SKETCHING THE PROFILE OF FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION USING AN ART-BASED, FEMINIST METHODOLOGY

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Abstract

Although female entrepreneurship, in Canada, is on the rise, only 16% of Canadian businesses have a woman leader (Grekou, Li & Liu, 2018). Evidence suggests that females, when compared to males, have distinct barriers, motivations and goals concerning entrepreneurship (Mattis, 2004). However, there is also a lack of research allowing experiences of female entrepreneurs to be viewed independently from those of males. Our goal was to further an understanding of female business owners using a feminist approach — gaining knowledge about female entrepreneurs that is both personal and holistic. To do so, a two-staged qualitative method was used. First, an individual interview with three participants occurred, creating a trusting relationship between researcher and participant. These were analyzed using an Interpretive Phenomenological approach (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Second, an art-based, exploratory approach was utilized (Williams & Smythe, 2018), wherein participants created imaginative art-based projects to gain greater insight into their own involvements, which offered a direct, unmediated view of their experience. This process occurred over a period of three months (four meetings on average), wherein participants discussed their journey in person or email. All women were able to produce works that exuded their true experiences, they reported. Participants exhibited a strong desire for innovation and freedom in their ventures and noted different connotations of ‘success’ than the profile of a stereotypical entrepreneur offers. While the Interpretive Phenomenological approach gave us an understanding of these women's lives, it was their art-based exploration that enabled them to convey their experiences and emotions at a deeper level.
Sketching the Profile of Female Entrepreneurs: A Qualitative Exploration Using an Art-Based, Feminist Epistemology

Gender issues have always been at the forefront of my mind. I was a self-declared feminist by age 15 and since, have always tried to further my learning surrounding feminism. Moreover, I attempt to educate those around me regarding the injustices that persist, admittedly albeit too aggressively at times. However, as I age, my views have evolved and I have realized that a type of feminism that works for me, may not work for everyone. My inherent privilege as a white female grants additional opportunities that are unavailable to marginalized women. I must continue to educate myself to broaden my knowledge and open myself up to other ideas of feminism — to understand what ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ means to others. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge the social construct of gender. Recognizing that when discussing gender throughout this research, as well as in everyday life, it is not in relation to an individual’s biological sex, but rather it is the gender label the individual self-identifies with.

**Literature Review**

**The Gender Gap and Female Entrepreneurs**

Sexism and gender issues exist in all aspects of life — during everyday interactions, in the home and in the workplace. There is a gap, whether it be wage, employment rate or success rate, between males and females in the professional world (Moyser, 2017). Even in an increasingly inclusive, intersectional and progressive society, women are still struggling to break the well-known glass ceiling. Not only are these issues in large corporations, but they also exist equally in small to medium enterprises and individual endeavours (Hughes, 2017). In Canada, female entrepreneurs account for only 16% of the total business owners (Greku, Li & Liu, 2018). However, during the past decade the number of female entrepreneurs has jumped by 33%
whereas businesses owned by males have only increased by 22% (Grekou et al., 2018). Additionally, women-owned enterprises, compared to men’s, have led to higher job creation (Hughes, 2017). Therefore, women who become entrepreneurs are capable at becoming successful. Thus, this leads me to question, why are there so few female entrepreneurs when they have proven their capabilities in the business sector?

Not only have women demonstrated their proficient business skills, they too create many positive attributes that benefit a wide range of arenas. For example, women in business foster economic growth (Hughes, 2017). In Canada, all entrepreneurs contribute to raising the Canadian economy by encouraging local trade and business (Hughes, 2017). Women especially contribute to job creation, as it is often the companies created by women that generate more work opportunities for women (Hughes, 2017). Moreover, females are innovative; they are creative in their products and venture into untouched markets (Hughes, 2017). Women-led businesses also have many social benefits. The lifestyle of an entrepreneur allows for flexibility; women can look after families, be creative, continue learning and take on other duties within the versatile schedule that comes along with entrepreneurship. As well, women in business often invest back into their communities through their work by creating and aiding in social transformations (Orser & Elliott, 2015). Lastly, female entrepreneurs are an integral part in the disassembling of the patriarchy.

With the many benefits that arise from female entrepreneurship, we ought to encourage more women to enter this domain. However, in order to succeed at this, we must examine the barriers these women face, and what is hindering others from becoming business owners. Due to the inequality that has existed between genders for centuries, it is no wonder that women, more so than men, experience greater barriers when attempting to curate their own businesses.
Challenges facing female entrepreneurs include limited access to funding, discrimination, and a double burden of responsibilities in their careers and at home (Kristy, Watine & Kemunto, 2018; Mattis, 2004; Moyser, 2017; Mwobobia, 2012). Women often find it hard to finance their endeavours; they are less likely to get funding from banks and are more likely to use large amounts of their own money to support their business (Kristy et al., 2018; Mattis, 2004; Mwobobia, 2012). Moreover, women are still considered the primary caregivers in most households (Moyser, 2017). The issue of the double burden makes it exceptionally difficult for them to focus on their work when they are also expected to take care of family members. These issues are not the fault of the women themselves; they arise from the underlying issues in societal structure. However, it is important to note, these issues have improved slightly in Canada, as now women have more access to funding than ever before (Hughes, 2017).

A major obstacle that women in business face is society's notion of what encompasses an entrepreneur. Orser and Elliott (2015), believe there is a general schema surrounding entrepreneurship, a schema that is made up of ‘masculine’ qualities. This stereotyping of entrepreneurship is the byproduct of the patriarchal culture we live in and the continuing idea that men and women are fundamentally different (Oser & Elliott, 2015). It is believed that simply being a woman, is a handicap in entrepreneurship. The masculine normativity of entrepreneurship insists that women are naturally at a disadvantage unless they conform to more male-oriented traits (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). These biases have generated the notion that women are less successful in business, have less of a desire for business growth and are directly attributing to the gender gap in entrepreneurship (Oser & Elliott, 2015). Therefore, in order to breakdown these stereotypes, we must reinterpret what is means to be an entrepreneur and begin to understand how femininity plays a role in entrepreneurship.
Gendered Research

In order to form an understanding on how females and femininity contribute to entrepreneurship and business, I began looking at previous literature on the matter. During my search I became disappointed with the lack of research that focuses on female entrepreneurs. I noticed how the research mirrored society’s views on entrepreneurship. The research seemed biased, because it used masculinity as a gauge to measure women’s success. I found it difficult to come to any conclusions regarding females and business when the research was constantly comparing women to men. Not only was the research conducted under the patriarchal lens, it also was sparse and difficult to find.

