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Review Article

# Analyzing the NIMMIWG's 231 Calls for Justice through a food studies lens: Inviting food systems scholars to the table

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## Abstract

In 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) released a report containing 231 Calls to Justice to address the disproportionate level of violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in Canada. Six years later, there has been little progress towards implementing the Calls to Justice, and the MMIWG crisis remains urgent. As four women (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) engaged in Indigenous food systems work, we analyzed the calls to action through a food studies lens and highlighted key connections between gendered violence against Indigenous bodies and food studies. Calls for all governments; calls for industries, institutions, services and partnerships; and distinctions-based calls were all deemed relevant to food studies, with areas of interest including human security, culture, extractive and development industry, and correctional services. We offer these connections between MMIWG and food studies as a call to action for settler food systems scholars and practitioners to engage with these calls in their own work in order to advance justice for, and prioritize the safety and wellbeing of, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. We urge settlers to practice kinship with the land and Indigenous Peoples as a way to hold the government accountable to the 231 Calls, and discuss rematriation as a path towards addressing the MMIWG crisis in Canada.

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## Résumé

En 2019, l'Enquête nationale sur les femmes et les filles autochtones disparues et assassinées (ENFFADA) a produit un rapport contenant 231 appels à la justice pour remédier au taux de violence disproportionné que subissent les femmes, les filles et les personnes 2ELGBTQQIA autochtones au Canada. Six ans plus tard, la mise en œuvre des appels à la justice a fait bien peu de progrès, et la crise des FFADA demeure une urgence. Nous, quatre femmes (autochtones et non autochtones) impliquées dans les systèmes alimentaires autochtones, avons analysé ces appels à l'action dans la perspective des études sur l'alimentation. Des liens clés en sont ressortis entre la violence genrée contre les corps autochtones et les études sur l'alimentation. Les appels à tous les paliers de gouvernement, les appels aux industries, aux institutions, aux services et aux associations, et les appels fondés sur des distinctions ont tous été jugés pertinents pour les études sur l'alimentation, touchant des domaines d'intérêts tels que la sécurité humaine, la culture, l'industrie extractive et de développement, les services correctionnels. Ces liens entre les FFADA et les études sur l'alimentation, nous les mettons en lumière comme un appel à l'action lancé aux chercheurs, chercheuses, praticiens et praticiennes des systèmes alimentaires issus du colonialisme : qu'ils et elles intègrent ces enjeux dans leur propre travail en vue de faire progresser la justice envers les femmes, les filles et les personnes 2ELGBTQQIA autochtones, et d'assurer leur sécurité et leur bien-être. Nous exhortons les personnes issues du colonialisme à faire preuve de solidarité avec la terre et les peuples autochtones en réclamant des comptes au gouvernement concernant les 231 appels à la justice, et en abordant la rematriation comme moyen de gérer la crise des FFADA au Canada.

## Introduction

From 2019 to 2024, the Yellowhead Institute, an Indigenous think tank in the Faculty of Arts at Toronto Metropolitan University, released independent reports on the federal government's progress in implementing the 94 Calls to Action—legal imperatives within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) 2015 final report on the violent legacy of residential schools in Canada (Jewell, 2024; Jewell & Mosby, 2019-2023). In 2023, the authors wrote that the dismal lack of progress (13 calls completed of 94) no longer warranted a report card. 2025 marked the tenth anniversary of the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, and as Eva Jewell, one of the report's authors, reminds us, "Reconciliation is not just about apologizing for past wrongs, at which Canada is quite adept; it's about ending current wrongs that are happening today, and preventing future wrongs—both of which Canada fails to do" (Jewell, 2024, p. 2).

In a process similar to that of the TRC, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (NIMMIWG) was launched to address the

systemic violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The inquiry was set in motion following the Native Women's Association of Canada's (NWAC) role in spotlighting the MMIWG crisis by creating a database to track reported cases of violence against Indigenous women and girls. Their 2010 report provided the first estimate of all existing reported MMIWG cases in Canada: 582 (NWAC, 2010). NWAC's report sparked outrage across the nation, with many human rights, legal, and social justice organizations, including the Assembly of First Nations, the Canadian Bar Association, the Feminist Alliance for International Action, and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, calling for a formal inquiry into the disproportionate violence faced by Indigenous women and girls (NIMMIWG, 2017). Many activists held vigils, public awareness events, and marches, using art, various forms of journalism, and social media to build support and to draw attention to MMIWG.

Initially, the Conservative government under Stephen Harper dismissed the urgency of addressing the MMIWG crisis despite the concerning data presented by NWAC and the RCMP, and did not support the investigation. This was further evidenced by Harper stating that the MMIWG epidemic "was not high on [his] radar" (García-Del Moral, 2024, p. 2). However, under Justin Trudeau's Liberal government, all ten provincial premiers supported a National Inquiry into MMIWG in 2013. On September 1st, 2016, the NIMMIWG officially commenced, with community visits and discussions with Indigenous and governmental organizations between November 2016 and March 2017, and with the start of statement gathering, or the Truth Gathering Process, in May 2017 (NIMMIWG, n.d.). The final report from the NIMMIWG was published on June 3, 2019 (NIMMIWG, n.d.). It articulates 231 Calls for Justice to end violence against MMIWG, reflecting a similar process to that of the TRC.

The NIMMIWG inquiry process included the development of a national action plan. Released on June 3, 2021, the National Action Plan is guided by a vision of "a transformed Canada where Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA people, wherever they are, live free from violence, and are celebrated, honoured, respected, valued, treated equitably, safe, and secure" (NIMMIWG, 2021, p. 22). One year after its release, progress on the National Action Plan was assessed and published in the *2022 Progress Report on the MMIWG National Action Plan* (NIMMIWG, 2022). While the National Action Plan outlined a detailed operationalization strategy with specific actions, resources, and timelines for short-, medium-, and long-term priorities, the progress report stressed that this had not yet been done. It underlined the urgency of creating a National Action Plan Committee and an implementation plan with clear timelines for immediate next steps to hold government bodies accountable for addressing the 231 Calls for Justice.

