

Community-Engaged Research – Elizabeth Vibert, History, University of Victoria

Community engagement – indeed, community rootedness – has become very important to my research process and teaching in recent years. I do community-engaged research on the gendered, lived experience of poverty and the quest for food sovereignty, particularly among small-scale farmers. I'm very interested in grassroots responses to global and national political and economic imperatives that further impoverish women and rural communities. My current major project is an oral history collaboration with older women farmers in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The most recent outputs of this research include a documentary film, 'The Thinking Garden' (2017), that was the original idea of these South African women. This film brings the research back to the women and their communities in powerful ways – while giving the work a much wider reach in the global North as well. Since its release in Spring 2017 the film has screened at festivals and community screenings on four continents and in four subtitle languages (the film is shot in the xiTsonga language).

I maintain a website and blog about the South African research project womensfarm.org/ Other blog posts include <http://activehistory.ca/2016/02/climate-change-on-the-ground/> ; <http://www.ideasxchange.org/womens-empowerment-and-food-security-in-rural-south-africa-a-virtual-sit-down-with-dr-elizabeth-vibert/>

For further details of my community-engaged research please see interviews at [http://www.uvicfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/FA_Relay - Issue 2 Volume 2-FOL-sm1.pdf](http://www.uvicfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/FA_Relay_-_Issue_2_Volume_2-FOL-sm1.pdf) (pp. 4-6) and at *Solidarity Economy News* - newsletter of the Cooperative and Policy Alternatives Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa <http://copac.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Newsletter-17-SE.pdf>

Teaching and public engagement

Community engagement in teaching has always been important to me. In 2005 I was a member of the founding board of the University 101 program, which makes Humanities education freely available to members of the wider community who are usually marginalized from university education. I have taught in Uni 101 almost every year since.

In 2014 I launched UVic's Colonial Legacies Field School in South Africa. Thirteen students (UVic and UBC) completed a summer course in South African history and politics, and spent three weeks on the ground in urban and rural South Africa. Engagement with grassroots community groups was a key feature of the field school. <https://www.uvic.ca/news/topics/2014+colonial-legacies-field-school+ring> The next field school is in 2020.

I guest lecture around campus on such topics as food sovereignty, global food politics, famine and food insecurity, gender and poverty, HIV/AIDS, the Haitian Revolution, and economic rights in the Global South.

Public speaking engagements take me to many community groups, from organic farmer associations to schools, community centres and service clubs. Topics include poverty in the Global South, food sovereignty, women's grassroots resistance to globalization, food politics, and comparative colonialisms. I have organized/participated in local public forums on women making change in Africa, food security/sovereignty local and global, and refugees in Canada.

I publish op-eds and letters and have been interviewed in media on topics ranging from race and mental health to food security to enduring colonialism in Canada. E.g., <http://www.timescolonist.com/opinion/op-ed/comment-first-nations-suffer-under-stacked-system-1.23173223> ; <http://www.timescolonist.com/opinion/columnists/comment-welcoming-refugees-undermines-terrorists-1.2125826>

In 2015 and 2017 I organized the Victoria Urban Food-Garden Tour <http://vicurbanfoodgardens.wixsite.com/tour>, a popular community event and fundraiser to promote sustainable food production locally and globally, and to inspire people to grow food in their own 'front yard, back yard, allotment, boulevard.' <http://www.timescolonist.com/house-beautiful-saanich-food-garden-revolution-1.22349078> ; <https://www.oakbaynews.com/community/victoria-urban-food-garden-tour-back-for-second-year/>

In 2018-19 I hold a Community-Engaged Learning Grant, with Charlotte Schallié, to deliver a module in a local high school on 'Acting Otherwise: Material Memory of Historical Injustice – and Community Resistance to Injustice.'