

What Meaning Can We Make Together? On Learning to Code Qualitative Research Data with Graduate Students in Education

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Abstract: Graduate students in education are often expected to collect and code data, but the practice of how to do this with qualitative data is not often made visible. In October 2022, we gathered as a collective of graduate students and a professor to address this gap. We asked, what might it look like to learn about coding together? What informs the decisions we make during the coding process? Drawing on a workshop where we coded data from Dr. Burkholder's research with 2SLGBTQI+ youth, we discussed how we approached the data from multiple lenses and perspectives. In this inquiry, we have traced the growth of our collective understanding of coding practices and show how we made sense of the data as we engaged in dialogue with each other. This paper reveals the intersections of our learning and creates a space for our accumulated knowledge using collaborative modes of inquiry. We argue that there is pedagogical value for graduate students in education and for qualitative researchers in making coding practices explicit.

Keywords: Coding, Data Analysis, Educational Research, Education Graduate Students, Qualitative Research

Introduction

What might it look like to learn about coding together? This question stood at the centre of an inquiry that began one afternoon in October 2022, when we met as a group of graduate students and a professor over our shared interest in coding processes and analyzing qualitative data. We knew that graduate students in education need to know how to code qualitative data, however, as emerging scholars we found that our theoretical understandings of coding became more complex in practice. We argue here that qualitative coding requires practice, reflection, and experience. Through a hybrid group workshop, we created an opportunity to code together and move from theory to practice by collectively coding using a real data set. Bringing to our collective inquiry a diverse background of coding experiences, we sought to make meaning of qualitative data collectively to explore both the overlap and divergence in our analyses. In this paper, we share our experiences of exploring the process of coding collaboratively by engaging with an existing data set together and by exploring collaborative ethnographic practice – the act of shared writing and reflection in research – to situate our experiences (Lassiter, 2005). We begin by positioning ourselves in the inquiry and engaging each other in a conversation to make visible our processes of learning together. We ask: How might this purposeful and collaborative centering of coding broaden our practices as qualitative researchers? Why does working together matter? We bring our reflections, experiences, vulnerabilities, and musings to the forefront by invoking the use of several voices to explore how to make meaning as a collective and move through coding practicalities together. We argue that this process strengthened our understanding of an often invisible research practice, fostered opportunities for ongoing reflexivity, and demanded a deeper relationship with the data we were tasked with coding. We offer this inquiry to fellow scholars in the isolating throes of disentangling their data and wondering—like we were—what it means to code in explicit and visible ways.

Situating Ourselves

After hearing several students express the need for a more nuanced understanding of how to code, Dr. Burkholder (hereafter referred to as Casey) invited graduate students in the University of New Brunswick's Faculty of Education to a hybrid coding workshop. Attendees ranged from students in their fourth year of masters' programmes to first, second, and third-year doctoral students. In considering our positionalities, some of us situated ourselves geographically and professionally:

- **Karma:** First year doctoral student and educator from Bhutan.
- **Loaneen:** First-year Ph.D. student and educator from Jamaica.
- **Marshall:** First year doctoral student exploring culture and education within the Canadian Armed Forces.
- **Cody:** First year doctoral student and instructor who continuously straddles the line between student and teacher.
- **Katharine:** Second year doctoral student and long-term educator.

Some of us identified ourselves through a layering of positionalities:

- **Auralia:** White, cis settler from the territories of the Coast Salish peoples and third year doctoral student.
- **Casey:** White settler, cis bisexual associate professor, and first person in her family to go to university.
- **Melissa:** White, cis-gender, queer, first-year doctoral student.
- **Angelina:** An Indigenous masters student who is living as a guest on the traditional territory of the Wabanaki peoples, and learning teachings from outside my home community.