The Progress Report concludes that much more work is urgently needed to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Indeed, the actual number of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people who have gone missing or been murdered across Canada remains unknown, as police reporting across the country is inconsistent, riddled with errors, and fails to acknowledge the truth about the staggering number of MMIWG (NIMMIWG, 2017). Statistics Canada (2025) estimated that almost 30 percent of female homicide victims in 2024 were Indigenous – a marked increase from previous years – representing a homicide rate more than six times higher than that of non-Indigenous women (NIMMIWG, 2017).

It's hard not to feel deeply disappointed by the lack of progress on the Calls to Action and the Calls for Justice, especially as reconciliation discourse swept across the

country in the following years. Perhaps more importantly, this lack of progress raises a question: Who is responsible for implementing these calls? In its Calls for Justice report, the NIMMIWG (2019) clearly states that the Canadian government has a legal obligation to implement the calls in line with its own laws and legal principles, and yet, it goes on to say:

> Our Calls for Justice aren't just about institutions, or about governments, although they have foundational obligations to uphold; there is a role for everyone in the short and the long term. Individuals, institutions, and governments can all play a part; we encourage you, as you read these recommendations, to understand and, most importantly, to act on yours. (2019, p. 168)

We take up this statement from the NIMMIWG as researchers, practitioners, and advocates to identify, disrupt, and transform racialized and heteropatriarchal dynamics in the food system. Specifically, we will analyze and highlight how the Calls for Justice are relevant to the broad field of food studies in Canada, which we define as an interdisciplinary field that examines the social, cultural, economic, historical, political, and environmental dimensions of food practices, foodways, and food systems, and how they, in turn, shape societies, cultures, and ecologies. In doing so, we aim to encourage others—particularly settler food studies scholars—to engage with the Calls in their own work. In what follows, we will briefly describe the history of Indigenous-settler food relations in Canada, with particular attention to racialized and gendered dynamics. We will then describe our methodology for assessing the Calls for Justice and their relationship to food studies, and finally, present our analysis and future recommendations for the field of food studies.

## Colonialism, gendered violence, and food insecurity

### Historical factors

Prior to colonization, Indigenous Peoples' food came from the land and represented a complex web of interactions and interdependencies among people, land, and the spirit world. Food roles and activities were tied to individual and communal responsibilities rather than to gender (Anderson, 2011; Manson, 2013). However, colonialism deeply affected food roles and responsibilities; Western notions of gender and food dominated assimilation projects (Burnett & Hay, 2023). For example, European women were responsible for indoctrinating Indigenous women into the kitchen, where so-called "proper" food belonged, and off the land, where only men belonged (Acoose, 2016). This messaging reduced women and Two-Spirit peoples in their communities, resulting in profound losses of food knowledge, spiritual practice, and connection; eliminated Indigenous economies; and altered family structures (Nickel & Fehr, 2020; Simpson, 2017). Many Indigenous cultures centre the responsibilities of women and Two-Spirit peoples to the land, water, medicines, plants, and seeds. As Kai Pyle (2020) urges, "making a concerted effort to explore and excavate individual teachings of our own peoples may be one way to counteract the tendency to erase the diversity of Indigenous gender" (p. 115).

The imposition of Canadian settler society and governments has disrupted these responsibilities and eroded Indigenous food sovereignty and security, in both direct and indirect ways (Daigle, 2019; Morrison, 2011; Settee & Shukla, 2020). The development of the Canadian settler state was intricately tied to the expansion of settler agriculture, which was a fundamental tool for dispossessing and subjugating Indigenous Nations through a racialized politics of starvation to advance settler land claims and territorial sovereignty (Carter, 1990; Kepkiewicz & Dale, 2018). The government often withheld promised treaty rations to control Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous women bore the brunt of heteropatriarchal violence by Indian agents, as their bodies could be used to release the rations (Daschuk, 2013).

Even under extreme duress, Indigenous Peoples worked tirelessly to feed their communities, yet settler laws, policies, and institutions have continued to undermine their success (Carter, 1990; Laforge & McLachlan, 2018; Sommerville, 2021). For example, the residential school system—run by Christian churches and sponsored by the Canadian government—stole Indigenous children from their families for generations. Indigenous children were not allowed to speak their languages or to practice their cultures, including hunting, fishing, and gathering. The goal of the residential school system was to assimilate generations of Indigenous children into "heterosexual, cis-gendered, English-speaking, Christian workers who had the skills to participate in the lowest rungs of the wage economy" (Simpson, 2025, p. 169), ultimately reducing Indigenous Peoples' ability to resist settler encroachment on their lands. Indian residential schools thus reinforced the division between Indigenous women and men, including the erasure of Two-Spirit and queer identities and belonging. This had cascading impacts on Indigenous food sovereignty, as land dispossession and colonial development have dramatically increased Indigenous Peoples' food insecurity by eroding the social determinants of health and well-being (e.g., access to territory, food-related knowledge, traditional foods, and self-determination) (Coté, 2016; Dennis & Robin, 2020; Jonasson et al., 2019).

The Indian Act (1876) dramatically reshaped Indigenous governance and lifeways. It diminished Indigenous Peoples' access to their lands and foods by forcing them onto reserves and controlling their movements and activities; disrupted hereditary governance systems, attempting to replace them with elected band councils; stripped Indigenous women of their political and leadership roles while imposing heteropatriarchal values on Indigenous Nations and communities; and disenfranchised Indigenous women of their rights and identity as citizens of their nations (e.g., by restricting Indigenous women's ability to obtain and/or pass on band membership/status) (Robin Martens, 2021; Deschambault, 2019; McIvor et al., 2019; Jacco, 2021). In turn, by severing historically matriarchal governance systems and removing Indigenous women and Two-Spirit people from their positions of political leadership, Indigenous women's "relationship, connection and engagement with their ancestral food systems" was upended (Jacco, 2021, p. 49). Other government policies and programs sought to eliminate breastfeeding in Indigenous communities, positioning milk and pablum as "pure", "clean", and "moral" (Burnett & Hay, 2023). The Family Allowance Program further attempted to segment and reduce women's access to traditional foods, the land, and food activities:

> Under the Family Allowance Program, Indigenous women's bodies became sites of conflict and violence for the colonial state. With the intent of withholding their family allowance benefits as a tool of coercion,

> letters from Indian Superintendents regularly requested that investigations be carried out into the conduct of Indigenous women believed to be transgressors of European-Canadian notions of domesticity and motherhood (Burnett & Hay, 2023, p. 64-65).