I am not the first to notice these issues regarding entrepreneurial research. Many review articles touch on this matter (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Henry, Foss & Ahl 2015; Oser & Elliott, 2015; Yadav & Unni, 2016). Henry et al. (2015) explain that research dedicated to female entrepreneurs was originally thought to not be needed, and it has only been during the past 30 years that examinations of gender and business have sprouted. What is more, Yadav and Unni (2016) believe that there is a systemic issue regarding research in this area. Previous research only focused on gender differences—they constantly compared women to men. They never looked at female experiences independently. This explains why Ahl (2004) found gendered stereotyping in all explanatory articles during her analysis of previous female entrepreneurial research. During her investigation, she found that all articles concluded that being female was detrimental to a business—specifically, that gender explained certain concepts in entrepreneurship such as business growth and risk taking. Further, Ahl and Marlow (2012) argue that when research is built on societal stereotypes, this only strengthens the discrimination that happens in real life.
There is a deep need for more research that utilizes feminist epistemology—research that is not biased and rather, focuses solely women’s experiences (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Oser & Elliott, 2015; Yadav & Unni, 2016). Unless we, as researchers, alter the way we research female entrepreneurs, research on the matter may be at a “dead end” (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Feminist research is participant-centered; it incorporates the understanding that gender is a social construct, challenges popular research methods, and never uses the participants as objects of knowledge (Fonow & Cook, 2005). The research should be a collaborative effort between the researcher and the participant in which the power is balanced. The participant gains as much form the research process as the researcher does. Furthermore, there is a push for more non-traditional methods to be used (Yadav & Unni, 2016; Oser & Elliott, 2015). Conversely, there is a push for those that incorporate more personalized data collection, not the classic, quantitative methods that have become the norm. Through reforming the research done on female entrepreneurs, perhaps we can build a better understanding around them, and in turn, encourage more women to participate in entrepreneurship.

**The Current Study**

This brings me to my current research goal. In this project, I have attempted to gain an understanding on female entrepreneurs. I wished to see how they compared to the stereotypical profile of an entrepreneur that society thinks of and how their femininity aids them in their businesses. To do this, using a feminist approach, I conducted an art-based, qualitative research study in order to fulfill the demands mentioned above. Art-based, qualitative research is fitting for a feminist paradigm. Using art as a research tool offers “a person-centered and recovery-oriented approach that embraces emotional, social and spiritual needs” (Lith, Schofield & Fenner, 2013, p.1310). Additionally, art has been shown as a useful tool for unveiling and
converting knowledge in research (Fraser & Sayah, 2011). Further, art-based research allows for and encourages inquiry and collaboration from participants (Knowles & Cole, 2008). Therefore, it seemed apt to use it within a broader feminist paradigm to explore women business owners.

The art-based methodology that was used was created by Smythe and Williams (2016). The paradigm, A Magical Realist Framework of Inquiry: IMagInE, pulls from art therapy and intuitive expression (Smythe & Williams, 2016; Williams & Smythe, 2018). Intuitive expression is the act of using emotions and energy that arise from intuition and turning it into something concrete. Participants used imaginative art-based projects to aid them in gaining introspection and further their understanding of their own experiences. By this, they could come to realizations not previously understood about themselves or their experiences. The participants are then able to share this information with the researcher. Although this methodology is still in its infancy stage, it has shown promising signs of becoming a qualitative method that would function in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations (Smythe & Williams, 2016; Williams & Smythe, 2018).

Method

Participants

Recruitment for this study began following approval from the University of Regina Research Ethics Board. I recruited three participants using posters (Appendix A) and snowball sampling. The only criteria for the study was being a female who had owned her own business for at least a year. The posters included a brief outline of the study, expectations for potential participants, and my contact information. The posters were distributed around the city of Regina, in small businesses, such as hair salons and coffee shops. Eligible participants contacted me through email to express their desire to participate in this study.
Three participants were recruited. The initial goal was to recruit three to five participants, as the small sample size allowed for more personalized data collection and more extensive time spent with each participant. Consent was given at the initial meeting from each woman and was reviewed throughout the research process. This study used a feminist approach, so it was important to work around the participants’ needs and schedules; all the participants had tight schedules with which I had to work around, so the approach was different with each individual.

Each participant represented a different part of the entrepreneurial journey. My first participant was a 25-year-old woman named Emily who was in the early stages of her career. My second participant was a 41-year-old woman named Sarah. She was in the middle of her career and was in the process of figuring out what her next step was. My third participant was Marian. She was 60 years old and was in the course of reflecting on her long career. Additional details about each participant are presented in the “Results” section.

Materials

In the first part of this research, I had an initial independent interview with each participant. The interview was semi-structured with an interview script (Appendix B) and was audio recorded. These interviews were analyzed used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014) (see description below in “Analysis” section).

The second portion of the research process utilized the art-based method IMagInE (Smythe & Williams, 2016; Williams & Smythe, 2018). Participants themselves were asked to choose their own medium for this section and to independently acquire the necessary materials. Each participant signed a consent form (Appendix C) at our initial meetings.
Procedure

The general research process is outlined in Figure 1. First, an individual, semi-structured interview occurred with each participant. The initial individual interviews ranged from an hour to an hour and a half and were audio recorded. The interviews asked basic questions regarding the participant's business and home life. Example questions are: “Have you always wanted to be an entrepreneur?”, or “Have you felt any barriers against you due to your gender during your entrepreneurial journey?”. The interview guide can be viewed in Appendix B. The goal of this interview was to take a baseline reading of what the participant already understood regarding her experience. As well, it was to understand key traits and information about each participant. This part of the research enabled a connection to be formed between myself and the women I worked with. This connection created a safe environment for the disclosure of personal and sensitive information.

Following these interviews, we began the work of IMagInE (Smythe & Williams, 2016; Williams & Smythe, 2018). An opportunity was provided to the participants to reflect on their own experience and derive questions regarding their experiences as a female entrepreneur, including uncertainties they had regarding their journey. The formation of these questions happened in congruence of the first interview. These questions were then be used as guidelines for an art-based project.