By making the experiences and identities of different members of our team visible, we were able to engage with this work on a deeper and richer level. All participating students had differing experiences with coding, ranging from basic understandings to more thorough understandings informed by experience with coding in previous graduate work. Our common goal was to learn about, and become more proficient in, coding qualitative data. In what follows, we describe how instructional approaches that generalize coding practices can be problematic and describe our efforts to move from a theoretical understanding of coding to something more tangible and applied.

The Problem

Within graduate methodology courses, coding approaches are often generalized, whereas specific, nuanced approaches to coding are often something that we learn individually during research practice (Elliot, 2018). As a group of new qualitative researchers, we acknowledge our need to better understand how we can think through coding as a research practice with its own epistemological root systems and research outcomes (Boström, 2019; Leavy, 2017; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). As Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019) observe, coding “represents the gritty craftsmanship that enables artful and creative interpretation and analysis of the data” (p. 261). Through comparing our experiences and understandings of coding at the beginning of the workshop, we found that each of us came with a different assumption of what coding is and how coding practices ought to be applied to research. We sought to expand our existing knowledge by looking toward our own research to explore different coding methods, including inductive, deductive, and participatory, which we define more explicitly in our methods section below. We found ourselves aligning predominantly with participatory approaches to coding, perhaps because of our group setting, or perhaps due to the themes of power and voice that emerged from our discussions.

According to Williams and Moser (2019), coding provides the structure necessary to construct meaning. Through coding, the researcher can sort, categorize, and identify similarities or themes within a dataset. Data is dense, and therefore coding becomes fundamental to our ability to make meaning and relate this newfound sense to inquiry (Elliott, 2018). In response to our coding workshop, Loaneen expressed that coding “simplifies the interpretation of participant feedback” and Marshall added that coding allows us to “draw attention to similarities and highlight differences.” Elliott (2018) noted that coding is a decision-making process where the individual researcher decides what type of data to examine and how codes might be found and identified from within the data set. As a group of mostly new researchers, we began by asking: what decisions ought to be made and who should make them?

Casey’s observation that “coding is something that people talk about in research methods, but [is] not always something that is shown” aligns with Elliot’s (2018) observation that the ‘how to’ of coding is “relatively undocumented” (p. 2850). Elliott (2018) suggested that researchers must approach coding in a

manner that is true to their chosen methodology and research design, yet noted that one's approach should change in response to the needs of each inquiry.

Framing the Data

The data that we worked with emerged from an art, archiving, and activism research project with 2SLGBTQI+¹ youth in Atlantic Canada called Pride/Swell that Casey has been working on since 2020. Beginning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, this study began by mailing packages of art supplies and themed prompts to 55 participants' homes. In November 2021, when pandemic restrictions were lessened in New Brunswick, 10 participants from the study came to Fredericton to co-curate the archive of these artworks to design an exhibition (see some of this art at: <https://prideswell.org>). At this exhibition, researchers recorded several conversations that were later transcribed by a research assistant. For an hour, participants and the research team looked at the art and annotated the artworks with their thoughts written on post-it notes (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Pride/Swell Gallery Walkabout



This is a method of analysis called the “gallery walk about” that Casey first learned about from her doctoral supervisor, Claudia Mitchell (see: MacEntee & Mitchell, 2011). At the coding workshop in October 2022, Casey shared the transcript with us, and provided us with an overview of three coding processes: inductive—where codes are derived from participant language, (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019), deductive—where researchers use predetermined codes to guide the data analysis (Boström, 2019), and participatory—where participants and researchers work together to determine what the data means (Switzer & Flicker, 2021).

¹ The acronym 2SLGBTQI+ refers to Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and the + refers to the complexity of sexual and gender identities not encompassed in the first letters of the acronym.

Next, we were guided to add codes to the transcripts of conversations from the exhibition as nested comments on a Google Document. Through interacting with each other's responses to the coding project, we began a conversation about the purpose and nature of coding methodology.

