



NETWORKS FOR CHANGE AND WELL-BEING

Girl-led 'From the Ground Up' Policy Making to Address
Sexual Violence in Canada and South Africa

Issue 8: March 2019

Content

Dear Partners, Colleagues and Friends of Networks4Change

When we first began *Networks for Change and Well-being: Girl-led 'from the ground up' policy making to address sexual violence in Canada and South Africa* in 2014, we had the idea that the various approaches to participatory visual work and engagement through the arts could lead to policy dialogue and maybe even policy change in relation to addressing sexual violence. Now, five years into the project, we are seeing more how these methods can lead to lobbying and activism, and at the same time, how these same methods continue to be significant in relation to expression, healing and self-love.

More than anything, we see that these methods are also deepening an understanding of what 'girl-led' or 'youth-led' means, including leadership. For example, we are seeing how these methods are offering girls and young women new opportunities to become leaders and mentors to other young people. This issue of our newsletter is full of stories and images of change-in-the-making.

As the project matures, we continue to see the value of face-to-face meetings, conferences, workshops and symposia, as well as learning across sites and across borders. Documenting these practices (lobbying, activism, taking on leadership roles) across the sites remains a critical area for the project as a whole, and will be a focus over the coming months.

Warm regards,
Claudia and Lebo

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Girls' Leadership Forum

Naydene de Lange

Port Elizabeth, South Africa | February 22-24, 2019

On 22-24 February 2019 three groups of girls in the Networks4Change project descended on Port Elizabeth to participate in the Girls Leadership Forum, hosted by Naydene de Lange at Nelson Mandela University, and organised by Lisa Wiebesiek from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The groups, Young Girls Leading Change from Paterson, Social Ills Fighters from Loskop, and Leaders for Young Women's Success from Khetani came together to talk to each other about 'Self-love as Resistance', in the Forum facilitated by Kari Wuttunee, who came all the way from Canada!

Kari started off by asking the girls to write a note on what how they see love, by writing a note beginning with 'Love is...'. Siya had the following to say:

"When we were asked to relate to the topic "Love is...", it made me realize that things that truly make us happy are the small things that we encounter and enjoy within our daily lives."

They then went on to respond to the prompt: 'I don't feel loved when...'

Naydene and Lebo drew out some themes from their responses, such as feeling unloved in various spaces and places, among different people who also might believe in harmful practices in cultural contexts, and the intersectionality of various issues that make them feel unloved, also their own lack of self-love. This was followed by groupwork, creating a storyboard around these issues, and making cellphlms. Once these were viewed and responses received from the audience, they were given time to revise their cellphlms. Siya remarked:

"The theme aroused a new awareness of self-discovery, self-esteem and self-confidence. It had us questioning whether we knew how to represent ourselves in front of others, and how we want others to see and relate to us..."



The girls at the forum, with Kari (sitting bottom right)

Kari ended the workshop with a check-in circle as debriefing, concluding a rich and productive workshop. Xaxa indicated that she had learnt that:

"You should try to love and accept yourself so that no matter what another person thinks of you won't matter or what they say to you ... because if you have accepted yourself,

that you are unique, no bullet of negativity will shoot you down!"

Amahle pointed out that she had learnt:

"You don't need anyone to tell you that he/she loves you ... and that it all starts with self-love. Depend on you to love yourself before others ... and I've also learnt that I am the CEO of my life! I can hire, fire and promote accordingly."



Girls at work

International Girls Studies Association Conference

Young Indigenous Women's Utopia Energizes the 2019 IGSA Conference

South Bend, Indiana | February 28-March 2, 2019

The Montebello Girlfesto, developed by girl participants at the *Circles Within Circles* conference in Montebello, Quebec, was presented at the second International Girls Studies Association (IGSA) conference at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. It was presented by a team made up of Cindy Moccasin and Jessica McNab, two of the girls who contributed to its creation, with support from Kari-Dawn Wuttunee and Jennifer Altenberg, Community Scholars from Young Indigenous Women's Utopia, and Catherine Vanner from McGill University. The Girlfesto itself, as well as other artwork by Indigenous girls in Canada and South Africa from the travelling exhibit *Speaking Back: Youth-Led Perspectives on Combatting Sexual Violence*, was on display throughout the IGSA conference.

The presentation showcased Young Indigenous Women's Utopia's community research and the creation of their award-winning cellphilm *Young Indigenous Women's Utopia* dealing with sexism and racism in the lives of Indigenous young women and girls who live in Treaty 6 Traditional Métis Territory Saskatoon. They also described the cultural practices of resistance and solidarity that they engage in through their girls' group as part of *Networks for Change and Well-being*.

Cindy and Jessica then described the experience of travelling to Montebello and creating the Girlfesto. They identified the Girlfesto's two **Calls to Action** that most resonated with them:

1. To commit to engaging more men and boys in discussions about gender-based violence, and
2. To create safe spaces for girls and women at various levels and in all ecologies.

Jessica selected the first because she felt boys should also have opportunities to share their stories and feel culturally supported. Cindy selected the second because her experience in her girls'



Cindy Moccasin (L) and Jessica McNab (R) with the Girlfesto Art Exhibition at the IGSA

group taught her that sexual harassment and discrimination is not something she should expect or accept in her life. Jennifer concluded the presentation by emphasizing that Young Indigenous Women's Utopia's participation at the IGSA itself was an act through which they were living the Girlfesto by claiming space and time for Indigenous girls to speak.

During the IGSA conference, Young Indigenous Women's Utopia also had the opportunity to do nation-to-nation community advocacy with members of the nearby Pokagon Band of Potawatomi. Two young people from the Pokagan Band, Glen and Jasmine, were accompanied by Rebecca Williams, Youth Cultural Coordinator from the Pokagan Band, in a half-day workshop led by Jessica and Cindy about countering racism and sexism with self-love. The four young people produced a [cellphilm](#) that emphasized their experiences encountering racism, colonial violence,



(L to R): Kari-Dawn Wuttunee, Jessica McNab, Cindy Moccasin, Jennifer Altenberg and Lennie Rose presenting their cellphilm

and homophobia, concluding with the confidence that they will rise above, exceed all expectations, and make their voices heard. Becky, Glenn, and Jasmine generously invited the Girlfesto team to visit their community, fostering an incredible experience of cross-nation cultural communication and exchange. The cellphilm they produced together was presented at the final luncheon of the IGSA conference to overwhelming accolades and invitations to share their work further at more international events.

As the only girl participants at the IGSA conference, Jessica and Cindy's presence at the conference showed the importance of creating time and space to listen to girls. Their clear and articulate messages challenged conventions of exclusion of girls and young people—Indigenous girls and young people in particular—in conversations about them, showing that girls' voices require a central position in girls studies work everywhere.

Engaging Youth and Community Responses to Sexualized Violence



Forum hosted by
**Sisters Rising: Shape Shifting
Settler Violence Through Art
and Land Retellings**

Victoria, BC | October 26-28, 2018

Forum Summary, Sandrina de Finney

On behalf of Sisters Rising, we raise our hands in deep appreciation for everyone who contributed to our amazing forum, *Engaging Youth and Community Responses to Sexualized Violence*, held at the First Peoples House October 26–28, 2018. The forum brought together more than 100 participants to explore Indigenous-led intergenerational knowledge mobilization of Indigenous perspectives on gender wellbeing.

Our forum started with two days of powerful, spirit-lifting sharing among our Indigenous participants. We shared circles, presentations from each group and community, ceremony, art making, and applied workshops. We raise our hands WAY UP for the amazing youth, support workers, academic mentors,

artists, families, Elders, and chaperones from:

- ▶ Prince Rupert
- ▶ Kitimaat
- ▶ Lax Kw'alaams
- ▶ Northwest Inter-Nation Family and Community Services
- ▶ Indigenous Young Women's Utopia (Treaty 6, Saskatoon)
- ▶ *Networks4Change*
- ▶ School of Child and Youth Care
- ▶ Innovative Young Indigenous Leaders Symposium (iyilis),
- ▶ Project Reclaim
- ▶ Fearless Collective.

We also extend our appreciation to *Networks4Change's* Claudia Mitchell and Relebohile Molestane and to the inspiring delegates from South Africa: Gender Activists and Girls Leading Change.

