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Unsettling Literacies

Directions for literacy research in precarious times

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Chapter 11
Engaging DIY Media-Making to Explore Uncertain and Dystopic Conditions with 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Allies in New Brunswick, Canada

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Abstract Dystopias—societies organized around deep inequalities—have existed in the context of Atlantic Canada since colonization. In this article, we seek to center the concept of dystopia as an important sphere of inquiry through participatory visual research with six 2SLGBTQ+ young people (14–17) in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. Using an intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989), we consider how intersecting power structures—gender, race, class, and disability—produce unequal impacts in relation to social and reproductive justice issues in Atlantic Canadian contexts. In this paper, we highlight DIY media-making—as a multiliteracy practice—with 2SLGBTQ+ youth to explore social and reproductive justice. As early as 1994, Julian Sefton-Green and David Buckingham wrote about the importance of acknowledging the situated nature of people's local literacy practices and of examining the ways that people make meaning through multiple texts in order to instigate social change. Other scholars working within a multiliteracy framework (see, e.g., Barton and Hamilton, Literacy practices. In Barton D, Hamilton M, Ivanic R (eds) Situated literacies: theorizing reading and writing in context. Routledge, pp 25–32, 2005; Rowsell J and Pahl, The Routledge handbook of literacy studies. Routledge, 2015) argue that an understanding of multiliteracies includes modes of processing, producing, analyzing, and meaning-making. Centering 2SLGBTQ+ youth agency, we position DIY media-making as a multiliteracy practice through stencil production and drawing. Through a close reading of three youth-produced images, and an interdisciplinary inquiry into dystopias present and future, we seek to make visual an ethical place of belonging among the dystopic.

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11.1 Introduction

> I did watch the world burn. Say nothing to me of innocent bystanders, unearned suffering, heartless vengeance…Well, some worlds are built on a fault line of pain, held up by nightmares. Don't lament when those worlds fall. Rage that they were built doomed in the first place (Jemison, 2017, p. 6)

Dystopias—societies organized around deep inequalities—exist in the context of Atlantic Canada as a reflection of ongoing processes of colonization. Interested in thinking about dystopia as a way to challenge deep-rooted inequalities, in this chapter, we take up Jemison's call not to be bystanders and to activate around the injustices we are witnessing and experiencing, even as the futures we work toward are uncertain. Current research paradigms for studying dystopia are often founded upon and limited by values and assumptions from the past and present and limited by the supposed certainty of the neoliberal status quo. As Godhe and Goode (2017) explained, "our capacity to imagine alternative futures has seemingly atrophied over more than two decades of neoliberal hegemony: 'capitalist realism' (Fisher, 2009) has meant persuading citizens that there is no alternative to the onward march of globalized markets, finance capitalism, deregulation and environmental degradation" (p. 3). In some ways, we know for certain that existing conditions are dystopic, and yet, this very condition creates disproportionate uncertainties and precarities for certain people and groups. We see a tension in thinking through dystopia as it seems simultaneously tied to both certainty and uncertainty. In this context, and with the need to find ways to disrupt this atrophy and imagine alternative futures, we turn to the social justice possibilities around literacies as creative and political acts (Freire & Macedo, 1987) amidst uncertainty. We suggest that expanded ideas around literacy and literacies, such as The New London Group's (1996) pedagogy of multiliteracies, offer transformative paradigms for studying dystopia in ways that acknowledge the multitextual, multimodal, and multilingual environments in which we learn and enact change. We explore dystopia as an important sphere of opening up inquiry in order to dismantle what seems normal, accepted, and inevitable.

In particular, we take up participatory visual methodologies to unsettle the concept of dystopia with 2SLGBTQ+—two spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and the plus refers to the gender identities and sexualities that are not represented by the terms "2SLGBTQ"—youth and ally-preservice teachers in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. With the ongoing structural oppression of 2SLGBTQ+ folks, the past experiences, present concerns, and imagined and uncertain futures of 2SLGBTQ+ youth matter for dystopic inquiry and create openings within and around existing precarities. We propose that responding to dystopic conditions through participatory visual research, described in this chapter as drawing and

stencil production, with 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies, offers a type of DIY (do it yourself) multiliteracy media-making practice for social change (Mitchell & Burkholder, 2015; Stuart & Mitchell, 2013). Working within a research for social change framework (Mitchell et al., 2017) and through DIY media production, we seek ways not just to study phenomena but also to actively transform what we are studying and living.