As these examples show, the intersections of colonialism, Christianity, and heteropatriarchy introduced food insecurity and economic inequality into Indigenous communities, directly contributing to the heightened vulnerability of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people to violence.

## Ongoing implications

In Indigenous communities, the impact of Western food economies and their colonial history has created an (*en)forced dependency* on federal government food systems and programs, causing Indigenous Peoples to become food insecure (Burnett & Hay, 2023). The very nature of colonial capitalism undermines the vital relationships Indigenous Peoples have with the land in order to steal the land and incorporate Indigenous Peoples into the Euro-Canadian body politic. Colonialism has especially destroyed Indigenous foodways and traditional practices by profiting from natural resources and criminalizing Indigenous bodies. For example, legislative policies have prevented and prohibited Indigenous Peoples from harvesting and hunting traditional foods, therefore preventing Indigenous communities from achieving food security (Robin et al., 2021). Federal government services and food programs have reinforced Indigenous Peoples' reliance on Westernized food systems as a tactic to control Indigenous populations and bodies (Burnett & Hay, 2023). The reservation systems are used to assimilate, dispossess, and displace Indigenous Peoples from their kinship ties with land.

Outcomes from 500 years of colonial violence against Indigenous Peoples' land, food, and governance systems today include high rates of Indigenous homelessness in Canada, with significant repercussions for Indigenous health and disconnection from traditional territories. Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people face disproportionately high rates of homelessness, layered violence, and systemic confinement in jails and prisons. Despite systemic barriers to employment, education, and housing, in addition to over-incarceration, poverty, and a lack of services, Indigenous women have shown remarkable resilience; for example, Indigenous women are often the first to defend traditional land and water from resource extraction. Yet Indigenous women are often criminalized and mistreated for their role in land defence, directly contributing to the MMIWG crisis.

In sum, since the arrival of colonists and the establishment of so-called Canada, violence against Indigenous land and food systems has shaped—and been shaped by—particular violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. Indigenous feminists have long pointed out these connections and demonstrated how colonialism disrupts Indigenous sovereignty over lands and bodies, while resurgence is about restoring land and body sovereignty (Simpson, 2014; Simpson, 2017). Yet despite the deep entanglement of land and food systems with colonial dispossession and gendered violence, the food studies and food sovereignty communities have had limited engagement with the topic of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people in Canada and beyond (Grey & Patel, 2015). While preliminary work has begun to address these topics (Parker, 2023; Xavier & Rotz, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2022; Pictou et al., 2021), here, we make the case that food systems scholars can and should engage more deeply with the gendered and racialized inequities that

shape access to land, food, and safety. In Canada, the MMIWG Calls for Justice provides a framework for food studies researchers and practitioners to carry out research that aligns with demands from Indigenous-led movements for both gender justice and food sovereignty. Informed by Indigenous feminism and anti-colonial/resurgence politics (Million, 2009; Simpson, 2017), we now turn to positioning ourselves and introducing our methodological approach.

## Methodology

As a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women whose work spans Indigenous food systems and is deeply rooted in Indigenous feminisms and intersectional theories (Green, 2020; Maracle, 1988; Starblanket, 2024; Smith, 2012), we came together to write this paper as a call to action for food studies to explicitly engage with the 231 Calls for Justice. In line with both Indigenous and feminist scholarship, it is important that we situate ourselves in relation to the research. The first author, Tabitha Robin, has mixed settler, Métis, and Cree ancestry from St. Peter's Indian Band and is an Indigenous food systems scholar. She is a gardener, seed keeper, and food scholar who has been carrying on the traditions of her family, living and learning about Indigenous food sovereignty, for 20 years. The second author, Dana James, is a settler of German, British, Dutch, and Polish descent. Through her work with land-based movements over the past decade, she has witnessed the disproportionate legal, physical, interpersonal, and ontological violence that Indigenous Peoples—especially Indigenous women—face when exercising their rights and responsibilities on the land. She therefore comes to this work through a desire to disrupt and dismantle patriarchal settler norms and institutions predicated on logics of power, control, and domination. The third author, Lisa Kenoras is a young Secwépemc woman with deep ties to the lands of her community through the powerful bloodline of her great-grandmother, kye7e and ki7ce. She is inspired by the women in her life who have supported and guided her, reminding her of her place in the world. The fourth author, Stephanie Lin, is a settler of Taiwanese and mixed European ancestry who is engaged in Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives alongside the first author across so-called Canada. Her graduate thesis project illuminated and unpacked the injustices that Indigenous land stewards face when caring for their land and food systems, challenges that are intimately tied to the MMIWG crisis.

Our analysis began in July 2024, when we met to determine a framework for evaluating the 231 Calls for Justice in relation to food studies, which concluded in February 2025. We began by establishing a working definition of food studies. We then independently read the calls and marked them for inclusion based on their alignment with our definition of food studies. Keywords we used to identify a call as relevant to food studies included: Wellness, prevention, healing, food, and culture. Given that Indigenous life is deeply entangled with the intersecting and overlapping colonial systems addressed in the 231 Calls, their relevance to food studies is open to differing interpretations. We therefore held a series of meetings to compare our assessments until we reached a consensus. While not all 231 Calls are highlighted in our analysis, we emphasize that, in many ways, all of the Calls for Justice could be relevant to food studies because they position Indigenous life as valuable.

