

## PhD Completion Seminar: Todd Fernando

### The social and cultural experiences of queer Indigenous Australians

#### Supervisors:

**Professor Marcia Langton**, (Principal Supervisor), Associate Provost, Foundation Chair of Australian Indigenous Studies, Director of Indigenous Studies, Centre for Health Equity, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health.

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1:00pm to 2:00pm



B103 (Theatre 1), 207 Bouverie Street, Melbourne  
School of Population & Global Health



Contemporary Indigenous health practices in Australia are focused on holistic health care approaches. In the past decade, there has been a significant increase of these practices identifying and engaging with the health priorities of Indigenous sub-populations based on geography, gender, and sexuality. While this increase has allowed for better general outcomes for the health of Indigenous people, little is known about the social, cultural, and historical factors for queer Indigenous populations in Australia. This inquiry asks: In what ways are queer-Indigenous identities framed or positioned in Indigenous health approaches, and how do queer-Indigenous people seek and understand healing?

This PhD research presents the findings of a qualitative study into the social, cultural, and historical factors that shape the determinants of health of queer Indigenous people in Australia. The investigation reveals that despite being framed or positioned as an 'at risk' population within Indigenous health practices, queer Indigenous people are highly literate and proactive in managing their health and wellbeing. Further, queer Indigenous people showcase diverse codeswitching techniques within the public and private interfaces of queer and Indigenous social settings. The study also found that queer Indigenous Australians possess a deep desire to understand and connect their gender and sexuality experiences within both ancient and contemporary Indigenous cultures as a form of healing, expression, and way of life.

Todd Fernando is a descendant of the Kalarie peoples of the Wiradjuri Nation and identifies as queer with pronouns he/him. Since 2014, Todd has engaged in a wide range of teaching and research capacities at The University of Melbourne with a keen interest in queer theory, gender and sexuality studies, health policy, racial literacy, whiteness studies, contemporary Indigenous studies, and Indigenous geopolitics.