

INCLUSIVE RESTORATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: A CASE STUDY IN
MILWAUKEE'S URBAN WATERSHED

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Urban ecological restoration and the creation of urban green space has become a major focus for environmental organizations in Milwaukee, WI. This thesis examines the inclusivity practices of two Milwaukee organizations working on environmental restoration, and asks the question, how can inclusive restoration be used to broaden the environmental justice framework? Literature was reviewed on the topics of Inclusive Restoration Access to Green Space, and Environmental Justice. Through participant observations, interviews, and surveys, themes emerged regarding the perceived value of urban restoration, creation of green space, and how Inclusive Restoration is or is not used to enhance community engagement and further environmental justice discourse. The organizations were evaluated with regard to their inclusive restoration practices using the Multicultural Organization Development Model. Recommendations are offered with the intention of increasing the engagement of communities directly affected by organizational restoration practices with regard to project planning and volunteer participation.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION: AN URBAN CASE STUDY IN MILWAUKEE, WI.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Milwaukee River Basin.....	1
The Creation of the Pearl Necklace	3
Milwaukee, the Most Segregated City in the United States.....	5
Literature Review	10
Inclusive Restoration	11
Access to Green Space.....	17
Environmental Justice.....	19
Methods	21
Overview	21
Research Question	22
Areas of Focus	22
Embedded Ethnography	23
Site Selection and Respondents	24
Researcher Background	26
Study Limitations	27
II. IS RESTORATION JUSTICE?	29
Why Urban Restoration.....	32
Issues and Struggles with Urban Restoration.....	40
Use vs. Protection	42

Chapter	Page
Feeling Significant	44
Are We Doing Enough?.....	47
Conclusion	48
III. URBAN RESTORATION AND THE CREATION OF GREEN SPACE	50
Urban Restoration	50
Green Space, Social Interactions, Health, and Privilege	51
Justice as Reclaiming Green Space	56
Fostering a Connection to Nature.....	59
Sacred Space and Privilege	65
IV. EVALUATING THE ORGANIZATIONS ON INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY	68
Introduction.....	68
Accessibility of Projects and Ability to Volunteer	70
Who Decides?	75
Opposition from Community Members	79
Definitions of Inclusion	81
How They Address Issues of Diversity and Inclusion.....	84
Conclusion.....	91
V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	96
Multicultural Organization Development Model	97
Accomplishments and Recommendations	101
REFERENCES CITED.....	109

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Racial Dot Map of Milwaukee area. Dustin A Cable, University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Wuwm.edu	9
2. Total Respondents by Milwaukee Zip Code. NIC Survey.....	87
3. Citizen Participation Ladder. Sherry Arnstein 1969.....	94

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Importance of restoration themes.....	32
2. Multicultural Organization Development Model. Holvino 1998. Chaos Management Ltd. 1998. Source: Bullock (2004)	98

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: AN URBAN CASE STUDY IN MILWAUKEE, WI

Introduction

Urban restoration and the creation of recreational green spaces has become a major focus for environmental organizations in Milwaukee WI. The city's residents enjoy the many trails, greenways, and river access Milwaukee has to offer.

Milwaukee is a city that is hyper-segregated and while these green spaces and opportunities are theoretically open to everyone, in reality most of the people that get to enjoy them are white. A number of organizations in Milwaukee work in often-segregated communities on environmental restoration projects that create green space. It is important to know a little about the history of Milwaukee in order to understand the context for this study and the importance of the restoration and justice work being done.

Milwaukee River Basin

The city of Milwaukee is located in the Milwaukee river basin that drains 882 square miles of agricultural land, as well as 13 cities, 32 towns, 24 villages and about 1.3 million people. The most populated area of the basin is the southern quarter where Milwaukee is located with about 90% of the population. The basin is made up of six watersheds with 2/3 of the basin being the Milwaukee River watershed, or about 584 square miles. The basin has roughly 68,000 acres of wetlands (108 square mile, 500 miles of perennial streams, 400 or more miles of intermittent streams and 35 miles of lake Michigan shoreline. There are also 57 named lakes and many additional un-named small ponds and 57% of the basin is agricultural land,

mostly in the northern parts of the basin. The middle area is rapidly urbanizing and suburbanizing, causing stress on the wetlands, rivers, and streams presently there. The land use of the basin has changed rapidly in the last few decades as agricultural lands have continued to be developed. Even with careful planning, agriculture, as the largest industry in Wisconsin, is the main cause of the destruction of wetlands and other ecosystems (Barret et al, 2006. Milwaukee Riverkeeper, 2012. & Epps Overholt, 2014.)

The city of Milwaukee has an interesting relationship with its own landscape. When the city was founded, the area that is now most of downtown was a swamp (Hutchinson, 2014). Wetlands lined the shores of lake Michigan, especially where rivers converged and flowed into the lake. Three rivers converge at the mouth of the Milwaukee River, the Menomonee, Kinnickinnic and the Milwaukee flow together and out into Lake Michigan. Where the three rivers converge, wetlands once lined their shores. This habitat, before European settlement, was filled with wildlife and hosted Native American tribes including the Menominee, Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox, Ojibwa, Mascouten, and Winnebago along the three rivers. In the 1600's, French trappers came to this confluence looking for beaver and other small animals. As trade expanded and more Europeans came to Wisconsin, three towns were formed on opposite sides of the three rivers in the early 1800s. These towns would be called Juneautown, Kilbourntown, and Walker's Point (Gurda, 2006).

By the 1830s, due to the degradation of the land, the draining and conversion of the wetlands, the over hunting, and increased traffic to the area, the fur trade began to fail. The stress on the land, as well as the loss of an industry, pressured the

three towns to compete for resources and other new industries moving to the area. Around that same time the U.S. Government removed the Native Americans from the Milwaukee area and most of Wisconsin and the three cities began to expand. By 1845, the tension between the three towns grew so palpable that when Juneautown built a bridge across the river to the adjacent Kilbourntown, Byron Kilbourn and his supporters retaliated and burnt the bridge to the ground. Thus began the bridge wars of 1845, where fighting and burning of bridges took over the three towns. After the bridge wars, the leaders of Juneautowns, Kilbourntown and Walker's Point decided to become one unified city, Milwaukee (Gurda, 2006).

As the city grew, more and more of the wetland were drained and were forgotten. Shoreline was developed and rivers and streams were channelized, lined with metal or left to degrade due to industry and other processes. Milwaukee today barely looks like it was built on a wetland and the river system that flows through the city acts as a set of physical barriers separating communities. Environmental organizations, as well as city and county projects in recent years have taken on the challenge of restoring parts of the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic rivers.

The Creation of the Pearl Necklace

Milwaukee County is known for its park system. In 2009 Milwaukee County Parks was awarded the national gold medal for excellence in park and recreation management (county parks website). Living in close proximity to a park is a major benefit of living in Milwaukee. The vision for the county parks started in the late 1800s with the purchase of the first park in 1890 as a place for the citizens of

Milwaukee to have a place to breathe. The parks were to be the lungs of the city (Gurda, 1999).

Charles Whitnall, a socialist city planner who sat on the Public Land Commission and the newly formed County parks Commission, and later became Milwaukee's mayor, believed in creating an intricate park, greenway and motorway system throughout Milwaukee county. He created a master plan in 1923 that would incorporate green space into the city because he believed that high-density development that isolated people from the environment was the wrong way to design a city. Whitnall's master plan included 84 miles of parks, river drives that followed the contours of the many rivers and creeks in the county, as well as lakeshore drives. The plan had designs for turning wetlands into lakes, restoring stream banks, and increasing the size of many key parks that would "hang like jewels from a pearl necklace." The plan highlighted the importance of flood control through natural amenities, was intended to strengthen public recreation and had a design for better sanitation. Whitnall wanted to surround every citizen, regardless of age, race, gender, or income, with nature and his master plan became the guide for all subsequent local landscape and city planning (Gurda, 1999). However, not all neighborhoods and parks get equal attention. Over the decades, the Milwaukee County Parks system has grown and is still a major highlight of the city, where many neighborhoods are within walking distance to a park. But, not all neighborhoods are walkable and not all parks are safe. Milwaukee's has a history of segregation that influences how some parks flourish while others fail.

Milwaukee, the Most Segregated City in the United States

Milwaukee has a long history, marked by periods of immigration and cultural unrest. As new groups of people came to Milwaukee, prejudice emerged and the city would re-divide itself by diverse cultural heritage. Until the 1920s most of the immigrants were white, but culturally different. Germans, Irish, Polish, and Italian populations made up the majority of the neighborhoods around the city. In particular, Germans lived on the north side, Polish lived on the south side, and Italians lived in the Third Ward, off downtown

Over time, the diversity of Milwaukee became its pride. Understanding that particular parts of town had strong cultural heritage was important to residents. That is, until racism took hold. Racial diversity was something the white Milwaukeeans didn't want (Gurda, 1999). Post WWII, Milwaukee County was expanding. Newly annexed areas were becoming part of Milwaukee but the city itself was suffering. African Americans were moving into the north side of Milwaukee, a historically German area in the 1800s and then a Jewish neighborhood around the 1900s. As more black people moved to a neighborhood, more white residents would move further away into newly annexed areas (Gurda, 1999).

In 1946, 67% of African Americans living in Milwaukee were living in homes that were deemed either in need of major repair or were unfit for use, as compared to 37% in Detroit and 34% in buffalo. High black infant mortality rates and other disparities were reported as early as 1946 (Gurda, 1999).

White flight was a real and ever growing phenomenon in Milwaukee between 1945 and 1970. In general, as a neighborhood would reach 30% African American,

white residents wanted out. Redlining became common practice and black neighborhoods were becoming more crowded and increasingly segregated. In July of 1967, known as the summer of love, Milwaukee had its own race riot that lasted only 24 hours, just long enough to accelerate the racial divide and white flight. At the same time, however, the fair housing movement was taking hold (Gurda, 1999).

It was that summer that Father James Groppi and members of the NAACP youth chapter started picketing at Milwaukee councilman's homes in hopes of pressuring them to pass a fair housing act. After the '67 riot, the movement changed strategy. Rather than picketing individual homes, they began marching for fair housing. On August 28th 1967, Groppi and over 200 young people marched over the 6th street viaduct to the south side of Milwaukee, where the majority of people who lived there were white, and were met by over 5000 white counter-protesters. These protesters hung effigies of black people, threw bottles and bricks and chased the marchers back. After this march, the Mayor banned nighttime assemblages but the marches did not give up. For 200 consecutive days, marches continued all over town, but with the main focus on the 6th street viaduct. Within two months of the marches ending on March 21st 1968, Milwaukee and its suburbs passed an open housing law that exceeded or matched the federal mandates (Gurda, 1999).

Fair housing was just one of the many movements that took place in the late 60s and into the early 70s for Milwaukee county residents. There were welfare marches at the State Capital, strikes and protests around hiring practices and the lack of bilingual/cultural programming in public schools from the Latino/a population in Milwaukee. An Indian Community school was created due to the

influx of migration to the city from reservations. It was the anti-Vietnam war era and the Feminist movement was also emerging, fighting sexism and for the right to work, self-worth and in support of women's health issues. While these movements were important and vital to the citizens of Milwaukee, the desegregation of Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) highlights how racially segregated the city actually was and remains. In 1970 MPS, was taken to court around the segregation of the school system. In 1976 the Federal courts found that Milwaukee had in fact maintained a deliberate policy of racial isolation for the last 20 years, and therefore was ordered to desegregate the school system and have at least 75% of schools be racially balanced. It took until 1979 for this to be achieved. By 1985, MPS was 56.6% African American and with growing indicators of not being racially balanced. New schools were being developed and built to attract suburban white students back into the city, as well as bus black students into suburban schools (Gurda, 1999).

The population of the city of Milwaukee has decreased by nearly 20% since the 1960 population peak. Some of that can be attributed to the deindustrialization of Milwaukee where from 1979-1983 the City lost over 50,000, or over a quarter manufacturing jobs, over a quarter of its manufacturing jobs. Unfortunately, most have not returned. Another reason for the population drop is the expansion of the suburban cities. Many of the suburban towns and counties have grown in commerce, causing many businesses to move there, rather than the city. The city has become a destination only for special events, rather than a major destination all forms of commerce (Gurda, 1999).

Lastly, racism and the ever-growing minority population have also contributed to the decline in population. While the city as a whole has declined in population, minority groups have grown in size over the last 45 years. So has the population of the four surrounding suburban counties, which have grown by over 95% in the same time period. From 1960 to 2010, Milwaukee's white population has decreased by 41%, the Latino/a population has grown from less than 2% to 17.3%, the Asian, mostly Hmong, Laotian and Vietnamese has grown from .6% of the population in 1980 to 3.5% and the black population has grown from 8.4% in 1960 to 40% in 2010. Over this period, Milwaukee has become the most segregated city in the United States (US census data and 1). Not only is Milwaukee segregated; it is hyper segregated, meaning it is segregated in more than one way. As demonstrated by the map below, there are distinct areas where specific race based populations live, with little mixing.

The map (Figure 1) points to distinct boundaries that separate populations of people within Milwaukee. These boundaries are both physical, as the black north side is separated from the east side by the Milwaukee River, and the Latino/ south side is sandwiched between the Menomonee and Kinnickinnic rivers, separating them from white neighborhoods. Racial segregation is also the result of housing and public school redlining and intentional forces that have kept the city racially separated.

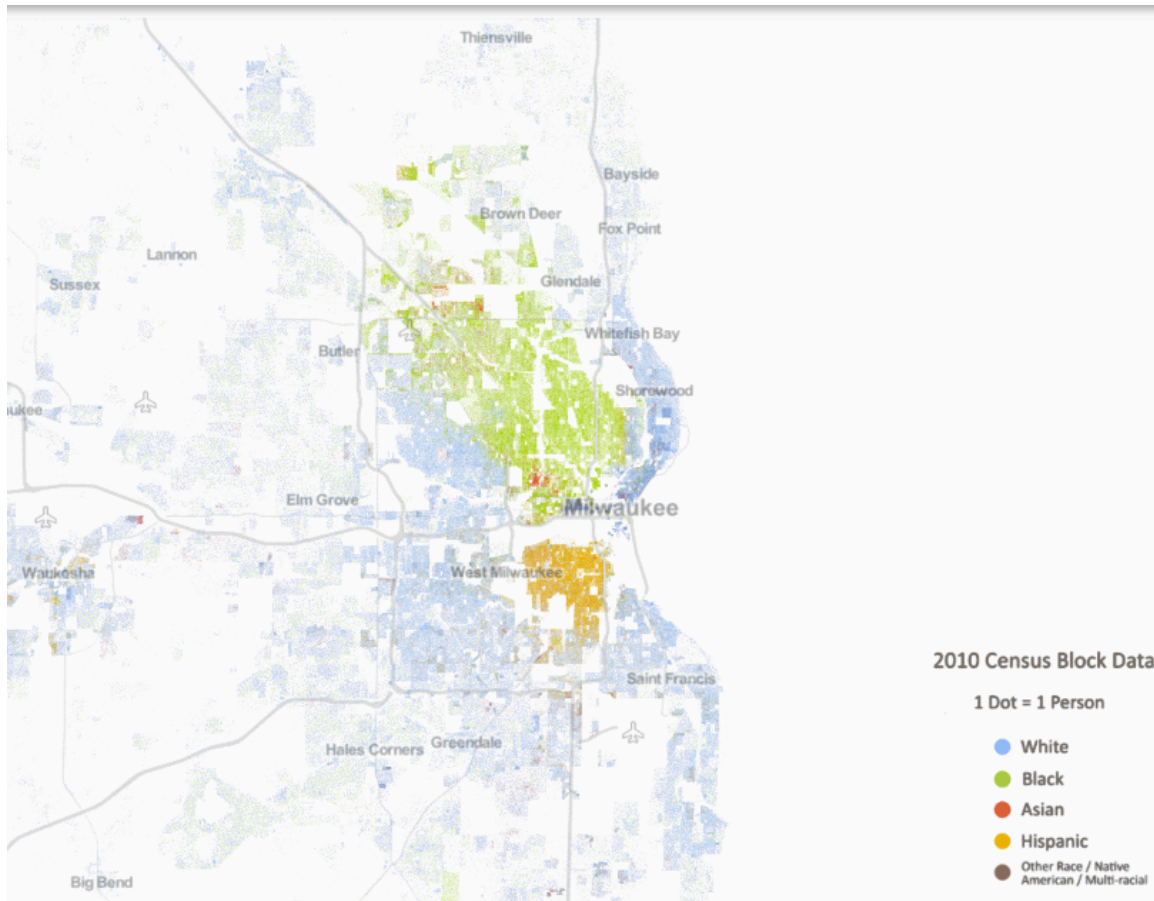


Figure 1: Racial Dot Map of Milwaukee area. Dustin A Cable, University of Virginia, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. Wuwvm.edu

The current culture of segregation in Milwaukee is held together by the structural practices that were put in place in the 1940s-70s and represent discriminatory practices that still take place today. The historic cultural and structural practices of segregation influence the way people engage with the Milwaukee county park system and green spaces in Milwaukee. If environmental organizations working within Milwaukee on restoration projects are not aware of the structures that hold the city apart, then they are working unconsciously, at best, within a system of segregation. Organizations have the opportunity to either keep

things the way they are and play into the structural and cultural history of segregation or they can take a stand and actively work to change the way Milwaukeeans engage with the environment in parts of town that have been historically marginalized and degraded.

