apart of the music group. The group met regularly every week.

I used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves "selecting cases with a specific purpose in mind" (p. 211, Kreuger and Neuman, 2006). Participants in the music group fit the study purpose very well: they had experience of being in-care and also had interests tailored to creativity, by their involvement and participation in music.

A total of six youth who were invited. Five responded to the request for study participants. One later dropped out due to personal circumstances and was replaced by another youth. In total five youth participated in this research.

One key aspect of ethics was outlined to the youth, was that when taking pictures for the study, I asked the young people only to take photos that did not identify people (i.e. not of people's faces). It was explained to them that this would be to protect everyone's confidentiality.

The focus group interviews were audio-recorded with the youth's permission. The participant's names were not identified in the transcript. The youth provided permission to have their photos included in a photo album to be located at the centre where the music group meets. The photo album has yet to be created, but once I am finished my thesis this

will be done.

2. Description of Participants

The group was comprised of youth 15–17 who shared a passion and interest in music creating and playing. There were four females and one male. The youth had met for some time over the last two years, with one youth recently joining.

Three out of four youth during the first focus group were in-care in the past, but none were currently in-care. The one youth who was not in-care spoke about spending time in shelters and having significant challenging times with her parents. Another youth later joined the music group and was present for the second focus group. She was in-care. Therefore for the five total youth who participated in the two focus groups, four out of the five were presently or had been in-care. For the young people who were in-care, the youth spent an average of two years in-care; one youth had one placement and the other two had two placements. The youth who joined the second group, I did not get the data on how many placements she had and how long she had beenin-care.

The youth play a variety of instruments, including three playing the guitar and one playing the electric bass. The young person playing the electric bass was not present for the second focus group. One youth sings and plays the piano, and another plays the drums. All the youth sing to various of degrees. One young person plays the ukulele. One youth also commented on writing her music, including both the music notes and lyrics. The genres of music the young person played were diverse. This included pop, rock, punk and one youth enjoying Korean pop (or 'K-pop') and 'Japanese fan dance' music. The young person commented on playing music from anywhere to three years to twelve years.

Child Development Considerations – Formal Operational Stage
The questions I asked the youth are in keeping with Piaget's complex developmental 'formal operational stage'. For example, abstract concepts such as 'voice' and 'self-expression' were not lost on the youth, rather the youth wove rich narratives, complementing each other's ideas. Asking the youth to also think metaphorically, about their music and

involvement in the group, was also an aspect of my study. The youth's metaphorical thinking was certainly a capacity of abstract reasoning, as a metaphor is when a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable. Therefore, abstract reasoning and a degree of problem-solving, be it about their lives or what photos the youth chose, was demonstrated in my study (Hopkins, 2005).

3. Procedures of Study

My study's data is the result of two meetings – one a traditional focus group meeting and another involving photo-elicitation. I will cover both meetings and then offer general commentary on the study's procedures.

The first meeting was a traditional focus group interview with a set of questions. These set of issues were split into two categories. The first questions focused on the youth's involvement in-care and whether they felt like their voice mattered in decision making. The second set of questions focused on the participants' music playing, creating and listening. The participants filled out a brief demographic-type questionnaire.

At the first meeting, I introduced the idea of photo-taking to describe what music means to them and how this may relate to their self-expression and sense of voice. I asked the youth to take a series of 5-10 photos. All youth had their cameras or cell phones they could take pictures. I asked the young people to take pictures of anything they associated with music and what music means to them. I gave them some ideas to think about, such as taking pictures of them playing their instrument, but I also encouraged them to think metaphorically, by taking photos more abstractly and what may relate to their music creating and crafting.

The young people in the group did not take many photos between the first and second meeting as requested – eight photos in total from two youth were sent to me. The other two young people did not take any pictures. The photos the two young people did take were of their instruments and connections they made with their music playing related to objects in their house. Due to the small turnout of photos,

I asked the youth to take pictures during a second meeting. I did not conduct a focus group during this session with the young people, but rather just provided them with my camera, and some took photos on their cell-phone. The youth appeared happy to take pictures of their music playing and their instruments, and it did not take much prompting from me to have them take photos. These pictures were of them playing instruments, a music video that was playing on a projector in the room, them dancing and other music associated objects, such as an amplifier speaker and a sound board.

The second meeting involved me first asking general questions about their music playing and expression. I then presented the developed photos to the youth. I mixed these photos in the middle of the group and asked the youth to pick their top ten favourite pictures from the fifty or so photos which were developed. These were photos which most spoke to them regarding their music playing and composing. I then asked the youth to write down one to two sentence descriptions of each picture they choose. We then went in a circle three times and each youth described what they wrote about their top three favourite photos. Some questions and discussion occurred during these three rounds. After this was conducted, I asked the youth to decide together what their top five favourite photos were – ones which most represented the music group itself. I made sure that at least one photo that the youth choose for their individual top ten were chosen by the group.

In summary, the data from the first meeting is comprised of the transcript and answers to a pre-study questionnaire. The second focus group data is comprised of the transcript and photos taken and selected by the youth and descriptions about these pictures by them (i.e. 1-2 sentence explanation of each their photos).

General Discussion on the Procedure of My Study
As the study progressed, the focus shifted somewhat from the youth's involvement in-care, to the youth's music playing, creating and their involvement in the music group. This appeared to be a natural occurrence, i.e. it appeared this is what the youth were most passionate about and what they wanted to most speak about. After becoming familiar

with the group, I also became further interested in the topic of the youth's music crafting, composing and the overall music group itself and what affects their participation in the group had on self-worth, confidence and ways in which music could be used to deal and cope with difficult emotions and stresses. As the study progressed, the conversation appeared to deepen and become more mature. This appears to have been due to when we discussed their photos of their music playing and related musical artifacts (i.e. photos of their instruments, them playing music, music videos etc.).

Although I was originally hesitant about losing focus on the youth's involvement in-care and issues pertaining to how music may help with their self-expression in the contexts of being in-care, other, more salient themes developed and emerged from the youth and through my verbal and visual inquiry using photography with the youth. Topics and themes of the first meeting were carried over to the second meeting, quite naturally and without much prompting. As I will explain in my discussion section, although talk about photos of the youth's music playing and creating produced some novel results, it did not necessary produce the 'emotional talk' described by such thinkers as Rose and other visual social science researchers. Implications and possible reasons for this occurrence will also be explored.

After my study was conducted, I consolidated the descriptions, pictures and transcripts, categorized them into four main themes and made conscious decisions about my commentary. I will cover these four themes in the findings section.

4. Approach to Data Analysis in My Study

Part 1: Thematic Analysis

My research explored my data for expressions and developed themes from those expressions. Practically, this involved me taking direct quotes from the youth (both from the transcript and from their photo descriptions) and organizing those expressions into four distinct themes.

The explicit way in which those themes were adopted by me

were, upon reflection, at first a somewhat mysterious occurrence. As I read the data – the youth transcripts and reviewed all their photos, 'traces,' or simply connections, in the data appeared. These relationships were categorized into four to five general lines of similar thought. I reflected on these five main threads and made conscious decisions how they would fit my overarching argument and discussion about my study. I gathered the quotes and placed them in what I thought were a logical sequence within these themes. I then built some of my commentary based on those sequences. Through dialogue and incorporation of my thesis supervisor's feedback, I condensed and further refined those themes in four distinct themes, editing some of the wording around the core aspects of each topic. Within that process, I also considered where the youth's photos would be located. The young people's photos were incorporated illustratively into these topics. All in all, my thematic analysis was conducted over a series of a couple of months.

Part 2: Visual Analysis

My original intention of my visual data analysis was to apply Rose's Critical Visual Methodology, without including the anti–realists and strict social constructivist accounts (I critiqued these two aspects in part 3 of my Method section titled 'Visual Data Analysis' and in my appendix). The reason is that Rose's framework offers a very elegant and comprehensive framework when considered in its entirety (i.e. by adopting all three 'sites'). Although for pragmatic reasons, I did not have the time and space to devote my analysis to adopting her theory completely. My visual data analysis approach does adopt Rose's 'Site of Audiencing'. The reason my analysis involves the 'Site of Audiencing' is that the youth's interpretation, and essentially their analysis of their images, were what guided the interpretation of a significant aspect of the study's data. In short, the youth were the audience to their photos and their descriptions and focus group commentary of their pictures is what formed part of the visual analysis of data.