Methods

Casey began the workshop with a slideshow in which she highlighted three different types of coding: 1) inductive or emergent; 2) deductive or a priori; and 3) participatory. We first explored the theory of inductive coding together, and then we applied this theory to the transcripts. Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019) note that for this method, we should approach data with as few preconceived notions about what we will be coding as possible. Applying our newly acquired knowledge while also leveraging previous experience, we began examining our data. Given the "bewildering array of options and strategies" (Thomas, 2006, p. 245) made available to qualitative researchers interested in coding, we took some time to annotate the shared document individually as we read it for the first time. After we finished making our individual annotations, we engaged in a collaborative discussion about our notes by exploring what we noticed about the annotations, and subsequently what themes we saw developing throughout the data. In working through this inductive coding, common themes began to emerge. As Loaneen observed, "I realize that coding simplifies the interpretation of participant feedback. Assigning codes to words and phrases in each response aids in capturing what the response is about, which aids in better analyzing and summarizing the results."

We then approached a second dataset from the same exhibition using deductive coding, an approach that involves using a predefined list of themes to focus the coding on relevant aspects of the research question or literature review guiding the study (Boström, 2019; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). During each iteration of the coding, we discussed our findings, compared interpretations, and asked questions of one another. For the third data set, we examined examples of participatory coding and how this methodology can mediate the potential for extractivism and essentialization in research practice (Petteway, 2019; Switzer & Flicker, 2021). Central to all approaches is the need to define one's procedure and be consistent in application (Elliot, 2018; Williams & Moser, 2019). Karma noted that there are multiple ways to code, including manually or through software, and that the medium influences the practice. For the purposes of this study, we used manual coding on Google Docs. In the future, we might take this exploration further by asking how the use of data analysis software might shift our coding practices.

After trying each coding method, we discussed when, how, and why we might use each approach. Deductive coding, for example, might be best suited to testing theory, and inductive coding can be more focused on generating theory; each suits different purposes (Elliot, 2018). We then decided to expand our inquiry - drawing together our differing (in)experiences with data analysis, perspectives, and backgrounds - and work together to develop a deeper understanding of qualitative coding analysis. The process of making our collective approach visible in our written work began as a polyvocal approach in which authors each write sections from their individual perspectives (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2014). This kind of approach preserves the original voices of multiple authors to create a sustained narrative (Weidinger, 2020). We found that in the context of this article, this approach created redundancies and repetition, and we moved toward a more quilted approach in which a common narrative is created by co-authorship (Lassiter, 2005). We quilted our individual experiences using collaborative ethnography--the process of "resituating collaborative practice at every stage of the ethnographic process, from fieldwork to writing and back again" (Lassiter, 2005, p. 15). This article is the result of that process. In the next section, we share our findings about the practice of coding from our experiences in the coding workshop.

Findings

Positionality and Coding

One of the things that became clear was that we each approached the data from our own specific lenses. The nature of qualitative research means that researcher positionality is embedded in how data is analyzed and coded (Anthias, 2002; Dean et al., 2018). Positionality unfolds along the fringes of our thinking, but also centres itself, sometimes unintentionally, in the analysis process. The acknowledgement that multiple

researchers can mull over the same data and write completely different codes based on how they see themselves in relation to their research has been well studied in the epistemological frame of perspectivism (Giere, 2006; Massimi & McCoy, 2020), and is something we continually returned to in our conversations. Some of us entered this inquiry with an awareness of the spaces we occupy as researchers and the lenses that inform our thinking: As Casey wrote,

I wanted to highlight the ways in which our lenses colour the ways in which we interact with data. I will always understand the data through my own particular lens, and I wanted to share this practice of beginning to code and analyze with students.

