Working Towards Veteran-Friendly Curricula: A Soldier Artist's Story

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A Thesis
In the Department
Of
Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Master of Arts (Art Education) at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
January 2022

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CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

School of Graduate Studies

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Abstract

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Very little research has been conducted on Soldier Artists, self-taught veterans who use art as an expressive outlet to cope with mild post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Using a NI, case study, and archival research approach (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) the following research examines my father's artistic journey throughout and after his military career, and then considers how are educational institutions are now accommodating veterans in their career transition by offering creative outlets. Through the lens of six theoretical components (Michel, 2004; Hasio, 2010 & 2011; Trofanenko, 2014; Lawton & La Porte, 2014; Armstrong's (2019; Lavergne, 2007) and Martin's oral history prompted by photo elicitation interviews, I have identified five emergent themes and distilled each into clear considerations for the art education field: inclusive creativity; gatekeepers as relationships of trust; withdrawal and sense of (un)belonging: oxymoron; emotional intelligence; and removing the stigma. There is much that we can learn from those who have pledged their lives to serving our country, we only need to be ready to listen to what they have to say.

Acknowledgement

To my dad, mon papa. Who knew that the sketchbooks, rolls of film, and photographs that you gave me 7 years ago would turn into a book about your story? Your openness, generosity of time, and endless support made this thesis what it is. The people who know you know about your generosity, but now others will be able to read about it too. I will forever be humbled that you decided to share your story with the world and me. Your drawings and photographs have always been an inspiration to me, I only hope that they will inspire others now.

To Dr. Anita Sinner, thank you. I remember sitting at my usual spot in your classroom and pitching this idea to you. Two years later, here we are. Your notes, comments, emails, and corrections brought this story to life, truly. Thank you for your continuous support, encouragement, and rigorous work ethic. You have shown me what it means to be an academic researcher. Your pedagogical perspective and methodology are what I value most in teachers and I hope I too can emulate what you do in my own teaching career.

Thank you Dr. Vivek Venkatesh for your allowing me to join your research team and teaching me various ways that academia can be explored. Your trust in my research abilities has helped fueled me in times of doubt.

To my mamie, Danielle Roy, who always took my phone calls and did not hesitate to add her own details to the narratives of our family. Sharing parts of your memory, of your life, and personal archives with me was eye-opening and colored our family pictures in a different light. They now illustrate this thesis for all to see.

Thank you to my “Art Galz”: Shannon Roy, Zoe Compton, and Denise Olivares. I value our friendship that only strengthened whilst we wrote our thesis’s apart during the global

pandemic. Being able to share thoughts, concerns, and successes with you three means a lot to me. I know that this friendship will continue as our careers flourish with time.

Lucas, thank you for listening to my many stories and gently helping me when I experienced writer's block. You and Albert were pillars during the long and quiet pandemic months we spent together. Thank you for patiently reading with me, for supporting me in times of doubt and celebrating every success, no matter the size, along the way. I love you both.

Pour toi papa.

Je suis fière d'être celle à qui tu as confié ton histoire précieuse.

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List of Terms

Veterans/vets/ex-military

The terms “veteran” “vet” and “ex-military” are used interchangeably throughout the thesis. In Canada, the term “veteran” refers to both Canadian Armed Forces and Royal Canadian Mounted Police retired members. In the case if this study, the terms veteran includes retired Canadian Armed Forces members only. “Veteran” “vet” and “ex-military” are employed as synonyms to one another as this is how my father refers to himself and his past career. My study did not investigate current enlisted members, nor any active members; it is solely about the story of one veteran – Martin.

Blue Helmets

Term used to refer to United Nations Peacekeeping soldiers. When a military branch affiliates with the United Nations (UN) and send their troops on peacekeeping missions, soldiers switch out their khaki military helmets to the UN’s iconic light blue helmets.

Soldier Artist

The use of capitalisation for the term Soldier Artist throughout this discourse is to acknowledge and distinguish those who have served within military organisations and cultivated an art practice throughout their years of service. These people have not yet been recognised as being both, a soldier and an artist; this thesis aims to bridge this gap and show that both worlds can and do coexist. As the discussion progresses, I also begin employing the terms “**War Artists**” and then “**Veteran Artists**” to properly refer to those who have cultivated an art practice beyond

their years of service. There is an implied chronology to Soldier/War/Veteran Artists, but this chronology applies to Martin in this case.

PTSD

Abbreviation for post-traumatic stress disorder.

CAF

Abbreviation for Canadian Armed Forces.

VAC

Abbreviation for Veteran Affairs Canada. VAC is a governmental platform through which Canadian veterans can apply for a number of different services, including (but not exclusive to) health, finance, family, and education support.

Brothers-in-arms

Dr. Nina Graeger (2018) researched this notion of "kinship" between members of military organizations and found that there is a gender-gap between the comradery of men and women. This gender-biased term is used to describe relationship between soldiers, and illustrates in its semantic nature, the visible imbalance between both sexes.

TTB

Abbreviation for Tank Test Bed, which is a large, armored vehicle often used in warfare.

R22R

Abbreviation for Royal 22nd Regiment. This is the only French-Canadian regiment in the country.

22s

Colloquial term used to refer to soldiers who belong to the Royal 22nd Regiment, the only Quebecois and French-speaking regiment of the Canadian Armed Forces.

CFAP

Abbreviation for Canadian Forces Artists Program.

Figure 1

Martin in Germany (1989-1993)

Note. 13cm x 9cm. Photograph from Martin's personal archives

1. Working Towards Veteran-Friendly Curricula: A Soldier Artist's Story

Research in art education concerning Canadian veterans is a new area of study, with a notable absence in the literature. To date, I have located a very small amount of peer-reviewed research studies published in art education journals concerning this topic. Notably, I lean on work completed by Dr. Cindy Hasio (2010; 2011), who is an American art education scholar and veteran who initiated a dialogue between the field of art education and the complex realities of ex-military. My goal is to initiate and build a similar discussion in my research capacity with this thesis and bring a Canadian voice into the conversation. The purpose of my research is to explore the case of a veteran, my father, who taught himself art and used this expressive outlet as a way to cope with mild post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). His PTSD surfaced after serving in Bosnia (between 1993-1994 and 2001-2002) for Canada's United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers Mission, also referred to as Blue Helmets (Department of Public Information, 1996). PTSD is evident in various capacities of art education, however, there is no area of inquiry that links military veterans and PTSD *to* art education. Without venturing into the field of therapy, it is important to note that people who suffer from PTSD lie on a broad spectrum (Jung, 2001), and my father identifies as being on the milder side. It should be viewed as something that he lives with, like vivid memories, rather than something that defines him, like a disorder.

Essentially, this thesis will be bringing together two domains: (1) art education, which I represent as an artist, researcher, and teacher; and (2) military veterans, which my father, Martin, represents although he has not extensively engaged in a pedagogic conversation about the topic up until now. Given our familial relationship as father and daughter, this story is written from an insider's perspective. Our strong emotional base of trust sets the conditions needed for sharing

our new roles as participant and researcher (Wilson et al., 2019). In this journey, we co-constructed, co-created, and collaborated throughout the research process.

Background, Positionality, and Bias

While planning this thesis, I wondered: How do veterans and art education tie together pedagogically? What might we learn from veterans and their past experiences to inform our field? I have always been curious about what influences the content of my father's artistic practice, especially since his art pieces document moments when war became manifest in our daily lives. When I started my undergraduate art degree, he was so proud that he gave me his old sketchbooks along with picture boxes, filled with work from when he still served for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). For me, these artifacts have always had strong narratives attached to them, but I never asked him to articulate what, where, how, when, who, and why until now. Receiving his work years ago felt important at the time, but even more so now that I have begun uncovering the myriad of stories that are attached to each sketch and each photograph. Even after all this time, it is still unclear to him why exactly he handed me part of his work. After an installation piece I made during my undergraduate degree (2018), the need to find out more about his autodidactic art practice entangled with war memories became more apparent (See Figure 2). I had always envisioned this artwork as a display of his drawings and photographs, paired with a video montage of the Canadian Blue Helmet's presence in Bosnia. During the video editing process, I became consumed with these men's stories. There was something inexplicably poignant about seeing the Radio Canada news reports and seeing the past in action. In many ways, I think that research for this initial artwork is what sensitized me to my father's deployment.

Figure 2

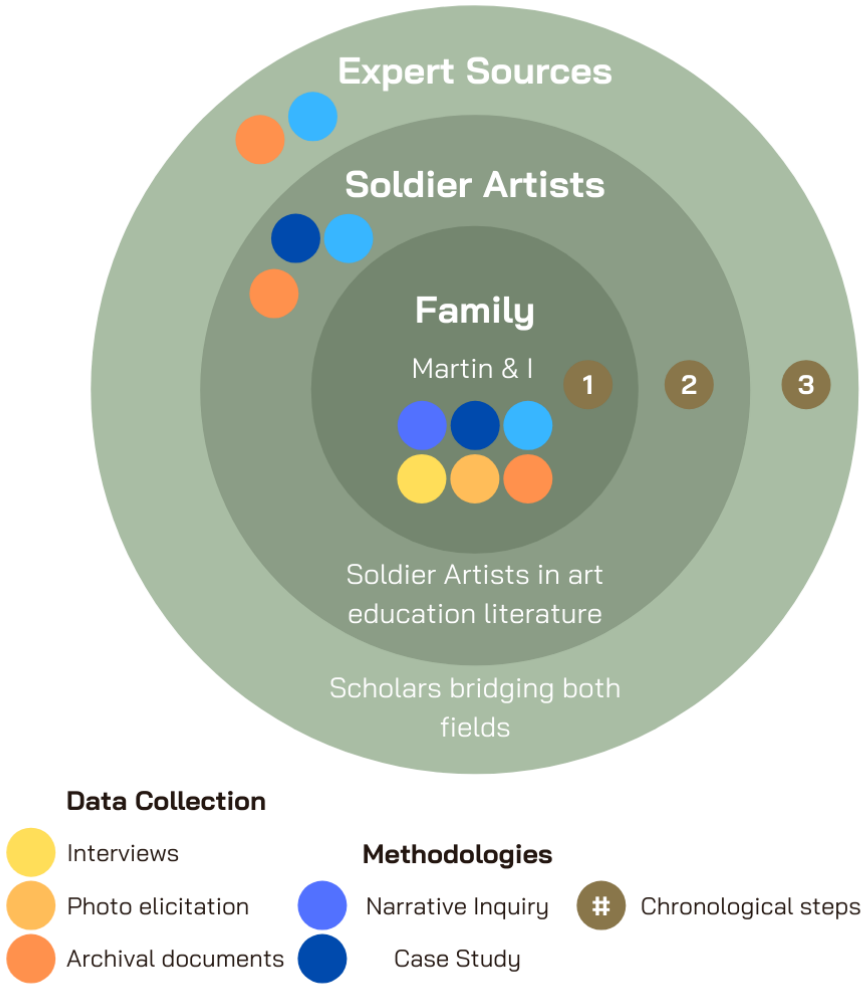
Papa & Sarajevo (Installation)

Note. Photomapping projection on boxes and video montage of the Canadian Blue Helmet invovlment in the 1990s Bosnian conflict.

As a visual learner, I began imagining this thesis visually first and textually second. At first, I saw the research model as a series of three porous concentric rings (See Figure 3), similarly to the way Sinner (2002) structured her a/r/tographic research process. At its centre sat my family, layered with a generational history of military involvement. More specifically, my father and I were, and still are now, at the heart of this study.

Figure 3

Concentric Ring Model

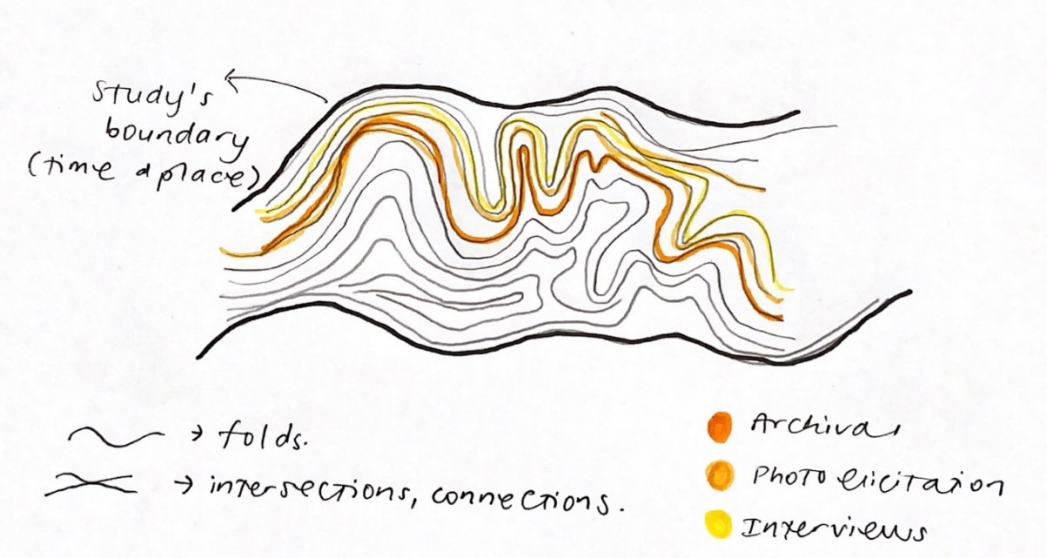


Note. This model was used to visually explain the initial framework for this research.

After having completed this thesis, the way that I visually imagined the research model has shifted once again. It is no longer comprised of concentric rings. Time and stories seem to be more tightly linked to one another, though still spaced by decades and different characters. An image of the Deleuzian fold visual (Deleuze & Strauss, 1991) comes to mind (see Figure 4), where I imagine the narratives of my father and myself painted as thin lines that flow with time. They are at the core of the research model and act as the boundaries of the study. Different stories on the folded lines touch one another and, in doing so, influence one another. At times, layers of the folds communicate with each other, but they can also be unfolded to work as individual stories, individual lines. Though the folds may belong to different decades and/or different characters, their intersections tell stories that connect through time.

Figure 4

Folded Model



Note. This model visually explains how I now imagine the framework for this research.

As described in the Positionality and Bias section of this chapter, there is an epistemological aspect to working with veterans. One must build strong relationships of mutual

trust to open the conversation; the process depends on the investment of time (Hasio, 2010, pp. 48-49). The literature proves that Soldier Artists exist, and they are vitally important and deserve to be listened to (Michel, 2004; Hasio, 2010; 2011). The way these veteran artists process their thoughts, emotions, and past experiences is rich with pedagogical value. My plan is to continue with this research trajectory in the future to ensure that their voices are part of the conversations of art education. After reading about their personal narratives in the available literature, the data collection process in existing research called for more comprehensive sources of information to cross-reference these stories. Field experts include the work of psychologists who specialize in working with veterans, such as Dr. Marvin Westwood at the University of British Columbia (Westwood et al., 2002), art education professor and veteran, Dr. Hasio (2010; 2011); UN Peacekeeping archives (1996); data and research published by Veterans Affair Canada (VAC); and educational institutions that are implementing veteran-friendly curricula. For the purposes of this thesis, I was able to review all these tertiary sources, though not to the depth that I would have wished to. More rigorous research needs to be conducted in the future. These organisations are removed from the immediate lives and PTSD experiences of veterans as they mainly govern military practices. However, their policies and practices have a direct impact on the daily lives of families who are still financially and socially dependent on these same institutions (Manser, 2020). Like Sinner (2002), I plan to "oscillate through each space, [each fold] living these roles sometimes singularly and sometimes concurrently" (p. 3).

PTSD

PTSD is now recognised as a severe challenge to the wellbeing of Canadian veterans (Brunet & Monson, 2014), and the devastating long-term effects that it has on soldiers and their families are of increasing concern (Ray & Vanstone, 2009). For my father, PTSD has come in

waves that have slowly decreased with time. As mentioned earlier, there are different degrees to PTSD (Jung, 2001), and the literature tends to highlight the extreme cases (Brunet & Monson, 2014). Being on the milder side of the spectrum now, my father's "invisible wounds," as described by Lobban (2014), translate as war memories and manifest in the way he lives with these stories (p. 3). Irwin et al. (2014) report that 42.5% of the sampled Canadian veterans were diagnosed with PTSD (p. 175). This staggering statistic not only emphasizes the prevalence of PTSD in the Canadian ex-military, but also highlights the importance of starting a dialogue, especially in the art education field, which remains relatively silent on the issue. Few scholars consider the educational and cathartic effect that artmaking can have beyond art therapy, particularly in terms of self-teaching and lifelong learning (LLL), be that in a community or higher education opportunities for veterans in our field of study (Lobban, 2014). To initiate the conversation, my research project aims to employ a qualitative, interpretive approach with arts-based inquiry in an amalgamation with narrative inquiry (NI) and case-study. Finally, this study, which I view as a participant-researcher collaboration, inquiries into the distinctive educational needs that veterans present for art education by exploring art education programs that exist to support our Canadian veterans as mature learners from a critical lens and suggest ways forward.

Positionality and Bias

Given the unique parameters of this study, I present both the strengths and challenges that this project may pose. Such research is delicate and requires sensitivity to the subculture of military; it also requires an insider's understanding (as a daughter) to navigate the gatekeeping that is potentially in place formally with the military as an organisation and personally among veterans. My understanding of the sub-culture and access to their stories were key to opening this dialogue between art education and veterans. I grounded my study in the father-daughter

relationship and ensure complete transparency of this relationship in my data collection, documenting the struggles as well as the successes that we experienced (Creswell, 2013). As a researcher, I kept a reflective journal, followed verification protocols, and triangulated interpretations and findings through multiple sources to produce a cohesive final written report. Martin verified all aspects of the study at each stage with member checks.

I also acknowledge the privilege that I bring to my study: I am a white Canadian woman, born in the 1990s in Quebec City to French-speaking parents. I grew up in Quebec and the Middle East. My father is a white Canadian man, born in the 1970s in Quebec to French-speaking parents; he grew up in modest rural towns around the province. His military experience and self-taught art discipline allowed the study to take on a veteran's lens on how being deployed in a warzone was mediated through art and education. Our worldviews and lived experiences shaped this research project and how I generated this artful and interpretive study.

Purpose, Relevance, and Motivation

Why is it important for the field of art education to open its doors to the veteran population? At a first glance, they may appear as an odd pairing and perhaps even mutually exclusive. I have observed first-hand the ways in which this is not true and will outline the three main reasons that I believe it is time for the field of art education to focus on veterans.

First, when one thinks about the military, the words that come to mind are war, weapons, authority, logistics, defense, etc. Words like photography, drawing, writing, community, reflection, and creativity do not come to mind. However, the two co-exist; soldiers are multifaceted people who express themselves in a multitude of ways. Some – like my father and Lavergne (2007) and Michel's (2004) participants – create artworks to externalize their military experience. To me, they are Soldier Artists, so they are referred to as such throughout this report.

The very existence of Soldier Artists is the first reason why art education should recognise and open its doors to the veteran population. This study looks at the practice of one man, but it does not investigate the work of neither current enlisted members nor active members.

Second, as outlined earlier in this chapter, very little research has been conducted that links the field of art education to Canadian veterans. The stories of Soldier Artists have not been written about in depth, and few university-level programs have been created to welcome these adult learners who are pursuing higher education. With my thesis, I aim to add to the work of Michel (2004), who conducted a study on U.S. veterans' art who served in Vietnam, the only academic publication that I came across during my literature review that placed importance on the work of Solider Artists. I also strive to add to the precious work of Dr. Westwood. His *Veteran Transition Program* has strong roots in psychology and community building. My goal is to add an art education perspective to the conversation that he has started in Canada.

Finally, the third reason why we should begin brining art education and Canadian ex-military together is because veterans are a unique set of learners with distinct sets of needs, notably organizationally and socially, because of their experiences in the field of war. Such lived experiences are limited in the Canadian society, and it is fair to say that veterans have been marginalised in research, if they are noted at all. The lack of research on who veterans are, mixed with their pedagogical needs, results in us knowing little about how to create learning environments and curricula that benefit them and potentially enable them to thrive as artists. With equity, diversity, and inclusivity redefining the academic landscape, this long-standing omission needs to be addressed.

Painting the Veteran Portrait: Statistics & the CAF

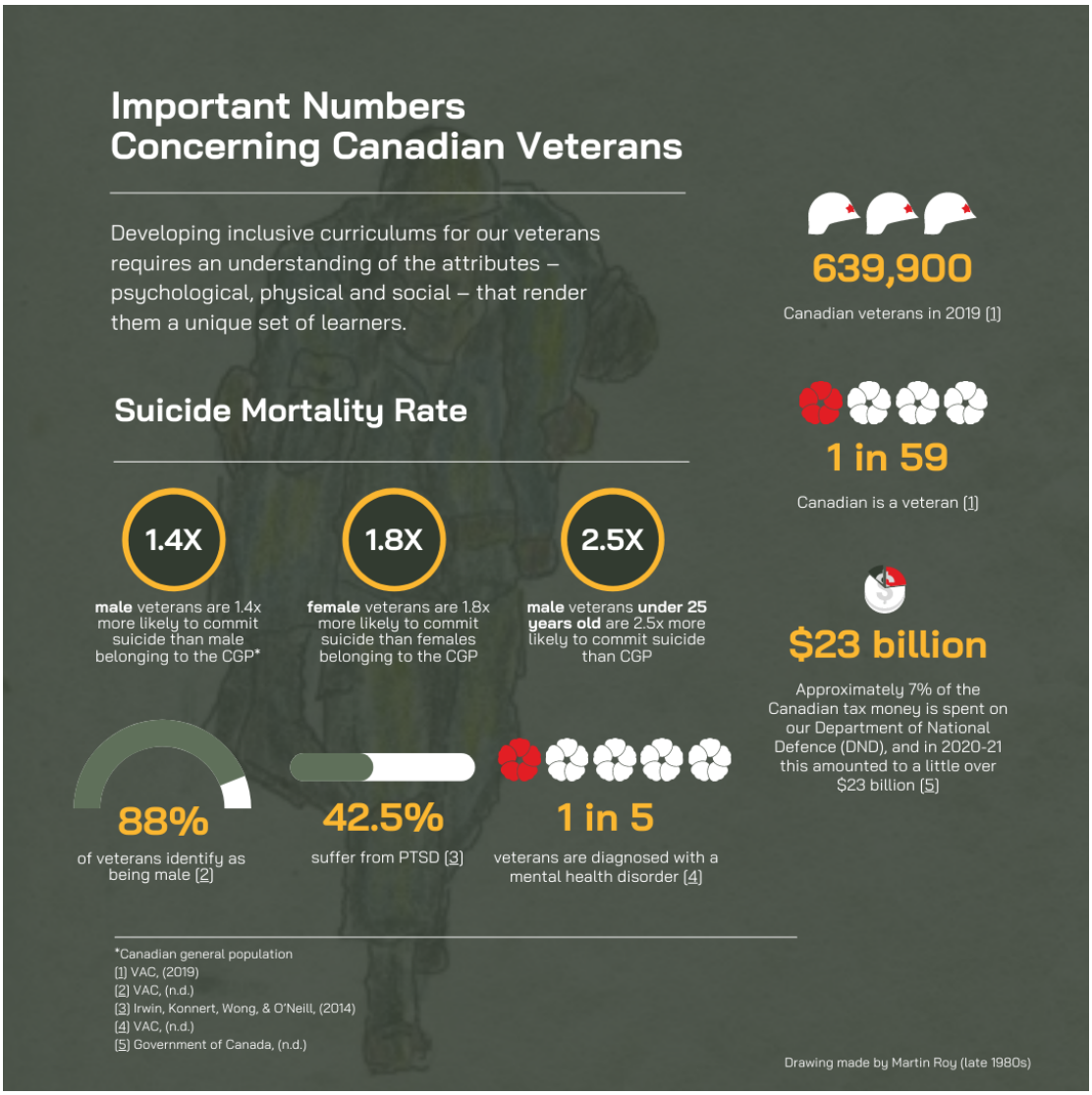
Educators are tasked with building a community of learners where learning is conducive and occurs as naturally as possible (Goddu, 2012). Developing inclusive curriculums for veterans requires an understanding of the attributes – psychological, physical, and social – that render them a unique set of learners. Although this is a qualitative study, I felt that some quantitative data was essential to support the conversation and to our collective understanding of veterans. Before we begin, I must acknowledge that the following statistics were relatively challenging to find. That is, the information is thinly scattered across numerous platforms (websites, scholarly publications, government information pages, etc.). Moreover, the information is presented in arcane terms that can make it laborious for its readers. However, I would like to acknowledge that the VAC database has greatly contributed to this section of my thesis. Their organization has conducted the most amount of research on the veterans, which can all be accessed via the government of Canada's website. The reality of this motivated me to, first, collect data from a variety of sources, ranging from the Canadian Government to academic researchers to present accurate and non-biased information. Second, my aim was to present the data in simple language for all to understand.

Finally, I also constructed an infographic, similarly to that of Manser (2020), which congregates all the quantitative data about veterans who were pertinent to this study (See Figure 5). Research shows that there are 639 900 estimated veterans in Canada (VAC, 2019); they make up 4% of the adult male population and less than 1% of the adult female population (VanTil et al., 2018). In 2020, VAC (2021a) estimated that 88% of veterans are men who are around 60

years of age[1], which shows that the veteran population is aging and should be taken into consideration by pedagogues when creating veteran-friendly curricula.

Figure 5

Veteran Infographic



In 2014, the Government of Canada announced that it would "provide $200 million over six years to address mental health issues among members of the Armed Forces" (CBC News,

[1] I was careful when relying on VAC's statistical data; these numbers include RCMP and CAF veterans. With my focus being on CAF vets, it was difficult to find data that separate the two.

2014). In tandem with this news, the Department of National Defense subsequently announced that an additional $16.7 million would be made available to veterans, active members of the CAF, and their families (CBC News, 2014). When it comes to mental health, about one in five vets are diagnosed with a mental health disorder (VAC, 2021b), like my father:

> In a 2010 study of Veterans who released from service between 1998 and 2007, about 24% reported they had a diagnosed mental health condition such as PTSD, depression, or anxiety. Of those with a diagnosed mental health condition, 95% also had a chronic physical health condition. (VAC, 2021b)

Having retired in 2004, my dad, Martin, falls into this statistic relating to PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Over the course of my life, I have observed the impact that these numbers have in real life on my dad and many of his brothers-in-arms. Some have paid the ultimate price, death, while others sit in wheelchairs or battle invisible traumas. These numbers also piqued my curiosity regarding mental health care. During my reading, I was interested in how Weeks et al. (2017) discussed the stigma that veterans face when seeking mental health care. Weeks and his colleagues (2017) concluded that compared to the general population, military staff are faced with more stigma when it comes to seeking mental health care (p. 713). This confirmed my hypothesis, which stemmed from observing my father's history with psychological care. The very nature of suffering from mental health issues makes it hard to ask for help when help is an unavoidable necessity, hence, it can be a vicious cycle for some. Every veteran's story is different and complicated, which is what makes telling this story complex and multifaceted. To this point, I argue that this complexity should be treated as a new pedagogical challenge for educators with creative potential, not as an insurmountable obstacle.