An argument could be made that some of the descriptions of my Study Design section includes elements of the 'Site of Productions' of the youth pictures (in that I describe the

who, what, where and why of photo-taking by the youth). Although I did not do an extensive analysis of the youth's photos (using my own observations of the photos), I did analyze the effects of the visuals on interaction and expression in the focus group setting. Therefore, my visual analysis did include aspects of the "Site of Production'.

In summary, I focus on the youth's voice and using their photos as part of my data analysis. I refer to what the young people said about their visuals in my data analysis. This retains the participatory research intent of Photovoice and photo-elicitation methods. On one occasion I will make some commentary myself about an individual photo, which could be considered being part of Rose's 'Site of The Image Itself'. This review is used to describe the photo and to offer a richer context of that picture. I do think for future projects, and my advice for other visual social science researchers would be to consider taking up Rose's Critical Visual Methodology entirety of the framework (i.e. all three sites).

4. FINDINGS

1. Youth's Thoughts on Consultation and Shared Decision Making

The youth, to my surprise, and counter to my original assumption, voiced feeling consulted to various degrees. The young people expressed having some input into decisions making about their lives in-care. They indicated being able to speak to their workers and described this communication in a mostly positive manner.

When asked if they felt like their voice has had any influence over a decision made about their life in-care and whether they felt like their voice mattered, one youth responded: "definitely", and another youth described not desiring to "really change anything because everything worked out perfectly". The youth expressed having a mostly positive relationship with their workers and felt like they were heard. One youth, M, felt like when he talked with his worker, she would always take things they discussed into consideration.

For as M stated: "my worker, she is really good with getting on things" and "we always find something to work out in regard to what I say". This same youth did point out that he had earlier experiences where he felt like his voice was not heard. However, this had more to do with "other counts of authority", which for him meant such authorities as teachers and counsellors.

When the youth were asked to rate themselves out of ten in the pre-study questionnaire (ten being they felt they had influence in decision-making and zero being they felt they had no influence in making decisions), the youth rated themselves as an average of 6/10. One youth rated herself 4, another 6 and the other one 8. The youth's rating was somewhat dispersed. The one young person who felt her influence in decision making was a 4 when asked why she rated herself at a relatively low score, indicated "the small things being missed". All of the youth's answers in the focus group were similar to their survey responses, expressing mostly positive assessments of feeling like they had influence over decision making, with fewer critical and negative evaluations.

The youth reflected on having positive experiences of having influence in decision making; they also stated that at times not feeling heard when it came to decision making. For instance, as one youth commented: "I did not feel like I had any power when it came to decisions". This young person stated the reason was that her two siblings and her, had the same worker, which for her, made it difficult for her to be heard. This youth recognized that it likely was not possible for there to be separate workers for each one of her family members, given there are not enough workers, but wished there was individual worker for each youth who is in-care.

Another youth advised that "in foster care, like when it came to the bigger decisions, like, we had to make, it was all like, we got heard". This same youth commented that the smaller things, for her the things that "didn't really matter", would get missed.

2. Music Playing

When asked what music means to them in the questionnaire,

the youth had a variety of answers. One young person commented on it being about: "expression", another stating "to me playing music is a way to escape into lyrics. It's a way to open my thoughts" and another youth indicating that "creative music is an extremely positive part of my life. It means that I can share my thoughts by showing unity". A few of these themes were expanded and later expressed in the focus group. It should be noted that the youth commented on benefiting from both the lyrics and rhythms of different types of music styles.

One aspect of the comments focused on the music group itself. One of the youth, S, described the group as "like a family" – nonjudgmental, welcoming, supportive and a "loving group". She stated that they build on each other and this is part of the reason she feels comfortable singing in public and on YouTube. This same youth reported that the facilitator of the group is like "glue of the group" and one, C, commented that he is the "icing on the gingerbread cake". As we will see, these similar themes of group cohesion, support and being

like a "family" were later carried over and expanded in the second focus group.

Music Benefits:

There were a variety of benefits indicated by the youth regarding their music listening, creating and playing. These advantages can be categorized into four primary categories: 1) dealing and coping with difficult emotions and stress, 2) supports self-reflection and self-awareness, 3) building confidence and promoting self-expression 4) and bringing the youth closer and making the group like a 'family'. The photos the youth took, and their comments on these photos, extend the four main themes. As indicated, I will offer a thematic analysis of the discussion, then turn to focus in an extended way on the youth's experience, using the photos he or she took and their comment on them. At one point, I will refer specifically to one youth's photo and their commentary.

1. Dealing and Coping With Difficult Emotions and Stress

The most talked about category was how music helped the youth deal and cope with difficult emotions and stress. All the young person agreed with the comment from one youth that music playing/ listening is their "comfort zone". When dealing with difficult emotions, daily stresses or even life crisis where suicide is contemplated, the youth all saw music as having therapeutic benefits – primarily as a calming method. For example, as one young person commented: "music is like, my remedy, to be honest. It makes me better when I'm upset or hurt". A variety of emotions were expressed and ways in which music helped them with those emotions. For M, music helped him with "dealing with depression and anger". He stated that "when it comes to playing the drums, that's how I get it all out". For C, music: "brought me out of that slump to get out of bed".

Part of the reason music appeared to help the youth with their emotions, particular with painful emotions associated with depression, was that it made them feel more hopeful: "when I thought there was nothing else to, motivate me or, to, encourage me to do stuff, I always had a radio". A possible reason that music made the youth feel hopeful was that it helped to alter their mood. For as one young person commented, music: "helps to change or alter a mood, making a bad day good again".

One young person, M, commented on his real and ongoing struggle with suicide ideation and how music helped to save his life:

> For me, music has helped me with not only depression and anxiety and anger. But, at times when I use to feel, you know, semi-suicidal. I had a lot of times, like that. When I would feel. Music would help me, calm me down a lot. And think more to myself, instead of thinking, you know, the bad things, because I would be so focused on music. All the bad thoughts would, just go away. And so, I wouldn't feel that way anymore. So if you want to, you know, put that in extreme type of terms, music has, you know, saved my life.

M's Drumming and It's Ability to Help to Calm Him, Alter His

Mindset and Help Cope With Daily Stresses

   M has a passion for drumming. For him: "Connecting my music with my drumming is something special". "The drums speak to me in a way nobody else can". M goes on to state that "Drumming calms my soul and helps with life's problems".

   For M, he saw a direct connection to how his drumming acts as a sort of catalyst, as means to alter and change his "mindset", but also to the way it helps to calm him down. To the title to one of his photos, M wrote: "feeling the adrenaline through my body helps my mind."

   He went on to explain in the focus group, that drumming "helps me have a better mindset, because, of, the rush that I get, when I, you know, playing drums. I finally understand, after doing this, it's not just, it's just not you're playing an instrument. You're connecting with it, you're feeling that

adrenaline, rush through your body, and it's like, it helps
you. It helps me stay positive. Specifically, because, you
know, it's something I love to do" Therefore, for this youth,
music plays a very important role in his life and that which
helps him get out of the deepest slumps in his life.

"My music is what brings out the best in me."

    M had insight into how different types of genres helped
him connect with himself, alter his various moods and, in the
process, "bring out the best" of him. I thought it was
particularly insightful that he was self-aware to see how
music connects with him on more than one level. For instance,
when describing the photo above, M described:

    I put: "my music is what brings the best out of
    me." Which is very true, because, for me, music is
    something that definitely connects with me, on more
    than one level. And there is always different kinds

of. Ah, there's always different types of genres of
music, depending on what mood I'm in. And despite,
ever being in a bad mood or whatever. Music still
helps me to calm down and cheer me up, and … helping
me understand more about, how I am feeling,
specifically. And that's why, I think it brings the
best out of me.

This is one of the few photos the youth took outside of
another youth. I think it captures what I have come to know
of M – playing and sharing music with his tablet and
headphones, listening to all his various playlist to suit his
mood. On an earlier occasion, M explained to me that he is
a subscriber to Spotify, a popular music streaming service,
which allows him to have access to millions of songs at his
'finger tips'.

Music was also said to help the youth with daily stresses,
particular by helping to calm them. For example, one youth
indicated that music is a "way to get me away from the
stresses of life". As one youth, C, commented, she: "turned
to music when, like I have a, big problem, or when I'm like,
stressing over, like a big test or exam or something. It is
just a good way to, like, calm me down".   Another youth,
similarly recounted a time when she was young, where music
also had a calming effect: "ever since I was little, even
when I was with my mom, she use to play music when she use to
put me to bed, or whatever, so I guess it just, it brings
back the happier moments of my life because, there was some."
Overall, music for the youth represented their 'comfort
zone', by helping them to deal with difficult emotions,
thoughts of suicide and the stresses of their life.

