



International Women's Day

RAPID-FIRE: Conversation for Change: *Women's Rights and Health Trajectories*

Abstracts

Indigenous Women's Rights and Health: Past and Present

Suzanne L Stewart, PhD, CPsych

Governments and communities across Canada agree that health and wellness is a major issue for Indigenous peoples, with highest vulnerability for women and girls. Human rights for Indigenous women is a complex issue but is tied to many social and health outcomes, including homelessness and mental health. Almost 60% of Indigenous peoples live in cities and their numbers are growing exponentially every year due to economic, social, and international factors. The context of homelessness and mental health for Indigenous women rests in hundreds of years of systemic oppression that lead to today's situation of inequality, marked by mistreatment, social exclusion, and exploitation at multiple levels. Programs and policies have been implemented to decrease homelessness on Indian reserves, yet these efforts appear to have had limited effect and have not been translated to urban areas, where most Indigenous women reside. In addition, little research exists on the successes of Indigenous knowledge in homelessness and mental health and how these are related to concrete life transitions such as education and employment for women. Further, concerns related personal safety for Indigenous women have historically been very high and continue to rise steadily in multiple Canadian systems, including the judicial system, the health care system, and education and employment settings. Goals of the presenter's current research include ending Indigenous women's homelessness and reducing mental health inequities by mobilizing Indigenous knowledge to increase program and policy change; results and implications relevant to researchers and public health practitioners will be shared.

Global Population Health Interventions for Women: Successes, Failures & Way Forward

Erica Di Ruggiero, PhD

Complex global health issues such as the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, and gender and health inequities are among the many challenges facing countries. In 2015, 193 countries agreed on a bold development agenda – the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. To achieve these goals, countries must identify 'best buys', implement and scale-up these evidence-informed interventions, while leaving no one behind. This presentation will reflect on successes and lessons learned, using examples of global population health interventions. Questions such as are we are putting undue emphasis on individual behaviour change approaches at the expense of further investing in population health interventions that affect the socio-structural determinants of health, will provide the basis for discussion.



Grassroots Feminist Movements in Argentina, Latin America

Mercedes Cavallo

#NiUnaMenos (Not One Women Less), La Campana por el Derecho al Aborto Legal Seguro y Gratuito (The Campaign for Legal, Safe and Free Abortion) and Encuentro Nacional de las Mujeres (National Women's Encounter) are three Argentinian grass-roots feminist collectives and endeavors that have been changing the social and political scene at a national and regional scale, demanding legal abortion, the end of violence against women and gender equality polices including equal pay. In my presentation, I will share with you their strategies and achievements of the last 3 years.

Women's Housing Movement and Health in Brazil

Mariana Ferraz Duarte

In this talk, I trace low-income women's participation in the housing movement in Brazil. I have examined how their experience, combined with connections to other social movements, enabled a new understanding of their own rights and of the oppression that they experience in their everyday lives. I argue that these experiences catalyze individual change, which, in turn, lead to a healthier and meaningful life. These also allow them to enjoy freedom, dignity, self-esteem, and get respect from others. Finally, I show how these women have been playing an instrumental role in the housing movement and in shaping the urban and housing policies at the local and federal levels.

Mental Health App for Students

Allie Margaret May

"If I open up Instagram and see one more strategically placed stethoscope and cappuccino on a marble table, I'm going to vomit." – me, right before I decided to jump into the unknown world of app development. I was tired. Tired of feeling inadequate every time I browsed social media. Tired of pretending there wasn't a divide between academic success and mental wellness. Tired, from sacrificing sleep in order to become the "perfect student". I knew something had to change. Together with Health Out Loud, a student-led charity, I set out to shift our student culture into a more positive direction.

Fight for \$15 and Fairness Movement

Mei Wen

Precarious work impacts significant number of Canadians, with 1,253,000 working minimum wage jobs. As a medical student working in the hospital, I see first-hand how working poor wages and in poor conditions can have a profound adverse impact on worker's health. Low wage jobs disproportionately impact women and it is pertinent to address this wage gap and consequently health gap. 15&Fairness has been an incredible example to show that even as a student, we can start advocating for causes we believe in and it is never too early to add our voices in the fight towards decent work for a healthier society.