I then wondered how this stigma in turn impacts the veterans' lives. Being left untreated when one suffers from mental health issues can be devasting in countless ways. When my father retired from the CAF due to medical reasons, the CAF offered him the therapeutic services he required. However, it took years for him to accept the psychological help that the CAF offered. In the following paragraphs, I researched three ways in which mental health issues impact veteran lives: homelessness, social isolation, and suicide. According to Ellis (2019), a member of the Canadian Liberal party and the Chair of the Standing Committee on Veteran Affairs, approximately 3,000-5,000 vets are homeless. This represents a staggering 4.6-7.7% of the vet population (p. 4). Ellis (2019) discusses in further detail the scope of the problem and the ways in which the Canadian government is now looking into this issue more carefully (p. 3).

Martin confirmed that the reality of coming home is stressful for some, but when comorbidities are added to the equation, the balancing act is rendered even harder. Isolation is a major aspect of veterans' realities after their service (Duane, 2019), an aspect that I feel is important to stress. My family and I have observed that my father still uses isolation as a coping mechanism to this day. Duane (2019) explain that,

> Humans are social creatures and pack animals. (…) One challenge with veteran mental health and wellness, however, is that it often drives isolation rather than connection. (…) Dr. Kathleen Jordan and colleagues (1993), found that social isolation among caregivers was one of the most commonly reported problems. Withdrawing from others…family, friends, social networks…increases the sense of burdensomeness described above. (Duane, 2019)

Soldiers are drilled into working as a unit and these intense shared-experiences create a strong sense of comradery, commonly referred to as brothers-in-arms (see List of Terms). Yet, these

men and women who thrive and survive as a ‘pack’ ultimately end up secluding themselves. The word ‘pack’ rings particularly true for those who belong to this subculture and is the subtext of many of my father’s stories. When he talks about his training or being on the battlefield, he always places emphasis on how the success of a mission or platoon lies in the symbiotic relationship of the soldiers. Wars are not won by rogue individuals, or lone wolves; they are won by units and packs. Duane’s words reveal the issue (isolation), the explanation (the harsh reality of coming home), and the solution (rebuilding community).

Veterans may isolate or feel/be misunderstood, and as a result, they do not share their story. To me, Michel’s quote suggests that for some, an experience with war is too big of a story to keep inside, and art can be the vehicle by which some may prefer to externalize their experiences if they are given the opportunity and safe space to do so. As the limited research has indicated, ultimately, some veterans do turn to art and use it as another language to share their story.

At this point in my research, I wonder if isolation and its silence push some to turn to art as a form of quiet expression. The combination of Duane’s (2019) and Michel’s (2004) words show me what our mission as art educators is beginning to resemble: creating spaces where veterans can belong to a community once again. Such spaces, where they can express themselves without the experience of feeling like a group therapy session and without carrying the stigma of therapy, are critical. There is no pressure to share, but there is every opportunity to do so creatively with artmaking. Nevertheless, like Duane (2019), my dad highlights the beneficial aspect that solitude can have. For Martin, solitude looks like drawing away from family, spending extended periods of time in nature, and staying home with his dog. There is a fine line to tread between the dangers of isolating and the benefits of being left alone. Duane (2019)

writes, “we’re not avoiding the crowd because it reminds us of Baghdad. We’re avoiding the crowd because being part of the crowd no longer interests us.” That could have easily also been written by my father. How, then, do educators create environments where veterans build a sense of community but are also left alone? This is a key question that I added to expand my inquiry.

The third and final impact that mental health issues can have on ex-military that I will discuss is suicide. VAC (2017) recently conducted research on veteran mortality rates and found that male vets were 1.4 times more likely to commit suicide than the Canadian general population (Simkus et al., 2017, p. 1). The number is higher for women veterans, who are 1.8 more likely to commit suicide than the Canadian general population (p. 1). I strongly believe that veterans are more than the statistics presented in this section, but I chose to include this information in my thesis because it is important for us as educators to begin to understand who these men and women are. They are adult learners who carry their noble career choice with them and, as a result, they are full of stories to inform creative practices in new ways. We must educate ourselves on the challenges that they face and have faced to find ways to mindfully begin including them into our curricula.

We can conclude that, on average, Canadian veterans are most likely to be men who are more at risk of homelessness and suffering from mental health issues, such as isolation, etc. Knowing these numbers and demographical data is essential when one wants to understand the people who belong to this subculture, especially when one wants to eventually build meaningful and mindful curricula that meets the needs of these mature adult learners (see Figure 5).

Drawing Analogies: The United States and Canadian Military

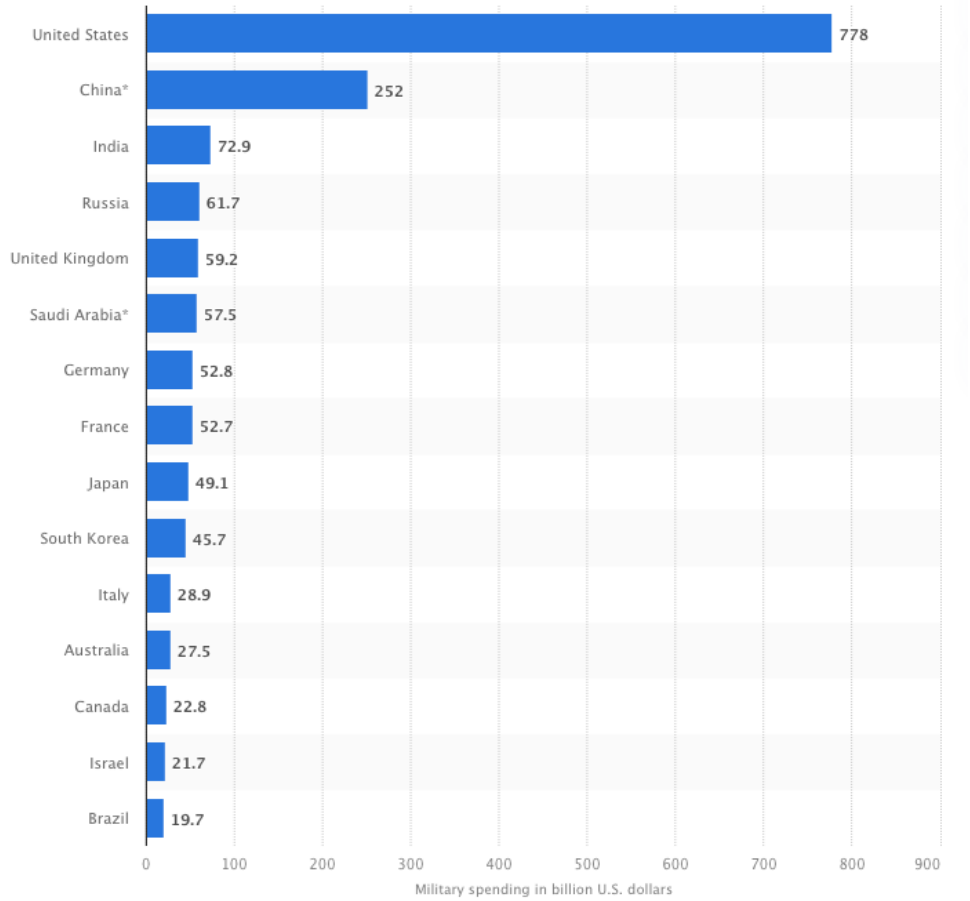
A large amount of research has been conducted on the United States (U.S.) military compared to the Canadian military. As such, I have noticed that Ellis (2019) often compares the

two to draw out analogies in the Canadian context. Initially, it makes sense to do so when one considers the political influence that these governments have on one another. Logic also dictates that more funding equals to more research, and so, it comes to no surprise that more research has been conducted on the U.S. military. In this paragraph, I outline why I believe that it is unproductive at times to compare the U.S. and the CAF, and why it is crucial that we separate the two in some cases.

Canadian numbers are very small compared to our most important ally's fiscal and military reality. Canadian military force is considerably smaller than that of the U.S. (See Figure 6). According to Ellis (2019), there are 30 times more veterans in the U.S. (i.e., 21 million compared to 650 000 in Canada). Also, the U.S. military has an annual budget of over $770 billion compared to Canada's $23 billion budget. To put this into perspective, the U.S. military budget alone is equal to the highest military spending of eleven countries combined (Szmigiera, 2021). Ellis (2019) supports my position by writing, "[g]iven the data currently available, it is impossible to determine whether the problem is proportionally more serious in Canada than in the United States." (p. 6). With this in mind, I have taken special care with this thesis not to compare Canadian military data with U.S. military data since their proportional relationship remains undetermined.

Figure 6

Annual Military Budget by Country



Note. Szimigera's (2021) table helps illustrate our most important ally, the United States', annual military budget in comparison with the other top military spending countries in the world. This table also helps compare the vast difference between the Canadian and the American budget.

Research Questions

Using a NI, case study, and archival research approach (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), I address the following research questions: What role does a creative practice play in a veteran's response to his military service and PTSD? How do autodidactic art practices play an educative role for military veterans? Does the field of art education facilitate LLL for veterans? How are educational institutions now accommodating veterans in their career transition by offering creative outlets? How then, do educators create environments where veterans build a sense of community but are also left alone?

2. Theory: Literature Review

This chapter outlines who Canadian veterans are and the importance of integrating them into the field of art education. To frame this study, I examined six theoretical components. Each component is described individually, and all are interlaced as they inform one another.

Problem Statement and Justification

As stated in the previous chapter, it was estimated that the Canadian veteran population reached 639,900 in 2019, of which 88% are male (VAC, 2021b). To reiterate the statistics that were presented earlier, 42.5% of the Canadian sampled veterans were diagnosed with PTSD (Irwin et al., 2014, p. 175) (See Figure 5). Without wanting to generalize who the Canadian veterans are based on these numbers alone – as they all have individually rich and diverse narratives – some similarities can be drawn to help to understand the individuals who belong to this subculture. In this section, I support veteran Duane's (2019) personal essay on isolation in tandem with Wilson and colleagues' (2019) study. During my research, I have found that one of the central points of the veteran subculture is isolation. Although Wilson and her colleagues' study was based in the United Kingdom, they also found that many veterans experience social isolation and loneliness when transitioning back home.

Having experienced traumatic incidents during their service, most veterans find discussing the reality of their service difficult with outsiders who cannot relate to their stories because of the unique parameters of military service that are not shared in the wider society. Therefore, keeping to themselves is a consequence of service (Wilson et al, 2014; Lobban, 2014, pp.5-6; Duane, 2019). Additionally, Lobban's (2014) study has shown that PTSD affects the brain's morphology and causes individuals to enter a fight, flight, or freeze emotional state that can in turn affect their speech, cognition, and memory skills (pp. 5-6). Most live with this

heightened anxiety and eventually enter a state of avoidance (p. 5). On the topic of avoidance, Duane (2019) wrote, “isolation became a way of avoiding unpleasant physical and emotional responses. Isolation also serves to help veterans avoid the stigma of mental health concerns.” This statement also supports Weeks and colleagues’ (2017) study on stigmatization.

For most of people who belong to the general population, it is impossible to fully comprehend the emotional reality that veterans face before, during, and after service. We cannot empathize, but we can sympathize. By practicing sympathy and staying open minded, we can see that social critique and miscomprehension that veterans face can be confronting and demotivating factors that prevent them from partaking in activities with the general population. The culmination of these facts also demonstrates just how challenging it can be for outsiders to gain trust and access this community. Dr. Westwood, the founder of the Veteran Transition Network (VTN) at UBC, centers his entire program around this very fact. Westwood’s (2002) program employs vets to help other vets to navigate higher education. There is a sense of trust which is essential to the process. In this way, Westwood’s (2002) program reemphasizes the importance of the familial relationship to the main participant.

Having now gained access to a member of this community, I felt the importance of bridging the gap between the field of art education and this man’s experience. I believe that as creative instructors, we are often intrinsically motivated to find outside-the-box ways to cater to students. In this case, our students take the shape of Solider Artists, vets who want to pursue their education, make art, and learn, all the while wrestling with a heightened state of anxiety. Those with teaching experience know that lingering heightened states of anxiety in students often manifest as (though not exclusive to) frustration, impatience, anger, silence, and inability to meet deadlines in classrooms. As educators, we must be mindful of this.

My literature review addresses six components that are interlaced throughout this section. I begin by discussing the historical context of art and war, more specifically focusing on soldiers as artists (Michel, 2004). Next, I review the work of art education professor and veteran Hasio (2010; 2011), who began the art education/veteran conversation. I also address art therapy and how I negotiated between the boundaries of my study and this discipline. Next, I delve into public pedagogies and LLL, including self-study, and how they pertain to this research project (Trofanenko, 2014; Lawton & La Porte, 2014). Then I argue how Armstrong's (2019) arts-based research framework on PTSD and intergenerational transference is applicable to my thesis and research plan. I also explore Armstrong's (2019) 'Method Writing' exercise as a creative framework for my personal reflections. Finally, I present the work of Lavergne (2007), a Quebecois veteran who fought in Bosnia at the same time as my father. Lavergne's (2007) illustration book and testimony in Radio Canada's (2019) documentary, *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre*[2], sparked this thesis idea.

Soldiers as Artists

The CAF have an important history of War Artists. According to Tippett and McIntosh (2020) and the Government of Canada's archives, the CAF has initiated four major art programs since the First World War.

> Canada's first official war art program, the Canadian War Memorials Fund (1916–19), was one of the first government-sponsored programs of its kind. It was followed by the Canadian War Art Program (1943–46) during the Second World War. The Canadian Armed Forces Civilian Artists Program (1968–95) and the Canadian Forces Artists Program (2001–present) (…). (Tippett & McIntosh, 2020)

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[2] French title translated to English: "Coming to Peace with War."

According to Tippett and McIntosh (2020), prominent artists have created works depicting warzones and military life, including Group of Seven co-founders and Molly Lamb Bobak 1920-2014 (see Figure 9):

- A. Y. Jackson, 1882-1974, (see Figure 7);
- F. H. Varley, 1881-1969, (see Figure 8);
- L. S. Harris, 1885-1970; ~~and later,~~

Indeed, Bobak was the first female artist to become a War Artist and to be sent overseas during WWII (Lumsden & McIntosh, 2020).

Figure 7

Ypres by A. Y. Jackson (1917)

Note. Oil on academy board, 21.6 x 26.8 cm. (Dale, 2018)

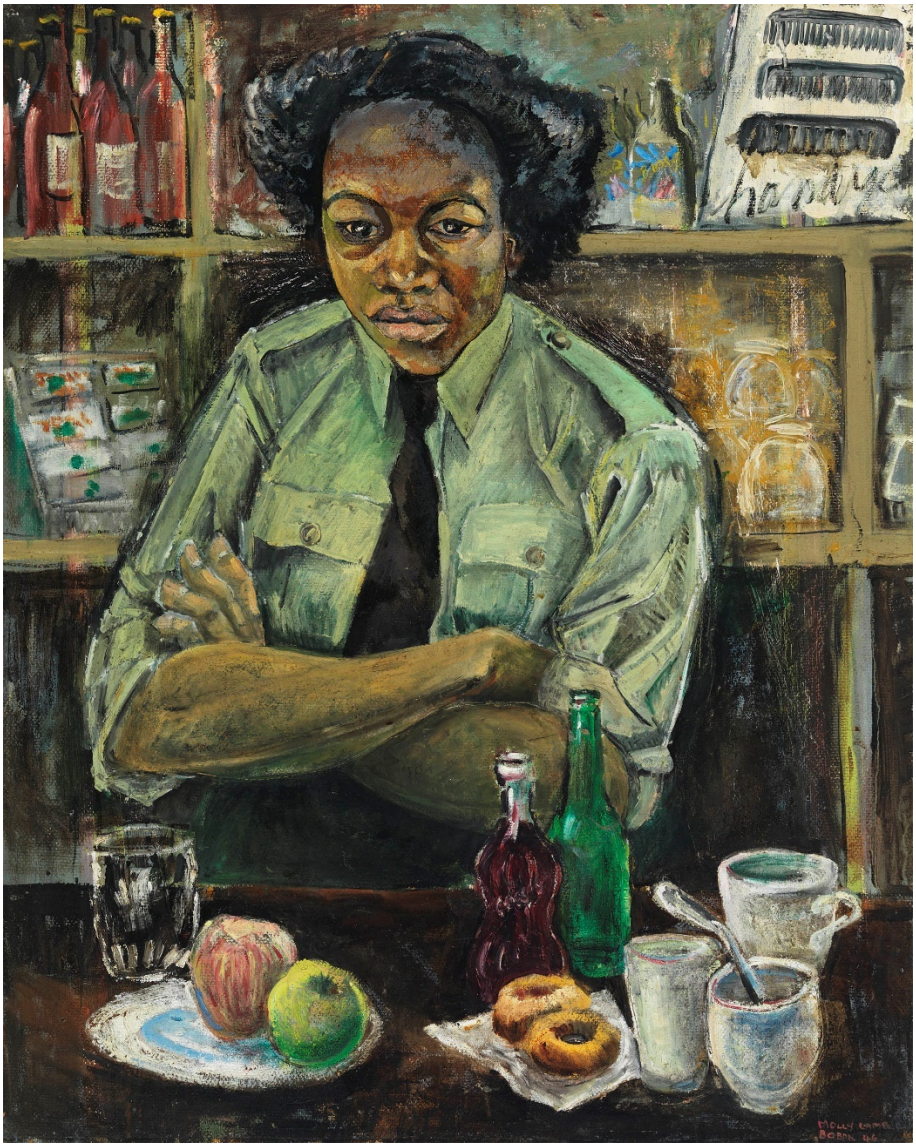
Figure 8

For What? by Varley, F. H. (1918-1919)

Note. Oil on canvas, 147.4 x 180.6 cm. (Université du Québec à Montréal, n.d.)

Figure 9

Bobak, M. (1946). Private Roy, Canadian Women's Army Corps.



Note. Oil on Masonite, 76.4 x 60.8. The War Museum's gallery on Bobak featured on interesting piece of writing, it said, "Molly Lamb Bobak sketched canteen worker Eva May Roy in Halifax, Nova Scotia." I find the fact that this woman and I practically have the same name to be an extraordinary coincidence. Of this painting, Bobak said, "The painting has caught her at a point in time; she'll always be young, and she'll always be Private Roy to those who see her."

Since their inception, these programs have shifted and morphed into the current Canadian Forces Artists Program (CFAP) that we know today. However, what remains clear is that it is civilian artists who participate in the CAFP, not soldiers. This is an important remark to make as there is a clear distinction between civilian artists who were sent to warzones and Soldier Artists who react to their career and environment by artmaking. Little information can be found on why that is, and further research is needed on the matter. It is also interesting to note that these programs initially included Solider Artists, such as A. Y. Jackson (Davis, 2015). To me, the meaning of War Artists and Soldier Artists is highly synonymous with one another. It is when the War Artist is not a soldier, or ex-soldier, that a distinction must be made between the two terms. Martin and I both find that Soldier Artists and even Veteran Artists (further discussed under section 2.3) would be prime candidates for the Call to Artists today since they have witnessed first-hand what happens on military bases and battlefields. As this research evolves, I would be interested to survey whether veteran Soldier Artists would want to submit their work to the CAFP.

In the words of Michel (2004), "war is inherently stressful and exacts a toll to all involved. (…) When one is exposed to the extremes of war, to the killing, suffering, and anxiety, then one emerges as a changed person" (p. 194). As witnesses of atrocities, veterans are a unique group with specific needs as learners. As stated by Morgan et al. (2005), "veterans are a largely and highly selected group with an increasingly recognized cultural identity (…) [They] represent a distinct and special population" (p. 1573). I side with these researchers and agree that veterans have their own sets of needs based on my personal knowledge as an insider. Naturally, some turned to artmaking to react to such vivid experiences, and as art educators, we know that some encounters simply cannot be expressed with words. Michel's publication is one of the rare papers

that investigates veterans' art and their reactions, more specifically, the ones who documented their time in the Vietnamese warzone. His rare topical study poses the question (but is not limited to): how do veterans' unique art practices inform the field of art education? The researcher includes photographs of artworks made by his participants and speaks to those works, at times, by analyzing them based on the information that he collected from the artists and, at other times, by writing rich narratives surrounding the artists' war memories (pp. 200-202). By extension, this literature inspired the structure of my thesis in a similar way through photo elicitation.

Michel's (2004) context, however, is very different than that of my study in terms of historical context and theatre among other attributes. For instance, the Vietnam War calls for us to question the sociocultural context in which people were deployed. It was conscription that forced Americans to join the fight in Vietnam (Vietnam war duration:1955-1975; U.S. military involvement: 1964-1973), which is different from the reasoning that pushed Canadian soldiers to join the UN Peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina twenty years later (1992-1995). Therefore, it is essential to outline the sociocultural context which acted as a motivating factor for Canadians to enlist for this deployment. I have reviewed this in further detail later in the chapter under the "A Quebecois Documentary & Illustration Book" section. One thing is clear: when researching the historical context of art and art education, the American perspective – as opposed to the Canadian perspective – has been explored in more depth. This, combined with the fact that the most recent research that was conducted on the art of American vets was published almost twenty years ago, highlighted the importance of this topic to me and provided me with the impetus for this study.

Withal, the way Michel's (2004) results pertain to my research plan is twofold: first, artworks can be "*literal* or *symbolic"* in nature (p. 194); and second, the artist's experience of art education informs their practice to some extent, and it is the only example of such research available (pp. 193, 195). I lean on Michel's categorization of artwork in the data analysis chapter as a way to discuss my father's artwork. The idea that artworks can be "*literal* or *symbolic*" refers to the veteran's intent when making the piece. Literal artworks, Michel explained, have a narrative nature that also functions bilaterally as a historical document. He confirms this result with one of his participant's testimonies, writing that "[the participating artist] believes that through his art he can help reveal what happened there" (p. 197). Symbolic artworks, on the other hand, reveal the artist's emotions towards the depicted situation and "add[s] deeper mental and emotional layers of experience" to the piece (p. 194). In this way, the need to assimilate one's experience with war through visual means can manifest in a vast number of ways. It can take on an emotional lens or be on the other side of the spectrum and become archival. This becomes an interesting way to look at and understand veteran art because it helps to inform the process that these artists undergo when creating. This constrained way of characterizing their work may need to be expanded in the future as more veteran art comes to light, but here, it serves as a conversation starter, an entry point.

Finally, I find the concepts of considering the experience of Solider Artists with art education training and how it potentially informs their practice to have pedagogical value. Martin certainly falls into this category. His early interest in art led him to enroll in an art program at his local vocational college before being called-up by the CAF. In the fourth chapter, I further explain how this influenced his art practice during his military career. The methodology of Michel's (2004) study facilitates a well-rounded discussion because having numerous

participants allowed him to compare stories. He was able to observe that the varying experiences of his participants with an art background "reveal[ed] diverse predispositions to art" (p. 193). It seems logical that those who have an art background are "predisposed" to the discipline, but it is important to note when building curricula for veterans. Educators must be mindful of the fact that some will come to classes to experiment, but others will come precisely because they have experience with the practice. Michel later notes that "[t]here is not a single factor, including an early interest in art, which generalizes to all respondents. It appears that many other elements, in addition to innate ability, were important to the development and expression of participants' creative potential." (p. 193). With this line of thought, I am reminded of the adult education theory – another field of research that will help to demystify who veterans are as learners.

Veteran Art and Education

Hasio (2010; 2011) offers the only peer-reviewed research papers that I have found that bridge together the field of art education and veteran subculture. Both of Hasio's (2010; 2011) papers synthesize her experience with a group of ex-military men who regularly engaged in an arts and crafts community activity at a local hospital where she volunteered (2010, p. 75; 2011, p. 48). Her participants are Soldier Artists who have shifted to becoming Veteran Artists, just like Martin. I found a plethora of similarities between her work and mine. We are both art educators who have personal connections to the veteran subculture and agree that this important positionality is key to gaining trust into these very personal stories. We have both reacted to our participants' artwork and testimonies by making art of our own (2011, p. 53). In her case, sharing her piece helped to strengthen the bond with her participant more deeply. We are both women, who are younger than our participants, navigating a male dominated world. These are just a

handful of ways that I was able to connect to her research and, simultaneously, establish a strong base for my work. Hasio (2011) wrote,

> my identity as a veteran helped me listen to their stories; some of them would not share any of their stories with anyone who had not been in the military because they had felt they would not understand what a veteran experienced. It was not that easy at first, though; I had to slowly build trust during the first several months during my 4-year period volunteering with veterans because I was a younger female veteran. (p. 48)

This statement exemplifies the careful work that art education researchers must begin to undertake. Leaning on Hasio's words, I argue that there is an ethnographic component to this branch of research as one must invest a lot of time in order to gain trust and, later, co-construct knowledge and understanding. In my case, however, given the time constraints of thesis work, I was lucky to have already established a strong bedrock of trust with the main participant, my father. As such, I would also argue that once this ethnographical foundation is set, this work calls for a blend of several other methodologies, including arts-based research, NI, and case study. Hasio's (2010) words further emphasize that the personal link that researchers must have to the veteran subculture is a non-negotiable criterion (p. 77).

Both of her articles are similar in nature and complement one another. The first paper (2010) focuses on the power that community art programs with marginalized communities (veterans) can have on both pre-service teachers and our field. It makes a strong argument for craft-making being a catalyst for conversation, which ultimately also strengthens reflective thinking and relational skills (pp. 76-77). Hasio (2010; 2011) also carefully explains and unpacks her ethnographic-like methodology and data collection process (i.e., in-depth interviews, photo elicitation discussions, observation, etc.), which spanned across four years (2007-2011, p. 48).

There are several testimonies that were included in the piece, each of which highlights just how cathartic and empowering art has been to her participants (pp. 80, 82). The second paper (Hasio, 2011) complements the first article by delving deeper into these individuals' narratives, which is why I think this article captivated me the most. My own research framework also reinforces this sentiment as I opted for NI as my main methodology because I find human biographical experiences deeply compelling and educational (Creswell, 2013). To me, it is the natural process by which we live, interpret, relay, and remember information (Clandinin, 2006). It is at the core of my teaching philosophy.