2. Supports Self–Reflection and Self–Awareness

Another topic, although not as pronounced, was that of music's ability to help the youth reflect and build self–awareness. Although the young people were not always explicit with these concepts, from my own observations and from key words they used, these two related topics appeared to correlate to what the youth were expressing. For example, one youth commented, that music "opens up my mind, kind of, to a, the issues I am, like, I'm currently, like, trying to solve. To see a fuller picture of what is going on". For me, this was insightful for the youth to say about music. He appeared to have particular insight into how music has helped him in his life and expand his view on particular topics. It struck me that this youth may have more capacity to do this because of his age (i.e. he is 17 – the oldest in the group) and perhaps just to do with his personality and life–experiences (as this was the same youth who credited music helping to save his life from suicide ideation and depression). Music's ability to act as a sort of 'reflection tool', was also covered by the youth. For as one youth stated, music helped them: "find out a lot of things about, what I like, and what I don't like". This same youth, commented,

how music helped with "thinking about what you really need to do".

3. Building Confidence and Supporting Self-Expression
    A main question I was interested in when initiating my study and an original purpose behind my questions to the youth, had to do with self-expression and its relation to music creating, playing and listening. I was curious how music and self-expression may correlate with consultation. I was intrigued about whether music has helped encourage and support their self-expression, particular as it related to expressing themselves in-care (i.e. to their workers etc.). What I came to learn, is that although self-expression is one component of the reason youth turn to music and continue to practice it, it was not necessarily the main reason. However, this being said, the youth, as mentioned, did voice music helping them with "finding and expressing" their voice. For instance, as one youth, S, stated: "music as a whole, has brought me, out of my shell. When I play music, it makes me less scared when, when I put videos online. And when I post videos online, it makes me, less scared to sing in public". For S, she saw a direct relationship from her music playing

in the group (i.e. singing and playing the piano) and the resulting self-expression online (i.e. YouTube) and in public. Another youth, who enjoys Punk music particularly, stated how music: "allows for freedom and the ability to express rebellion from strict expectations". A common theme expressed in Punk music.

These comments related to another important topic closely related to self-expression, that is, that of music's ability to encourage self-confidence. For example, as one youth, S, stated, "not only is music a good way to, kind of escape, and think things through, and like de-stress. But I think music really helped me with my confidence". Another youth commented on how he prefers music that builds his confidence, as it was reinforcing for him: "the music I like more, ends up bringing out my confidence to, to do it more", for as he later states, his drumming helps in "expressing my excitement, and my enthusiasm to, to keep doing it". Another youth, C, expressed how music helped her with feeling more comfortable in social situations. For instance, as she explained: "when I listen to music or when I play it. It, it gets me distracted. So I am more comfortable to talk … If I have my headphones in, or whatever, I can, keep a conversation going. And it also makes me feel, like, depending on what I listen to, it can make me do anything I want". Overall, the youth who participated in this study did make reference to expression and confidence, however, these themes were less salient than music helping them deal and cope with difficult emotions and stress.
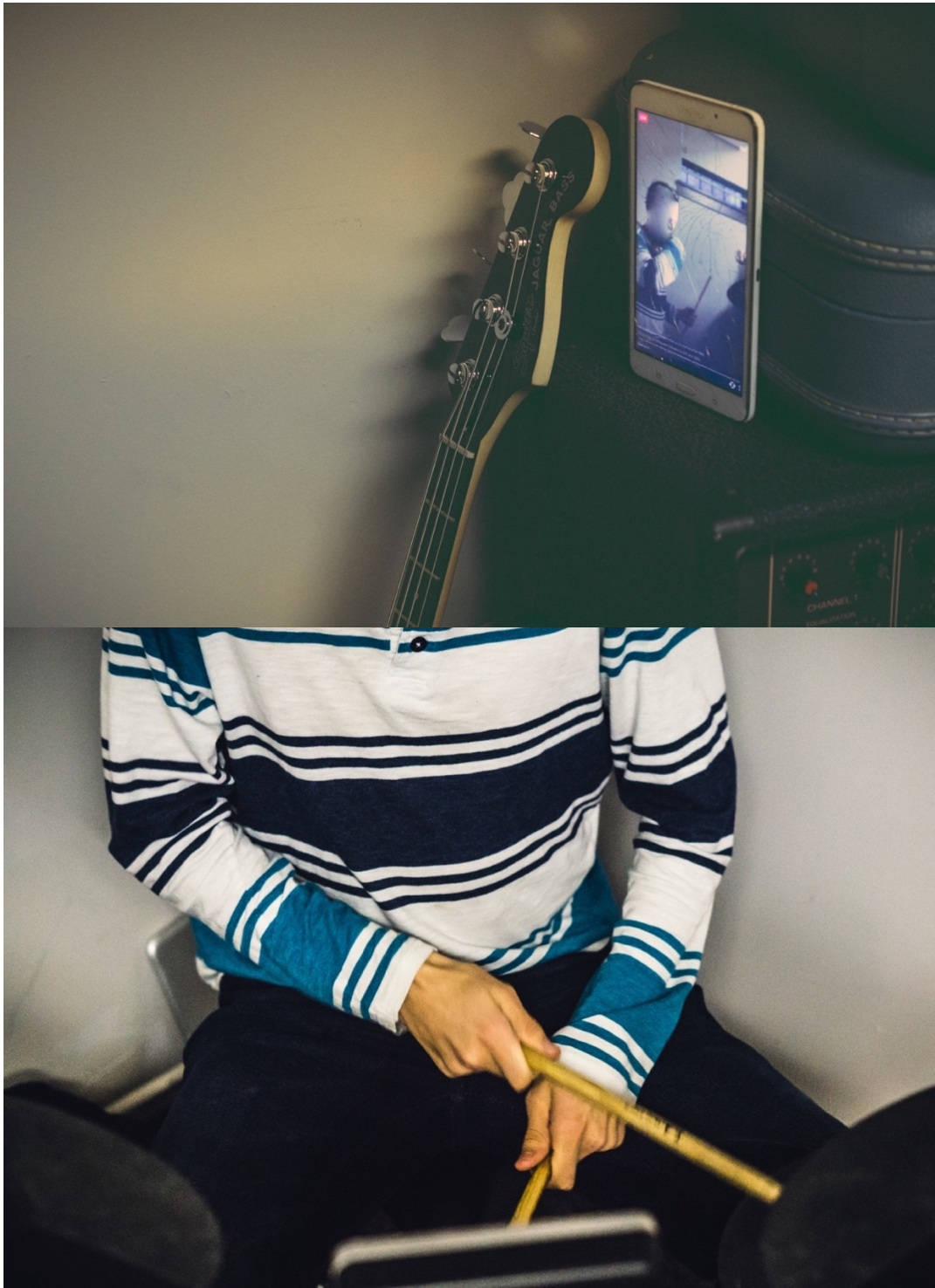
For M, he further explained how drumming is his passion, which when practiced, helps him with his self-confidence, self-reflection and overall well-being and feeling happy:

"being able to do it and being so good at it. It helps me, you know, learn a lot more. Helps me think a lot more. It helps me, stay happy and be able to, put my passion in my work".

4. Music as Bringing the Youth Closer and Making the Group Like a 'Family'

A main song from the group the youth cited was a song by Paramore, a popular American pop music group. They called it "the rock' behind the group. The youth indicated that it was the first song which initiated the group, as it was the first song they sang together and they kept coming back to. The song they referenced was 'Still Into You' by Paramore. 'Still Into You' peaked at No. 24 on the Billboard Hot 100 (2013) at the time the second-highest a Paramore song had ever reached. 'Still Into You' is a love song about a relationship, about "being into" a person, an important topic for many youth at this stage of their life and a popular reoccurring and omnipresent cultural topic (of love) which is relevant regardless of age. I looked up the lyrics to this song, and I found these two interesting lines:

    You felt the weight of the world
    Fall off your shoulder

Which for me, although lyrics about a person's expression of love, was I think also representative of why the youth keep coming to the group, that is, that the group and music itself, literally help take the 'weight of the world' to 'fall off their shoulders'. Now of course the lead singer, Hayley Williams, is speaking about her love for another, but I thought these two lyrics were symbolic of the group's purpose and love for music.

73

For M, he stated that: "Paramore is the band that got me into drumming". He attributed that the band helped him learn about drumming, by stating that: "learning is a beautiful experience … Paramore got me into… basically, what I am, now". M went on to state: "like I always had an interest, in music, because of Paramore. Not just, not just drumming, but, everything in general. I have always had a passion for music because of Paramore".