The participants then began practicing an art-based activity of their choosing. This activity was aimed at expressing their experiences as a female entrepreneur. They used themes discussed in the initial interviews and the questions they came up with as direction for their art. They attempted to describe their emotions through visual or sonic representations. Next, the participants practiced personal reflection regarding their art, and in turn, engaged in a
collaborative discussion with me. Here, the key component was to let the artwork speak for itself—to find information through the art and the process of artmaking. To complete the IMagInE methodology, participants engaged in three – five sessions. During each session, we reviewed their work, discussed their reflections, and planned the next phase of their artistic expression (see Figure 1).

At the conclusion of the art-based work, one additional audio taped interview took place. Together, the participants and I discussed the art activity and inquired as to how or if it applied to their experiences in life. Our final interview was a collaborative reflection on everything both the researcher and the participant learned or discovered over the sessions. Table 1 shows the approximate meeting times and outcomes for each participant, along with totals of each.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Sarah</th>
<th>Marian</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Number of emails about the artwork received</td>
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<td>Number of Art Projects</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Outline of process flow for a qualitative, art-based research on female entrepreneurs.

An initial interview with a participant allows the researcher to gain background information regarding the participant. Additionally, the participants formulate questions regarding these experiences. The participant then uses these questions as guidelines for an art-based project.
The project, and what was learned by the participant, is then discussed with the researcher. This process is then repeated if necessary. Finally, the researcher finds common themes and builds conclusions upon the participants journey through this process.
Emily. After my initial interview with Emily, she was semi-set on journaling for her creative project. She had some art-projects she needed to accomplish for work, so she therefore decided to make journal entries about these projects. We met one week later to discuss her process. She needed more guidance regarding what I was wanting from her. Through our second meeting, we decided that she needed to do a project that was not for work; she needed to do a project that was just for herself, in order to get anything meaningful out of it.

After our second meeting, she had a better idea of what I was expecting and went on to create an embroidery piece (Figure 2). From here, Emily and I remained in contact through email. She would send me photos of her art, along with write ups of what she was learning from it. This process took around two months (three emails were sent to me). Upon the completion of her project, we met an additional three times. During these meetings, we had in-depth conversations regarding her process and what she learned through her art. At the first of our three final meetings, Emily took notes on interesting things we found and went home to reflect on them. These meetings each lasted around one hour. The final meeting encompassed a debriefing of the whole process and was audio recorded. Lastly, she sent me a write up of the key points and findings she had for herself. On average, Emily and I spent around four hours together and she carried out two art-projects, her journaling, and her embroidery.

Sarah. My initial meeting with Sarah lasted around an hour, after which we decided to meet every week at a scheduled time to discuss her process. She decided on doing a sketch for her first project (Figure 3). Our second meeting encompassed the discussion of this sketch and what had motivated her to make it. Following this, we met two more times. Each time, she had a new project to share with me, along with new insights. Her second project was a performance piece, and her third project was a song. Although we attempted to meet at the same time every
week, this did not always happen. Therefore, this process took around six weeks. Each meeting lasted approximately an hour. Our final meeting was audio recorded and discussed the entire process. In the end, Sarah and I spent five hours together, and she collectively completed three projects.

**Marian.** My initial meeting with Marian lasted an hour and a half and was audio recorded. From there, we did not meet again for two months. Her schedule was the busiest of all three participants, so she found it hard to find time for this study. She emailed me once she had time to meet again. By our second meeting, she had yet to complete her art-based project. She needed more guidance regarding what I was looking for and needed deadlines in order to get the project done. A week and a half later, we had our final meeting, and she was able to present the painting she made. The final meeting was audio recorded and incorporated critique of her painting and last remarks regarding this research process. Marian and I spent approximately three hours together, and she completed one art project.

**Analysis**

After the initial interviews with each woman, these interviews were transcribed and analyzed. The analysis included open coding and phenomenological coding (Harper & Thompson, 2012). Open coding included an initial read of the interview, during which I took note of any and all ideas I had regarding the text. In this manner, I was able to reflect on my own perception and become aware of any biases I had. Next, phenomenological coding incorporated line by line analysis. Here I attempted to find common themes in individual participants and between women.

After every session (the initial interview sessions and IMagInE sessions), I recorded everything I learned that day and continued my analysis using the methods outlined above. Upon
completion of the data gathering, I went on to find common themes that occurred throughout the process and joined these ideas together into one concrete analysis. I took what I learned from each woman and began to find both common themes and key differences. As well, I separated what I learned through the art-based process versus through the phenomenological process.

Lastly, my final analysis was done by member checking (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter, 2016). I conveyed my final findings to each participant in person at the end of our final, audio-taped session. In this manner they were able to veto, add or alter my conclusions if they did not feel like it was correct. However, all participants agreed with what I had found.

**Results**

Each participant worked within my study differently, and therefore I will present their findings individually. I present background information regarding their lives, as well as key information I gained through the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the initial interviews. Additionally, I layout the guidelines these women set for their art. Next, I go on to describe their processes through their art-based projects and the outcomes of these works. Lastly, I present their final remarks -mainly, their key takeaways from this experience about themselves and about this research method.

**Emily**

**Background: Initial interview information.** Emily (25 years old) ran a graphic design and clothing company that focused on women empowerment and social justice issues. For Emily, her business came as a surprise, as she did not think it would grow to the magnitude that it did. She simply wanted to send a message and make a change using her art. Due to this, she was not ready for the surplus of business she received. This, in conjunction with having no formal business training, a fallout with her partner, and health issues, eventually led to the
closure of her business. Nonetheless, her impact on the community remains strong and her clothing can still be found on women in the community. In addition to her clothing company, she continues to do custom designing, styling, directing and ironically, some business consultations. Moreover, she is in the process of a new start-up that is going to focus on sustainability and education.

When asked if entrepreneurship had always been on the agenda, she initially said no; however, looking back in her life she realized she had always dreamed of doing something where she would be a leader and independent, such as running her own spa or being a teacher. It was not until she returned home from post-secondary education that it really clicked that she wanted to be an entrepreneur. Upon graduating, she began to work under someone but described herself as a sponge: “Within the first year I had times where I was lost and acted like a sponge. I was so full and needed a way to let everything out and that is how The Tit Store came out. I just needed to create something, and it was successful.” She had a desire to create something for herself and it ended up being a success. So, through her experiences, she realized entrepreneurship was the only thing she wanted.