In the third day of the forum, we opened our amazing circle to a public audience. Over 100 presenters and participants from community groups, organizations, government, academia, and activist networks came to witness the important work of restoring dignity and sovereignty, and blanketing and honouring those who have experienced sexualized and gender-based violence. I think it's safe to say that our inspiring presenters brought down the house!

Our knowledge sharing explored topics including dignity, safety, sexualized and gender violence, land-based wellbeing, and Indigenous resurgence. Together we refused victim-blaming and criminalizing narratives of racialized gender violence and the colonial gender binary by linking body decolonization and land sovereignty.



The Sisters Rising Indigenous circle on the first day of the forum

We also unveiled our art exhibit, featuring artwork from Sisters Rising and *Networks4Change* participants, as well as an incredibly powerful collective mural created for the forum in collaboration with Sisters Rising, iyilis, and the Fearless Collective, with Nicole Neidhardt and Brianna Dick as lead artists.

Research on sexualized violence in our communities tends to focus on the impact of risk and trauma and on the legal, social, and psychological costs of interventions. The Sisters Rising forum and art exhibit centered the strengths and knowledge systems of Indigenous nations to explore how young people experience the historic and systemic colonial roots of sexualized violence. Together we are restorying colonial violence to disrupt ideologies that have always seen our bodies and our lands

as disposable, as colonial property. Restorying and representing ourselves on our homelands is at the heart of our response to colonial sexualized and gender-based violence. Much more needs to change to redress the sharp, persistent systemic inequities that sustain colonial violence. We thank you for witnessing this forum and invite you to commit to moving these stories and actions forward in a good way.

To all presenters, it was an absolute honour to have you all with us! Your presentations and artwork moved us to tears and lifted our spirits. The impact of our collective circle will stay with us and has inspired us to move forward with this critical work.

We are thankful for everyone who attended and who joined us in witnessing and responding to our calls for action.

Please visit our website to see the forum pictures, slideshow and video:

sistersrising.uvic.ca

I want to extend a HUGE thank you to the Sisters Rising “dream team”:

Chantal (aka junior) Adams
 Shantelle (aka senior) Moreno
 Anna Chadwick
 Shezell-Rae Sam
 Keenan Andrew
 Pawa Haiyupis
 Michaela Louie
 Jill Tenning
 Ana MacLeod

And our amazing youth drummers:

Ruth and Abby Underwood
 Aniah Raphael



Sisters Rising collective mural, created in collaboration with Sisters Rising, iyilis, and the Fearless Collective, with Nicole Neidhardt and Brianna Dick as lead artists

Witnessing a Celebration of Indigeneity, Keenan Andrew, Research Facilitator

*Uu-klah-ish, Imscha
hístuuk-shilth Ahousaht
hístuuk-shilth Nuu-chah-nulth
Isaak camis Chuu—Klecko klecko*

*My traditional name is Imscha,
I come from the Ahousaht First Nation
of the Nuu-chah-nulth people.
Respectfully, thank you.*

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the Lkwungen and SENĆOTEN speaking peoples of the Esquimalt, Songhees, and WSÁNEĆ territories that I have occupied for the past 4 years while I live, learn, and decolonize myself.

To begin, when I walked into the First Peoples House at the University of Victoria on October 26th, I felt a tremendous amount of anticipation, excitement and pride. I am the only male-identified member of the Sisters Rising Team. To me, this offers a real sense of pride, but also a responsibility to carry myself in a good way. Furthermore, my responsibility to the Sisters Rising Team and to the entire forum meant sharing allyship, advocacy, support, understanding, and love for the relationships and storytelling that transpired throughout the forum.

Although I am one of the newest members of the Sisters Rising Team, I am very aware that Indigenous women and girls experience higher rates of abuse, marginalization, disenfranchisement, and sexualized violence than non-Indigenous women and girls here in Canada and across the world. The same can be said of 2Spirit youth who face so much discrimination due to colonial gender shaming and silencing of our Indigenous gender teachings.

Also, this work is very important to me and very close to my heart because my mother, aunts, and grandmother are all residential school survivors. I recall a conversation with my mother where she shared that:

*“They shouldn’t be called schools
because that implies we learned
something there.”*

Residential schools have caused great harm and losses in kinship, identity, and rights, and have produced much intergenerational trauma for our communities, which continue to impact Indigenous women, girls, 2Spirit and LGBTQ folks, and also boys and men.

It was truly an honour to sit and listen to the women and girls from South Africa, Saskatchewan, and across British Columbia speak their truths about what it means to live with and resist pervasive gender violence.

I learned that Indigenous women around the world are experiencing the same hardships, marginalization, and abuse—and are also matriarchs, healers, leaders, life makers, advocates and change makers. I was elated to see the hard work that communities, led by amazing gender activists, are doing to end these cycles of violence and abuse towards themselves, their communities, and those that they care about. To sum up the experience in one word, it was transformative. My *tichma*



“Our Guide” Cedar figure, created by Anna Chadwick for the Sisters Rising art exhibit

(heart) was full after the 3-day Forum, but more importantly, I felt that I had an incredible opportunity to witness Indigeneity being celebrated.

Also, working in Circle helped elicit deeper understanding that Indigenous youth and communities are not going to be pushed over or silenced, and everyone present at the Forum was there as an ally to this important understanding.



The Forum connected everyone to Indigenous traditions and cultures from each respective participants' home community. Being a part of the blanketing ceremonies reminded me that it is important to acknowledge the teachings of our ancestors and our Elders. Keeping these integral components of Indigenous cultural practices alive is what keeps future

generations of Indigenous women and girls strong.

Moving forward, I want to do workshops with Indigenous boys, young men, and youth in care (or have been in care) to connect them to traditional cedar weaving workshops. The workshops will be supported by Elders and steeped with cultural practices, medicines, and land-based teachings/healing.



Honouring circle held on the last day of the Sisters Rising forum

Forging a New Path for Gender Well-being, Michaela Louie, Research Facilitator

On my father's side I have Nuuchahnulth roots from Ahousaht, and on my mother's side I have mixed European ancestry. I am a Sisters Rising research facilitator, currently completing a research internship as an undergraduate student in the Child and Youth Care program at the University of Victoria.

In these past few months I have gained so much insight and sacred knowledge. The Sisters Rising Forum that took place felt a lot more like being a part of a ceremony as opposed to an academic forum. The way each participant opened up and shared their experiences and knowledge with us was incredibly

powerful, and I feel honoured to have been a witness.

My designated roles at the forum were to greet the participants and make sure the Old Ones and Elders had everything they needed. I was also given the opportunity to mind the art gallery and support the process of participants contributing their own artwork. An unspoken role I want to honour is carrying the stories and experiences shared at the forum in a good way, and to forge a new path for all Indigenous and racialized women, girls, and youth of all genders in our society.

Sisters Rising has shown me the importance of being accountable to

people's stories and experiences, and that doing good work in this field is much more than academia and research, it is a way of life and it extends much further than our campuses and work sites. Good work does not just come from research studies and from our textbooks, it comes from the heart and it is practiced daily regardless of whether we are being graded or paid.

I would like to raise my hands to everyone who attended and travelled from near and far to be a part of this forum, *Kleco-Kleco* to Sandrina for envisioning this, and every team member who helped make this come true.

Shezell-Rae Sam, Research Facilitator

My name is Shezell-Rae Sam; I am an Indigenous female, I am a mother, a wife, a graduate student, and a research facilitator. I am from the Ahousaht Nation, which is in Maaqutusiis village, in the lands of the Nuuchahnulth People. I was an uninvited guest to local traditional lands when I moved to Victoria at the age of 14. It is my value and responsibility to acknowledge and give my gratitude and respect to the Lkwungen and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples, on whose lands I am living learning and practicing, at the expense of their cultural wellbeing and the loss of their ancestors.

For the past two years, I have had the honour of being a research facilitator with Sisters Rising. I had the opportunity to facilitate at the Sisters Rising forum, *Engaging Youth and Community Responses to Sexualized Violence*, an international, intergenerational forum to honour Indigenous knowledges of gender wellbeing. I was a witness to an amazing group of participants from across Indigenous communities coming together in an amazing Indigenous-led

circle. This community engagement was vital, because it responded to the epidemic rates of gender-based violence that Indigenous youth are experiencing all over Canada and internationally. It is evident that Indigenous girls are experiencing higher rates of gender-based and sexualized violence, poverty, suicide, domestic violence and human trafficking, compared to any other Canadian population.