The band Paramore, was a central topic amongst the youth, a topic brought up in both focus groups, a subject which was

captured in numerous photos the youth spoke about and a band all the youth referenced liking. In fact, C calling it the "rock" in which the foundation of the group was built. S elaborated when she stated that "Paramore, really made us, connected, like it made us, closer than we were before, like it turned us into, our music group family". She provided an origin story behind the song's adoption from the group: "it's the one we started from base zero. And we just built up from. And build our relationship as a group. It's like, no matter how many times you play it, you still never get bored of hearing it". Thus, for the youth, the song by Paramour and music in general, made them more of a family and brought them closer.

5. DISCUSSION

I cover *three* main discussion points in the following section. These are 1) self-expression problematized and its relation to music and youth consultation 2) justifying the tailor-made version of my visual data-analysis and potentials for future research 3) testing Rose's three claims of visual research benefits and answering Travers' skepticism.

1. Self-Expression Problematized And Its Relation To Music And Youth Consultation

The whole concept of self-expression was problematized during my analysis. I went into my study believing that self-expression, music and youth consultation was positively correlated. That is, I thought that the young people's involvement and expression of music would enhance and strengthen the young people's expression to their workers and other professionals, aiding in the consultation process. However, what I found from the research, was the youth's music involvement appeared more linked with self-reflection, self-confidence and dealing and coping with difficult emotions and stress. In other words, although music played a role in self-expression it was not the most pronounced factor highlighted by the youth.

How self-reflection, self-confidence and dealing and coping with difficult emotions and stress helps in the

consultation process with youth is not exactly clear. One speculative, but untested claim, would be that by the young people developing greater self-reflection and self-confidence, they may, in fact, be more confident and articulate in expressing their voices more broadly. An instance of this was when C stated that her music playing and singing in the music group gave her the confidence to post videos of her music online. Another connection may be that if the young people can deal and cope with difficult emotions, it may help them communicate and articulate their feelings to their workers. Again these points are speculative, but what my study did not find was any strong case for self-expression, music and how it may influence consultation. Rather, confidence, self-reflection and coping and dealing with emotions were more frequently discussed features of how their voice might be shaped and expressed.

2. Justifying The Tailored Version Of My Visual Data Analysis And Potentials For Future Research

Although the young people's photos were not analyzed by me, they were analyzed by the youth and included illustratively to extend the youth commentary. I think the photos are significant physical representations and artifacts of the focus group discussions, different from words. They have power on their own and have the potential to reach audiences, including the reader, in ways that are novel, engaging and potentially compelling. In short, I think that the photos enhanced what the youth said, brought new life to a thesis and gave a fuller account of the group's love of music.

I had every plan to apply Rose's Critical Visual Methodology to the photos the youth took. However, I had to make the conscious decision to tailor my analysis primarily to the 'Site of Audiencing' (although as mentioned, part of my analysis did include analyzing the effects of the visuals on interaction and expression in the focus group setting. Therefore, my visual analysis did include aspects of the "Site of Production').

There are several reasons I decided on a tailored version of Rose's theory. Timing and practical considerations was

one main reason.   I did not consider how complex and challenging some of the theoretical and epistemological matters concerning visual analysis would be. However, I do not think my effort into the inquiry of visual data analysis was wasted. Rather, it laid important groundwork for future studies on visual data analysis. Furthermore, I think, it offered useful commentary on the influence, and also the limitation, of postmodern philosophy on the analysis of visuals in the social sciences, specifically about anti-realism and relativism concerns (see appendix 1). Furthermore, it potentially helps support other researchers taking up the challenge of visual methodology in their research.

3. Evaluating Rose's Three Claims of Visual Research Benefits

Rose made *three* central claims about the potential benefits of visual research methods. As part of my research, I explored whether these propositions were evident in my study. These three claims by Rose are that visual research methods can: 1) produce greater emotional talk, 2) lead to the empowerment of participants, challenging the power-differential and 3) engage with people who find talk challenging and generate more conversation.

Visual Research Methods Producing Greater Emotional Talk
As indicated in my visual research methodology section, The 'talk', as Rose calls it, occurs when visual materials are discussed, which she cites as being "better at evoking the sensory, affective and emotional" (18:03, NCRM, 2012; Weber, 2008). Rose's 'talk' of producing greater emotionality in the discourse, did not pan out in my results. The comments from the youth when engaged in the photo-elicitation process, did not create any noted greater emotional responses, as Rose and other say it would likely do. In fact, there appeared to be less connection among the youth and less interaction in talk when the visuals were used, than there had been at the previous focus group, when no visuals were used. There may be reasons for this other than the use of the visual research method I applied. One potential reason is that I used the photo-elicitation in a very limited fashion.   It was implemented with the youth only during a 30 to 40-minute focus group session. It was not an extensive Photovoice project I

engaged with the young people in over a series of weeks. A greater emotional expression may have been produced, if I had applied photo—elicitation over a more extended period. Another reason may be that the youth were not as engaged with the method and photo—taking as I initially thought they would be. This may have been due to the way I explained the process to the youth in the run—up. The task of photo—elicitation, in many respects, limited the conversation. As I reviewed the transcript, the task of sorting the images significantly limited the talk generally. The youth's responses were not as emotive as I initially assumed it would be.

Although the 'emotional type talk' was not as self—evident, the photo—elicitation process did produce a degree of confidence building. Confidence appeared evident when the youth shared their photos and then reflected on those pictures in a group. For example, seeing images of them playing their instruments, I think affirmed to the youth their talent for music playing and involvement with music. When the photos were presented to the young people, they appeared to express genuine excitement, by their facial expression of smiles and reaching eagerly towards the pictures. Expressions of self—confidence were also evident in how the youth described their photos. They spoke about their passion for drumming, playing the keyboard, singing, dancing, playing the guitar, with a particular excitement and assurance. I think a degree of confidence was expressed due to them recognizing they have a talent for their music playing and were proud of this fact. Seeing themselves visually practicing and playing their instruments appeared to have reaffirmed their skills and expressions.

Although the photo—elicitation process did not generate more emotional talk, it did produce more talk of 'the visual' — as in, physical appearance. There appeared to be a degree of hyper—focus on physical appearance. In other words, when the youth took photos of themselves or had pictures taken of themselves, it did appear to increase a degree self—consciousness regarding their bodies. The young people made comments about not liking their "skinny hands" or thinking their "arms looked fat". Some of this could be seen as typical youth behaviour, i.e. self—consciousness of their appearance. It still I think is significant to point out —

that visuals can also have an opposite effect, that is opposite to confidence (lessening of confidence that comes with self-critique of body). Therefore, although the talk came easier, it also seemed to increase self-consciousness regarding the body.

Visuals Can Lead to the Empowerment of Participants, Challenging the Power-Differential

Another benefit Rose cites is how discussion of visuals can result in the empowerment of participants when they shoot and explain their photos. Such a process challenges the power-differential between researcher and participant, as there is a degree of negotiating when a picture is taken. This was evident to a degree in my results. The youth shot the photos and then as a group organize those images which most spoke to them. I think they got to shape more the conversation and have more ownership over the communication, which is different from me merely asking them questions. I also think that taking photos and seeing the results of their pictures and then sharing the pictures with the group, placed the youth in the position as more of the expert when discussing their music. It seems this occurrence is linked to the confidence I discussed above – that the building of confidence is a form of empowerment. In conclusion, I think the creating and sharing of visuals, is one central example where a consultation process with youth can be enhanced as it allows for greater power-sharing.

Visual Material Can Engage With People Who Find Talk Challenging and Generate More Talk

Rose states visual research methods can engage people who find talk challenging. She specifically references children as one such group (NCRM, 2012). Furthermore, Rose at her 2012 NCRM keynote talk states that discussion of visuals produces more speech (NCRM, 2012). This did not pan out in my results, as the youth did not appear to talk more. The exception is that they did talk about their music playing when the images were presented and sorted. This was evident in the way they spoke about their photos. For instance, their discussion of images seemed easier and more relaxed. There may be a few reasons why this talk was more comfortable. As indicated, the young people spoke more confidently about their images. Speaking confidentially may generate more conversation, as

when one is assured by what they are saying, they may talk more. Another reasons was that the pictures were a good 'touch point', i.e. they helped to frame and structure the conversation and place the focus on physical objects. This appeared to take the focus off some of the social awkwardness present in the group. Such an occurrence seems to confirm Sinding and colleagues' (2012) review of claims made about the arts' ability to help translate complex or hard to express feelings into a more tangible and concrete form (i.e. photos). Art, as the authors noted, is often less direct and more easily shared. For as Sinding et al. indicate many researchers claims that art "sidesteps the defensiveness generated by familiar communication; it captures experiences and phenomena too elusive for words" (p. 197, Sinding et al., 2012). Thus, by the youth placing more focus on physical objects, which the youth were passionate about, I think made the talk easier.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, many theorists have written how child welfare system is broken. The consensus is that youth themselves should be a top priority. Bill 89, the new child-welfare legislation just recently passed in Ontario, specifically stipulates making child protection 'child centric'. One of the main impetus of this is ensuring youth participate in decisions made about their care. However, questions remain about how best to consult youth, when traditional approaches such as standard interview techniques have their limitations.

