Chapter 1

An Introduction to the Geographies of Sex and Sexualities

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Introduction

Sexuality has been present, but obliquely addressed, in human geography for a long time. Whenever geographers discussed demographic transition models, population dynamics or fertility rates, for example, they were, at least implicitly, discussing human sexuality. Such approaches tend to assume, prioritize and only attend to aspects of heterosexual coupledom, parenthood and family arrangements. As in most of the topics we study, as geographers we have learned to be wary of assuming that these normative forms of family and coupledom are universal and do not vary between places or across spatial scales. By contrast, geographies of sexualities scholarship considers the different ways in which human sexualities vary geographically.

Geographies of sexualities scholarship is now in its fourth decade. This approach emerged from the desire to examine geographical differences in sexualities and their spatial specificities as a key aspect of human geographies. This geographical work has engaged with a multiplicity of sexual identities and practices, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and heterosexual/straight as well as myriad other practices and experiences. This rich body of work illustrates the centrality of place, space and other spatial relationships in shaping sexual desires, practices and identities, as well as how they are represented, policed and treated in law and everyday life. Similarly, geographers argue that place and space are central to the production of sexed bodies (Duncan, 1996; Longhurst, 2001).

Often starting from the idea that there is nothing innate or natural to either space/place/environment or sex and sexualities, these geographies have shown how sex and sexualities are created in, through and by space, place and environment. Moreover, how space and place are organized and used is directly related to sex and sexualities. Space/place are usually understood as heterosexual and meant to be used by two people who are unambiguously sexed (man or woman), exhibit proper gendered behaviours (femininity and masculinity) that

are mapped on to that unambiguous physical body and sexual interests that are directed towards the clearly differentiated 'opposite sex'. Heteronormativity refers to the ways in which sexuality, sex and gender are intertwined in ways that are presumed to be natural. It is usually based on particular class, race and able-bodied ideals.

Uncomplicated presentations of heterosexuality are what are expected to be visible in spaces, making heteronormativity the marker of heterosexual space. Heterosexual couples holding hands, for example, are unremarked upon and seen as 'normal' in most public spaces in the Global North (Bell, 1994). In contrast, those who contravene these norms are detected and repudiated, often with verbal and physical violence. For example, those who are not 'properly' gendered – that is, easily read as male/female – can be subject to prejudice, abuse and violence in spaces such as toilets (Browne, 2004). Similarly, couples who are read as both being of the same sex, or those who are seen as beyond the 'correct' boundaries of heterosexual monogamy can also be policed through shouting, comments and physical attack (Valentine, 1996). Yet the sexuality of space tends only to be noticed, and named as such, when it is not heterosexual/straight. Gay spaces are marked as different and named as 'gay', but this is not the case for straight spaces. What this means is that sexualities remake everyday spaces, often as 'normal' (where normal means straight and adhering to gender norms). People using these spaces can conform to the norms of the spaces. As a result, they are not subject to violence, looks or comments. Their 'normality' remains unremarked and invisible. In this way places also remake people's lives, identities and bodies.

Initially, geographies of sexualities focused on the activities and experiences of gay men, before then considering the lives of lesbians, and then bi/bisexual and trans people. Including trans people under the label 'sexualities' is problematic, because trans is not a sexual identity; it is related to gender/sex. For this reason, this book explores sex, as it is related to categorizations of man/woman, male/female, as well as the practices of gender that make sexed bodies. Because geographies of sexualities are often presumed to be about other sexualities, 'normative heterosexuality' or the places that Phil Hubbard (2008) calls 'unsexy spaces' often get overlooked. Sexualities are key to the social relations which produce these 'unsexy spaces'

(such as supermarkets, homes and nights out with friends), but because these social relations often go unnoticed and are not considered to be 'sexual', such spaces are often overlooked even by geographers of sexualities (see, however, Meth, 2009; Morrison, 2012a, 2012b; Thomas, 2004; Waitt, Jessop and Gorman-Murray, 2011). The predominance of studies of lesbian and gay spaces by geographers of sexualities also means that there continues to be a lack of geographical work on asexuality, polyamory, kink and BDSM (see Binnie, 1994; Herman, 2007; Klesse, 2007, 2014a, 2014b; Wilkinson, 2009a, 2011).