At the forum, I witnessed a strength-based approach for Indigenous people from all walks of life, whom were honoured for restoring their experiences with sexual violence through workshops, art making, and presentations, while being supported by our Old Ones, our strong circle, and a certified counsellor. In addition, the forum invited members of the public to attend and respond with a call to action. Community members were called as witness and asked:

What have you witnessed today?

What will you commit to?

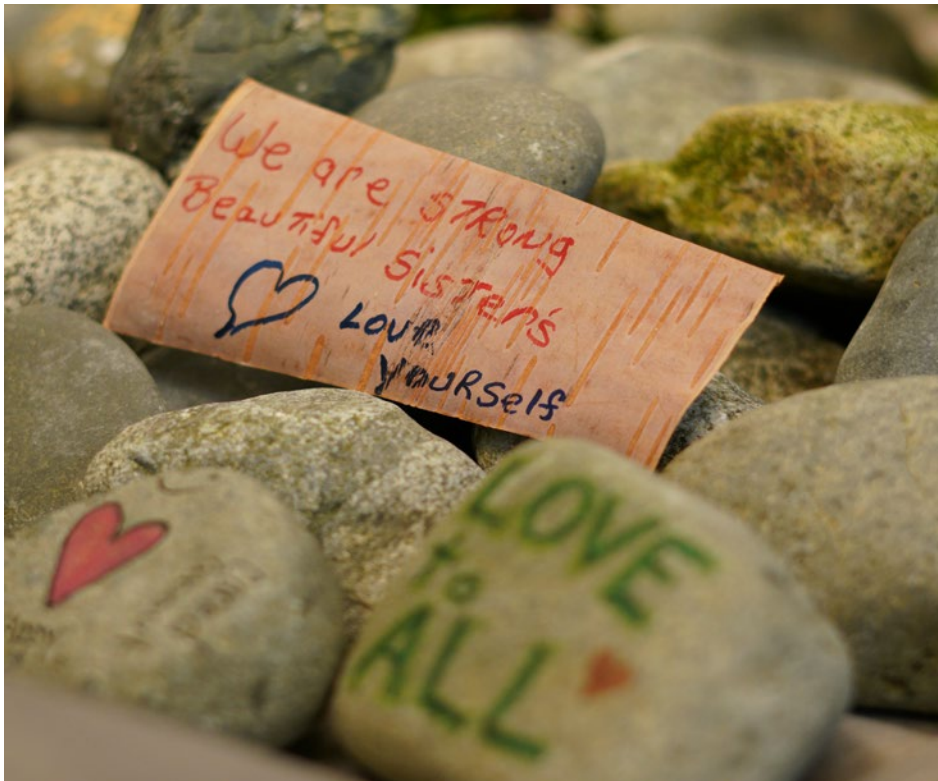
I witnessed the forum being guided by traditional Indigenous protocols and ethics that upheld the communities' dignity, respect, wellbeing, and consent.

For example, circles, ceremonies, inter-cultural and inter-tribal sharing, kinship-making, and presentations were all practiced and completed by respecting traditional Indigenous protocols. As a result, our responses to epidemic rates of violence was rooted in a strength-based, reclaiming approach that fosters gender wellbeing and enhances the knowledge of participants and community members.

Most importantly, we are also altering the stigma and silencing of these stories—I witnessed many participants sharing their stories regarding sexualized violence, and then being dignified and honoured for their strength.

I had the opportunity to present the stories from my research as an undergraduate researcher, regarding the impacts of lateral violence with young girls between the ages of 14-24. Throughout my work with this forum and Sisters Rising, I also honour my own reasons as to why I continue to research sexualized violence, because of my lived experiences as an Indigenous female living in Canada.

I created a poem that speaks to my experiences:



Land-based art materials with messages about gender-based violence

“

31 Years

*Exploited to Colonialism
Exploited to Lateral Violence
Exploited to Sexual Violence
(All with no consent)*

*Breathing Displacement
Breathing Heartbreak
Breathing Pain*

*Reclaimed my Culture
Reclaimed my Strength
Reclaimed my Body*

*Regenerated my Family
Regenerated my Love
Regenerated my Life*

”

— Shezell-Rae Sam

Networks4Change Fieldsites

Here we present updates on fieldsites set up in Canada and South Africa.

Eastern Cape (South Africa)

Young Girls Leading Change

YGLC at a weekend retreat in Port Elizabeth

The YGLC came together for a weekend retreat (19-21 October 2018) to wrap up the work for the year and to plan forward for 2019. We started with a circle where the girls reflected on how things were in their community and how it was to lead the march on National Women's Day in August. It was motivating to hear their perspectives of positive change and their own treatment by their parents. One of the girls said:

"It was difficult for me to talk with my father about gender-based violence ... but after him seeing me presenting about GBV, we have a different relationship and we understand the importance of talking to each other about the difficult topic."

This really underscored the value of the *Networks4Change* project.

The *Networks4Change* Newsletter is usually packed with interesting news from all the girls and young women across the sites. The YGLC were each given a newsletter and then were given a chance to read and respond to it. The YGLC were especially impressed to see the handmade Treaty 6 ribbon skirts and suggested they do something similar, making scarves or gloves. The girls were motivated by the work done by other girls from other countries and saw how beneficial it was to be part of *Network4Change*. The girls couldn't wait to share the newsletter with their parents and peers so that they could see what girls were doing and that they were no longer silent on gender-based violence!

The YGLC did an analysis of the draft 2018 Montebello Girlfesto and added their ideas to it. They also looked back at the artefacts they had produced in 2016, such as the Action Briefs and Policy Posters, reflecting on how they understood the content of the artefacts. During this stage, girls were given a chance to reconstruct and or add any details overlooked in the artefacts.

The girls were also given a chance to look at the first PowerPoint they created in 2016 and compared it to the last PowerPoint they created in 2018. This exercise turned out to be fun when the girls saw their old pictures and how they had struggled to create a PowerPoint in 2016. This was followed by an interesting activity, where the girls had to draw how it was to create and use a PowerPoint to engage the rural school community in addressing gender-based violence (GBV). Ntosh, the facilitator, explained what they had to do and emphasized that the beauty

of the drawing was not important but that the message was. The girls worked in groups enhancing collective learning which enabled them to enjoy the activity and came up with meaningful drawings which evoked rich discussions. In a nutshell, the girls concurred how the project assisted them in gaining computer skills, knowledge about GBV, and the confidence to be able to stand up for what is right.

Towards the end of the workshop, the girls wrote down their wishes for the future. One of the girls said they would like to start a gender club, get information about post school opportunities as they do not know which courses to choose after matric and go back to their peers and educate them about GBV.

In closing, the team celebrated the YGLC and GLC panels which were launched in July in Montebello, Canada, and celebrated all the YGLC birthdays.

Ntomboxolo Yamile



YGLC proudly
wearing Circles
Within Circles
t-shirts

Girls Leading Change

Writing Retreat
September 7-9, 2018

Bongi Maome

In September 2018, the *Girls Leading Change* (Zethu, Melissa, Bongive, Asisipho, Happy, Zama, Thina, Sandisiwe, Takatso and Elethu) met in Port Elizabeth for a writing retreat hosted by Professors de Lange and Moletsane.

The purpose of the retreat was for the Girls (Leading Change) to engage each other with regard to their experiences as new young women teachers working in various schools across South Africa. In addition to sharing their experiences as young teachers, the Girls:

- ▶ discussed the progress and development of the *Girls Leading Change*
- ▶ brainstormed the implementing of ideas for increasing the online and offline presence of the GLC
- ▶ developed the GLC Youth Council
- ▶ planned community outreach programmes which also involved the drawing up of a proposal to this end.

At the retreat, the Girls also discussed the Montebello Girlfesto which was drafted at the *Circles Within Circles* conference in Canada. They also partook in discussions about GLC publications:

- ▶ *Fourteen Times a Woman*
- ▶ “*Hamba Thobekile*”
- ▶ *Dear Nosizwe*: They planned and drafted this upcoming publication which draws on biographical letter writing to write letters to an audience of new teachers, articulating what they wished they had known about gender when they were first year students and how they are now teaching their learners in preparation for university and adult life.

