

A Scoping Study of Two Spirit People, Homelessness and Access to Services in Urban Centres in Saskatchewan

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Two-Spirit

The term **Two-spirit** is a self-descriptor increasingly used by Aboriginal gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people who strive to live within a traditional Aboriginal worldview. It asserts that all aspects of identity (including sexuality, race, gender and spirituality) are interconnected and that one's experience of sexuality is inseparable from experiences of culture, community, and the land (Wilson, 2007, iv).

Research Questions

How does homelessness impact two-spirit/queer Aboriginal people in urban centres in Saskatchewan?

And, How can service providers and educators improve access to homeless two-spirit/queer Aboriginal people?

Rationale

Urban Aboriginal people are more likely to be homeless, compared to non-Native Canadians.

Lack of research around Two-spirit homelessness.

Re-victimization: Two-spirit people are invisible when accessing services.

Project design

Indigenous & Queer methodology

- Relationship, reciprocity, collectivism, and sacred knowledges.
- Avoid binary thinking, use a fluidity of terms and experiences.

Methods

- Environmental scan of services, literature, semi-structured interviews (co-created) with community partners.

Analysis

- Individual readings and group readings, themes. Analyzing how notions of class, ethnicity, gender and sex come into play when trying to access housing services
- Feed back from community partners

Moving forward (Action)

Policies

- Need to reflect TS needs: remove stigmatization, misconceptions, and victimization.
- Include Two-spirit/Queer Indigenous people on policy-making boards and program development boards.
- Support from non-Indigenous and Indigenous political organizations for TS issues and concerns.

Education/Training

- workshops and training programs for landlords and property owners about TS people.
- Service organizations working with TS Homeless population need training around the issues and barriers when accessing services.
- Service organizations should hire TS people for mentorship roles.

Future research

- Future research needs to be done around the notion 'home' and 'homelessness' that takes into account a Two-spirit perspective or lens. Consider Two-spirit people as researchers.
- Explorer the link between TS homelessness with domestic / partner violence.
- Link b/w TS homelessness and the criminalization of the sex trade.

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