The term 'queer' has emerged as a dominant conceptual force in Global North considerations of sexualities and sexes, as well as other normative forms of social relations. Queer has diverse definitions. For our purposes, we understand that some people use queer as an identity to move beyond lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (G. Brown, 2007a), whilst others see queer as a mode of thinking that questions how social norms are formed and created (see Giffney, 2004; Browne, 2006; Browne and Nash, 2010; Oswin, 2008; Podmore, 2013a). Queer has questioned the normalization of certain genders (male/female) and also sexualities, including some forms of lesbian and gay sexualities (what can be termed homonormativities – see below).

Whilst there have been many important insights into how bodies and identities question the rigid binaries of gender and sexualities, queer theory's emergence through textual analysis has at times overlooked the lived experience of marginalization, exclusion and self-determination – that is, what it feels like to be other/different and punished in everyday spaces for this. Nonetheless, queer allows us to question the ways in which desire, categories, identities and practices are created, rather than presuming that there is a necessary link between your gender identity, the gender that you are attracted to and what your sexual practices are. Queer, then, allows us to see sexuality and lived experiences as dynamic.

Despite its predominance and analytical potential, there are limits to tying geographical work on sex and sexualities to only queer theory. Doing so encourages us to go about addressing questions in particular ways, when other ways might also be productive (see, for example, Green et al., 2010 for work that does not primarily use queer methodologies). It can also negate

the importance of examining sexualities through the identities that continue to matter in people's lives. Given that such identities can mean that people become the target of discrimination and that these identities are important for the creation of community and belonging, they can be a resource for mobilizing collective activism. For example, mapping LGBT places and histories illustrates the ways in which geographies and politics are inherently intertwined, both critiquing and using identities as a mode of analysis (see Brown and Knopp, 2006).

Moreover, queer modes of analyses are not predominant everywhere, and indeed can be seen as reproducing Anglo-American hegemonies in ways that would be at odds with how queer seeks to question all norms. One of the difficulties is the way in which queer travels to different places, as well as the presumption that queer ideas and concepts can be used in identical fashion everywhere (Browne and Nash, 2010). Queer thinking has emerged through Anglo-American linguistic contexts, and the word 'queer' itself and the ideas behind it do not translate easily (see, for example, Pustianaz, 2010).

Thus, for this collection, although many of the chapters might be described as being 'queer geographies', we have chosen not to name the book in this way. Instead, we focus the book on geographies of sexualities and sex, recognizing both the importance and limitations of queer, and seeking a diversity of geographies that investigate sexual lives, desires, identities, bodies and practices.

What follows is a short introduction to some key areas of geographies of sex and sexualities, public/private, urban/rural, Global North/Global South. Such an Introduction, and indeed even the section introductions, cannot cover everything written in geographies of sex and sexualities over the last 40 years. This chapter is designed to give a reader unfamiliar with the area a chance to understand some of the core building blocks of the subdiscipline. It uses three binaries to introduce some of the key ideas in geographies of sexualities. Each of these is developed in further depth in the section introductions and then the chapters that follow.

Public/Private

The Routledge Research Companion to Geographies of Sex and Sexualities

The public/private divide is a key way through which geography scholars have explored sexual politics, including visibilities and exclusions (Brown, 2000; Tucker, 2009a). Here, we take two paths through this literature, first exploring the role of the state in promoting heteronormative (and, in some cases, homonormative) values and then examining the ways in which everyday spaces are negotiated in relation to the public/private binary. Indeed, some scholarship questions the solidity of the binary itself as the private can become public and what is public is becoming increasingly private. As is the case for many geographers, we are interested in how this and other binaries were used from the nineteenth century onwards to regulate the lives of whole populations through 'public health' and 'birth control' campaigns, and later to encourage people to regulate their own sexual lives (in private). The politics of regulating life in this way is known as 'biopolitics' (see Chapters 29 and 30 for further discussion of this).