The number of parks within Milwaukee, even hyper-segregated, does align with Whitnall's dream of creating green space throughout the city. Where it does not align is in the dream of creating space that is open to all, no matter the race, gender or ability of the person. The reality is that many of these spaces, and in particular the ones examined in this study, are often spaces dominated by white people, and those spaces that are not being worked on by white people, are often degraded and often not considered an environmental amenity. Urban restoration in Milwaukee is creating white spaces, even if it is taking places in non-white places.

Literature Review

The concept of inclusive restoration is used to critique traditional restoration ideologies by looking at community engagement, participation, and ideals rather than focusing solely on the land that is being restored. Gaining an understanding of what inclusivity looks like for the particular communities I was working with was a major goal of this study. Inclusivity of communities of color and other marginalized groups was a major concern for me as a researcher. This framework is where I see urban restoration and environmental justice fitting together.

Access to green space emerged as an important theme during the interview process and analysis. Access to green space is a major driving force in urban ecological restoration and environmental justice, creating a place for communities

to gather, recreate, and experience environmental amenities that are often limited in an urban setting. Access to green space fits within the umbrella of environmental justice easily and is often discussed in the literature as summarized below.

Inclusive Restoration

The first framework that will be used for this analysis is the concept of inclusive restoration. Before we can go any further in understanding the importance of inclusive restoration, there needs to be an understanding of what ecological restoration is and why inclusivity matters. Ecological restoration is the process of taking damaged or degraded land and intentionally working to aide in the recovery of the health and sustainability of that ecosystem (Society for Ecological Restoration, 2015). It is possible, and often accepted, to conduct this process without the consideration of the people living within the various environments. Inclusive restoration focuses on restoration as well as making sure that organizations and the practitioners are using inclusive practices in the planning and implementation of restoration projects. These practices could include the use of bilingual recruitment materials, holding meetings when it is convenient to community members, and conducting targeted outreach to diverse communities. . The idea of inclusion is particularly important because these organizations work within a system where racism and other oppressions are structurally reproduced by the interpersonal relationships, ideas, assumptions and preferences of a dominant group, which, without intervention or intentionality, will perpetuate the practice and norm of exclusion.

There are many ideas of what inclusivity is, and what it means. What is exceptional about this theory is that the definition of inclusivity evolves according to the needs of the community and people involved. I got to come to this project with an idea of what inclusivity meant, but I also got to work with the subjects of this project to carve out a definition that works best for everyone. Because urban ecological restoration has challenges unique to an urban setting, such as a direct connection and interaction between the environment and the human, as well as potential conflicting values between the community and organizations, inclusive restoration, according to Newman is the opportunity for “voices of difference” to be heard within ecological restoration planning and implementation. Newman (2011) also emphasizes the need for inclusive restoration to “question current practices and participatory frameworks, and critically analyze the accepted norms within ecological restoration. Inclusive practices, therefore, must be sensitive to power imbalances built into the historical framework of ecological restoration” (p.64).

According to Newman, cities in North America are becoming more and more diverse and ecological restoration needs to become more inclusive and adapt this framework. Disciplines such as landscape architecture and urban planning have done limited research on the values of racialized people in urban green spaces and recognize the need for a framework that includes a diverse group of people, but little has been done to actually create a more inclusive urban ecological restoration (Newman, 2008). Places where an inclusive framework could be useful, as identified by Newman consist of those who have the vision of the restoration project, what

involvement looks like, recruitment and how information is gathered and disseminated.

Currently, urban ecological restoration projects are usually designed by scientists, restorationists or landscape architects, and in doing so “the knowledge, expertise, biases, and priorities of the restorationists involved in the project determine the direction of the restoration and what ‘nature’ will be created” (Newman, 2008, p.230). With this practice, different groups of people and their ideals around what nature should look like are left out. Nature, as a construct, can take on many forms and be created to fit a particular ideal. If the only people creating nature are not inclusive and diverse, then the nature that is created will always look a particular way. Without a diverse group of people conducting restoration projects, the narrow understanding of what nature should be results in a nature being created that becomes refashioned to very specific ideals that only serve to reflect the identity and worldview of some.

Some of benefits described by Newman for inclusive urban restoration are in the opportunities for people from all parts of the city to connect to nature within their local landscape through restoration, and if done well, for “myths about how racialized people interact with green space” can be contested and challenged (Newman, 2011). Gibson-Wood and Wakefield, authors of *“Participation,” White Privilege, and Environmental Justice: Understanding Environmentalism Among Hispanics in Toronto* (2013), also work to expand the ideals and myths surrounding racialized populations and their connection to the urban environment. They look at how the Hispanic populations in Toronto are excluded from environmental projects

in their community, which perpetuates a narrow definition of environmentalism and what environmental justice looks like. These two works, in particular, have deepened my understanding of what inclusivity can look like, as well as where the practice and theory of inclusivity is missing.

When describing how restoration projects are picked, and the location of those projects, sites are often picked through public meetings participation or at volunteer events. Organizations decide which neighborhoods or groups of people will benefit from the project based on those who show up. It is assumed that racialized populations have little interest in environmental issues or restoration projects because of their low attendance, but in fact, diverse populations have a high interest in such things. “Many people, although highly interested, may not have the resources or the time to engage in volunteer activities that do not reciprocate value... if volunteering is the only way to become involved in ecological restoration in the city, restoration groups are limiting involvement to those who already have the resources to get involved, and thus further excluding marginalized people” (Newman, 2008, p.230).

Newman also looks at how the format of community meetings can also be exclusive, in language, time commitment, and communication styles, as well as advertising for meetings and events. Different cultures and groups of people have learned and practiced communication styles that vary greatly. When multiple groups of people come together for community meetings the style of communications may differ and particular groups may feel devalued or out of place in a formal community meeting. Also, much like volunteering, being able to

participate in a meeting means that individuals have the resources to come to the meeting and participate. Advertising an event or meeting via the Internet or email assumes that everyone has access to a computer and often excludes those that do not.

Haluza-Delay and Fernhout, authors of *Sustainability and Social Inclusion*, look at how the idea of nature and environment are constructed, and how this construct creates barriers that exclude diverse populations, rather than being inclusive. “Diverse ‘excluded’ peoples – such as immigrants, women, people with disabilities, youth, racialized persons, multiculturalism, etc – and the specific frames that are used to explain their exclusion, can be brought together in the pursuit of ‘inclusion’ into the main-stream structures of society” (Haluza-Delay and Fernhout, 2011).

While expressing the need for inclusion in the environmental field and other areas of society, Haluza-Delay and Fernhout (2011), also make it clear it is important to recognize where this framework can be limiting. “If social inclusion is about bringing people in from the margins, where are they being brought to? It is ‘the center’s dream’ which becomes the aspiration to which people want to be brought in... social inclusion becomes another means of assimilation” (Haluza-Delay and Fernhout, 2011; p.728). While this movement toward centrism is important, especially when thinking about inclusion on all levels of society, it should not minimize the ways inclusion can benefit all people. In ecological restoration, if marginalized peoples are brought in, and the ways in which projects are communicated, and ideas on who has the expertise change, then maybe the type of

nature that is produced will not be the same nature that has been produced over and over in the past. Including “voices of difference” (Newman, 2011) will help insure that restoration projects are both inclusive while pushing on the idea of what is nature and who decides what it looks like.

When exploring what inclusion looks like, and how inclusive restoration could be apart of the ways in which we view and practice restoration, Havlick and Doyle’s work *Restoration Geographies* (2009) offers how restoration has always had the potential to be inclusive, and maybe it the type of disciplines that are working on restoration that are contributing to the problem. They argue that geography should be the discipline used when thinking about restoration because “restoration has been shaped by not only ecologists, but also by citizen practitioners, and managers, and others, including philosophers, engineers, landscape architects, historians, and writers” (Havlick and Doyle, 2009; p.240). The authors express their concerns with how small a role geography has played in restoration, especially because of the human/environment connection. It is possible that in thinking about restoration as a part of the dualistic framework of nature/human, and how cultures can and do influence what is viewed as nature, geography becomes the unifying discipline that makes restoration more inclusive. If geography is in fact more inclusive then the associated separation from the human/culture dualism becomes a major force in thinking about restoration. This does pose some potential problems, especially about how to integrate the social and the natural (Havlick and Dolye, 2009). This notion, as presented by Havlick and Doyle does still fall within the mainstream ideas around nature and culture and who has the expertise, rather than broadening the

discussion to include marginalized people and “voices of difference.” It could be an avenue to expand restoration for the better, if done inclusively and with thought.

Access to Green Space

Another area to consider when working in urban environmental restoration is the quality and amount of green space to which different communities have access. Many researchers have looked into the importance of green space, access to city, county, and national parks, as well as environmental amenities, as well as the effects of their absence. Health and health outcomes, such as asthma, obesity, and cancers, are a place where access to green space has been studied in connection to environmental justice. Normally, environmental justice work has looked at the distribution of environmental disamenities, but recently the shift has been to examine the importance of access to environmental amenities, such as parks (Boone et al. 2009). Cutts, et al. (2009) discuss how the built environment shapes both the behavior and health outcomes of young people. Access to green space, and the accessibility and safety of green space correlates to the health and well being of urban young people, in both mental health and physical health. Boone, et al. (2009) write about the ways in which access to environmental amenities are a matter of privilege, and therefore many groups of people are left without access to parks, green space, and other environmental amenities. The authors also discussed how underprivileged groups and areas are often disproportionately burdened with environmental hazards and pollutants. These two works are important examples of research that has been done in framing why urban environmental restoration is needed.

Because green space is unequally distributed within cities, often due to historical racism, minority communities are left with poor access to urban open spaces and parks, which can lead to a greater exposure to health-related problems (Byrne et al. 2009). This limited access to open space and the amenities it provides, like clean air, gives communities of color “profound and systematic difference between the health of minority residents compared to the dominant social group” (Cutts et al. 2009; p. 1315). Parks and green space bring social, economic, health and environmental benefits to a community (Boone et al. 2009). Other benefits include social cohesion in a community, improved mental health and psychological wellbeing, stress relief and increased physical activity (Byrne et al. 2009).

Much of the research around access to green space and environmental justice is focused on disamenities, however Boone et al. (2009) suggests that it is important for researchers to understand white privilege and to evaluate white privilege in relation to how privilege repels environmental burdens. The authors go on to explore how white privilege can in fact attract amenities to communities, many times in the form of parks. It is clear that people who live within a half a mile to two-mile radius of a green space or park experience positive health benefits (Maas et al. 2006), which for many is a privileged state.

Access to green space, be it parks or play structures, is not just beneficial for physical and mental health. Children who grow up in the inner city where such features are less available are at a higher risk for developmental challenges (Taylor et al, 1998). Green space and public space lead to opportunities for community members to experience stronger social interactions, social ties and a stronger sense

of security (Boone et al. 2009). At risk populations, or communities that experience multiple stresses such as low economic status, racism, or poor health disparities, are the groups of people who benefit most from having access to green space, and are also the people who often have barriers. Children, elderly, car-less and low-income populations have the greatest need for parks within walking distance (Boone et al. 2009). Lack of access to parks and playgrounds by this population is compounded by long distances, gang-controlled territories, and busy streets, which leaves outdoor space that is adjacent to their homes and buildings as the only space easily available (Taylor et al, 1998). Because urban areas have recently experienced a decline in the quality of their green space (Maas et al. 2006), environmental organizations that are working with communities to build or restore green spaces are necessary, but it is unclear whether or not they have been successful in this task.

Environmental Justice

Traditionally, environmental justice looks at communities and people who are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards like toxic pollutants or environmental degradation. Because the environmental movement came about in the United States with a focus on issues and concerns of the white, middle and upper class citizens, the environmental justice movement emerged in response with a focus that includes issues that directly impact people of color and working class and poor citizens, such as environmental pollutants and disamenities (Bullard, 1989).

Robert Bullard defines environmental justice as the movement that “embraces the principle that all people and communities are entitled to equal protection of our environmental laws. It means fair treatment, and it means all

people — regardless of race, color or national origin — are involved when it comes to implementing and enforcing environmental laws, regulations and policies.” (2014 Bullard interview). Bullard (1994) states that the framework for environmental justice is centered around the fact that no community should be a sacrifice zone. Environmental justice centers on five principles that are adopted from the civil rights movement and incorporates legislative strategies and a plan that would make environmental discrimination illegal. The five principles focus on regulation and governance, more than community action, and they are: 1. Guaranteeing the right to environmental protection, 2. Shifting the burden of proof to the polluters, 3. Preventing harm before it occurs, 4. Redressing existing inequalities, and 5. Obviating proof of intent to discriminate (Bullard, 1994).

Because environmental justice is becoming an umbrella term that is used in many places by many different kinds of people and organizations, it is an important term for this thesis because it has the potential for expanding the justice framework bridging the traditional environmental movement and environmental justice movement together.

The works of Julian Agyeman, a social scientist and professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University, explore the ways in which environmental justice and sustainability (in the many forms sustainability can take) fit together. It investigates how cities and individuals can shift their understanding of what is just and what is sustainable so that at all people are living in a place that is environmentally healthy for both people and the earth. The article Exploring the Nexus: Bringing together sustainability, environmental justice, and equity (2002),

looks at the relationship between the environmental justice movement in the United States and the U.K. It argues there are issues of race, racism, and environmental issues that are linked to economic exploitation, environmental degradation and environmental exclusion. It argues these links affect the way environmental justice and ecological degradation are described. Agyeman suggests a framework of Just Sustainabilities that holds “the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems” (Agyeman, 2004). This theoretical framework is one lens that I intend to use in exploring the topic of inclusion and environmental restoration.

Methods

Overview

My research sets out to expand and critique traditional understandings of what environmental justice looks like, and whether restoration projects can fit within an environmental justice framework. Being from the city in which my research takes place, my understanding of the landscape and the hyper-segregation that plagues my city, as well as the importance of the parks system and the restoration projects taking place there, has fueled my desire to explore and understand how urban ecological restoration engages communities. The research was conducted over 8 weeks during the summer of 2014 in Milwaukee WI. There were many questions that prompted my desire to conduct this research, a few being; how are communities of color engaging with restoration projects? What are some of the ways organizations are thinking about restoration and inclusion? Why

are some urban restoration projects more successful than others? Through interviews, focus groups, embedded ethnography, surveys and participant observations, data was collected and analyzed against two main frameworks, Environmental Justice and Inclusive Restoration.

Research Question

Primary Questions:

1. How can inclusive restoration be used to broaden the environmental justice framework?
2. Who gets to decide what is inclusive and what is just?

Sub Questions:

1. What does inclusive restoration look like in Milwaukee WI?
2. How are organizations engaging in racialized communities?
3. How does the concept of inclusive restoration challenge or enhance the environmental justice framework?

Areas of Focus

Three main themes influenced and shaped this research - environmental justice, inclusive restoration and access to green space and in particular how do they fit together? This study examines how the environmental justice discourse, as an umbrella framework that holds the study together, can be used to describe the impact and importance of urban ecological restoration from a community engagement, improvement, and health point-of-view. It became clear during the study that environmental justice as a discourse was not common among the

organizations but also clear that the type of work being done was in fact justice focused.

Embedded Ethnography

In order to better understand how inclusive urban ecological restoration projects in Milwaukee operate and if projects are also environmental justice projects, I conducted embedded ethnography studies within two environmental organizations. The settings for observations were restoration sites, volunteer meetings and work groups, as well as community events. These locations were a necessary part of the study as they provided the opportunity to observe the interactions with the community first hand and to see actions, rather than just hear about plans, intentions or hopes. Watching the community, volunteers, and staff of the organizations in these places allowed me construct a narrative about the ways the organizations are inclusive and ways that they can improve.

For the first organization, Restore Milwaukee (RSM), which has a mission to bring about the improvement of the environment through empowering communities to promote environmental, economic, and social well being. I was hired as a crew leader for 18-24 year olds found within the Omani neighborhood in the north west side of Milwaukee. I was able to work with these young adults on projects that ranged from building raised bed gardens, rainwater harvesting systems, and invasive species removal.