In our initial interview, she described her main motivation for entrepreneurship. Emily described it as something that she has always identified with. Her grandparents even call her CEO or Miss Presidents. Moreover, she was raised by a single mother who had to put her artwork and passions aside to work in a place she did not enjoy in order to raise three kids. Emily believed seeing her mother in this situation motivated her to do her own thing, and she realized she never wanted to be stuck in a job where she found no joy. Additionally, Emily’s mother told her to “follow what’s inside [her] brain” and to not fall into a pattern where she could not do what she wanted. Yet, a key motivator for Emily was her passions and artwork. She believes this
to be true for a lot of artists. For anyone to see her artwork and benefit from her products, she believed she had to work for herself; therefore, entrepreneurship came out of necessity as well. In the end, she believed her motivations for becoming an entrepreneur were multifaceted; however, she noted her main motivation was her pride and her desire to create.

Lastly, in terms of lack of funding or discrimination due to her gender, she never felt that she had any. If anything, it was her age and lack of assets that hindered her from getting a loan from the bank. One thing she did note is the falsity that it is easy for women to get grants from the government; even though the government prides itself on female entrepreneurial loans, they are nearly impossible to get. Therefore, the only thing that held her back as a woman was the nature of her business. Since her business centered around feminism, she had to be careful about what she put out there due to the different spectrums of feminism. What held her back was the fear of hurting people or damaging her own image. She regrets not starting a dialogue with the women she was careful not to offend instead of simply not acting at all.

To Emily, being a female entrepreneur did not mean having to deal with barriers due to her gender or sexism. In fact, she found hardly any negatives. She focused more on the positives. She noted,

The most positive thing about being a female in business right now, is that it is 2019. Women are on the rise. We are seeing so many women in powerful positions all over the world. Entrepreneurship as a woman means that I have the ability to provide other women with opportunities. Women-run businesses give other women a space to be completely themselves.
Therefore, Emily noticed the importance of female entrepreneurship. Not only in her own life but in society as a whole. She is a first-hand witness to the benefits female entrepreneurship poses on society.

Lastly, Emily and I discussed her views on art-therapy. She said she had never thought about it too much. However, upon reflection art and the therapeutic benefit of art is something her and her family have always practiced on their own. Whenever her family was going through hardships they would always turn to art as a manner of emotional reflection. Emily understands the value of art for mental health and notes that was one of the downfalls of her past business. She neglected to take the time for herself to be creative. Since her business was art-based, creating art became more of a stressor for her; she stopped doing anything creative for herself. She believes that if had she continued creating, even in the smallest of scales, for herself and not for her business, then things may have turned out differently regarding her business.

**IMagine:** Guidelines for art. During our initial session, Emily decided she wanted to reflect on her past business through her art. She wanted to retrospect on where things went wrong and what she could do to better her new endeavors. Additionally, she wanted this art-based project to help her rekindle the joy she had for art. She wanted to get back to a place where art could be her release and aid her mental and physical health.

**Art project.** After our first meeting, Emily seemed eager and excited for this project. Since she was already working on art-based projects for her new business venture she came to the second meeting to discuss those and the journaling she did regarding those. She thought her art for her work could simultaneously be used for this research project. Her main objective centered on creating a new business that would fare better than her last. She was doing plenty of retrospection regarding the failures of her previous business and wanted to learn for them. Yet,
she was not gaining as much from this experience as I had hoped; moreover, she was confused about what I was expecting from her.

From there, I encouraged her to create an art project that was just for herself. Something that was not going to go towards her future business - something she could use as an emotional outlet and did not tie in to her other endeavours. She accepted the challenge and began to consider a new art project. Through her new project, she aimed at reflecting upon her definition of success. She wondered what success meant for herself and her business.

Eventually Emily decided on a project. Using recycled materials, she created multiple hand embroidered art pieces (figure 2). These allowed her to relax her brain and focus her attention on herself. She enjoyed it because it was environmentally sustainable and a project that she was genuinely proud of. She confessed it was the first time in a while where she was able to work on something that did not have to do with business. This project began to mean something greatly to Emily. She found herself wanting to create something perfect and in doing so made many drafts and changes throughout her process. By the end, she had worked 30 plus hours on her art work and was still not done. She told me she would continue working on her creation even after my research was completed and even had a vision for a final photoshoot with all of her completed works. Upon hearing this, I asked if she intended to sell her project. She declared that if someone wanted them, they could have them; however, that was not her intention. She had made these for herself and for no one else.
Figure 2. Metallic Slick. Emily's Embroidery Piece.
Outcomes. Although Emily struggled at the beginning of this research, she eventually benefited tremendously from it. During her artwork creation, Emily learned a few key things about herself and the way she runs her business. The first was patience. You can tell through viewing her artwork (figure 2), that a large amount of time, dedication and detail went into it. Emily explained, “I have spent so many hours working on my art for this study that I have remembered how important it is to be patient with ourselves. Things don’t happen overnight”. This project reminded Emily that hard work does pay off. Especially in business, her new endeavors are not going to form by themselves. Only after many hours of research and planning will her dreams come to fruition.

Second, Emily’s project helped her on her own personal journey. This project allowed her to concentrate on her mental and physical health. She realized that when she felt good on the inside, she was able to flourish on the outside. She said this project, has helped me build such a positive relationship with my brain. I set goals and I found ways to achieve them. I taught myself a new medium. I have been stuck in an artistic block for so long and taking away any expectation from my practice provided me with so much clarity. This process has made me believe in myself again after the closure of my last business.

Lastly, this process helped her define success. She realized that the way she planned for success in her health is the same way she planned for success in her business. For Emily, success, whether it be in her personal life, in her health, or in her business, is holistic. Emily states, Success to me is waking up in the morning and being better than the person I was yesterday. Success is extending my hand to people who need it. Success is sharing knowledge. Success is making changes each day. Success is having the awareness to
know what is dragging me down. Success is finding inspiration in unsuspecting places. Success is listening to the needs of our global community and putting routine into place that works towards fulfilling those needs.

Sarah

**Background: Initial interview information.** Sarah had originally gotten into massage therapy school with the hopes of working on heli-skiing tours in British Columbia. However, after coming to Saskatchewan to finish her program, she got married and stayed in Regina. She originally worked at a clinic, as a massage therapist, for two years. However, her husband believed she should start her own business. They started a massage therapy clinic together in the early 2000’s. She described him as “very entrepreneurial and the driving force of the business”. They were able to expand their business by building a house with a clinic in the lower half and filled it with staff. Since then, the business has been relatively stable and has been able to grow. Sarah later purchased her partner’s shares in the business and has been the sole owner and manager since.