The focus of my thesis was on youth voice. I explore this topic through a study with youth in-care involved in a music group. I used focus groups and photo-elicitation as methods for data collection. My exploration was into whether an alternative art-informed/ visual approach, such as photo-elicitation, offers useful insights into young people's perspectives and experiences, which may in turn make it a useful method for consulting youth. Specifically I explored claims made about photo-elicitation helping with increasing emotional type talk and inquired into how the method may enhance the consultation process with youth. What I found was that, although my photo-elicitation focus group study did

not generate more emotional-type talk, it did generate talk which appeared to build confidence amongst the participants, This seemed to support meaningful participation in the interview process. Specifically, my study found that youth built confidence about their music playing and crafting and were able to express how music helped with their daily stresses of being in-care. Although much more needs to be explored with the application of visual research methods, and social science researchers should be cautious in making unsubstantiated or exaggerated claims in support of the approaches, young people in-care can surely benefit from visual research methods such as photo-elicitation.

All in all, although exaggerated and unsubstantiated claims made about the power of visual research methods should be avoided, there is much potential for the arts in social science research, visual research methods in particular, in enhancing the consultation process with youth. There is much more to an image than meets the eye. Providing opportunities for young people to express themselves through visuals and to elicit responses from those images to aid the consultation process should be encouraged and pursued.

APPENDIX 1

<u>Postmodernism and Rose's Critical Visual Methodology</u>

Justifying Exploration of Postmodernism Place in My Thesis:
   As Rose is a central figure in my thesis, one of the leading proponent of visual research methods within the social science and informs my visual portion of my data–analysis, it is important I trace her thinking. Rose cites a prominent postmodern thinker, Michel Foucault (1926–1984) as the primary influence behind her work (Rose, 2012; Hicks 2011). It is for this reason, and other reasons, in which I will elaborate, that I argue that postmodernism has a direct relationship to Rose's philosophy and subsequently her argumentation underlying her 'critical–visual methodology'. Thus, an understanding of postmodernism is crucial when understanding and critiquing Rose's approach.

   My explanation of postmodernism will focus primarily on the metaphysical and epistemological elements of the philosophy (i.e. what constitutes reality and what knowledge governs that reality). I will offer an explanation of postmodernism's fatal flaw and offer two central insights provided by the philosophy. In summary, although there are benefits and insights of postmodernism, two main ones in which I will include as part of my analysis, I will primarily be critiquing the over–arching framework.

Introduction to Postmodernism – General Context/ Overview
   Although postmodernism often purports itself as anti–philosophical, in that alleges to "rejects many traditional philosophical alternatives, the philosophy presupposes at least an implicit conception of reality and values" (p. Hicks, 2011). I will briefly sketch some of the central tenets of postmodernism, relying heavily on Hicks 2011 book 'Explaining Postmodernism: Skepticism and Socialism From Rousseau to Foucault' (Hicks, 2011).

Definition
   The simplest, and sometimes the easiest way to understand postmodernism, is simply: 'what comes after modernism'. This is a 'catch all' and offers a certain coherent and

straightforward logic, when such a philosophy can quickly become convoluted and unintelligible. Although broad, and not necessarily saying much, it provides a good starting point in understanding postmodernism.

Main Contemporary Thinkers

Probably the best-known Postmodernists and the leading strategists and architects of the intellectual movement is Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida (Hicks, 2011). These French intellectuals, were deconstructionists and offered unique insights into our social reality and ultimately an overarching metaphysics and epistemology. Before briefly covering these two influential thinkers, it is important I mention some of what they were so venomously opposed in critiquing, that is modernism, Western Civilization and the entire Enlightenment project (Hicks, 2011).

Hicks traces the rise of postmodernism from its rejection of modernism, the Enlightenment and reason in particular. For example, according to Hicks:

> Modern debates were over truth and reality, reason and experience, liberty and equality, justice and peace, beauty and progress. In the postmodern framework, those concepts always appear in quotation marks. Our most strident voices tell us that "Truth" is a myth. "Reason" is a white male Eurocentric construct. "Equality" is a mask for oppressions. "Peace" and "Progress" are met with cynical and weary reminders of power—or explicit ad hominem attacks. (p. 20, Hicks, 2011)

Hicks goes on to explain that "Postmodernism, therefore, is a comprehensive philosophical and cultural movement. It identifies its target—modernism and its realization in the Enlightenment and its legacy—and it mounts powerful arguments against all of the essential elements of modernism" (p. 21). As indicated by Hicks, postmodernism is also therefore considered a larger cultural movement, not merely a philosophy. Postmodernism is often cited as starting around the time of the counter-culture and civil rights movement of

the 1960s and early 1970s. It, therefore, can be considered an entire worldview and social movement, which is still unfolding today in different forms and expressions, politically, economically, intellectually and socially (Hicks, 2011).

History: The Counter Enlightenment's Attack on Reason and the Rise of Postmodernism

Hicks offers an extensive overview of what led to postmodern thinking. He indicates that at the height of Enlightenment, thinkers like the German philosopher, Emanuel Kant, were already sowing the seeds of skepticism of reason. Kant precisely questioned the notion of objectivity and whether we have 'contact' with the world through reason and our sense faculties. Speaking more broadly about the origins of postmodernism, Hicks states: "the Enlightenment confidence in reason … upon which all progress had been based, had always been philosophically incomplete and vulnerable" (p. 24). According to Hicks, Kant "held that the mind and not reality sets the terms for knowledge. And he held that reality conforms to reason, not vice versa. In the history of philosophy, Kant marks a fundamental shift from objectivity as the standard to subjectivity as the standard" (p. 39). Hick states that even though Kant is seen as a champion of reason, Kant's initial skepticism and critique of reason, spawned Anti-Enlightenment thought – by thinkers such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), among many other philosophers and intellectuals. It is from Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' (1781) and subsequent thinkers, which led to the rise of postmodernism (Hicks, 2011). Hicks states:

> Postmodernism's extreme skepticism, subjectivism, and relativism are the results of a two-centuries-long epistemological battle. That battle is the story of pro-reason intellectuals trying to defend realist accounts of perception, concepts, logic, but gradually giving ground and abandoning the field while the anti-reason intellectuals advanced in the sophistication of their arguments and developed increasingly non-rational alternatives.

Postmodernism is the end result of the Counter–Enlightenment attack on reason. (p. 27, Hicks, 2011)

Therefore, as we will see, Rose's anti–realism stance and social subjectivism of visuals, is rooted in postmodern thinking, which comes from a long and extensive history of Western thought. We can also understand that alternative methodologies within the social sciences, such as visual methods, are a result of this non–rational historical development.

Rejection of Reason, Truth, and Knowledge
Foucault was a skeptic of any universal truth and value claims. For instance, he declared "all my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence" (p. 3). This ultimately also included such key universals as 'Reason', 'Truth', or 'Knowledge', as for him "it is meaningless to speak in the name of–or against–Reason, Truth, or Knowledge" (p. 3, Hicks, 2011). For Foucault, his thinking addressed the relationship between power and knowledge, demonstrating how this relationship is used as a form of social control (Wikipedia, 2017). He, therefore, asserted that all claims of knowledge were forms of power. Similarly, according to Jean–Francois Lyotard, a leading postmodernist, also equated that "reason and power are one and the same" (p. Hicks, 2011). Lyotard, speaking in the 1970's, declared an ending to any 'meta–narrative' or grand–narratives, as for him, "we have ceased to believe that narratives of this kind are adequate to represent and contain us all" (p. Hicks, 2011).