A strong argument for the value of crafts in veteran community art programs is made in both articles. She has found that some individuals enjoy getting lost in the building process that some crafts offer (e.g., Daniel's wooden boats (2010, p. 80 & 2011, p. 52) because the task of assemblage helps them to assuage their (at times) negative thoughts. What I gather is that rather than being consumed by having to create something from scratch, some enjoy the step-by-step nature of craft kits because it gives them the mental space to create a final product while, at the same time, socially connecting with others. Hasio observed that this in turn gives space to "reciprocal learning relationships" where veterans interact and share their personal stories with those who they feel safe (p. 52). As such, I agree with Hasio's conclusion that craft kits are valuable creative tools to have in veteran art programs. On the other hand, scholars like Lawton and Laporte (2013) have strongly disagreed about the value of craft kits in community art programs (p. 312). They explain that kits are frowned upon in the art education community because they can be constraining and stifle creativity (p. 312). I find their inclusion of Barret's (1993) quote particularly arguable in this context: "[c]rafts in this sense are merely exercises in technique and production rather than art experiences which result in work expressive of the

individual" (p. 134; Lawton & LaPorte, 2012, p. 313). To me, this blanket statement is dismissive. When applied to the veteran context, it even diminishes the work of some veterans as being of lower quality and skill (p. 313). Hasio's work proves Barret's statement to be wrong; Mike's leather work, for example, takes hours of work, and it is a skill that he had, at the time, spent nine years perfecting (2011, p. 50). I find the "Is craft art?" argument to be redundant here given the invaluable pedagogical and social outcome that it has for people who belong to this subculture. This said, later Lawton and La Porte wrote, "Art education can be a vehicle to share the unheard stories and traditions from our communities" (p. 314). I whole-heartedly agree with this; perhaps, there is a middle ground to be reached here, one where both arts and crafts can co-exist and be viable options for veterans, who partake in art programs and share their stories in the best way that they see fit.

Finally, I see an overarching theme emerging in Hasio's writing. First, it is natural that Soldier Artists become Veteran Artists after their military service. Veterans' practice, much like their life, morphs according to their life experience. Second, several Veteran Artists explain in various capacities that making art (or crafts) helps them to escape from their thoughts and living environments (2011, pp. 50-51). The combination of working with their hands and engaging in conversation with peers helps to sooth a part of them (2011, p. 49). It is this intangible atmosphere of making and creating that motivates them to come back time and time again. This fact reinforces the idea that more spaces like these need to exist, especially in Canada.

Art Education and Art Therapy Boundaries

At this point, the terms War Artists, Soldier Artists, and Veteran Artists have been introduced and have the potential to be placed on an amorphous pedagogical timeline. In the case of this research, it all begins with Soldier/War Artists who have made art to depict or react to

their service. Then, as time progresses and some leave the army, they put on a new hat: the hat of being Veteran Artists. Some put on this new hat and leave behind their old Soldier Artist one; whilst other put on this hat having never made art during their service. A plethora of possibilities are true, but the life-long pedagogic journey only goes one way, and we are reminded once again of the folded model.

It is important to address now the boundaries of my study to those of art therapy. As alluded to in the introduction, this type of research can rapidly venture into the realm of therapeutic art practices, like Hasio (2010; 2011). This is not my field of expertise nor my interest. As art therapist Malchiodi (2011) explained, "art is a powerful tool in communication. It is now widely acknowledged that art expression is a way to visually communicate thoughts and feelings that are too painful to put into words." (p. 4). This statement, to me, is highly reminiscent of veterans' art, especially those made during deployment in warzones and those made by veterans reflecting on their deployment. It is important to make this observation now, not only to acknowledge the link to therapeutic theory and practices, but to begin to steer away from this viewpoint. My aim is to understand how a veteran's art practice can help provide insight into how people belonging to this sub-culture are learners with unique sets of needs. It is less about interpreting how cathartic the actual artmaking process was at the time of their service. Therein lies the boundary between my study and art therapy. My overarching goal is to listen to veterans' testimonies reacting to past work, images, and military memorabilia, in order to understand how to provide them with meaningful and educative art making opportunities within our current curriculums, and to eventually recreate a sense of community; something that was so present during their service but has often alienated some as they left the military behind (Wilson et al., 2019).

Briefly looking back at Michel (2004), the researcher made a vital discovery when discussing Mann's relationship to his own artmaking (pp. 200-203), writing that this participant "only paints when he is deeply depressed. (…) [He] is not interested in selling his work. He needs to have it hanging on the walls all around him so he can study and learn from it" (p. 202). Similarly to my father, Mann has also only shared his work with others because he believes that they can "be an emotional catalyst for others and an agent of healing" (p. 202). Again, looking at this from an educational standpoint rather than an art therapy one, this is vital to the field because it shows fundamental ways of understanding pedagogy, and then structuring curriculum for this particular population who experienced war, and others who suffer from trauma related to war. It places importance on emotion, the sense of belonging, creating a sense of community, and above all, spaces for them to connect and learn from one another. This last point also echoes throughout Hasio's research (2010; 2011). In this way, veteran art also brings public pedagogy (Trofanenko, 2014) into the conversation.

Public Pedagogies, Lifelong Learning & Self-Taught Creative Practices

Public Pedagogy

Borrowing Brenda Trofanenko's (2014) words,

> Although war is not the only past event that evokes emotions, it can serve as a basis for analyzing how emotions and knowledge intersect to define a nation, to advance patriotism, to form a collective national identity and sense of belonging (p. 22).

In short, I agree with her that bringing the emotional side of war to the conversation can serve as a form of public pedagogy. She discusses how war is already present in the current curriculum, but it is often simplified as distant past events that must be understood chronologically, politically, and ideologically (p. 23). A vital piece of the conversation is missing, one that could

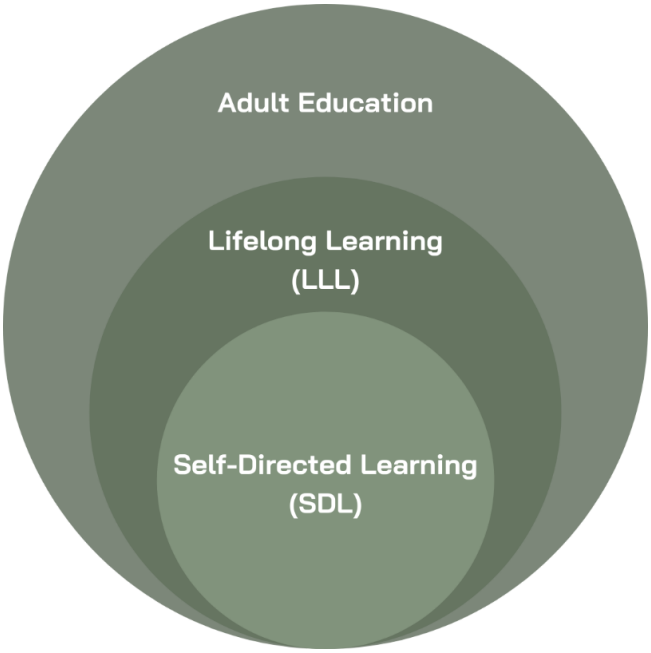
"form a collective national identity and sense of belonging" (p. 22). Such a conversation, I believe, would have the potential to educate the public on the realm of conflict beyond stereotypes. I would argue that Trofanenko's (2014) call for more empathic conversations links to Venkatesh's (2021) research which demonstrates the need our current society has for engaging in meaningful pluralistic dialogues and building awareness. Venkatesh's (2021) multimodal work, developed collaboratively with a myriad of scholars, emphasizes how to counter hate and foster resilience. It's the fostering notion, in particular, that reminds me the most of my father's journey with PTSD since retiring from the military. I find that with the broader social conversation surrounding the importance of taking care of one's mental health gaining momentum in Canada in recent years, understanding how our emotional and affective intelligence impact our learning and collective identity is part of the process that is implicated in my research (Trofanenko, 2014, p. 23). Could engaging in art be the way to begin engaging in these conversations? Trofanenko (2014) wrote, "[t]he purpose (…) is to highlight how emotional (and affective) responses to war can work as a starting point to developing insight into teaching and learning about past events represented in public educational institutions beyond the school classroom" (p. 23). To me, that is the power that veteran testimonies and artwork can have on a community and eventually on a national level. Trofanenko (2014) continues to focus on "emotional appeal" which has been used in the past by art and educational institutions to teach and learn; in turn, I am interested in researching how this way of processing information relates to how we view, treat, and accommodate veterans today, in the field of art education. Again, the only art education scholar who has truly addressed this, is Dr. Cindy Hasio (2010; 2011). Beside her, not many in our field really view, treat, or accommodate veterans. For the most part, they are left out of the conversation.

Adult Education, Lifelong Learning, and Self-Directed Learning

Before we delve into these important areas of discussion, let us define LLL and self-directed learning (SDL) in the context of art education and the Solider/Veteran Artist, to help show how they related to one another. LLL, as its name logically implies, is "all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective." (European Commission, 2001, p. 9; London, 2011, p. 3). One might also add that "all learning derives from experience" (Jarvis, 2012, p. 9; Goddu, 2021, p. 171). London (2011) explains that LLL is often discussed in the context of adult education as the two go hand in hand (p. 2). In tandem, SDL is "a process by which learners manage their own learning process from beginning to end" (Boyer et al., 2014, p. 20). In the context of this thesis, if the relation between these pedagogical concepts were to be represented visually, it would take on the shape of the Venn Diagram displayed in Figure 10. Adult education is the overarching context in which both these concepts are discussed and derived from (London, p. 2; Boyer et al., pp. 20-21). Further exploring these areas of discussion will help to understand how they relate to Martin's pedagogical journey.

Figure 10

Adult Education, LLL, and SDL Venn Diagram



Note. A visual representation of how "adult education", "LLL", and "SDL" are thought about and discussed within the context of this study.

Lawton and La Porte (2014) wrote, “art education can be a vehicle to share the unheard stories and traditions from our communities” (p. 310). The word *communities* here could easily be replaced with Veteran-Artists. Though Hasio (2010; 2011) is the only scholar yet to have addressed veterans, LLL, SDL, and art education together, I also feel that adult education theories must be brought to the discussion. Lawton and La Porte (2014) conducted research on mature adults’ distinctive needs as community art students and concluded that “transformative learning empowers individuals to explore and analyze themselves and engage with their community through both traditional and non-traditional visual art forms and experiences.” (p. 318). The importance and relevance of our field is highlighted in this sentiment, which argues that this special way of assimilating information in tandem with life experiences can be a catalyst

for community interaction. Wilson et al.'s (2019) paper on veteran isolation and loneliness comes back to mind. I would argue that this withdrawal from society, as is the case with my father and many of his ex-colleagues, could possibly be bridged by creating a shared space and community of learners from an art education standpoint. This argument is supported by Hasio: "[f]or [these] veterans, the exchange of personal stories of the veterans, interpretation of their artwork, and the reflection of ideas and interactions helped them gain insight into how they saw themselves." (2011, p. 52). Rather than creating art therapy groups, which could seem confronting for some (Lobban, 2014, p. 6), perhaps simply creating art classes/workshops for veterans could be a gentle way to reach out to them. Mason (2003) reinforces this sentiment when he wrote, "community arts ha[s] been used in a variety of settings to access groups and communities and to involve them in thinking about issues which impact upon their lives and ways in which services could address those factors" (p. 327).

Martin is a lifelong learner when one considers the fact that despite his "formal" (this term is defined later in this section) education ending one semester after his high school graduation, he continued to make art. Thereby, he also became a self-directed learner as there were no 'educational experts' or teachers showing him how to progress and work these artful techniques – he simply learned by trial and error. "Formal" education here refers to the K-12 and high school system that children and teenagers are federally required to go through. Tight (2012) goes as far as listing "military bases" amidst his examples of non-formal education institutions (p. 16). He discusses the equal importance of formal and non-formal education (p. 16). I agree with him in that most do not automatically think of military bases when thinking about educational institutions. Yet, military bases are nothing but places where an immense amount learning takes place. When I was a young girl, I used to ask my dad about what he did for a

living, and he would always answer the same thing: “daddy trains all day to hide as well as he possibly can. We do lots and lots of exercises in the forest. That’s why I come home dressed up like a tree!” (See Figure 11).

Figure 11

Dad Dressed as a Tree

Note. This picture of Martin was taken by one of his brothers-in-arms during a training exercise. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

My twin sister and I used to find it amusing when he came back in his full make-up, as we knew nothing about why he had to hide amongst the trees. Now, I know that his days were filled with exercises and retaining new information – not unlike what we do on school benches. With this memory comes the realization that learning continuously takes place on military bases because that is what saves lives of soldiers. Thinking back on London's (2011) quote stated earlier, military people learn throughout their lives, "with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective" (p. 3). As such, an argument can be made for military people being mature learners in almost perpetual evolution, they are lifelong learners.

Research demonstrates that mature students have different needs and expectations when pursuing their education (Goddu, 2021; Boyer et al., 2014). Generally, they place higher value on autonomy and SDL (Goddu, 2021, p. 171) and are instinctually motivated when it comes to taking charge of their education (p. 172). Constructivist notions of education–constructivism stating that "the real understanding is only constructed based on learners' previous experience and background knowledge" (Ültanir, 2012, p. 195)–are strongly embedded into adult learning theories. Mature learners are not empty vessels; they are individuals rich with experience looking to specialize in a skill, as in this case study. Veterans are "older adults who have a wealth of knowledge and experience, a broad range of interests and cognitive abilities, and a unique vantage point: the wisdom acquired with age" as is the case with Martin (Lawton & La Porte, 2013, p. 311). To this, I would further argue that there is also a wisdom acquired with their experiences that is not generally shared across society. This study's aim is to understand how this "wealth of knowledge" specifically can help inform the field of art education through the interviewing of veterans, photo elicitation, and the mapping of their personal narratives.

A Quebecois Documentary and An Illustration Book

In this final sub-section of Public Pedagogies & Adult Learning, I return to Soldier Artists in relation to a specific source that informs my thesis: Radio Canada's *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre* (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019) documentary in tandem with Lavergne's *Les sens du cœur/L'essence du cœur*[3] (2007), as one supports the other.

It would be impossible not to draw parallels between the narrative of Frédérick Lavergne, Dominique Brière, Érik Moyneur, and Luc LaFramboise–the four veterans leading the Radio Canada documentary (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019) following their trip back to Bosnia almost twenty years later–and my father's story. These men were deployed by the same government, the same province, and at the same time and place. At the time, they were linked by the same sense of adventure and desire to serve their country.

> C'est l'appel du devoir à quelque part mais aussi de travailler sous l'effigie des casques-bleus des Nations Unis qui était- surtout en 90… Ils venaient de remporter le Prix Nobel de la Paix. D'être choisi pour partir pour une mission de paix dans un autre pays, bien c'était, c'était valorisant.[4] (Chevrier & St-Onge, 2018).

Moyneur (2018, Online Interview) helped contextualize the narrative when he discussed the image of valor that came from working with the UN at the time. In 1988, the Nobel Prize was awarded to the UN Peacekeeping Forces (Ghali, 1993, p. 67; Griffin, 1999, p. 25), who operated internationally as annexes to numerous military organizations, including the Canadian Forces (UN Peacekeeping, 1996). Their military staff switch out their usual khaki green head gear (i.e.,

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[3] French title translated to English: "The heart's meanings/ The heart's essence."
[4] French quote translated to English: "Somewhere down the line, it was the call of duty but also to work under the effigy of the UNs Blue Helmets which was – especially in the 90s… They had just won the Nobel Peace Prize. To be chosen to go on a peace mission in another country, well that was, that was rewarding."

helmets and/or beret) to the UN's iconic light blue hue and are therefore referred to as les 'Casques Bleus' or Blue Helmets in English. Martin also addressed this during our early interview sessions; he too took pride in being a UN Blue Helmet (Interview 1, Roy, 2021).

It is estimated that Canadians represented 10% of the peacekeeping missions between 1948 and 1988 (Granastein et al., 2021). As such, having greatly contributed to its success, Canadians in the 90s were still proud of being associated with an organization that had won such prestige (Granastein et al., 2021). There were many driving forces that incited hundreds of young men to become Blue Helmets for the UN's UNPROFOR mission (1992-1995) (Department of Public Information, 1996) but for the Quebecois men in Radio-Canada's the documentary (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019), it was the honour of being part of an organization who valued peace that convinced them it was their duty to go and help. Their expectation of conflict and the reality of their deployment has left them shell-shocked, to borrow Armstrong's (2019) terminology (Chevrier & St-Onge, 2018). All four men agree that in the early summer of 1993 when they landed on the Sarajevo airstrip, the atmosphere was nothing like what they had expected. Not long after setting foot on European land, they realized the loud dissonance between what they thought the mission would be like and the reality and gravity of the situation (Chevrier & St-Onge, 2018).

The documentary also revealed a fellow 'Soldier Artist': Frédérick Lavergne. I was struck by the large number of similarities between Martin and Frédérick. Both men were in their final year of high school when they applied to the CAF. Both their grandfathers fought during World War II (WWII) and they followed in their footsteps. Both were in their early twenties when they were deployed in Bosnia in their formative years, and they were even deployed at the same time (1993-1994). Most extraordinarily though, both drew during their military service

(Proulx, 2007). I would even argue that their drawing styles are similar: quick scruffy black-and-white marks (See Figures 12 and 13).

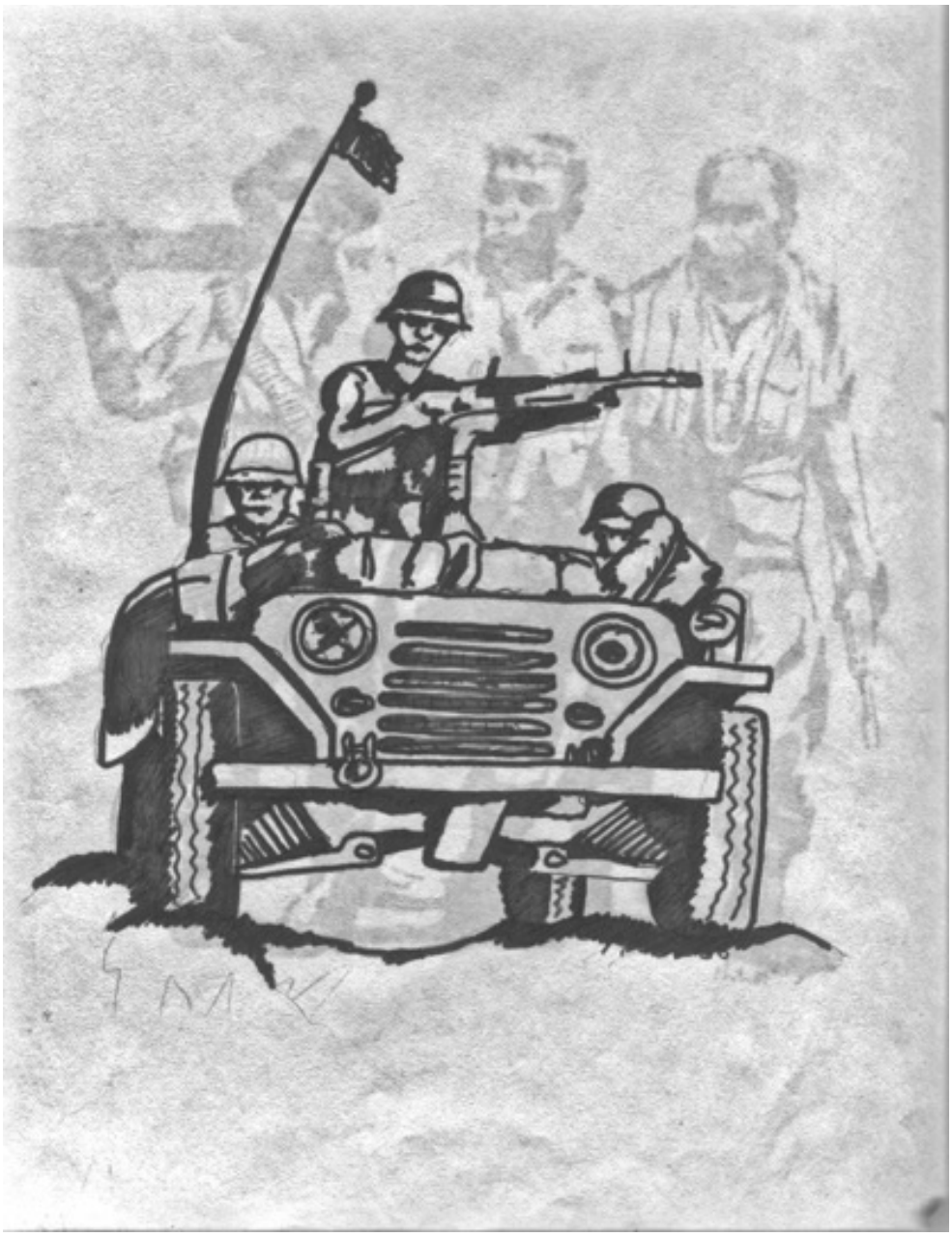
Figure 12

Shopping Cart, Lavergne, F. (Unknown)

Note. Pencil on paper. (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019)

Figure 13

Hommes & Tank, by Roy, M. (late 1980s).



Note. This drawing was made by Martin during his only semester at the CEGEP de Sherbrooke in a fine arts program in 1988. It was after this semester that Martin was called up by the CAF and joined the Forces at 17 years old. Drawing from Martin's personal archives.

Lavergne explained that drawing has always been a way for him to focus and deal with his attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). During his deployment, he began using this creative process to interpret and assimilate the world around him, and to make others around him laugh (Proulx, 2007). Over twenty years after returning from war, Lavergne has published *Les Sens Du Coeur/L'essence du Coeur* (2007), an illustration book encapsulating his experience in Bosnia and the harsh reality of coming back home. The drawings take on a personalized comic strip format to tell his story and the emotional journey that he embarked on. Lavergne explained,

> Je ne voulais pas de cases, je voulais que ça ait l'apparence d'un cahier de croquis ouvert. Les espaces blancs sont nécessaires aux dessins; je voulais que les planches vivent, ça ne m'intéressait pas que ce soit encadré dans une structure.[5] (Proulx, 2007)

To me, everything about his work is raw. Authenticity transpires through every sketch. His rapid scruffy marks give me a sense of movement and impulsivity, while the number of lines remind of a mind going into overdrive. Martin told me that since he came back from Bosnia, it feels like there is a hamster spinning quickly in his wheel over and over again inside his brain. Lavergne's lines remind of that visual. There are numerous layers to Soldier Artists' art, ranging from the backstory of the work, the motivation to create, the choice of medium, to the style employed.

To better understand the work that catalyzed this study, I discuss Lavergne's (2007) *Shopping Cart* (See Figure 12). For me, the most emotionally charged drawing featured in both *Les Sens Du Coeur/L'essence du Coeur* and *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre* is the pencil sketch of a shopping cart parked in front of a window. It is simple and effective. At first glance, some

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[5] French quote translated to English: "I didn't want any boxes, I wanted it to look like an open sketch book. The white spaces were necessary to the drawings; I wanted the strips to live, I wasn't interested in them being framed within a structure"

could argue it looks banal, but like most artworks, I find that once the story the behind it is revealed, it is anything but banal. Frédérick explained that it reveals his experience at a hospital in Fojnica, one of the most vivid and traumatizing events for him during his deployment (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). I vaguely recognize this story because the same hospital haunts my father's memories. He once told me that it was where he saw a monster, and it is a story we often steer away from. Collateral damage in the civil war, some young children had been abandoned by the staff, and were left to themselves at the Fojnica psychiatric hospital for an undetermined amount of time (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). Upon the Blue Helmets' arrival at the site in 1993, they were charged with burying the dead infants and helping the few survivors. The R22R soldiers were the first Canadian crew on site, including my father. Four months later, Lavergne's troop took over (Lessard, 2019). Valerie Lessard, one of the leading Radio-Canada journalists and directors of the documentary, wrote a digital essay to accompany the documentary.

The second chapter of the digital essay is dedicated to the shopping cart and explaining from Lavergne's perspective what happened in Fojnica. Woven into her text is a minute-long video extract of one of Radio-Canada's report on the Fojnica situation aired during the summer of 1993 (Lessard, 2019). The footage that they aired was shocking and emotional, it bleakly illustrated Lavergne's narrative, and plunged the audience into his traumatizing experience as a young solider. Once again, I was reminded of how powerful media and art can be. This hospital is still standing and in service today, though its operations are no longer as grim (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). Lavergne's (2007) seemingly ordinary sketch carries a loaded and confronting war narrative; these shopping carts were used to carry the small dead bodies out of the building to be buried outside. In the documentary, the sight of them is enough to trigger the veterans' who returned twenty years later to visit the hospital (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). It was the only site

that they did not want to film, and so we only see the veterans getting on site and leaving the hospital grounds. I argue, similarly to Michel (2004), that it is artwork like *Shopping Cart* that truly documents what happened during wars. Solider Artists are at the frontlines of history and capture what they witness in their work. This in turn helps the audience learn about the horror without having to use any words. As Lobban (2014) wrote, "an understanding can be restorative" (p. 3). Using this logic, the soldiers did not have time to process everything that was happening during their Bosnian deployment; going back, like Frédérick, Dominique, Érik, and Luc did, helps to heal/restore some part of them because they finally have the space to understand and assimilate.

It is this book's, the digital essays', and documentary's creative and narrative method of presenting data that inspired the grounding idea and methodologies for this thesis. I recognized my father in Lavergne's story and felt compelled to tell Martin's story as well. Lavergne's visuals were so powerful, I was overwhelmed with a curiosity to uncover my own father's work. Both soldiers' work has much to offer to the art education community, and it has remained rather dormant until now. Each of Lavergne's pencil drawings and Martin's black-and-white 35mm photographs are rich chronicles of war and military service.

Generational History with War and PTSD

This final section brings together the themes that intersect in this thesis–war, health, and art–through the work of Armstrong's (2019) dissertation *shellshocked*, which offers an interesting perspective on intergenerational PTSD transference using creative writing to illustrate how this psychological condition transpires from one generation to the next, and from one family member to another (p. 11). That is the meaning of being shellshocked; to me, it reads as a close synonym to PTSD tinted with a military undertone. I find Armstrong's (2019) model of working

closely with family to be of particular interest since very few other academic studies have explored trauma, war, and art from this angle. My study aims to bridge these realms together in order to understand a veteran as an art education learner.

