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current designation

Research Fellow

Participation, Power and Social Change Team

Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK.

biographical statement

akshay khanna is a Social Anthropologist, a Lawyer, an activist, a theatre practitioner and a development practitioner. Dr khanna's initial degree in Law was with a specialisation in Human Rights, Medical Law, Gender and Juvenile Justice. Thereafter akshay worked as a lawyer with a leading human rights NGO in India; first as a Research Officer on domestic violence against women, responsible for the first draft of what is now the law in India relating to domestic violence. akshay then worked as an Advocacy and Training Officer and ultimately as Senior Project Officer on a project dealing with legal, ethical and rights issues arising out of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In addition to the provision of legal services to communities with an exacerbated vulnerability to HIV/AIDS due to social, political and economic marginalisation, this work involved designing, implementing and co-ordinating research projects on the vulnerability of most-at-risk populations, with a special focus of the role of criminal law in exacerbating such vulnerability. This also involved engagement with a wide range of players in the development industry, including governments and bureaucracies, UN agencies, NGOS and INGOS, international donor agencies, health care providers, state machinery and community groups across India and beyond. khanna's involvement during this period also involved research and advocacy relating to Intellectual Property law, international trade agreements and their impact on access to treatment and the right to health. This work instigated the Affordable Medicines and Treatment Campaign in India.

After a Masters program in Medical Anthropology at SOAS, London, personally focusing on the global politics of the HIV/AIDS industry, khanna completed doctoral research in Social Anthropology relating to the Queer movement in India, at the University of Edinburgh in 2009. In particular this research focused on Law and Epidemiology as two registers of governmentality to which activists relate as part of their projects of citizenship. This included a focus on the relationship between law, rights and socio-political and economic vulnerability, and on the conditions in which, and ways in which epidemiological knowledge about HIV/AIDS amongst men who have sex with men is produced and brought to circulate.

akshay has been active in the Queer movement in India for about 15 years, and this work has been influential in shaping the conceptualisation of sexuality and gender as broader political concerns rather than relating to particular identities. Dr khanna has also had a close relationship with the women's movement in India and with various campaigns for the right to health and access to health care. Over the years, akshay has worked as an independent consultant to various actors in the development industry on issues ranging from sexuality, gender, health care practices, intellectual property law, reproductive technologies and human rights. Dr khanna has completed a Lectureship in the Sociology department at Lancaster University, convening and teaching post-graduate and undergraduate courses in Research Methods and Ethics, Anthropology, Race Relations and Social Change, and in Sociology. akshay is currently a Research Fellow with the Participation, Power and Social Change Team, at the

Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. During this period, akshay has convened the Sexuality and Development Programme, and has been instrumental in expanding the scope of the programme to focus on the political economy of sexuality, questions of law, legality and constitutionalism, and issues around race, nation, fundamentalism. akshay also has played a central role in developing an 'Unruly Politics' approach to citizen action, which brings together a wide range of theoretical and philosophical approaches to politics together with engagement with close attention to emergent modalities of political action around the world. khanna has also been involved in carrying out trainings for activists and academics from different parts of the global South on qualitative research methods, forum theatre, visual methods, and substantive trainings on issues around sexuality and politics.

educational qualifications

PhD Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh, 2004 – 2009

Specialising in Anthropology of Development, Medical Anthropology, Legal Anthropology and the Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality.

Thesis title: *A Refracted Subject: Sexualness in the Realms of Law and Epidemiology*

M Sc by Research with view to PhD in Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh, 2004-2005

With a focus on Qualitative Methods in Ethnographic Fieldwork, Research Skills in Social Sciences, Qualitative methods in Data Collection, Quantitative Data Analysis, Advanced Issues in Anthropological Research

MA Medical Anthropology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2002 - 2003.

With a focus on Cultural Understandings of Health, Asian and African Cultures in Britain, Anthropology of Gender, Sexuality and the Body, Theoretical Approaches to Social Anthropology, Research Methods and Dissertation in Medical Anthropology

BA LLB (Hons), National Law School of India University, Bangalore, 1994-1999

With a specialisation in Human Rights – Law and Practice, Law and Medical Ethics, Women and the Law, Affirmative Action, Juvenile Justice, Local Self Government

employment history

- 2012 – present **Convenor**, Sexuality and Development Program at the Institute of Development Studies
- 2010 - present **Research Fellow**, Institute of Development Studies
- 2002 - 2010 **Independent Development Consultant** - primarily short term consultancies with local NGOs, INGOs, non-funded activist groups, international donor agencies, UNIFEM and UNAIDS.
- 2009 - 2010 **Lecturer in Sociology**, Lancaster University
- 2007-2009 **Lecturer in South Asian Studies**, Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh
- 2004 – 2009 **Tutor in Social Anthropology and in Social and Political Theory.**
- 2008 **Teaching Assistant** on Culture and Power, Honours level course run by Dept. of Social Anthropology.
- 2001- 2002 **Senior Project Officer** co-ordinating the Delhi Project Office, of the Lawyers Collective, a human rights NGO. Duties included co-ordinating research, legal services and advocacy and lobbying work of Project Office, co-ordinating Affordable Medicines and Treatment Campaign + position of administrative head for two projects of the Lawyer Collective