The second organization was Nature in the City (NIC) has a mission to foster ecological understanding that inspires community change. I volunteered with the Land Stewardship program multiple times a week at their three locations around

the city. In order to gain access to the center, I met with the Head Land Steward and the head of education to discuss the project and the impact it will have on the center and the volunteers. It was important to me and the staff that my presence would not disrupt or negatively impact the volunteers' experience at the center. While volunteering, participant observations were conducted including informal interviews. Later in the process formal interviews and focus groups took place. I participated in activities ranging from seed sorting to the removal of Queen Anne's Lace in groups as small as 2 other individuals to as large as 25. I received email updates and newsletters advertising volunteer, educational and social events at the three NIC locations. I was also given access to data the center had collected for marketing purposes and volunteer participant information. Conducting ethnography within these two organizations allowed me to observe the organizations as a participant and gain access to respondents for my study after forming a relationship with them.

Site Selection and Respondents

It was important to participate as a volunteer at all three NIC locations because these locations are found within different racialized communities that have different levels of access to environmental amenities and hazards like air and river pollution and safe park access. The community make-up of these locations impacts the level of volunteerism and therefore community engagement. It was important to recruit for interviews at all locations to insure as representative a sample as possible. Respondents were recruited during volunteer workdays, through snowball

sampling and a recruitment email to all the land steward volunteers through the NIC's volunteer coordinator.

At Restore Milwaukee, respondents were recruited through my interaction with them on a daily basis and through emails from other crew leaders. Lastly, I reached out to neighborhood associations and other organizations within the communities to recruit community members outside the direct connection to organizations I worked with. Overall 3 focus groups and 15 interviews were conducted.

As the process of recruiting and interviewing took place, it became clear to me that I needed more data on community members who lived in the neighborhoods surrounding the parks because they were not represented. To achieve this, I conducted a survey of visitors within Greenway Park and Hilltop Park. The survey looked at use of the park, understanding of projects taking place in the park, and their knowledge of the NIC, 10 people were surveyed.

Interview respondents ranged from ages 16-75, mostly white and mostly female. The majority of the respondents, all but 5, were from NIC. They were staff, interns, volunteers, and community members. There were retirees, high school students, college students, teachers, and unemployed individuals. Most of my data came from respondents that are connected to the NIC, due to the level of community engagement found there. In order to better understand their feelings about the restoration projects, the level of inclusivity, and the potential benefits of the restoration projects I asked questions such as:

1. What caught your interest in this organization?

2. Walk me through the last day you volunteered on a restoration project?
3. How has the organization included you/ your community?
4. How long have you been volunteering?
5. How far away from the site do you live?
6. Is the restoration project important to you? How so?
7. What stage of the restoration project do you enjoy the most?
8. Tell me about a day when you struggled with the work, and why?
9. Can you see any ways this restoration has improved the community/ area?
10. How has the restoration changed, if at all, your connection to this community?

Researcher Background

My history with RSM and NIC allowed me easier access to the organizations and therefore study participants. During the summer of 2009 I worked as a summer educational intern at the NIC. The relationships formed there have lasted, as I am still contacted often for job openings, events, and volunteer opportunities. Since 2009, I have volunteered and participated in NIC programs as a community member and with other jobs. My history with NIC played a major part in the level of access I was granted by Beth, the Director of Education and Jan, and the Land Stewardship Manager. I would not have been able to conduct this study without my prior history of NIC's Centers and my prior knowledge of how the organization works. These relationships contributed to my ability to get the data I needed. This understanding helped me frame my research questions and gave me the ability to understand many aspects of the organizations and the situations that were discussed.

My relationship with Restore Milwaukee is an ongoing one. I have worked with them in different capacities since 2010, as a guest facilitator, collaborator on projects, and summer crew leader. My intimate knowledge of the work that RSM does and the small staff influenced my decision to include them in my research. Working as a crew leader during the summer of my research allowed me access to potential respondents and participant observations, but also allowed me to the comfort that a steady paycheck gives during the long process of research approval and data collection. It is also important to note that a few weeks into my research I decided to leave my job at Restore Milwaukee to focus on my fieldwork, as well as for my mental health, as I was experiencing a hostile work environment that distracted me from my goals as a researcher.

Study Limitations

Due to my decision to leave Restore Milwaukee, my study focuses primarily on the NIC, with only one focus group and 2 interviews from people associated with Restore Milwaukee. Because of this, my study is missing key “voices of difference” (Newman, 2008) in relation to what inclusive restoration looks like at Restore Milwaukee.

I was also unsuccessful in recruiting community members who are not also volunteers at the NIC to participate in my study. This could have been because of the recruitment choices I made, which focused on snowball sampling at volunteer events and connections from the volunteer database at NIC and RSM, the lack of community involvement in the organizations, or the short amount of time in which the study was conducted. This lack of community perspective points to the ways in

which my process was not as inclusive as it could have been, as well as how privilege, in the ability to volunteer during the day or meet with me to be interviewed, impacted my study sample.

Lastly, the greatest limitation was in the amount of time I had to conduct the study. I started collecting data after institutional review board approval at the end of July and needed to end my study and return to school at the end of September. This gave me a little less than eight weeks to observe, recruit and interview respondents. The crunched time impacted the amount of time spent conducting surveys, the number of observations and the ways in which I could recruit participants, limiting my respondents to those who are more easily accessible. It was my hope that because the restoration projects were happening in many different communities that I would have a sample that represented the diversity of Milwaukee in age, gender, race and class.

CHAPTER II

IS RESTORATION JUSTICE

Yeah, I'm from Milwaukee. It's just when you realize what's all going on on the earth and like how we just kinda don't take care of it, makes me a little sad you know, and its like we live here on the earth and it gives us everything we need and I feel we should give back and at least in a minimal way, if not like you know [stop] messing it up, or fix what can be fixed. I feel like there needs to be someone doing it. I just feel really passionate about that I guess, I think the earth is really beautiful and I would like for it to stay that way. (Ebony, 19, land stewardship intern)

Before we can talk about inclusive restoration and how it applies to this study, it is important to understand what urban ecological restoration is and how the topic will be used in the context of this thesis. The definition of urban is complex, politically and emotionally charged, and ever changing. According to Pickett and Cadenasso (2006), the term urban is one that is both familiar and difficult, meaning that it is a term that we use often and yet are not completely clear as to what each usage really means. The term urban has been defined by many in ways that are not suitable for ecological research (Pickett and Cadenasso, 2006). Because many of the definitions leave out important interactions, influences and context it is important for each researcher to define what is meant by urban for each study (Pickett and Cadenasso, 2006). For this study urban will be used in reference to the population of people living within the city of Milwaukee, not the entire metropolitan area which included suburban towns.

Ecological restoration is a term that is often used for conservation purposes. Its focus is on re-establishing ecological systems and functions, as well as biodiversity, that might have occurred on a site had that site not been disturbed by humans. Ecological restoration can range from totally rebuilding a devastated ecosystem to simply managing a site that is relatively undisturbed (Hobbs and Norton, 1996). Since its conception, restoration work has been shaped not only by ecologists but also by land managers, citizen scientists and practitioners, philosophers, engineers, historians and landscape architects (Havlick and Doyle, 2009).

One of the major questions restorationists have to consider is, “what are we restoring to?” The issue of what is natural is something that many struggle in defining. Are we restoring to a pre-human state or the pre-European state? (Hobbs and Norton, 1996) The acknowledgement of co-evolving influence of Native Americans on many ecosystems has been increasing and much of what we consider a natural ecosystem is actually one that evolved with human interaction and manipulation. According to Hobbs and Norton, it is important to think of restoration as a dynamic practice that is constantly changing. That the use of the word natural keeps us in a static perspective (Hobbs and Norton, 1996) that does not take into account the many ways ecosystems evolve and change. The authors highlight that by “identifying and dealing with processes that lead to degradation in the first place” restoration can restore areas so that they are “protective, aesthetically pleasing, or valuable in a conservation sense” (Hobbs and Norton, 1996).

Inclusive restoration, as a central theme for this thesis, and described in more

detail in the previous literature review, is a way of conducting restoration projects that integrate community members, voices of difference, and the understanding that restoration is more than just an environmental act. Inclusive restoration is something that people experience and are a part of. Being inclusive within a restoration project can take on many different forms and look different depending on the project. What is important is that restorationists and organizations are transparent and open.

When coming to this project I had hoped to answer the question, “is ecological restoration justice?” But it was clear in all of my conversations with respondents that this was not something they had ever thought of before. It was much easier for them to discuss things they like about restoration or volunteering, or things that are hard, how inclusive they feel the organizations are, and the motivations behind their work. What was lacking was analysis or examination around the importance of the work they are doing for the communities involved. One place respondents were able to see and discuss more clearly how restoration is a form of justice, without using the word justice, was when thinking about the spaces that are created. A section on access to green space section will look at the ways respondents thought about green space and how that is justice. Here I will discuss why urban restoration matters, the motivations people have, issues and struggles that are present, and the feeling of significance volunteers had while participating in the projects. I will build on these themes from interviews to address my question about whether or not restoration justice.

Why Urban Restoration

After sitting and talking with many people who volunteer and have worked in ecological restoration, it became clear that one of the easiest things for interviewee's to discuss were why urban ecological restoration is important, and their motivations for doing it. People who volunteer or work in ecological restoration discussed why it is important personally, why it's important for the community and why it's important for the environment. The motivation people expressed for doing this work varied from personal preferences to the benefit of this work on the community. The motivational reasons why this work is important is a topic that I believe is necessary to discuss in order to look deeper into whether or not this work is just and inclusive.

The people I spoke with realized 5 major themes around why restoration is important and the motivations people had for doing this work. The five themes are show in table 1.

Table 1: Importance of restoration themes

Theme 1	People live in cities
Theme 2	Urban restoration gives people a place of their own
Theme 3	Urban restoration is useful for humans and the environment
Theme 4	Urban restoration can help cities be more sustainable
Theme 5	The projects involved community

The first theme that many spoke about was that urban restoration is important

because people live in cities and more people are moving into cities. As Adam explains:

I mean, restoration is needed everywhere, there's like hundreds of thousands of acres of degraded land out where there's been farming and other kinds of development. But I'm attracted to urban restoration because I like living in the city. It's kind of my personal bias, but also because this is where the majority of the population, or is moving towards living in cities. So if people in the cities have a knowledge of, like they're ecologically literate and aware of their surroundings... and I just feel like that can have a pretty powerful impact on conservation and people's attitudes towards nature and desire to conserve biodiversity.

Being aware that the preference for working on urban restoration is because he lives in the city and he wants there to be natural places where he lives could seem selfish to some, but I believe it is a truth that many share. Wanting to experience the environment where you live is not selfish; everyone should have access to nature and green space where they live. Having an impact on biodiversity and learning about the environment was just an extra benefit that his work has on the larger community. Having restoration projects in people's neighborhoods, or within biking or walking distance was a major contributor to volunteers participating. Over 50% of respondents recognized the importance of having these spaces close by and attributed their proximity to one of the reasons they participated.

As Adam mentioned, restoration is needed everywhere but the vast majority of resources and concern has been placed on areas that are considered wild, rural or minimally disturbed by humans (Pickett and Cadenasso, 2006), leaving the urban

landscape with more degraded land and less resources for repair or maintenance. If natural areas are present in the urban setting, they are often remnant patches or corridors that exist because they are not ideal for urban development, be it because of slope, flooding or other undesirable characteristics (Cook, 1991). Organizations that are doing work to enhance or create natural areas in the city are becoming more popular, as people are beginning to recognize the importance of this work.

The second theme that many people spoke about when describing why urban restoration is needed was that it gives people a place of their own. It can give people a place where they belong and feel safe and comfortable. I will dive much deeper into this topic in the access to green space section of this thesis (Chapter III). But for now we will look at Ebony's reflection on why the work she does is important. She highlights many of the ideas respondents felt about having access to these places.

I think its important for people to know, like, what's here in regards to like plants and animals, I think that's something that is easily overlooked and when you think about it, that's really crazy because without any human interference, that's simply what would be here and not a lot of people know about that. And I think that should be here for educational purposes and for wildlife and plant life. I think it gives people a safe haven to like reflect in, a place to work in a place to feel involved in. I think it's just a really important part of the community that everyone should be involved in.

Having a safe place to relax and explore is not something that everyone has, and in the creation of these spaces, urban restoration is doing justice work affecting many lives. Urban restoration is combating an equity issue. In many cases work sites are contaminated, abandoned or are locations where other environmental injustices

have taken place in marginalized communities. In turning a space into accessible green space for community, restorationists and the organizations that are doing this work are working within the environmental justice framework. Because the traditional application of environmental justice work focuses on the disproportionate amount of environmental disamenities marginalized communities are burdened with, the creation of safe natural space directly addresses this issue.

Not only did Ebony speak about the “safe haven” the restoration areas provide for the community, but she also mentioned how it is necessary for the health of the environment. The third theme identified frequently was how urban restoration was useful not only for the humans but also for the environment itself. Both Ebony and Adam highlight the importance of human and the environment as motivations for their work. Ethan describes the importance for the environment as well as for the human in his recollection of a project that took place in the Menomonee Valley, along the Menomonee River where the newest branch of the NIC is located.

In the Menomonee, to be able to see that transformation and what’s possible I think in that way a lot of the Milwaukee groups that came together for [the project] did something extraordinary. And I think the neat thing is also nature wants to heal; if you ruin it as a human, but give it a chance to re-grow it comes back so fast. It’s come a long way and everything from like water quality to the diverse species so that’s amazing and I think it’s a tricky balance between our history of urbanization and industrialization and we have to almost completely change... I mean we don’t have much choice we have very little time.

Ethan’s describes how we have degraded the land but that nature wants to heal itself and re-grow was a theme that was echoed by many. What is unique about

Ethan's experience is that the restoration projects in his neighborhood have been going on for fifteen years and the changes he has seen, over time, have been tremendous. For most other areas I observed, projects did not have such a long history. While the projects are important, he also stresses that we do not have a lot of time to fix things. Ethan is referring to climate change and other forms of environmental degradation that will have impacts for both humans and ecological communities.

Restoration is a way for communities and organizations to come together and heal. To work to create change in places with a history of degrading and exploiting the land is also justice work. Ethan goes on to talk about the ways restoration and the creation of green space can benefit the community surrounding restoration projects. He adds:

At a big scale it affect everything and in that way we have no choice, we have to get together to restore things for the health, the basic health of humans. And from there, it hopefully helps the health of the overall system.

Connecting the health of the environment with the health of humans is a major principle in environmental justice. Most of the work that has been done around environmental justice is in connecting what people are doing to the environment with how it influences human health. Ethan's description of restoration as a tool that not only heals the environment but also heals people is something that was not unique to him. When thinking about justice and the way restoration fits within the environmental justice framework, this connection of health and the environment is central. Marginalized communities are not just at risk for bad health outcomes, they

are at risk for all sorts of environmental disamenities. Bullard and Hendrix (1986) state, “In the quest for quality neighborhoods, individuals often find themselves competing for neighborhood amenities (i.e., good schools, police protection, quality healthcare, land use regulations, etc.) And resisting disamenities (i.e., sewer treatment plants, landfills, garbage dumps, hazardous waste sites, freeways, public housing projects, etc.)” (Bullard and Hendrix, 1986). Restoration projects in the urban setting are therefore not only providing healthy habitat for wildlife, but are also providing environmental amenities that are greatly needed.

Creating spaces as a way to be more sustainable was the fourth theme that emerged from the interviews. Jill, an intern for NIC expressed her motivation for doing this work as being for more than just the environment but for cities in general.

I think also, cities in general, it's not sustainable for a city to be completely concrete. Like its not sustainable physically, its not sustainable for the people, energy wise, all of these things, its just not going to work, so having these restoration projects, pocketed around the city... in all of the aspects is important.

Designed green space, creative places that cool off the urban heat bubble, pockets for migratory birds and other animals, are examples of a few benefits of urban restoration. Understanding that the sustainability of a city can be influenced by the amount of green space is found within the city is vital, as Jill mentioned above. Recently, the city of Milwaukee underwent a series of public meetings and community input sessions to create the first sustainability plan for the city. Many environmental organizations in Milwaukee participated on committees to ensure that the sustainability plan included urban ecosystems and water protection. The

sustainability plan, adopted in 2013 titled Refresh Milwaukee, defines sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Refresh Milwaukee, 2014). According to the sustainability plan, in order to be truly sustainable, there needs to be a balance between the three pillars of demands; environmental, economic, and social. It is when a city makes gains unevenly in one or two of the pillars that can cause negative impacts on the other, often times at the expense of the environment.

Milwaukee’s sustainability plan was created in response to the needs of residents and with their priorities in mind. These priorities were categorized into eight issue areas; energy, food systems, human capital, mobility, resource recovery, water, buildings, and land and urban ecosystems (Refresh Milwaukee, 2014). Land and urban ecosystems must be a starting point when looking at the importance of restoration and sustainability in Milwaukee. For this priority, a number of goals have been created that can only be fully accomplished with the use of urban restoration. One of the main goals for the Land and Urban ecosystems is to protect, restore, and maintain Milwaukee’s natural resources. In particular, tree canopy cover will be doubled to 40% by 2023, and the amount of natural areas that are resorted or protected will increase by 10% annually. The second goal for the land and urban section of the sustainability plan is to increase Milwaukeeans’ connection to the green and recreational spaces within the city, and in particular, the city plans on creating enough green spaces so that all residents live within a 10 minute walk to a park, greenway or another type of green amenity (Refresh Milwaukee, 2014).