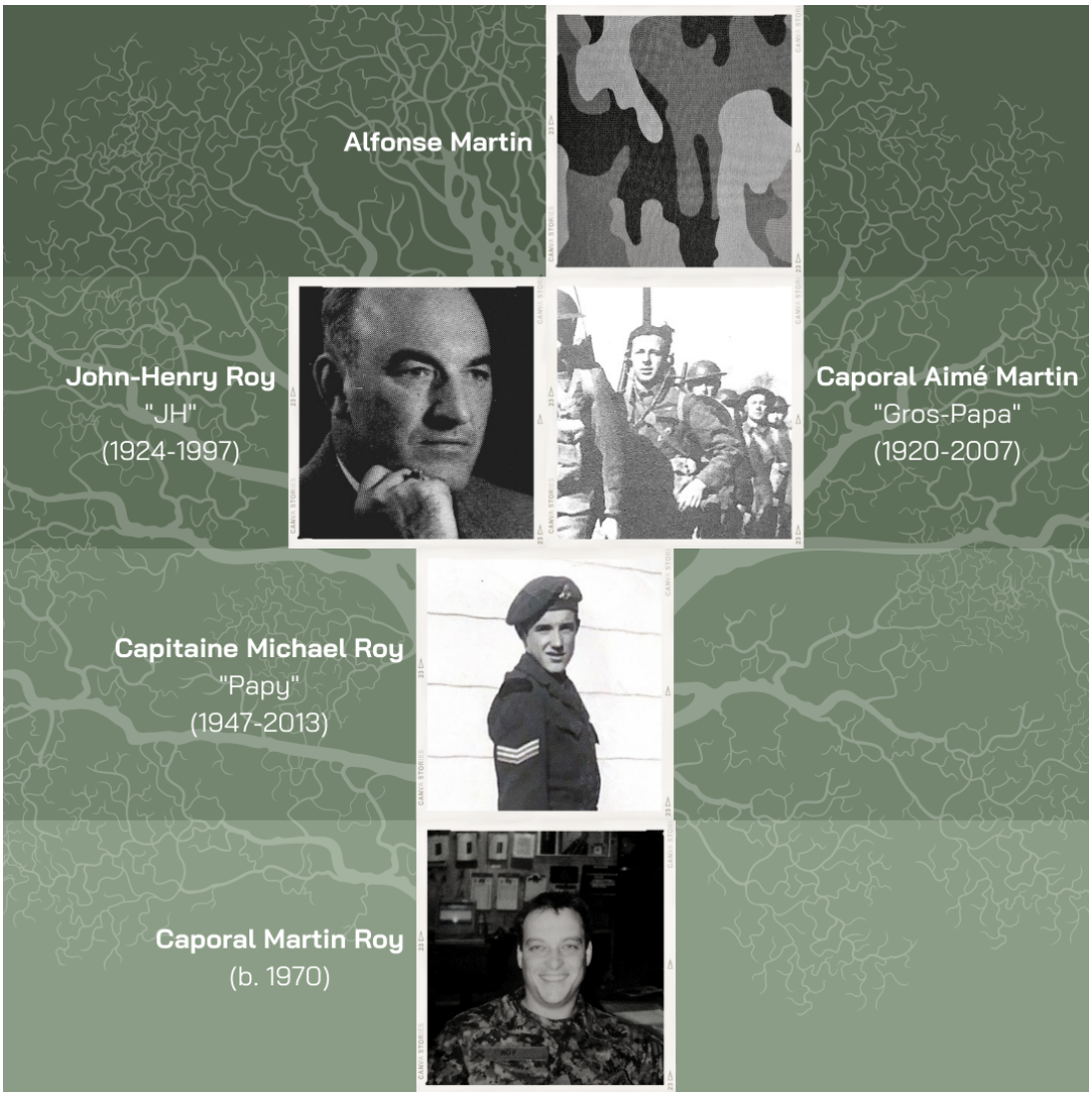
Armstrong (2019) adopts a personal approach when she brings herself and her thoughts (and in doing so, adopts an autoethnographic stance to the narrative at times) into the research. I worked in a similar fashion, though the focus was on the participant rather than the researcher, and my relationship to his narrative helped contextualize his position in relation to art education. Armstrong's (2019) heart-wrenching introduction, in the form of re-storying, paints an accurate and engaging picture for how PTSD and its ensuing complex realities can affect generations within a family (pp. 17-20; 25). The dissertation opens with the story of her grandmother who was abandoned as a child, went through the foster home system, and was later sexually abused (p. 17). It continues by painting the ways in which this trauma transferred onto her mother, who needed psychiatric care as a result, and then explains how this in turn transferred onto her, Armstrong, in the form of PTSD (2019, p. 17). The author re-stories her family's history in a poignant way and ties precious links between her various ancestral histories to understand how those living with PTSD can be "unlocked" and heard (p. 15). I find that re-storying (Creswell, 2013, p. 74) is an informative and powerful literary device to disseminate oral histories from which others can potentially learn from. It is an informative and powerful device because it curates the original information into a concisely framed narrative with the aim to educate its readers.

Armstrong's (2019) stance on generational trauma is raw and captivating. She argues that this trauma can affect, or even infect, one's body in a plethora of ways–from the body to non-communication, to movement, habits, urges, etc. (p. 25). The repercussions are both mental and

physical. In the fourth chapter, I contextualize Martin's narrative by outlining the multi-generational military history he followed (See Figure 14).

Figure 14

Martin Roy's Generational History with the CAF



Note. On this image, four continuous generations of Roy and Martin men are shown. The lineage doeesn't end with my father, his nephew (my cousin) has recently joined the R22R as a soldier in the R22R infantry devision, following the footsteps of many of the men in our family.

After reading Armstrong's dissertation, I questioned the relevance of generational trauma and how insidious and subtle it can be years later. Was my father destined in some way to follow the footsteps of the men in his family and choose the same career path as they did? He argues no (Roy, Interview 3, 2021), but Armstrong's (2019) words have showed me that the consequence of living with shell-shocked men might be more indirect than some expect.

When we sift through the many photographs that Martin took before his military service as well as the drawings that he made when he was a teenager, the military presence is already staggering (see chapter four for further explanation). He visited the Citadel as a young boy (where he would later work for almost two decades) as part of a family trip to Quebec City and wore military related shirts for his elementary class pictures (See Figures 15 and 16). I suspect, based on our discussions, that he dressed this way and visited such places with my papy because of the strong military history attached to the men in our family. The photograph of him as a boy next to the R22R Garde en Rouge at the Citadel (Figure 15) when placed side-by-side with the picture of him wearing the same uniform years later (Figure 17) evokes a strong sense of foreshadowing. In fact, both photographs live side-by-side in his living room, hung on a wall next to the lazy-boy which he sits in daily. The picture of him years later, now a Garde en Rouge soldier himself, also features his younger sister and three-year-old me looking up at him (Figure 17). When I take a step back from the data, it is clear that there is a series of events that seem unrelated when thought about independently, but together resemble this sort of butterfly effect. Visuals of the army were just everywhere, always around in some shape or form.

Figure 15

Martin at the Citadel in Quebec City (1970s)

Note. This photo of young Martin was taken in the late 1970s during one of his family's visits in Quebec City at the Citadel. He is photographed next to The Red Guard, which he later belonged to for almost 20 years. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

Figure 16

Martin's Elementary School Photo (1970s)

Note. This elementary school photo reinforces the ever-present military memorabilia throughout Martin's life. His interest in the Armed Forces started at a young age and later blossomed into his career. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

Figure 17

Martin and Family at the Citadel in Quebec City (1990s)

Note. This photograph accompanies Figure 15. It was taken in the late 1990s, several years after Figure 15 was shot and features my aunt Claudie (Martin's sister) Martin, and myself. In many ways, Figure 15 foreshadowed this photograph. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

In being careful about navigating the dichotomy of the father-daughter/participant-researcher relationship, I was inspired by Armstrong (2019) to engage in method writing to better understand how generational trauma might have manifested in our families and in turn, in this study. Armstrong (2019) explain that, "[method writing] aims to develop greater authenticity in character development. (…) [It] aims to gain deeper access into the voice of the human experience through a submersion into the experiences and landscapes of characters" (p. 27). The ways in which I engaged in this process and how it affected this research is explained in more detail in the fifth chapter (See Appendix A).

Re-storying and method writing are some of the ways in which Armstrong's (2019) work help inform this study. Getting familiar with generational trauma and PTSD helped me, as a daughter and researcher, to slowly sow together the life choices that my father has made and what influenced these choices. Re-storying helped to contextualize Martin's life journey within the field of art education, and method writing helped me gain some insight into his world as well as sooth internal queries through the research process. Having learned this, I argue that art educators must also do similar work. We must strive to know our students well to be able to cater to their individual pedagogical needs as much as we can.

In the next chapter, I will explain the research methodology, methods, and procedures used. I will further argue that by exploring the stories of Soldier/Veteran Artists, we could expand the field of art education by beginning to include this unique community of learners into current curriculums.

3. Research Methodology, Methods and Procedure

This chapter outlines the three methodologies that structure this study: NI (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), case study (Merriam, 1998), and archival research (Fischer & Parmentier, 2010; Creswell, 2013). The methods and procedures of the study are also presented and discussed. To explain how the three methodologies work together in the context of this study, I refer to the folded model (see Figure 4), which was initially outlined in the first chapter. The folded model should be read as blurring boundaries that move across, with, and through the folds, always referencing back to the previous discussion dictated by the chronology of my inquiry.

Research Questions and Grounding Literature

The research questions presented in the current study were:

- What role does creative practice play in a veteran's response to military service and PTSD?
- How do autodidactic art practices play an educative role for military veterans?
- Does the field of art education facilitate LLL for veterans?
- How are educational institutions now accommodating veterans in their career transition by offering creative outlets?
- How do educators create environments where veterans build a sense of community but are also left alone?

This list may seem extensive, but since little research exists on the topic, it was important to begin the conversation between the field of art education and Solider Artists by setting a strong foundation. As seen in the previous chapter, it was the work of scholars like Hasio (2010; 2011), Michel (2004), and documentary directors, Lefebvre and Lessard (2019), that helped me to

navigate my research design. I was interested in reading about their participants' views and how they discussed art and education, but I was also inspired by how the researchers framed their studies. To better explain my methodology of choice, I present the methodological framework that each of these experts used and subsequently explain how they influenced this thesis.

Hasio (2010, p. 75) spent four years interviewing and observing a group of veterans, who were taking part in local community art sessions at the veterans Dallas hospital. What started as volunteering turned into a research project. Throughout the years, Hasio (2010) connected with her participants, mainly men, and collected data using a wide variety of methods. Hasio (2010; 2011) recorded in-depth interviews, field notes, observations, created artwork, and discussed artworks, all of which are synonymous with qualitative research. To me, her research takes on an ethnographic framework, about which Creswell (2013) wrote, "[a]n ethnography focuses on an entire culture-sharing group. (…) Thus, ethnography is a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns (…) of a culture-sharing group." (p. 90). This is compatible with Hasio's (2010) method. The amount of time that she spent with the group, the data collection methods she used, and her research questions all align with Creswell's definition of ethnographic research and its core values (pp. 90-96). The importance of the gatekeeper is once again reinforced in Hasio (2011, p. 54) and Creswell's (2013, p. 94) redaction. They both advocate strongly for a trustworthy relationship between the researcher and participants, thus, the importance of this kind of relationship is stressed several times in my thesis.

Furthermore, one could argue that there are some elements of phenomenology present in Hasio's (2010) work. Creswell (2013) describes the framework as that which "describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a

phenomenon" (p. 76). In this case, the several individuals are the veterans, and the phenomenon is creating artwork together as self-taught artists who enjoy the cathartic experience (Hasio, 2010, p. 76). Creswell's (2013) research also elucidates "'what' they experienced and 'how' they experienced it" (p. 76). This can be observed particularly in her second paper (Hasio, 2011), where she writes about the individual experiences of four vets to illustrate how and what they experienced by coming to the arts and craft room (pp. 49-52).

Let us now discuss the work of Michel (2004) who, similarly to Hasio, also presented a selection of works and experiences from six of his participants. His research made a strong argument for veteran art being important historical documents that help to tell the story of those who experienced war first-hand (p. 189). Michel (2004) clearly presents a multimodal methodology as he states at the beginning of his paper that he employed a combination of ethnography, case study, and phenomenology (p. 190). To explain his choice, he wrote "[i]t is equally a study of a group of artists and an attempt to understand the connection between experience and art." (p. 190). To me, this statement is key because the truth of his words echoes in many others' works, including works of Hasio (2010; 2011), Lefebvre and Lessard (2019), and my work. Having already explained ethnography and phenomenology, I now lean once again on Creswell's (2013) words to describe case study research. He wrote, "case study research involves the study of a case within real-life, contemporary context or setting" (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). Unlike other methodologies, Creswell (2013) also argues that case study research can be both a framework and the "product of inquiry" (p. 97). In Michel's (2004) case, I think that case study was a product of inquiry because the dominant methodology was ethnography, and multiple (eighteen) case studies were studied to help to answer his research questions (p. 190).

The interviews were both a means to an end and essential to the framework. Both realities exist and rely heavily on one another in his writing.

Finally, as detailed in the previous chapter, I was also deeply inspired by Lefebvre and Lessard's (2019) documentary *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre* and Lessard's (2019) digital essay, which compliments the film. Both pieces have strong elements of case study and NI. The documentary follows four Quebecois veterans who travel back to Bosnia twenty years after their deployment in order to bring themselves a sense of peace and reconciliation. Their individual stories are presented at the beginning of both pieces, which is in line with the methodological demands of case study research. The research is bounded by time (the late 1990s and now) and place (Bosnia). Simultaneously, there are also strong elements of NI present in the work. Creswell describes the method, "it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. (…) The procedures (…) consist of (…) gathering data through the collection of their stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering the meaning of those experiences" (p. 70). To me, case study and NI complement one another. One explores the life of an individual, and the other tells this story through a chronological framework. Both demand close partnership with the participant. They coexist in this research and often overlap, especially in terms of data collection methods and inquiry intent. Like Hasio (2010; 2011) and Michel's (2004) work, *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre*, also has ethnographic and phenomenological traits. However, I find that NI and case study are the dominant frameworks in the documentary.

It is undeniable that various elements of all four methodologies (i.e., ethnography, phenomenology, case study, and NI) live in this thesis. The culture-sharing group and the common experience that they share are at the heart of the writing. However, considering the

constrained time frame of a thesis, it would have been incomplete to opt for only ethnography and phenomenology. In this case, NI and case study were more appropriate. Martin's story has been explored in-depth and presented chronologically. I have used his case as a specific illustration of the culture-sharing group in order to get a better understanding of who they are as learners and as artists (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). Before I explain how both methodologies were employed, I discuss them separately.

The Methodologies

Narrative Inquiry (NI)

NI is discussed at the forefront of this chapter because it was the grounding methodology of the current study. At the heart of the study, lies Martin's narrative as a Solider Artist and my perspective as his daughter, a researcher, and an art educator. The NI and case study methodologies frame his narrative.

Often used in the field of education (Creswell, 2013), NI relies on the mindful co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and participant (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Since NI focuses on human biographical experience, I used it to chronologically understand the details of Martin's life and his artistic and educational journey. Furthermore, I argue that charting the chronology of events can help to understand isolated experiences by contextualizing and linking them to past and future happenings, or in Creswell's (2013) words, by illuminating "causal links" (p. 74). For example, understanding a chain of events in classrooms can help educators and students to learn from cause-and-effect situations, and by extension, educate all. In my (elementary level) classroom, I have often done this by using storybooks. Dissecting the series of actions that led the main character to the final scene of the story often helped my students to comprehend subliminal causal links and their importance in everyday life. In this

case, looking at a veteran's artwork chronologically and investigating how the visual story, the artwork, has transformed with time has helped me to map the pedagogic value of including the choices of veterans in our field.

Creswell (2013) outlines the "defining features of narrative studies" as requiring these attributes (pp. 71-72):

- The co-construction of story and re-storying between the researcher and participant. This was key to the process in order to accurately tell Martin's story.
- A variety of data collection methods (i.e., interviews, photographs, artwork, etc.). The large variety of data collection methods helped to solicit more in-depth information; this is discussed in more detail in the fifth chapter.
- Re-storying chronologically; explained earlier in this chapter.
- Analyzing thematically. This kind of analysis method helped to generate five emergent themes from the study; this is presented in the sixth chapter.
- Placing emphasis on "turning points" and contextualizing the story. Examples of this are detailed in the fourth chapter.

It was crucial to me to know these features in order to set a successful and coherent scaffold for the research. If NI is the nucleus of this research, then oral history and biographical study are the neutrons and protons that complete the atom.

Oral History and Biographical Study. NI can be approached in a variety of ways, two of which include oral history and biographical study (Creswell, 2013, p. 72). Oral history "consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual (…)." (Creswell, 2013, p. 73). A biographical study "is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person's life." (Creswell,

2013, p. 72). These two strongly linked methods are what I used to prompt Martin's story. My father has always been a great storyteller. He is famous in our family for his loud voice and use of gestures as he speaks whilst subconsciously miming his stories. When he gets lost in a narrative, he often stands without knowing to gesticulate with more ease. In my family, stories have always been transmitted orally and gesturally. Some scholars even argue that oral history is our oldest form of recording history (Desai, 2001, p. 72; Haynes, p. 221). For decades, Desai (2001) argues that this was the way we remembered and relayed information to the next generations (p. 72). The historical weight attached to this way of gathering and transmitting information is both valuable and critical to the integrity of this study. Now, oral history is an interview-based way of prompting information and understanding others' perspectives in academia (Creswell, 2013, p. 73). To me, in the context of art education, oral history also becomes an interesting way to understand the material, color choices, artistic intentions, and narrative behind an oeuvre. With this, Desai (2001) wrote, "[t]he significance of oral history narratives is that they tell us more about meaning, feeling, desire, and perception (…)." (p. 73). Haynes (2010) agrees with this statement and reminds us that,

> [Oral histories] allows for the description of feelings, emotion, memory, perception, and identity, throughout a life course. Oral histories also facilitate connections between social groups and roles, giving insights into the lives of many, because the narrator weaves their story with those of significant others, such as children, parents, partners, employers, and colleagues. As such, oral history exposes the life experiences of individuals, which more formal documentary sources may fail to elucidate. (p. 221)

It is for these reasons that it was important to weave elements of oral history into the thesis. Using this framework was vital for capturing the complex narratives of veterans' lives accurately

and authentically. Creswell (2013) also leans on other academics' views and argues that this particular type of NI has also often been used to give voice to marginalized groups in the spirit of "disrupt[ing] the dominant discourse" (p. 73; Desai, 2001, p. 74). I find this fitting for the research since the voices of veterans need to be louder in the field of art education. My hope is that this way of working will help to amplify Martin's story and encourage others to share their testimonies too.

At the same time, Martin's oral history is biographical — the two belong together and work in symbiosis (Savin-Baden & Neikirk, 2007, p. 460). I find that the beneficial output of biographical research reminds me of one of Michel's (2004) observations that one veteran's story has the potential to help others (p. 202). As a population who tends to isolate themselves because of their trauma (Wilson et al., 2019), hearing about others' struggle with the harsh transition of coming home from war can be not only cathartic but also educative (Wilson et al., 2019; Lobban, 2014). On numerous occasions, Martin told me that this was one of the main motivating factors for him to participate in this study. Reflecting on this, Martin said, "soudainement tout faisait du sens. J'ai vu le potentiel d'en aider d'autres. C'était moins à propos de moi et plus à propos de notre histoire."[6]

Case Study

Similarly to the works of Hasio (2010; 2011), Michel (2004), and Lefebvre and Lessard (2019), my research is not bounded to a single methodology; instead, it employs many. If NI is the dominant framework, then, case study research is the scaffold that complements it. By focusing on Martin's life, my thesis also embodies case study research as it is bounded by time

[6] French quote translated to English: "Suddenly, everything made sense. I saw the potential to help others. It was less about me and more about our story."

(1993-1994 and 2001-2002) and place (Bosnia and Quebec), primarily to one individual (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). As an instrumental case study model (Creswell, 2013, p. 99), my focus is on one concern (a veteran's autodidactic art practice and art education); hence, this study uses one bounded case to illustrate this. I believe that the case study model has allowed me to come to a conclusive end by looking for "patterns" or "explanations" (Cresswell, 2013, p. 99). As Ochieng (2009) explains, it is crucial to the quality of the research that the researcher understands the rigorous work ethic associated with this methodology (p. 17). The research must have a clear objective regarding their study in order to purposefully analyze the data and synthesize it (p. 17). The methodology that one uses dictates how the data can and should be thought about. In this case, the interviews, photos, photo elicitation sessions, memory boxes, and other important documents that were reviewed were analyzed and reflected upon in relation to Martin and how his narrative informs the field of art education. In this way, the case study model helped to steer the data into a selective research process (Cresswell, 2013, p. 17).

The key defining features of case study research that I employed in this research study first stem from the center ring of the concentric ring model (which later morphed into the folded model). Martin's case was studied using a wide variety of data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews, photo elicitation interviews, field observations, reflective writing entries, photographs, family archives, and military documents (Creswell, 2013, pp. 98-99). The diverse types of data helped to generate new information pertinent to the field of study. The final defining feature of the methodology that I leaned on was its thematic data analysis approach (see chapters 5 and 6). In order to successfully ascertain a portrait of the veteran sub-culture, I had to generate themes that would help to elucidate the research questions. One more research method, which was salient to the study, must be considered — archival research.

Archival Research

When I think about archival research, I think about Sinner's (2013) work. Her passion for archives and careful attention to detail showcase the power that archives hold for educational researchers, for the person that they belong to, and for the field that it ultimately informs. Sinner wrote,

> Archival research into the histories of teacher education is a form of living inquiry that begins with an understanding that we are always in relation to historical events and contemporary experiences and engaged in a process of continually deconstructing and constructing the past as multiple histories (p. 242).

Therefore, a strong argument can be made for the fact that archives are not stagnant; they are living entities full of possibility and information, with complex timelines attached to them (Schultz et al., 2008, p. 3). It is undeniable that without Martin's photographs, artwork, military memory boxes, and old documents, this research study would not be the same; it would not be as alive.

Furthermore, Sinner (2013) argued that "archival research as living inquiry is enriched and enlivened by the *in situ* opening of participant's (as co-researchers) lived and learning experiences (…)" (p. 248). With this in mind, I argue that the archival research component of my thesis was utilized as an opportunity for my father and me to review archives and co-construct knowledge together. According to Fischer and Parmentier (2010), archival research is a way to help to justify primary data using secondary data (p. 798). In my case, the findings that rose from participant interviews were contextualized and supported by archival data, which made for "a more compelling case" and "provide[d] insight into patterns and motives" of this veteran (p. 799). This line of thought is reinforced by Schultz and colleagues (2008), who wrote that

"writers who discuss family members (…) create and report interpretations not just about their families and themselves but about the larger world as well" (p. 3). Additionally, since the data collection was mainly comprised of oral sessions and relied on Martin's memory, the archives served as visual and physical supports or even corroborated his stories. My great-grandfather's bloody medical tag from 1916 is an important example of this (Figure 18). When trying to recreate our family timeline, my father and I had some difficulty placing specific dates around his grandfather's military accomplishments. However, with the help of a well preserved Canadian Medical Service tag and Lieutenant Colonel Corriveau's book (1989), two archival pillars in this research, we were able to retrace his steps and life story. We were both surprised and inspired by the power of archival research.

On the matter, Schultz and colleagues (2008) discuss how this kind of research can indeed seem spontaneous and "serendipitous" but rapidly turn into merited "scholarly research" (p. 4). The authors make a strong case for serendipitous archives being important vectors to curiosity, not just frivolous ways of conducting research (p. 4). Curiosity in research projects is what breathes life into the process (p. 4). Their argument reminds me of my great-grandfather's medical tag once more; it was this serendipitous archive that sparked the curiosity, which led me to delve deeper into our family's strong generational military history. Archives and especially photographs, Langford (2021) argues, are how we remember and make sense of the world around us and our histories.

When we think back to the folded research model, one can interpret some of the lines as pertaining to archival research. In the inner familial fold, archives consist of family photographs and memorabilia. In another fold, it takes on the shape of testimonies that are featured in the research of art education scholars (Hasio, 2010; 2011; Michel, 2004; Duane, 2019; Lefebvre &

Lessard, 2019). Finally, archival data can also be in different forms, such as web-based military documents through the Canadian Government's archival database, current educational practices for veterans (Dr. Westwood's VTN), as well as UN policy and briefing statements about the Bosnia conflict with specific attention to regions where Martin served (Department of Public Information, 2016). Since research demonstrates that archival data is an effective way of contextualizing qualitative research by grounding new information in existing documentation (Fischer & Parmentier, 2010), I regarded this component of my thesis as a precious opportunity for my father and I to review official documents together and co-construct knowledge in conversation about the documents.

Background and Rational for Methodologies

As an elementary school teacher, art and stories are at the center of my teaching practice. After a few years of teaching, I realized that information was more easily assimilated when taught through play, experimentation, and storytelling. To illustrate this, I observed that when introducing units, using storybooks filled with illustrations always sparked insightful conversations between the students surrounding the new topic. The importance of stories is also reinforced by the Quebecois Ministry of Education's programs, which strongly encourage its teachers to use books and stories as teaching tools (MELS, 2021). Storybooks are read daily and used as pedagogical strategies to develop language, affective, social, and cognitive skills (MELS, 2021, p. 52). Stories can also help children to learn how to sequence thoughts and strengthen communication skills in the process. Narrative materials are riddled with morals and lessons that are brought to life by illustrations. They can be utilized, for example, to see how the main character makes sense of the world around them, like Savin-Baden and Neikirk (2007) advocate. These academics note that characters act as conduits to send messages to its readers/viewers (p.

460). For me, NI does exactly the same. Martin's narrative acts as a conduit in this written report for the readers to understand a veteran's experience with life-long learning.

Moreover, stories can be fact, fiction, social fiction, poetic, autobiographical, biographical, short, long – the list is nearly endless. The possibilities are left to the writer's creativity and intent. In case of this research, NI takes on a biographical and "life course research" lens, as termed by Savin-Baden and Neikirk (2007, p. 460). To further explain this, let me reiterate Creswell (2013), who wrote, "a biographical study is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person's life" (p. 72). I have collaborated with Martin to re-story parts of his life in order to present the significant altering life experiences that veterans have and how this shapes who they are after their military service as men and women who want to return to education but are not being catered to. The student-centered model that we so strongly advocate for as educators today should be extended to veterans. It must also be noted that stories are reliant on one's memory, and memory has been shown to shift and morph with time (Harper, 2002, p. 13). As such, his narrative must be read as being relational to today.

With this, I am reminded of the first teaching contract that I had at the kindergarten level at a school in my neighbourhood. My sunny classroom was filled with toys, story books, and recycled art materials. To me, these things were synonymous with three teaching philosophy pillars that were alluded to earlier: play, storytelling, and creativity. Unfortunately, for many, these are the very things that disappear as people grow up and continue their education. They are often dismissed as being only pertinent to children. So, what does this have to do with adult-veteran-art education? The answer is everything. Play, storytelling, and creativity are not concepts bounded by age. They are vital ways that we all use to assimilate and appropriate

information at different stages in our lives (Clandinin, 2006a, p. 46). I further argue that at the core of these three concepts lies social interaction, and tied to that, experience. Experience and most of what it means and involves is discussed at length by Clandinin (2006a). Experience, she argues, is also a core component of NI. Clandinin (2006a) refers to her and Connelly's definition of NI as,

> A way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place (..) and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that made up people's lives, both individual and social (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20; Clandinin, 2006a, p. 46).

Experience, storytelling, re-storying, social interaction, and more site specific, relational factors, are all important components when processing information. This can happen orally, textually, and visually. As such, the art room is a fertile ground for these processes and NI to occur. In my teaching practice, NI, artmaking, and education co-exist harmoniously. This is highlighted in Hasio's (2011) research, particularly in her strong argument for craft kits being vital and playful ways for veterans to engage in artmaking and communicate with those around them (p. 49).