The retreat offered us a refreshing outlook on teaching and being feminists simultaneously; it provided us with a platform to motivate one another and help each other solve problems and overcome challenges that we experience in the rural and township schools that we teach in.

We challenged one another to re-visit and re-evaluate our own education as indigenous African girls and from that, we challenged one another to keep working towards being the generation

of women and educators that teach differently—more holistically.

The most important take-away from the retreat was that education is a social discourse, and with society ever-changing through the efforts of activists in their various areas of social interest, there is no reason why the education of young rural girls should remain the same. As young teachers, it was and is crucial that we recognise our position in facilitating the evolution of the education of young African children.



Zethu
presenting her
drawing at the
writing retreat



Launch of the GLC book,
“*Hamba thobekile*”:
*African Women in Times
of Gendered Violence*



*Girls Leading
Change* on the
first day of
the retreat

Girls Leading Change

Canada Trip: Off to Victoria

Melissa Lufele

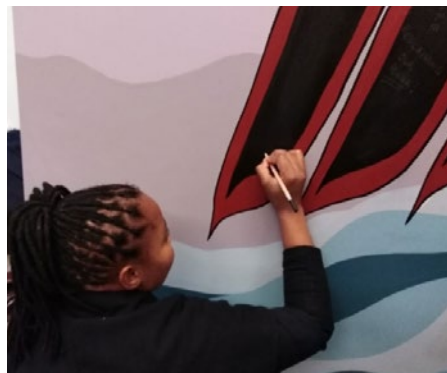
24th October 2018 marked another milestone for the *Girls Leading Change* from Nelson Mandela University. Three representatives, Takatso Mohlomi, Elethu Ntsethe, and Melissa Lufele, together with Amanda Ngcobo (Gender Activists, University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Professor Relebohile Moletsane set off to Canada to participate in an Indigenous Women Colloquium titled *Engaging youth-and community-generated responses to sexualized violence*.

The colloquium organized by Sisters Rising, a community-based research project in partnership with *Networks for Change* provided an opportunity for indigenous girls and youth of all genders to engage in creative dialogue and projects that support sexualized violence prevention and gender wellbeing through youth engaged, multimedia methods and meaningful intergenerational connections.

This invitation from Dr. Sandrina De Finney of the University of Victoria together with the Sisters Rising team consisted of a three-day conference which had the first two days (26-27 October) include an inner circle of participants with interactive sessions and workshops focused on art making, networking, telling our stories on our own terms and working with youth, elders and artist mentors. The final day was opened to the public and it focused on knowledge sharing. This will definitely go down in history as an incredible opportunity for us as the *Girls Leading Change* because it was not only an opportunity to share how we raise awareness against sexualized violence in our respective communities but an opportunity for us to learn what other indigenous women are doing around the world.

One of our highlights was when we participated in a tea making session which taught us the importance of reflecting on the type of work that we do. This session taught us to take moments and identify what drains us, what fuels our drive and how we can constantly replenish ourselves because it becomes impossible to give from an empty glass. So we have now learned that it is important to keep our glasses overflowing all the time (we must be at our best to give the best).

R: The tea-making ceremony



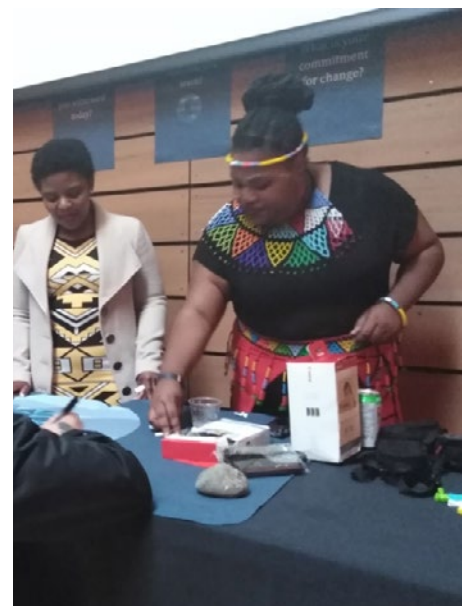
We also participated in a mural painting workshop where we helped finish off a beautiful mural that captured the essence of an indigenous woman in her quest to make the world a better place for generations to come.

L: Elethu helping to paint the mural

Sharing some stories from our book "*Hamba Thobekile*": *African Women in Times of Gendered Violence* gave the ladies a sense of what we do in our communities and how we use the art of storytelling to bring about change. We also got a chance to facilitate our photovoice session with the audience using the prompt:

Use your hands to depict a picture of a harmonious world without gender-based violence

R: GLC at work during photovoice activity



We are grateful to have had an opportunity to meet such powerful women who do great work in their respective communities and share with them a part of us. Through our various interactions we have learnt a lot that we wish to do here in South Africa, most importantly we came back refueled to do more with regards to activism because our indigenous sisters have taught us that no effort is too little in changing lives.

KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa)

Lisa Wiebesiek

To practice and learn some leadership skills, and have some fun before the end of the year, the Social Ills Fighters and Leaders for Young Women's Success

spent the day at Spirit of Adventure leadership camp. The activities for the day included abseiling, raft-building competition, and swimming.

Girls' Leadership Day Camp, December 2018

The Social Ills Fighters and Leaders for Young Women's Success triumphant after abseiling



Stakeholders' Meeting, Loskop

On 20th February, 2019, a stakeholders meeting was held at the Amangwe Tribal Court to discuss the practice of forced and early marriage in Loskop. These practices have affected a number of the Social Ills Fighters and are experienced by them as violence. Professor Relebohile Moletsane represented the girls at this meeting with support from Xoli Msimanga from our community partner, Thembaletu Care Organisation, Mr. Cele, the principal of the high school in the area, and Mr. Mpembe the ward councillor for the area.

The meeting was also attended by the Ndunas (Ndunas are the tribal council) of the area, representatives from the



(L to R): Mr. Dlangalala (advisor to the Chief), Mr. Mpembe, Professor Moletsane, and Chief Mazibuko

Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), and the Department of Health (DoH). The outcome of the stakeholders meeting was a follow up meeting suggested by Chief Mazibuko to strategise about how to end these practices.

South Africa Trip

Kari-Dawn Wuttunnee

It was an honour to be invited by the *Networks for Change and Well-being* South Africa to share some of the same teachings that we here in Treaty 6 & Homeland of the Metis have explored

with our young women over the last few years. The invitation to exchange our learnings came about at the *Circles Within Circles* transnational gathering in Montebello, Montreal—an event where so many things transpired and where our girls from T6HM showcased their presentation skills and cultural resurgence with other girl participants and academics from across the world.

For myself, Jenn and Sarah it was an incredible experience to witness.

I arrived in South Africa and it was right in the middle of summer! Some of the hottest days of the year and I just came from Canadian winter—such a wild difference. Lebo, Lisa and Nkonzo were the greatest hosts and we laughed non-stop from the beginning to the end.



Our first outing together was to the community of Loskop—located in the rurals just a couple hours outside the city of Durban (see image below). There was a community gathering of local leadership including the Chief and his counsel, nursing staff, school principal and members of the *Networks for Change* team.

The topic being presented and discussed was that of forced and early marriage—something that the members of the research team were unaware was an ongoing issue for the community until the young women from the Social Ills Fighters revealed how they experienced violence from not only males in the community but how cultural norms uphold the practice.

I was so proud to be able to sit with the amazing *Networks for Change* research team and see them in action, from what started as a dominated

conversation by the male leadership turned into outcomes that none of us were expected. From afar, I continue to support and send my love for their fearless efforts and dialogue with the community, they are truly creating real change for young women and their families in Loskop.

On a high from the beautiful gathering in Loskop we quickly changed gears to get ready for the weekend workshop in Port Elizabeth. I was feeling excited to meet the girls we would be working with over the next three days and be a part of their very first flight experience! They were thrilled and I have never seen so many selfies being taken in a single trip, such a fun time and reminded me so much of our group of girls in Saskatoon.

The workshop was a time for girls to reunite, share what has happened in their life since they last met and

explore what self-love means to each of them. It turned out to be a special weekend filled with moments where girls connected to one another through conversation, planning and organizing, poetry and storytelling. Listening to each of their stories and affirmation on self-love, gave me insight to their livelihood, something I will always cherish.