We write together as three early career female scholars—one Black (Funké) and two White[1] (Casey and Jen)—who have been working together to think through the ways in which systems and structures reflect dystopic conditions that have long been in place in New Brunswick, Canada—unceded and unsurrendered Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy territory. Our larger project, *Exploring Dystopia with Youth: Confronting Unsustainable Futures Through Participatory Visual Inquiry into the Past and Present*, explores dystopic conditions in Atlantic Canada, past, present, and future, with a focus on how DIY multiliteracies and participatory visual research methods might be harnessed to explore intersections between various forms of injustice across categories of race, gender, and reproductive health and environment. Attending to the embeddedness of historic and ongoing legacies of slavery and colonialism, alongside exploitative and extractive practices of late-stage capitalism (Preston, 2017), we explore dystopias through DIY media-making, with a focus on power and how youth navigate existing dystopic structures. Contributing to the areas of education and Canadian youth studies (Chen et al. 2017), we are interested in how the concept of dystopia is enacted in access to reproductive and health care and how dystopic conditions already exist and create disproportionate uncertainties and precarities for racialized, gendered, and economically marginalized bodies and communities.

We focus our inquiry in this chapter on a DIY stencil and drawing production workshop with three queer, trans, and nonbinary youth and three youth allies (aged 14–25) in Fredericton, New Brunswick Canada, which sought to address dystopic conditions in education and healthcare systems for queer, trans, and nonbinary people. Julian Sefton-Green and David Buckingham (1994) wrote about the importance of acknowledging the situated nature of people's local literacy practices and examining the ways that people make meaning through multiple texts in order to instigate social change or take action (see also The New London Group, 1996). Other scholars working within a multiliteracy framework (see, e.g., Barton & Hamilton, 2005; Rowsell & Pahl, 2015) argue that an understanding of multiliteracies includes multiple modes of processing, producing, analyzing, and meaning-making.

Centering youth agency, we disrupt the notion that young people are disengaged consumers of media and position youth as knowledge producers through participatory visual and DIY methods of inquiry, including stencil production (Burkholder & Thorpe, 2019) and drawing (Literat, 2013). In this chapter, we highlight the

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[1] Drawing on the activism and scholarship of Eve Ewing (2020), we explicitly capitalize Black and White as the "seeming invisibility [of Whiteness] permits White people to move through the World without ever considering the fact of their Whiteness…White people get to be only normal, neutral, or without any race at all" (para. 8).

importance of DIY stencil production practices with youth as openings to imagine alternative ways to create community and belonging in ways that embrace gender-inclusive youth resistance to reproductive injustice in New Brunswick, Canada. To address these objectives, we ask two sets of research questions: (1) When faced with uncertain and dystopic conditions in relation to gender-affirming health care, how do young people respond through stencil production and drawings? Here, we understand gender-affirming care as "the processes through which a healthcare system cares for and supports an individual, while recognizing and acknowledging their gender identity and expression" (BC Nurses' Union, 2016, p. 2). How might engaging in media production with young people and sharing these productions in digital communities work to counter dominant forms of apathy and denial and support youth to claim a stake in creating solidarities, belonging, and community-making in contexts of uncertainty? With 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies, through an inquiry into dystopias past and present, we seek to make visual an ethical place of belonging amidst dystopic precarities, to define our understanding of stencil production as a DIY multiliteracy practice for social change, and to imagine our work in solidarity in the face of unsustainable and uncertain reproductive and gender-inclusive healthcare futures.

11.2   Context

The workshop we highlight in the chapter took place in September 2019 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.[2] Our work first considers how the colonization of the Wabanaki Confederacy—Atlantic Canada—disrupted and outlawed existing structures of gender and sexual diversity as a strategy to oppress and colonize existing nations and peoples within this territory (Reid, 2019). This colonization is extensive and ongoing, enacted through state structures that replicate inequitable, uncertain, and uneven access to education and health care; these challenges stand at the intersection of gendered, racialized, and Indigenous identities. For many, privilege renders these structures invisible, and yet there is also a growing public acknowledgment of the need to heed Indigenous, Black, and 2SLGBTQ+ calls for change to address the dystopic and precarious conditions that are already there. In a poem published on November 3, 2020, Black, queer, and Muslim-American poet, Devyn Springer, wrote:

the apocalypse was already here,
it has been here, striking in plain sight,

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[2] Our context, Fredericton, New Brunswick, is situated on the unsurrendered and unceded traditional lands of the Wolastoqiyik peoples. Signed in 1725, the Peace and Friendship Treaties established Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik title over these lands and provided rules for ongoing relations between nations. We acknowledge the land and the unhonored Treaty of Peace and Friendship, as an example of the existing dystopic conditions that exist within this territory. New Brunswick was founded on stolen land and provides the geographical and societal context for our inquiry.

it is not a thief in the night we must watch for,
nor an impending catastrophe we must manage,
but an infestation so large, so vast in sheer numbers,
so incalculable in the lives it's collected,
and audacious in the histories it's stolen,
that we think it has yet to arrive.

Our work also takes place during the ongoing struggle to fund Clinic 554—a Fredericton-based family medical practice that centers gender affirming health care, including abortion (Clinic 554, 2020). The chronic underfunding of Clinic 554 by the New Brunswick provincial government led to its recent closure in October 2020, leaving a gaping hole in access for trans people seeking health care and any person seeking an abortion in the geographic region of Fredericton. Currently, only two cities in New Brunswick, Bathurst and Moncton, offer surgical abortions—both 2-h drives from Fredericton and Saint John (Bell, 2020). The impending closure of Clinic 554[3] was the impetus for the September 2019 workshop we describe in this chapter, where 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies created drawings and stencils to be shared broadly online. We sought to provide youth input on the crisis and amplify their calls for reproductive justice and gender inclusive health care. The eventual closure of Clinic 554 in October 2020 intensifies reproductive injustice and the dearth, and therefore precarity, of gender inclusive health care in New Brunswick—clearly dystopic conditions.

11.3   Positioning Ourselves in Relation to the Study

We came together to do this work in 2018—long before the current coronavirus pandemic—when we began to think about the ways that we might work with young people to explore dystopic conditions from the past, in the present, and in the future. We write together as people who have commitments to educational and social reform in the context of Atlantic Canada. Casey is an Associate Professor who teaches and researches in the area of gender, sexuality, participatory visual research, and Social Studies education. She is increasingly disappointed in the affronts on queer, trans, nonbinary people, as well as cisgender women, in relation to schooling and health services provided in New Brunswick. Her commitments to educational and social change are drawn from her embodied and internalized experiences of homophobia from her own educational experiences. She writes and works in solidarity with the youth and preservice teachers enrolled at her university. While Casey led the workshop we describe in this chapter, Funké and Jen have collaborated as "critical friend[s]" (Costa & Kalick, 1994, p. 49), who have brought analytical frameworks and visual analyses to the data in order to make sense of the

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[3] Rumors of the Clinic's impending closure began in August 2019. The Clinic was put up for sale in June 2020 and effectively closed in September 2020 (Bell, 2020).

participant-produced stencils and drawings as examples of DIY multiliteracy practices for social action.

Funké is an Assistant Professor of Black Canadian history deeply invested in the bridging of academic and community knowledges. Her early research in Fredericton recognizes the long-standing history of Black communities in New Brunswick but also considers gaps in educational access and knowledge about these histories. By emphasizing the necessity of participatory research and a recognition of community-based knowledges, largely through oral histories, Funké considers the important avenues by which we can understand and situate advocacy work for persons of African descent in New Brunswick.

Jen is a postdoctoral researcher currently working in the area of youth knowledge mobilization in Quebec. Centering questions about how participatory visual methodologies offer ways to expand and transform research processes, Jen's research has explored gender relations within education, as well as in relation to environmental issues. Jen collaborated with Casey on a 2SLGBTQ+ youth workshop with some of the participants in a July 2019 embroidery and patch-making workshop while she was a Summer Scholar in the Faculty of Education at the University of New Brunswick.

Taking our collective interest in praxis and research for social change, we put our work in conversation with youth-produced stencils and drawings as DIY media for reproductive justice and a multiliteracy practice for social action. We turn now to the theoretical framework for the chapter: intersectional feminism.