To this, I wondered if she had the desire to be an entrepreneur or if it just happened to her. To this she said, “I’ve always been a free spirit. I did work as a barista and a waitress, but I always made it my own. It was never like I was going to work. I was always free within it and was always like ‘you can’t tell me what to do’”. Over the years she has been able to process this and realized she trusts herself and her impulses. Her intentions have always involved putting others first as long as she has freedom. Sarah expressed, “I am a person who wants to feel freedom in every sense of my life. Freedom reigns kind of”. Therefore, she believes she would have come to entrepreneurship even if she had not been pushed there by someone else.
However, her self-governing nature has had an effect on her marriage, both as life partners and as business partners. Her partner always had a business plan and wanted to grow. He had concrete ideas on how the business should run and she resisted that. She wanted things to slow down and felt as if he was taking her freedom away by pulling her this way or another. She resisted the changes and wanted to do better by her staff because they were not happy. She did not know whether it was going to be a failure or a success, yet she also knew she had to take control of the business. Sarah and her partner have now been separated for five years. At the time of our initial meeting, it was the first time in a while where Sarah was excited about her business. In addition, her kids were getting older and she described herself as being ready to take her business to the next level. She just had to figure out what that was.

She spent a lot of time discussing the idea that some people are natural born givers and others are natural receivers. Neither of which is more advantageous than the other, yet how we are raised might affect the outcome. According to Sarah, both women and men can be born “givers”. However, perhaps in women the giving is more nurtured, whereas in men, being a “receiver” is pushed. She believed this could be why people view male entrepreneurs as greedier, and female entrepreneurs as less determined. However, she did mention that she notices a change in how her and her friends are raising their boys, and therefore we might see a transformation as time progresses.

When asked about her family, Sarah confessed that motherhood changed her. When she was younger, she was indifferent about having kids, and yet now could not picture her life any different. Being a parent affected the way she ran her business; she keeps her children at the top of her list. She confessed that she never wants her business to take away from being a mom stating, “I want to be a good mom, which means I really do have to take my work hat off and I
can’t do two roles in the day or else I’m a grump mom.” Everything she does in her business is to benefit her family.

**IMagInE: Guidelines for Art.** When discussing the questions she had about her life, Sarah’s primary goal was to figure out her next step. She wanted to reflect on her past and figure out if she can take this business to the next level. Mainly, she wondered if she could move the business forward by herself, she needed to regain her independence in her work. She wanted to know “can I do this?” Sarah used that phrase as the guideline for her artwork.

**Art Project.** Upon beginning her artistic journey, Sarah confessed that it took her awhile to figure out her art project. She started multiple projects before she concluded what medium would work best for her. Finally, she started sketching the moon in the middle of a sheet of paper but before she finished, she started writing a number sequence on the paper. She started at the upper left-hand corner and made her way down to the bottom right-hand corner. You can see this illustrated in figure 3. The number sequenced turned out to be associated with one of her old partners. It was a mix of his badge number and her phone number with which she repeated down the page. However, upon further inspection, it became evident that the numbers did not incorporate her phone number until the last quarter of the page.

Upon asking what the number sequence meant to her, she confessed that she thought of this old partner when she needed to find her independence. She described him as a stable figure in her life that was able to give her back some freedom after she split up with her husband. He was the one that gave Sarah her confidence back. Therefore, while thinking about her business and the question “can I do it?” she used him as a light towards finding her confidence within her own endeavours. At this point I asked her how she could feel confident on her own if she still used another man as a crutch. After this inquiry, Sarah had somewhat of a break through. Sarah
realized she was hardly represented in her artwork. From there she wanted her next art project to focus on herself. She did not want to be holding on to the past.

At our next meeting, Sarah confessed that what we discovered the last week with her sketch bothered her, and she wanted to find a different art project but could not find one that suited her. To that she declared that cleaning, going for a walk and general keep up around the house was her art project. It was a way for her to keep on top of things and not become stressed; she was able to process emotions while making her bed. In turn, she ended up having more time to spend on her business and her kids. Essentially, she described her project as a performance piece. Doing mundane tasks allowed for clarity in her mind and allowed her to focus on her goals. Even still, I urged her to make something that was just for herself. She seemed reluctant to take time for herself if it did not immediately benefit others as well.

By our final meeting, Sarah’s project had taken on a completely different form. She decided to create a song, with hand actions, with her sons. Through this she created time with her family, they worked on it for around 20 minutes every couple of days, and through it she was able to process what was important in her life.
Figure 1. Next Step. Sarah's Sketch.
Outcomes. Through this process Sarah came to the realization that her business did not need to grow or become a large corporation. She was happy with where it was and decided her priority was herself and her boys. She was making positive impacts on the community, her family, and her employees, and that is what mattered the most. While making up her song with her sons she envisioned how she wanted her future to pan out; she realized that she did not want to be consumed by her business. For Sarah, her priorities were the emotional relationships with her family and the community. She realized it was the pressure from those around her that made her feel like she had to grow her business— it was never her own desire to want that. Additionally, she was able to make the decisions regarding her personal career. During the formation of her final project, Sarah decided to enroll in classes that would help her with future endeavours; in doing this she would be able to work smarter and not harder.

In the end, Sarah was able to sort through some very difficult decisions in her life through art work. Her art gave her a safe space to think and reflect on her past, as well as gain some introspection on some emotions that may have been holding her back. Even though the work she did was not in a classical medium, she was able to gain great introspection within her work.

Marian

Background: Initial interview information. Marian started her career as a music manager in the early 70s. She originally began working within a company, but then moved on to independently manage bands that were not on the label. After a while however, she decided to quit that job and begin a family. At the same time her brother told her to come to Vancouver where he lived and start a record label. So, at five months pregnant, she moved and started a business and signed artists. At the age of 28 she had a new baby, a new business and a new artist. Yet, in 1987, when she was in her early 30’s, there was a stock market crash and they were
forced to close the label. From there she decided to privately manage her artist for ten years. After that, she started doing independent consulting for the province of Saskatchewan and eventually started an artist run, non-for-profit center in 2011.

For Marian, sexual harassment was just a part of her job. Because both her and her artist were females, therefore they had a double strike against them. They were never taken seriously; Marian had to fight every single day in order to get her artist anything. Dealing with sexual harassment lit the fire under her to be as successful as she could. She can distinctly remember the first time she stood up for herself, and the feeling of immense power it gave her. Since then she has learned to always stand her ground. She associates that self-confidence with growing up in a houseful of men and having to defend against the male domination that was happening in her own household. That taught her to never be afraid to stand up for something she believed in.

