



Nulungu Research Institute

School of Arts Sciences.
Faculty of Arts, Science, Law
and Business

A New Partnership, William Roe, 1994

PhD Presentation:

Tourism Trails from Saltwater Kimberley to Oklahoma Indian Country: An Exploration of Indigenous-led Tourism, Culture and Resurgence

Date: Friday 23 September 2022

Venue: NDB11/ Lecture Room 13

88 Guy Street, Broome

Zoom: <https://notredame-au.zoom.us/j/84322434494>

Password: 204525

Please advise if you need any special requirements to attend this event.

This event will be conducted in accordance with COVID-19 requirements.

Time: 12.00pm – 1.00pm

Presenter:

Bobbie Chew Bigby



Abstract

This research explores the intersections between Indigenous-led tourism and resurgence among Indigenous communities, with resurgence understood as connections with culture, Country (i.e. Indigenous homelands and waterways), and community. The research utilises a comparative case study approach to specifically highlight the experience of Karajarri Traditional Owners within the context of the saltwater Kimberley region of northwestern Australia. It also presents a comparative example of Indigenous-led tourism development within the context of the author's Tribal Nation, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, in the United States. Employing an Indigenous Participatory Action Research methodological framework that prioritises Indigenous perspectives, relationality and collaboration with participants as co-researchers, the research relies on extended, semi-structured interviews and co-researcher feedback when presenting the data. This study brings forth different voices, perspectives and experiences with Karajarri-led tourism from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal co-researchers alike. The research focuses specifically on the relationships between traditional values, cultural lifeways and tourism models offered to visitors.

Overall, the study critically examines the nexus between Indigenous-led tourism and community resurgence practices and discourses, with an emphasis on the ways that tourism relates to and, in some cases, serves as a vehicle for enabling resurgence. Specifically, I examine the ways that the Karajarri case study relates to the following concepts from Indigenous resurgence discourses: (1) grounded normativity, or traditional, place-based values; (2) 'everyday acts' of resurgence of cultural lifeways in the spheres of permissions, governance and economy-making; and (3) Indigenous internationalism that introduces a comparative lens for bringing the Karajarri case into dialogue with Cherokee and other Indigenous-led tourism models. The reflections from this study highlight the ways that Indigenous-led tourism can serve as a vehicle for resurgence of culture, community and connections with Country. It also explores the ways that this tourism-resurgence nexus is tested and shaped by the wider context of settler-colonial historical, political, social and economic influences, whether in the Kimberley or Oklahoma Indian Country.

Biography

Bobbie Chew Bigby is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Bobbie is based between Broome, Australia and Tulsa, Oklahoma where she is completing a PhD at the Nulungu Research Institute in the University of Notre Dame Australia, focused on comparative Indigenous tourism, culture and resurgence. Her past research fellowships, including a Fulbright award and Rotary Peace Fellowship, have taken her to Indigenous Australia, Burma, Cambodia, China and India for research and community-based work. Bobbie is a recent co-editor of the volume, "Socialising Tourism: Rethinking Tourism for Social and Ecological Justice" (Routledge, 2022). Bobbie is a recent co-editor/author of the volumes, "Socialising Tourism: Rethinking Tourism for Social and Ecological Justice" (Routledge, 2022) and "The Local Turn in Tourism: Empowering Communities" (forthcoming, Channel View, 2022).