

Research as Dialogue with Communities
Organized by Kristi Kenyon, Trudeau Scholar 2007

While many students undertake the research they do as a result of concerns or interests arising from the communities that they study, the academic environment emphasises a method of communicating research findings that often excludes these groups. Journal articles, conference presentations, lectures and publications are critical in the communication between scholars as well as for career advancement within the academic world. They are, however, venues of communication that are generally inappropriate and inaccessible for broader communities who may have participated or have an interest in the practical implications of such work.

At its worst research can be an extractive industry whereby research is mined from communities for the purpose of individual academic benefit. Even where researchers hold genuine concern and interest for the participants in their research, the process of communicating findings back to research participants is often an after thought or, at least, an add-on to what is considered 'real' academic work.

The Trudeau Foundation, with its emphasis on holistic visions of scholarship and the interplay between involvement, service and research is a community that holds both much interest in the process and possibilities of linking research participants and research findings, as well as a number of examples of how this can be carried out. This Scholars' Workshop will build on ideas developed and explored at the St. John's Scholars' Workshop where Scholars had the opportunity to hear from community members directly. It will also be a useful forum to draw upon the Trudeau Foundation community – enabling those further along (or who have completed) their research to share their innovations with those currently developing their research proposals, so as to include feedback to communities explicitly in their proposals.

Structure and Timeline:

10 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Introduction

- Introduction of participants and their interest/experience in the topic
- Discussion of the article "Using Participatory Action Research to Build Healthy Communities" (*Public Health Reports* 2000 Mar-Jun Vol. 115 No. 2-3. Pages 191-7.) and other articles to be identified
- Identification of key principles regarding communicating research findings to participants

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Research, Participation and Dialogue

- A detailed participatory presentation on methods of engaging communities in dialogue around research

11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Presentation and display of materials

- Scholars will be invited to bring examples of their work in this area to present and share

12 p.m.-1 p.m.

Lunch

1 p.m.-2 p.m.

Research as the Building of Long-Term Relationships with Communities

- A senior researcher will present on work with communities that has spanned a longer period of time, looking at the impact of communication and dialogue on research trajectories and community development.

2 p.m.-3 p.m.

From the Other Side of the Fence: the Experience of a Research Participant

- A participant in a research study will share their experiences.

3 p.m.-3:45 p.m.

Small Group Work

- In small groups participants will brainstorm about how to integrate dialogue with community on their research findings into their plan of work.