IMagInE: Guidelines for art. Marian decided she wanted her artwork to reflect the sexual harassment she endured through her career. Therefore, she used those experiences and how she persevered through it as guidelines for her art-based projects.

Art project. Marian, out of anyone, had the most difficulty when coming up with an art-project. She revealed being most comfortable with spoken word or poetry yet wanted to push herself out of her comfort zone. As well, during this process she had a very busy schedule and believed if she had more time she would have been able to come up with a different project or produced a different outcome. Nonetheless, she was able to produce a colourful painting (figure 4). She reported that her main focus for her project was to try and emulate the harassment and sexism she endured through her career. In her words, she described the “old school boys clubs” and “big swinging dick clubs” she had to fight her way through. She deemed her painting to be
quite literal, almost in a negative connotation. However, I reassured her that it was quite thought provoking.

The basis behind it was simple, but you could take one look at it and feel the emotion flowing through it. She said the little figure with the red nose represented her. She was fighting off an “air raid of dicks” with her positive energy, her music and her clown noses (she had recently taken up clowning). The green represents the earth which she is protecting from these attacks. She said that basically, the world needs a change, and only through positivity and good intentions can we accomplish this.

**Outcomes.** The main emotion Marion emitted through this process is how much she hopes things have changed for women. She hopes that no one ever has to go through what she went through during her career. Moreover, she notes that things are only going to change if we bring issues to light and that we have only just begun uncovering issues. Especially in her industry, there still exist many areas where women are penalized and not taken seriously based on their gender.

When asked how useful she found this research and this type of methodology, she felt like it may not have worked completely for her. She said she has always understood that art is an emotional outlet and renders valuable information about ourselves. However, for her, she did not feel as though she uncovered anything about herself. She noted that perhaps if she had more time, or used a medium she was more comfortable with, there may have been a different outcome.
Figure 4. The Daily Competition. Marian’s Painting.
Commonalities Between Participants

The principal quality my participants shared was the desire to make something for themselves. They all struggled with the idea of working under someone else; in Marion’s case she was fired both times she attempted to do this. Additionally, Emily confessed she would never work under someone if she did not have to. All three women shared this notion of independence and confidence in their work; if they were to work for someone else it would have hindered themselves and their employers.

Additionally, I found they shared a commonality with their sense of community. Whether it be directly through their business or on their own, each of them tried to give back: Emily with her focus on sustainability and social justice issues, Sarah with her volunteering and the collective nature of her business, and Marion with her generous involvement in the local art scenes. Not only did they want to achieve things for themselves, they wanted to make sure they could fulfill the needs of their employees, clients and friends.

One thing that was noted to be different than the general profile of an entrepreneur were my participants’ ideas of what success meant to them. For Sarah, success was not creating this giant business where she would sit at the top. Her main goal was to run a business where everyone succeeded and benefited from the business. For her, the more the business made, the more she wanted to give back to her employees. If Sarah could be happy with her work and was able to be a good mom, then her business was a success. As well, for Emily, when starting her company, greed was not on her list. She simply wanted to create a product people would love, while educating the public. It was never about money to her. We see this as well in Marion. Her priority was her artist, and she just needed money to survive. Additionally, in creating her
community center, Marian’s goal was to create a place that benefited everyone involved rather than just benefiting herself.

**Emma: My own reflections through this process**

Lastly, I decided to document my own journey through this process. At the beginning, I treated this research project as an “assignment” like any of my other undergraduate classes, like a task. It was just one more thing I had to complete before I could graduate. Of course, I wanted to get a good grade. However, I had the notion that I would float through with a good grade because quite frankly I had done that most of my university career. Yet I soon realized this was going to be more work than I have ever put into a class. Do not get me wrong, I did enjoy choosing my topic and being proud of the research I had decided to take on due to my feminist background. Nevertheless, this project felt like a burden at time. I have never felt more stress in my life than when I had a breakdown in my supervisor’s office because I just did not think I could do this. I simply found no joy in what I was doing.

However, around the halfway point of my data collection, I had an epiphany. At the beginning of this research I had the belief that I would take these women on a journey through their own self exploration; I thought I would merely guide them along and they would share with me their own findings and introspections. In reality, these relationships became more reciprocal than I ever could have imagined. I was no longer leading a journey, but rather I was a part of a journey. Through this process, I too had become a participant in my study. I found myself relating to these women and their stories through my own thesis research.

It came to me, that through this project I had started my own ‘business’ in an off-kilter way. Not that I had created a profitable business, but that I had started a project from the ground up in the hopes to make something of it and of myself. My research became my job through
which I could either fail or succeed. However, in terms of success, instead of it being monetary, it was grades, graduating and the ability to impact these women’s lives through my research. Furthermore, I had the opportunity, as a researcher, to broaden our knowledge on female entrepreneurs. Moreover, my thesis literally became my ‘art-based project’. It was once I had this realization that my whole outlook on my process changed. This is where I truly began to understand the nature of feminist research. My participants were no longer participants to me, they were full collaborators in our study.

Due to this, I found a new sense of pride in my study. It was no longer a burden, but rather, it was a responsibility. I was responsible for these women’s lives now; they had shared so much with me and given me so much of their time, I could not waste that. I now owed it to Emily, Sarah and Marion to do well on this project. I needed to make them proud and I needed to be proud of the work I was doing. Upon this, I found myself working harder and even getting emotional thinking and speaking about my project. My only regret was not figuring this out sooner. Consequently, I found a new voice in my writing. It became more personal in an attempt to convey the experiences and emotions I have encountered throughout this process. Moreover, I no longer have the notion of needing to get this done simply to graduate. I mean, of course I want to graduate, but the fact that I have made these strong connections and hopefully helped them in their lives is the biggest success to me.

Discussion

I found that these women were not confined to the stereotypical entrepreneurial norms. They ventured away from the main ideologies that society has come to place on entrepreneurs. I found interesting similarities between these women, and yet they all have had vastly different journeys throughout their careers. Each of these women helped me understand what it means to
be a female entrepreneur. I learned that there is not just one way to become a thriving entrepreneur. There are many paths one could take to achieve success.