Dian Million's (2009) felt theory was especially appropriate for this engagement. Million (2008; 2009) positions *affect* as a critical approach to understanding Indigenous history and contemporary realities. Felt theory has also been applied to Indigenous food contexts, with the understanding that Indigenous food experiences are inherently healing at one end of the spectrum and, at the other, intensely traumatic due to the colonial food system (Robin & Hart, 2025). Indigenous food is healing: As medicine, spirit, community, family, and a relationship to Creation. This is why food is utilized prominently in ceremonies (Robin & Hart, 2025; Atleo, 2004). The consequences of the colonial food system are felt deeply within Indigenous communities, including the land and non-human kin. Felt theory argues that Indigenous experience is a valuable source of data and embodied knowledge. With felt theory in mind, we examined the Calls for Justice to assess how Indigenous bodies, cultures, and communities have been affected by colonial violence, particularly that of the colonial food system.

Any interpretation, especially with felt theory, should be Indigenous-led, but the actions they demand apply largely to settler systems and settings. Thus, the experiences of the Indigenous women on our team who are engaged in food sovereignty work are especially relevant; we have shared some of them here to illuminate the applicability of the Calls for Justice. Drawing on our experiences and a desktop review of the literature conducted between March and mid-May 2025, we provide examples that support our analysis of the MMIWG Report and highlight initiatives that connect food to the health, safety, and well-being of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people, as felt experience. Lastly, we deliberately engage with citational politics: Indigenous Peoples are best suited to describe the nature of their realities, and we make a concerted effort to engage with Indigenous scholarship throughout this paper (Liboiron, 2022).

## Relevant MMIWG Calls for food studies

Land, culture, language, governance, and food are sites and sources of healing—of affect—for Indigenous Peoples. In total, the Calls for Justice should be understood as concrete efforts to end the genocide against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Our analysis highlights the following Calls for Justice as relevant to food studies, and they should be understood as opportunities to refocus food studies research in support of Indigenous healing, sovereignty, and gender justice. This list is by no means exhaustive, and as concepts of Indigenous health, well-being, healing, infrastructures, and services continue to grow, so too will this list.

Our results follow the structure of the MMIWG Final Report, which categorized the Calls for Justice into four major groups: 1) For all governments; 2) Industries, institutions, services, and partnerships; 3) For all Canadians; and 4) Distinctions-based calls that address the specific distinctions of Inuit, Métis, and 2SLGBTQQIA populations. Table 1 presents the Calls for Justice for each section that applies to food studies. For each section below, we provide a brief summary of the Calls under the theme, our analysis, and examples of these Calls in action relevant to food studies.

Table 1: Calls for Justice applicable to food studies

| | |
|---|---|
| **Calls for Justice for All Governments** | |
| Human and Indigenous Rights and Governmental Obligations | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 |
| Culture | 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 |
| Health and Wellness | 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7 |
| Human Security | 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 |
| Justice | 5.6 |
| **Calls for Justice for Industries, Institutions, Services, and Partnerships** | |
| Media and Social Influencers | 6.1 |
| Health and Service Providers | 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 |
| Calls for Transportation Service Providers and the Hospitality Industry | N/A |
| Calls for Police Services | 9.1, 9.2 |
| Calls for Attorneys and Law Societies | N/A |
| Educators | 11.1 |
| Social Workers and Those Implicated in Child Welfare | 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.12 |
| Extractive and Development Industry | 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5 |
| Correctional Service Canada | 14.3, 14.6, 14.8, 14.10 |
| **Calls for Justice for all Canadians** | |
| Calls for all Canadians | 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8 |
| **Distinctions-Based Calls** | |
| Inuit-Specific Calls for Justice | 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10, 16.11, 16.12, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15, 16.17, 16.18, 16.19, 16.20, 16.21, 16.25, 16.27, 16.28, 16.30, 16.37, 16.42, 16.44 |
| Métis-Specific Calls for Justice | 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 17.5, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.13, 17.15, 17.16, 17.17, 17.18, 17.19, 17.20, 17.21, 17.22, 17.23, 17.24, 17.25, 17.26, 17.27, 17.28 |
| 2SLGBTQQIA-Specific Calls to Justice | 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4, 18.6, 18.7, 18.8, 18.10, 18.15, 18.16, 18.17, 18.18, 18.19, 18.22, 18.24, 18.25, 18.27, 18.28, 18.29, 18.31 |

## Calls for Justice for all governments

### Human and Indigenous rights and governmental obligations: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8

*Summary*: These Calls demand that "equitable access to basic rights such as employment, housing, education, safety, and health care is recognized as a fundamental means of protecting Indigenous and human rights" (NIMMIWG, 2019, Call 1.1, p. 176). They also recognize that systemic and jurisdictional gaps in services contribute to the marginalization of and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Governments must also take all necessary measures to "prevent, investigate, punish, and compensate for violence" (ibid., Call 1.5, p. 177).

*Analysis*: Thus, tangible efforts to eliminate these gaps and prioritize Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people's human rights must include long-term, core funding commitments from all governments; program- and project-based funding will not address these gaps. Importantly, these Calls require compliance with relevant rights instruments, including the ICCPR, ICESCR, UNCRC, CEDAW, ICERD, UNCRC, and UNDRIP (see list of acronyms), among others. Fundamentally, the Calls focus on the realization of and respect for the individual and collective rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people as prerequisites for Indigenous life and the basis on which Indigenous land and food systems flourish.

### Culture: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6

*Summary*: The Calls related to culture require governments to "acknowledge, recognize, and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples to their cultures and languages as inherent rights, and constitutionally protected as such under Section 35 of the Constitution" (ibid., Call 2.1, p. 179). Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must have "safe, no-barrier, permanent, and meaningful access to their cultures and languages" by ensuring and protecting the "rights of Indigenous children to retain and be educated in their Indigenous language" (ibid., Call 2.3, p. 179).