Regulating the (real and imagined) relationship between disease and certain forms of sex has been a key form of biopolitics over the last century. Associations between sex and disease are also key areas of research for geographers interested in sexualities. In this context the medicalization and associated demonization of certain sexual acts (see Kearns, Chapter 30 in this volume) is related to shame, and this can encourage the privatization of certain sexual behaviours (as well as associated identities, such as prostitute or gay man). However, public health agendas often intersect with supposedly private sexual lives, as has been the case with diseases such as syphilis, HIV and AIDS when they became key public health concerns (see Brown, 1997a; Legg, 2009, 2012, 2014; Phillips, 2002). However, as Taylor (Chapter 31 in this volume) attests, it is not only public health, but also corporations that have an interest in 'private' sexual lives and the regulation of sexual behaviours. The regulation of sex and sexualities has implications for the individual and collective lives of those who fail to conform to the 'normal' and that includes mental health and suicide (Lewis, 2014). In this and many other ways, the intersections of health and sexualities extend far beyond sexual health.

Across the globe, nation-states monitor and seek to control sexualities in various ways, including: the governance of reproductive rights; access to marriage; tax and welfare benefits for married couples; and the (unequal) legal regulation of certain sexual acts and identities.

Currently, state engagement with sexualities can be classified in terms of heteronormativity and homonormativity, although this distinction soon breaks down. It can be tempting to simply think about heteronormativity in relation to repressive legislation that seeks to condemn and punish 'homosexuality'. Where such legislation has been enacted, it has often driven sexual minorities 'underground' so that they only feel safe expressing their sexualities in private spaces. This, in turn, strengthens a spatial binary between public and private space, whereby all expressions of sexuality become associated with private space. At the same time, this sociospatial division tends to promote some expressions of heterosexuality as not only normal in everyday spaces, but as also key to the development and protection of the state itself. By, for example, outlawing 'unnatural' sexual acts (often sodomy and oral sex) and 'deviant' identities, preventing service in state institutions such as the military and confining the recognition of relationship forms only to men and women, the state itself is sexualized as heterosexual. It is not only by outlawing particular acts that this occurs; the state is also heterosexualized by the ways in which it offers recognition and preferential treatment to some heterosexual relationship forms (Bell, 1994, 1995a; Bell and Binnie, 2000; Richardson, 1996a).

Since the 1990s increasing numbers of countries, such as South Africa, the UK, Brazil and Canada have instigated equalities and human rights legislation that creates protections and rights for some gay men and lesbians. These changes include same-sex marriage, equal employment rights and the right to serve in the military. Seeing state-led sexual politics only in terms of heteronormativity is now problematic (Oswin, 2007a). Yet, to frame all sexual politics in terms of a desire for 'equality' can be problematic as well, and the assertion that all sexual minorities only want equality is inaccurate. Indeed, a group called Against Equality (http://www.againstequality.org) critique mainstream gay and lesbian politics for overlooking the forms of classed and racialized inequalities within lesbian and gay communities that are overlooked by standard equality claims. Rubin (1984) suggests that society prioritizes some expressions of sexuality over others. This is a dynamic process: as new groups are welcomed into the 'charmed circle' of social approved sexualities, so others are pushed out of the circle. The public recognition and hierarchization of some sexual identities, relationships and forms

over others continues. The instigation of these rights has seen some queers 'left out in the cold' (Sears, 2005), whilst others, mainly white, monogamous, coupled, middle-class gay men (and, to an extent, lesbians) benefit from these changes. The term 'homonormativity', coined by Duggan (2002) has been used to describe how some people who were once considered 'sexual deviants' have become normalized through these legislative and cultural shifts, whilst others, including queer migrants, queers of colour, disabled queers, those who are poor, non-monogamous or single continue to be demonized and excluded (Isoke, 2014; Nast, 2002; D. Richardson, 2004, 2005; Platero, 2014; Taylor, 2007a; Taylor, Hines and Casey, 2011; Wilkinson, 2013). An engagement with the ways in which normalizations are formed not only by gender/sex, but also by other intersecting identities, including class, race, ethnicities and disabilities, is key to understanding sexual lives, practices, identities and power relations.

Nonetheless, there has been a push-back against the necessary association of white, middle-class gay men with privilege (Elder, 2002; Sothern, 2004). The assumptions that there can be a pure separation of (self-identified) queer lives and politics from the state has also been queried, where scholars have argued that such ideological divisions cannot be realized and that such an argument overlooks the productive possibilities of an LGBT politics that engages overtly with state equalities processes (see Andrucki and Elder, 2007; Brown, 2009; Browne and Bakshi, 2013a; Oswin, 2004). In this way, the desires for equality and freedom are both problematic and have limitations. It is important, then, to look critically at how sexual 'liberation' is understood and attained, given the political and social choices being pursued.