Having now explained the methodology in the educational context, we arrive at an important question: Why use NI in the context of this research? Burner (2002) has answered this question for me: "[t]elling stories is an astonishing thing. We are a species whose main purpose is to tell each other about the expected and the surprises that upset the expected, and we do that through the stories we tell" (Burner, 2002, p. 8). The stories that we tell are our teachers; they are our life lessons. Stories are natural ways to relay information and to impart knowledge. Burner's

(2002) quote was also used by Clandinin (2006a) in the opening section of his paper, where he details the theory behind NI (p. 44). NI is the scaffold from which other methodologies emanate, such as archival research and oral histories (Clandinin, 2006b, pp. 81; 177). Personally, I find that the more a 'surprise upsets my expected' (the more surprised, or moved, I am by a story), the more interesting and poignant it is, the more I can learn from it. When I first heard Frédérick Lavergne's story, I was moved by how similar his narrative was to my father's. I could not help but draw comparisons and wondered where their storylines intersected. Suddenly, I was confronted with a man (Lavergne) who had bravely stepped out of his state of isolation and was empowered to tell his story publicly to show other veterans that they are not alone. I was not alone in having a shell-shocked father, and my father was not alone in having experienced Bosnia in the mid-nineties and reacted artistically. In this way, Lavergne imparted knowledge. Hearing his truth and his story, helped a daughter understand more about her father's past. It also showed a researcher how to undertake her research.

Critical Views

Limitations

Since its inception, the strengths and limitations of the NI framework have been discussed by a plethora of academic experts. Working with humans is a complicated and beautiful thing, but not as "either/or" and quantitative research (Ochieng, 2009, p. 14). Creswell (2013) makes it clear that NI can be an arduous methodology to use because it requires extensive research on the participants and demands that the research be fluent with their life story (p. 76). I am less interested in understanding what exactly happened to my father during his military career free of any bias. Rather, I am interested in understanding how he views his life and what this means in the larger veteran sub-culture context. I agree with Lincoln (1992) that "realities are

constructed entities", but the construction is very telling and can teach us a lot if we are ready to listen (p. 379).

Furthermore, NI and single case study findings cannot be generalised to extend to the entire population that is being studied (i.e., veterans) since only a single voice is being examined (Creswell, 2013, pp. 101-102). On the other hand, case study and NI research results can complement the existing data and larger conversation. In this case, since there is very little research conducted on the topic of art education, veterans, and creating student-centered curricula for them, I firmly believe that further research with more participants is needed in order to better illustrate the complex issue at hand. Martin's story cannot be generalized to every veteran/Solider/Veteran Artist, but every story is a step forward in addressing the gap in research and the field of art education as a whole.

Let us now discuss the ethical concerns associated with the methodologies. From a theoretical standpoint, the ethical concern was to be as aware and as self-reflective as possible as the researcher because of the complex nature of investigating life stories (Clandinin, 2006, pp. xv-xvi). Clandinin (2006) wrote, "as narrative inquirers, we and our participants are always in the midst of living and telling our stories. We are also situated in the larger cultural, social, and institutional narratives" (p. xvi). What I understood by this is that we cannot ever fully remove ourselves from the macro-situations that we find ourselves in. Therefore, we must be aware of the many things that influence us and our participant's stories to disseminate information that is as unbiased as possible. Yet all stories are always partial. Thus, my reflective writing journals were a way to cater to this ethical concern. Taking a step back from the data and being able to reflect and keep a record of my thoughts allowed me to problem-solve and remain as neutral as the nature of this research demanded.

Concerns regarding working with a participant who suffers from PTSD also needs to be addressed. The nature of NI and case study research requires the researcher to delve deeply into the participant's personal story, so how can one do this while minimizing the risk of triggers? As stated in the first chapter and in the Summary Protocol Form (SPF), the risk associated with this study was relatively minimal. It was minimal for the participant since participation was voluntary, and Martin was instructed in writing and verbally to pass on any questions that he did not wish to answer. This option minimized discomfort. Martin was also free to stop the process at any time and withdraw from the study without any consequences. This is stated in the letter of consent and was repeated at the start of every session. Furthermore, the nature of the questions did not pertain to psychology as they did not linger on his experience of PTSD and how that experience has changed over time. As outlined in chapter two, the focus of the study was pedagogical, not therapeutic. This also helped to minimize discomfort and ensure that the focus remained on the purposes of art education.

Finally, looking at the technicalities of NI, Creswell (2013) explained that re-storying calls for the researcher restructuring the story to have a beginning, a middle, and an end (p. 73). In the context of someone's' life that is still in process, as is the case with Martin, accurately determining what constitutes as the beginning, the middle, and the end can be perilous. In my case, it is one of the research components that took the most amount of time during the redaction. It was important to me not to cut Martin's story too short, not to start it at an odd or inaccurate point, and to successfully highlight the causal links between pivotal events (p. 74). With the literature guiding my process and Martin's continuous checks, I believe that we were able to recount his journey in a way that is clear and informative to the readers.

Strengths

Having discussed the limitations of NI and case study research, their strengths must also be highlighted. To me, qualitative research is invaluable and hard to compare to quantitative research. In my opinion, at its core, qualitative research is about humans finding out more about other humans. The process is messier than working with hard numerical and precise mathematical equations, but that is what makes it interesting and beautiful to me, like art. One might also find that numbers can dehumanize experiences as they step away from personal stories and exclude precious details. However, I find that there is an equilibrium that can be reached between these two techniques: numbers and stories. When they coexist, they can balance information and research. There is a plethora of ways to collect data when it comes to NI and case study research. Almost anything can be considered as important information to record; it only depends on the focus of the research and the participant that is being called upon. In case of this research, these methodologies helped to elevate the study because they brought to light what the participant learned/experienced through his life. We heard the narrative through his words, using interviews, photo elicitation discussions, drawing and photograph analyses. Martin's narrative/case was then contextualized with the use of expert opinions, archival documents, and some past research on the topic (Westwood, 2002; Michel, 2004; Hasio, 2010; 2011; Duane, 2019). In the future, I plan to continue with this research trajectory, observing veterans who are returning to education with a larger number of participants in focus groups.

After understanding the theoretical literature surrounding the topic of this thesis and understanding the ways in which the study has been framed, we can now begin to delve into Martin's life story as a Solider Artist. As NI demands, the next chapter presents my father's life, career, and art practice in a re-storied format.

4. Presentation of Data: Re-storying

In this chapter, I present the data collected during this research. I begin by examining the context in which my family was involved with the CAF, relying on personal and official archives. My family's archives constitutes many photographs, but also includes old military books, medals of service, and pieces of objects collected during the Roy men's respective deployments. These were all objects and memorabilia that I had already seen but saw in a different light now as an emerging researcher. With these archives, the focus is on the French-Canadian regiment – the Royal 22nd Regiment (R22R) – because the men in my family were all "22s"[7]. I split the contextualization into two parts: first, with a brief outline of the history of the R22R, and secondly by presenting the socio-economic and political context that influenced these men's career choice. Then, I pivot to my father's narrative and recount my father's life journey becoming a Solider-Artist. As the NI methodological framework demands (Creswell, 2013), the information is presented chronologically and places emphasis on key elements of the story determined by Martin and me, collaboratively.

Contextualizing the Narrative

Before we delve into this historical recount, I must introduce the men in my family who served. Once they are introduced, I believe they operate as "characters" in my research, and this opening helps to facilitate their entry into the contextualized story of Martin. When my father and I traced back our family history (Figure 14), it seemed like all the men had some sort of involvement in the military. Chronologically, we can trace as far back as his great-grand-father on his mother's side (Alfonse Martin) who was deployed during WWI. Alfonse's son, Aimé

[7] "22s" is a colloquial term used to refer to soliders who belong to the R22R.

Martin (1920-2007), who is also Martin's maternal grandfather, was a WWII veteran. His paternal grandfather John-Henry Roy (1924-1997) also served during WWII. John-Henry's son, Michael Roy (1947-2013), served as an officer in the Canadian Army's Reserve (ARes) in his youth. His son, Martin Roy (b. 1970), who is my father, served 17 years. Even though the lineage of military service does not end with my father, I will be focusing on these specific people's stories as they are the ones that impacted Martin's military choices.

The Conscription Dilemma

We begin the historical recount at the start of the 20th century with the conscription dilemma in Canada that arose during both World Wars, though more prominently during WWI. This political decision and its societal ramifications have a rich history that could make up an entire thesis on its own. I will therefore present a brief history of conscription through a more personal lens to illustrate the circumstances that influenced some of the men in our family to become soldiers.

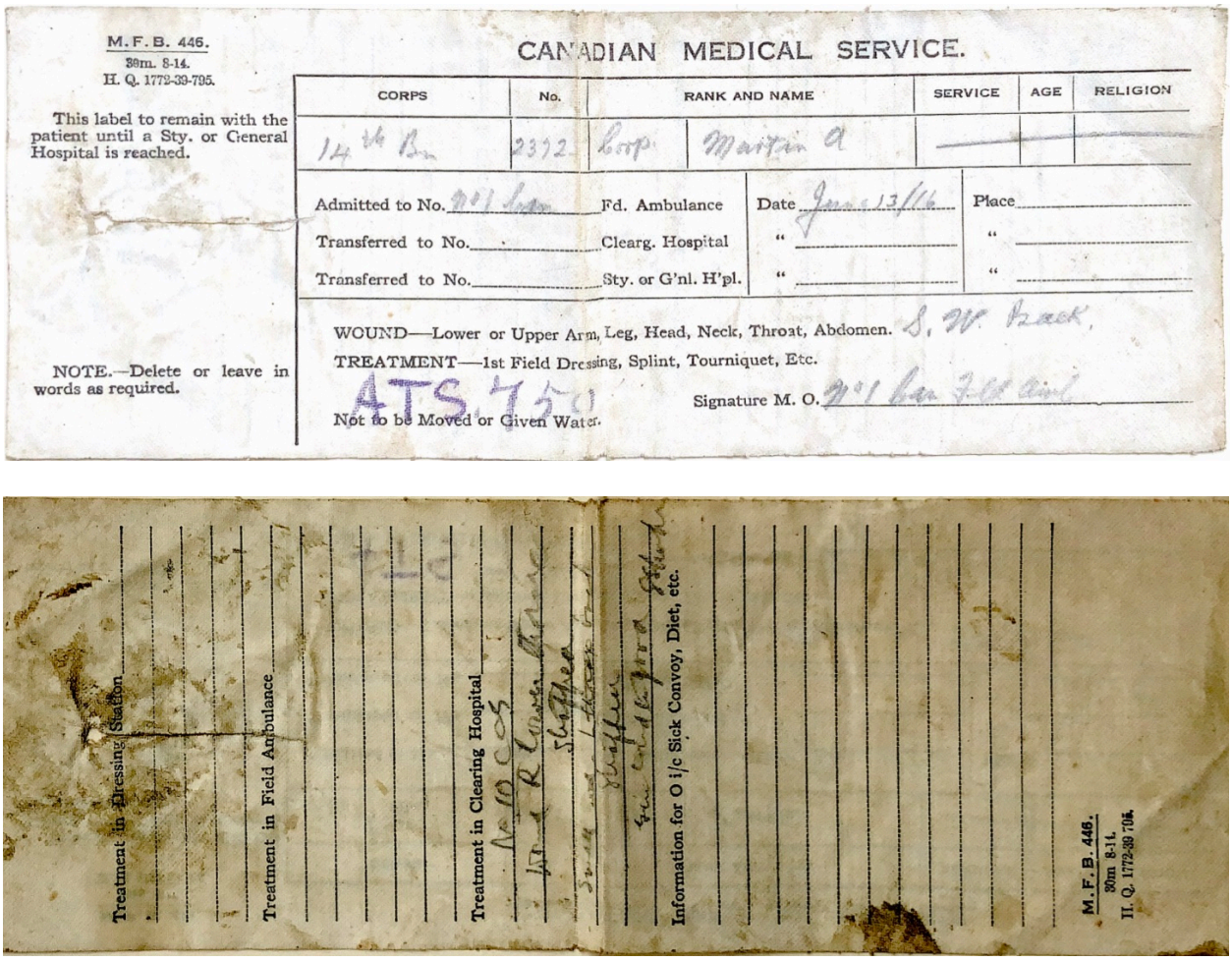
> Conscription is the compulsory enlistment or "call up" of citizens for military service. It is sometimes known as "the draft." The federal government enacted conscription in both the First World War and the Second World War. Both instances created sharp divisions between English Canadians, who tended to support the practice, and French Canadians, who generally did not. Canada does not currently have mandatory military service. (Granatstein et al., 2021)

As the Great War (1914-1918) stretched into years, soldiers were falling, numbers were declining, and recruiting became more complicated. As a result, the Canadian government leader at the time, Prime Minister Borden (1911-1920), urged conscription. The political and social divide that this brought between the English Canadians and the French-Canadians cannot be

understated. The political strategies and promises between the federal government and the Quebec government were arduous and created lasting tensions between the two. Despite the difficult process, the Military Service Act was imposed in 1917, three years into WWI (Granatstein et al., 2021). Some academics argue that this imposition could have been one of the early catalysts for Quebec Nationalism (Harbour, 1989), a political program movement which prioritizes the independence of Quebec from the rest of Canada. According to Granatstein et al. (2021), the "deep divisions in the country" that conscription recreated are still felt today. "People in Quebec weren't happy about the conscription at all!" my grandmother told me during one of our recent phone calls. Suddenly, every man aged between 20 to 45 were "subject to [be] call[ed]-up for military service" and for a war that was not theirs some could argue (Preston et al., 2021). It is unclear what urged Martin's great-grandfather Alfonse Martin to join the Forces, but a well-preserved medical tag reveals that he was deployed to Europe a year before the Military Act law was passed (see Figure 18). This is key information because it echoed throughout the Roy and Martin men who followed him. His will to join the Forces wasn't the only thing that inspired his progeny. Alfonse's war mementos were also passed down to his sons and their sons making their way to Martin. Years into Martin's military service, when exchanging war stories with his grandfather, he was given Alfonse's bloody injury tag (see Figure 18). On the front, we can observe that Alfonse suffered from a back injury and was taken in by "Canadian Medical Service" on June 13th, 1916. I learned, given the nature of my research, that coming across specific dates is a rare thing, especially when considering that much of my research relied heavily on memories, passed down spoken-word stories, and collected artefacts (pictures, medals, quick sketches, old pieces of cutup uniforms, etc.).

Figure 18

Alfonse Martin's Canadian Medical Service Tag (1916)



Note. (Top) front; (Bottom) back. This well-preserved medical tag placed on my great-great grandfather during WWI helped Martin and I situate where he was deployed over 100 years ago. From Martin's personal archives.

The "June 13/16" inscription on my great-great-grandfathers' tag in Figure 18 speaks volumes. According to the Canadian War Museum database, this specific date marked the end of the end of the Battle of Mount Sorrel in Belgium. Although there is no location indicated on the tag, both my grandmother and father believe that there is a strong possibility that he took part in the Battle which spanned over eleven days in the summer of 1916 (Greenhous & Tattrie, 2014).

With this artefact came the realization (as a novice researcher) that every tiny piece of information counts–perhaps this is akin to being a "historical" detective. Through this discovery, I was reminded of my purpose as a researcher, and understood that every item from my father's memory box informed his story and has the potential to reveal segments of what may be described by popular media as "the butterfly effect" of events that influenced him to become a Solider Artist. "Memory box" is used here to describe my father's cardboard box filled with old photographs, letters, military documents, military medals, and ID cards that he kept from his years of service. It is stored, and has always been stored, in the back of his walk-in closet amongst his clothes. This box is separate from the box filled with photographs (mentioned later in the thesis) which he gave me during our collaborative research.

The Royal 22nd Regiment, R22R

Lieutenant Colonel Corriveau (1989) succinctly explains how the R22R was founded, "À l'aube de la Grande Guerre, les Canadiens français réclament la formation d'une unit. Bien à eux. Le 20 octobre 1914, le recrutement officiel est autorisé et le lendemain, la Gazette du Canada publie la naissance de l'unité"[8] (p. 13). To me, this begged the question: Why was there a sudden need for a French-Canadian regiment at that particular time? The answer is both simple and loaded: it is because of the province of Quebec's complicated and taut history with the rest of the federation (Rocher, 2002). Without wanting to venture too deeply into the field of politics and Quebec Nationalism, I will rely on the observations of Rocher (2002) in saying that "the dominant ideology in Quebec is nationalism, and that partisan activism has been the means for promoting knowledge of Quebec's uniqueness within Canada." (p. 1). Today, I would reaerate

[8] French passage translated to English: "At the Great War's dawn, the French-Canadians demand the formation of a unit of their own. On October 20th, 1914, the official recruitment was authorized and the following day, the Canada Gazette published the birth the of unit."

this statement in the past tense because research shows that this sense of nationalism appears to have quietened after the second referendum of the mid-nineties (Rocher, 2002, p. 2; Changfoot & Cullen, 2011). Many Quebecois–especially those who belong to the generations that precede mine–view the province as one which stands out from the rest of Canada in terms of ideology (Meadwell, 1993), language, socioeconomic contribution, and as being marginalized (Rocher, 2002, p. 3; Pépin et al., 2021). Essentially, on some level French-Canadians did not feel a sense of belonging to the country and by extension the federation's fight. One could then argue that the formation of the R22R was a sort of "partisan activism [as a] means for promoting (…) Quebec's uniqueness within Canada" (Rocher, 2002, p. 1) and used as a way to entice the younger population to enlist at the time. On the other hand, one could also argue that the birth of a French-Canadian Battalion gave the province a proper standing within the CAF as opposed to their smaller militia regiments. Nevertheless, the claim that forming a Quebecois military branch would help recruit more men to join the Canadian Forces during WWI is supported by letters between Prime Ministers Sir Robert L. Borden, Sir Wilfred Laurier, and Captain Arthur Migneault (Corriveau, 1989, pp. 18-21). The fact that French-Canadian men were not joining the fight was problematic as men are a precious commodity in wars. In the end, I believe that the old cliché "strength in numbers" was the convincing argument that birthed the R22R.

Martin's Oral History: The Soldier Artist

Let us journey back to rural Quebec's Bas-Saint-Laurent region in the 1970s in order to contextualize this study's main participant's narrative. Martin was born in the early summer of 1970 into a family of modest means with, as outlined earlier in the chapter, a long history of military service. His father, my papy, had been one of the youngest officers of the Fusilier du Saint-Laurent. When he married my grandmother, he left his part-time job working for the

militia regiment and found odd jobs around the Bas-Saint-Laurent region to support his growing family.

It was clear every time we met for our interviews that Martin loved his grandfather (Gros-Papa) and enjoyed going to his house as a child. My dad's most vivid memory associated with Gros-Papa is sitting in his living room and flipping through his collection of military books always on display. As a young boy, Martin took pleasure looking at the old black-and-white photographs and creating his own stories based on the images. He sat in the small living room looking at them over and over again. The photographs were carved into his subconscious. Sometimes, Gros-Papa would sit down with him and explain the stories behind some of the photographs. He would tell him about his time in Italy during WWII and the training he underwent in England (Corriveau, 1989, pp. 46-47). He showed him the Italian prayer that he found and held onto during his time in Europe (see Figure 19). According to Martin (Interview 3, 2021), "Il pensait que ça le protégeait à la guerre et je pense qu'il a même écrit sa propre prière pour aller avec. Bien, je pense, sa mère l'a peut-être écrit aussi"[9] (see Figure 20).

[9] French quote translated to English: "He believed that it protected him during the war and I think that he even wrote his own prayer to go with it. Well, I suppose that he wrote it, but his mother might've done too"

Figure 19

Aimé Martin's (Gros-Papa) Italian Prayer (1943)

Note. (Left) front; (Right) back. My great grandfather found this Italian prayer during his WWI deployment in Italy. He kept it safe with him tucked away in his uniform as a good luck charm. When my father joined the CAF, Gros-Papa gave him his protection prayers. In December 2021, my cousin was deployed in Eastern-Europe, and my father passed on this protective prayer to him... maintaining the family tradition. From Martin's personal archives.

Figure 20

Aimé Martin's WWII Goodluck Charms

Note. These trinkets were passed down from my great-grand-father to my father when he joined the Forces. They were given to him as good luck tokens for when he was deployed. From Martin's personal archives.

1 – Blessed religious relic depicting St-Christophe.

2 – Reads "Heart of Mary pray for us now and at our hour of". One can only suppose that the last word which has been cut off with time read "need".

3 – Reads "Saint-Christophe protegez-nous" which translates to "St-Christophe protect us". This coin-like religious relic was given to Gros Papa by his family or his church (unclear) before his WWII deployment.

4 – Weathered canvas pouch in which he sorted items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. This pouch was kept in one of his front pockets of his military uniforms.

5 – Reads "Apostolat de la Prière", which translates to "Apostolate of Prayer". Upon further research, I discovered that the damaged bottom section reads "que votre règne arrive", which translates to "may your

reign come". This illustration of Jesus's Sacred Heart is a blessed relic from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

6 – It remains unclear whether Gros-Papa wrote this prayer himself, or if another family member did for his safekeeping. Nevertheless, this written prayer accompanied his Italian prayer during his WWI deployment.

7 – Reads "Madonna del buon ritorno" in Italian, which translates to "Mary of the good return". This image was made by artist Giovanni Battista Conti for soldiers of War in 1942. The prayer was titled "Our Lady of Good Return" in English. Later, this version of Madonna became the patron for veterans and MIA (missing in action) soldiers (Fototeca Gilardi, 2020). In it, we can see a solider kneeling to Mary and praying to baby Jesus. Gros Papa collected this prayer during his company's mission in Italy. This now 80-year-old piece of paper is sorted in a transparent plastic pocket in my father's memory box.

These old pieces of paper remind me of Alfonse's bloody medical tag (Figure 18); they look historic and precious. The two prayers are carefully folded up old pieces of paper protected by an 80-year-old piece of cloth which Gros-Papa obtained during his deployment. It looks like it might have been cut-out of some military gear, perhaps a sleeve or the corner of a bag. Now, they have become WWII family relics. Their meaning has transformed over time and look to me like they belong in a museum; artifacts to be marveled at, researched, and re-storied. These relics, along with other family archives are discussed in more detail under the Family Archives section of this chapter.

In 1988, at seventeen-years-old, Martin preferred enlisting in the CAF to pursuing higher education. Like many before him, he believed that the army promised to be an exciting profession full of adventures; it seemed like a good way to travel away from school benches. During this transition from formal education to vocational training, my grandmother who valued education above all, encouraged him to pursue his other passion and enroll in art school in case

he was not “called-up”. Every time my father tells me his story, he explains that drawing had always been a hobby for him, and that art was the only subject that motivated him to stay in school as per his mother’s request. After completing his first semester at CEGEP de Sherbrooke, he was called-up by the CAF. His pursuit of becoming an art teacher ended and his harsh military training began. In 1989, years after sitting in his grand-father’s living room, Martin finally earned his own Beaver badge, the R22R insignia, at 17-years-old (see Figure 21). To receive one signifies that you are now a soldier. The adventures that he had imagined as a young man turned out to be grimmer than expected, and photography was a way to document his two deployments in ex-Yugoslavia as well as his seventeen years of service. Though he never did finish art school, the need to make art never left him and became a part of his LLL journey.

Figure 21

Three Generations of R22R Beaver Badges

Note. (Left) Aimé’s R22R Beaver badge with the King George V’s insignia; (Middle) Michael’s Les Fusiliers du St-Laurent’s militia badge; (Right) Martin’s R22R Beaver badge with Queen Elizabeth II’s insignia. From Martin’s personal archives.

Later in 1989, he attended the regiment’s 75th anniversary celebration. Soldiers were distributed a book: *Le Royal 22e Regiment: 75 Ans d’Histoire, 1914-1919* (Corriveau, 1989), and

just like he did when he was a boy, Martin sat flipping through the pages, looking mainly at the pictures. It felt oddly familiar. Halfway through, he stopped: "'C'est Gros-Papa! C'est mon grand-père!' J'ai tenu le livre ouvert et je l'ai dit à tous mes amis. Je n'arrivais pas à croire que cette photo-là était là. Il me l'avait montré quand j'étais plus jeune dans un vieux journal Britannique."[10] (Martin, 2021, Interview 3). The image is a sepia tone photograph of soldiers walking in line formation, one behind the other, along the side of a rural road. The caption reads, "Le major G. Turcot et sa compagnie s'entraînent dans la campagne anglaise (1943)."[11] (Corriveau, p. 49). This image was a key component during the photo-elicitation interview, and it is discussed in further detail under the Photo Elicitation section of this chapter.

[10] French caption translated to English: "'that's Gros-Papa… That's my grand-father!' I held the book open and told all my friends 'that's my grand-father!' I couldn't believe that picture of him was there! He had shown it to me when I was younger in an old British newspaper."
[11] French caption translated to English: "Major G. Turcot and his company training in the English countryside"

Figure 22

Aimé Martin (Gros-Papa) in England (1943)

Note. Gros-Papa is the third man to the left wearing a communications radio, walking with his R22R military company prior to his deployment in Italy during WWI. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

One thing becomes clear as I start collecting my dad's artwork and his myriad of stories: photography was his preferred medium. After sitting with him for hours going through photographs, memory boxes and military books, I began to imagine of him as a boy sitting in Gros-Papa's living room looking at dated photobooks and making-up stories to animate the images and create his own version of comics. Now, he has his own work and his own stories to illustrate his memories. Parallelly, I observe that these photobooks were subconsciously ingrained in him because he kept doing exactly this throughout his journey: capturing his brothers-in-arms on film. It is important to note here that film photography is different in

materiality to digital photography, which we are more accustomed to nowadays. Film requires special care and, out in the field, must be carefully preserved from water and weather damage. There is a level of preciousness added to the artistic process. The word “experience” comes back to mind (Clandinin, 2006, pp. 45-46). Martin’s past experiences deeply influenced his future choices, and I believe it is what inspired his pursuit of photography as a way to capture his world. Unsurprisingly to me, his favourite photographs are the black-and-white ones, though he never made the connection as to why (see Figures 23-26).

Figure 23

Black-and-White Germany Series #1, M. Roy (late 1980s & early 1990s)

Note. Martin captured this image using his 35mm film camera, on the American military base near Lahr (Germany) at the end of the Cold War. Photograph from Martin’s personal archives.

Figure 24

Black-and-White Germany Series #2, M. Roy. (late 1980s & early 1990s)

Note.. This photograph of Martin in his early twenties was captured by an unknown brother-in-arm using Martin's 35mm film camera, on the American military base near Lahr (Germany) at the end of the Cold War. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

Figure 25

Black-and-White Germany Series #3, M. Roy (late 1980s & early 1990s).

Note. Martin captured this image using his 35mm film camera, on the American military base near Lahr (Germany) at the end of the Cold War. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

As an artist-researcher and pedagogue, I am fascinated that he never noticed the link between his military service, his art practice, and his childhood. To him, all three coexist but are mutually exclusive. Where I see connections and transformative life-long learning, he sees happy coincidences. At first when I pointed this out, he said nothing; then his facial expression gradually changed. As his daughter, I could see that he was moved and perhaps even thinking back on his own stories, the story of his life.

Figure 26

Black-and-White Germany Series: Burger, by M. Roy (late 1980s & early 1990s).

Note. Martin captured this image of his roommate affectionately nicknamed “Burger” using his 35mm film camera, on the American military base near Lahr (Germany) at the end of the Cold War. Photograph from Martin’s personal archives.