*Analysis*: Support for grassroots and community-led Indigenous food and language programming must be provided, with special attention to those who have been separated from their land and culture through colonialism, as food and language are foundational to Indigenous cultures. One example is Robin and Cidro's (2020) year-long Indigenous food sovereignty project with youth in Manitoba, in which Elders and language teachers co-taught workshops to provide a holistic approach to learning. Additionally, these Calls highlight the need for an empowerment fund to support Indigenous-led language and land-based cultural education programs that operate outside government and educational institutions. Such a fund would support Indigenous families and communities in engaging in healing land-based practices (most involving food harvesting and preparation) and "assist in the revitalization of distinct cultural practices as expressed by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people" (NIMMIWG, 2019, Call 2.5, p. 179).

### Health and wellness: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7

*Summary*: These Calls emphasize that "the rights to health and wellness of 2SLGBTQQIA and Indigenous women and girls must be recognized and equitably protected regardless of jurisdictional lines, geographical location, and Status affiliation or lack thereof" (ibid., Call 3.6, p. 181). They highlight a special need for ongoing healing programs for "all children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, akin to the previously established and disbanded Aboriginal Healing Foundation" (ibid., Call 3.7, p. 181).

*Analysis*: There is a need for stable, adequate, long-term, and/or permanent funding for Indigenous-led, community-based health and wellness services, including mobile trauma and addiction treatment programs paired with mental health services. These services must be available in all Indigenous communities to prevent the need to relocate for services and must "call on Elders, Grandmothers, and other Knowledge Keepers to establish community-based trauma-informed programs" (ibid., Call 3.3, p. 180). A good example of such a service, developed in response to the Calls for Justice, is the Resiliency Lodge model hosted by the NWAC. For example, the Wabanaki Resiliency Lodge sits on 16 acres of farmland in Wabanaki territory and provides land-based, Elder-led traditional healing services and programming. The lodge offers healing ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, medicinal baths, talking circles, art expressions, and Indigenous-led agricultural programming that serves as a global prototype for healing Mother Earth and Indigenous Peoples. Featuring land-based agricultural workshops, medicinal plant teachings, regenerative healing through traditional food methods, and a companion apprenticeship program, the lodge's agricultural programming is grounded in Traditional Knowledge and led by Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse+ (WG2STGD+) Peoples (NWAC, 2023).

### Human security: 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8

*Summary*: These Calls outline how "all governments must immediately ensure that Indigenous Peoples have access to safe housing, clean drinking water, and adequate food" (ibid., Call 4.1, p. 181). The Calls emphasize that "all governments must support Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the pursuit of economic and social development" (ibid., Call 4.5, p. 182).

*Analysis*: Services and infrastructure must meet the social and economic needs of Indigenous People. This includes: Safe housing appropriate to geographic and cultural needs; long-term, ongoing funding for shelters, safe spaces, transition homes, and second-stage housing; and services, particularly for those experiencing poverty and food insecurity. Funding to ensure adequate infrastructure and safe, affordable transit and transportation should be readily available to Indigenous communities to improve access to both traditional and store-bought foods alike. This should also include expanded, safer access to grocery stores and an examination of the exorbitant costs of food in Northern stores. Liveable incomes are essential for Indigenous Peoples, especially those reliant on Northern stores.

### Justice: 5.6

*Summary*: Call 5.6 states that all governments must develop a comprehensive and holistic approach to

provide healing and necessary trauma supports for Indigenous Peoples, especially for "Indigenous victims of crime and family and friends of Indigenous murdered or missing persons" (ibid., Call 5.6, p. 184). This includes culturally relevant and accessible Indigenous-led services and trauma supports.

*Analysis*: Many Indigenous Nations incorporate food into their grieving and healing ceremonies, especially in remembrance. One such ceremony is the Anishinaabe *chi bi* ceremony (meaning "ghost ceremony" in English), which honours loved ones who have passed through a feast. An Elder shared with the First Author that during a *chi bi* ceremony, attendees bring foods the deceased enjoyed, while an Elder conducts a pipe ceremony to invite the departed to join the feast with their mourning loved ones (Robin Martens, 2021). Given the power and importance of these ceremonies, which largely involve feasting, funding for feasts should be available to communities, including cultural and mental health supports, so that families can begin to recover from loss.

## Calls for Justice for industries, services, and partnerships

### Media and social influencers: 6.1

*Summary*: All media and institutions teaching journalism, governments, and those working in the entertainment industry must use decolonizing approaches in their work to ensure authentic and appropriate representation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and to challenge harmful and violent stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples must share their stories without discrimination. This is especially relevant in combatting the racist and gendered stereotypes promoted in the media regarding "high-risk" lifestyles, poverty, and child-rearing (Acoose, 2016; Good, 2023).

*Analysis*: Our work and that of many Indigenous scholars, along with our relationships with Indigenous land protectors, has shown that while Western media has depicted the care and protection of Indigenous food systems by Indigenous land stewards, gardeners, seed keepers, and harvesters as disruptive and violent (Lin, 2024), Indigenous Peoples care for the land in non-violent ways, fuelled by reciprocity with the land, to protect their plant and animal kin that make up their food systems. Those engaged in food studies can create media and publications with Indigenous co-authors or co-creators to accurately portray the stories of Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty.

### Health and service providers: 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8

*Summary*: Indigenous Peoples are the "experts in caring for and healing themselves" (NIMMIWG, 2019, Call 7.1, p. 188), and so health and wellness services must be designed and delivered by the communities they serve. Healing initiatives must not be time-limited and must include preventive approaches, including land-based and language initiatives that centre care for Elders and children, as well as knowledge "about harvesting and the use of Indigenous medicines" (ibid., Call 7.4, p. 189). Beyond Indigenous-led approaches to health and wellness, Western systems must provide adequate training and education for health service providers on the history of colonialism, oppression, and genocide of Indigenous Peoples. Funding, training, and recruitment

of Indigenous Peoples to train and work in health and wellness must be established by all governments and health service providers.