11.4   Intersectionality as Theory and Method

While we theorize dystopias as purposely unsettling, our study brings together methods and approaches that also seek to unsettle dominant discourses that situate dystopia as a futured experience. Black feminism (Jacobs, 2019; King, 2016; Pellow, 2016) and critical future studies (Godhe & Goode, 2017) anchor our research. Using an intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989), we consider how intersecting power structures—gender, race, class, and disability—produce unequal impacts in relation to race, gender, reproductive health, and environmental issues in Atlantic Canadian contexts. Intersectionality as method works to dismantle interlocking systems of oppression as it compels a type of praxis to disrupt systemic oppressions (Cho et al., 2013). We consider the situated, specific, and relational nature of social power and also consider how social relations shape and are shaped by environmental factors (Sturgeon, 2016; Thompson, 2016), including access to gender-affirming reproductive care.

We also seek to ground this intersectional framework within the context of Canada (Aladejebi, 2015). Black Canadian feminists call attention to intersections of race, culture, geography, national origin, sexuality, and gender, which transform and situate diverse minority populations—especially Black Canadian communities (Wane et al., 2002). This framework shifts our understandings from theory to

practice in order to place youth (and their intersectional experiences) at the center of analyses but also to position their voices as active creators and writers of their own stories. We explore the ways in which this approach can provide mechanisms for activism by privileging the experiences of those affected by intersecting forms of oppression (Wane et al., 2002).

We draw on the work of participatory media scholar Henry Jenkins (2006) in the area of convergence or DIY culture to center young peoples' active roles as knowledge, cultural, and media producers. We also draw on the work of Gillian Rose (2014), who highlights the affordances of visual research methods, including the generative nature of conversations between researchers and participants as visuals are produced, and the ways that visual production has the ability to "reveal what is hidden in the inner mechanisms of the ordinary and the taken for granted" (Knowles and Sweetman as cited in Rose, 2014, p. 28). Rose suggests that the collaborative nature of visual methods supports participants' ownership over the visuals they create and the knowledge they produce, such that participants are positioned as "experts…as they explain their images to the researcher" (p. 29). We adopt Rose's approach to visual analysis and apply it to the drawings and stencils produced in our collaborative project.

11.5   The Workshops: *Where Are Our Histories?*

In December 2018, Casey—with PhD candidate and collaborator Amelia Thorpe—began a series of monthly arts-based workshops with queer, trans, and nonbinary youth (aged 13–17) in Fredericton (Thorpe, 2020) in order to investigate the erasures of queer histories from New Brunswick Social Studies curricula and classrooms. As the initiative evolved, it grew to encompass young people's school and social experiences more broadly. The first workshop in December 2018 centered on stencil and cellphilm production (cellphone + filmmaking; see MacEntee et al., 2016) that responded to the prompt, "Where are our [queer] histories?" One of the results of this first workshop was that the young people wanted to keep meeting and making art together. In theorizing youth stencil production as a posthuman multiliteracy practice, Casey and Amelia argued that stencils were:

> nestled within other materialities in the workshop and as actors within the research space—[which] prompted reflection on the participants' experiences as queer, trans, and non-binary youth who inhabit school spaces…about the ways that gender and sexuality are experienced and often erased as landscapes within school spaces. (Burkholder & Thorpe, 2019, p. 299)

Our present chapter takes this theorizing and turns it toward the production of two stencils and two drawings produced by 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies that centered their concerns over the impending closure of Clinic 554 and offered a call for action amidst dystopic conditions in relation to gender and reproductive injustice.

11.5.1   Save Clinic 554 Drawing and Stencil Production Workshop

From January 2019 until February 2020, Casey, Amelia, and the *Where Are Our Histories* 2SLGBTQ+ youth met in monthly DIY media production-based workshops, where the membership fluctuated between three and seven members. In October 2019, we—three 2SLGBTQ+ youth, three youth who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ allies, and Casey—met and produced drawings and stencils that took up the prompt "what matters to you in your community?" Together, through a discussion about pressing issues in Fredericton, we decided to highlight our responses to the significance of Clinic 554, our fears about its precarious financial state, and what that meant for gender-affirming and gender-inclusive reproductive health care in the province.