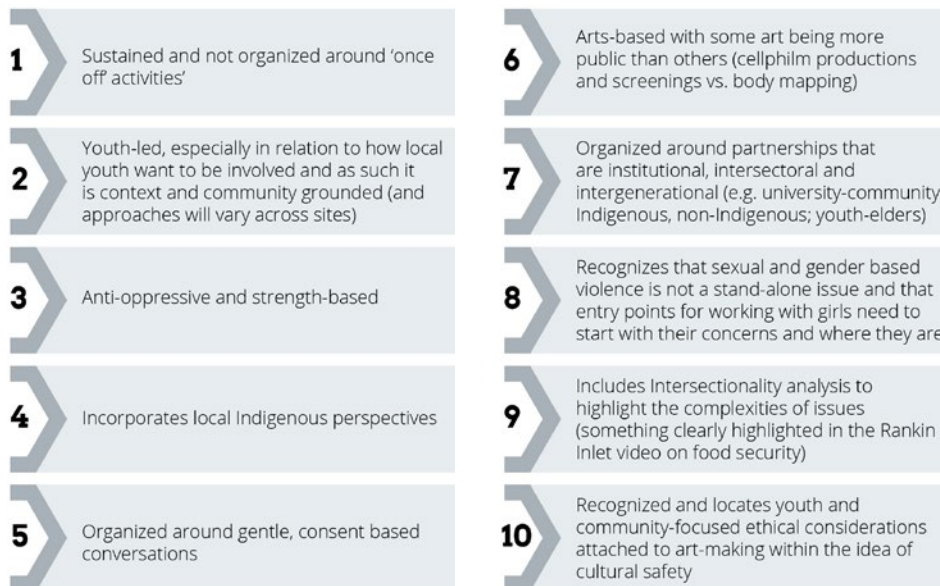
My time in South Africa flew by and I am ever so grateful for the opportunity to share the teachings of Treaty 6 and that work of my brilliant co-community scholar Jennifer Altenberg. Even though I might have taken on this journey solo, I carry the spirit of our young women in Saskatoon with me wherever I go and hopeful for a time where South African and Canadian girls gather for a celebration of resistance.

Networks for Change (Canada)

Team Meeting

Members of the Canadian-based team working across sites in BC, Saskatoon, Eskasoni and Rankin Inlet participated in a two day planning meeting at McGill, December 10-11.

A key feature of this two day planning meeting was to consider the shared principles in our participatory work with Indigenous youth which account for the successes of these initiatives. These 10 shared principles are summarized in the accompanying figure:



As a team we also recognized that the obvious next step in this work is one that places greater emphasis on 'growing our own'. The emphasis here is one of building mentorship, leadership and facilitation skills of young people to take participatory arts-based work further by involving work with younger participants in the community and even by 'rolling out' these approaches to other community members).

A growing body of research evidence demonstrates that mentoring has significant positive and beneficial social, academic, and community outcomes for Indigenous young people. Good

mentoring can act as a protective factor that increases the likelihood of success for young people, while providing them with a person or people in whom they can place their trust and from whom they can learn.

Research from Canada, Australia and New Zealand illustrates the ways in which mentoring aligns exceptionally well with Indigenous ways of teaching and learning, and its cultural relevance has been demonstrated repeatedly. Indigenous mentoring, in particular, emphasizes:

- ▶ Spirituality
- ▶ Tradition,
- ▶ Social and environmental factors,
- ▶ Integrates cultural connections that fortify identity and cultural pride.

Indigenous mentoring differs from typical Eurocentric models in that it recognizes that all people can be teachers and learners, and that teachers are not just those people who have official accreditation to do so. Indigenous models tend to be activity-based and to value different ways of knowing. Indigenous youth leadership may also be more relational and privilege qualities such as being trustworthy, humble and healthy.

Treaty 6 (Canada)

Jennifer Altenberg

Young Indigenous Women's Utopia (YIWU) has been keeping things LIT up in Treaty 6/Traditional Homeland of The Metis. We are currently amping up for our Book Launch on April 27th, 2019 and will be launching our first ever publication showcasing each of our 7 amazing girls narratives around cultural resurgence, empowerment,

mentorship, their own stories as survivors of gender-based violence. This will be a special evening that will be spent with the families of each of the girls and those from our community who have contributed to the teachings of our group over the past three years. It will be the very first time that we will be able to share the many different pieces we have produced as a group with the community of Saskatoon.

Although our prairie winter was *tahkayow*, the cold didn't keep our girls from wanting to spend as much

time together as possible. We had 5 or more weekend workshops over the Fall and Winter months, mostly to prepare for our trip to Victoria, British Columbia to attend the Sisters Rising *Intergenerational Forum to Honour Indigenous Knowledges of Gender Wellbeing* and the International Girl Studies Association Conference in South Bend, Indiana. This was a unique opportunity for Kari and I to watch some of the transformative work begin as we watched our girls turn from participants to mentors and leaders themselves.

Two highlights of our work these past few months was:

1. our “Self-Love is Our Resistance Poem” that we created for the Sisters Rising Conference, written and performed in a team slam poetry style by Jessica McNab, Cindy Moccasin, Kalan Cree Kalan McKay, and Gabby Daniels, and
2. the amazing graphic design workshops lead by Gabrielle Giroux a 19 year Indigenous woman from the Prince Albert area who has been working with the girls to create their book. Gabrielle has helped to bring the ideas and contributions of the girls journaling over the past three years to life through her amazing graphics design skills and collaboration with contributors of the book.

Each opportunity that we are given to come together, whether it is to learn a new skill, peer-edit each other’s writing, or present on a panel at an International

Conference, each one of the girls from YIWU continues to grow, learn, and embrace this exciting journey that we are on together.

Cindy Moccasin one of our YIWU presenters wrote a reflection on our recent trip to South Bend, Indiana:

“I never thought our group would go and do presentations at international conferences with girls from all over the world. I am very grateful for this new experience and I also never thought I would leave the country especially without my Mom at 15. When preparing I didn’t know what to expect at this conference and I am glad we chose to present at it because the feedback was very positive and made me personally feel good about it afterwards. We met some great people from Pokagon Band who were super kind and even invited us to hang out and visit their community after the conference. They showed us around and gave us a little knowledge about the Reservations in America and even opened up a little about their life experiences and what they go through. Being able to meet people

especially our age who have been through similar things/situations as us girls in the group means so much and inspires me to want to do more. I can’t wait for our next presentation.”

Jessica McNab also reflected:

“Getting everything for this trip was a hassle and in some parts very frustrating for me and my family. When we got to Indiana it was very surreal to me, I never imagined myself in the States presenting at a women’s conference. Being there made me think a lot about how far our girls group has come. It made me think back to our first session and how nervous we were to be there, how we were strangers to each other. Now we’re super close and we treat each other like family. The part I liked the most about our trip was going to Pokagon with Jasmine and Glenn (the youth we presented to) I loved it there, I loved the scenery while driving back. What I’ll always remember, is when we were in the van driving back into south bend, I looked back at the window and there were trees and through those trees was the sun set, it was beautiful, the sky was pink and purple with clouds surrounding the sun. It was amazing.”



Treaty 6 South Bend selfie (see page 3 to see more from this trip)

Jessica continued:

“Presenting to all the women was scary but such an amazing experience that I can now talk about to my friends and family. I felt proud of myself for standing up there and trying to talk, being someone with bad anxiety. I was proud of Jen and Kari, I was proud of my group and even more proud to be a part of this

amazing experience. I can’t wait for the future and what it has in store for us.”

With our book launch just around the corner, it is in a good way that we will attend a full moon ceremony together on March 21st with our families at Marjorie’s place in Duck Lake and begin to create our new ribbon skirts

for our book launch. We hold space with each of you as we continue to do this work, it is not easy, our tears may still fall, but we continue to grow, continue to rise, and continue to fight the injustices Indigenous girls have to face every day!

Treaty Six out!

See CBC Saskatoon’s article on Young Indigenous Women’s Utopia: <https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.5047057>

Postdoc Update (Canada)

Catherine Vanner

The Time to Teach about Gender-Based Violence in Canada Research Project is Recruiting Participants

What is the role of secondary schools in educating Canadian young people about gender-based violence (GBV)?