Unfortunately, the report does not discuss how issues of safety and other barriers may keep people from accessing these green spaces.

The last theme that motivated people to volunteer and work in urban ecological restoration was the way it involves the community, whether it's through education or volunteering. It was important for respondents that I understood that the work they were doing was not only helping the environment but also the community around the parks. Stressing the diversity of the community and the people who experience the park was common, along with the way those I spoke with talked about the lack of knowledge many people have about the environment. Sammy expresses her motivation as:

You know the better the land stewardship, the more of there is to learn and to teach. But I think this is one approach to dealing with problems in the community as far as educating people about the ecology system and how fragile it is and how important that is to the future of everybody, no matter what your income level or what your... I think this is a great way to teach people and this is a great way to get people of all diversity, and there's a tremendous amount of diversity in the people who come here, to work together and see each other as being someone you'd like to have stuff to do with.

The diversity of the people who come to the park may be large, but from the interviews and the observations, during volunteer workdays, participants were diverse in terms of age and gender but not race or class. Volunteers were predominantly white, middle to upper middle class, and mostly retirees. Few volunteers were people of color, especially at sites in racialized neighborhoods and the all-white volunteer crews were especially apparent in communities of color.

Figuring out how to be more inclusive to different groups of people seems a needed focus for these organizations.

Throughout the process of digging through the data, I would continually ask myself, how is the work of these organizations justice? How are the things that respondents experience and speak about pushing the understanding of what is considered environmental justice? The five themes that were identified are one way of trying to address these questions. Healing the land, healing communities, combating health issues, sustainability, and education are all features of environmental justice work. Unfortunately, I get the sense that there is potential for inclusion but also significant limitations within the projects and organizations. Because this is a localized case study that looks at only a few restoration projects I am unable to say that all restoration projects cultivate the same motivations volunteers identified for their participation in restoration projects. But it is assumed that with similar community involvement, similar motivations and reasons, a justice framework can be ascribed to them as well. The concept of inclusivity in community involvement and participation in the projects is a place where all restoration projects also need to focus.

Issues and Struggles with Urban Restoration

The previous section, *Why Restoration?* discusses the five themes that were uncovered through interviews with respondents and the importance of the restoration projects. This section is broken into three parts, *use vs. protection, feeling significant, and are we doing enough?* These topics explore three main issues and

struggles with urban restoration. The specific reason for looking at the different issues and struggles that are associated with urban restoration is an attempt to understand the complexities of the projects and their role in the justice framework.

Urban restoration efforts have unique challenges because of their location within a city. These include budget limitations, over use, and opposition from the public. One major challenge is in recognizing the dominant plants and animals in urban landscapes tend to be generalists, early successional plant species and species that can tolerate disturbance (Pickett and Cadenasso, 2006). Many non-native and invasive species are generalists that thrive in areas of disturbance and out compete native species even if they too are generalists, making restoration efforts particularly challenging.

The field of urban planning, recognizes the need to incorporate natural areas into the urban environment (Cook, 1991). Cook (1991) explains that the natural areas that are left in an urban setting often do not last due to over use, and therefore aggressive management is needed. This aggressive management can however lead to more disruption to the natural systems.

Remnant patches and corridors can act as a network to enhance system function within the urban landscape matrix, especially if these patches are connected to a larger source, which tend to be large natural areas with strong native species populations (Cook, 1991). But often, source patches are not available in the urban landscape. Some of the projects taking place around Milwaukee can act as a source for the movement and health of patches throughout the city, the size and availability of native species is limited.

Baseline challenges are not just specific to Milwaukee, but to all urban restoration. In this section I will examine struggles particular to the Milwaukee, but can still be applied to other restoration projects. Because restoration is a human activity, and people are complex, struggles emerge. Some of these struggles center on the act of restoration itself, while others relate to the larger structure, influences and importance of restoration.

Use vs. Protection

Restoration activities through the NIC and Restore Milwaukee have two purposes, enhancing the community and education. One struggle many people expressed was the frustration with the level of use of the restored areas.

In this next passage, Adam refers to the work being done at Hilltop Park:

It can be frustrating, especially if we just finished planting an area and the next day we see an educator with a bunch of kids running around on top of the plants we just planted. And they are doing completely innocently, usually... and we're like oh no that's a special spot, so it kind of makes us plant all the cool stuff on steep slopes or tucked away where nobody goes, but that will benefit wildlife, but it's kind of a bummer because we want people to be able to enjoy and appreciate all the cool diversity and different kinds of plants.

The conflict between urban restoration and the use of spaces as a place to connect and interact with the environment can also leave the restoration project and practitioners in a tough position, as Adam describes above. How does one handle the expectation that the patrons of that site could potentially destroy the space you are creating? Knowing as a restorationist that the amount of work that

you can do is extremely limited by sensitivities of that particular plant communities as they relate to the constant disturbance of humans and their animals. This is a place restorationists have to make hard decisions. The challenge of knowing that creating beautiful and diverse environments also means that more community members may use the area for recreation and enjoyment. This is a struggle that I believe is particularly relevant to urban restoration, as it would seem almost impossible to fund a restoration project in the city that is off limits to the public.

Adam continues:

I think with such a large population using the parks and also our own programmatic uses of the park, where we're bringing people and kids out there all the time, it does take a toll on the land. I mean there's renegade trails everywhere which leads to erosion and damages the vegetation and then as part of the programming, um, free nature play is encouraged because they don't want the kids to have this straightjacket'd, rule bound, experience, they want them to have like happy organic spontaneous out in nature kind of experience which is all well and good, except that if your bringing thousands of kids into a space and letting them all just do whatever they want, it can cause some damage.

The two passages from Adam illustrate the dualistic struggle of urban restoration. Adam describes how he would like to hide all the beautiful and important plants in places where people can't get to and destroy them, but understands that it would not be beneficial to both the environment and the visitors to the park. Wanting to create a space that is both environmentally and socially stable, while dealing with the particular issue of being in an urban setting can leave restorationists in a delicate situation. Jan, also a land steward for the NIC and who

lives in the neighborhood echoes Adam's concerns about high use areas and talks about it as a major concern she and her staff has to deal with regularly.

Trying to balance sensitive plants and areas where we know people will go through and trying to balance a lot of the outdoor education, you want the kids to explore, but if we're sort of loving the land to death, then your really just trampling everything at the same time

While there are struggles with urban restoration and the amount of damage that can be created by human use, it is also important to recognize why urban restoration is important and that ultimately, the restorationists I spoke with believe that:

The higher quality places that we can create within the city I think the more alluring and magical and mysterious that opportunity [to explore] can be for kids that are visiting or people from the community.

Being thoughtful of this particular struggle when planning urban restoration projects would be useful to both the practitioners as well as the community. Creating a space that does not foster animosity, but rather openness and communication to address the needs of the organizations, community, and restorationists is a step that is needed to ensure the health and success of these projects.

Feeling Significant

A struggle identified by the people I spoke with was around feeling significant. In many ways respondents described feeling like they made a difference in the work

they were doing, especially when the task was something like pulling one particular weed. However, many also expressed a feeling of uncertainty in their significance due to the repetitive nature of the work. In participant observations, many workdays included pulling Queen Anne's Lace in the savanna. This activity showed immediate results. Before our work day the hillsides would be covered in large white flowers towering over the smaller, multicolored native prairie plants and after two hours there was no white left, but a sea of orange, purple and red. That sense of gratification in actually seeing the work that we completed made volunteering seem worth it, but at the same time there was always a weed to be pulled and even in the places we worked this summer, next summer we would have to do it again. This feeling made respondents wonder if the work they were doing actually made a difference in the long run. For example, Sammy and Lauren talk about their experience in dealing with Reed Canarygrass, a process that entailed placing smothering burlap mats on the riverbanks:

Sammy: "I was talking about how nice it is to see progression but the thing is that we've seen the regression (everyone laughs and agrees). We put down the stuff one year and then we picked it up the next year and there was not reed canary grass and then we came back to plant the trees and there was reed canary grass again, so that, that in addition to the fact doing that kind of work as Cindy said is pretty stressful on the body, it also, you know, I'm not very happy to see that its back again and. "

Lauren: "it didn't work..."

Sammy: “well it did, I guess it works somewhere because they were able to plant the trees and before we couldn’t even don’t that, but yeah, I mean there’s a bit of frustration in doing that.”

This common struggle to feel that one’s work is effective is one that restorationists are aware of when working with volunteers. The feeling of significance is a major motivator, but can also be a barrier for the long-term volunteers. Figuring out things for people to do that helps them feel connected and needed is something that many people are trying to figure out at the organizations within this study. It is also important for volunteers to know that the work that they are doing does make a difference, especially in the long run. Adam who has worked for the NIC for almost 10 years assures me of the importance of the volunteers and validates their experience:

But I’ve seen huge decrease in the number of buckthorn and garlic mustard and also just all over the place, little volunteer native woodland plants popping up that we did not plant, and I’m like wow, its actually working. These things are coming back. The seeds are coming in from, probably from north of here, so I feel like a lot of species are moving in from there. But yeah, just to see that all this work, a lot of times you know with volunteers that are just here as a group for a day or they just pop in, and they probably feel like is this even worth it, and they’ve even said like are we making any difference because their pulling garlic mustard in a sea of garlic mustard. And yes, it does make a difference, and I’ve seen that difference in the 15 acres.

Being able to see the big picture and think about the work that is being done on a longer time scale, in contrast to one volunteer experience or one growing

season, is something that restorationists and organizations have to always consider. Communicating the difference and making it clear to the volunteers and the community members who get involved that they are needed and their work is significant is a necessary and repetitive task for the organizations. Conveying the significance of restoration work in an urban setting is a larger struggle.

Are We Doing Enough?

The last struggle respondents identified, though not raised by all, was the struggle of fighting the doom and gloom mentality of the environmental crisis that came up for respondents. People spoke about how they knew that restoration is needed and necessary, but also raised fears that it is not enough is something I believe many struggle with in all aspects of environmental protection and activism.

I think where I have a tough time is where, um, I believe we still have to give it our all to fix things but I can see why people are going towards more of a helpless stance. I mean if we were talking about some of the models saying that if we don't fix climate change within some models say 15 years some say 50, I mean its certainly gonna be in our grandchildren's time, its very hard to think I can solve this, and you know, we can solve all this as a little local community. I think we have to try our darndest, but I can see, I'm not as, I'm a little more jaded now. It's like, I think to some degree we, if its sinks multiple things like, if it affects recreation like people can enjoy it, and ecology that's a good combo, and of course you always, ideally the economic. I think that's where building hope. We have to restore, but are we restoring, its one thing to build an environment and it's another to build a person. And I think we are way behind on getting people built for this.

The part that resounds most with me, other than undertones of urgency, is the

way Ethan speaks about building a person as well as the environment. Restoration is inherently a human activity, one that can only be done with humans and is done because of human values. Connecting the act of ecological restoration with the importance of building people is inherently justice work. While the struggle of feeling adequate and enough is real, what is more striking is the possibilities this idea holds. Inclusive restoration, I believe, can only be accomplished if we remember the importance of community, people, and the environment.

Conclusion

Is restoration justice? Exploring the motivations people have for this work, why its important and the struggles and challenges that people face are all avenues for answering this question. In the sections that follow, I will address ways that needed, inclusively created green space, is justice work. I will also explore more deeply what inclusivity and diversity looks like in the projects I participated in, and how those actions are in fact justice work.

An area that was not explored in this section due to lack of data is how restoration, be it urban or rural, is in fact the production of nature. As previously discussed, restoration is inherently a human activity. The nature that is created cannot be separated from culture, and therefore runs the risk of being exploited for the needs, wants, and values of the restorationists. According to Smith “nature is generally seen as precisely that which cannot be produced; it is an antithesis of human productive activity. In its immediate appearance, the natural landscape presents itself to us as the material substratum of daily life, the realm of use-value

rather than exchange value” (Smith, 1996 p.369). This idea of nature as being produced and therefore a part of the capitalist system only complicates the work that inclusive restoration is hoping to accomplish. It raises questions about who benefits, and is it benefiting people for more of a use or exchange value? It is my hope that the work that is being done to restore environments will one day be for the sake of the people and nature, not for the gain of capitalism and all its associated oppressions. It is my hope that inclusive restoration will be a way to dismantle systems of oppression that fit within the capitalistic worldview and therefore the production of that nature will in fact be a part of what it means to be human, not separate or without value.

CHAPTER III

URBAN RESTORATION AND THE CREATION OF GREEN SPACE

I think [it's] the biggest thing, the thought that if you connect people to nature and to being outside, they'll have more of a affinity for it, more passion for it, they'll care more about it, and then they'll begin to look at more of their practices and their daily life and how their impacting the environment. And so... all you need to do is connect with the outside and everything else will fall into place. (Jan, white female, mid 40s, land steward manager)

Urban Restoration

The literature review discussed how having access to green space correlates to better mental and physical health outcomes, can be a privileged experience, and how green space creates the opportunity for lifelong connections to the land. This section will discuss ways in which access to restoration, created or enhanced green space, impacts the lives of the respondents. A number of themes are identified in the data and will be used to shape the discussion around the importance of green space and how people experience access.

One of the observed benefits of urban ecological restoration is that it quite literally creates green space in an environment that was previously void of living, growing organisms. The number of parks and manicured green space is often limited in dense urban areas and are thus coveted spaces for people to interact outside of the built environment. Restoration projects that focus on urban spaces and are inclusive have the ability to provide an opportunity for community members to participate in the restoration projects that can facilitate an increased

appreciation to nature (Light; 2003). This appreciation for nature can be fostered in the physical act of restoration or grown from other interactions with open green space. For this section, many themes around access to green space are developed from the data. In particular, themes having to do with privilege are identified and discussed. Privilege was found to underlie many interactions people have with the environment and the type of green space and amount of green space to which people have access. I will discuss issues around social interaction, health, reclaiming space, and the fostering of connections and connection to urban restoration and its role in restoring, creating, or enhancing these green spaces.

Green Space, Social Interactions, Health, and Privilege

Because green space is so limited in urban areas, having access to restored spaces provides the opportunity for people of all ages to have green space beyond their lawn or backyard. Often, when talking with respondents, this came up in particular when thinking about youth and their understanding of the environment. One interviewee, Ebony, a land steward intern, when talking about having access to green space through urban restoration recalls:

This summer, seeing all the kids that were coming in and learning about the environment made me really really happy. The only thing... I think there should be an even heavier focus on like the urban aspect. I think that it's really important for urban youth to be exposed to this kind of stuff. Because I don't think that they are. I think the most they get exposed to is whatever is in their lawn if there is anything growing, you know? I think it's vary valuable.

While this passage is mostly about the hope that more urban youth can experience nature and that the work of the NIC could be more focused on that aspect, it also points to an interesting phenomenon linked to the amount and type of green space to which urban or marginalized young people have access. Green space is often limited to what is surrounding a building or home is common to a traditional urban setting. With access to parks and green space influenced by distance, gang-controlled territories, busy streets and other obstacles, lawns or the space outside of apartments are often the only space young people have to play and explore and to learn from social interactions (Taylor, et al. 1998). Unfortunately, these social spaces don't always provide a healthy and safe space for young people to be and learn. Having access to green space that is both neutral ground and not densely populated creates both a safe place for young people to play and learn healthy social skills and behaviors but is most often also a privileged experience.

Living within walking distance to parks or green space that are safe and accessible gives enhanced opportunity for positive social interactions and a sense of security in those communities (Boone et al, 2009). Mass et al. (2009) explores how having access to green space is beneficial for creating social connections in that people in these spaces can facilitate conversations, visit each other and participate in activities together. People that live in areas with more green space feel less stress and more social support and are often more connected to neighbors than in places without access (Mass et al., 2009).

While clean air, water and unpolluted green space are most often a rare experience in urban, racialized and low economic neighborhoods, that is not the

case for the privileged, usually white, middle to upper middle class neighborhoods and communities, who can have access to large lawns, parks, and other environmental desirable amenities. The inequitable distribution of environmental amenities is often looked at when comparing health and other issues surrounding minorities and other marginalized groups. The amenities include access to clean air, water and unpolluted green space (Cutts et al. 2009).

Growing up with access to well-maintained parks and green space allows people to experience social interactions that are beneficial and safe, while fostering a connection to the environment. Community access to lawns and other green spaces is one level of privilege to which restoration projects need pay attention when considering locations and who will benefit from having access to these spaces. The regular and ongoing restoration work of the NIC and RSM continues to create safe spaces for people to connect. It is clear that the projects benefit the community as much as the environment.