11.5.2   Drawing and Stencils as DIY Multiliteracies for Social Action

In what follows, we engage in Gillian Rose's (2012) framework for critical visual analysis—which highlights the production of the image, the image itself, and the audiencing of the image—in order to present a reading of four creative productions: two participant-produced drawings by Raven and Kristy, one participant-produced stencil by Scott, and one researcher-produced stencil by Casey.[4]

Raven is a 15-year-old 2SLGBTQ+ artist, activist, and collaborator in the *Where Are Our Histories* project. Raven and Casey first began working together in December 2018, when we collaborated on several cellphilms about queer erasure in social studies curricula and in New Brunswick schools in general.[5] Raven's drawing (see Fig. 11.1) uses marker, pen, and bright colors. Three people are depicted, including a self-portrait of the artist. The person on the left holds up an agender[6] flag, and the person in the center holds a sign reading CLINIC 554. The third person's shirt reads, "Save my family doctor." At the top of the image, a rainbow extends horizontally across the image. Behind the figures, a number of images, patterns, and words are repeated. The text looks like doodles and graffiti, and each phrase is intentional. Words featured include "equality," "recycle stuff," and "Jenica A"—in reference to the Green Party MP for Fredericton. Other statements featured in the graffiti highlight things that are important to Raven, from "pineapple belongs

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[4] Kristy and Scott are pseudonyms. Raven is a participant-chosen pseudonym. Casey is non-anonymized.

[5] See our work from our Queer Cellphilms NB project, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXORsJs60OVKJ7TSDnEl6xg

[6] Agender is a nonbinary gender identity that means that a person is without gender (Pulice-Farrow et al., 2020).

Fig. 11.1 Kristy's 554 and Raven's Save Clinic 554

on pizza" to "Clinic 554 is very important" to "Pokémon, gotta catch them all." In talking about the piece, Raven shared that they "just wanted to show that Clinic 554 is really important for the LGBTQ community, and not just like, for what people think it is for [abortion services], but like for counseling and healthcare, and I just think it is a big part of the community. It will be sad if it closes." We see this point to be worth noting because there is a clear awareness demonstrated here that abortion is still thought of as negative, as Raven discursively constructs abortion as a service that is separate and distinctive from the other reproductive and gender-affirming care that people receive within Clinic 554. Even within gender-diverse communities, there is an awareness of popular media and conservatism within the province of New Brunswick (e.g., Quon, 2020), which creates negative assumptions about access to care that are so much more than "just" abortion.

Kristy, who attends university and identifies as a 2SLGBTQ+ ally, produced a drawing, "554" (Fig. 11.1) that combines text, pastel, pen, and drawing and that makes visual the multiple services that Clinic 554 provides. Kristy attended the workshop as a volunteer preservice teacher participant who wanted to interact with youth in an out-of-school setting and who sought to learn more about arts-based approaches to activism with youth. For example, within the outline of the first number 5, Kristy wrote the terms "safe abortions," "pediatrics," "family doctor," "safe hormone injections," "HIV care," and "trans health," effectively naming the specific types of care services offered by the clinic. When Clinic 554 is discussed in local media (see, e.g., Quon, 2020), it is often described only as a "private abortion clinic" (Bissett, 2020, para. 1). However, as Kristy and other sources (see, e.g., Hansen & Harnish, 2020) make clear, the Clinic provides gender-affirming care in a family practice setting. One of the services that Clinic 554 provides is abortion care, and this is the site of its defunding by the provincial government (Clinic 554, 2020). By producing this drawing and consenting to its dissemination online on Casey's Twitter (Fig. 11.3), Kristy is engaging in a DIY multiliteracy practice for social action: seeking to inform larger public audiences about the services that Clinic 554 provides for community members and disrupting broader mainstream narratives that simplify its diverse meanings and supports for people.