Casey's reflections informed our conversations as we unpacked our understandings of positionality in the days following the workshop. Auralia echoed Casey's reflections and added, "researcher positionality in time and in relation to the themes constantly affects and changes coding." Auralia goes on to suggest that "we should learn about coding so that we can see where we end and the data begins, and make that clear within our work." Here, Auralia identified the researcher's ability to transition between the outsider and insider positions (Bukamal, 2022)—existing both within and beyond our data. Katharine emphasized this articulation and considered how researchers need to be cognisant of this insider/outsider positioning, "I hope positionality does not influence the results...I think with proper coding the researchers will have a better understanding of the participants' experiences and therefore will be able to communicate the participants' stories." As we continually interpreted our coding practices through a reflective framework, we remained cognisant of our own embeddedness within our research (Hertz & Hertz, 1997) by acknowledging that our voices as researchers unfold alongside the voices of our participants, and in turn, become reflected in the data we curate and make visible.

Our conversations soon turned to the privileged nature of researcher positionality. As part of the workshop, we coded a transcribed conversation between 2SLGBTQI+ young people and members of the Pride/Swell research team (see: Burkholder et al., 2021). The fact that we were analyzing data involving queer and trans youth was not lost on us, and in the days following our initial meeting, we considered ways to think about representation and power relations in our own research practice. In thinking about privileged positionalities, Melissa wrote, "I am so fascinated by how simple decisions in coding practice can completely change the trajectory of the research process, but also how the act of coding itself can liberate, silence, connect, and build meaning." Marshall shared: "We are telling someone's story and that is a huge privilege and the way it is approached can say a lot (is this for us, for them, both of us?)." Attending to these musings, Auralia offered a solution informed by her past coding experience:

I found it useful to take my codes back to participants when combining similar topics and ask about phrasing or language to make sure that in combining them I was not missing a difference or changing their terms of reference to more comfortably 'academic' language that didn't resonate for them.

Here, we reflected on how our interpretation of participant narratives is, as Frost et al. (2010) articulate, "a privileged one which silences possible others" (p. 444). As we considered researcher positionality and the codes we curated together, it became clear that the gallery walk Casey had planned for the 2SLGBTQI+ Pride/Swell participants offered a way to work through this privileged positionality. Through this process, Casey and the Pride/Swell research team worked alongside participants to discover and make explicit their own patterns, and in doing so, made the research more accessible and collaborative by making space for multiple ways of seeing, feeling, and understanding.

Our thoughts on positionality also drifted to the role of context in coding analysis. As with most of our dialogue, we found value in allowing our conversations to flow organically while tending to each other's thoughts to unearth even more. In considering outsider/insider perspectives, Marshall stated,

If I conducted research within [any] community, I would be an outsider and there would be so much cultural context that I just would not and perhaps could not understand...I wonder if an outsider needs to spend more time within a community to gain a sense of understanding or if that can actually occur.

We saw a need for researchers to be thoughtful and forthright when conducting studies across cultural lines (Milner, 2007). Advisory teams pose a possible solution by situating participants as experts and broadening research teams to include multiple interpretive viewpoints. Katharine called attention to the potential biases we carry as researchers: “I think if we look at what we are coding we may be able to see how our lens could possibly be leading our research. When coding, I think we need to continue to be open to learning about cultural differences”. To tie positionality together, Angelina summarized the group’s thoughts:

When working with coding, a researcher should consider,

- cultural differences of a research team versus cultural differences within participant groups;
- checking our own biases when coding;
- understanding that culture can be both visible and invisible and can exist along the periphery of the text we are analyzing; and
- research team meetings at each iteration of coding, and spending more time with the community with whom the research would be serving.

For us, it became clear that researcher context and positionality undoubtedly influences coding processes regardless of whether the role of positionality is made visible or not.

Words Matter

Researcher positionality impacts academic research at each step of the process, perhaps most intentionally within the words chosen to represent data through the codes that are generated. Researchers carry a significant responsibility to the data and the participants that they work with (Horgan, 2017; McKenzie & Tuck, 2015; Ruiz-Casares & Thompson, 2014). The researcher can shape how participants’ experiences are viewed by the reader, and therefore how their experiences are understood. This consequence can emerge even in seemingly less consequential decisions, for example, by choosing one code over another. We quickly realized that the words we assign to the codes matter.