*Analysis*: Indigenous-led health and wellness services must incorporate land-based practices involving food harvesting, preparation, and care, as food is central to Indigenous wellness. One example of an Indigenous-led initiative focussed on land-based wellness, health, and healing is the "From the Ground Up" Toolkit for Indigenous Food Sovereignty Planning, curated by the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty (Morrison, 2024). The toolkit uses a trauma-informed approach to support Indigenous communities in planning Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives that can transform trauma by "upholding Indigenous rights and response-abilities to protect, conserve and regenerate the complex system of Indigenous biocultural heritage in the land and food system (Morrison, 2024, para. 2)."

### Calls for police services: 9.1, 9.2

*Summary*: Importantly, these Calls begin with 9.1: "We call upon police services and justice system actors to acknowledge that the historical and current relationship between Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people and the justice system has largely been defined by colonialism, racism, bias, discrimination, and fundamental culture and societal differences" (NIMMIWG, 2019, Call 9.1, p. 190). All actors in the justice system must undertake appropriate training in trauma-informed approaches; establish working relationships that are territorially specific to the police's jurisdiction; and ensure Indigenous representation on "police service boards and oversight authorities" (ibid., Call 9.2 iii, p.190).

*Analysis*: These Calls extend to Indigenous Peoples and children trapped in social welfare and justice systems, whose rights to culturally appropriate food and medicines in correctional facilities are not honoured. These Calls are also especially relevant to the work of land defenders and other stewards, who experience industry-, societal-, and state-based violence while on the land (Lin, 2024; James & Mack, 2020). For example, there have been numerous instances of discrimination and racially charged violence by law enforcement officers against Indigenous land stewards who peacefully protest against resource extraction and industrial developments on their lands that were not approved by their Nations and which threaten to irreversibly contaminate vital foods and waters (Gobby & Everett, 2022; Powell, 2020). Land defenders have been asked to provide status cards, had guns drawn on them, been pepper-sprayed, and had their clothing torn off; Indigenous women land defenders have been called "orcs" and "ogres"—in the context of having red handprints painted on their faces to honour MMIWG—and unjustly singled out for arrest by the RCMP (Kilawna, 2020; Hermes, 2021; Lin, 2024; Lin & Robin, 2025; McKay, 2024; Sterritt, 2021; Mackin, 2025). The violence Indigenous land defenders, particularly women, face from law enforcement underscores the urgency of building respectful relationships between Indigenous Peoples and the justice system, as well as the need to revise policies and procedures to reduce the systemic racism experienced by Indigenous Peoples.

### Educators: 11.1

*Summary*: All educational institutions, from elementary to post-secondary, must educate the public about missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people: "about the issues and root

causes of violence they experience" (NIMMIWG, 2019, Call 11.1, p.193). This education must be done in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and include (but not be limited to) Indigenous territories, law, practices, and histories, including the root causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people (NIMMIWG, 2018, p. 22).

*Analysis*: Many of the root causes of the violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people are relevant to food studies (e.g., loss of Indigenous languages and cultures, loss of land, food and water insecurity, and more). In 2018, the NIMMIWG published a student and youth engagement guide as a "resource for educators at all levels to introduce the value of Indigenous women's and girls' lives into the classroom and into the minds and hearts of young people" and to "prepare educators to use a decolonizing pedagogy and a trauma-informed approach in their teaching" (ibid., p. iii). This guide can be adapted and applied to curricula across the country to challenge harmful stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples, raise awareness of MMIWG, incorporate Indigenous teachings on land and food, and provide settlers with tools to approach decolonization in education.

### Social workers and those implicated in child welfare: 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.12

*Summary*: Indigenous children are the foundation of Indigenous culture. Thus, many of these Calls are relevant, but for this analysis, we highlight a few. All governments and Indigenous organizations are called upon to develop and apply a definition of "best interests of the child" grounded in Indigenous needs, values, and worldviews, and to ensure that, if apprehension is "not avoidable", family and community members will assume care of the child and be supported to do so (NNIWWIG, 2019, Calls 12.3 & 12.6, p. 94-95). Indigenous children should not be apprehended on the basis of poverty or cultural bias. All governments must resolve issues of poverty, housing, and food and water insecurity so that all Indigenous families may succeed. All governments must also provide financial support and resources for children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, including support for grief and loss, as well as specialized care for trauma.

*Analysis*: There is a long history of Indigenous children being apprehended through Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and now the child welfare system. In all cases, the apprehension of children was intended to separate the next generation of Indigenous hunters, gatherers, and food providers from their families, foodways and cultural traditions, and land-based knowledge (including language), while advancing a settler agenda of land dispossession. During apprehension and institutionalization, Indigenous children have been subjected to colonial diets and nutritional experimentation, directly violating their right to food and dignity. This disruption also undermines the specific roles and responsibilities that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have in land-based stewardship, while continuing to socialize Indigenous girls, boys, and 2SLGBTQQIA youth according to Western gender and sexuality norms. By ensuring that Indigenous children and youth remain with their families and communities and have access to traditional foods while they are in systems of "care," there is an opportunity to promote healing through a connection to culture and identity.

### Extractive and development industry: 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5

*Summary*: Resource extraction and development industries must ensure the safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people while also ensuring "equitable benefit from development" (ibid., Call 13.1, p. 196). Development industries must carry out "gender-based socio-economic impact assessments on all projects" (ibid., Call 13.2, p. 196) as an integral part of environmental impact assessments. Government must fund further inquiries and studies to "better understand the relationship between resource extraction and other development projects and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people" (ibid., Call 13.4, p. 196).

*Analysis*: This section specifically notes the need to address racialized sexual violence at hydroelectric projects in Northern Manitoba, where communities have been calling for support for decades. The effects of these projects have been well documented and have emerged in our own work in this context, ranging from the erosion of food sovereignty due to the pollution of traditional foods and medicines, to the harassment of Indigenous women working in the care and service economy (e.g., in kitchens and the food sector) (Amnesty International, 2020; Neckoway & Brownlie, n.d.). Therefore, efforts to reduce harmful resource-extraction development will contribute to the health and safety of traditional food systems and the women and girls who care for them.