All entrepreneurs are innovative, passionate and have the desire to create something (Costin, 2012). This was a common theme found in the experiences of my participants. Each of these women had the desire to be independent in their endeavours. Because this quality was found in my participants along with other entrepreneurs around the world, one could say this is the most important factor when becoming an entrepreneur. This drive is essential in creating one’s own business. This quality is found equality in both female and male entrepreneurs (Hughes, 2017).

The most interesting thing my participants and I brought to light in this study was our ideas of what success is. Both my participants and I found success in creating positive impacts with the people around us above other things in our endeavors. Therefore, perhaps for women, the goal of entrepreneurship and the idea of what success means, is different from a traditional (male) entrepreneur. Perhaps this is a feminine trait that aids female entrepreneurs in their business. This adds to the notions put forward by Oser and Elliott (2015) that women have special qualities that enable them to succeed in business. Qualities that have been looked over because they did not directly impact the monetary growth of a company. This finding aids in redefining societies idea of what it means to be a successful entrepreneur. As well, it could lead to new research on entrepreneurs that allows for a more open interpretation of success in entrepreneurship.

Moreover, it was evident in this study how much society has changed regarding the inclusion of women in the workforce. Albeit, although equality in entirety has not been achieved, it has tremendously progressed in Canada. When Marian started in the music industry, she faced
 sexual harassment every day, was never taken seriously, and had to fight every day for what she wanted. Therefore, it was extremely refreshing to hear that neither Sarah nor Emily had to go through anything of that nature. Although, it is important to note, that perhaps it was the nature of their business’ that allowed them to avoid that overt discrimination. As well, we are lucky in Canada to have a generally progressive society and both Emily and Sarah are privileged to be white women; therefore, I cannot generalize to the whole population.

Due to this study, personally my whole idea of the profile of a female entrepreneur has changed. I started this project expecting to find women that have struggled with bank loans, been forced to take a step back from their careers to take care of their family, and those who struggled to find their seat at the men’s table. When, in reality, I found three very strong, talented women who not only fought through gendered biases, they completely destroyed them. My entire schema on what incorporates a female entrepreneur has been torn down and a new one, a very large and inclusive one, is beginning to form. Upon reflection, I wondered where those ideas of mine came from to begin with. I have always considered myself a strong feminist; therefore, perhaps I expected to find a lot of negative marginalizing issues in these women’s lives. I think the majority of society would have thought that as well. There is a stigma that exists against female entrepreneurs, i.e., it is hard for women to succeed based on past issues and articles implying that men are more successful. Perhaps therefore, there is a lack of female entrepreneurs when compared to men, based on the idea that it is harder for women. When, in reality, three brilliant women have demonstrated to me that female entrepreneurs are not only successful, they are thriving.

I hope notions on the importance of using feminist-based paradigms will spill over into subsequent research of female entrepreneurs. In order to study females, in any sort of setting, I
believe we must use a feminist framework; past methodologies cannot always be generalized to
the whole population. Not only is this type of research beneficial for women, it has also been
shown to be advantageous for other marginalized groups that may not fit into traditional
paradigms (Fonow & Cook, 2005). Therefore, this methodology could be used in several
different populations.

It is theorized that IMagInE would be a useful tool for studying any phenomenological
experience that may be specific to an individual or a group (Smythe & Williams, 2016; Williams
& Smythe, 2018). In terms of the direct method used, I noticed that previous art experience of
the participants did not play a role in how much information they are able to discover about
themselves. Those who had never engaged in an art-based activity were still able to hone into
their creative side and pull subconscious information through it. The main challenge that was
found using this method was the participant’s time availability. Marian had substantially less
time to give compared to the other participants and that showed. She even noted that had she had
more time she would have been able to give more to this project. Moreover, this methodology
would be the most beneficial if the participant was already looking for something new in their
life. This is to say that if someone is ready for a change in their life and ready to embark on a
journey to help them through this they would likely engage strongly in and benefit from this
methodology. Both Emily and Sarah were at this point; they both knew they needed a change to
happen and that their life needed a different path, yet they did not know how to go about it. They
both expressed that I had come along at the perfect time to make it happen. Now this is not to say
that one must be open to a new experience in order for this process to work. Marian was able to
give me vital information through her work. It simply means that those who are ready for a
change might be able to gain more insight or benefit more for themselves.
This leads me to the most important aspect of this study. Not only was I able to learn vital information regarding female entrepreneurs via my woman collaborators, they too learned about themselves. I have never felt as much joy as I did when Sarah and Emily told me I helped them along in their path. Emily reported, “This process has made me believe in myself again after the closure of my last business.” Additionally, Sarah declared that she would not have been able to make these realizations about her life, such as going back to school and changing her mindset about her business, had I not been there to guide her through it. Therefore, to me, the most important part of this study is the impact I was able to have on these women's lives. Simply taking a few moments to talk to an individual and ask them to create some art can do wonders. It reinforces the importance of art and the importance of human connection.

Nonetheless, certain limitations of this study exist. As much as one can try to check their biases, the data was still somewhat based on my own subjectivity. I am the only one who engaged with my participants, therefore only I (with my participants) could decide on conclusions regarding this study. Perhaps another person would have been able to see things that I or my participants could not. Further, we are still in the infancy stage of the chosen methodology. It will not be until after repeated studies using this technique that we can be certain of its process and ability in accurately portraying the participants’ experiences. As well, since this methodology was quite new, it was difficulty for me to explain to my participants what I was expecting. When this methodology is used again, it will be easier to describe the process to the participants using this study as an example. Lastly, all of my participants were Caucasian woman. Therefore, I cannot generalize my findings. It would be important to recreate a similar study that focused on marginalized groups in order to understand female entrepreneurs on a larger scale.
Although society has shined a light on its patriarchal structure, we still have a long way to go to achieve equality of the sexes. The best way for people to become inclusive of those who differ from them is through knowledge. It is by means of research projects such as this that we can begin to comprehend one another and foster acceptance. This study merely scratched the surface of what can be discovered; more studies concerning female entrepreneurs are needed - especially those that embrace non-traditional methodologies. Further research regarding entrepreneurship needs to encompass more marginalized groups, such as women of colour, trans woman and those who identify as non-binary. This study demonstrated the potential of this methodology, not only in a research setting but possibly in a clinical setting. Lastly, to encourage women to enter the business sector we must reinvent the concept of an ‘entrepreneur’-- to allow it to incorporate more feminine traits. In doing so, this might foster greater acceptance for female entrepreneurs.
References


Appendix A

Department of Psychology

University of Regina

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR
RESEARCH IN UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS

We are looking for female volunteers to take part in a study exploring the motivations, barriers and experiences of female entrepreneurs. As a participant in this study, you would be asked to: partake in 4-6 sessions with a researcher that will last aprox. 60 minutes. You will be interviewed and asked to participate in an art-based activity.