As artists, we tend to communicate visually. We are drawn to things that move us, and are prompted to materialize them using paint, paper, clay, cameras, film, etc. While some use different languages to communicate, we use various mediums. As we learn to master things like paint and charcoal, our preferred materials begin to feel familiar. Through our many discussions, I concluded that intrinsically photography felt natural to Martin. It was what he was exposed to during his childhood, and later it became an easy material to carry and store amongst his military gear when he was on the go. “J’ai toujours été plus un gars qui fait les choses. Je ne pense pas à

tout ce qui va autours, et ce qui sort c'est ce qui sort. Quand j'aime le medium, bien j'y vais."[12] (Roy, 2021, Interview 5). To me, this quote resembles an artist statement as well as a soldier's training. Soldiers are taught to be quiet, never question orders, and "just do it" as Martin so succinctly said. Many of his photographs feel the same way–impulsive action shots. He took quick images using a light portable and disposable camera (see Figures 23-26). He told me that his bosses allowed him to take his camera out in the field with him. Some of his friends would even pose for him or re-enact moments for Martin to capture. To continue understanding Martin's story as a self-taught artist soldier, we must investigate the content of his photographs and uncover the stories that lie within them. I did so through photo elicitation (Prosser & Loxley, 2008).

Photo Elicitation

Photos are powerful visual reminders of what actually happened. As Prosser and Loxley (2008, p. 5) explain, elicitation material "provoke[s] other data" and that "found or existing images can be used as data or springboards for theorizing" (e.g., as was the case with Alfonse's medical tag in Figure 18). As such, I decided to use elicitation material to provoke other data which surfaced during the interviews. Furthermore, research shows that they can act as powerful memory prompts (Prosser & Loxley, 2008). Hasio (2010; 2011) also used this data collection method in her research centering on veteran-made art, which in turn helped me to conclude that artworks are interesting conversation openers and frame discussions differently to traditional question-and-answer interview formats. This was one of the many reasons why I felt compelled

[12] French quote translated to English: "I've always been more of a 'just do it' kind of guy. I don't think things through, and what comes out comes out. When I like the medium, or anything, I just go for it."

to use photo elicitation as a data collection method. These next sections are presented in the chronological order that they were photographed by Martin.

I decided to select photographs from the two time periods in front me: those shot pre-Bosnian deployment, and those shot during his first week in Bosnia. I could not overlook the heavy military past that shaped Martin either, so I selected photos from our family archives. As such, the photo elicitation interview could be separated into three formative periods of his life: pre-military service, early military service, and Bosnian deployment. First, his pre-military service acted as the foundation for his Soldier Artist identity. Next, his early military marked an era of abundant artmaking and experimenting. Finally, his creative practice was put on hold due to the horrors of war witnessed as a peacekeeper.

Pre-Military Photographs

The image of Gros-Papa walking with his military company in rural England is an image we still talk about in my family today (see Figure 22), and I strongly believe that it played an important role in Martin becoming a Soldier Artist. The image's photographer remains unknown. Being new to the photo elicitation interview process, I opted to begin the conversation by having Martin describe the photograph in Figure 22. The interview questions came naturally once he started describing the scene. His military training appeared instantly. He was methodical and read the image from left to right.

The man on the far left, talking to his radio, is Major G. Turcot. The colleague to his right wearing a helmet, in center frame, is most probably the Major's Chief Warrant Officer. The man just behind him is Gros-Papa (Aimé Martin). He is wearing the headphones because he was the Signaller, the one in charge of communicating important information to surrounding troops. Martin went on to explain that clear and unobstructed communication is vital on the battlefield.

Consequently, signalers are very important and often remain near the commanding officers. On the battlefield, everyone is instructed to remove their ranks from their uniforms so that enemy snipers have a harder time shooting those in charge. However, a good way to determine who is in charge when the ranks are not visible is to spot people like my great-grandfather (i.e., signalers) as military leaders usually stay near the radio to strategize, give commands, and stay informed.

Martin then explained that he knows about this kind of plan of action because it was part of his "reconnaissance" (i.e., scouting) training. In fact, his primary job was as a recce, or "recon" as more commonly referred to by our American neighbours. Soldiers who undergo recce training need to learn and practice every position, including giving commands and sniper work. They must do so because they are tasked with hiding on the frontlines where they secretly scout as much information as they can on the enemy troops. "En bout de line, on est les yeux et les oreilles du bataillon."[13] (Roy, Interview 3, 2021). It is vital to know how everything works for recces to accurately observe their opponents and relay precise information to the officers. Martin underwent part of this training on an American military base in Germany during the four-year period he lived there (between 1989 and 1993). During the Cold War, the CAF also had a military base in Lahr, Germany. Amongst its many divisions was the R22R's 1st Battalion, which my father belonged to. Whilst stationed there, his unit would often train on other ally army bases including the Americans' base. The photo of Gros-Papa and the story behind it lead to an important series of black-and-white photographs taken on the American base in Germany, which showed me that if you listen carefully to people's oral histories, their individual stories often intersect beautifully with their life story.

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[13] French quote translated to English: "At the bottom-line, we are the eyes and ears of the battalion."

Early Military Photographs

"Dans le temps, tout le monde prenait des photos, tout le monde avait des petites caméras en plastique. Par contre, pas tout le monde achetait des films noir et blanc."[14] Martin's photography work bloomed in late eighties and early nineties while living in Germany. His military career had finally taken him abroad and his adventure began. He shot everything: his room, friends, trips, girlfriends, food, cars, etc. There are hundreds of photographs from that time in his photo box. Those he cherishes most though, are the black-and-white ones. We focused on one in Figure 26 capturing his roommate Danny B, or "Burger" as his brothers-in-arms affectionately called him, standing in front of a Tank Test Bed (TTB). Martin wanted to focus on that one because he liked the composition; I did so too, because the composition reminded me of the drawing, depicted in Figure 13, that he made during his semester in art school. There's a strange parallel in the composition of both works. The center frame is dominated by the military vehicles, soldiers are in and around the tank. There are two poles in the left side framing the setting. Martin noted how strange that felt to him, that a piece of work made before he joined the CAF foreshadowed a scene in his future. It is an interesting wink to his younger self. The photo of Burger reminded him of comradery and some of the pranks that they used to play on each other. There are happy memories are attached to this series; I could see it in his smile and hear it in his voice. Our favorite picture from this series is the image of him standing tall in the middle of an American airfield, holding a beer with his left arm outstretched and a helicopter flying low in the sky (see Figure 1). It is a simple composition, which is what we both like. There are no distractions, just him waving to the photographer who was probably a friend. His features are

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[14] French quote translated to English: "At the time, everyone took photos, everyone had little plastic cameras. However, not everyone bought black-and-white film."

shadowed by the low light setting so that only his silhouette remain. In fact, you really must know Martin to know that it is him waving back. It could be any man, any solider. When I look at it, I am reminded that he is not the only man who has lived this sort of experience. There are others, such as Frédérick Lavergne, who have their own photos and oral histories to share with us and educate us. Each story matters.

Harper's (2002) paper enlightened me to the benefits of photo elicitation as a data collection technique. As mentioned before, memories and photo elicitation work in symbiosis. Like Harper (2002, p. 13), I too will borrow Berger's (1992) explanation of how memories and photography play into one another,

> The thrill found in a photograph comes from the onrush of memory. This is obvious when it's a picture of something we once knew. That house we lived in. Mother when young. (…). Memory is a strange faculty. The sharper and more isolated the stimulus memory receives, the more it remembers; the more comprehensive the stimulus, the less it remembers. This is perhaps why black-and-white photography is paradoxically more evocative than colour photography. It stimulates a faster onrush of memories because less has been given, more has been left out (…). (Berger, 1992, pp. 192-193)

This passage rings true to me because it reminds me deeply of my interviews with my father. It seems that Berger was able to explain the unexplainable to me. I often wondered why the black and white photographs had deeper emotional tones attached to them. I theorized, as Prossler and Loxley (2008, p. 5) suggest doing, that it was perhaps because they mirrored the old photographs that Martin had looked at as a child. Berger (1992) and Harper (2002) suggest a more "scientific" theory to mine: black-and-white photographs are, in a sense, more minimalistic which helps leaves space for thought–for memories (pp. 192-193). Comparably, my father said this during

one of our interviews that he likes the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" because he thinks that it is true. To him, black-and-white is timeless, classic, and authentic. We are not distracted by the colours and it is all about the subject. That being said, it was not something that he necessarily thought about at the time. He posits that it was always intuitive (Roy, 2021, Interview 3). Without knowing, he was reiterating Berger's sentiment. I agree with my father that his choice of film was always an intuitive choice. More specifically, it was an intuitive artistic choice that he did not learn in a formal classroom; it is something that he learned through trial and error, or SDL, and something that he taught himself. As an art educator, I find this to be an interesting pedagogical "happening"[15]. To me, it reinforces the idea that art can be taught to a certain extent but that being an artist cannot; it is something that must come from within the student. This also reinforces the notion that art educators are facilitators, not the sole custodians of artistic knowledge; and I think that this is one of the many things that our field can learn from (self-taught) artists.

Photographs from Sarajevo

Given the emotional importance of this period in his life and the limited number of images salvaged, we decided to talk about all five images during our third interview. My father and I both wanted to carve out an appropriate amount of space for these photos in this part of the redaction. Therefore, all five images are described and commented on.

As someone who has had to analyze visual works many times over my education career, one thing jumps out from the images and drawings that my father created pre-Yugoslavian deployment: the eagerness for adventure. This feeling fades in his Sarajevo series in 1993. The

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[15] I use the word *happening* here for lack of a better term. My father's intangible self-taught journey is hard to describe at times. Things just happened or occurred.

series was shot during his first week on Balkan land, marking his first deployment in a warzone when he was only twenty-three years old. Suddenly the pictures are in colour, but they all have a cold blue cast, a natural filter, and a subtle reminder of the UN's colours. A mix of UN effigies are present in almost every shot, they appear as helmets, flags, and tags on the sides of large white tanks. I wonder if the imagery was everywhere or if Martin captured these effigies because he was proud to be associated with this internationally recognized Peacekeeping institution like Érik Moyneur talked about (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). My father cannot really remember what exactly would prompt him, over twenty years ago, to get out his cheap 35mm camera from his front pocket and click the round button. He also cannot remember what happened to that camera.

The series starts with a high contrast shot of the inside of a cargo-like military plane, Martin thinks maybe a Hercules (Figure 27). Two soldiers in full military gear are catering to an amorphous box with the back door of the plane open behind them. Martin explained that this is what they were transported in from Canada to Bosnia. He still remembers how uncomfortable the ride was from his jump seat and how the plane barely stopped when they reached their destination. They all had to jump out of the open door onto the tarmac. There is no chronology to the rest of the four photographs; he talked about them in the order that felt most natural to him.

Figure 27

Sarajevo Series: Cargaison Précieuse, M. Roy (1993)

Note. Captured with a 35mm film camera during his first week in Sarajevo, Bosnia (1993). This was taken in the large CAF plane that dropped his troop in the Balkans. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

In Figure 28, we can see Martin standing in the foreground of the frame, smiling at the camera holding up his right hand making a peace sign. He blends into the other dozens of soldiers around him who are dressed exactly the same. Some are walking into the scene, while others are sat in vehicles in the middle ground. In the background, we can observe part of the Sarajevo city skyline. "Il y avait des trous de balles partout sur les murs des immeubles."[16] (Roy,

[16] French quote translated to English: "There were bullet holes everywhere on the buildings' walls."

Interview 3, 2021). As he said this, my mind automatically jumped to the bullet holes that the four men see right from the start from their rental car in Lefebvre and Lessard's (2019) documentary, *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre*. Their narrative and that of my father continuously intersect as I begin to create my own memories. Figure 29 looks like it was taken within a few minutes of Figure 28.

Figure 28

Sarajevo Series: QG UN Sarajevo, Unknown (1993)

Note. Shot by an unknown brother-in-arm using Martin's 35mm film camera during his first week in Sarajevo, Bosnia. This was taken at the UNs' General Headquarters. Martin is smiling and holding up a peace sign to the photographer. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

We can see Martin more clearly in this shot. He is holding a large bag strapped over his shoulder, still smiling, and standing straight in front of a large, dirty white tank. He looks young dressed in his full military gear and light blue helmet, younger than I am, which to me emphasized his vulnerability. The vehicle is another TTB which could accommodate up to ten men, according to Martin's memories. The TTB is so large behind him; the stark and muddy vehicles make this picture even grimmer.

Figure 29

Sarajevo Series: Ti-Roy le Casque-Bleu, Unknown (1993)

Note. Shot by an unknown brother-in-arm using Martin's 35mm film camera during his first week in Sarajevo, Bosnia. This was taken at the UNs' General Headquarters. Martin is smiling in front of a large TTB. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

The grey sky reinforces the uncomfortable environment, it lets us know that it was wet and cold on that day. The dirt floor has turned into mushy mud. It stains everything in the frame and is true to the distant image many of us have of areas that have been devastated by war. As our conversation progressed, Martin's description of the images shortened and became more focused on the facts rather than the narrative behind it. When we arrived at the fourth image, we only looked at it; *Cimetière Sarajévien* is self-explanatory (see Figure 30).

Figure 30

Sarajevo Series : Cimetière Sarajévien, M. Roy (1993)

Note. Captured with a 35mm film camera during his first week in Sarajevo, Bosnia (1993). This was taken in on his way to the heart of the city whilst being carried by a military bus. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

The composition is horizontally split in two by the cemetery wall: the bottom half is dominated by messy rows of tomb stones. The eerie assortment of black and white, of stone and of cement tombs darken the image. The top half of the frame is populated by war-ridden architecture. The winter atmosphere can be seen in the absence of greenery, the bare tree, the wet rooftops, and the sky's grey haze. The skeleton of a bombed building sits in the middle of the shot. Its walls appear to have crumbled to the ground because we can see through the structure. Only a few floors remain.

Finally, the last image brought Martin's smile back (see Figure 31), mirroring the facial expressions in *Trois Ingénieurs* (1993). He remembers taking their picture while they were enjoying a quick drink in a large TTB.

> Si je me souviens bien, la fille s'appelait Natalie mais je ne suis pas certain. Elle participait à des compétitions de body building! Elle était forte comme dix gars! Leur TTB avait une grosse pelle devant. On se déplaçaient avec les ingénieurs des fois parce qu'ils nettoyaient le chemin ou ils faisaient du déminage. Ils étaient là entre autres pour faire des genres de réparations et faciliter le transport.[17] (Roy, Interview 3, 2021)

The composition of *Trois Ingénieurs* reminded us both, once again, of his drawing *Homme & Tank* (see Figure 13) made during his semester in art school and *Burger* (see Figure 26) at the American base in Germany. The similarities are arguably more striking this time. All three images have flagpoles framing the left side of the setting, and a small amount (trio) of soldiers sitting in center frame.

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[17] French quote translated to English: "If I remember correctly, the lady was called Natalie but I'm not sure. She competed in body building competitions! She was as strong as ten guys! Their TTB had a big shovel in front. We would ride with engineers sometimes because they would clear the road or demine. They were there, amongst other things, to fix things and facilitate transport."

Figure 31

Sarajevo Series: Trois Ingénieurs, M. Roy (1993)

Note. Captured with a 35mm film camera during his first week in Sarajevo, Bosnia (1993). This was taken in the Bosnian countryside in a large TTB. Photograph from Martin's personal archives.

There is a subconscious recurring imagery and stylistic choice that Martin employed throughout his military photography practice. This photography style echoes through three vastly differently periods in his life. What we both concluded after discussing these images is that he did not want to capture what he saw during the Bosnian civil war. Living through it once was enough. I concluded that he felt that there was no need to immortalize this period in his life. The photo elicitation interview stood out to both him and I, in comparison to our other discussions throughout the course of this research project. Perhaps Harper's (2002) thought helps explain why that is: "(…) the parts of the brain that process visual information are evolutionarily older

than the parts that process verbal information. Thus, images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness that do words (…)" (p. 13). I would argue that this is why we conduct art critiques and have added "art appreciation" as the third competency to evaluate students on in visual art courses. Making art is highly beneficial for several reasons stated throughout this thesis, but coming together and discussing the ideas, intentions, and stories behind works of art has tremendous value as well.

Elicitation and PTSD

PTSD can be odd for those who do not live with it. Hart (2015) explains that they can be anything from auditory, olfactory, or visual cues (p. 308). They appear to be random to outsiders, but they are in fact attached to very specific memories which are sometimes buried so deep in one's subconscious that they seem highly unfamiliar at first glance (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). This is illustrated in *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre*, during Dominique Brière's testimony. He shares with us a vivid memory that has stayed with him twenty years on. At age 21, during one of his patrols in the infamous city of Srebrenica, Brière was ushered to a local's house in a panic. Once he arrived, the Blue Helmet understood that the man wanted him to help his wife in labour. Both of them had no idea what to do, the woman had her baby, and some medics came shortly after. At this point in the interview, Dominique's voice quivers. When he left the poorly lit house, the father asked for his name so that he could name his newborn after the kind soldier who had come to their aid. The emotional ramifications of this encounter were fully felt later in Dominique's life. He said, "quand j'ai assisté à l'accouchement de mon garçon, ça a été mon 'trigger'. Mon élément déclencheur pour mon PTSD. Comme quoi un évènement qui soit est positif, peu aussi devenir un 'trigger', un élément déclencheur pour un syndrome de stress post-

traumatique."[18] (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019). This veteran's story taught me that I had to be careful and mindful of potential triggers, especially during our third interview.

It was important to ensure that the images selected for the photo elicitation portion were not triggering images. There is a fine line to navigate here because my father's PTSD triggers are not explicitly known to me. To that, he argues that they most probably still are not all explicit to him either. Again, I am thankful for our father-daughter relationship as it allowed me to safely navigate curating the images with the trust in my questions. As outlined in the consent form, Martin was instructed before the interview started to pass on any questions or visual material that he did not want to speak about. There were no images that he passed on. The only material that Martin opted out of viewing is the Radio-Canada documentary. The synopsis was enough to indicate to him that the content would most likely be too triggering. You can see the years of experience that he has dealing with his PTSD in this decision. Martin knows what is okay and what becomes too much and feels comfortable voicing it. My father now identifies as being on the milder side of the spectrum. His PTSD is something he lives with, like vivid memories, rather than something that defines him, like a disorder.

Armstrong's (2019) experience with intergenerational trauma and how her family lived through her father's PTSD demonstrates the large range of the PTSD spectrum. Her excerpt from *split minds* lies on the heavier side of the spectrum, compared to my father's current state of mind. In my view, their stories exist on opposite sides of the spectrum. This excerpt helped me

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[18] French quote translated to English "When I attended my boy's delivery, that was my 'trigger'. The trigger for my PTSD. It just goes to show that an event that is positive can also become a 'trigger', a trigger for post-traumatic stress syndrome."

understand some of the nuances of his PTSD and, in this way, assisted me in navigating the photo elicitation conversation.

Finally, given the close nature of my relationship with Martin, it was important to the research process that I keep a reflective journal in order to take a step back from the data, problem-solve, map out how to proceed, and ultimately navigate our father-daughter/participant-researcher relationship. It was also a place where I could write down the thoughts freely and without any academic constraints. At times, some reflective writing entries morphed into method writing. This was inspired by Armstrong's *split minds* excerpt (2019, p. 30). In order to be successful in method writing, she argues that the writer must let go of any constraints and simply write freely. In her case, she opted to write in the third person at times as a way dissociate the traumatic memories from herself and write about them from a distance (Armstrong, 2019, p. 22). I decided to do the mirror opposite of this. In my case, I was trying to put myself in my father's shoes at times to understand his history more deeply. Therefore, I wrote in the first person imitating an internal dialogue or a diary entry (Appendix A). It felt odd and out of place to do so at first, but the writing exercise helped release internal thoughts. I am still unsure whether the exercise helped me "develop greater authenticity" as Armstrong (2019) said; however, the process was cathartic and helped me move on with my research.

5. Data Analysis

Data Analysis

The data collection process is particularly important in this study because it moulds the research; it is the starting point and framework from which everything unravels. The collection process was divided into three steps: 1) the main participant; 2) academic's encounters with Soldier Artists; and 3) expert sources. The data was collected using a variety of methods, each of which depended on which step I was soliciting information for. As seen in chapter four, to best understand my father's stories, I interviewed him, conducted photo-elicitation sessions, and explored/photographed/drew from family archives. Then, to contextualize his story, I went to the existing literature and found the stories of other Solider Artists in the work of Michel (2004) and Hasio (2010; 2011). I also explored the work of Quebecois veteran Frederick Lavergne (2007) bilaterally to Lefebvre & Lessard's documentary (2019). These stories were then analyzed using a compare-and-contrast method. Finally, I moved to the final step, expert sources, to understand how larger organisations and institutions are catering to Canadian veterans today. Since I used several sets of data to frame this study, I needed to analyze them separately before I could cross-reference and group my information.

The Main Participant

Interviews 1 and 2

The research process began with a series of interviews with my father. I was able to stick with my initial plan and conduct four interview sessions, with specific goals and elicitation methods. The first conversation was used as an ice breaker, which was structured to seek out biographical information in order to create a timeline of events for his deployment and the artmaking that arose. I sought to detangle the timeline of Martin's life that I knew from being a

family member that he confided in into a coherent and engaging string. As outlined in the third chapter, NI calls for information to be relayed chronologically (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 4), and that is the foundation on which I wanted to begin the research. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue that empirical data is key to NI as it sets a basis for credibility. It is what distinguishes the work from fact and fiction in some ways (p. 5). I found working from one's memory to be a difficult challenge to navigate at first. Later, the story was anchored with the family archives, memorabilia, and photographs; they were tangible pillars in time that scaffolded the conversation and research.

What I was able to ascertain from this interview is his journey from 1988, when he finished high school, applied to the CAF, and completed a semester of CEGEP in an art program, to 2004, when he left the Forces with a medical discharge (PTSD). Together, we talked about his life story and carefully tracked his professional career. He led the interview as he comfortably moved from year to year to the best of his ability. I mapped the conversation with questions that redirected him to the topic at hand and prompted further details when necessary, much like I do as a teacher. The idea was to act as a facilitator, not as the dominating force of the interview. I chose to navigate the participant/researcher relationship by modelling it after my teaching philosophy and student/teacher relationship structure. During the interview, I knew that we would have to revisit the timeline and add his art practice as an additional layer. His soldier and artist identities were separate in that way. Talking about both worlds simultaneously was new to him, so we discussed them separately in the beginning.

Once the first interview was over, I transcribed it and kept a reflective journal as a way to problem-solve. I quickly discovered during this first encounter that there is an intricate art to interviewing people, one that I must become proficient in over the course of my academic career.

After the transcription, I drew the timeline in my reflective journal to begin to see the information, rather than hearing it. There were gaping holes that were more noticeable that needed to be revisited. This process essentially helped me to map my second interview, and in my visual mind, the data collection started to look like a growing tree (see Appendix B for the reflective journal excerpt).

A follow-up interview was necessary to address the gaping holes from the first interview. Systematically, we followed the same interview process. The questions were derived from the first interview, which I then transcribed and wrote in my reflective journal. What happened during my reflective exercise this time proved to be very important. I ascertained that the interview process could not continue effectively without me starting the analysis process. What I mean by this is that I rapidly recognized after two conversations with Martin how rich oral histories are and that there was a plethora of stories to explore and more branches to investigate. However, I needed to cut some branches for my tree to grow in the right direction (see Appendix B). Analyzing data early in the research process is unconventional, but without the initial sets of codes and reassembling of the codes into themes, I could not coherently map my third and fourth interviews. It is hard to accurately describe how I viewed the data at this point; it felt like I could hear emergent themes, but I could not see them. The emerging themes were loud and amorphous. Again, my visual background prompted me to add colour, literally, to the transcriptions so that I could begin funnelling the conversation into a concise thesis. The time period also seemed to be too broad at this point. Looking at sixteen years' worth of life stories and artwork was too substantial for the nature of thesis work.

Analysis (Interviews 1 and 2). Beginning the analysis stage of the research felt important and ambiguous. The intricacy of analyzing qualitative data is stated in almost every

article that I have read. It appeared to me as if each researcher had their own way of engaging in the process, which is always tailored to the specific set of data at hand. Creswell (2013) outlined three different ways to analyze narrative data: a thematic analysis, structural analysis, and dialogic/performance analysis (p. 72). For this study, I opted for a thematic analysis for my biographical study.

True to the analysis approach that I presented in my proposal, all interviews were transcribed, member-checked, analyzed by codes, color-coded, sorted into categories, and organised thematically to generate a detailed and contextualized illustrated narrative (Creswell, 2013; Lavergne, 2007). The first two interviews were worked on first and in tandem with each other. What I needed to do during this initial analysis was to: 1) examine the notes that I had taken during the interview; 2) code the transcript using various colours to track the recurrence and variety; 3) categorize the codes; 4) and find patterns to reveal overarching themes. These overarching themes were vital for me to see what important avenues needed to be discussed in the following set of interviews in order to map my questions. This way of analyzing data was strongly rooted in Creswell's (2013) compilation of "General Data Analysis Strategies (…)" (p. 181). One of the ways that I coded was by keeping track of the number of times a code reoccurred. This highlighted the frequency/importance of a topic. From this, several patterns arose during my investigation of the data. The three dominant ones were 'photography', 'generational military background', and 'PTSD/avoidance/isolation'. I asked myself why these themes were more important than the rest (more present) and why they should be focused on.

As discussed more thoroughly in the fourth chapter, Martin's art material choices have transformed and flowed over the course of his life. A few constants remain, and photography is something that he keeps coming back to. The nature of what he shoots and which camera he uses

has evolved, but nevertheless, photography is consistently present. At the start of this research journey, just after having signed the consent form, Martin handed me a large box that was so full of his own photographs that the lid did not properly latch on. To me, the importance of this theme is as heavy as that box. Consequently, concentrating on this theme also allowed me to put a portion of his artwork (paintings, sculptures, drawings) to the side and focus on the works that were more relevant to the current study. This helped to map the third interview, which included photo-elicitation.

Furthermore, after color coding the transcripts, I flipped through the pages and noticed all shades of green. Every military refence paired with family history had been sectioned using various shades of this color. I had always been aware that several men on my paternal side were involved in the military, but I had never realized how many of them there were and the richness of their stories. I became interested in determining whether generational trauma had influenced my father's career choice and, perhaps, subconsciously played a role in his decision to leave art school and join the CAF. Going back to the two initial goals of this analysis process, I saw an important avenue to be probed further and gaps to be investigated. Ultimately, this theme of 'generational military background' was also central to the larger conversation because it helped to explain the catalysts for Martin becoming a Soldier Artist, chronologically framing his journey.

Finally, I could not overlook the 'PTSD/avoidance/isolation' theme. In retrospect, when looking at the summarized timeline of Martin's life, I can see how many life events foreshadowed this theme. Throughout his stories, these terms – PTSD, avoidance, isolation – though never explicitly said by him, became synonymous with one another and ultimately deeply impacted his life post-military service. This became an important theme to keep in mind during

later interviews and an interesting lens through which to ask questions. I realized later during my theoretical research (discussed in chapter two) that these psychological states also largely explain who veterans are as learners and how 'PTSD/avoidance/isolation' impacts their artmaking practices (Hasio, 2010).