Scott is a university student in the field of education who also identified as a 2SLGBTQ+ ally. Scott is a preservice teacher-activist who wanted to collaborate in the youth workshops to practice art-informed pedagogy and learn about 2SLGBTQ+ youth activism outside of school contexts. Scott wanted to create a stencil that could communicate his thoughts in French for Francophone communities, who have long-standing histories in New Brunswick. Here, Scott engages with a multiliteracy framework by acknowledging the limitations of monolingualism and recognizing how people are often engaging in and producing meanings around texts across multiple languages (Rowsell & Pahl, 2015). We note that a multiliteracy framework means acknowledging that the monolingual and autonomous model of literacy is a false and homogenizing thing (Rowsell & Pahl, 2015). Scott created his stencil by layering tape over a black piece of cardstock (see Fig. 11.2). Then, he used a paintbrush to splash pink, mauve, and white paint over the top of the tape, creating a marbled aesthetic. Settling on the message, "Sauvons Clinique 554" (Save Clinic 554), Scott's piece seeks to engage Francophone communities, who also access the clinic but whose perspectives are largely removed from the ways that saving Clinic 554 is discussed in the media (Bell, 2020). Because the art we were producing was meant to be public facing—and shared in social media and real-life contexts (including on Casey's office door)—Scott's choice to highlight the need to "Sauvons la Clinique 554" speaks back to the erasure of Francophone advocacy for the Clinic within local activist circles and popular media.[7]

As a practice that first began when she was a classroom teacher and continues in her current research practice, Casey always produces DIY media alongside participants, taking up the prompt in her own way. With collaborative research methodologies in mind, Casey is cognizant that her interpretations might influence the modes
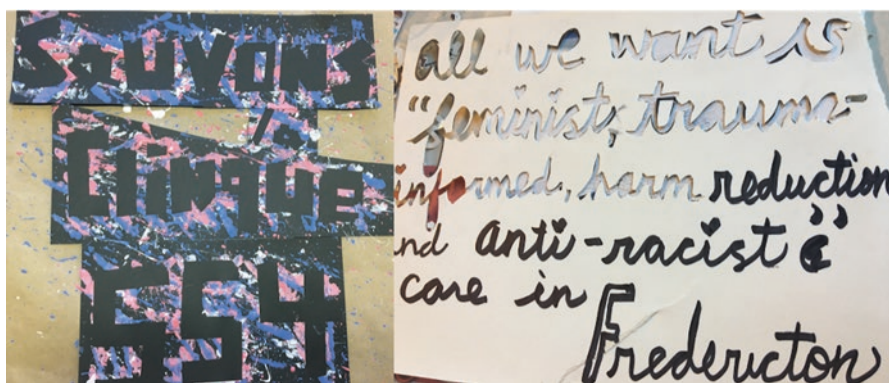

Fig. 11.2 Scott's *Sauvons la Clinique 554* [Save Clinic 554] and Casey's trauma-informed care

[7] See exceptions, including an August 2020 Radio Canada, Ici Nouveau-Brunswick interview with Monique Brideau: https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1728657/clinique-avortement-chirurgical-nouveau-brunswick-lections-recours-collectif

that participants take up, but she feels that crafting alongside participants is an example of engaged practice, of showing her own interpretation, and of being vulnerable with participants—who have varying degrees of comfort with the notion of media production. In her stencil, Casey decided to use cursive writing to amplify a phrase that she found on Clinic 554's website that highlighted its goals for providing care for community members within Fredericton (see Fig. 11.2). Casey decided not just to quote the website's statement about services but to reframe the quote as a call for action. Her stencil reads, "All we want is 'feminist, trauma-informed, harm reduction anti-racist care in Fredericton.'" Casey wanted to highlight antiracism within the project—as racism is a dystopic condition well entwined with reproductive injustice. The picture of Casey's stencil depicts a moment midproduction before she had finished cutting. With this picture, Casey wanted to show how stencils are often drafty and allow space for mistakes and how stencil production offers an example of the political nature of DIY itself. Casey's call for action through her stencil was intentional as she thought about ways that the images might later be disseminated—especially through online communities.

After we produced both the stencils and drawings, we photographed them using our cellphones and disseminated them across our personal social media networks. Kristy, Raven, and Scott also consented to sharing their work publicly through Casey's professional social media network (Fig. 11.3), and Raven also shared their image with a teacher in their school. Although their drawings and stencils were produced within the confines of a 3-h workshop, they have had a life and impact outside of the workshop space. We see this dissemination of these powerful visuals as one of the methodological contributions of DIY multiliteracies that center dystopia as a sphere of inquiry in order to both document resistance and provoke transformative change.