How can secondary school teachers enhance the critical consciousness of Canadian youth about GBV issues?

These are the questions Catherine Vanner, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University, is trying to answer in the *Time to Teach* research project, which seeks to build knowledge about experiences teaching and learning about GBV issues in Canadian secondary schools.

The prominence of GBV dominated media outlets in North America and around the world in 2017 and 2018. Issues on the front page include the **#MeToo** movement, the *National Inquiry on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls* (MMIWG) in Canada, and high profile sexual harassment and sexual assault cases

such as those of Jian Ghomeshi, Bill Cosby and Raymond Cormier. While there is a strong foundation for challenging GBV in community activism and extracurricular school activities, little is known about education on GBV issues using provincial secondary school curricula, particularly outside of Health classes. Consequently, the role of teachers in educating Canada’s youth about issues of GBV using the formal curriculum remains unclear.

As teachers are essential for developing curriculum and pedagogy for social justice and often have a strong awareness of the foundations of GBV in schools and society, this study turns to educators who have been teaching about issues of GBV within the formal curriculum to learn from their experiences and build guidance for other teachers and education administrators based on that experience. It also seeks to provide students a mechanism to share what they want their teachers to know when teaching about GBV.

Teachers or students (ages 14-18) in any Canadian province who have taught or learned about GBV issues in a secondary school using an official provincial curriculum are invited to participate in this study. The study uses a three stage approach, including:

- ▶ Curriculum analysis
- ▶ Individual teacher and student interviews, and
- ▶ Participatory workshops.

Through separate teacher and student participatory workshops, the project invites each group to analyze the previously collected interview data about the ways that GBV is addressed in curricula.

During student workshops, students will collaboratively construct art-based messages grounded in their analysis about what they want teacher participants to know. In teacher workshops, teacher participants will view the student messages and integrate them into their participatory analysis that is meant to lead the development of educational resources designed to influence teaching practice. The purposeful steps are designed to facilitate an intergenerational dialogue that ensures resulting research products build directly upon perspectives from both groups.

For more information, potential participants or other interested stakeholders are welcome to see the [student](#) and [teacher](#) recruitment posters, or contact Catherine at:

catherine.vanner@mcgill.ca

Networks Events

This panel brought together team members from both Canada and South African to consider the ethical dilemmas participatory visual researchers confront in efforts to privilege participants' voices:

- ▶ What strategies and tools work best in such an endeavour?
- ▶ In what ways might participant-led co-creation and dissemination of knowledge occur ethically, particularly in contexts of unequal power relations and violence?

6th International Cellphilm Festival Winners Announced

The 6th International Cellphilm Festival was held at McGill University in Montreal, Canada on Thursday, November 12, 2018

We were honoured to be joined by Université de Montréal's Dr. Thora Hermann, Ariella Orbach and Iphigénie Marcoux-Fortier, who led a panel discussion entitled *The power of the lens: (re)building community on ancestral lands*. Their presentation showcased three short films directed by their project community's researcher-filmmakers:

- ▶ Ince Ka Mogetun from the Mapuche Nation in Wallmapu (Chile)
- ▶ Nuestro Hogar from the Embera nation (Panama)
- ▶ Hanna Boade Gaddaj from the Sami nation in Sapmi (Norway).

The films well-exemplified this year's theme: ***Making Community: Action, Activism, Advocacy, Art.***

The festival's theme was further explored through a curated selection of powerful cellphilms.

Networks4Change Panel at 2nd International Girls Studies Conference South Bend, Indiana | February 28 - March 2, 2019

Paper 1: Hoods, sunglasses, and signs: An intersectional analysis of how young Indigenous women negotiated consent during cellphilm research on gender-based violence

Sarah Flicker, Kari-Dawn Wuttunee, and Katie MacEntee
(York University, Canada)

Paper 2: Who is going public? Ethical perspectives through a decolonizing framework

Naydene de Lange
(Nelson Mandela University, South Africa)

Paper 3: The ethics of participatory dissemination: Reflections from participatory research on sexual violence with girls and young women in rural South Africa

Relebohile Moletsane
(University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa)



Screening of cellphilms at the International Cellphilm Festival

The winner was *Community Gardening for Social Ills* produced by Sven 7ven Creese, Mitchell McLarnon and Lyne Dwyer (Montreal, Canada).

Two remarkable films tied for second:

- ▶ *Juala* produced by Ephantus Kariuki, William Kamau 'Shikokoto', Rosemary Nyambura Mwangi, Joab Mutisya and Kelvin Irungu (Nairobi, Kenya), and
- ▶ *Indigenous Young Women's Utopia* produced by the Treaty 6 Girls and

their mentors Jennifer Altenberg, Sarah Flicker, Katie MacEntee and Kari Wuttunee (Saskatoon, Canada).

Isolated Network produced by by Bobbie Vojtko, Hallan Mtatiro, Ben Laidlaw and Liz Sax (Kamploops, Canada) received an honourable mention.

This year's winning films are available on the Festival's website:

<https://internationalcellphilmfestivalblog.wordpress.com/>

16 Days of Activism

Leann Brown

Here at McGill, we had the great privilege of bringing together a collection of the artwork of girls and young women across the *Networks for Change* fieldsites and other partnership groups into the art exhibition *Speaking Back: Youth-led Perspectives on Combating Sexual Violence Art Exhibition*. The exhibition showcases the visual works (drawing, mapping, photovoice, cellphilms, and other material productions) addressing sexual violence in Canada, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sweden, and Russia.

Launched at the *Circles within Circles* summit in Quebec in July 2018, the exhibition has expanded and has since been exhibited at McGill University (Montreal, QC), the University of Victoria (Victoria, BC), and Notre Dame University (South Bend, IN). It will soon be exhibited in Saskatoon (SK) as well.

The exhibition is also travelling digitally! Its digital version was launched as part of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence* campaign, November 25th-December 10th. This global campaign originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute coordinated by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. The 2018 campaign theme was #MYActionsMatter, designed to raise awareness of the disproportionate levels of violence faced by women and girls, as well as diverse populations, including Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2 community members, gender non-binary individuals, those living in rural, and remote communities, people with disabilities, newcomers, children and youth, and seniors. In response to this all-too-familiar reality #MYActionsMatter asks the question: What will you do?

Here's what we did ...

Through the 16 days of activism, we took the opportunity to launch the *Speaking Back* exhibition online. Through Email, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter we shared a panel, or set of panels, each day of the 16 days. We kicked-off with

the *Girlfesto*, a collaborative declaration of demands, recommendations and commitments that arose from the work of girls and young women at *Circles with Circles* and has since been further developed by girls in fieldsites in South Africa. We then went onto art panels from *Girls Leading Change*, Port Elizabeth (South Africa) then *Sohki iskwew (strong women) Treaty 6*, Saskatoon (Canada) and on until all the panels from Canada, South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sweden, and Russia has been circulated.

The campaign garnered thousands of views, shares, and much engagement over the course of the 16 days. The Facebook posts had a total reach of 4,740 people, while Twitter posts were shared over 100 times and liked by over 130 users. People interacted with Instagram posts which incorporated hashtags like [#girlfesto](#) [#myactionsmatter](#) [#16daysofactivism](#) [#speakingback](#) [#EndVAW](#).

Rich content was added and appreciated on the *Networks for Change* social media channels and the girls' messages were shared and appreciated widely.



One of the campaign Facebook posts

Tweeting the Montebello Girlfesto

Youth Sexual Health Research Symposium

June Larkin, University of Toronto

March 21, 2019 | Toronto, Canada

The Youth Sexual Health Research Symposium at the University of Toronto brought together community youth and university students to share their research and artistic pieces on youth sexual health. In the current political climate, this year's symposium provided a crucial forum for youth asserting their right for progressive sexual health education. During the symposium, students, youth, academics, policy makers, and community members had the opportunity to network and engage in each other's work.

A highlight of the symposium was a keynote talk on the *Networks for Change* Indigenous Girls Project by Shezelle-Rae Sam and Keenan Andrew. In their presentation, *The impacts of sexualized violence through land-based practices: Body sovereignty is land sovereignty*, Shezelle-Rae and Keenan shared the story of Sisters Rising, an Indigenous-led, community-based research project focused on Indigenous teachings for gender well-being and sovereignty.