After synthesizing the two initial interviews, I began charting the third interview, the photo-elicitation process. I opened the box of photographs and started selecting those that intrigued me. Luckily, the hundreds of pictures were loosely sorted into categories like "Allemange '80" [19] or "base Americaine"[20]. I categorized the images into two piles so that there was a smaller one with pictures that I wanted to know more about, from which I had formulated pointed questions. Keeping in mind the co-constructed nature of this study, I made the other larger pile for Martin to also select photographs that prompted stories for him to share his experience more naturally.

Interviews 3 and 4

As an art educator, the visual research component of this thesis was one of the most intriguing parts of the process. Both Martin and I were highly stimulated when talking about his artwork. He was pleasantly surprised by the memories that surfaced from observing his old photographs, and I was fascinated to listen to how these still images came to life through his words. Rich stories also emerged from the family memorabilia that Martin collected over the years. Being an avid collector of various kinds of objects, Martin is well-versed in asking about the story behind the objects from the people that he sources them from. This felt advantageous during the interviewing process. A key example of a family memorabilia is Gros-Papa's personal

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[19] French quote translated to English: "Germany 1980s".
[20] French quote translated to English: "American base".

military items collection (Figure 20). He passed on his prayers and religious stamps to my father when he joined the army. They were given to him for protection during his service like they had protected Gros-Papa during his. As mentioned previously, what anchored the memories and narratives that my father told me during interviews were the family archives, memorabilia, and photographs because they are tangible pillars in time, proof of some stories in a way. As Proxler and Loxley (2008) noted, photo elicitation and memory prompt work can help to generate more in-depth data, something that I witnessed first-hand at this point in the research. The previous interviews had helped to illustrate Martin's larger life story; it was now time to add the artwork and family archive layers to his timeline and delve deeper into these visual prompts attached to specific important moments. Thinking back on the three emergent themes from the previous interviews ('photography', 'generational military background', and 'PTSD/avoidance/isolation'), I was tasked with thinking about them chronologically. How does the first layer of analysis tie into the second layer of analysis? How do the themes point to formative artmaking periods? It was my job to find a way to prompt Martin to help me to answer these questions.

Going back to the fundamentals of NI, we opted to discuss the photographs in the order that they were captured. I suspected that the answers to both questions that I just posed would be naturally answered during the third interview. We began with the imagery that was attached to Gros-Papa's service during WWI: a photograph of him in England with his company (Figure 22), his personal military items (Figure 20), and the bloody medical tag (Figure 18). Then, we moved on to photographs from Martin's early military career at the end of the Cold War: his black-and-white series that were taken at an American military base during his time in Germany (Figures 23-26). Finally, we concluded the interview with his images from Bosnia, the Sarajevo series (Figures 27-31). We were able to narrow down the work by focusing on these three pivotal

moments in his oral history. Martin and I found it crucial to look at what influenced him to join his early service and his deployment in order to understand what shaped him into who he is today, a Soldier Artist veteran.

Analysis (Interviews 3 and 4). Once the third interview was completed, I transcribed our conversation and began coding our talk without constraints, similarly to how the first and second interviews were analyzed. The transcripts from both the third and fourth interviews were colour-coded, which were classified into categories and later grouped under larger themes. I felt that it was important to the validity of the study that the third and fourth interviews were analyzed in the same way that the first and second were without the three initial emergent themes influencing the second set of interview analyses. I believe that the classification portion of the analysis process should be as free and unconstrained as possible to truly see and understand what the data says. The emergent themes were strongly linked to the interpretation step of the analysis, which came later in the process. Therefore, in my view, that the initial classification step should not be influenced or dictated by later steps.

My analysis of photographs was conducted in tandem with the transcript because the stories attached to the photographs were embedded in the transcript. I used the images as visual support for reference whilst examining the text. In addition, elements and principles, such as angle, composition, light, and lens, were identified to compare the stylistic choices to the subject matter. The focus was on the subject and narrative rather than the mastery of technical skills; much as Richard and Lahman (2015) suggest, the idea of "photographs as representation of inherent meaning" (p. 13) floated around in my mind during this examination. These photographs were chosen to illustrate Martin's stories and acted as memory prompts. Essentially, they reminded him of the "inherent meaning" behind the work that he produced over twenty-five

years ago. They were also used to illustrate the stories that he shared orally. As someone who has not witnessed what he did, the powerful visuals helped to bring his narrative to life. For example, seeing him standing in the middle of the war-ridden city of Sarajevo besides a tank five times his size, with both feet in the mud, at an age younger than the one I am now, stayed with me throughout this entire research project (see Figures 27-31). The photo elicitation task helped me to get a better sense of what anecdotes he has kept close in his memories and what he has subconsciously let go over two decades later.

The process of remembering and forgetting memories, traumatic memories, and PTSD interested me for two reasons. First, memory, as educators know, is an integral part of learning. It is how we retain information and build an understanding of the world around us. Second, NI work relies heavily on the participants' memories. Exploring this realm of psychological research is important because it informs who veterans are as learners and who they are as research participants. Strange and Takarangi (2015), experts in psychology, conducted research that investigated memory distortion in relation to trauma and PTSD. They observed, amongst other factors, what influenced instances of intentional and unintentional remembering in their participants' "mental imagery" alongside "memory amplification" and "re-experiencing" (Strange and Takarangi, 2015, p. 1). Although their research is not specific to veterans, they found that those who have experienced trauma are more likely to experience memory distortion (Strange and Takarangi, 2015, p. 1). Furthermore, they posit that those who suffer from PTSD are more susceptible to re-experiencing some mental imagery and, with time, amplifying those memories (Strange and Takarangi, 2015, p. 1). Memories are personal and are not immutable. They belong to their hosts and should be treated with care.

The fourth and final interview was a way to consolidate the information that we had generated together and ask Martin about possible ways forward for the veteran population as potential students who want to pursue higher education. The final conversation shifted to a time when he left the Forces in the early 2000s and included a few follow-up questions about the third interview as I wanted to confirm some thoughts that I had in reaction to his stories about Gros-Papa, who was stationed in Sarajevo during his first week and Lahr. We spent the second portion of the conversation discussing the types of services that were offered to him when he left the CAF. Not surprisingly, given his medical discharge, he was offered full psychological and medical support. He did not recall community art programs being offered but had valuable insight on how he would like to return to the art classroom and what the experience would look like to him in an ideal world. About this, Martin said,

> Si j'étais pour retourner à l'école j'aimerais bien avoir accès à un studio, pas que ce soient des cours nécessairement. J'aimerais avoir accès à un gros studio ou je pourrais aller travailler et peut-être demander des questions à un professionnel quand j'aurais besoin d'aide. Peut-être même que j'irai à quelques classes ou ils nous montrent une technique mais pas si on est évalué ou quoi que ce soit.[21]

I then asked him if I was correct in hearing that he would like to have access to a space where he would be free to create without the pressure to perform or any other kind of pressures that are often associated with school, to which he replied, "Yes exactly." This key piece of information answered one of my research questions: How then, do educators create environments where

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[21] French quote translated to English: "If I were to go back to school, I would like to have access to a studio, but not classes necessarily. I would like to have access to a big studio, where I could go work and maybe ask a professional a few questions when need be. Maybe I would even go to a few classes where they would show us techniques, but not if we are evaluated or anything like that."

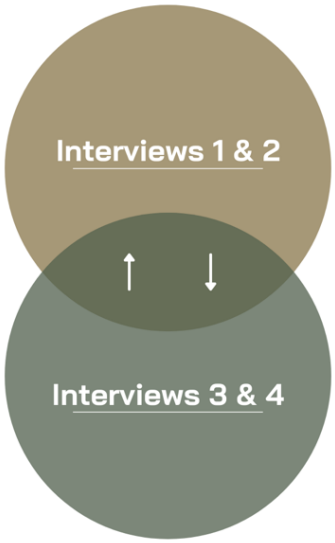
veterans build a sense of community but are also left alone? The answer to this question lies in Martin's quote mentioned above. It is also strongly connected to his autodidactic history with his artmaking skills. His art training dates back to 1988 and ends there in terms of formal classroom education. The rest he learned through trial and error, he told me. There was never any constraint to learn quickly for the sake of an assignment or pressure to share his work during critiques with fellow classmates. It is only natural, then, that Martin imagines his return to education as a mature learner with a sense of creative freedom. This is reminiscent of the points that were highlighted in chapter two by Goddu (2021) and Lawton and LaPorte (2013). Again, mature learners are not empty vessels; they are individuals rich with experience, who are looking to specialize in a skill. What Martin voices and wishes for resembles an artist who is looking to create than a student going to school. Suddenly, it felt like the research was revealing concrete and possible ways to frame veteran art curricula directly from the perspective of a veteran/Solder Artist. Effectively, this sentiment became a crucial theme to discuss in the results and conclusion, which can be seen in more detail in the chapter six. Once the final set of transcripts were coded and categorized, I was able to begin the third stage of my analysis process and notice the second set of emergent themes (Creswell, 2013, p. 75). Five important themes emerged: 1) inclusion and creation; 2) gatekeeper: a relationship of trust; 3) withdrawal and sense of belonging; 4) emotional intelligence; and 5) removing the stigma. All five are thoroughly discussed in the following chapter.

If I were to illustrate the data analysis that I conducted, it would look like a horizontal Venn diagram that is comprised of two circles (see Figure 32). The top circle represents the first and second interviews and it intersects with the bottom circle, which represents the third and

fourth interviews. The two are separate but collide in the middle since the initial examination led to the final one.

Figure 32

Interview Venn Diagram



They do not require to be viewed as one entity because one arose out of the other. The third and fourth interviews were sequential, that is, molded by the first and second interviews' analyses results. This is how they intersect in the middle of the Venn diagram and inform one another.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Qualitative research comes with its own set of limitations but also numerous strengths. Contrary to quantitative research, qualitative research "intends to understand a complex reality and the meaning of actions in a given context" (Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017, p. 369). To best frame the research project, the qualitative method was split into several frameworks, including NI and case study, on which I have grounded my research. Since the limitations of these methodological frameworks have been discussed in the third chapter, this section will

concentrate on other aspects of the study. Notably, there were times when there was not enough data to contextualize the narrative as completely as I would have preferred (e.g., the Sarajevo series). Martin's recollection of his first week on Bosnian soil and what pushed him to reach for his camera in his uniform's front pocket were amorphous to him two decades later. At other times, the availability of data was scarce, which limited the scope of the research (e.g., the military backgrounds of the men on my paternal side). Retrieving the dates of their service, the ranks that they reached, or even photographs of them was constrained. Such is the reality of working with family archives and stories that date back several decades. Still, the silver lining in both of these limitations lies within the thesis model, which limits the amount of data that can be processed and the amount of time that one can spend on a project. As more historical documents are found, sourced, discovered, and more sites are visited, this research and story could shift significantly. What is interpreted today could shift in the future, and so, the story is being continuously rewritten. The limited timeframe dictated the depth that this study could reasonably go into and helped me to shape the research timeline. What I learned during this project is that it has a great potential to expand beyond the parameters of a single case study. I regard this thesis as an introduction to the conversation between the field of art education, veterans, and curricula. My aim for the future is to introduce more voices, including voices of veterans (e.g., Lavergne) and other scholars featured in this thesis (e.g., Dr. Cindy Hasio; Dr. Marvin Westwood), to the dialogue.

Working from Memories

Memory as a data source in research has been deliberated for merits and limitations extensively (Lobban, 2014; Haynes, 2010; Harper, 2002; Desai, 2001), and memory has been discussed in various capacities throughout the study. The very nature of interviews and

qualitative work is that the study is strongly rooted in participants' personal stories and memories. A plethora of research has been conducted on the reliability of interviews and one's memories (Harper, 2002; Strange & Takarangi, 2015). Some scholars argue that memories can be distorted after experiencing traumatic events (Strange & Takarangi, 2015, p. 2). After reading this, I felt that it was necessary to understand the extent to which these potential distortions could affect my research. The combination of articles that I have read on memory-work, reliability of memories, and how they are affected made it clear that this limitation exists but cannot be measured. In fact, I believe that the strengths of qualitative research balance out the accuracy risk that comes from working with memories. I argue that memories are how we construct ourselves in relation to what we have lived and exterior factors (Bell, 2002, p. 207). Therefore, understanding and discussing them is not a limitation, but it is crucial and important.

One of the ways that I made sure that my data collection method was rigorous was by reviewing multiple sources, from conducting photo elicitation interviews to research into external sources of official archives. Across the multiple data sources, I sought to verify facts and events as part of triangulating my findings. To borrow Harper's (2002) words, "photo elicitation mines deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do word-alone interviews. (…) [They work] for rather mysterious reasons. Photographs appear to capture the impossible: (…) an event past" (pp. 22-23). To this, I would add that photographs are visual proof of certain memories and, in this way, act as empirical evidence for unconventional sources of data, such as personal stories.

Father-Daughter

Being the participant's daughter was both a limitation and strength. From an ethical standpoint, it was crucial to be cognisant of the boundaries that I intuitively understand as a

family unit. It was also important to establish the boundaries early in the research process. Bias is the main limitation of working with family, but in this case, I strongly believe that it was necessary and even crucial.

Such research is delicate and requires sensitivity to the subculture of military and insider's understanding (as a daughter in my case) to navigate the gatekeeping that is potentially in place formally with the military as an organisation and personally among veterans. Creswell (2013) defines bracketing as a way in which researchers separate themselves from that which they study. The personal in this case was key to opening this conversation with pedagogic purpose. With careful bracketing (Creswell, 2013), I was able to ground my study in the father-daughter relationship and ensured complete transparency of this relationship in my data collection by documenting the struggles as well as successes that we experienced together. As a researcher, I have kept a reflective journal, followed verification protocols, and triangulated interpretations and findings through multiple sources to produce this cohesive final written report. I was in a unique position since I have a familial relationship with the main participant, and, as studies have shown, a relationship of trust and respect is critical when inquiring into personal traumatic stories. I regard serving in the military as such a story (Ray & Vanstone, 2009). My father, as the participant, was continuously made aware that he was free to withdraw from the study at any given time without consequence, notably when signing the consent form as well as at the beginning of each interview session.

Bounded by two Languages

This research process included English and French languages. The data collected from Martin (interviews) were in French, which was then translated to English. The data collected from academic literature was in English. There is a definite strength in speaking two languages –

it is what allowed me to conduct this research with my father – but this also meant that it was crucial not to lose information in translation, literally and metaphorically. However, Birbili (2000) shows that "collecting data in one language and presenting the findings in another involves researchers taking translation-related decisions that have a direct impact on the validity of the research and its report" (p. 1). Effectively, there is a possibility that some nuances, in expressions for example, might be lost in translation. However, I made sure that Martin's tone and voice remained as true to him as possible in the translation. Being fluent in both French and English from a young age allowed me to move between the two languages with ease. This was not the case for Martin, who understands lay-language English but struggles with academic-level discussions in this language. This meant that I had to be with him during the written report reviews and carefully explain the wording to make sure that he understood exactly what I had redacted and could in turn offer modifications and clarifications as freely as possible.

At first, I had planned on hiring a translator to translate some of the interviews. Yet, Birbili (2000) shows that the more people are involved in the translation process, the more the quality tends to be impacted (mostly negatively) (p. 1). She shows that there are numerous factors that need to be considered when the researcher and translator/interpreter are not the same person, such as "competence" and "relations" to one another for example (Birbili, 2000, p. 1). The term "interpretation" becomes important here as the goal is to make sure that the interpretation is as true to the participant's intentions as possible. I decided to translate the information myself. My father's French dialect is regional and many of the expressions that he uses belong to the culture and region where he resides. Finding a translator familiar with his dialect, with this kind of expertise, would have been time consuming, expensive, and difficult to

find. Being familiar with Martin proved to be advantageous once again. For these time management, financial, and logistical reasons, I translated the interview transcripts myself.

Finally, Birbili's (2000) research posits that in order to minimize translation-related issues, a good course of action is to conduct "pre-test" interviews with participants who belonging to the same culture that one is exploring (p. 2). As this research trajectory expands in the future, I aim to do exactly this. I would seek more participants to observe patterns of thought and speech to ultimately deepen my understanding of their stories and help to translate them into French.

COVID-19 Restrictions

The pandemic has had a major impact on the scope of my project and ability to undertake this project in the ways that I originally envisioned (see Mobility Award example explained later). Since the COVID-19 global pandemic came to prominence in the early spring of 2020, countless research projects have been affected in a myriad of ways both systemically and socially. Its repercussions have been felt in the restriction of in-person activities (interviews, meetings, classes, etc.), access to sites (such as family members' homes, the university, libraries, cultural sites, military bases' museums, etc.), borrowing equipment, and travel (both provincially, nationally, and internationally). As a result, some have even begun to question the validity and reliability of some of the research that has been conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ramos, 2021). In my view, being transparent of one's research limitation is being reinforced by the health crisis.

Moreover, timelines became tentative and were often subjected to last minute delays. Academics and students were instructed to work from home, which came with its own set of positive and negative repercussions (Ramos, 2021). As a whole, more reported feeling stressed,

anxious, worried, and mentally drained (Panchal et al., 2021). The pandemic has affected everyone, ranging from participants to researchers and supervisors. We have all felt its weight and have had to adapt quickly to this global change.

Given the time sensitive nature of thesis work, I had to modify my initial research plan in numerous ways. First, it was strongly recommended that provincial travel must be done under emergency circumstances only. As a result, I was unable to travel to my family members' homes to view their archives in-person as often as I would have needed. I had to make a selection of works during a single visit. The solution to this issue was to have my relatives send me digital versions of these documents.

International travel was also highly restricted and discouraged. Initially, as mentioned in the first chapter, my father and I were inspired by *Faire La Paix Avec La Guerre*[22] (Lefebvre & Lessard, 2019) and had planned on travelling to Bosnia to conduct site elicitation and photo elicitation interviews, artmaking sessions, and film our time there. The health crisis restrictions prompted us to postpone this plan and decline the Graduate Mobility Award that we were able to secure. Within Quebec, we had changed our site elicitation plan. The goal was to visit some key sites to him, conduct an interview, and perhaps, make some art if he felt inspired to react to the place in this way. Provincial travel was also unsafe at the time of the interview process, so we also postponed this plan for later research projects. Instead, we both decided that we would adapt and concentrate on the photo elicitation process and interviews.

Furthermore, I had also prepared to interview two of Martin's ex-colleagues, his brother-in-arms, to help contextualize his narrative. Unfortunately, due to the restriction of in-person activities and the fact that this particular work requires time and human contact to set a

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[22] French title translated to English: "Coming to Peace with War."

foundation of trust between veteran participants and researchers, I needed to change the outline. Virtual meetings were not viable options since I am not familiar with them and value the importance of creating cemented relationships with participants who belong to this subculture. In the future, in-person meetings with Martin's ex-colleagues would be beneficial to the research. The need for other veterans' voices was still important to the quality of the conversation; so, instead – as detailed earlier in this chapter – I decided to rely on existing veteran testimonies in the literature of Hasio (2010; 2011), Michel (2004), and Lavergne's (2007) work.

Under ideal research circumstances, I would like to interview Lavergne about his artwork that was produced in Bosnia and upon his return from Bosnia. The few images that were featured in Lessard's digital essay (n.d.), Lefebvre and Lessard's documentary (2019), and Lavergne's book (2007) are striking and informative. Adding his story to the conversation would give space for a compare and contrast analysis between his and Martin's work. Based on the research that I have conducted, it would also be the first time that two Quebecois Soldier Artists' artwork would be in conversation about their journey with art in an academic context, expanding the oeuvres and stories for art educators to learn from.

6. Results and Discussion

This chapter considers a series of related findings of the data analysis. They are discussed as emergent themes. The sixth chapter is structured into five sections: (1) inclusion and creation; (2) gatekeeper: a relationship of trust; (3) withdrawal and sense of belonging; (4) emotional intelligence; and (5) removing the stigma. The themes are then distilled into clear considerations for the art education field. The "implications for art education" sub-sections aim to provide clear suggestions on what art educators and curriculum designers can and should do going forward.

Inclusive Creativity

Since we can safely conclude that veterans are people with unique educational needs (Morgan, Teal, Reddy, Ford, & Ashton, 2005, p. 1573), who also experience social anxiety and, therefore, isolate as a coping mechanism (Wilson, Leslie, McGill, & Kiernan, 2019), educators and instructional design teams must consider their teaching approaches and the composition of classes. We must include veterans in our art classes, but we must also be open to creating entirely new spaces that are designed to serve them specifically if need be. Further research surrounding this must be conducted. Vets need to be given a few options so that they remain in control of the pedagogical and social situation that they enter. Martin posited that some might feel safer attending classes with fellow veterans only, like the veterans from Hasio's study (2010; 2011), whereas others might want to steer away from their former selves. To this, Martin said:

> Il y en a qui voudraient sûrement être avec d'autres vétérans mais pas moi. Bien, ça ne me dérangerait pas mais je ne voudrais pas que ce soit un affaire qui est trop axé vers

l'armé. J'irai à un cours d'art pour faire des choses, pas dans un building militaire[23] (Interview 2, 2021).

This indicated two things: first, continuing this research by speaking to more veterans is vital. NI and case study as methodological frameworks have served their purpose to open this conversation, but the very nature of these methodologies makes it so that the data cannot be generalized to the larger (veteran) population (Anderson, 2010, p. 2). Martin's story is just one amongst many and his story may be viewed as idiosyncratic because his experience is unique to him. Martin's reality resembles that of others like him, but he is also in a specific place in his life's journey. He is a white, French-speaking, Quebecois middle-aged man, who retired from the Forces almost twenty years ago. For example, the voices of women, the younger generation, and those who have just left the Forces are still missing from the conversation. Additionally, Wilson, Leslie, McGill, and Kiernan's (2019) research shows that military transition is crucial to note when talking about veterans (p. 39). Martin's state of transition from military to post-military life is not the same as it was back in the early 2000s. Over the years, he has worked incrementally on his relationship with his PTSD and has slowly transitioned back to civilian life. Therefore, similarly to Hasio's research (2010; 2011), we need to further conduct more epistemologically framed studies that consider the voices of (many) other veterans in order to better understand what their art classes and learning spaces need to resemble for them to not only be interested but also be motivated and inspired to come create, or simply, to be and feel included in art education.

Second, Martin's words also indicate that paying particular attention to the workspace is crucial. The curriculum is important, but where curriculum is enacted matters too. Art has a

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[23] French quote translated to English: "Some might want to be with other veterans, but not me. Well, I wouldn't really mind, but I wouldn't want it to be too army focused. I'd go to an art class to make things, not in a military building."

physicality to it that other school subjects do not necessary require. One needs room to create, store, and explore. Art is materiality; it lives in the physical world and less in the digital realm. During our final interview, I asked Martin how he imagined the space. Would he feel more comfortable going to an art class on a military base, or would he rather go to a university's veteran art faculty building? Or did he imagine the space any other way? (The nature of these two options is discussed later in this chapter). His answer was immediate and was reiterated in the quote above: no military building. Martin said that he would want to feel like he was part of the community of returning to education students and not necessarily be labelled as a veteran. Recognizing who veterans are as learners is key, but it is also important to remember to not make it all about the fact that "you guys are different and standout". Again, inclusion and creation must work together. This emergent theme is the opening gate to creating inclusive, student-centered environments.

Implication for Art Education: A Research Underpainting

One of my initial research questions was: How do educators create environments where veterans build a sense of community but are also left alone*?* We must provide Solider Artist students with options, but not too many options. Here, "options" is used as a blanket term. The word "choices" could also be used as a synonym. Choices include everything, ranging from courses (i.e., photography, painting, drawing, etc.), to scheduling (i.e., fixed class time, open studio hours), to the level of involvement of educators/facilitators. There is a careful balance to navigate between the two. Too many options/choices can flood these anxiety-prone learners, while not giving them any options removes the level of control over a situation that some require as adult students to feel safe and confident. Next, we must also speak more about Canadian veterans to understand the larger scope of the issue. In order to answer questions like how we

should create choice-based curricula, more research needs to be conducted over a longer period of time. Hasio's (2010) research is a good example of this once again as her research spanned over the course of four years and provided her with deeper, contextualized insights (p. 54). My hope is that this topic is further explored through a Canadian lens.

Gatekeepers as Relationships of Trust

Throughout my adult life, my paternal grandmother has often told me about how little she knows about her son's military experience. She told me that Martin made it clear on many occasions that there is no point in discussing something that nobody will ever understand. This feeling is not uncommon in the veteran sub-culture. Hasio (2011) wrote,

> My identity as a veteran helped me listen to their stories; some of them would not share any of their stories with anyone who had not been in the military because they had felt they would not understand what a veteran experienced (p. 49).

My experience with this is somewhat different. When I think about my father's war stories, I think about my cousins. My cousins are close to their uncle, and they always expressed fascination with his career. Often, when we would all have dinner at my father's house, Martin would open up to us about his military service. When they would ask him to share his war stories, he gladly volunteered the information. I believe that it is through their bold prompts that I heard most of his anecdotes. We were all silent as he plunged into stories about his exercises in the forest, enduring unpleasant weather conditions, or funny interactions with his brothers-in-arms. With time, his stories became more animated and detailed, and I suspect that it was so because over time his stories morphed into memories rather than poignant recent events. His most recurrent story dates to 1993, when his friend got shot in both wrists whilst they were observing the Serbs atop the mountain range surrounding the town of Srebrenica. Every time he

tells this story, he gets out a ballpoint pen and presses the end of the pen to one of his wrists to demonstrate the diameter of the injury and scar. To me, this has always highlighted how candidly comfortable he was able to get when remembering such moments, which then suggests another iteration of trauma for those individuals, and so on, as trauma reverberates across individuals, time, and memory. For a long time, I had trouble reconciling my grandmother's narrative with the reality that I was witnessing. What conditions did I fulfill for me to be privileged enough to hear these stories? The answer was straightforward. He told me that I am his daughter and left it there. This example helps to illustrate the familial relationship between veterans and who they choose to confide in – sometimes family, sometimes peers. Without trust, there can be no dialogue.

In hopes that more research on the topic will follow, researchers must be cognizant of the high level of importance of being trustworthy gatekeepers (Creswell, 2013, p. 94). This was a key emergent theme in the research. Without trust and connection, as noted by Hasio (2010; 2011), the veteran community is challenging to access (p. 77; p. 49). She wrote, "[t]rust and openness are key components when trying to understand how the veterans think, learn, and feel when they make arts and crafts" (Hasio, 2011, p. 49). "Trust between veterans and teachers must be established first so as to build acceptance" (Hasio, 2010, p. 77). The gatekeeping aspect of the study is continuously highlighted by the few like Hasio (2010; 2011), who have ventured into this kind of work. In fact, Hasio (2010; 2011) was able to access this subculture because she belongs to it as she served for the US Forces. Despite her being a veteran, she confessed about still having to face challenges in the initial stages of the research due to her age, gender, and race (2011, p. 54). For the counselling psychology expert, Dr. Westwood, the connection to the sub-culture was different. His research sparked from an emotionally loaded conversation with a

family member, a WWII veteran (VTN Canada, n.d.). The cathartic experience of this open conversation left Westwood inspired. These stories about connection help to demonstrate that researchers must be regarded as allies with good and helpful intentions.

