

**Michael J. Bosia, Sandra M. McEvoy, and Momin Rahman. *The Oxford Handbook of Global LGBT and Sexual Diversity Politics*. Oxford Handbooks, 2020.**

Alexandra Fine, University of California, Davis, USA

1        *The Oxford Handbook of Global LGBT and Sexual Diversity Politics* (2020) edited by M. Bosia, S. McEvoy, and M. Rahman, offers three sections composed of twenty-eight chapters on histories, theories, case studies, and critiques of global LGBT and sexual diversity politics. The handbook's main intention is to dislodge the centrality of the U.S., and the West in general, in global LGBT studies. The editors therefore support a more inclusive perspective through case studies of a decentralized 'global' LGBT world.

2        Bosia introduces the handbook by problematizing the notion that the lesbian and gay liberation movement in the U.S. has been exported to other nations as a model of progress, thus challenging a merely 'Western' approach to global LGBT studies. Bosia does so by referencing to the 2019 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Stonewall Riots and the common assumption that the riots mark the start of the modern global LGBT-movement, as well as the idea that struggles for same-sex marriage are central within the global LGBT-movement, instead of a more multi-faceted approach.

3        This handbook therefore emphasizes that non-Western narratives and global manifestations of empire and race are critical to understanding global LGBT politics. The handbook presents guiding questions for its readers, targeting the impact of colonial and neocolonial structures, racial configurations, Euro-American imperial projects, and the imposition and export of Western understandings of gendered and sexual binaries. These questions are critical in fulfilling the authors' goal of going 'beyond' the West.

4        Within the first section, "Theories and Origins of Contemporary Sexual and Gender Diversity Politics," the authors challenge the assumption that current LGBT politics signify a clear and linear progress narrative, applying an interdisciplinary approach when they explore gendered and sexual dimensions of capitalism, globalization, and industrialism, as well transgender identities and rights. The overall focus is on challenging scholarly attention on largely Western experiences in the understanding LGBT identities and politics.

5        Central within the second section, "Case Studies in Global Sexual and Gender Diversity Politics," is the inclusion of queer sexualities and forms of identification. Here, the authors list case studies that mostly go beyond the U.S. and West, including Latin America, Africa, South

Asia, the former Soviet Union, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa. They examine decolonial and indigenous sexualities, the global impact of HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ-rights in relation to the geographic, cultural, and temporal context in which they are situated.

6 Within the third section, “Critical Understandings of Global Sexual and Gender Diversity,” the reader is provided with theoretical and methodological tools, as well as activist strategies, for an intervention in the present status of global LGBT politics within academia. Discussions of LGBT visibility, of knowledge-production and theories around LGBT issues, and of the relation between academia and activism are paired with the examination of politics of oppression and liberation, as well as decolonial critiques of LGBT issues. Central to this section are processes of normalization, hetero- and homonormativity, discrimination and violence, neoliberalism and capitalism, as well as the social significance of language.

7 Overall the editors acknowledge that the handbook, despite its breadth, is in no way an exhaustive global study of LGBT issues. They explain that the handbook falls short in lacking a chapter on migration in relation to LGBT identities and experiences. I agree that this gap presents a large oversight, especially as immigration, forced displacement, violence, and what has been termed the ‘refugee crisis’, remain pressing global issues, and thus should be considered in a global study of LGBT-issues.

8 Apart from this limitation, the handbook presents an effective examination of the breadth of global LGBT issues, with questions and theories relevant to gender studies and queer theory, as well as feminist and trans studies. Overall, the handbook presents a critical and interdisciplinary approach to global LGBT politics, including the recent research. Although the various authors introduce relevant terminology, a more in-depth focus on the impact and development of language with regard to gender and sexuality would be beneficial, as well as a more detailed assessment of the concept of intersectionality, as it is central to the handbook’s examination of a the diversity of global LGBT issues.

9 Overall, this handbook offers a uniquely comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of various contemporary LGBT issues, together with an examination of academic approaches to the global study of gender and sexuality. Unlike other volumes, which focus largely on specific LGBT issues, and are restricted to a specific context, this handbook comprehensively and effectively highlights a wide range of topics pertaining to LGBTQ cultures, politics, and histories, from a

range of multi-disciplinary perspectives. The handbook is therefore uniquely accessible to readers with diverse research interests and academic training.