### Correctional Service Canada: 14.3, 14.6, 14.8, 14.10

*Summary*: Plans and services for mental health, addictions, and trauma support for incarcerated Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must be needs-based and support reintegration into the community. Culturally safe, distinctions-based, and trauma-informed models of care must be prioritized to enhance the role of Elders in healing.

*Analysis*: In line with the Gladue Principles, our work with land defenders and in communities has emphasized that the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in prisons and jails must be reduced. One pathway is to ensure that alternative approaches, such as healing lodges like the Eagle Women's Lodge, are consistently well-resourced (Indigenous Women's Healing Centre, 2022). These lodges provide trauma-informed spaces that support individuals who have been involved with the Correctional Service of Canada in accessing culturally appropriate care, food, and medicines as they work toward reintegration and healing. As mentioned in Sections 2, 3, 5, and 7, access to traditional foods—and the knowledge of how to harvest, prepare, and share them—is essential to Indigenous food sovereignty, wellbeing, health, and cultural revitalization.

## Calls for Justice for all Canadians

### All Canadians: 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8

*Summary*: These Calls include speaking out about violence against Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA people, and all people; confronting racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia; learning Canada's true history; reading the NIMMIWG final report; working to become a strong

ally; respecting others' values; and committing to protecting and promoting the safety and well-being of 2SLGBTQQIA people, Indigenous women, and girls.

*Analysis*: We chose these Calls deliberately as entry points: Too often, there is a desire to look away from or not interrogate the relationship between food, sex, gender, patriarchy, and violence. However, the Calls for all Canadians recognize that "each person has a role to play in order to combat violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people" (NIMMIWG, 2019, p. 199). In food studies, for example, there is an enormous opportunity for teachers and practitioners to teach about Canada's true history through a food systems lens, given how integral settler agricultural expansion was to dispossessing Indigenous Nations of their lands and to the formation of the Canadian nation-state (Carter, 1990; Kepkiewicz & Dale, 2018; Wittman & James, 2022). As Rotz (2017) points out, patriarchal norms ran through patterns of settler agriculture, where land rights were allocated to settler families that established patriarchal family farms. These patterns—which shape views of who belongs on the land and how—still reverberate across the Canadian agricultural landscape.

## Distinctions-based Calls

The Distinctions-Based Calls articulate the diversity of Indigenous experiences across the country. These calls draw attention to the specific and intersecting forms of violence and oppression that Inuit, Métis, and 2SLGBTQQIA people experience because of their geographic locations, distinct histories of colonialism, and cultural, economic, and jurisdictional contexts. As a group, we debated whether to include all of these calls given their specificity and interdependence. Below, we present several strong examples and encourage readers to familiarize themselves with all Distinction-Based Calls.

Inuit-specific Calls for Justice: 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10, 16.11, 16.12, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15, 16.17, 16.18, 16.19, 16.20, 16.21, 16.25, 16.27, 16.28, 16.30, 16.37, 16.42, 16.44

*Summary*: Most Calls for Justice for Inuit are relevant to food studies. They include protecting and promoting Inuit culture and language by enhancing Inuktut service capacity; requiring government and service providers to learn about Inuit culture, laws, values, and history; supporting intergenerational knowledge transfer; providing culturally appropriate health services within each Inuit community; developing a long-term, sustainably funded Inuit Healing and Wellness Fund to support grassroots and community-led programs; developing a long-term, sustainable fund for Inuit artists to explore and promote healing; and respecting the rights of Inuit children in care, including those placed outside their homelands (which must be restricted), by providing safe, culturally appropriate housing given the links between the housing crisis and violence.

*Analysis*: Of particular relevance, number 16.20 calls for "all governments to support the establishment of programs and services designed to financially support and promote Inuit hunting and harvesting in all Inuit communities" (NIMMIWG, 2019, p. 205). One such

service we have experience with that aligns with this call is Siku, an app created by and for Inuit (and since expanded to other Indigenous Nations) that supports Indigenous-led environmental monitoring and territorial governance, as well as data sovereignty protocols. As noted in Section 4, safe, reliable transportation methods must be available to Indigenous women and girls to maintain access to food, and Siku provides such a service, enabling accessible monitoring, harvesting, and consumption of traditional foods.

### Métis-specific Calls for Justice: 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 17.5, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.13, 17.15, 17.16, 17.17, 17.18, 17.19, 17.20, 17.21, 17.22, 17.23, 17.24, 17.25, 17.26, 17.27, 17.28

*Summary*: Similarly, many of the Métis-specific Calls for justice are relevant to food studies and require Métis participation, "including those with lived experience" (NIMMIWG, 2019, p. 210), to more fully realize the Calls. They include: Equitable representation of Métis voices in policy and programming; funding for Métis-specific programs and services, such as Métis health authorities; eliminating barriers to accessing Métis programs and services; developing Métis-specific cultural competencies, such as trauma-informed care and anti-racist training; funding to establish and maintain cultural programming for Métis children in foster care; funding for traditional healing programs and Métis-specific programs that address Métis well-being; and funding to support Métis cultural practices. Of particular relevance to food studies, 17.9 Calls for "all governments to provide safe transportation options, particularly in rural, remote, and northern communities, including 'safe ride' programs" (ibid., p. 211). This stems from many instances of sexual violence that Indigenous women and girls have faced when utilizing public transportation and taxicab services (Longman, 2016).

*Analysis*: This issue inspired the creation of several ride-sharing organizations for Indigenous women and girls, such as Ikwe Rides. This Indigenous, female-run group provides transportation to Indigenous women and girls on a by-donation basis and has a social media community of 16,500 members (Ikwe Safe Ride, n.d.). Their mission is "to provide a safe means of transportation for female members and children of our community through a volunteer-run initiative. [...] The safety of our volunteers and passengers is our number one priority" (Longman, 2016, para. 14). These services also support food sovereignty for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people by providing safe transportation to access grocery stores, community food markets, and harvesting sites.