Your participation would involve 4-6 sessions, each of which is approximately 60 minutes.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

Emma New
Department of Psychology

at
306-530-8378 or
Email: newemmem@uregina.ca

This study has been reviewed and received approval through the Research Ethics Board, University of Regina.
Appendix B

*Semi-Structured Interview Script*

1. What’s your age?
2. Describe your business.
3. How long have you run this business?
4. Have you always wanted to be an entrepreneur?
5. If not, what did you want to do before?
6. What pushed and/or pulled you into starting a business?
7. What motivated you to become an entrepreneur?
8. If none of the above, why?
9. Do you have a family? Or the desire to start a family?
10. Has this impacted any decisions you have made regarding your business?
11. Have you felt any barriers put on you by society or others regarding your business because you are a woman?
12. Did you experience any sexism during your business start-up?
13. If yes to #11&12, were you able to work through these issues? Or were you able to discuss these issues with someone?
14. Any other notable experiences you’ve encountered regarding your entrepreneurship?
15. Do you practice any art-based activities?
16. Have you ever used art and an emotional outlet? Why or why not?
17. If not, would you be willing to?
18. What do you know about art therapy?
Appendix C

Participant Consent Form

**Project Title:** Understanding the Experiences of Female Entrepreneurs

**Researcher:** Emma New, undergraduate honours student, department of psychology, University of Regina, (306) 530-8378, newemmem@uregina.ca

**Supervisor:** Dr. Jaime Williams, Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Regina, (306) 337-2911, jaime.williams@uregina.ca

**Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research:**

This research is intended to expand on the motivations and barriers that exist regarding female entrepreneurs. Our goal is to take what is already known regarding female small business owners and CEO’s and elaborate on their shared and unique experiences. In other words, to gain knowledge regarding female small business owners that is less systematic and more holistic. This research will be participant led, where the researcher and the participant are aiming to learn more about the participant’s experience. During this mutually exploitative research you will be initially interviewed and in additional meetings you will use art-based practices to uncover more about the your experience as a female entrepreneur. Lastly, this research will look at how these art-based projects may help you with your own realizations and add to the idea that a participant should gain something for their own wellbeing from studies. Any data recorded during this research is for use towards an honours of psychology thesis and any subsequent publications.

**Procedures:**

The researcher will meet with you for 6-8 sessions that will last anywhere from thirty to sixty minutes.

This project will include an initial semi-structured interview where the goal is to learn more about your life and work. This interview will be audio recorded.

The next 4-6 sessions will include four phases. The first will be an opportunity for the you to ask and reflect on your own experience. You may come up with a list of questions you have regarding your experience. Second, the you will begin practicing an art based activity of your choosing. This activity will be aimed at expressing your experience as a female entrepreneur. This will attempt to answer your questions or describe your emotions through a visual or audible manner. Third, you will practice some personal reflection regarding your art and in turn engage in a collaborative discussion with the researcher. Additional meetings may be necessary in order to uncover your complete experience.
A final meeting will take place as a way to reflect on the activities that took place and the things you have learned about yourself and your experience through this process. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the procedures and goals of the study or your role.

**Potential Risks:**

We do not anticipate that emotional stress or harm will occur. The intent of this research is not to explore traumatic or triggering experiences. Moreover, you will be encouraged to only share what you are comfortable with. Nonetheless, if you do begin to feel emotional stress that you are uncomfortable with, then activity will stop and you will be told where they can seek professional counselling. The researcher will have a list of counselling services available. Additionally, the student researcher’s supervisor (Dr. Jaime Williams) is a registered clinical psychologist and she or her colleagues, will be available for consultation with the participant.

**Potential Benefits:**

As a participant in this study you may uncover any unanswered questions you have regarding your experience.

This research may provide important insight into the lives of female entrepreneurs and in turn aid other women dealing with similar situations at achieving their professional goals.

**Confidentiality:**

Confidentiality is dependent on you, the participant and if you agree to share your experiences. There is the potential that given the nature of your small business and documentation of your artwork, that identification is possible. However, efforts will be made to protect your confidentiality such as the use of a pseudonym in the honours paper and changing details about your business.

There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some or none of them. Please put a check mark on the corresponding line(s) that grants me your permission to:

- I grant permission to be audio taped: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- I grant permission to be videotaped: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- I grant permission to have my organization’s name used: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- I wish to remain anonymous: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- The pseudonym I choose for myself is: ____________________________
- You may quote me and use my name: ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
- I grant permission to have my artwork photographed and/or videotaped ___ Yes: ___ No: ___
This consent form has been reviewed:

☐ 2nd Session
☐ 3rd Session
☐ 4th Session
☐ 5th Session
☐ 6th Session

**Storage of Data:**
- All documented interviews will be stored on password encrypted files on a USB drive.
- Following completion of the project, all data will be stored on a password encrypted USB drive and stored in a locked filing cabinet in the office of Dr. Jaime Williams at the University of Regina. No other individuals except that of honours student, Emma New, and supervisor, Dr. Jaime Williams, will have access to the files. Files will be stored for 5 years to the month.
- After 5 years to the month, following the final submission of the Honours thesis project, all files will be electronically deleted.

**Right to Withdraw:**
Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort.
Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position [e.g. employment, class standing, access to services] or how you will be treated.
Should you wish to withdraw, you must orally communicate this with the researcher and your data will be destroyed and omitted from the research.
Your right to withdraw from the study will apply until one month after your final data collection date with the researcher or March 15th, 2019; whichever comes sooner. After this date, it is possible that some results have been analyzed, written up and/or presented and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.

**Follow up:**
To obtain results from the study the researcher, Emma New, will provide the finalized honour’s student thesis paper to the participant via email or paper document if they so desire.
Should you wish further information about this project at a later time, you may contact Emma New or Dr. Jaime Williams.

**Questions or Concerns:**
Contact the researcher using the information at the top of page 1;
This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board on (insert date). Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at (306-585-4775 or research.ethics@uregina.ca). Out of town participants may call collect.

**Continued or On-going Consent:**
At the beginning of each interview, we will review this consent form and any questions you may have will be answered.
Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided; I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my/our questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Researcher’s Signature ___________________________________________  Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.