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**Evelyn J. Peters and Julia Christensen, editors. *Indigenous Homelessness: Perspectives from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*. University of Manitoba Press, 2016. 408 pp. ISBN: 978-0-88755-826-9.**

<https://uofmpress.ca/books/detail/indigenous-homelessness>

Despite the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the homeless populations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, studies of homelessness have so far failed to consider the specificity of Indigenous homelessness in culturally relevant ways. Arguing that homelessness is “endemic to experiences of colonialism” (323) and indeed rooted in colonial practices, editors Peters and Christensen have drawn together chapters which resituate the crisis of Indigenous homelessness away from social pathologies, discourses of poverty, addiction and mental health. *Indigenous Homelessness* is a timely, important work which considers in detail a diverse range of Indigenous perspectives, illustrative of the scale and scope of contemporary Indigenous homelessness in order to address the prevailing “apathy and even passive acceptance” (10) that currently surrounds this phenomenon.

*Indigenous Homelessness* is organised into three sections, which separately focus on homelessness in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Introductory chapters usefully lay out the colonial and socio-economic contexts within each country, and the extent of what is currently known about Indigenous homelessness, as well as current areas of focus for policy makers. Whilst this structure enables detailed discussions within each national context, it does limit the extent to which comparisons can be made. One might have wished for a more balanced structure: nine chapters are devoted to Canada whilst five chapters explore homelessness in Australia and three chapters concentrate on New Zealand. That being said, the book is structured with an accumulative effect in mind, meaning ideas and concepts initially raised in the chapters on Canadian homelessness are brought into dialogue with the discussions focused on the other countries. Indeed, this accumulative effect is most apparent in Peters’s conclusion to *Indigenous Homelessness*, which makes some of the book’s most valuable comparisons. Individual chapters, which might have adopted their own comparative approach, are unfortunately lacking in this edited collection but, as has been noted, this is an understudied aspect in homelessness scholarship and perhaps such comparative work might now follow on from Peters and Christensen’s work, utilising the methodologies and concepts raised in *Indigenous Homelessness*.

Peters’s illuminating conclusion identifies broad themes across the multitude of perspectives offered in the collection as a whole: legacies of colonialism; policy-driven homelessness; cultural survival and resistance; specificity of places and identities. Addressing the complex challenges posed by Indigenous homelessness, Peters argues, requires a greater understanding of these themes as well as the willingness to confront the cultural assumptions and structural racism embedded within existing practices. Peters advocates (as indeed does the book as a whole) for the involvement of Indigenous people in community-engaged scholarship to build upon the findings within *Indigenous Homelessness*.

The many settings, methodologies and culturally specific aspects of homelessness—be it “absolute,” “hidden,” “at risk of” or “spiritually” homeless—presented in Peters and

Christensen's expansive work are too varied to summarise here. There are, however, particular chapters that achieve an exemplary balance between local and global challenges posed by Indigenous homelessness. Employing a Blackfoot (Niitsítapi) conception of land lends Belanger and Lindstrom's chapter, "'All We Needs Is Our Land': Exploring Southern Alberta Urban Indigenous Homelessness," an important tribal specificity. Yet their concern for the experience of "being homeless in one's homeland" (163) and spiritual homelessness speaks to a wider problem shared by many communities discussed in this work. Research such as this, informed as it is by brief considerations of similar work from other geographical contexts, provides an exemplary approach to addressing Indigenous homelessness; local cultural frameworks and methods lead to discussions that have an empowering relevance which reaches to issues faced by Indigenous populations more broadly.

Without adequate definitions and models of Indigenous homelessness, public policy is not properly equipped to address it and even risks exacerbating the issue. Greenop and Memmott's chapter, "'We Are Good-Heart People, We Like to Share': Definitional Dilemmas of Crowding and Homelessness in Urban Indigenous Australia," illustrates this in relation to Australian models of crowding. They find that statistical measures of homelessness and crowding are culturally constructed to extend Anglo-Australian norms of behaviour and housing use. The authors call for an evidence-based policy that does not assimilate cultural values and discuss positive Indigenous practices behaviours surrounding sociality and mobility, caring for country and kin, that are mistakenly interpreted as examples of crowding.

In the section on New Zealand, Groot and Peters's introductory chapter outlines the ways in which New Zealand lacks a nationally coordinated response to homelessness. That the delivery of social housing and service provision appears to fall behind parallel efforts in Canada and Australia might explain the corresponding paucity of research into Māori homelessness. Whilst this third section of *Indigenous Homelessness* is unfortunately smaller than the preceding sections, the ideas presented are nonetheless significant to the field. In "*Tūrangawaewae Kore: Nowhere to Stand*," Brown comprehensively explains *tūrangawaewae*, the Maori concept of having an ancestral place to land, before stressing the need for long-term strategies that might decolonise national policy and prioritise Māori spiritual identification with ancestral landscapes. Brown's discussion covers a multigenerational experience, of both rural and urban homelessness, to provide a detailed account of the processes by which colonisation has caused Indigenous homelessness in New Zealand.

If colonisation is in part, as contributors Bonnycastle, Simpkins and Siddle argue, "a contest over whose knowledge matters" (117), then surely this necessary study is an important step in countering the underrepresentation of Indigenous people in current studies of homelessness. Prioritising Indigenous concepts—from *tūrangawaewae* to home/journeying in the Northwest Territories and Australian Aboriginal structures of kinship—allows *Indigenous Homelessness* to assert how Indigenous knowledge should matter to researchers and policy-makers facing the challenges posed by homelessness.

*Indigenous Homelessness* succeeds in its exploration of pliable analytical concepts—such as "spiritual homelessness"—with which we can consider Indigenous homelessness in specific local contexts. Several contributors note the dangers of extrapolating findings from one geographic location to another, yet, as Peters's conclusion suggests, there are respectful ways in which the individual cultural experiences of homelessness can be connected across distinct geographies

because of shared colonial histories. Readers of *Transmotion* might want to consider ideas presented in this work in relation to Indigenous homelessness amongst Native American populations. Certainly, the comprehensive examinations of homelessness in Canada would seem applicable to a broader North American context. Given the expertise of the editors, this book is of particular use for social and cultural geographers across all former settler colonies. Across Indigenous literary studies, researchers interested in Indigenous wellbeing, identity through relationships to land and the continuing legacy of colonialism should welcome the important discussions presented in this edited collection.

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