

## Two-Spirits, *Nádleeh*, and LGBTQ2 Navajo Gaze [Abstract]

Gabriel Estrada

This article compares four Navajo lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two-spirit (LGBTQ2) films. It emphasizes cinematic gaze, anti-LGBTQ2 violence, Navajo transgender women, Navajo cosmology, Native lesbian feminism, and two-spirit community activism. Directed by Euro-American Lydia Nibley, the *Two Spirits* (2009) documentary recounts Fred Martinez's queer hate-crime murder and affirms Martinez's Navajo sense of being a two-spirit effeminate male, or *nádleeh*, especially as related by Martinez's mother, Pauline Mitchell, and the *nádleeh* scholar Wesley Thomas. Through interviews with the author, *nádleehs* Elton Naswood and Michelle Enfield praise Nibley's film, featured by the Public Broadcast System's Independent Lens nationally in June of 2011. They also voice a need for greater two-spirit and Navajo transgender women activist representations. In contrast to *Two Spirits*, the *Miss Indian Transgender Arizona* short overtly affirms a Native transgender identity. It is one of many short films that the activist NativeOut.com makes available online. Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie's (Navajo/Muskogee/Seminole) art installation film, *An Aboriginal View with Aboriginal Dreams* (2002), visually interrogates Navajo gender, sexuality, and sovereignty within a context of contemporary US/Navajo nationalism, the Iraq War, and gender suppression. A Native feminist perspective lends Tsinhnahjinnie's film a foreboding sense that US militarism in the Middle East increases heterosexism on the Navajo Nation, a dynamic that culminates in the 2005 Diné Marriage Act, which restricts marriage to heterosexual couples. Finally, Carrie House's (Navajo/Oneida) *I Am* short centers on diverse two-spirit activists that *Two Spirits* mutes. Through a comparative analysis of the Native LGBTQ2 representations in *Two Spirits*, *Miss Indian Transgender Arizona*, *An Aboriginal View with Aboriginal Dreams*, and *I Am*, the essay foregrounds Navajo LGBTQ2 gazes that are culturally grounded, activist, and critical of US, Navajo, and Native American national heterosexisms.

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