In the same way that our individual experiences shape how we interpreted data, so did our specific vocabularies as we explored the data set together. Angelina recognized this: “At times, I felt assumptions were being made through word choice for themes. For example, using the word ‘barrier’ versus ‘challenge’ to represent an experience. Who decides?” When commenting on her motivation for attending the coding workshop, Melissa reinforced this thinking:

I keep coming back to this statement! It speaks to how our themes and word choices can create completely different spaces to situate our data. And... how particular words (“barrier” or “challenge”) can twist a meaning/experience/situation on its head and change how a participant’s perspective becomes interpreted, and then articulated.

The challenge associated with assigning specific codes to the data became clear within minutes of this project starting as we shared our individual codes with each other. Katherine assigned the word “connection” while another participant wrote “cohesive; see connections” (Figure 2). Similar themes emerged from our uses of different codes (i.e., change, growth, and progress), but within the context of this data set, combining these terms would remove both their context and original meaning. Loss of context is one challenge faced by qualitative researchers when working with interviews or semi-structured interviews as was the case in this data set. Other challenges include words having multiple meanings and using words that are left open to interpretation (Campbell et al., 2013). These challenges are often explored through the lens of intercoder reliability, which sees multiple researchers applying a consistent coding effort to a large data set (O’Connor & Joffe, 2020). We suggest that the challenge of word choice also applies to individual researchers coding in isolation.

Figure 2

Making Our Coding Visible

"Like it's really easy to **connect** with a lot of these people"s

"Yeah, we were definitely on the **same point or wave length**"

"I think it's really cool that, like, **it's like in person all around us**. Rather than just scrolling on a **screen and I like seeing it all together**. It's easier to respond then if it was like on a google form or something"

"Yeah"

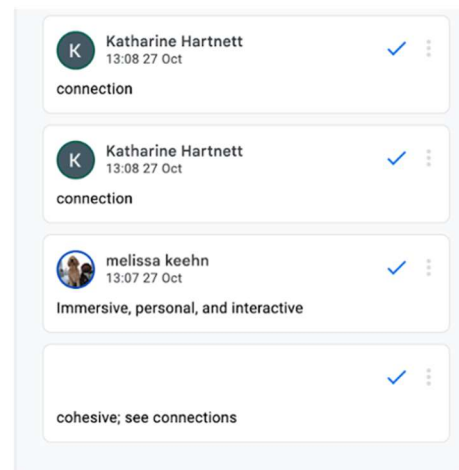
"I think that seeing other people's responses helped you formulate your response. Having other people here and having their opinion would **effect yours too**"

"Is that a good thing?"

"Yeah, I think it would be. Like, more room for education and stuff like that. Learning opportunity"

"I like how every, or almost every single piece of art has a sticky note on it. So that means there's something to say about"

"I think it's really interesting to see which ones have a pile"



Making Meaning Together through Collaborative Inquiry

Through annotating shared files, we began to understand our diversity of backgrounds and approaches to coding not as something that needed to be reconciled, but as something to preserve within our documentation. Inspired by the work of Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2014) we talked about how to preserve our individually diverse perspectives while still writing together in a deliberately collaborative experience. We took up the practice of writing collectively from our unique stages of academic progress as an answer to the potential isolation of 'post'-pandemic graduate work with the goal of offering multiple perspectives on topics that unite us in their centrality to our work as researchers. As a new writing collective, we weaved together our insights within this paper as part of our collaborative ethnographic journey, while acknowledging that the plurality of our voices opened new spaces of learning, understanding, and seeing. As Karma pointed out, "I am getting to learn more about coding with every discussion on the topic." Likewise, Cody remarked, "essentially we are learning by doing."