Similarly, Derrida was critical of categorizations, as he saw it as naturally and inherently exclusionary (Peterson, 2017). His position was that the foundation of Western Civilization, based on Reason, is inherently exclusionary. Those that do not fit Western Civilization value system are therefore inherently marginalized (Peterson, 2016). It is because of this and other reasons, that postmodern thinkers such as Derrida and others, saw Western civilization, needing to be completely overhauled. For example, according to Hicks, many postmodernists "deconstruct reason, truth, and reality because they believe that in the name of reason, truth, and

reality, Western civilization has wrought dominance, oppression, and destruction" (p. 3). In other words, postmodernism rejects the entire Enlightenment project, in which modernist thinking is based.

Postmodernism and Social Constructionism

According to Daniel Bonevac at one of his lecture on Postmodernism at the University of Toronto posted to YouTube, declares that postmodernism has mostly given up the search for truth. This is because for them, thought and language do not relate to the world directly. Bonevac goes into the history of why this is the case, highlighting thinkers such as Hegel, Kant and Wittgenstein. For Bonevac, postmodernists take it one step further and argue that we do not have direct knowledge, even of ourselves or of the world. He states, the argument provided by postmodernists, is that our perception of the world is always mediated. It is mediated by concepts. In other words, as we do not have direct knowledge of anything, even of ourselves, postmodernism emphasizes our relation to ourselves is mediated by our concepts. Society is what gives us these concepts, even of the self. According to Bonevac, this is what leads to deconstructionism and social constructionism. If everything comes from ideas and we have no direct relation to the world, then postmodernism argues everything is a social construct and everything is up to interpretation. Now there are variations of these arguments and many thinkers in this space have many nuances regarding these arguments, but it suffices to say that the most extreme postmodernists, will essentially say that there is no difference between fiction and nonfiction. As for them, what is the difference between imaging and describing reality, if there is no world 'out there'? For Bonevac and others, this is an odd conclusion. To argue everything is a social constructionism, Bonevac states "something weird" is happening. For instance, a postmodernist, could not logically say that a tornado heading their way is merely a social construct unless they want to be taken up by its winds. However, surprisingly, as postmodernism denies Enlightenment truths, in that there are no absolute truths, they also will deny logic. For Bonevac and others, this is unintelligible.

I would argue that Rose falls in similar accounts of reason when describing visual research methodology. Although

surely she is not extreme as some postmodernists, she does seem to do a 'slight of hand' when she skips over the nature of visuals and equates a social constructionism of visuals. Her argument is also incoherent at times, as she is less concerned about any truth, but rather purports a sort of pragmatic focus on the social construct of the image. Therefore, although her argument may be compelling, it falls short of being coherent, as it does not account for the hard problem of what makes up an image and how it can ground our knowledge.

Despite postmodern's "official distaste for some versions of the abstract, the universal, the fixed, and the precise" (p. 6), it still, ironically and perhaps contradictory, offers a consistent framework of premises, values and axioms, which under closer scrutiny contradict postmodernism's alleged deconstruction of universal truth claims (Hicks, 2011). A topic I will now explore.

Values and Truth Claims Embedded Within Postmodernism

Although on the surface postmodernism appears to conclude a particular ending of any 'grand narratives' and to question the existence of values themselves, it also has a substructure of values and assertions about the nature of reality and the basis of knowledge. Perhaps more accurately, in is untenable for a staunch proponent of postmodernism to assert anything universal–binding about the world (i.e. it does not tell how one to act or live), but those who follow such a philosophy still default to certain values and conceptualizations of reality. I will quote Hicks in full, to help paint a picture of how postmodernism opposes modernism and in turn purports its own positive assertions about the nature of reality and knowledge:

> Metaphysically, postmodernism is anti–realist, holding that it is impossible to speak meaningfully about an independently existing reality. Postmodernism substitutes instead a social–linguistic, constructionist account of reality. Epistemologically, having rejected the notion of an independently existing reality, postmodernism

denies that reason or any other method is a means of acquiring objective knowledge of that reality. Having substituted social-linguistic constructs for that reality, postmodernism emphasizes the subjectivity, conventionality, and incommensurability of those constructions. Postmodern accounts of human nature are consistently collectivist, holding that individuals' identities are constructed largely by the social-linguistic groups that they are a part of, those groups varying radically across the dimensions of sex, race, ethnicity, and wealth. Postmodern accounts of human nature also consistently emphasize relations of conflict between those groups; and given the de-emphasized or eliminated role of reason, postmodern accounts hold that those conflicts are resolved primarily by the use of force, whether masked or naked; the use of force in turn leads to relations of dominance, submission, and oppression. Finally, postmodern themes in ethics and politics are characterized by an identification with and sympathy for the groups perceived to be oppressed in the conflicts, and a willingness to enter the fray on their behalf. (p. 6-7, Hick, 2011)

Therefore, in deconstructing modernism, postmodernism assert various tenets itself. It is, therefore, a performative philosophy, not merely a deconstructionist one. The philosophy is collectivist, asserts subjectivity as a primary reality and uses 'social-linguistic constructs' to represent reality. Some widely cited values also include relativism, pluralisms and multiculturalism, as being 'self-evident' categories of existence (Wilber, 2017). In my experience and readings, proponents of postmodernism also often appear to be especially critical of any form of hierarchy (both 'growth hierarchies' (i.e. child development, moral systems of belief) and dominant hierarchies (i.e. that

of power existing in business and or governments). Thus, everything essentially becomes 'flat'. We essentially are told to say nothing is better than another. The logic is that if everything is relative, how can one thing be better than another? If we privilege one category above another, it is naturally exclusionary and therefore oppressive. This is especially troublesome when considering such ethical systems as moral relativism. Narcissism also appears to be a byproduct, as when everything is deconstructed, all you have is yourself to elevate.

Hicks argues that postmodernism also has an activist element. For a postmodernist, they have a "strategy against the coalition of reason and power" (p. 3). For example, Hick quoting Postmodernist, Frank Lentricchia, states postmodernism "seeks not to find the foundation and the conditions of truth but to exercise power for the purpose of social change" (p. 3). In academia, according to Hicks, the task of a postmodern professors is to help students "spot, confront, and work against the political horrors of one's time" (p. 13), not necessarily to determine truth through reason. According to Hicks, this leads to intellectuals within academia relying not on the obligation to be right, but rather only on being interesting (Hicks, 2011).

Postmodernism Central Flaw – Performative Contradiction

As indicated earlier, postmodernism is against any universal truths. However, although it is postulated as part of the philosophy, there is an inherent contradiction underlying its logic. Hidden in the claim that there is no universal truths, lies a universal truth claim about reality. For example, when one makes a claim, as postmodernists often will, that all truth is relative, they are making a universal claim about reality and epistemology. This is widely cited as a performative contradiction. This term was widely coined by German sociologist and philosopher, Jürgen Habermas (1929–). Habermas and Derrida had a series of debates over the last several decades. Habermas once publicly concluded that "Derrida's method as being unable to provide a foundation for social critique" (Wikipedia, 2017). Derrida was in defence of deconstructionism and Habermas being a proponent of modernity and reason (among many other ideas). Habermas and other lodged the central argument that postmodernist thinkers like

Derrida, were acting out a performative contradiction, making it ultimately incoherent and unintelligible

The Positives of Postmodernism:
     The positives of postmodernism and its contribution to my research are that it recognizes multiple ways of knowing and the importance of context. It also questions the limitations of reason, offering room for such means of knowing as art– informed methodologies. As we have seen, a modern understanding of mind does not go deep enough into our full human capacity (i.e. seeing how the emotional aspects of our being, provides useful and necessary forms of knowledge through the use and application of art/ visuals). In other words, as this paper has covered, a postmodern interpretation, allows for us to see visual studies and research methods as a legitimate research endeavour, as it takes in more than just a rational understanding and uses different knowledge claims (in this case a visual methodology). Although a modernist framework, is primarily grounded in scientific observations of the visuals, such as what is used in visual anthropology and visual sociology, a postmodern framework allows for a more broader interpretative framework – namely one that allows for multiple truths, not merely a pure empirical scientific reading.

     It is with the two positive aspects or the recognition of context and acceptance of various truth claims, that makes a postmodernism lens such an important and needed one. It helps discover and explore new territory of the human mind and soul. However, where I see postmodernism's overreach, is where it delegitimizes any modern conceptualization of knowledge/ reality (be it science, truth, knowledge or rationality itself) – mostly 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater'. In short, I have intellectual differences with postmodernism axioms, but also see many of the inherent benefits of the overarching meta–approach. I choose to challenges its pathologies but bring forward its positives. I hope to do this with my data–analysis. Surely a post–postmodern future understanding of social science research will include both modern and postmodern insights into the nature of reality and knowledge generation. It is therefore for these reasons, why I uphold not just a primary postmodern social constructionist interpretation using Rose, but hope to at least attempt to

bridge both a modern and postmodern interpretation of the visual.