11.6   Taking the Pieces Together

By producing drawings and stencils to address the impending closure of Clinic 554 and sharing these pieces online, we suggest that this practice might be conceptualized as DIY multiliteracy practices for social action. Our research both disrupts autonomous notions of literacy (Street, 2006) and positions youth-produced drawings and stencils as a DIY literacy practice that acknowledges dystopic and uncertain conditions and speaks back to these conditions. Although our interventions—the production of stencils and drawings and sharing these online—did not change the outcome of the closure of Clinic 554, they did create new openings and communities of inquiry and activist practice. The images also align with broader social critiques about conservative news and media reporting and contest these messages. The pieces reflect youth awareness of the potential of DIY media in making and effecting change, by identifying opportunities for naming and acting on injustices. The awareness that something can be done (even if it does not work out) is a radical practice for mobilization and consciousness-raising. Multilayered communities
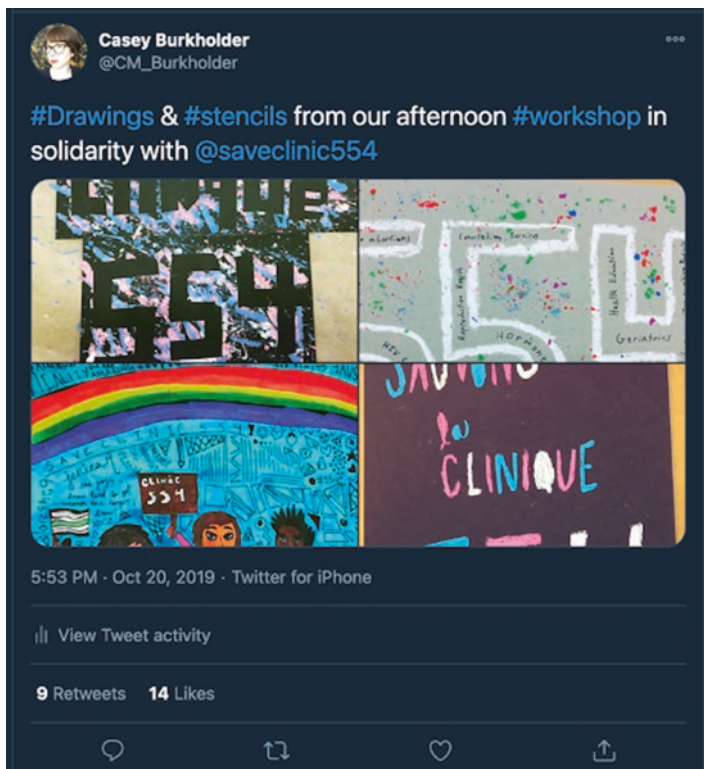
Fig. 11.3 Sharing the pieces with online networks

were developed in the workshop, between 2SLGBTQ+ youth, ally youth, and a researcher, and also between the community of producers and online communities. While we did not stop the closure of Clinic 554, we did share what the clinic meant to us. This effort has led to other collaborations, including the production in Summer 2020 of a cellphilm[8] and two lesson plans[9] that could bring the notion of gender-affirming care to Grade 7 Social Studies classrooms.

Our stencils and drawings also inspired art production in a knowledge mobilization project called *Pride/Swell*[10]: *Art & Activism with 2SLGBTQ+ Atlantic Canadian Youth*, where Raven's drawing became a recruitment tool for participants. Later, as a part of *Pride/Swell* and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Casey created

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[8] See Araujo, N. and Burkholder, C. (2020). Gender affirming care: Save Clinic 554. [cellphilm]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91MRZVNe5OI

[9] See Chase, A. and Burkholder, C. (2020). Lesson plans. *Queer histories matter: Queering Social Studies in New Brunswick.* [website]. https://www.queerhistoriesmatter.org/lessonplans

[10] Pride/Swell is an art, activism, and archiving project Casey is engaging in with 2SLGBTQ+ youth and collaborators Dr. Katie MacEntee, Dr. April Mandrona, and Amelia Thorpe.

both a DIY facemask[11] that read "Save Clinic 554" in response to the prompt "staying safe, but never silent," as well as a doll holding an embroidered protest sign reading "Save Clinic 554"[12] in response to the prompt "embodying future selves." At a time when the precarity of the future seems accentuated by the uncertain and dystopic conditions created by the pandemic, we seek to highlight the complex ways that injustices are playing out and understood. For youth participants of this study, the urgency of access to health care and the potential closure of Clinic 554 brought the reality of dystopia to the ongoing present rather than a future coming. Participants remained aware of the disparate and precarious locales of access to care available to 2SLGBTQ+ communities and joined in ongoing struggles to voice their concerns. Not finding these platforms in mainstream media outlets, participants used DIY media-making to expand their access to public audiences. They participated in practices of consciousness-raising that considered the more nuanced ways that Clinic 554 provided necessary services for their communities. This is the makings of radical practice work and resistance. The October 2019 workshop and the production of media within it continues to affect research and activist communities in the context of Fredericton—a form of social action.