### 2SLGBTQQIA-specific Calls for Justice: 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4, 18.6, 18.7, 18.8, 18.10, 18.15, 18.16, 18.17, 18.18, 18.19, 18.22, 18.24, 18.25, 18.27, 18.28, 18.29, 18.31

*Summary*: During the NIMMIWG witness testimonies, the need for greater awareness of 2SLGBTQQIA people, their histories, roles, and their contemporary place within communities was highlighted as particularly important. Self-determined and culturally specific approaches are strongly featured and include: Consistent funding for 2SLGBTQQIA programming and services that are culturally safe and involve youth; inclusion of 2SLGBTQQIA perspectives in decision-making; provision of "safe and dedicated ceremony and cultural places and spaces for 2SLGBTQQIA youth and adults," and advocacy "for 2SLGBTQQIA inclusion in all cultural spaces and ceremonies." Calls directed at researchers and educators

are significant, and include: More precise data-collection measures that include non-binary gender options for reporting in all contexts, and research on pre-colonial knowledge and teachings about the roles, responsibilities, and place of 2SLGBTQQIA peoples within their communities.

*Analysis*: Many Two-Spirit People hold key roles and responsibilities within Indigenous food systems, including seed keeping and healing. These practices are threatened by colonialism, environmental harm, and the safety of Two-Spirit individuals responsible for seed keeping and healing work. If the safety of Two-Spirit people is not prioritized and ensured, these roles will remain threatened, weakening Indigenous health and food systems. Two-Spirit life must be affirmed to revitalize these roles and advance Indigenous food sovereignty.

For food studies scholars, improving health outcomes for 2SLGBTQQIA people can start with something as basic as collecting gender-disaggregated data that recognizes non-binary and Two-Spirit identities, thereby avoiding the replication of colonial binaries. Researchers can also engage more deliberately with scholarship on land and food systems produced by queer and Two-Spirit scholars, as well as with Indigenous feminist and queer theory that foregrounds the interconnections among land, body, and power (cf. Simpson, 2014, 2017; Hunt, 2025).

## Conclusion

There is a danger in responding urgently to these Calls for Justice with simple, reactive solutions that are not conducive to long-term, systemic change. Indeed, addressing the MMIWG2SI crisis *is* urgent: Poverty, gendered violence, child apprehension, and resource extraction are urgent issues that deeply affect Indigenous life. Nonetheless, it is crucial to listen to and respond to community needs and priorities and to base responses on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, seeing, and doing. As demonstrated throughout this paper, Indigenous Peoples are responding to this crisis in countless ways.

In addressing colonial violence, Patty Krawec (2022) urges settlers towards kinship. She explains:

> [B]eing a settler or colonizer is not something you *are*; it is something you *do*. It describes your relationship to this land and the people in it. Remember that settlers come to impose a way of living on top of the existing people. Settler colonialism destroys to replace. If you are going to stop being a settler and start being a kin, that's where we start. With what you do (p. 178).

Kinship requires accountability. Holding the government accountable to the 231 Calls for Justice is an act of kinship. This paper focuses on Calls that extend to the work of food studies practitioners. Thus, it can be considered a call, or perhaps a plea. For Indigenous Peoples, food and the land are inherently political, and, as Tuck and Yang (2012) remind us, decolonization requires *work*. Felt theory guides our plea to food scholars and all Canadians because it humanizes Indigenous lives. This remembering is necessary to support settler engagement in political realms and to enhance learning, sharing, teaching, and classroom engagement with the 231 Calls for Justice.

Gendered violence is part of the colonial food system's history and should be taught as such.

The lack of accountability in natural resource extraction industries is a matter of injustice and a pressing issue that demands immediate attention. Across Turtle Island, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are often doubly victimized by industrial resource extraction projects that perpetuate violence against their traditional lands and their bodies. Governments must hold the operators of resource extraction sites accountable for the national crisis caused by man camps and the violence that perpetuates against bodily sovereignty. Indigenous traditional knowledge and foodways cannot be acknowledged without the perspectives of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

In recognition of the racialized and gendered ways in which settler food systems, in particular, continue to impose on, disrupt, and perpetuate violence against Indigenous land and food systems, Indigenous and anti-colonial land and food scholars, activists, and organizers have increasingly looked to processes of rematriation (Ferreira et al., 2022; Gray, 2022; Kepkiewicz et al., 2023; Leonard et al., 2023; Hill et al., 2024; Herrighty & Hill, 2024; Eastern Woodlands Rematriation, n.d.). Initially coined by Lee Maracle (1988), the "Indigenous rematriation approach to food-related research affirms the relatedness among Indigenous food, bodies, and land" (Ferreira et al., 2022, p. 210) within an Indigenous feminist framework, involving "an embodied praxis of recovery and return…based on Indigenous values and ways of knowing, being, and doing" (Gray, 2022, p. 5). Specifically, rematriation initiatives:

> … connect Indigenous women, celebrate Indigenous womanhood, illuminate the leadership and labour of Indigenous women, recognize the sociopolitical power of women in matrilineal societies, and affirm women's authority in Indigenous governance systems. From these Indigenous feminist perspectives, decolonization cannot fully be realized without Indigenous women at the centre of our efforts. Grassroots Indigenous reclamation and revitalization efforts are most often led and sustained by women at the forefront and behind the scenes. Since Indigenous feminists are identifying the need for place-based cultural reclamation, and work to support the collective healing and resurgence of our nations, rematriation can also be described as an embodied praxis of recovery and return (Gray, 2022, p. 4).

By recognizing and replacing Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA peoples' leadership, decision-making, and roles in caring for food and the land, rematriation can provide a pathway to healing from the heteropatriarchal and colonial violence at the root of the MMIWG crisis, which tells Indigenous women that their place is not on the land—that they are not welcome or safe. Rather, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are of the land. Their safety must be a priority.

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