Positive physical health outcomes are often correlated with access to green space. This theme came up often when community level urban restoration projects were discussed and how the created space benefits the community. The belief that limited exposure to green space can lead to greater health related issues is prevalent (Byrne et al., 2009). One interviewee, Ethan, expresses so effortlessly when talking about restoration projects in the Menomonee valley and why they are important:

I mean, if you think about it from the kids perspective, kids I work with, if they don't have this, they're not active. If they don't have this, were talking diabetes epidemic, were talking obesity epidemic, were talking. You know things that other generations would never have fathomed, at a big scale and so it affects

everything and in that way we have no choice, we have to get together to restore things for the health, the basic health of humans. And from there, it hopefully helps the health of the overall system.

The restoration projects to which Ethan refers are important to him because now, there are places that are beautiful and safe in his community where people can be active. While the restoration projects are important to him, it is apparent that what is equally important is the health of his students and the children in his neighborhood. While he does not directly connect this to privilege, being able to be active in a space is something not available to everyone. The health issues mentioned here are but a few that are impacted by access to green space.

Access to green space is one of many ways that the economic, social and environmental disadvantages, along with race, class, gender and geographic location fit together to impact health outcomes of a cities population. “Health disparities happen when adverse health conditions are unequal across populations due in part to gaps in wealth” and other social factors (Jennings and Gaither, 2015). Because much of our lives are spent in the built environment, this type of environment also shapes our health outcomes. Having access to more walkable areas, green space and parks can lead to a more active and healthy lifestyles (Cutts et al. 2009). Studies have shown that there is a positive association with the “perceived” health of a person and the percentage of green space in a person’s community, which leads to lower mortality risks (Mass et al., 2006 & Mass et al., 2009).

According to Jennings and Gaither (2015), one of the major health risks associated with lack of access to green space is obesity. Physical inactivity

worldwide leads to 3.2 million annual deaths and also “increases the risk of obesity and cardiovascular disease” (Jennings and Gaither, 2015). In low income community’s children are 3.7 times more likely to be obese as compared to wealthier communities. While in many cases, having access to green space within 1 mile of your house, which is the recommended feature for positive health outcomes (Jennings and Gaither, 2015), is a privileged experience, urban restoration can help create green spaces in low income and racailized communities so that lack of access is less of a factor.

Unfortunately, lack of access is only one part of the inactivity found within these communities. As previously discussed, public safety and pollution, as well as lack of access to parks and green space, can be limiting factors. Additionally, an active lifestyle may not be a part of the communities’ way of being (Jennings and Gaither, 2015). Not having the privilege of an active lifestyle, as previously discussed, is one challenge for urban restoration that creates green space. The space may not be used by the community without sufficient programming and other ways of integrating these restorative practices. Increased obesity is one example of community health impacts results from a lack of green space, and as Ethan has stated so clearly, there are many more.

Lastly, while it is important to recognize the role environmental amenities and access to green space plays in health outcomes, we should not “exaggerate the relevance of green space over other major factors in health disparities such as access to health care, education and the systemic/institutional barriers and environmental burdens” present in a community (Jennings and Gaither, 2015).

Urban restoration projects, whether they are done inclusively or not, can create opportunities for improved health outcomes, but without a larger shift in systemic inequalities, the work that NIC and RSM are doing can only have a limited outcome.

Justice as Reclaiming Green Space

In Milwaukee WI, a city that is proud of its parks and greenways, the lack of park and green space access is still apparent. The County supports 136 parks covering 15,000 acres (Milwaukee County parks. 2015), but the level of safety and maintenance associated with individual parks can vary, often connected to the level of appreciation and use from the community surrounding the space. As Boone et al. (2009) noted, populations that are the most vulnerable (elderly, racialized, poor, young) are in more need of green space that is both accessible in location, and accessible in the feeling of safety and the feeling of community than other communities. Inclusive urban restoration that has community support has the potential to foster a shift in perception and use of green spaces that maintain a healthy social and physical interaction with the park. But how does restoration projects impact spaces that are deemed unwanted and unsafe? The NIC believes that by creating and restoring the land, we can change the way a park is used.

It is hard to conclusively say if it was the restoration or the education that took place at Hilltop Park through the NIC that helped change the space for the better. It is clear that the consistent presence of volunteers, community members, and children fostered the shift in the park from a place that felt unsafe and unattractive in the community, to a jewel that is valued and used by the neighborhood,

community members, as well as Milwaukee as a whole. Another interviewee, Jan, describes some of her history with the park and the restoration that's taken place:

I would bring groups of volunteers together to work in the park and occasionally people would come past us and ask us what we were doing and we would explain that we were doing habitat restoration, and um, improving the park, removing some of the invasive's and then also as we brought in large school groups in the back of the park, I think usually people that are looking for a quiet space for undesirable activities, whatever, when a group of screaming kids come through the park, that's not really where they want to hang out. So it kind of has that, you know automatic since of kind of pushing out the undesirable activities and bringing in people that are ok being where there are groups of kids running in the park.

The constant programming and ongoing presence of volunteers and young people made a difference in what type of activities took place in the park. Because people started using the park in a way that was safe and connected the community to the space and to each other, people who were there to do undesirable activities, that made the park feel unsafe, were driven out by the community. The NIC hoped that in getting the community connected to the park through restoration work and through environmental education that the park would transform into a place where all people felt welcome.

Later, Jan goes on to say:

I was giving a tour [of the park] and one of our board members was on the tour and he remarked that back in the day when he used to come through, you never would have seen a single women running though, and he commented on how often now in the park you see a single women walking though or running through the park, and that at least on the outward scale gives sort of that sense

of well it must be safe enough if this many people feel like its fine to go through alone.

The task of creating a space that is both safe and inclusive is something that privileged communities need not deal with if their green space is maintained and valued by the city and the neighborhood. Undesirable elements left because Hilltop Park became a place where increased numbers of community members started participating in activities and volunteering with NIC and participating in restoration projects. It demonstrates not only the intrinsic benefit of restoration, but is also an example of how access to green space and restoration influences environmental justice activities through community participation.

The understanding that a park is linked to the crime rates in an area is known but also property values are linked to the perceived threat of crime in an area. In Baltimore MD, Troy and Grove (2008) found that when crime rates were lower the parks in the area had a positive impact on property values. In the case of Hilltop Park, it is unclear if property values were impacted by the perception of the park before the NIC was present, but it is clear that with the work taking place there, crime rates have lowered and people's perception of safety in the space has increased. Also, in areas where parks are mismanaged and full of undesirable plants, the perception of safety is lessened than in parks that are well-managed or full of ecologically diverse species (Troy and Grove, 2008). This shows that restoration can change the opinion a community has about the safety of a space based on the type of vegetation present.

Having the privilege of living in a space with safe and well-kept parks is not universal. The act of reclaiming a space is also something that not many communities are able to experience. The role the NIC has played in facilitating the shift in opinion and actual safety in the park should be seen as an example of what urban restoration can accomplish, especially with community programming accompanying it.

Fostering a Connection to Nature

As discussed previously, creating a safe space and bringing people into the park for restoration activities can help facilitate a connection to the environment, which is an important benefit of having access to safe green space. Fostering a connection to nature is not something everyone has access to, but many at the center believe is important. Jan who works for the NIC expresses:

Getting people to have fun outside, even if you live in an apartment building in the city and you don't have even a patch of grass around you, but to be able to go outside and go for a walk in the park and see the butterflies and the birds going though and to kayak down the river or to get out on your bike or barrow a bike... to really encourage people to get outside on their own time.

People, especially children, require ample opportunities to experience nature in order to form a connection that will translate to an environmental literacy that could impact the choices they make later in life around environmental issues. Over the last decade research has looked at the ways young people engage with the environment or how little engagement is actually taking place. Louv's (date) work, which is widely accessible, in particular has exposed the issues associated with a

lack of connection and time spent in green space.

Many believe that the human connection to the environment is a relationship that is part of our evolutionary history, and that the connection and affiliation to the environment is a part of what makes us human. This hypothesis is known as Biophilia (Hinds and Sparks, 2008 and Wilson, 1984). The natural and inherent connection to nature that we as humans have, the benefits in terms of our mental and physical health being connected to the amount of green space we have access to, enhances the need for every person to have a chance to bond with and experience nature, especially in a way that is accessible and inclusive. The fostering of our inherent connection to the environment should not only be for the privileged but for everyone.

There is much literature on the idea of connectivity, connectedness and our interactions with nature (example citations?). A common theme in the literature as well as in the discussion with respondents is that creating a connection to nature is a major part of what is needed in fostering an ecological consciousness. This connection can be made through exploration and other experiences that help people expand their sense of self to include the natural world where they then believe that any exploitation or destruction of the natural environment is also a “self-destruction” (Mayer and Frantz, 2004). The creation of a sameness between ones self, the natural world and others is another way of expressing the connection one can form from interacting with green space (Dutcher et al., 2007). “Connectivity is not only about seeing the environment as part of ourselves, but also about seeing ourselves as a part of the environment. Connectivity with nature reflects a sense of

empathy because of the unity/community between self and nature that is inherent” (Dutcher et al., 2007, p.16). Hinds and Sparks (2008) believe that having contact with the environment especially during childhood is essential in forming meaningful bonds with nature as well as in creating positive values towards the environment. It is also clear that young people who have different levels of green space experience the connection differently. As Jill noted when speaking about the differences she has observed

Like kids, that live in the inner city neighborhood. They don't experience nature the same way as someone who maybe grew up in lets say a rural community does... these kids that come to the camps, they don't realize that they live like a mile from lake Michigan, or you know, ok, there's like an oak savanna, maybe that doesn't mean anything to them, but later on its going to start building that foundation in their mind that there are all these native habitats here that nature does exists within the city and its accessible to them.

Hinds and Sparks (2008) found that rural children had a stronger positive connection to the environment than children of the same age from urban settings. As seen in the passage, urban restoration can give urban young people the opportunity to learn and experience nature within their city in a way that is meaningful and important. Being limited to interactions within the city does not have to mean that people have less of a connection to the environment.

As previously discussed, types of access are often different depending on the privileges afforded an individual or a community. A major theme that came up often during the interviews was how easy it is for some people to experience nature and how hard for others. Privilege plays a major role in who has access to nature and

what is considered nature. There is a disconnect from the environment that is found within the city and the very idea of nature. Many believe that nature is something that is far away, pristine and untouched, and without human interaction. But urban ecological restoration has the ability to change the perspective on what nature is and who has access to it. When done in a way that encourages people to experience the environment, urban restoration can connect community members to the land around them, forming lasting and changing bonds to the land. As Jan expresses this point here:

It's very important is for people, for kids and residents and community members who might not have the opportunity or interest to drive an hour or 4 hours or 10 hours out to go see lots of different wilderness areas or plant community types, for them to be able to see it right in the city where its more accessible, its easier to get to, you don't necessarily need significant transportation to be able to see them, I think its great for them to see the richness of the native Wisconsin plant communities right in their own neighborhoods.

Ricardo, a high schooler who participated in the Outdoor Leaders program describes his experience working with young people at Greenway Park and their level of experience and connection to the environment around them:

I think, I think at some points, some could be really like uninterested and ignorant about it, but like, a lot of them were really like interested in learning about it and seeing the animals and stuff, because that's not stuff that their usually exposed to and like, I think a large part of it was the adventure kind of stuff [we did], cause those kids don't really get to go to state parks and stuff

These two examples address the issue of access differently. One expresses the importance of green space as a way to benefit those who don't have the privilege of going to state or national parks, while the other expresses an understanding that the young peoples lack of awareness and connection to the land is because they do not have these experiences. While different, both illustrate a common understanding that urban and racialized populations are often excluded from the experience of what many consider as nature and wilderness. And that in their exclusion are unable to form connections to the land in ways that more privileged peoples and communities are able. Having to travel outside of ones community to connect with nature is something that many do not have the privilege of experiencing.

When I think back to my own childhood and I got into nature it was going to really cool beautiful places and I always, and my eyes always were drawn to all the different kinds of plants and animals and rocks and I think we just inherently are drawn to diversity and beautiful places.

Adam recalls his childhood love of getting to go to national parks and other natural environments. In speaking about his different experiences with nature, it was clear that Adam's experience seemed completely normal and usual. The privilege he grew up with wasn't something that he expressed understanding as a young person, but as an adult knew that not everyone has access to these spaces. It was common for respondents to mention how great it is to get to go to state and national parks to experience nature, but then also say how great it is having spaces like that in the city so more can experience them. What was missing in our conversations were the expressed understanding of privilege and how certain

spaces were set up as exclusionary. Byrne et al., (2009) explores this and says that national parks don't just seem exclusionary, but actually were set up for social exclusion through many acts restricting particular groups of people, native Americans and African Americans in particular, from national parks.

Forming an early connection to the environment, as previously discussed, is a major motivator for a life-long connection and care for the environment. Many people connected their love of the environment, whether it came from visiting national parks, camping, recycling in the house they grew up in, or gardening, as a motivator for participating in urban restoration and the importance of having access to green space. Though many of the early experiences respondents talked about were important to the formation of their environmental understanding, few directly connected how early experiences were their major motivator to want to work to create green space in the city through restoration. Adam and Ilana are two examples of how respondents spoke about their initial motivation or interest in volunteering and in particular the importance of urban green space.

Adam: "My parents always gardened, um so I got a little bit of a green thumb from them. And went throughout high school I helped work in the yard... then somewhere in there I realized... I was on a road trip and I saw this what turned out to be butterfly milkweed growing on the road and I was with my family and I was like we need to stop, I need to see what this is and I climbed up on this hill and I looked at this plant and was like, how come nobody grows this, its beautiful and then I came home and I Googled Wisconsin native plants and this whole new world opened up to me... So then I was just like, wow I've got a new mission now, I gotta bring native vegetation back into the urban landscape."

Ilana: “the reason I started caring was because I was always more, I’ve always been involved in feminist politics and all of that kind of thing, and this was just a natural thing for me, as far as for like getting healthier, plus I was vegetarian for a little while, and that alone kind of like made me want to read and gain more information on that, so it was kind of a natural segue for me [to volunteer here].”

Having an early introduction to nature, be it positive or negative, has a major influence on how one treats the environment throughout their life. Adam and Ilana both had positive experiences with the environment, which led them to a where they are today, working in this field and wanting to make a difference. But what if they had a negative experience or no experience at all? How much harder would it be for individuals to form a connection to nature later in life? Urban ecological restoration projects are a place where people of all ages can form a connection to the environment, and better their community. The more people who have a positive association with urban nature, the more successful these restoration projects can be, creating a positive feedback loop that will benefit us all.

Sacred Space and Privilege

It is clear that forming a connection to the environment early in life can lead to a lifelong understanding, caring and love that can influence how a person continues to interact with and think about the environment. One of the many benefits of inclusive urban ecological restoration is, as previously discussed, the connection that people can form with the land. This connection can be more than just an understanding and love for nature Restoration work can help people feel a part of

the environment, as though it is theirs. The environment can become apart of them. Their understanding of themselves and of the land can become forever intertwined. In creating green space, urban restoration can create sacred spaces for individuals, Ebony talks about her connection:

I feel like it has definitely made it a lot stronger like I've put some of my energy into the east side and like making sure that Hilltop park looks beautiful and now I feel like this is a part of my home.

It became clear when talking with respondents that many of them have either experienced a sense of ownership or connection to the land through their involvement with restoration work, or that they hope and have witnessed how fostering a connection to the environment within young people can have a lasting impact on how they interact with the environment and feel a sense of belonging. As Ethan explains:

When I go through the valley, there's certain parts that I remember planting an oak tree or... like planting an oak tree there and its still doing good or places we cleaned out invasives you know, so there's a lot of places that I past by that have worked on or bonded in it, you know, having an experience there, cleaning it up or things like that. So for me it's like somewhat, there a lot of sacred grounds to learn from even if they're young like new restorations. So yeah, I mean, I don't know if that answers your question but, yeah. I would say the more, I think its like anything, its sort of like farming, the more you work on an area or a piece of land, the more attached to it the more you learn from it, the more people you meet from it, so I think that's a big thing.

Jan adds:

Kids from the neighborhood that go to school within a 2 mile radius, and many of those kids then live within about a 2 mile [who visit the park] have a

connection to the park and they feel more responsible for it. And you have hopes that they feel less like they want to come in and vandalize the park. They'll feel more like "no this is our special space" and wanna be connected to it.

While feeling a connection and ownership is important. It is equally important to recognize that much of the degradation that has been caused on this earth is because of the rhetoric of domination that is prominent in our society. There needs to be a balance between helping foster a connection to the environment and instilling a sense of domination.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATING THE ORGANIZATIONS ON INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

We have been talking about the more difficult issues, like maybe are, are our volunteers really a mix of the neighborhoods we're working in? are we making sure that we're letting people know that these are opportunities and things that they can become involved with? (Jan, Land Steward)

Introduction

Previous chapters have provided a discussion on green space, and restoration projects and how participation in such related projects is also the work of environmental justice.