State interventions that seek to eliminate certain sexual acts, practices and relationship forms from public life, can instead privatize them within domestic (private) spaces. The home has been a significant site of geographical research for decades. Initially, humanities research celebrated the positive sense of place associated with home spaces. However, geographers interested in gender and sexualities have queried these assertions (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Gregson and Lowe, 1995), and architects have explored how housing design presumes certain relationship forms and gendered divisions of labour (Matrix, 1984; Colomina, 1992; Betsky, 1997). The home can also be a place of oppression, where lesbians and gay men experience

alienation and discrimination from their families of origin, and other household residents. Moreover, even where same–sex couples live together, they may develop strategies to hide their relationships when certain people come to visit (such as pretending to use two bedrooms) (Johnston and Valentine, 1995). In contrast, when heterosexual family pictures are displayed and shared, there is a celebration of ideal family forms (Rose, 2010). Research on domestic violence has also noted how the associations of privacy and safety with the home can deflect attention from the need to investigate violence and the home (Brickell, 2012; Meth, 2014; Warrington, 1995). Scholars have also noted how homes can be spaces of empowerment and self–expression, including for LGBTQ people (Gorman-Murray, 2007, 2008; Kentlyn, 2008). Paying attention to the mundane practices of making a home together (such as cooking or DIY) can reveal much about the role of homes in the intimate lives of people of all sexualities (Gabb et al., 2013; Meah, 2014, Morrison, 2012a, 2012b).

In contrast to the privacy of the home, as the 'best place for families and reproduction', public spaces for the expression of alternative sexualities and sex itself can be extensively regulated (Browne and Nash, 2014a; Nash and Browne, 2015). Sex itself is policed in relation to 'public decency' that reiterates a public/private divide. In addition to street based sex work, that challenges the public/private divide, numerous studies have documented gay men's/men who have sex with men's use of (semi–) public spaces (including beaches, cemeteries, parks, toilets and bathhouses/saunas) to engage in sex with casual partners (see Brown, 2008; Gandy, 2012; Ingram et al., 1997; Kramer, 1995; McGlotten, 2013). Less well understood are women's use of public space for sex, although there has been some work on queer women's bathhouses (Bain and Nash, 2007; Nash and Bain, 2007). Nonetheless, in public space 'a kiss is not just a kiss' when two women kiss in public spaces, and LGBT people continue to feel unsafe and fear discrimination when displaying affection in public space (Blidon, 2008a; Cattan and Clerval, 2011; Ferreira, 2011; Ferreira and Salvador, 2014).

Digital technologies are increasingly altering the ways in which sexual encounters are mediated, sex work is undertaken, blurring established divisions between public and private space. Applications ('apps') such as Grindr and Tinder, enable individuals to find sexual

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partners in 'cyberspace' without needing to use public or semi–public spaces. It is worth remembering that these applications rely on their geolocative and other functions. This is explored in Section 7 along with the many other ways that digital worlds are recreating spatial–sexual relations (see Ferreira and Salvador, 2014 and chapters by Albury, Mowlabocus, and Nash and Gorman-Murray).

Urban/rural

The shift from rural communities to large urban conurbations during industrialization in the Global North contributed to the emergence of the sexual subcultures and identities that we recognize today. Placing people into closer proximity and loosening the ties of community and family was key to creating new social and sexual forms (Hubbard, 2011). Geographies of sexualities began by looking at gay ghettos and other urban areas where gay men claimed territories in the form of shops, bars, clubs and places to live (Lauria and Knopp, 1985; Knopp, 1987, 1990, 1992). These studies showed the importance of proximity and territory in establishing collective identities and also in claiming political power. For example, in San Francisco these areas were able to elect gay politicians, such as Harvey Milk, because of the clustering of gay men around the Castro area (Castells, 1983; Armstrong, 2002; Forest, 1995).

