



Food, Gender and Materiality in Rural Communities

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A STORY ABOUT POVERTY

A young girl found an egg while playing with her friends. She took the egg home and then went to collect firewood to cook it for the family. When she came back, the egg was gone. The girl was devastated and told her mother about the missing egg. The mother decided to consult a Sangoma. The Sangoma called the family together and exposed the father as the one who took the egg. The young girl cried upon hearing that her father had eaten the only egg that was going to be the family meal that day. Before leaving the house, the Sangoma pointed out to the father how his daughter and wife were malnourished, while he looked healthy. The father was ashamed of his actions, but continued his selfish deeds.



Poverty eradication means access to food (Tim Hart, 2010, p.114)

- “Rural women are faced with severe poverty and inequality on a daily basis, in their homes, in their villages and in the social systems around them. What this does is to destroy their self-worth... You cannot talk about poverty reduction when people are hungry. The first step is food...”

Food in the Context of rurality, poverty and HIV & AIDS –structural issues

TI who had carer responsibilities for the children of her late sister following her death from AIDS-related illness. She started crying when asked if she worried about not having enough food for the household...Every day TI faced her sister's children without food to offer them, she told ... She was unable to have access to child support grants as the birth certificates and other identity documents needed for the applications had been lost...

("I am at the lowest end of all". Amnesty International, 2008, p.78)

The Project: Networks for Change and Well-being: Girl-led 'from the ground up' policy-making to address sexual violence in Canada and South Africa





Overarching Question

“What would it really mean to study the world [of sexual violence] from the standpoint of [adolescent girls] both as knowers and as actors?”

(Anne Oakley, 1994)

Methodological Approach

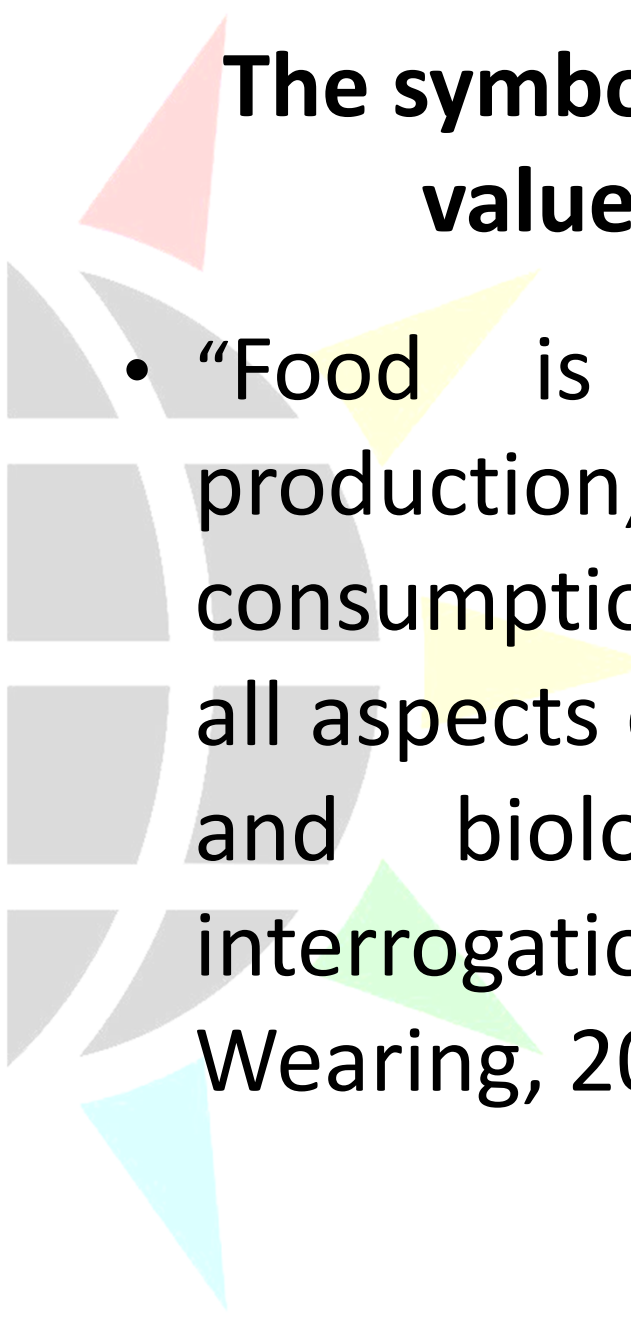


- Participatory Community-based Research: Photo-voice; Digital story-telling; cellfilms; drawing; collage; drama and storytelling.