The goal of Sisters Rising is to link issues of consent, dignity, gender, health and well-being to issues of land sovereignty and Indigenous self-determination. The Sisters Rising research team has hosted workshops with Elders, knowledge holders and youth participants in nine Indigenous communities across British Columbia.

Shezelle-Rae and Keenan explained how the workshops used natural, hands-on, arts-based materials to explore topics such as dignity, the colonial roots of violence, land-based gender well-being, and Indigenous resurgence. New to the project this year is important work with young Indigenous men on issues related to gender violence and well-being.

YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2019

Sexual Health: Knowledge is Power

Trans and intersex sexual health inclusion - Indigenous and two-spirit sexual health access - Youth focused access and education initiatives - Globalization, migration, and sexual health - HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health - Neoliberalism and sexual health inequities - Disability and sexual health - Harm reduction

Panel 1: Sexual Autonomy and Empowerment in Relation to Sexual Health

“Survivor Support and Community Outreach through Art: A Creative Response to Non-Agentive Campus Resources”

Taylor Berzins

“Yes Means No”: Thinking Through Trauma Survivors’ Struggles and Access Needs for Consent Education

Jessica Wright

“Rainbow’s Pride in Scarborough (RPIS) Empowering Disability Youth Through Engagement.”

Rainbow Coco Channel

Panel 2: Local and Transnational Approaches to Sexual Health

“Sex Education and Sexual Health in Chinese Youth”

Vivila Yujuan Liu

“Street Involved Youths’ Perceptions of the Appropriateness and Acceptability of Peer Navigators to Increase Access to and Uptake of HIV Prevention, Testing, and Treatment in Canada and Kenya”

Mara Hayward

“Abortion Bans in El Salvador, The Dominican Republic, and Haiti: Culture, Law, and Bioethical Analysis”

Deanna Hembruff

Keynote Talk: Cory Silverberg and Fiona Smith

Keynote Performance: SEt (Sex Education by Theatre)

Guest Presentation: Networks for Change (Shezelle-Rae Sam and Keenan Andrew)

Panel 3: Disrupting Normative Sexual Discourse Through Media

“Creating Space for Nuance(d) Voices in Sexual and Reproductive Health Media

Nashwa Khan & Sarah Edo

“Grindr and the Construction of the (Homo)Rational Subject: An Exploration into Gay Media and Emotional (Dis)Connection”

Adam Davies

New Publications

Creating Circles Handbook

Catherine Vanner	Maria Ezcurra
Fatima Khan	Pamela Lamb
Claudia Mitchell	Milka Nyariro
Haleh Raissadat	Hani Sadati

To access: http://bit.ly/Circles_Handbook



As a resource, *Creating Circles: A Handbook on Art-making with Young People to Address Gender-based violence* offers a step-by-step illustrated 'how to' of various arts-based activities such as photovoice, cellphilmimg and collage. But it also goes beyond this by including reflections and tips by the facilitators who led the workshops at the *Circles Within Circles* summit held in Montebello, Quebec in July 2018, and through the inclusion of ideas for

follow-up reflexivity and dialogue as key components of doing arts-based work related to such a sensitive issue as gender-based violence.

Given the international context for *Circles Within Circles*, by including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants, and adults working as allies or accomplices with young people, it recognizes the importance of offering ideas and strategies for creating safe spaces for this work.

As a special feature, the Handbook includes short reflections written by both youth and adult participants about engaging with the various arts-based methods in participatory workshops. These short writings offer a sense of 'being there,' serve as evidence of the power of this work, and offer an invitation to use the arts-based methods in future participatory work with young people geared toward creating a more just world.

Gender-based Violence Toolkit

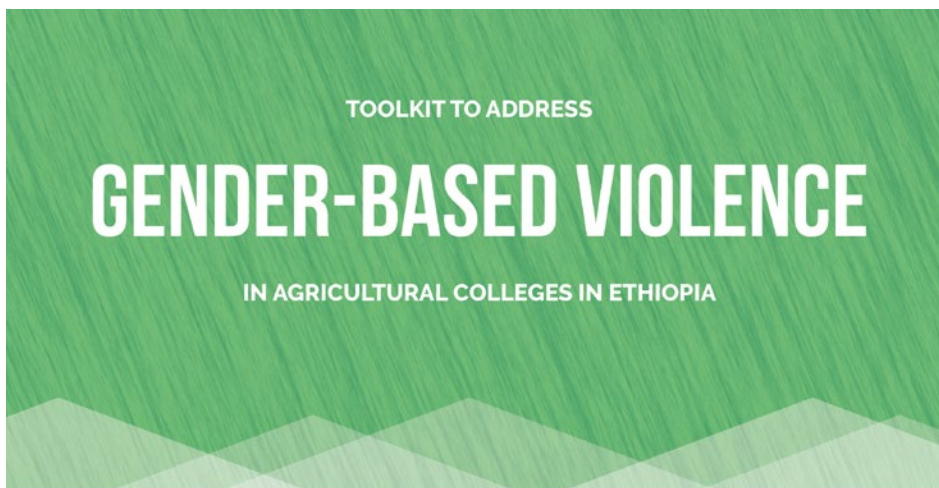
Participatory Cultures Lab, McGill University
with thanks to Jessica Meirovici

As part of the Global Affairs Canada funded ATTSVE Project (Agricultural Transformation For Stronger Rural Education) we are pleased to present the *Toolkit to Address Gender Based*

Violence in Agricultural Colleges in Ethiopia. This toolkit is one of many project initiatives towards gender mainstreaming and women's inclusion in Agricultural Technical and Vocational Colleges (ATVETs) in Ethiopia.

The toolkit provides Gender Focal Persons, instructors and peer leaders with the information and means to educate and create awareness on the issue of GBV while supporting survivors. The document will act as an excellent resource for addressing GBV in post-secondary institutions.

The electronic version of the toolkit is designed as a set of 74 stand-alone PowerPoint slides in PDF format, so that facilitators have a ready-made set of Ethiopia-based training materials that they can use in their workshops.



To access the Toolkit, visit:
http://bit.ly/GBV_Toolkit



To access: http://bit.ly/GBV_Toolkit

New Issue: Agenda

Land, Violence and Womxn's Bodies: Aluta Continua Vitoria e Certa?

Guest Editor:
Rushiella Songca

On 31st May 2017, a productive feminist dialogue, *Violence on the land, violence on women's bodies*, was held in Durban in collaboration with our community partner, *Agenda Feminist Media*. The dialogue was informed by the work of the Native Youth Sexual Health Network in Canada and especially their manual *Violence on the Land, Violence on our Bodies: Building an Indigenous Response to Environmental Violence*