This preliminary scholarship focused primarily on the visible experiences of a particular group of white gay men who were often understood to have disproportionate amounts of disposable income (even if their apparent 'affluence' has continues to be contested). Challenging this Gill Valentine (1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1995), Linda Peake (1993), Julie Podmore (2001, 2006) and Catherine Nash (2006), amongst others noted the ways in which lesbian geographies queried and contested the territorial assumptions in the literature focused on gay men. Time–space compartmentalization was used to explore how lesbians express their sexual identities differently at different times, and in different spaces, (Valentine, 1993b). We would suggest that just as lesbians *do* cluster, gay and bi men also use time – space compartmentalism as a way of managing different aspects of their lives and identities. This literature has questioned the idea the sexual identities were necessarily territorially based, nor that they needed to be. Indeed Julie Podmore (2001) explored how lesbians found each other

in public (heterosexual spaces) through particular dress codes, hair styles, walks and other actions (see Browne and Ferreira, forthcoming).

The focus on gay men is also contested in research examining prostitution and sex work which notes how red light districts in urban areas are facilitated and policed (Hubbard, 1997, 1998, 2001; Hubbard and Whowell, 2008; Laing, Smith and Pilcher, 2015). Seeing sex work as inherently spatial, brings a discussion of heterosexuality to the fore when examining marginalized sexual spaces. Work in this field looks beyond (potentially) marginalized 'red light districts' to consider how new forms of 'adult entertainment' are increasingly central to the economies of many cities (Hubbard, 2011).

Explorations of Bi and Trans lives also question some of the findings in early literatures about sexualities and urban space (Hemmings, 2002; Klesse, 2007). Hemmings (2002) noted that bisexuals have always been present in (and involved in the creation of) both gay and straight spaces despite the fact their presence has largely been visible or unacknowledged. Authors such as Petra Doan (2007, 2009, 2011) and Nash (2011) have noted how supposedly inclusive lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans scenes and urban spaces can be highly marginalizing and spaces of discrimination for trans people. This is similar to findings regarding how lesbians experience LGBT spaces, which are often seen as more friendly to gay men, reproducing a need for lesbian specific space (Chetcuti, 2010; Corlouer, 2013; Ferreira, 2011).

It was not only differing identities that lent complexity to early engagements with urban spaces. Recently, the continuing existence of 'gay ghettos' has been called into question as recent research questions whether major cities in the Global North are witnessing the end of the fixity of gay ghettos (Ruting, 2008) and 'gaybourhoods' as certain gay (and lesbian) identities move into the mainstream (Brown, 2014; Kanai and Kenttamaa-Squires, 2015; Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2014; forthcoming). Ghaziani (2014, pp. 245–59) has argued that 'gaybourhoods' are dynamic and that different clusters of gay businesses and residences come and go over time. In recent years, a combination of more tolerant social attitudes in Europe and North America (along with the growth of online dating apps) has seemingly reduced the need for gay/LGBT people to congregate in particular neighbourhoods for safety and

companionship. Many more LGBT people are now choosing to live in the suburbs and smaller cities (Brown-Saracino, 2011; Kirkey and Forsyth, 2001). As more lesbian and gay people have children and other out or semi-visible LGBT populations are ageing, they now look for other services and atmospheres in the places where they choose to live. Even so, traditional gay neighbourhoods continue to be material and symbolic places of safety and freedom for LGBT youth, trans and gender-variant people, as well as others who may find it harder to create a safe space for themselves elsewhere (Gorman-Murray and Nash, 2014; Leroy, 2009). As part of this diversification of residential and leisure options for LGBT people, some researchers have noted the emergence of new 'queer' neighbourhoods which seek to distinguish themselves from older 'gay villages' aesthetically and in terms of the types of consumption opportunities they offer and the 'diversity' of people they claim to include (see Andersson, 2009, 2011; Compton and Baumle, 2012; Nash, 2013a, 2013b; Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2014; Nash and Gorman-Murray, Chapter 22 in this volume). Whether these spaces are more inclusive than older gay neighbourhoods or whether they produce alternative configurations of exclusion will require further research over the coming years. However, it is important not to forget that increasing rent prices and gentrification also means that some LGBT people may not have a 'choice' of living in these neighbourhoods at all, as was contended from the outset of investigations into these areas (Castells, 1983; Collins, 2004a).