Developing method...

- “For Indigenous/rural communities ..., the links between land and body create a powerful intersection—one that, when overlooked or discounted, can threaten their very existence”. (*Violence On The Land, Violence On Our Bodies*, Native Youth Health Network, Canada)
- Land and sand art as method



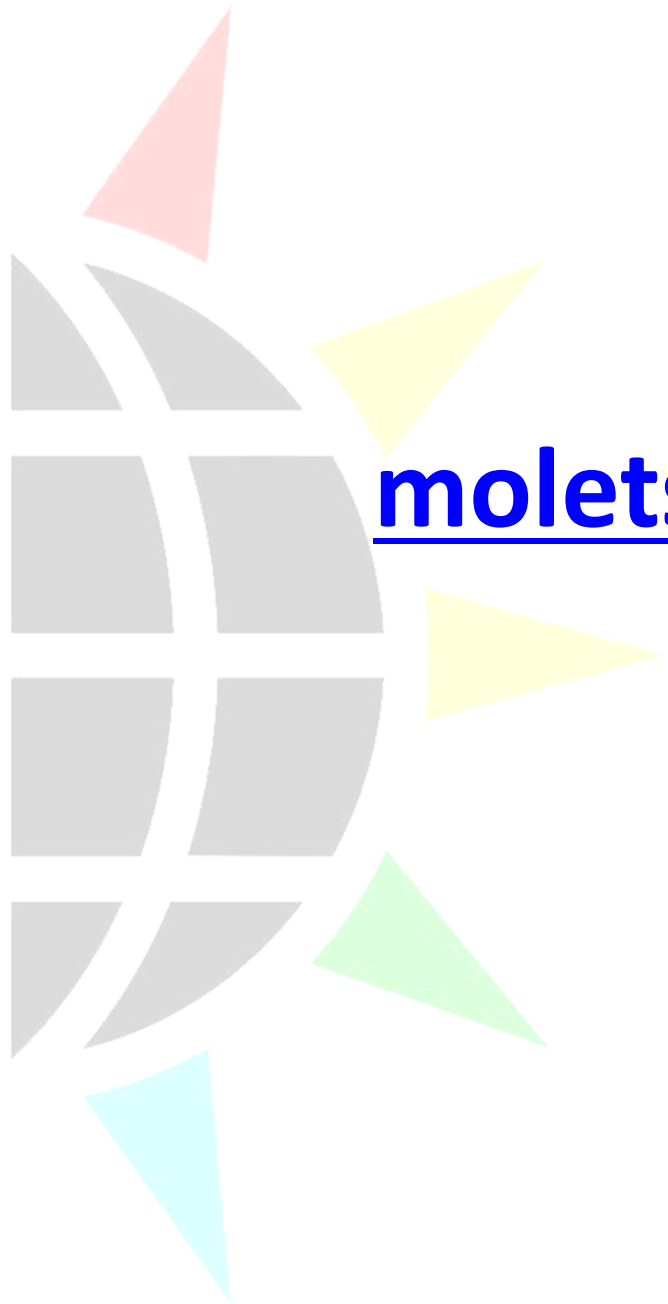
The symbolic, relational and affective value and character of food

- “Food is a feminist issue. From production, distribution and consumption, the gendered dynamics of all aspects of this arena of social, cultural and biological life repay feminist interrogation” (Hemmings, Al-Ali & Wearing, 2016:114)



Intersecting Issues

- The burden of women's mental and manual labour in food production vs who controls the resources;
- Food as identity, and intersecting identities: gender; race, rurality, culture, class, etc
- Food in the context of HIV and AIDS
- Food and substance abuse in rural communities
- Food and Gender-based violence



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