This last chapter describes places where respondents were able to think and talk about issues of diversity and inclusion. An evaluation is provided of participant organizations observed through an inclusive restoration and workplace diversity framework in addressing the question: are restoration organizations also justice organizations?

Newman's framework (2008) uses five recommendations describing how restoration projects could be more inclusive. The recommendations she outlines are important starting points for any organization that is trying to engage the community through restoration work. Each recommendation is targeted to a specific part of the process. Each is specific enough that organizations can choose the recommendations that make sense for where they are organizationally and the type of work they are doing. The recommendations are:

1. The definition of urban ecological restoration should include socially-focused

projects that combine social and ecological goals; for example, native plant community gardens and local urban ecological restoration job training and creation programs.

2. Site selection processes for urban ecological restoration projects should be based on community need and protected from political pressure.
3. Designate resources to community-driven ecological restoration projects in areas identified as vulnerable and low income, to allow racialized communities greater access to urban ecological restoration projects.
4. Acknowledge that a diversity of value systems is critical for the urban ecological restoration community. This can be done by providing opportunities for information sharing not based on the expert/volunteer paradigm but that allow for participation by people unfamiliar with the language and culture of the field of urban ecological restoration.
5. Hire people from diverse backgrounds into organizations working on urban ecological restoration projects, to give racialized people the opportunity to increase their participation in restoration projects. (Newman, 2008)

These recommendations will be the jumping off point from which values of inclusiveness at the NIC and Restore Milwaukee will be assessed, using respondents reported feelings, insights and awareness of diversity and inclusion within the restoration projects. Some of the recommendations relate issues of agency funding or city planning, but also provide an important place to focus our discussion around inclusivity. Many themes emerged from the discussions with respondents and from the survey data including accessibility of the projects, volunteer opportunities, who decides what is done, community opposition, definitions of inclusion, and actions (or lack of actions) that are being taken to address issues of diversity. These themes, which shed light on the importance of inclusivity, shape the framework by which the

observed restoration projects and organizations at the NIC and Restore Milwaukee are evaluated.

Because of limited contact with respondents from RSM, most of the data for this section has come from the NIC. The two organizations interact with communities differently and their restoration projects are not similarly structured. This section will use NIC data in particular. In my experience, RSM does not rely on volunteers in the same way as the NIC. RSM's restoration projects, for the most part, are conducted in one of two ways. Either a RSM green team, which is their youth workers, completes them or they partner with neighborhood groups or other organizations to participate in larger projects. The green team, unlike the NIC who relies on volunteers, completes the ongoing maintenance of restoration sites. While RSM does on occasion hold volunteer events, they are organized with community associations, garden groups, or other neighborhood organizations around an event that is relevant to all partners. Not having adequate respondents from RSM I am not able to fully conclude if the way they are participating in restoration projects is in fact inclusive or not, but I will be able to give limited discussion around places where they are doing things well and where they can improve.

Accessibility of Projects and Ability to Volunteer

A major discussion emerged from all the interviews around people's opportunity or ability to volunteer on restoration projects. It was important for me to understand who the volunteers were and how inclusive and accessible the volunteer opportunities were for them. It was clear during the interviews that

accessibility of the site and of the projects was important to the individuals, many because of age. Many of the respondents were retired and expressed issues with other volunteer opportunities that treat them differently because of their age and their perceived ability. The work that they do at the NIC matters to them, but more importantly; they feel welcome and encouraged to volunteer. Sammy explains:

They never belittle us, you know, never once have any one said to us, giving us the feeling that we are too old to do something, they leave it up to you, but if they see us struggling they will help us. And so I think that, for me, that's been a big key.

Making projects that are both valuable to the overall restoration efforts and that are accessible for everyone is a place where the NIC has paid extremely close attention. They understand that particular people are able to consistently volunteer and making sure that everyone feels welcome and needed is a major goal of the organization. Adam also comments on the level of diversity in volunteers at the center:

As far as land stewardship we just work with any and all volunteers and here in Hilltop [Park] we don't have as much diversity in terms of ethnic and or cultural background, however we have there's still so much diversity especially in terms of the age spectrum. Like we work with first graders through you know some of our volunteers are in the 80s and 90s.

While age is an important factor to consider when creating restoration projects for community involvement, it is not the only thing to be aware of. When thinking about what locations get the most volunteers and where they are coming from Adam talks about his understanding and assumptions:

Yeah, I mean Hilltop Park definitely has the largest number of regular volunteers. And I'm not sure why that is, I mean it certainly has something to do with the fact that the center has been here for a very long time, but it also, I think it has a lot to do with where people are at socioeconomically and in terms of other demographic differences like most of the volunteers that we have here they've got secure jobs, or their retired or whatever and its kind of just an assumption, but I would think it would be harder to give your time to volunteering when you have more pressing concerns in your life and some of the more lower income areas like Menomonee Valley and Greenway Park.

Class and race are important social divisions that need to be accounted for when considering accessibility and inclusivity on a restoration project. It was clear from respondents that the discussion around class being a hindrance for engagement was something they had thought about and were comfortable speaking to. In contrast, the discussion around race was limited to respondents of color, who often expressed a desire to see more people who looked like them participate in the projects. The discussion of class, and in particular the way values and free time play into the ability for people to volunteer, is a place where restoration projects and other environmental justice concerns are often divided.

Adam talked about how he is amazed that people find the time to volunteer. He has such limited free time that he cannot find the resources to volunteer. Another respondent addresses this issue as well:

The way I see it, there's not much mentioned about class, like I think its very tricky because if your just look at from a bird's eye view, you have always university-educated people, often not from the neighborhood, not always, but often, coming in to here or somewhere like here and saying, okay now come

out and do what we do. And I think its not that the intention is bad, its that if you don't know where they come from, and you don't know where you come from its hard to want to work on this together. It's hard to want to think this is something fun. The things we're competing against are really are huge and they're dangerous. I mean my roommate works as a foundry mechanic and you know, he's gonna be exhausted, he's been sweating in machines that are like hundreds of degrees all day and if you tell him now at the end of the day come to a meeting about the environment or you know, its not feasible for him. He's got a two-year-old, and I'm sure he'd love to walk with her and take her to the valley and stuff like that, but a lot of these experiences don't mesh with well with the class differences.

Ethan goes on to express the need for us to integrate university-educated people with community educated within organizations. That people should live and get to know the workers in the area and the type of skills already present in the community. In doing this, he believes that organizations and restoration projects will have a better understanding of the needs of the community, as well as a way to get better community involvement and projects that are inclusive and accessible.

While having expertise from the community is one way to insure that a particular community is considered and represented, a major concern, emerged during the interview process - how are volunteers recruited to participate in projects? Having staff and practitioners who are community members is important but, if volunteer recruitment is not targeted to fit the needs of a particular community, then many important individuals, and their resources, can be excluded, overlooked or left out, and are often missing from these projects. It became clear to me because of the demographic of returning volunteers that something was missing

in terms of making sure the volunteers actually represent the community that is being served. Fortunately, at least one staff member has been thinking about this issue.

We have also been talking about the more difficult issues, like maybe are our volunteers really a mix of the neighborhoods we're working in? Are we making sure that we're letting people know that these are opportunities and things that they can become involved with?

Being aware of this potential disconnect is a hopeful indicator that the organization will take action to have their volunteers actually represent the communities being served. When speaking with staff of the NIC about how they recruit volunteers, it became clear that recruitment was not something they actively do. Katie who is a volunteer coordinator explains:

Because the center just got a good reputation for being a place to come and volunteer, we're at a point right now at Hilltop Park where I don't have to do that much recruiting, I do like three orientations a month and I usually get about 10-15 [people] per orientation, without doing any recruiting, and then, so that works here. What we're finding, and we do get people who come up at Greenway park and Menomonee valley, but not necessarily from those communities, so that's where we're wanting to do recruiting efforts, in those communities to get individuals to come to like to orientations or to come to volunteer.

Katie goes on to explain that the volunteer coordinators at the other two locations are trying to figure out what recruitment means for those communities. They are trying multiple methods, which include going to other organizations or neighborhood associations and flyering. Unfortunately, because staff time is so

limited, these actions are not happening on the scale that may be needed.

Advertising an event or meeting via the Internet or email assumes that everyone has access to a computer and therefore excludes those that do not.

Who Decides?

Deciding on what projects to do and the locations of those projects is a major part of the restoration planning process. The ways in which organizations formally consider levels of diversity or inclusivity varies by organization and project. If the project is conducted on public land through the County, then informational meetings and community input and transparency are usually required at some level. On the other hand, many projects take place on private land and community involvement is not mandatory. In reality, the amount of community engagement is quite often dependent on whether or not community participation is a priority to the organizations tasked with the project.

I think what happens is, and you know, I've been a part of it, we know we are required to reach out the community, and there's two elements; there's our limitations, like even with infinite funding do people listen, do they read their mail, do they want to get involved. It's a big bridge to cross when your talking about poverty, other factors, multiple health issues, trying to get the community active. Trying to get our community, I mean I live here, and we're I mean, disproportionately affected by so many things. So to tell someone to care about another thing when you just want to feed your family is a hard thing. So I get that, there's that level, but then there's a second level which I think is organizational, where in the society, its very common that a public entity or a non-profit or a private would say we reached out the community and it would be a very token gesture like well we sent out a mailer so they don't care, we're

just gonna build it or whatever the case may be. And I think that's a big problem.

Too often the case, as described above, organizations can be stuck between two hard places. How much involvement do they really want? And will people actually come? Later, Ethan goes on to explain how he has never been invited to participate in any of the planning for the NIC at the Menomonee Valley restoration projects. He lives in the community and is a member, but knows that he has never been contacted about a public input session about the projects.

Newman (2011) also points out how the format of community meetings can also be exclusive, in language, time commitment, and communication styles, as well as advertising for meetings and events. If groups communicate differently from each other, particular peoples may feel devalued or out of place in a formal community meeting (Newman, 2011). According to Piper (2005) people who show up and participate as stakeholders within meetings surrounding the planning and implementation of a restoration project, hold more power in how meetings are run, how information is shared and the outcomes of the projects. Ratcliffe (2004), as quoted by Newman (2008) attributes low attendance by racialized communities to the fact that they might not have the resources or time needed to participate. Language, childcare, transportation, and other barriers can influence the amount of time one is able to participate in volunteer events and community meetings. If those factors are not considered, marginalized people are only further excluded (Ratcliffe 2004 and Newman 2008).

According to one land steward, NIC's restoration projects do not normally have community input. Often they get to create whatever they want on the land as Adam explains here about Greenway Park in particular:

In the past its kind of been like 'we'd like a prairie, can we plant a prairie?' and I'd be like I've planted a prairie before maybe we can plant a prairie, but I'm only there one day a week so your gonna have to help. And then they would rally a bunch of volunteers and prepare an area and we'd go gather seeds. So there wasn't a whole lot of planning that went into it per say. So it was driven just by other staff members over there and what they were either interested in, excited about, or they perceived as needs for education purposes, like we need someplace to bring the kids to learn about woods and we have no woods over there.

He continues:

Here in Hilltop Park we have had more freedom because we have a lease of the park, and so the county lets us kind of do our thing, unless we're doing something really dramatic like a bridge or re-doing paths or something like that. But here its just kind of driven by Jan, Caitlin and I our fantasies about what kind of beautiful places we'd like to see and having a kind of a mix.

As Adam explains, what staff wanted to see and what they knew how to create drove the types of projects that were chosen. Because not all of the land that the NIC works on is theirs, Greenway Park for example is a County Park while the Hilltop Park, is a lease, and the amount of approval that needs to happen differs. At Greenway park they need to get approval from the County on any projects they want to do, whereas at Hilltop Park, unless they are making structural changes, they

are free to do whatever they see fit for the land without County or community approval.

When asked about holding meetings or getting approval Adam tells me that:

Related to land stewardship, not so much, when we have like as an organization, do infrastructure buildings and bridges and stuff like that, there always a community input, but as far as land stewardship, historically, the community input just comes pretty much from the volunteers who come from the community. I do know that the restoration plan for Greenway park which is being vetted by the county, that one we plan on giving a presentation that will be open to the community for commentated feedback, so that will be new and different from Hilltop. Should be interesting.

Such limiting of community involvement in the planning process to those who already volunteer can and does skew organizational priorities. Without the participation of different views that inclusive community meetings can provide, the restoration projects may not be as welcomed or appreciated by the larger community. Currently, urban ecological restoration projects in Milwaukee are designed by the scientists and restorationists or landscape architects, and in doing so “the knowledge, expertise, biases, and priorities of the restorationists involved in the project determine the direction of the restoration and what ‘nature’ will be created” (Newman, 2008, p.230). With this practice, different groups of involved people, and their ideas around what nature should look like, are left out. Nature, as a construct, can take on many forms and be created to fit a particular ideal. If people and organizations creating nature are not inclusive and diverse, then the nature that

is created will always look a particular way. And wont achieve its potential in building connections and community.

Opposition from Community Members

When thinking about inclusivity and community involvement, whenever there are people involved in something no matter how positive the project, there will be someone (or many someones) who does not agree with the work that is being done. While conducting participant observations, this was witnessed first hand and it made me wonder how much opposition these restoration projects experience. The volunteers who spoke with me during formal interviews, as well as those who I spent my time with in the field, told story after story of experiences of being confronted by someone who didn't agree with what they were doing, especially around the removal of species that they grew in their own yards. What was clear though, was that the volunteers understood where these individuals were coming from and they had the knowledge to explain what and why they were doing the work. Community members and people who used the parks also had issue with trail closures, trail building, smothering projects and tree removal. At times, individual issues stemmed from a lack of knowledge but also from a place of entitlement around the use of the park. Volunteers and staff would hear things about how "I've always done it this way, why do I need to stay on the trail" or "I've seen birds eat those berries, therefore they are needed, why are you cutting down those trees?" Sometimes, unfortunately, volunteers and staff have encountered more serious opposition to the work they are doing. Adam recalls one situation:

Oh sure... I had one volunteer come twice and it became apparent from our conversations that his whole point in coming was to tell me that I was basically following a Nazi philosophy by suggesting native plants were superior to introduced and exotic ones... Like I was favoring the motherland.

When planning restoration projects, a lot of the work that volunteers do is in exotic or invasive species removal. The discussion around the removal of invasive and non-native species is one that all restoration projects have. What is missing is the discussion around how the practice may be excluding individuals who are recent emigrants to the United States and where those species are familiar and comforting (Newman, 2008). A complicating perspective that many restorationists have is the idea that while not all exotic species are invasive, not all native species are preferable. The removal of all non-native species, whether they are invasive or not, in restoration practices can leave systems vulnerable to invasion. Understanding that this is a controversial issue, one perspective on the topic is that of Ewel and Putz (2004) that suggest that if “their presence does not unduly threaten surrounding ecosystems, alien species can be tolerated or even used to good advantage, if they provide essential ecological or socioeconomic service” and that the eradication of all non-native species can cause “collateral damage” to that system, meaning exposing that system to unnecessary stress, invasion and loss of function. They go on to say that the use of non-native plants in restoration is not always useful and can be dependent of the landscape and the desired outcome of the restoration project, but their presence can sometimes be useful where they have a positive ecological role. If there are non-native species present at the start of the

restoration project, their continued existence in the ecosystem will may not have a negative impact on the outcome of the project (Ewel and Putz, 2004).

Keeping in mind the impact the type of volunteer work has on community members could help prepare restorationists about potential community opposition, similar to this one. Because the issue of human immigration is so politically charged and ever present in our world, the issues and assumptions surrounding animal and plant invasion has also become politically charged, creating a desire for a more culturally aware ecological knowledge to combat the similarities to nativism that is now present (Havlick and Doyle, 2009).

Definitions of Inclusion

During my conversations with volunteers, community members, interns, and staff we would discuss ways that the organizations were being inclusive. Over and over I would hear “oh yeah, they are totally inclusive... everyone is welcome” or some iteration of that statement. I would ask how are they inclusive, or what do they do that makes you feel welcome? Respondents had a hard time going into detail about *how* the organizations, staff, or projects were inclusive. When I set out to do this project, a major part of it for me was figuring out what inclusivity meant, especially in the urban restoration context within the city of Milwaukee. What I got were general, broad statements about being inclusive. Many times inclusivity and welcoming were used interchangeably. Here are a few examples of the ways respondents tried to show me how the organizations and projects were inclusive:

I'd say in general we just try and be inclusive of everybody. We don't ever, I never, none of us ever want to say no, you can't volunteer at the center. You know. The thing is almost all of our opportunities are totally inclusive. You don't have to have experience in, which is one of the coolest things about it, you don't have to have experience with like anything, you know environmental or sciencey or anything to help out land stewardship or to help out with research... they're super inclusive because anybody can do it (Katie, staff)

Its making an effort to open up what ever programs or opportunities you have to everybody, and or to as many people as possible. (Victoria, community member)

It's to invite everybody without any discrimination of anything. Its simply just being open.... just not having any discrimination in people that can be involved, you know making sure what ever you are doing is inclusion. (Ebony, intern)

While these answers are totally valid and important, it felt as though respondents were trying to sell me on the organizations. As though they didn't want to say anything against them or judge what they are doing. Often times, I felt like I was pulling teeth trying to get answers that just weren't coming.

