

My research will explore the Incan Empire's highly-regarded view of lesbianism using Adrienne Rich's notion of "compulsory heterosexuality" which argues that patriarchal domination results in heteronormativity. I will discuss how differing conceptions of gender influenced this view of lesbianism as compared to the negative view within the archetypal patriarchal society of Rich's model. I intend to explore this topic through a research paper which utilises sources in English, Spanish, and Quechua. It will be interdisciplinary, combining what I have learnt in International Relations, specifically on patriarchy and heteronormativity as power, with what Social Anthropology has taught me about conducting ethnography.

This research is important because of the subaltern nature of the knowledge I will be exploring. Lesbianism has been vastly overlooked both because of heteronormativity in the west and because it is a female-centred occurrence. Further, colonised cultures like the Incan Empire have taken a back seat in our discussions of world history and notions of sociology. Our understandings of Incan culture are largely the product of a European lens which projected its own norms in its descriptions of Incan society. My research will serve as an ethnography of a culture which did not abide by western understandings of sexuality and gender, hopefully leading readers to question their own perspectives. I will focus on this aspect during the second summer.

Possible external outlets for publication include Journal of Lesbian Studies, which examines the lesbian experience from a historical, cultural, and interpersonal perspective or Sprinkle, which specifically emphasises undergraduate queer, feminist scholarship. Besides these queer and women's studies-specific journals, other potential outlets include 1890, the Columbia Undergraduate Research Journal, and the University of Warwick's Reinvention journal which emphasise interdisciplinary work by undergraduates.