

Bringing Indigenous Standpoint to Trans Geographies

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Gender, Place and Culture

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Gender, Place and Culture (GPC)

- ▶ Ki Namaste (1996),
- ▶ Petra Doan (2007), and
- ▶ Kath Browne (2004, 2005)
- ▶ Special issue, GPC 2010 questioned geography's predilection for heteronormative and binary thinking when discussing gender
- ▶ Lead to the creation of several sub-fields, including trans geographies

Trans Geographies

- ▶ Are empirical and demonstrative of the experiences and embodied knowledges of trans people
- ▶ Complicate geographies of sexualities and gender
- ▶ Explore the limitations and assumptions of binary thinking of sex, gender, and sexuality
- ▶ Race remains an under-examined axis of difference

Indigenous Sexuality and Gender Diversity

- ▶ Indigenous sexuality and gender diversity is often ignored, silenced, or misunderstood in Indigenous, geographic and feminist scholarship
- ▶ Indigenous people are being oppressed and subordinated by patriarchal and colonialist structures, performances, and cultural dogma

‘For Indigenous trans peoples, there is a struggle to understand our gendered and sexual identities in relation to colonialism, to our relationships with religion, and our place within the queer community at large’ (Clarke 2017, p.77).

Bringing Indigenous Standpoint to Trans Geographies - the possibilities...

- ▶ Offers a framework to investigate Indigenous sexuality and gender diversity
- ▶ An appropriate ‘...way of theorizing knowledge from a particular and interested position’ (Nakata 2007, p.215).
- ▶ Recognises Indigenous people are the ‘primary and most authentic sources of our own cultures and experiences’ (Kwaymullina 2016, p.446).

Indigenous Standpoint as Methodology

seeing knowledge as acquired through interaction, engagement and relationships with the surrounding environments. This praxis provides a conduit that values and privileges the voices of those who are marginalised, disadvantaged and oppressed, whose experiences and lives have generally not been given space in the creation, construction or development of formal western knowledge systems (Sullivan 2018)

Bringing Indigenous Standpoint to Trans Geographies - Can it work?

- ▶ trans geographies still operate within a very western paradigm with a tendency to concentrate on White trans people's experiences

Vs

- ▶ Indigenous Standpoint centres and privileges Indigenous voices and perspectives



Further Reading

- ▶ Sullivan, C. T. (2018). Indigenous Australian women's colonial sexual intimacies: positioning indigenous women's agency. *Culture, health & sexuality*, 20(4), 397-410.
- ▶ Sullivan, C. T. (2018). Majesty in the city: experiences of an Aboriginal transgender sex worker in Sydney, Australia. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 25(12), 1681-1702.
- ▶ Sullivan, C.T., and Day, M. (In press). Indigenous Transmasculine Australians and Sex Work. *Emotion, Space and Society*.