When asked how these projects could be more inclusive, or what the NIC and RSM could do to be more inclusive, most of the respondents had a hard time coming up with anything they could do. Some examples include:

I fee like I would feel more included if I was a student because I feel like more of the programs are for younger people, kids, but also younger community people. (Victoria, community member)

Word of mouth communication, definitely. You know, just going up to them and letting them know what type of programs we have going on and of course we get responses from flyers and posters or what ever we made, but I think just, you know word of mouth, verbal communication makes people feel included. (Jason, staff)

But I definitely think that it would be beneficial to have more black people at the center, working here, and like bringing their families here and their friends here so that they can know about it, course I feel like again, a lot of the urban parts of Milwaukee don't really know about the center and what it can offer. (Ebony, Intern)

I had hoped, in asking ways that these projects can be more inclusive, that I would get lists and lists of ideas that could be passed on to the organizations as recommendations from the community. These three statements are all that I was given, other than "oh I can't think of anything" or "they are already so inclusive, everyone is welcome."

Nevertheless, three approaches did emerge from the examples. 1. Advertise and promote projects through venues other than schools. Make events accessible and appealing to people without families or who are not in school. 2. Directly interacting with community members helps individuals feel more included. 3. Hire people that represent the diversity that you wish to attract to projects. If incorporated at the NIC and RSM, these approaches fit well within the Inclusive Restoration recommendations that Neman (2008) proposes. Unfortunately, these three approaches are still lacking because we are still not able to define what inclusivity means to the community and how the organizations could be more

inclusive. This is one place where the lack of community participation in the data really shows. Because I was unable to get community feedback through interviews, all the respondents I worked with already felt included and engaged. Getting to talk with members of the community who may not be involved in the NIC or RSM could have given more insight into what these organizations could do to be more inclusive.

How They Address Issues of Diversity and Inclusion

Figuring out how the NIC actually is working on issues of diversity and inclusion was a challenging task. As previously discussed, the definitions of inclusion that emerged seemed limited at best. What became clear was the disconnect between what was said and actions that were taken. Here are two examples of how inclusion and diversity were addressed:

Especially over the last couple of years we've especially begun to question and realize that we need to make, have a little more action on trying to make sure that are membership, our staff, our board, our visitors, anyone coming in, to make sure that they are being as welcome and possible to them, to all different cultures. We've formed a multi-cultural learning group two years ago, that so far as sort of been discussing issues and reading articles and bringing up ideas and things like that, and trying to figure out like "what can we do to actually implement to make sure that we are welcoming.

I don't, yeah like I said it's not something we talk about or have like a specific strategy for how to engage more diverse set of volunteers but we just work with everyone and we try and make everyone feel welcome and have a good time and engage them in conversation and make sure they want to come back and that they understand of the importance of their contribution.

These two examples from staff in the same department at the NIC are very different descriptions on how they understand or address issues of diversity and inclusion. While the understanding of cultural differences is important, putting oneself out there and using strategies that create change, is the only way anything is going to change in the projects and for the organizations. Actions, in my opinion, are more important than words and thoughts. Actions give community members and individuals something tangible to hold on to and see. Thoughts and words are abstract and are hard to hold on to. I appreciate the staff is engaging in dialogue around these issues, but unless those dialogues lead to real tangible changes and actions, how is it benefiting the community?

It became apparent that I would need to look outside of interviews to get an understanding of how diverse the restoration projects really are. To accomplish this, a survey was conducted of park users at Hilltop and Greenway Parks, asking questions how often do you use the park? Do you know what that organization does? Has anyone ever engaged you in some way? Do you volunteer with the NIC? But the data was limited. I was able to supplement my survey with information NIC collected on their volunteers. The survey the NIC collected shows location by zip code of where volunteers are located as well as other demographic information. This survey also provided data on feelings of significance and the importance of the work being done. The second set of data was a collection of user surveys after volunteer events. These data provided a picture of why people came to volunteer, along with demographic information. Lastly, I was given their Logic Model that indicate goals and strategies the organization follows for different parts of their

work.

Data of particular interest to this study was around demographic information, use of the different locations and what activities they participated in. Below is a map of where respondents lived in relation to the parks, by zip code (Figure 2). Of 266 returned surveys, over 70% respondents were between 40-89, 91% were white, 2% were African American, 1% were Asian and 3% were Latino/a. What was particularly interesting was that over 90% responded that they strongly agree or just agree that they feel welcome at the NIC and about 80% only visited the Hilltop Park branch. Do respondents feel welcome because they are going to the Hilltop Park location, which is in a white neighborhood, and over 90% were also white? Did the 5% who were neutral the people of color who took the survey?

This information highlights some major flaws with how the NIC is reaching out to people and conducting their surveys. If this is all the data that they are getting-- saying that they are welcoming and inclusive, having primarily white people responding, leaves out many voices and experiences. For clarification, this survey that was sent out by the NIC was sent electronically to people who are on their mailing list.

Of the people who responded, 77% were current members and about 20% were not members. Fifty-five percent got their information about the center and programs from the printed newsletter, which you have to sign up to receive, while over 80% relied on the weekly emails. Both of these ways of communicating volunteer opportunities are reliant on either the Internet or having contact with the center initially. This form of communication, especially through social media or

emails is a privileged activity that is completely exclusionary to those that cannot afford a computer or Internet.

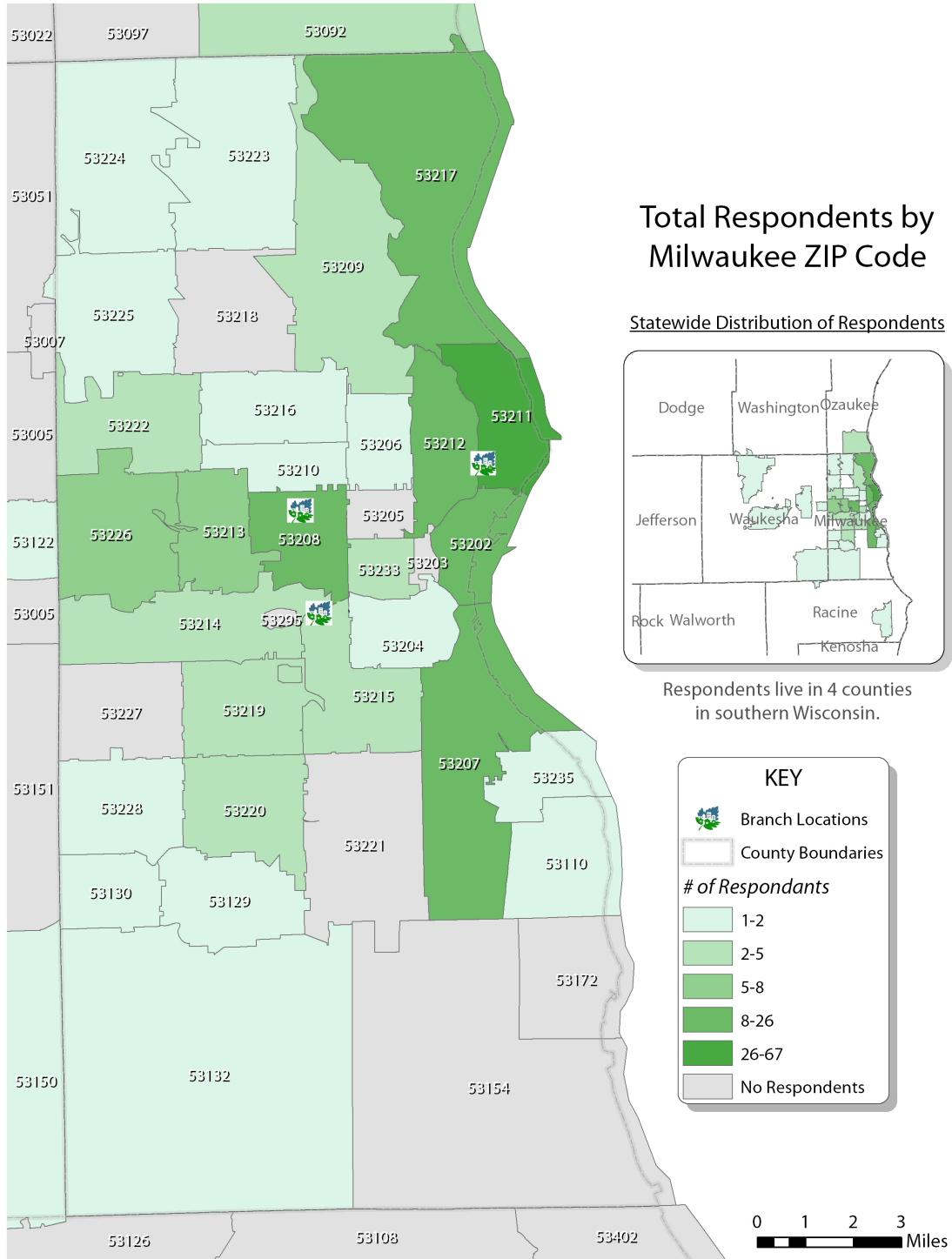


Figure 2: Total respondents by Milwaukee Zip Code. NIC survey

The surveys that I conducted within Greenway and Hilltop Parks were much different. Those surveys were intended to find out if park users were approached by staff about volunteer activities, if they knew about the center, had thoughts about the restoration projects taking place, and how far they lived from the parks and the frequency at which they visited. About 20 surveys were collected over 4 visits, and of that the majority were white, 45-70 years old and lived within a mile of the parks. What was the most interesting was that in Greenway Park, a park that on one side borders one of the poorest neighborhoods in Milwaukee, and on the other side one of the more wealthy, white areas, the black people who were surveyed had no idea the NIC was in the park and were never approached or asked to participate. On the other hand the white women knew about the center but were not members and had never volunteered, but the white man was a member, had been approached and had volunteered on many occasions. At Hilltop Park, all respondents were white and knew a lot about the NIC but only half were encouraged to volunteer when they walked past restoration efforts.

It's one thing to say that you are welcoming and to say that staff encourages people to volunteer when they see them interacting at the different locations, and it's another thing when people actually do it. In many discussions with volunteers and staff, there was always the understanding that people were welcome. However, when directly asked if they have ever thought of inviting people they see in the parks to come volunteer, the answers varied dramatically based on location of the projects. Land Stewards who worked at Hilltop Park said that on occasion they had

invited people they saw in the park. Land Stewards at the other locations reported they had never thought to invite people in the Park. Jill has one such realization:

I think, there are a lot of people, at Greenway Park especially, there are a lot of people that are walking through the park on a regular basis. We usually say like hello to them, like hi, how's it going, um, but maybe it's worthwhile to actually try and strike up a conversation with them and say like, hey what are you doing, do you want to come volunteer with us, this is who we are, this is what we do, this is you know, we are apart of the NIC and this is what they are all about, um, because I also hear a lot from people that, especially our volunteer groups, that their like, oh wow, I never knew this was here, I had no idea this existed and I feel like even the people probably that live around the park know the park is here, but they don't necessarily know that the NIC is here.

Having the mindset of inclusion and diversity means actively trying to engage community members and stepping outside of comfortable, privileged space to genuinely get to know people of difference. Newman (2011) states so eloquently "The absence of racialized people in these leadership roles contributes to an imbalance of power that is reflected in the priorities and aesthetic values represented in the restoration projects as well as the locations selected for restoration" (p. 69). Newman also states that if organizations and practitioners only operate under the traditional paradigm, hierarchy and systemic barriers that it traditionally operates make it impossible for them to understand how other communities think or feel about the project (Newman, 2008). The restoration projects that I observed in Milwaukee Wisconsin fit in many ways within this traditional paradigm, though are also conscious of how and where they interact with

a community. But because the projects and volunteers are predominately of the same racial and class background, there is an absence of representation, which can lead to restoration project operating exclusively.

According to Galabuze (2006) if people who are traditionally excluded are brought into a project after it has already been defined and planned out, without addressing the power dynamics and hierarchies that are present in the organization and within the decision making, then the framework of exclusion is only maintained. As we discussed with Adam about how projects are decided and the amount of community input, community members are not often engaged in the process and if they are, it is more of an informational meeting, rather than a discussion, which fits within the idea Galabuze has put forth. If the NIC and RSM really want to engage communities and have a diverse and inclusive perspective on projects then community members need to be a part of the decision-making from the beginning.

Lastly, when speaking with Ebony, who as a person of color doesn't get to see people who look like her participating in the restoration projects, or in the educational programming at the NIC very often, she expressed many emotions. She strongly believes in the work that she is doing and feels welcomed and included, but knows that many people would have a hard time getting through the doors because of the lack of diversity in the staff and within the volunteers. What was most interesting was that she, like many respondents, is able to dream about changes for the sake of the children who they hope would get to experience the environment at the NIC. She explains:

I think that maybe being a women of color here, I think that only that I might have struggled with, which isn't really a struggle, it just makes my heart a little sad knowing that not a lot of [black] people know about the center and I rarely see black kids you know and I think more black kids could benefit from being at the center.

She goes on to add that:

I think that having a more diverse, like educator community would be beneficial... that have worked with urban youth before. Cause there are not a lot of kids that are, you know, of that demographic that come here, I think.... I don't know, I've thought about this a lot this summer, like actually being at the center and like, being involved in it made me think about it a lot

In many ways, these struggles and wishes are monumental. Getting to see people who look like you in all different roles helps children grow up believing that people of color can be and do anything. Having black and brown educators and restoration staff is not, in fact, difficult. What it takes is staff that is committed to having voices of difference around. It's about being intentional about the image and message you are trying to convey to a community. Being inclusive is not just saying everyone is welcome. It must be reflected through the staff that represents the organization.

Conclusion

A place where I was not able to explore too deeply, mostly because of the lack of respondents of color in this study, was how different racial groups engage in environmental restoration and other environmental activities, and how that is influenced by their culture and ethnicities. How their connection to the environment

is perceived and influenced by their racial history. This topic in relation to the black community has recently become something many historians are starting to look into. The notion that American environmental thought is lacking perspective has lead people to think about African American environmental thought. Authors suggest that much of what is considered environment is from a white perspective, when traditionally, African American environmental understanding connects the human and the environment, is found within the built world, and is not always pristine and wilderness (Smith, 2007).

The two black women I interviewed both talked about how they are expected to not care about this type of work, but truthfully, their communities and culture have always been a part of the land, whether its through gardening, farming, or other environmentally-related activities. Part of what makes this movement hard is that a lot of what is portrayed as environmental is things that they have been doing for years. Ilana explains:

I see why black people wouldn't really connect to things like that, simply because of the way that its framed, why would we connect to it. The fact of the matter is that like, we've been riding bikes, for ages, like there weren't any bike trails or any bike lanes until all the hipsters decided that we needed bike lanes and bike trails to keep themselves safe, but we've been riding bikes forever, because all of us, a large percentage of African Americans depending on which city you go to don't have cars. But as soon as they needed bike lanes, they got then, because they have the money to do that.

Applying the recommendations that Newman (2008) made with regard to ensuring a restoration project or organization is acting inclusively to the projects

covered in this study was easier than originally expected. The NIC and RSM have particular issues surrounding inclusivity and diversity that influence how well they fit within the recommendations. It was interesting to notice that many of the recommendations were either already followed or they had hopes of incorporating something similar into how restoration work is accomplished. For example, sites that were selected by both organizations are done so with a community focus or are in low-income communities by design. They also acknowledge diversity as an important part of urban restoration but they are lacking in their ability to take action.

The seminal work on community participation and involvement, conducted by Sherry Arnstein (1969) introduced her citizen participation ladder (Figure 3). While this ladder is often used to discuss political and economic issues, it can be applied to issues of inclusion and diversity as well. According to Arnstein (1969) the idea of citizen participation is the same as the redistribution of power to the “have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future.” The idea of citizen participation in relation to the restoration organizations is in community involvement and the inclusiveness and diversity found within the organizations and projects. Not having a representative staff and volunteer pool that includes diverse perspectives, cultures, and socioeconomic status is similar to the ideas Arnstein puts forth that “participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the power holders to claim that all sides were considered, but makes it possible for only some of these sides to benefit (Arnstein

1969).” Briefly, if there are limited types of people creating restoration plans or volunteering for those organizations, than those persons often hold the power and can create a nature almost always exclusive to their point of view.