My Central Critique of Rose's Argument:

It is with this summary of postmodernism that I turn to the work of Rose and offer my central critique. I argue that:

1) Rose is anti-realist in her conceptualization of visuals and asserts a social constructionism as a substitute. I think this is ultimately limiting. 2) Rose also elevates the 'audiencing site', over the other two 'sites' as part of her critical-visual methodology. In doing so, she negates or minimizes the validity of other conceptualizations other than the social, which I think does a major disservice to a fuller and more inclusive understanding of the visual.

Rose's Anti-Realism Account of Visuals

In regards to the first claim, Rose makes this assertion most self-evident in her 2011 keynote lecture: 'Now You See It Now You Don't' when she essentially suggests that the visual image itself, does not legitimately have any 'essential' nature 'in-of-itself'. Rather what matters for Rose is the social context in which that photo is culturally interpretation and ultimately created. Therefore, for her, the visual itself is not important (i.e. it does not carry any inherent meaning or quality of knowledge), but rather it is the interpretation of that visual, by the audience, which is what matters. On the surface, this is a convincing argument, but are we really to believe that the image has no inherent quality in which we can take as forming knowledge? Is there no beauty, truthness, data inherent in the photo? Or is the image merely a subjective interpretation or 'social construct'? For example, if a picture is of a cow, and the person describing the photo says it is a picture of a cow, is that merely his/ her subjective interpretation and nothing else? It is type of arguments philosophy get us involved in, but what appears to be logical or 'common sense', at least to some researchers, is not the case. Admittedly these are hard questions to answer, but I am reluctant to divorce any empirical or practical understanding of art/ visual-analysis completely.

Finally, in regards to the second argument made by Rose, I offer a more full and more detailed criticism:

A Criticism of Rose's 'Inclusive' Framework
Although Rose offers an inclusive and comprehensive framework as part of her critical-visual methodology, she still curiously emphasizes the site of audiencing over the other 'sites'. In other words, Rose is clearly more interested in and puts greater theoretical weight on, the audiencing of an image and corresponding social modality. For Rose, "since the image is always made and seen in relation to other images, this wider visual context is more significant for what the image means than what the artist thought they were doing" (p. 26, Rose, 2012). She quotes Roland Barthes, French literary critic and theorist, who proclaimed the "death of the author", in a 1967 essay he wrote by the same name (Wikipedia, 2016). Rose goes on to explain, it is "not the author, or indeed its production itself, but its audiences, who bring their own way of seeing and other knowledges to bear on an image and in the process make their own meanings from it" (p.27, Rose, 2012).

I find Rose's stance on this issue a bit curious: surely an author's intention is a valuable aspect of the interpretation of imagery and therefore should have equal weight. For example, a participant's intention, what they were feeling/ thinking at the time they took the image and what personal story may make up that picture, should have a bearing on the topic of visual interpretation. If not, is a major component being ignored within visual social science research? Surely not everything can be reduced to the social effects or 'social embeddedness' of an image.

To be fair, Rose understands how she is choosing one such theoretical position – the site of audiencing – as central. In other words, she demonstrates a self-awareness, which she is choosing one interpretation among many. For as she describes:

> Interpreting images is just that, interpretation. But my own preference – which is itself a theoretical position – is for understanding visual images as embedded in the social world and only

comprehensible when that embedding is taken into
account. As Hall suggest, though, it is still
important to justify your interpretation, whatever
theoretical stance you prefer. (p. xviii, Rose,
2012)

I wonder why Rose would introduce her theory, the three
site framework, and then places inordinate value on one of
the sites over the others? What I appreciate about Rose's
position is that she already recognizes this and shows a
degree of self-reflexivity in understanding she is
privileging the site of audiencing over the other sites.
However, why would we not value all sites when interpreting
imagery? Would this not be more inclusive and a better gauge
of the multiperspectival interpretation of imagery needed for
a comprehensive reading?

Rose does not really offer an argument as to why she
picks one site, the social, over the others, only that it is
her "preference". Her description of the other sites is more
critical and appears to suggest that they do not provide the
same interpretative weight or merit. One wonders why these
sites are less significant.

<u>References</u>

Ballantyne, Mary. (2016, Jan 1). Don't 'blow up' Ontario's child welfare system. Toronto Star. Retrieved from https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2016/01/01/dont-blow-up-ontarios-child-welfare-system.html By

Banks, M. (2001). Reading pictures. In Visual methods in social research (pp. 2–12): SAGE Publications Ltd doi: 10.4135/9780857020284.n1

Banks, M. (2001). Visual methods in social research: SAGE Publications Ltd doi: 10.4135/9780857020284

Berg. (2007). Focus Group Interviewing. (n.d.). Qualitative Marketing Research, 113–131. doi:10.4135/9781849209625.n8

Bessell, S. (2011). Participation in decision-making in out-of-home care in Australia: What do young people say? Elsevier. Children and Youth Services Review 33(1) 496–501.

Blackstock, C. (2006/2007). If Reindeer Could Fly: Dreams and Real Solutions for Aboriginal Children. Education Canada, 47 (1):4–8.

Boote, D. & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: on the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. Education Research. Vol. 34 (No. 6) 3–15.

Brainy Quote.com. Alfred North Whitehead Quotes. Retrieved from http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/alfrednort119002.html.

Brazg, T., Bekemeier, B., Spigner, C., & Huebner, C. E. (2010). Our Community in Focus: The Use of Photovoice for Youth-Driven Substance Abuse Assessment and Health Promotion. Health Promotion Practice, 12(4), 502–511.

Broussine, M. (2008). The seductive qualities of creative
    methods: Critical awareness. In M. Broussine, M.
    Beeby, R. French, L. Grisoni, P. Kirk, M. Page, & P.
    Simpson (Eds.), Creative Methods in Organizational
    Research. (pp. 34–50). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Carter, S. M. and Little, M. Justifying knowledge,
    justifying method, taking actions: Epistemologies,
    methodologies, and methods in qualitative research.
    Qualitative Health Research. 17.10.

Carter, S.M. & Little, M. (2007). Justifying Knowledge,
    Justifying Method, Taking Action:
    CBC News. Katelynn Sampson inquest: Institutions too
    slow to assess case, says Children's Aid lawyer.
    Retrieved from
    http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/katelynn–
    sampson–inquest–last–day–1.3468286.

Clark, A., & Morriss, L. (2015). The use of visual
    methodologies in social work research over the last
    decade: A narrative review and some questions for the
    future. Qualitative Social Work.

Clark, A., & Morriss, L. (2017). The use of visual
    methodologies in social work research over the last
    decade: A narrative review and some questions for the
    future. Qualitative Social Work, 16(1), 29–43.
    doi:10.1177/1473325015601205

Coholic, D., Lougheed, S., & Cadell, S. (2009). Exploring
    the helpfulness of arts–based methods with children
    living in foster care. Traumatology, 15(3), 64–71.

Knowles, J., & Cole, A. (2008). Handbook of the Arts in
    Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies,
    Examples, and Issues. doi:10.4135/9781452226545

Community Centre for Media Arts. Photovoice Hamilton Youth
    Project: a guide to developing a photovoice project in
    your community (2008).

Damiani–Taraba, G., Sky, I., Hegler, D., Woolridge, N.,

Anderson, B.; Koster, A.. The Listen to Me Project:
Increasing resiliency and creating lasting changes in
voice and participation for children in care through a
youth led project. Manuscript submitted for
publication. Brantford. Brant Family and Children's
Services.

Drew, S. E., Duncan, R. E., & Sawyer, S. M. (2010). Visual
Storytelling: A Beneficial But Challenging Method for
Health Research With Young People. Qualitative Health
Research, 20(12), 1677–1688.
doi:10.1177/1049732310377455

Duncan, E, Susan M. (2014) Visual Storytelling: A
Beneficial but Challenging Method for Health Research
with Young People. SAGE Visual Methods. 20 (12): (pp.
1677–1688).

Epstein, I., Stevens, B., McKeever, P., Baruchel, S..
(2006). Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI): Using
Photos to Elicit Children's Perspectives.
International Journal of Qualitative Methods.