Gaybourhoods are not only being questioned in the Global North. Elsewhere they have been critiqued as an Anglo-American spatial formation that resulted from the confluence of various factors, including specific forms of planning cultures. In other contexts, this urban form has never appeared or has assumed completely different forms. This can vary from city to city, as well as internationally (Peixoto Caldas, 2010; Martinez and Dodge, 2010). In other words, geographers should be wary of assuming that these models are universally applicable (Visser, 2013). Concerns over the decline of 'the gaybourhood' and claims that these are no longer necessary are based on specific Anglo-American assumptions (Lewis, 2013a).

Central to discussions of geographies of sexualities from the 1990s has been the urban/rural divide. Research on migration initially focused on urban to rural migrations.

Speaking to those who had moved away from rural areas, urban areas were seen as the only place that it was possible to come out, engage with same-sex sexual partners and actively create community (Weston, 1995). When examining heterosexualities in rural areas, the normalization of certain forms of heterosexuality has often been read through associations linking nature and romance, as well as 'wholesome' family life (Little, 2003, 2007). This has meant that others (including racial and urban others) are excluded and marginalized from rural space. Indeed, some authors equate the urban with sexual diversity and promise because of the proximity of people to each other. Rural researchers, however, contest the presumption that gay and lesbian sexualities are confined to urban areas (Phillips et al., 2002). Kramer (1995), for example, demonstrated how gay and bisexual men in rural Dakota developed specific sites and forms of mobility in order to meet men like themselves. Valentine (1997a) showed how US lesbian separatist women used rural areas to challenge man-made urbanities and create alternative communities (see also Browne, 2011). Smith and Holt (2005) showed that a small town in a rural area in the North of England had also developed into a lesbian haven. Finally rural spaces are used in subversive heterosexual ways, including practices of dogging (Bell, 2006).

The urban/rural divide continues to pervade not only geographical literatures, but also popular consciousness about where sexual identities can be performed. Yet there have been some challenges to this. Research demonstrates how migration patterns are not linear and final, even where the initial move is from the rural to the urban (Waitt and Gorman-Murray, 2011a). People move into and out of different areas, they return to places where they grew up and move again (Knopp and Brown, 2003; Lewis, 2014). Many different spaces can be used to find safety and freedom to express gender and sexual identities (see Doan, Chapter 27 in this volume). Of course, these mobilities are not available to all, and the assumption that all sexual and gender minorities can move to urban areas to escape repression in their home towns, has been contested (Gorman-Murray, 2009a; Gray, 2009). Moreover, these studies were often based in the USA, and often focused on coastal cities in that country (Murphy et al., 2010, with notable exceptions including Gorman-Murray, 2013 and Lewis, 2014). Not only does this fail to account for the diversity of urban spaces in the USA, but it also cannot account for the different experiences of

migration that lesbians, gay men, bi and trans people have across the world, including experiences of international diasporas and refugee status (see Blidon, Yue, Raj, Rouhani, Chapters 23, 24, 25 and 26 in this volume). The section on mobilities in this volume explores movement, including, but also moving beyond migration.

Global North/Global South

In the introduction, the example of same sex-couples holding hands was used to discuss how space is heterosexualized. Whilst this might be out of place in the Global North, in many places in the Global South, it would be men and women holding hands in public that would be seen as disrupting the norms of the sexualities of space. Indeed in some places, men holding hands is an acceptable sign of male friendships. As geographies of sexualities has grown and diversified from its initial beginnings in the study of US cities, the unexamined applicability of concepts developed in these cities about sex and sexualities to other locations has been contested.[1] Three will be introduced here and others can be found in Section III. The three addressed here are: 1) that sexual identity categories and the man/woman binary are universally applicable in all places, at all times; 2) how studies originating in the Global North tend to assume patterns of progress and development that emerge from particular world cities will be replicated in other places; and 3) the geographies of knowledge about sex and sexualities itself.