Finally, this very fact is put at the front of Dr. Westwood's Veterans Transition Network (VTN) at the University of British Columbia. The VTN was founded in the late 1990s by Westwood and his team and has since grown into a large organisation across the country that has helped over 1,500 CAF and RCMP veterans to transition from their military careers to civilian life (VTN Canada, n.d.). Officially recognized by VAC, the VTN continues to adapt to veteran demands and offer a wide range of counselling services free of charge (VTN Canada, n.d.). Their mission is to help veterans to transition back to civilian life and support their mental health. Most notably, one branch of the counselling sessions that is offered by the VTN is led by veterans who have graduated from the VTP (VTN Canada, n.d.). These researchers advocate for the fact that veterans open up more easily to other veterans and, in doing so, often express a sense of relief (Westwood et al., 2010, p. 47).

Implication for Art Education: Gatekeeper to Advocacy

To date, I have found that this therapeutic program at UBC is the only organization of the sort and scale that exists in Canada. As discussed in the second chapter, my research interest is not related to the field of therapy, nor is it my area of expertise. As an art educator, I am interested in seeing how this successful program could potentially help to inform our field to create veteran-friendly art curricula and learning spaces. Westwood's group-therapy, led by veterans, reinforces the important need for trustworthy gatekeepers to facilitate the conversation. This is the key implication that members from the field of art education must retain. Is it possible for researchers who have no affiliation to veterans to become trustworthy gatekeepers? Hasio

(2011) argues that this is possible (p. 54). She argues that one does not necessarily need to be a veteran to access the sub-culture. Instead, one needs to spend time building relationships with veterans and collaborate on projects (p. 54); art again becomes a vessel for unconstrained communication. Hasio (2011) ends her statement by claiming that these connections and collaborative moments help to foster LLL skills in all who engage in the activity (p. 54). This is a paramount pedagogical implication to our field.

Withdrawal and Sense of (un)Belonging: An Oxymoron

"Isolation and solitude" are important aspects of veteran lives, they can be tricky for educators to navigate. This theme is echoed in the works of Westwood (2019), Hasio (2010; 2011), Michel (2004), Wilson and her team (2019), in the illustrations of Lavergne (2007), in Duane's personal essay (2019), and in the way that Martin lives his life. In the second chapter, isolation is explained in terms of how it affects veterans' lives and how it strongly links to stigmatization (Weeks, 2017). The need to withdraw as a means to cope with co-morbid mental disorders can affect one's sense of belonging and even alienate some (Duane, 2019). Then, how can art educators mindfully and gently invite those who isolate to come experience the art room?

Duane (2019) suggests that one way that we can try to tread this seemingly invisible line between the two juxtapositions is to "value solitude, avoid isolation". The idea of a classroom with more flexibility, which began to take shape in the "Inclusion and Creation" section, comes back to mind. I find that providing veterans with choices and options when enrolling in art classes could help to alleviate some of the stress of joining a group. This sentiment is also corroborated by Martin in chapter five. As Martin suggested, coming to an open studio session where a fellow veteran shows you around could feel less intimidating, after which joining a lecture-style art lesson is more comfortable. In this way, solitude is valued because it remains an

option, but isolation is avoided because others are around, engaging in similar self-directed art-making activities. To me, options help to foster autonomy and individuality. Thus, everyone is free to pick and choose what serves them best, both educationally and mentally. It is important, then, to hire teachers who have experience with veteran students, who live with PTSD, and by extension, train art education students to work with such communities.

Westwood and colleagues (2010) work around the issue of isolation and solitude in another way. The VTN offers group-therapy sessions where veterans have in-depth talks with each other about their traumatic experiences (Westwood, 2010, p. 46). These researchers argue that "soldiers' interpersonal difficulties that arise from exposure to traumatic stress do not necessarily improve with individual approaches. Support from peers is often sought (…)" (p. 46). I have also witnessed this with Martin; when he does reach out to his ex-colleagues, he feels heard and accepted as part of a group. Westwood and colleagues (2010) further argue that group approaches help to reduce the pressure that is associated with individual sessions, foster mutual support, and help "cognitive reframing" to eventually reverse the tendency to isolate (pp. 46-47). Essentially, Westwood and his colleagues (2010), along with Martin's personal experience, make a strong argument for group work and creating opportunities for team building.

The theme of peer teaching is at the forefront of both of Hasio's research papers (2010; 2011). In the veteran community art classes that Hasio (2010) observed and took part in for several years, the strong sense of community had already been established (p. 76). What she observed was the power of peers teaching other peers skills, also termed as "reciprocal learning" (Hasio, 2011, p. 52). The benefits are countless: increased mental-health and well-being; strengthening interpretation, narration, and communication skills; cathartic feeling that comes with sharing one's reality; self-esteem boost; focus on the present; feeling heard; etc. (p. 52). To

me, the psychological benefits are synonymous with the pedagogical benefits. Happier, more confident, and comfortable students flourish in their learning skills and experience decreased isolation in these instances. Art is lifelong, life-wide, life deep learning. In this way, art becomes a means by which some individuals can connect and share their expertise/abilities/stories.

Implication for Art Education: Navigating Both Sides of the Medal

Leaning once again on Wilson et al.'s (2019) paper on veteran isolation and loneliness, I argue that withdrawal from society, as is the case with my father and many of his ex-colleagues, could possibly be bridged by creating a shared space and community of learners from an art education standpoint. Rather than creating art therapy groups, which could seem confronting for some (Lobban, 2014, p. 6), simply creating art classes/workshops for veterans could be a gentle way to reach out to them. Similarly to what I have done with Martin, I posit that the field of art education could ask those who know what to do – those who have lived the experience – about what they should do. Furthermore, Martin suggested during our final interview that a portion of the art programs could be non-graded so that there is no pressure to perform academically. School has always been stressful for him especially because of exams and grades. The ways of evaluating skills need further refinement and further investigation as to why evaluation is necessary in this context should be conducted.

In sum, Westwood and his team's (2010) two-decade worth of research shows us that group therapy is an essential part of the cycle of health and well-being across a veteran's lifetime. The option of group classes and session needs to be available to veterans – with, in, and beyond traditional classroom learning at the post-secondary level. This is essential support, which is well recognized in areas (though not exclusive to), such as disability studies, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA2+. Hasio's (2011) work reveals that fostering peer teaching is also necessary and

pedagogically beneficial. Having other veterans volunteer to show new Solider/Veteran Artists around and mentor them is an important consideration to keep in mind for future research. Finally, Martin's experience with keeping to himself highlights the importance of placing value on solitude whilst simultaneously avoiding isolation (Duane, 2019). To me, this suggestion is brought to life through the flexible class model that is outlined in this chapter.

Emotional Intelligence

When organizing the classroom, art educators must understand and take into careful consideration how veterans' emotional intelligence impacts their (and our) learning (Trofanenko, 2014). First, we must understand what "emotional intelligence" means. I lean on Salovey's (1990) definition, which describes emotional intelligence as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). According to the US Army veteran O'Donnell (2019), emotional intelligence of veterans is manifested through their risk-taking abilities, composure, and decision-making abilities under stressful conditions and environments. O'Donnell (2019) further argues that the ability to utilize the power of teamwork, which is ingrained in them during their training, does not disappear once they move on from their military service.

To reiterate an earlier quote by Trofanenko (2014), "[t]he purpose (…) is to highlight how emotional (and affective) responses to war can work as a starting point to developing insight into teaching and learning about past events represented in public educational institutions beyond the school classroom" (p. 23). Her research centers on the public pedagogy surrounding the topic of war. In her essay, she argues that there is a need for more empathic conversations to be had about war and all that ensues from the conversation. She also posits that those who are subjected to the harsh reality of war, like veterans, acquire a distinctive emotional and affective

intelligence (Trofanenko, 2014, p. 23). I believe that this also comes from the resilience that they have acquired from the battlefield. The theme of resilience is at the foundation of Venkatesh's (2021) research. Through meaningful and participant-led art and musical encounters, Venkatesh (2021) explored the theme of resilience in multimodal ways. The focus was entirely on the participants, which empowered them to take control of the situation and open up about their past/personal experiences with the theme (Venkatesh, 2021). I find Venkatesh (2021) and Hasio's (2011) research to be linked in this way. Their participants' emotional and affective intelligence is not only highlighted through their work but also through the foundation of their research.

Implication for Art Education: Sensible Practices for Art Educators

Without venturing into the field of art therapy, I argue that one does not need to be an art therapist to navigate emotional and affective intelligence in a class setting; one only needs to be sensible to the emotional tonality of these mature students and their environment – as do the rest of the students who are attending the class. Ultimately, as posited by Trofanenko (2014), my hope is that we can "highlight how emotional (and affective) responses to war can work as a starting point to developing insight into teaching and learning about past events represented in public educational institutions beyond the school classroom" (p. 23). We must ask ourselves what their stories can teach us and understand how we can start to mindfully reach out to the veteran population for them to feel comfortable with sharing their valuable narratives with us. Venkatesh's (2021) research, viewed in tandem with this last statement, further reinforces the need to seriously consider resilience as a key emergent theme in our field when considering Soldier/Veteran Artists' education. In the context of veteran art education, these scholars' works

teach educators and student-teachers to be mindful of the emotional intelligence and resilience that is particular to the veteran subculture in classrooms.

Removing the Stigma

The final emergent theme of this study centers around veteran stigmatization (Weeks et al., 2017). The research conducted by Weeks and collegaues (2017) concerning the stigmatisation of mental health care in the military was of particular interest to me since my father fell into their statistical results. In the early 2000s when he retired, Martin was diagnosed with PTSD (outlined in more detail in chapter one). Martin shared that seeking help at the time was not his priority; getting away from the problem (the military) was his preferred solution. Although help was offered, he admits that it took a long time for him to be interested for reasons which he admits that he is still working through. Almost two decades later, Martin now steers away from the stigmatisation, perhaps, because mental health now has a new image. He feels that taking care of one's mental health now does not make you "crazy", rather it is valued by society and regarded as an act of mature intelligence and mindful introspection.

Weeks and colleagues (2017) define stigmatisation as "a multifaceted phenomenon that involves stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (…)." (p. 710). I find their definition highly reminiscent of my father's initial attitude towards art classes or, in other words, entering the field of art education. He voiced that he was worried about not fitting in and that being a barrier for him. Knowing that veterans tend to isolate (Wilson et al., 2019) and face more stigma (Weeks et al., 2017), one can understand that the combination becomes a big challenge to overcome alone. Most importantly, Weeks and his colleagues (2017) discuss stigmatization in terms of various mental health disorders that veterans suffer from and the likelihood of seeking care. They also explore the stigma in association with the level of education that veterans have, their earnings,

and comorbidities (p. 713). When discussing about seeking mental health care in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), Weeks and colleagues (2017) wrote, "[i]ndeed, recognition of need is one of the pillars of the CAF's program, and there is strong evidence from 2002 CAF data that failure to recognize need was a leading barrier to care" (2017, p. 715). What Weeks and colleagues (2017) have concluded here is crucial: to remove stigma, we must first recognize that it exists; afterwards, we can take action.

Implications for Art Education: Saying and Taking Action

What can we take away from the stigmatization of veterans and how can we account for this when creating spaces for Soldier Artists in our classrooms? This mental health barrier is vital to keep in mind because it tells us more about the challenges that the veteran sub-culture faces today. By knowing this, we automatically know more about our future potential Soldier Artist students and the considerable challenges that some face, which can help to shape our teaching philosophy in more compassionate ways.

With stigma comes exclusion, and with exclusion comes a starting point for resilience. Venkatesh's (2021) work ties back to this emergent theme once more. Perhaps, the art room can become a place where the resilience of veterans is explored through artmaking and art appreciation exercises. I was inspired by Project SOMEONE's mission statement, which centers on "build[ing] awareness, creat[ing] spaces for pluralistic dialogues, and combat[ing] discrimination" using multimedia art tools (Venkatesh, 2021). For Martin and me, this is exactly what future art spaces that are designed for veterans need to reflect.

Moving from Themes to Actions

One might wonder at this point what kind of programs currently exist for veterans, and if they are supported financially to return to education at public universities compared to military-

based post-secondary learning. Currently, no art programs, like the one that I argue for throughout this thesis, exist in Canada. The only program which mindfully caters to veterans is the VTN, though it is psychology-focused rather than artistically focused. Solider/Veteran Artists who wish to pursue their artistic practice after their military career have the option to either join community art programs, like the one researched by Hasio (2010; 2011), or enroll in Fine Art university programs. In some cases, VAC offers the Education and Training Benefit to Canadian Veterans who meet their criteria (VAC, n.d.). This program offers financial aid and supports veterans in retraining for a career post-military service. The bursary is calculated based on various factors, including, though and exclusive to, years of service and number of credits to be completed (VAC, n.d.). For example, veterans with six years of service are entitled to up to $42,000 (CAD) depending on the program that they apply to (VAC, n.d.). Funding is important to discuss because it is an undeniable necessity to accessing education. In my view, VAC's provision of financial support shows that they value the years of service that their soldiers have given them. In this way, their sacrifice to the country is not ignored but honored by helping them retrain once they leave the Forces. A more thorough review and larger survey of the scholarship programs, like the Education and Training Benefit to Canadian Veterans, that are available to veterans in Canada are needed in the future.

Educational Significance

Before ending with the concluding thoughts, I offer ways in which I hope this conversation can expand and continue in the field of art education. Hearing more Solider Artist voices is crucial to the continuation of this project. This research investigated, using NI and case study (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), the case of a veteran who taught himself art and used this expressive outlet as a way to cope with PTSD. The literature review chapter helped to

demonstrate the ways in which the literature concerning veterans, specifically in the field of art education, is sparse, which renders this type of research essential to our field. Though a considerable amount of research has been conducted on PTSD (Nelson et al., 2011), few consider the space that we need to start giving our veterans in the field of art education, theoretically and practically. This thesis is intended to initiate more academic research and conversations around the issue of art education and veterans in hopes that it will eventually carve out space in the public consciousness for a louder dialogue to begin. It is time for us all to hear these soldiers' stories, learn from them (Janson, 1998; Michel, 2004), and give this unique culture-sharing group a place in our education system.

Expanding the Research

There are many more avenues that are left to be explored in this work. An important one, in my opinion, is Lavergne's (2007) life work. His book (Lavergne, 2007) has been discontinued from print and has effectively become an exclusive commodity. I would be interested to speak to him and interview him about his experience with learning how to make art. Moreover, Lavergne went back to university after leaving the CAF to pursue an illustration degree at l'Université du Québec en Outaouais in order to perfect his comic drawing skills (Proulx, 2007). The questions that come to mind are near endless: What was the experience like? What worked and what did not? What prompted you to go to art school? Did the military support you in this career transition? If yes, how so? How can veterans be catered to more specifically in fine art university programs? Lavergne's testimony could be compared to Martin's journey, and parallels could be drawn between both men's life stories and art practices. Making voices of other veterans, such as Lavergne, heard needs to happen if we want to better understand how to cater to the veteran population in our field.

I hope that this thesis sparked a further interest into the Canadian veteran experience with art, where ethnographic and phenomenological frameworks can advance our understanding. I envision it spanning over a longer period, rooting itself in adult education theory, with more participants and voices, as well as other means of collecting data, such as observation, field notes, focus groups, and more methods that are similar to Westwood's (2002) research.

Going forward, I also believe that interviewing Westwood would be crucial to the conversation. As discussed in the sixth chapter, his twenty years of research on veteran transition and findings from the VTN programs can help to inform how to include veterans into art classes whether they be in a community or higher education institution setting. His therapeutic approach would help to contextualize the art education conversation and anchor some potential Solider Artists, who struggle after coming home from war and would like to pursue art practice. In fact, hearing from art therapy specialists could also serve an important purpose, if only to chart how art education directives and goals differ, and how together both fields can strengthen the needed support without stigmatizing veterans further. This conversation has the potential to span across different academic fields and involve a large variety of experts.

May the Stories Continue

As this thesis ends, I am hopeful and left with more questions than I began with. I wonder about the countless unheard Solider Artists in the Canadian society. What are their stories? Do they hope to connect with others like them in spaces where they could experiment with their creativity? We have learned that making arts and crafts can help veterans to improve their self-efficacy, gain hope and confidence, and serve as an outlet for their negative emotions (Hasio, 2011, p. 49). Let us now create space in our art programs for veterans to join. Borrowing Sinner's (2006) words, I too want to add a cautionary note to this report. I have alluded to this

many times during the thesis but state it clearly here: “This inquiry is in progress and continues to develop, [and] I anticipate shifts in the narrative as more information becomes available” (p. 369). Martin’s story is not over; it is ever growing. There is much that we can learn from those who have pledged their lives to serving our country; we only need to be ready to listen to what they have to say.

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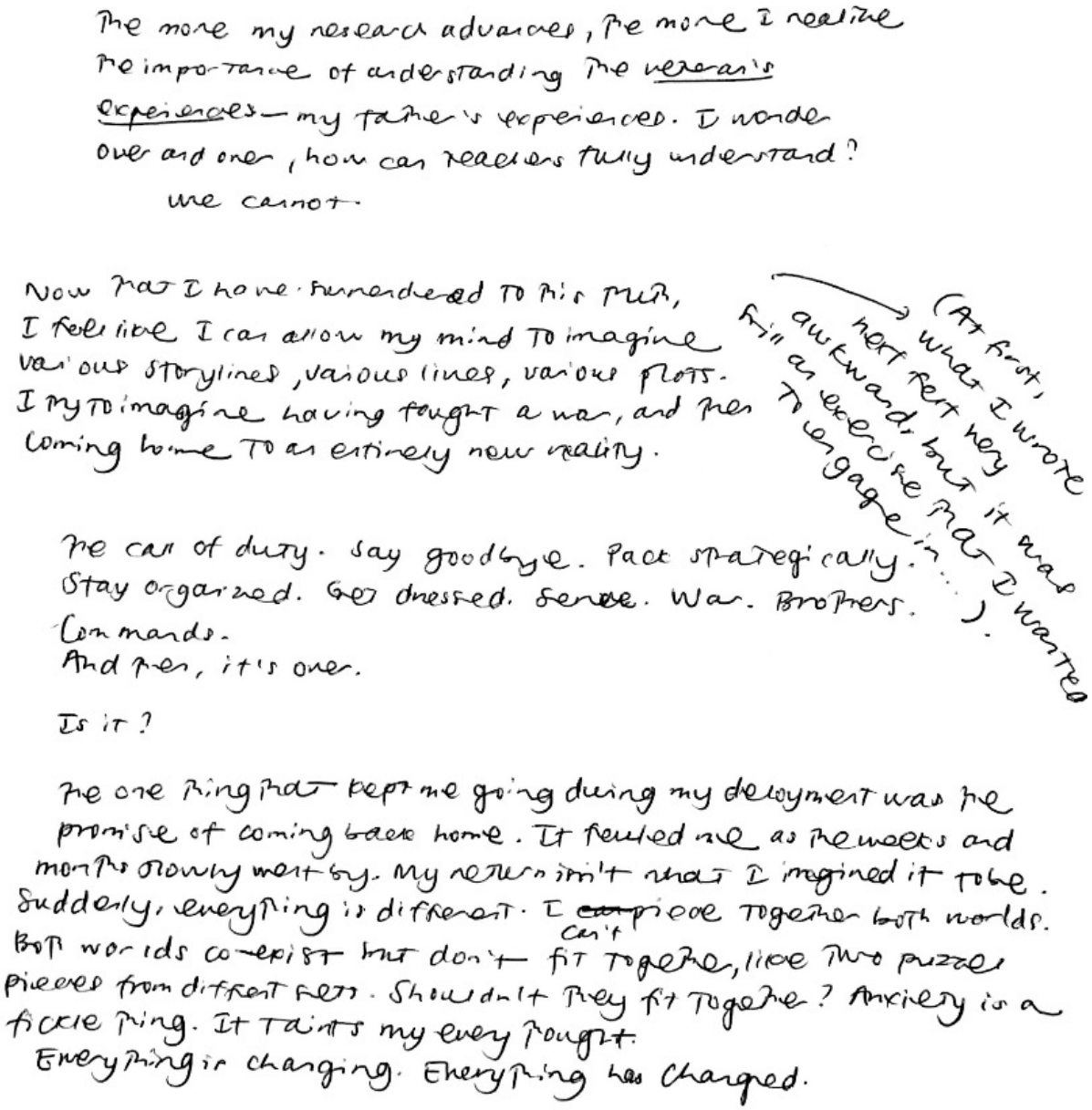
Appendix A

Method Writing: An Excerpt from my Reflective Journal



The more my research advances, the more I realize the importance of understanding the veteran's experiences — my father's experiences. I wonder over and over, how can readers fully understand?

We cannot.

Now that I have surrendered to his pull, I feel like I can allow my mind to imagine various storylines, various lines, various plots. I try to imagine having fought a war, and then coming home to an entirely new reality.

(At first, what I wrote next felt very awkward, but it was an exercise that I wanted to engage in...).

The call of duty. Say goodbye. Pack strategically. Stay organized. Get dressed. Serve. War. Brothers. Commands.
And then, it's over.

Is it?

The one thing that kept me going during my deployment was the promise of coming back home. It fueled me as the weeks and months slowly went by. My return isn't what I imagined it to be. Suddenly, everything is different. I ~~can~~ can't piece together both worlds. Both worlds co-exist but don't fit together, like two puzzle pieces from different sets. Shouldn't they fit together? Anxiety is a fickle thing. It taints my every thought.

Everything is changing. Everything has changed.

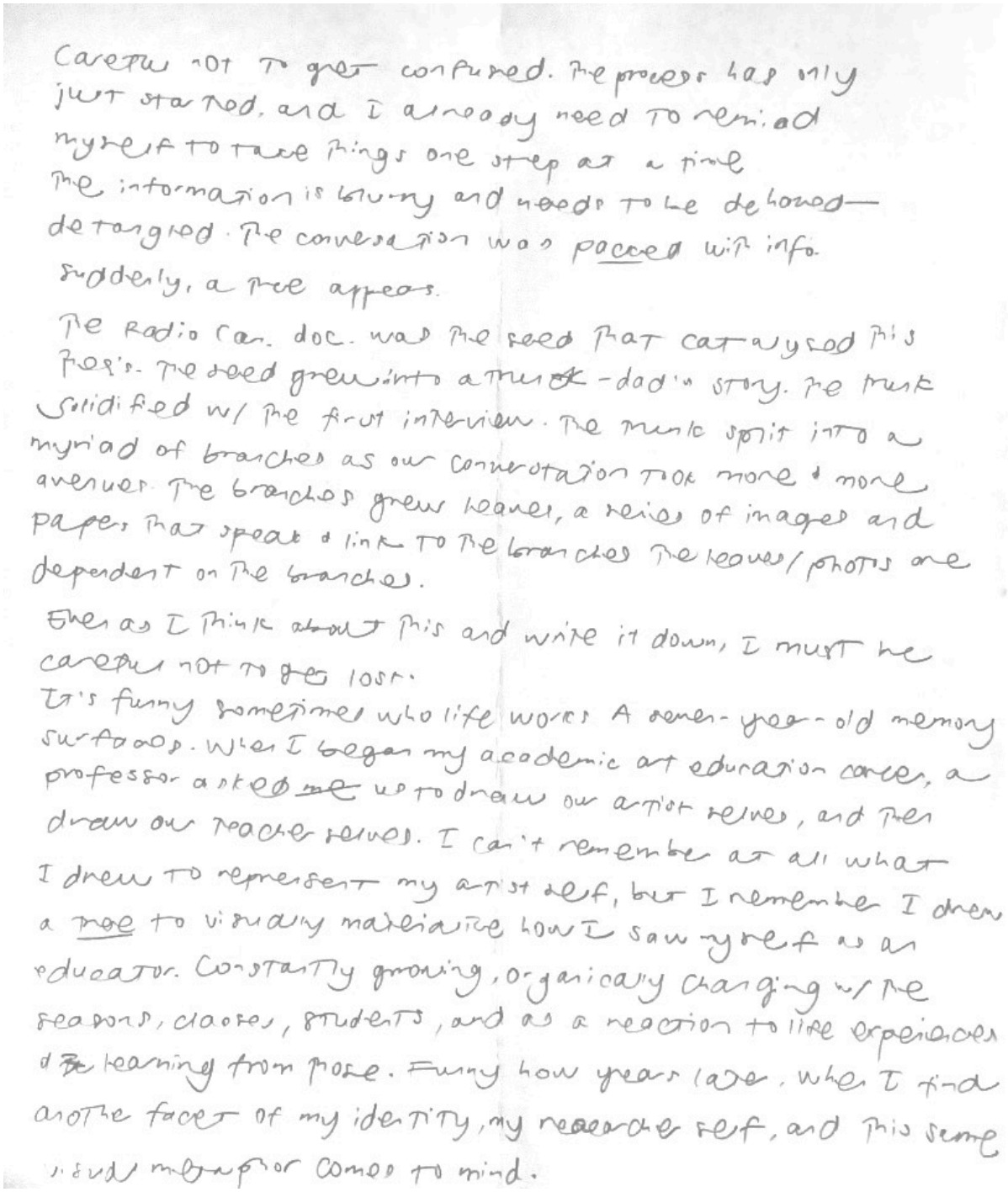
Serving no longer interests me and the anxiety lingers, it ebbs and flows — it oscillates.

My military career is over, and I must now fill my time with other parts of who I am. My military career is over, but my training urges me to stay productive. Can I remain? Is "remain" even the right word? I want to do something else. I want to do nothing.
And no one understands.

Fragments. I stay away.
Are they all obvious?

Appendix B

Reflective Writing: An Excerpt from my Reflective Journal



Careful not to get confused. The process has only just started, and I already need to remind myself to take things one step at a time. The information is blurry and needs to be behaved— detangled. The conversation was paced with info. Suddenly, a tree appears.

The Radio Can. doc. was the seed that catalysed this process. The seed grew into a trunk-dad's story. The trunk solidified w/ the first interview. The trunk split into a myriad of branches as our conversation took more & more avenues. The branches grew leaves, a series of images and papers that speak & link to the branches. The leaves/photos are dependent on the branches.

Even as I think about this and write it down, I must be careful not to get lost.

It's funny sometimes who life works. A seven-year-old memory surfaces. When I began my academic art education career, a professor asked ~~me~~ us to draw our artist selves, and then draw our teacher selves. I can't remember at all what I drew to represent my artist self, but I remember I drew a tree to visually materialize how I saw myself as an educator. Constantly growing, organically changing w/ the seasons, classes, students, and as a reaction to life experiences & learning from those. Funny how years later, when I find another facet of my identity, my researcher self, and this same visual metaphor comes to mind.