While DIY media-making within this project largely considers the intersections of gender and sexuality, there are limitations in the ways in which race, reproductive, and environmental justice are engaged within these spaces. We acknowledge that in this part of the project exploring reproductive and health-based dystopias with 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies, the majority of our research population is White—which we see as a limitation to our work. Stronger considerations must be given to explore how racialized communities are excluded from access to services, which are connected, but not limited, to health care within the province. For example, African-Canadian community consultations in Saint John, New Brunswick, revealed learning gaps around access to resources and information within the province (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008). In addition, community members reported that various institutions within the province lacked people who understood the needs of African-Canadians. The more recent treatment of Dr. Ngola—a Black physician in New Brunswick whose medical privacy was denied as his COVID-status was disclosed at a press conference by the premier, Blaine Higgs—also reflects deep-rooted elements of systemic racism, harassment, and violence directed at persons of African descent within the province.[13] To date, there has been no comprehensive assessment outlining the experiences of racialized populations despite ongoing calls to action around this issue (Metallic, 2020). These are avenues not fully explored within this discussion but remain intimately connected to the

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[11] See Casey's selfie and facemask at https://www.instagram.com/p/CGpT0EYD01E/

[12] See Casey's doll and tiny protest sign at https://www.instagram.com/p/CG42K4rjchznTPYthZ9gTGZPcd1d57Idau3SRo0/

[13] See Dryden, O. (2020). Racist responses to Covid-19 place us all at greater risk. *The Chronicle Herald*, September 3. [Viewed December 15, 2020]. Available from https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/local-perspectives/omisoore-dryden-racist-responses-to-covid-19-place-us-all-at-greater-risk-492256/

intersecting experiences and multiple understandings of how dystopia and precarity are experienced in the past and present.

11.7 How Can We Move Forward with DIY Solidarities and Collective Resistance?

While the range of complex issues related to social change certainly cannot be resolved in this study, we seek to find ways forward to create new openings and communities that can work together to make space for beauty, for resistance, and for collaboration in the face of increasing disparities in gender-affirming reproductive health care, certainly since the closure of Clinic 554. Moving forward, our study contributes to disrupting conventional thinking about literacies and engaging in research for social action with and by youth. Young people in particular have specific and important stakes in questions about uncertainty and precarity in dystopic pasts, presents, and futures and are already engaging in resistance and activism in Atlantic Canadian contexts. For example, Kendra Levi-Paul advocates for equitable access to health and education in New Brunswick. Also in New Brunswick, Husoni Raymond and Felomena Degratsias have played central roles in building Black Lives Matter—Fredericton in response to systemic racism within the province. In Nova Scotia, Kyturea Jones, Payton Ashe, and Donntayia Jones build community through resisting gentrification of their Halifax neighborhood, and Tina Yeonju Oh's climate activism has garnered international recognition. Prince Edward Island's Queer Youth Collective offers the only community-based youth group specifically for 2SLGBTQ+ youth on the island. These projects reflect an awareness among young people that dystopia is indeed in process and that bridging across solidarities offers important moments for collective resistance and coalition building. DIY multiliteracies for social action, as demonstrated throughout this chapter, offer important methodological and theoretical frameworks for looking at uncertain and dystopic conditions, past, present, and future. Working with dystopia as a sphere of inquiry for imagining alternative futures, we hope to build on these moments to investigate the ways in which issues of justice, racism, dispossession, uncertainty, gentrification and progress, and access to reproductive health services shape communities and community members in different ways. We see stencil production as one method of DIY multiliteracy practice for social action, as it has the potential for participants and the research team to share their works broadly in multiple spaces, both online and offline. Providing a gender and race focus to the future community building and media-making workshops will encourage those communities most impacted by reproductive injustice to imagine their place in resisting unsustainable and uncertain futures together through DIY multiliteracy practices for social change.

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