Gay and LGBT identities are largely associated with specific values located in the Global North, including ideals associated with coupled family forms that differ from other forms of extended kinship. These are not always easily applied to other contexts (Adam et al., 1992; Plummer, 1992; Drucker, 2000; Grewal and Kaplan, 2001; Platero Mendez, 2009; G. Brown et al., 2010; Moussawi, 2013; Cattan and Vanolo, 2014). This means that the

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[1] This is not to suggest that writing on the Global South is not a feature of geographies of sexualities (see, for example, Oswin, 2005, 2007a, 2013; Legg, 2009, 2012, 2014; Tucker, 2009a); instead, it is to note how this subdiscipline has been hegemonically constituted through Global North understandings of sex and sexualities, as well as particular practices of scholarship.

assumptions of unidirectional and the unproblematic acceptance of Western gay and lesbian identities in the Global South have also been critically analysed (see, for example, Povinelli and Chauncey, 1999; Cruz-Malavé and Manalansan, 2002, Kulpa and Mizieliñska, 2011).

The presumption of universal models of gender that see it only through man/woman or male/female binaries has long been disrupted by the existence of 'third sexes' in various parts of the world. Examples of third sexes include Hijras in India, Samoan Fa'afafine and Two-Spirited Indigenous Americans (Hutchings and Aspin, 2007). These 'third sexes' and gendered roles associated with them challenge the binaries of Western thought in relation to sex and gender. Moreover, understandings of trans/transgender/transsexual that are articulated in relation to particular models of transitioning and 'gender reassignment' can also be queried beyond the Global North. For example, as Silva and Ornat (Chapter 37 in this volume) demonstrate, *travesti* does not equate to transgender and transgender can be rejected as an identity by *travestis* themselves.

Alongside the ways in which some cultures beyond the Global North can be classified as being 'more progressive' with regard to gendered lives beyond male/female binaries, the presumption that the Global North leads the way in sexual equality agendas is also questionable. These assertions often focus on the 'progress' made in specific cities and the acceptance of some gay men (and lesbians). However, discussions of world cities and ordinary cities (see Kanai, 2014; Oswin, 2015; and the chapters by Muller-Myrdahl, Johnston and Longhurst, and Visser in this volume), show that as geographers we are critical of models that see some cities as 'world leaders' and others as followers. Instead, each city and the lives within them need to be explored on their own terms, recognizing the potentials and limitations of each (see also Robinson, 2006).

However, it is not just the object of examination – that is, 'gay', 'LGBT' or 'heterosexual' men/women – that has been brought into question by critically reflecting on Anglophone and Eurocentric assumptions within the geographies of sexualities. As the editors and authors note in Section III of this book (see the chapters by Hutta, Zarate, and Silva and Ornat), the very way in which knowledge about geographies of sex and sexualities has been

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created is related to the Global North positioning/identities of scholars. Creating knowledges that move beyond Anglo-American hegemonies not only diversifies the objects of study beyond Global North categories of sexualities and sexed difference; it also can be used to question the premises on which this work is built.

About this Book

The *Companion* is structured around seven themed sections that profile the distinctive contributions geographers make to the study of sexualities: urban sexualities (which also addresses small towns and the urban/rural divide); sexual politics; decolonizing sexualities; mobile sexualities; sexual health; commercial sexualities; and, digital sexualities. Each section brings different ways of thinking that considerably widen the geography of analysis, and conversely push the thinking in sexualities/LGBTQ studies. Each section begins with an introductory chapter authored by the section editor(s), reviewing the core concepts and debates in that specific field of geographic inquiry. Many of these introductions also identify gaps or problems in the field and suggest how scholarship might develop over the years to come. Sections I and II deal with urban sexualities and sexual politics as a frame for how geographical work about sexuality initially developed. We then disrupt this order by explicitly contesting the Anglo-American hegemony within geographies of sexualities through Section III, 'Decolonising Sexualities'. We then move to consider other ways of engaging with sexual geographies through mobilities, sex work and sexual health (an area that has dominated work on sexualities beyond geographies). We conclude by exploring digital sexualities. This is an emerging area that reworks considerations of spatialities in part through the technological reworking of the physical embodiment of gay territories in urban areas.

In this way the *Companion* seeks to provide scholars and graduate students with a comprehensive overview of the current research in geographies of sexual and gender/sex difference. This breadth suggests multiple and diverse, even divergent, paths for future inquiry and developments in the area and beyond into geographies, sexualities, gender identities and queer thinking.