To engage in collaborative inquiry – or to make meaning from the data together, in the spirit of collaborative ethnography (Lassiter, 2005)—we set weekly hybrid meetings to discuss our annotations and editing decisions. Here, Cody articulated how our collective writing and thinking unfolded: "we were able to see in real time others' thought processes, offer feedback, and refine some of the categories." By writing separately and then coming together to discuss, we layered multiple opportunities for us to participate in ways that worked for our lives. As individual authors, we contributed from our homes or workplaces, by speaking out loud or inserting comments into a document. Some preferred to engage in spontaneous analysis, others withdrew to consider a perspective before sharing it with the group. We found ourselves connecting through our writing styles, thought processes, vulnerabilities, and confusions as to how to move the project forward. As Melissa revealed to the team, "most of my writing has been a solo engagement, and to write in this collaborative way is both exciting and intimidating." For many, this duality took up considerable space alongside our inquiry. Not only did learning occur within the physicality of our shared writing document, but also through our weekly and daily interactions both virtually and in-person. Our learning unraveled and then reshaped itself over the next several weeks. In this way, we were able to extend our work from the initial coding workshop and then reacquaint ourselves with the data. Our open-ended and holistic conversations eventually formed the groundwork for this article. In relation to attending to meaning making in collective autoethnography, Chang (2016) articulates, "by reading others' work, reviewing data over and over, using intuition to grab something out of thin air...researchers will reach 'aha' moments" (p. 116). The meaning we made together is not only found in the codes we unearthed during the initial workshop, but also in the contours

of this article. Although meaning making can be a solitary activity, we found value in our interactive approach.

Discussion and Implications

Central to our collaborative inquiry was an attempt to enrich our collective understanding of coding analysis and to push our boundaries of knowing. As we carved out a sense of researcher positionality, mulled over the ethics of predetermined coding scripts and word choices, and built from our collective knowledge, we moved each other towards a heightened awareness of our own coding practices by inviting responses from each other, offering questions, and making our vulnerabilities explicit. We argue that there is value in this approach, both pedagogically in terms of centering researcher practices, and professionally in terms of the collegiality framing this experience. We found enjoyment in watching someone's internal dialogue become visible and then blending with our own, seeing patterns form in our codes as we looked for them together, and unsettling our own uncertainties to (re)emerge with new understandings. All too often, academics work in isolation while coding and conducting analysis, but also in doing research and writing in general (Berg & Seeber, 2016). We indulged ourselves in working to experiment with data as a collective. As revealed in our findings, we found that researcher positionality exists at the forefront of coding analysis – permeating in and out of every possible stage of research. We argue that the words we use in coding both reflect this positionality, but also work to create their own meanings. Simple decisions in our coding practice – like choosing certain words over others to describe a participant's narrative – can completely change the trajectory of the research process, and can thereby liberate, silence, and build meaning. Finally, we examined how collaboration demystifies coding methodologies and can lead to a deeper understanding of a process that is often done in isolation.

We suggest that there is something deeply useful in making coding practices visible for an audience of graduate students. We approached this process differently by working together to make meaning together, and by making our different thoughts, questions, and insecurities visible along the way. There is also something important about working as a collective in an environment that can be isolating. Collegiality improves our scholarship and is a way of enacting our values around representation and solidarity as researchers whose work focuses on learning communities. While we argue there is value in making coding transparent and engaging in collaborative efforts to write and research, this does not always come easily to groups, as was clear throughout this project. At times, we were nervous or apprehensive about writing in a shared document where others could see our musings as they appeared on the page in real time. Others chose to write in a separate document and paste material into the shared document once it felt “complete”. These insecurities strengthen the case for making coding and writing in general more visible and collaborative. Without pushing ourselves as researchers to try new methods and to work together, we may not learn to resist the competitive nature of the academy. Making coding visible also contributes to transparency in academia and forces us to confront our own positionalities and biases in ways that may not be possible for us to do on our own. When working to communicate the voices of others *with* others, we must be thoughtful and intentional in our choices.