Arnstein’s citizen participation ladder (Figure 3) uses rungs representing different levels of participation. The bottom rungs are non-participation, the middle is tokenism, and the top is true participation or citizen power (Arnstein 1969). Based on observations and interviews with the NIC, their attributes locate them on Arnsteins tokenism labeled rung. According to Arnstein (1969), the tokenism rung allow the have-nots to be heard, but they lack the power to insure that their perspectives and ideas will be paid attention to and enact change from the powerful. When participation is at this level, the organizations have no real follow-through or assurance that changes will be made (Arnstein, 1969).

The ultimate goal would be for urban restoration projects to have full citizen participation. If this is accomplished, marginalized groups and voices of difference would be placed in positions that can enact decisions and make change, allowing for a truly diverse and inclusive restoration project.

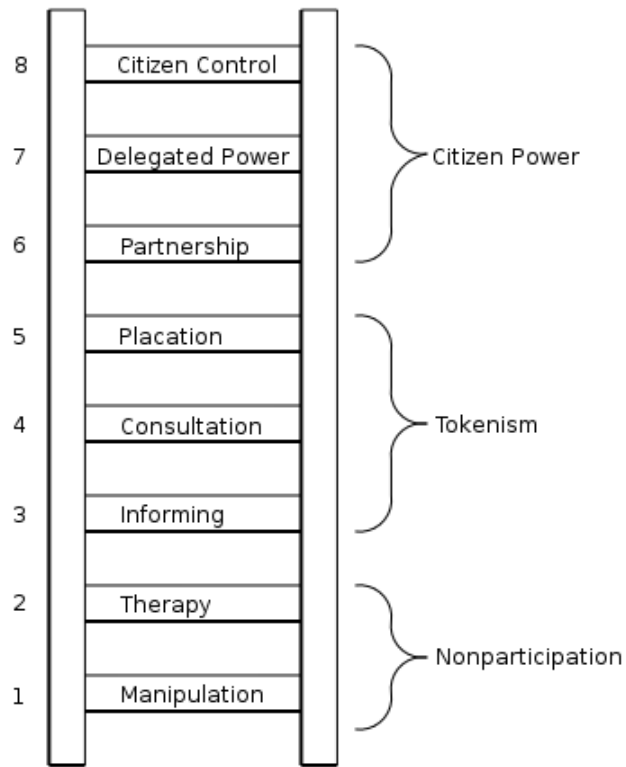


Figure 3: Citizen Participation Ladder. Sherry Arnstein 1969

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I mean, I would walk there and now you see people coming in with me, but back then it could just be me and I mean, its just my experience but, I would go out everyday and its like, I didn't see my neighbors, for the most part I would see people coming form other parts of town that were, for lack of a better word, already privileged enough to be active, to be you know into biking or hiking or running, so they knew about this. But I think the poorer communities, it takes... it's longer. They just aren't always reached in a way that they can understand or that is in their language or, whatever the case may be. So that's where I see a disconnect sometimes. (Ethan, early thirties, white male)

Having spent the last three chapters looking at the way the work of restoration projects coincides with environmental justice, how two organizations are engaging with communities, and the importance of the work that is being done, this chapter will look at how the organizations studied fit within a multicultural organization development model. The multicultural organization development model (MCO, Table 2) used in this section is a framework that was created by Evangelina Holvino (1998) and is designed to help organizations “evaluate where they fit within the journey from exclusion to multiculturalism.” This model is a way for organizations to start thinking about how they're structured and organized is either limiting or enabling multiculturalism.

The previous chapter ended with the citizen participation ladder, which looked at how community members' engagement in the restoration projects was not

much more than tokenization. It is important to note the citizen participation ladder looks at individuals and community members, while the MCO model offered here looks at how an organization is structured and where on the path to multiculturalism it falls. Within this evaluation, I will be highlighting places that the two organizations are doing well, as observed by myself or from the perspectives of the respondents, and offer related recommendations useful to help make these projects more inclusive.

Multicultural Organization Development Model

Holvino (2008) suggests that while individual interactions and interventions are useful and the focus of many organizations, for true change to take place there needs to be systemic changes within an organization that focuses on “interventions that analyze organizational systems and everyday practices that sustain inequality and prevent people who are ‘different’ from contributing fully to the organization” and that organizations should shift from managing diversity to incorporating social diversity and inclusion at every level (p. 9).

The MCO model (table 2) is used in part as an assessment tool to understand where an organization fits on the journey to multiculturalism. This model, used in conjunction with other evaluation tools created by Holvino, can help an organization develop a vision, goals and interventions that can move them towards a more diverse and inclusive organization and hopefully, by extension, a more inclusive restoration practice. While I am going to explore where the organizations in this study fit within the model, this is not a full, in depth look at every aspect of the organizations. My evaluation will be based on the interactions I

had with the organizations and the data collected through observations and from respondents. It is my hope that the organizations, if they are committed to becoming more inclusive and truly diverse and multicultural, will conduct a full audit of their organizations processes and goals. In order to create inclusive restoration projects, I believe that the organizations themselves need to be fully inclusive and diverse. It is impossible for me to advocate for inclusive restoration as though it is isolated from how the organizations serve their communities.

Table 2: Multicultural Organization Development Model. Holvino 1998. Chaos Management Ltd. 1998. Source: Bullock (2004)

THE MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT MODEL					
MONOCULTURAL		TRANSITIONAL		MULTICULTURAL	
Exclusionary	Passive Club	Compliance	Positive Action	Redefining	Multicultural
Committed to the dominance, values and norms of one group. Actively excludes in its mission and practices those who are not members of the dominant group.	Actively or passively excludes those who are not members of the dominant group. Includes other members only if they "fit" the dominant norm.	Passively committed to including others without making major changes. Includes only a few members of other groups.	Committed to making a special effort to include others, especially those in designated protected "classes." Tolerates the differences that those others bring.	Actively works to expand its definition of inclusion, diversity and equity. Tries to examine and change practices that may act as barriers to members of non-dominant groups.	Actively includes a diversity of people representing different groups' styles and perspectives. Continuously learns and acts to make the systemic changes required to value, include and be fair to all kinds of people.
Values and promotes the dominant perspective of one group, culture or style.		Seeks to integrate others into systems created under dominant norms.		Values and integrates the perspectives of diverse identities, cultures, styles and groups into the organization's work and systems.	

While RSM and NIC are both organizations that do environmental restoration, almost all the similarities stop there. Important ways these

organizations are different are their size, mission, and how they engage the community. A notable difference encountered was in the diversity of the staff. While the NIC is much larger and found within many parts of the city, their staff does not reflect the diversity of the communities and people they serve. RSM on the other hand is a small 5-person organization that is significantly more representative of the communities they serve, as the majority of their staff is African American. Where both of these organizations are lacking significantly is in the representation of other minority groups, such as Latino/a and any of the many Asian communities found within Milwaukee.

As mentioned in other sections, my access to RSM was more limited than the access at NIC thus many assessments focus on the latter. Because RSM is staffed with mostly people of color, has a diverse board of directors and recently hired a black executive director, they appear to fall on the side of *Redefining* in the multicultural section of the MCO model. I know that it was a major goal of the organization to include the voices of the people they serve and only participate in projects if the communities are apart of it. They would refuse to go into a place and do all the work without any community buy in. According to Holvino (1998), the redefining stage is where organizations are actively working to include all groups of people and are working to remove the barriers to inclusion by addressing these barriers in the norms, practices, relationships, structure and overall systems found within the organization, and based on my work experience with this organization, I think they fit well within this stage. The reason I believe they are not truly

multicultural is because they are still trying to figure out how to integrate other voices into the organization, yet are accepting of the differences they do bring.

In the case of the NIC, much of my understanding of how the organization works came from observations made at the different centers and interviews with staff and volunteers. Because of the size of the organization there are things that may have been missed or misunderstood. I am not an expert in the inner workings of the NIC, but my observations lead me to conclude the NIC fits within the *Transitional* phase description of the MCODE model. I cannot confirm they are in the compliance stage or the positive action stage.

The reason for the hesitation in assigning a sub-stage within the transitional phase of the MCODE model is because there are aspects of two stages within which the NIC fits. For example, they are more than passively committed to including diverse perspectives, which is a descriptor of the compliance stage, but they have not made any substantive changes in the management of the organization to include diverse groups of people, which is the second part of the compliance stage. For the positive action stage, the NIC is committed to bringing diverse perspectives but do not have many special means of attracting these groups of people. Their organization seems to tolerate different perspectives but the norms, structures and ways the organization is run still favors the dominant group, which shows that they are not fully within the positive action stage (Holvino, 1998 and 1).

Identifying where an organization fits within the model serves as a starting point. Both the NIC and RSM have the opportunity to improve their engagement

with diverse communities and more become organizations better represent the communities they serve and the greater Milwaukee community.

Accomplishments and Recommendations

Both of the organizations are working towards becoming more diverse and are committed to serving communities in the inner city of Milwaukee. The time spent with the NIC and RSM gave me an appreciation for the work that these organizations are doing and has helped me recognize places where the organizations are doing well and also make recommendations I believe will help them become more inclusive. Many of the recommendations follow the MCO model but are also a result of discussions with volunteers and staff, and fit well within the literature around inclusive restoration and environmental justice. It is important for me to first take note of the places where the organizations are doing well, things that I have noticed and things that respondents made sure to express to me. The following list applies both to the NIC and RSM. While one organization may do something better than the other, the list is a reflection of how the organizations are being inclusive and working for environmental justice.

Accomplishments:

1. Good intentions: Both organizations, from what I have experienced, are doing the best they know how and want to make a difference. They have pure, good intentions that the community recognizes and appreciates.

2. Awareness that change is needed: RSM and the NIC are both aware that their organizations could be more inclusive and representative of the communities in which they work. The NIC in particular has a team that is thinking about these issues. As Jan mentioned: “We’ve formed a multi-cultural learning group two years ago, that so far has sort of been discussing issues and reading articles and bringing up ideas and things like that, and trying to figure out like ‘what can we do to actually implement to make sure that we are welcoming.’”
3. Value and are welcoming to volunteers: Every volunteer I spoke with feels welcome and heard and are often multi-year returners. Valuing and showing volunteers they are appreciated is a major win for both of the organizations and the volunteers.
4. Having a variety of volunteer opportunities for every ability and age range: not only are the NIC and RSM welcoming to volunteers they also create volunteer opportunities that are welcoming to people no matter the ability or age of the volunteer, Sammy explains “they send us information about what we’ll be doing so that helps us to prepare, you know, if we need to bring anything special, or what ever, but one of the things that I always know when I come here that the land stewards who are in charge will have figured out what we are gonna do, that they are going to watch over us like hawks and never belittle us, you know, never once have any one said to us, giving us the feeling that we are too old to do something, they leave it up to you, but if they see us struggling they will help us.” The NIC and RSM do exceptionally well at being inclusive around the type of volunteer activities. Creating opportunities for everyone, no matter their ability

is not something every environmental organization does, or has to do. Creating opportunities for volunteers of all ages and abilities to participate in restoration is not only good for the volunteers and organization, it is also important for the restoration project, as it allows for different perspectives.

5. Trying to think about the needs of the community: RSM is particularly good at this as they partner with neighborhood associations and other community groups to make sure they are meeting the needs of the community. The NIC is also good at this in terms of creating green space, the education they provide, and ways the programs are run.
6. Creating amazing spaces that everyone can enjoy: the restoration projects that RSM and the NIC conduct is creating spaces throughout Milwaukee that are beneficial to everyone and are open and public spaces. Inclusive restoration is not just for the practice of restoration, but also about the projects themselves. The organizations work hard at creating space that is open and welcoming to everyone. Tim talks about how these different spaces have impacted him “It has been interesting to see, I don’t know, a different side of Milwaukee, I feel like growing up in Whitefish Bay, um, I think you see the city through probably more of lens of privilege, and I think seeing a different side of the city or just seeing the city from you know a different community aspect, you know just a different physical, geographical location on the map, is interesting and has maybe more rounded my perspective on Milwaukee”
7. Helping communities foster a connection to nature: both the NIC and RSM work with communities in many different capacities, outside of the restoration work.

The programming and other aspects of the organizations, in conjunction with the restoration projects have given communities ample opportunities to connect and enjoy the environment found within Milwaukee.

8. Coming into spaces only when invited: this is one place where I think both organizations are doing exceptionally well. Being invited into a space, rather than moving in and telling a community what they need, helps the NIC and RSM to be more inclusive and is an act of justice. Recognizing the importance of community buy-in and participation is not something everyone does, and these organizations do.

This lists only some of the ways the NIC and RSM are doing well and is not a complete representation. RSM and the NIC do so much more than restoration; they have amazing connections to communities, and are recognized throughout Milwaukee as leaders in the environmental sector. The list of accomplishments are what I have observed to be most reflective of inclusive restoration and environmental justice.

The recommendations will vary in complexity. Some are actions staff can make daily to be more inclusive, while others will need more structural support and organizational change. These recommendations are places I see the NIC and RSM could improve, and implementation of any of these would help the organizations and the restoration projects move towards inclusivity and environmental justice. Most of these recommendations are focused on the NIC but RSM would benefit from many of them as well.

Recommendations:

1. Hire people from the community you are serving: Ethan sums this recommendation up nicely “I think you need to know the community on the class and cultural level, I think its not really enough to just go, ok do we have a black worker represented, do we have a Latino worker represented, and Asian, I don’t think that’s how it should work. You don’t want just a tokenism approach, it should be: ok does this guy or girl know, is part of this neighborhood as a whatever, a Latino or what ever, but in this culture I think its often like ok, we’ve found a found a Latino from Chicago, that has all these qualifications and don’t get me wrong, that person could do a great job, but are they even going to know this neighborhood the way some of us that have lived here 30 years. But I think too often we skip that and are like, ok we got a group that looks the right way, and now we’re set. “
2. Actively seek out diverse perspectives and experiences through community engagement and volunteerism. This recommendation is one that comes from both the idea that if you have a diverse volunteer base, viewpoints and perspectives about what is important in the restoration project will be more diverse than a group that is all the same. Jan notes that as an organization “we have also been talking about the more difficult issues, like maybe are our volunteers really a mix of the neighborhoods we’re working in? We know its something that we know we need to work more on, and trying to figure out exactly how to do that, and what’s the most effective way.”

3. Figure out what inclusivity means to the non-dominant group. From my research, the people who felt most included were white, middle class people. The pool of volunteers did not reflect the neighborhoods in which the centers are located which indicates that, though the organizations say they are welcoming and inclusive to everyone, something is holding other groups back from participating.
4. The type of engagement and the ways in which the center conducts outreach needs to be tailored to non-dominant groups as well. When speaking with Jill about community engagement she noted, "I know they have a newsletter, I think the newsletter is great, but that's for people that are like, seeking it, where as the NIC maybe isn't seeking people as much. I don't know how best to do that but, yeah maybe it's as simple as going door to door with a flyer or something." Jill was not the only person to mention that the NIC doesn't seek out volunteers or other community members; a land steward, a volunteer coordinator, and a person who works in marketing shared this sentiment. It is one thing to want a more diverse membership and another to actually make changes to the way marketing and recruitment are done.
5. Continue with the reading group of NIC staff, but also make tangible changes and actions to how the organization and restoration projects are run. Being able to think and discuss issues of diversity is a privilege and can be a safe place for people and organizations to stay. Real change comes from stepping away from the safety of education and trying things and taking risks.

6. Continue or start the diversity and anti-oppression training and environmental justice workshops, and include issues of power, privilege, and segregation. As Ilana explains when asked about environmental justice “We had one workshop on environmental justice, it was great but I don’t think it was enough. I think that there should be more discussion, I think that it should be a common thread throughout the organization.” Cultural competency training, workshops on diversity and inclusion, and environmental justice trainings are always needed, especially when working with communities of color.
7. Reach out to diverse groups and individuals daily. Be intentional in the interactions. This recommendation comes from the mixed messages I received from staff and volunteers around engaging people within the parks. Some stated that it is common practice to acknowledge passers-by and invite them to participate in projects, while others had never thought about it. Making this a standard practice, especially to individuals of color, will help attract a diverse group of people.
8. In decision-making, be transparent with the community, especially in terms of if community input is wanted and if it will be used. Not all restoration projects have community input, but if it is the goal of an organization to have community members use the space or participate, then community members should be a part of the decision-making when possible.

Like the accomplishments, there are more recommendations that could be made with regard to other aspects of the organizations. The recommendations are the ones that I think fit most within the research and would be most effective in guiding RSM and the NIC in becoming more inclusive and diverse. The main focus of the recommendations was around how to get more diverse perspectives and participation in the projects. In my view, this is the most important thing the NIC and RSM could do. Having “voices of difference” (Newman) in volunteers and staff will only strengthen the connection to the community and the organizations’ goal of being welcoming and inclusive. In doing this, organizations will also increase the broader benefits of restoration to the community and improve long-term success of restoration projects by increasing community involvement and engagement.

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