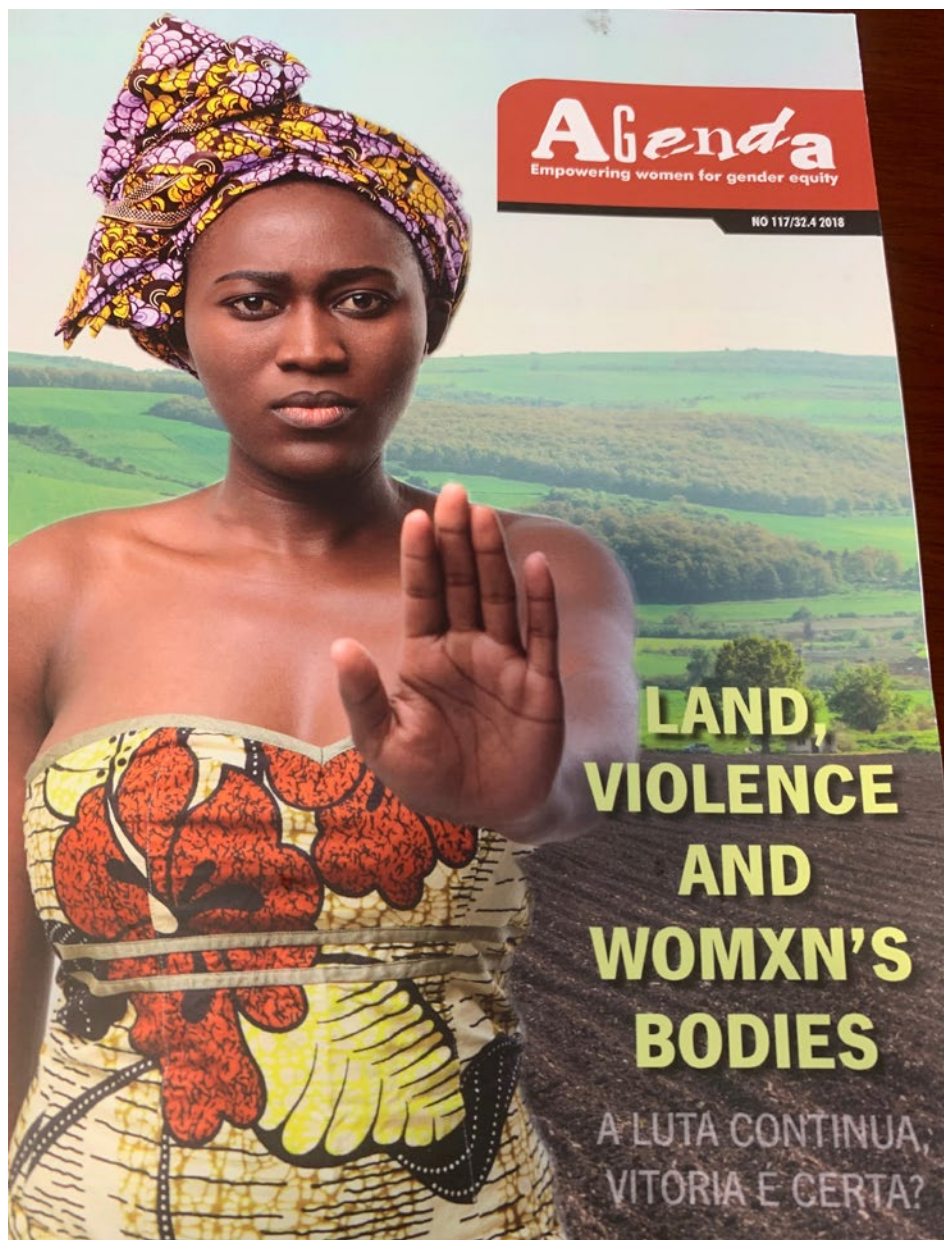
Available at: <http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf>.

The dialogue brought together academics, activists and practitioners to debate issues around understanding the intersections between lack of access to land/land degradation and gender based violence, and to identify and debate ameliorative strategies for social change.

One of the recommendations following this dialogue was the need for an issue of the journal, *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, which would not only solicit pieces reporting on ongoing research, but also those which would focus on interventions that have worked and on where the remaining issues are.

The result is the 2018 issue *Land, Violence and Womxn's Bodies: Aluta Continua Vitoria e Certa?* guest-edited by Rushiella Songca, a children's rights expert based at the University of South Africa. As Songca writes in her introduction:

[The] issue seeks to re-centre the debate on land as it relates to womxn's bodies. It highlights the tensions between womxn and land and demonstrates how womxn's bodies, like land, have been shamed and at times celebrated.



Cover of Agenda's 2018 issue *Land, Violence and Womxn's Bodies: Aluta Continua Vitoria e Certa?*

[Importantly], the experiences of womxn in relation to their rights to land are analysed, highlighting the marginalisation of womxn from decision-making in community-based structures despite the existence of liberal policies and statutes on land reform in South Africa (p.7).

For the *Networks for Change* project, the issue adds to the growing scholarship on the links between gender-based violence, particularly against women and girls, and the various strategies and tools available for us as we seek to effect social change in rural communities. While many of the articles focus on women's

struggles for land, a few take up the issue of strategies for social change.

For example, writing in the context of Canada, one Co-Investigator in the project, Sarah Flicker (University of York) leads a piece in the issue *Teaching and learning about the relationships between land, violence and women's bodies: the possibilities of participatory visual methods as pedagogy*.

For enquiries about the issue: contact the Agenda Feminist Media Offices at: admin@agenda.org.za

Website: www.agenda.org.za

Call for Papers: Girlhood Studies

Activism Networks by, for, and
with Girls and Young Women

Guest Editors

Catherine Vanner, McGill University
Anuradha Dugal, Canadian Women's Foundation

Activism networks, defined here as virtual or in-person communities devoted to social change, are conceived of as empowering and productive spaces for collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Participation in activism networks is characterized by social categories including gender, age, location, sexuality, race, and ability. The power of girls' agency and their position as political actors is being recognized increasingly.

With the advent of digital technology that enables communication across geographic divides, there has been a growing emergence of activism networks led by, for, and with girls and young women for whom participation in activism networks can multiply and mobilize their collective influence. They can also be empowering sites of decolonization and resistance to hegemonic and oppressive norms.

Networked activities may include organizing for policy change, writing or creating art to reflect lived experiences, or raising awareness and/or funds to support social causes. They can be initiated by girls or by adults for or with girls. Problematic practices can characterize initiatives that use or promote such activism, including tokenism, appropriation, exclusion, and Eurocentrism, and further research into the influence of the diverse communities embodied by these activism networks has been called for.

For this special issue of *Girlhood Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, we invite articles that use a range of methodological approaches to analyze activism networks led by, for, and with girls and young women. The terms girls and young women are inclusive of all self-identifying girls and young women including non-binary, femme, two spirit,

and gender non-conforming young people. Articles may include:

- ▶ Empirical research
- ▶ Case studies
- ▶ Autoethnographic experiences
- ▶ Artistic representations, or
- ▶ May be about theoretical or conceptual frameworks.

Along with conventional articles and visual essays, alternative contributions such as a very short screenplay or piece of fiction, poetry, or lyrics will be considered, as will material produced by girls and young women.

Articles are invited to respond to questions such as:

- ▶ How are activism networks led by, for, or with girls and young women experienced by participants?
- ▶ How is participation in girl-led activism networks enabled or constrained by social norms and expectations related to gender, race, ethnicity, language, religion, ability, location, age, and sexuality?
- ▶ What kind of political change is achievable through activism networks that focus on girls and young women?
- ▶ How can activism networks that focus on girls and young women expand participants' social capital?
- ▶ What power dynamics are embodied in transnational activism networks led by, for, or with girls and young women?
- ▶ What does it mean for a network to be girl-led?
- ▶ How do digital technologies enhance or undermine the effectiveness of girl-focused activism networks?
- ▶ What can leadership, governance, and organization look like in girl-directed or girl-led activism networks?
- ▶ What are some of the risks regarding the appropriation or tokenization of girls' voices through activism networks?
- ▶ How is gender manifested in youth networks involving young people who identify as girls or young women, as well as boys or young

men and/or non-binary, femme, two spirit, and gender non-conforming young people?

- ▶ Do networks enable stronger mobilization of girls and young women against hegemonic and oppressive forces such as patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism? Do they ever reproduce these structures?
- ▶ How can girls' and young women's activism networks be supported and/or constrained by funding and evaluation frameworks?
- ▶ How do girls and young women mobilize strategic partnerships with adult-led organizations to influence policy change?

Abstract and Article Submission

Please direct inquiries to:

Catherine Vanner
catherine.vanner@mcgill.ca

Schedule:

Abstracts: **15 June 2019** (send to girls.advocacy.networks.gsj@gmail.com)

Full manuscripts: **15 November 2019**

Authors should provide a cover page giving brief biographical details (up to 100 words), institutional affiliation(s) and full contact information, including an email address.

Articles may be no longer than 6,500 words including the abstract (up to 150 words), keywords (6 to 8 in alphabetical order), notes, captions and tables, acknowledgements (if any), biographical details (taken from the cover page), and references. Images in a text count for 200 words each.

Girlhood Studies, following Berghahn's preferred house style, uses a modified Chicago Style. Please refer to the Style Guide on the website:

[www.berghahnjournals.com/
girlhood-studies](http://www.berghahnjournals.com/girlhood-studies)

If images are used, authors are expected to secure the copyright themselves.

Full call:

[http://journals.berghahnbooks.com/
uploads/ghs/GHS_cfp_activism.pdf](http://journals.berghahnbooks.com/uploads/ghs/GHS_cfp_activism.pdf)

Partners



Current Stakeholders



National Council Against Gender-Based Violence, South Africa



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