As this inquiry draws to a close, we recognize the richness in our collective (re)learning of coding methodologies. We think our approach will be particularly useful to those students wanting, like we were, to explore more collaborative ways of researching, knowing, doing, and understanding. We therefore call on graduate schools to not only offer courses on qualitative methodologies that foster learning about coding and analysis, but also to offer more opportunities for students to move from theory to practice. What might it mean to work more collaboratively in our graduate faculties? How might a shared vulnerability as researchers and students lead us to more enriched experiences? What else can we discover? We encourage fellow graduate students and colleagues to take up this shared approach to construct new knowledge, cultivate meaning together, and share the nuances of scholarship and research that are so often curated behind closed doors.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Auralia Brooke is a PhD student at the University of New Brunswick and sessional faculty at St Thomas University teaching experiential courses focused on community and belonging. She is a recipient of Canada's Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship as well as a faculty grant from St Thomas University. Her research focuses on community-engaged research design, and well-being and belonging in high school settings. She completed her MEd in Educational Policy Studies, with a focus on citizenship education and digital/experiential community-building. She is passionate about linking learning to lived experience, solving puzzles, and designing schools that are good for humans.

Dr. Casey Burkholder is an Associate Professor at the University of New Brunswick, interested in critical teacher-education, and participatory visual research. In choosing a research path at the intersection of resistance&activism, gender, sexuality, DIY media-making, art production and participatory archiving, Casey engages in research for social change through participatory visual approaches to local issues with youth and pre-service teachers. She is the co-founder of the Fredericton Feminist Film Collective.

Marshall Gerbrandt (he/him) is a PhD student at the University of New Brunswick. His research explores adult learning in the Canadian Armed Forces, with a specific interest in the ways issues around institutional culture manifests as learning.

Katharine Hartnett (she/her) is a second-year doctoral student at the University of New Brunswick. She has worked in schools as a teacher, resource teacher and administrator. Her work is focused on educational leadership, exceptional learners, and supporting newcomer education. Katharine is on educational leave from a vice principal role at Fredericton High School to pursue her Ph.D.

Angelina Heer is an MEd candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of New Brunswick (UNB). Angelina holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology (2011) from Simon Fraser University and is in her fifth year in the MEd Counselling program at UNB (2023). She is a current professional member of the Canadian Counselling Psychotherapy Association (CCPA). She completed her counselling internship at Apatawsuwikuwam "Come Back to Life Lodge", under the clinical supervision of Dr. Jenny Rowett. Angelina's MEd research topic explores Indigenous adult needs for community re-entry from a federal prison, from a wholistic perspective.

Melissa Keehn (she/her) is a NB educator and Ph.D. student at the University of New Brunswick. Her research explores the crisscrossing of queer and trans youth cultures in NB rural schooling spaces and the educational policies and practices framing their experiences.

Loaneen Palmer-Carroll is an educator and education officer from Jamaica and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of New Brunswick. Her passion for the Visual Arts and working with children with behavioural challenges has impressed upon her the willingness to conduct research: *"Using Art as therapy as a tool for behaviour management," "Disruptive Art," and "Using art as therapy to curb a selected group of students with disruptive behaviour within the school environment."* She is also interested in using visual sociology, photo-elicitation and art production to include cellphilms (cellphone + film production + intention) to understand disruption in Jamaican schools and communities.

Karma **Phuntsho** is a 2nd Year Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick (UNB). With a passion for qualitative research, Karma brings a unique perspective to the field of education. Before pursuing his Ph.D., Karma gained valuable experience as a teacher in Bhutan for seven years, followed by two years as a research officer and five years as a curriculum developer. His diverse background and deep understanding of educational practices contribute to his research endeavours, focused on exploring innovative approaches to teaching and learning.