Esposto, Jill. (2010). A Kingdom In Trouble. (Unpublished
master's thesis). McMaster University Hamilton,
Ontario

Fleer, M. (2013). A Digital Turn: Post–developmental
Methodologies for Researching with Young Children.
Visual Methodologies and Digital Tools for Researching
with Young Children, 3–11. doi:10.1007/978–3–319–
01469–2_1

Fook, J. (2003). Critical Social Work: The Current Issues.
Qualitative Social Work. 2: 123–130.

Fook, J., Social Work: Critical Theory and Practice
Foster–Fishman, P. G., Law, K. M., Lichty, L. F., &
Aoun, C. (2010). Youth ReACT for Social Change: A
Method for Youth Participatory Action Research.
American Journal of Community Psychology, 46(1–2), 67–
83.

Fox, A., & Berrick, J. D. (2007). A response to no one ever asked us: A review of children's experiences in out-of-home care. Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 24(1), 23–51.

Greene, S & Hogan, H (2005). Creative Methodologies in Participatory Research with Children.

Hogan (Eds.), Researching Children's Experience. (pp. 254–273). London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Greene, S, Hogan, H. (2005). Researching children's experience: Approaches and methods. SAGE Publications. 1– 304.

Horsfall, D. & Tichen, A. (2009). Disrupting edges—opening spaces: Pursuing democracy and human flourishing through creative methodologies. International Journal of Social Research Methodology. 12 (2): 147–160.

Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: A case for photo elicitation. Visual Studies, 17(1), 13–26. doi:10.1080/14725860220137345

Hopkins, B. (2005). Cambridge Encyclopedia of Child Development. Cambridge University Press.

Huss, Ephrat (2012), What We See and What We Say: combining visual and verbal information within social work research. British Journal of Social Work. 42, 1440–1459. Advance Access Publication

Lapenta, F. (n.d.). Some Theoretical and Methodological Views on Photo-Elicitation. The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods, 201–213. doi:10.4135/9781446268278.n11

Loriggio, Paola. (2016, February 26). The Canadian Press. Retrieved from http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/katelynn-sampson-7-was-overlooked-ignored-before-her-death-lawyer-1.2793694

Malherbe, N., Suffla, S., Seedat, M., & Bawa, U. (2016).

Visually negotiating hegemonic discourse through
Photovoice: Understanding youth representations of
safety. Discourse & Society, 27(6), 589–606.
doi:10.1177/0957926516664255

Margolin, L. (1997). Under the Cover of Kindness.
Charlottesville: The University Press
of Virginia.

Miller, D., Culhane, B., Taussig, B. (2010, April).
Children's appraisals of their experiences in out-of-
home care. Children and Youth Services Review, 32(1),
1324–1330.

Mitchell, T., Kuczynski, L., Tubbs, C.Y., Ross, C. (2009).
We care about care: advice by children in care for
childrenin care, foster parents and child welfare
workers about the transition into foster care Child
and Family Social Work, Blackwell Publishing Ltd,
Guelph, ON. 15(1), 176–185.

Mueller, Jennfer. (2017)· Most people are secretly
threatened by creativity. Quartz. Retrieved from
https://qz.com/929328/most-people-are-secretly-
threatened-by-creativity/.

Neuman, L. (1997). The Meaning of Methodology. In Neuman,
W.L.. Social Research

Neuman, W. L. (2007). Social Research Methods: Qualitative
and Quantitative Approaches, 3rd Ed. (c). Allyn and
Bacon – Pearson Education.

New World Encyclopedia. (2014, July 24). Susanne Langer.
Retrieved from
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Susanne_Lang
er

Newman, T (2010). Listening and believing: An examination
of young people's perceptions of why they are not
believed by professionals when they report abuse and
neglect. Blackwell Publishing Limited, Children &
Society 25(1), 458–469.

Nybell, L. M (2013, April). Locating "youth voice":
      Considering the contexts of speaking in foster care.
      Elsevier Ltd., Children and Youth Services Review,
      35(1) (2013) 1227–1235.

Osei–Kofi, Nana, (2013), The Emancipatory Potential of
      Arts–Based Research for Social Justice. Equity and
      Excellence in Education, University of Massachusetts
      Amherst School of Education.

Prosper, J, Loxley, A. (2008). Introducing visual methods.
      ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review
      Paper. London, England: National Centre for Research
      Methods.

Prosser, J. (2007). Visual methods and the visual culture
      of schools. Visual Studies, 22(1), 13–30.
      doi:10.1080/14725860601167143

Prosser, J., & Burke, C. (n.d.). Image–Based Educational
      Research: Childlike Perspectives. Handbook of the Arts
      in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies,
      Examples, and Issues, 407–420.
      doi:10.4135/9781452226545.n34

Rauktis, M. E., Rachael ,A., Fusco, B.,, Cahalane, H.,
      Kierston, I.B., Reinhart, E (2011). "Try to make it
      seem like we're regular kids": Youth perceptions of
      restrictiveness inout–of–home care. Children and Youth
      Services Review, Pittsburgh, PA. 33(1), 1224–1233.

Rose, G. (2012). Visual methodologies: An introduction to
      researching with visual materials. London: SAGE.

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to
      Identify Themes. Field Methods, 15(1), 85–109. doi
      10.1177/1525822x02239569

Sanon, M., Evans–Agnew, R. A., & Boutain, D. M. (2014). An
      exploration of social justice intent in photovoice
      research studies from 2008 to 2013. Nursing Inquiry,
      21(3), 212–226.

Sinclair, R. (2004). Participation in practice: Making it meaningful, effective and sustainable. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Children & Society, 18(1), 106–118.

Sinclair, R. (2004). Participation in practice: Making it meaningful, effective and sustainable. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Children & Society, 18(1), 106–118. Social Work as an Integral Profession Larkin, Heather. (2006). Social Work as an Integral Profession. 1(2).

Stafford, A., Laybourn, A., Hill, M. (2003, February). 'Having a say': Children and young people talk about consultation. Children & Society, Wiley InterScience, 17(1), 361–373.

Stafford, A., Laybourn, A., Hill, M. (2003, February). 'Having a say': Children and young people talk about consultation. Children & Society, Wiley InterScience, 17(1), 361–373.

Strack, R. W., Magill, C., & Mcdonagh, K. (2004). Engaging Youth through Photovoice. Health Promotion Practice, 5(1), 49–58.

Strolin–-Goltzman, J., Kollar, S., and Trinkle, S. (2010, January). Listening to the voices of children in foster care: Youths speak out about child welfare workforce turnover and selection. National Association of Social Workers Social Work, 55(1), 47–-53.

Strolin–Goltzman, J., Kollar, S., and Trinkle, S. (2010, January). Listening to the voices of children in foster care: Youths speak out about child welfare workforce turnover and selection. National Association of Social Workers Social Work, 55(1), 47–53.

Swift, K. (1995). Neglect as Failed Motherhood. Manufacturing 'Bad Mothers': A Critical Perspective on Child Neglect. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. Ch 6. 102–125.

Swift, K. (1998). Contradictions in Child Welfare: Neglect

and Responsibility. In C. T. Baines, P.M. Evans, & Neysmith, eds., Women's Caring: Feminist Perspectives on Social Welfare, 2nd ed. (pp. 160–187). Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Torraco, R. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: guidelines and examples: Human Resource Development Review. Vol. 4 (No. 3): 365–367.

Travers, M. (2009). New methods, old problems: A sceptical view of innovation in qualitative research. SAGE Publications. (pp. 162–179).

Trocmé, N & Chamberland, C. (2003). Re-involving the community: The need for a differential response to risking child welfare caseloads in Canada. In N. Trocmé, D. Knoke & C. Roy. (Eds.). Community collaboration and differential response: Canadian and international research and emerging models of practice (pp.32–48). Ottawa: Child Welfare League of Canada.

Wang, C, & Burris, M. (1997) Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. Health Education Behaviour. 24: (pp. 369–387).

Wang, C. C., & Redwood-Jones, Y. A. (2001). Photovoice Ethics: Perspectives from Flint Photovoice. Health Education & Behavior, 28(5), 560–572.

Wehbi, S. (2014). Arts-Informed Teaching Practice: Examples from a Graduate Anti-Oppression Classroom. Social Work Education, 34(1), 46–59.

White, A., Bushin, N. (2010). Using Visual Methodologies to Explore Contemporary Irish Childhoods. In J. Hughes (Ed.), SAGE Visual Methods. (Vol. 10, pp. v4–203–v4–221). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Wikipedia.org. (2017, May 6). The Death of the Author. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Death_of_the_Author) .