- 2000 – 2001 **Advocacy and Training Officer**, Lawyers Collective HIV/AIDS Unit, designing research and needs assessments with communities vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, human rights advocacy with various state and non-state actors, training on health and human rights for NGOs, community based organisations, patient groups and networks
- 1999 – 2000 **Research and Documentation Officer**, Women's Right Initiative of the Lawyers Collective, legal research relating to domestic violence, writing and publishing articles, pamphlets and a manual on legal options, responsible for first draft of legislation which then led to the protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

major scholarships and fellowships

- British Chevening Open Social Science Scholarship, 2002-2003 under the aegis of the British Council.
- PhD Studentship at the School of Political and Social Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Edinburgh, September 2004-07.
- College Special Award (to cover difference between fees payable by European and overseas students), College of Humanities and Social Science, University of Edinburgh, September 2004-07
- Independent Research Fellowship, 2005-06, the Sarai Project of the Centre for Study of Developing Societies, Delhi

selection of recent publications

Books, monographs and research papers

khanna a., *Sexualness: the Subject in the Realms of Law and Epidemiology* (forthcoming in 2014), New Delhi: Yoda Press

khanna, a., with Maysa Shqerat, Priyashri Mani, Maro Pantazidou and Zach Patterson, (2013) 'The Changing Faces of Citizen Action – a Mapping Study Through an Unruly Lens', *IDS Working Paper*, Volume 2013, no. 423, London and The Hague: IDS and HIVOS.

Khanna a., Ian Harper and Tobias Kelly (eds.), (forthcoming in 2014) *The Clinic and the Court*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

khanna a., Ponni Arasu, Alok Gupta, Arvind Narrain, Siddharth Narrain, Mayur Suresh (eds.), (2011) *Love Like Law: Queer Perspectives on the Law*, New Delhi: Yoda Press

khanna a., (2008) *in other words – sexuality and assisted reproductive technologies: thoughts from a queer perspective*, Monograph commissioned by Sama, New Delhi.

khanna a., (2006) *The Right to Health and Sexuality*, Mumbai: Cehat.

khanna a., (2006) *Gender and HIV/AIDS in South Asia: an analytical paper*. Monograph commissioned by UNAIDS South Asia Inter-Country Team and UNIFEM, New Delhi.

Articles and Book Chapters

khanna, a., Three Hundred and Seventy Seven Ways of Being – Sexualness of the Citizen in India, *Journal of Historical Sociology* Vol. 26 No. 1 March 2013 pp 120-142.

khanna, a., Seeing Citizen Action through an 'Unruly' Lens, *Development*, 2012, 55(2), (162–172)

khanna, a and Paul Boyce, 2011, Rights and representations: querying the male-to-male sexual subject

in India, *Culture, Health & Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, Intervention and Care*, 13:1, 89-100

khanna, a. (2011) 'Meyeli Chhele becomes MSM: Transformation of idioms of sexualness into epidemiological forms in India', in *Politicising Masculinity*, Cornwall A., Jerker Edstrom and Alan Greig (eds.), London: Zed.

khanna, a. (2011) 'The Social Lives of 377', in *Love like Law: Queer Perspectives on the Law*, Arasu, P., Alok Gupta, akshay khanna, Arvind Narrain, Siddharth Narrain, Mayur Suresh (eds.) New Delhi: Yoda Press.

khanna, a. (2009) 'Taming of the shrewd Meyeli Chhele – A Political economy of Development's Sexual Subject', *Development*, Vol.52 number (March 2009) pp.43-51.

khanna, a. (2007) "us, 'Sexuality Types' – a critical engagement with the postcoloniality of sexuality rights activism", in *The Phobic and the Erotic The Politics of Sexualities in Contemporary India*, Brinda Bose and Subhabrata Bhattacharyya (eds.). New Delhi: Seagull Publications.

khanna, a. (2005) 'Beyond Sexuality(?)', in *Because I Have a Voice – Queer Politics in India*, Gautam Bhan and Arvind Narrain. (eds.) New Delhi: Yoda Press.

Recent conference and seminar papers

Keynote and Plenary Addresses

- Conference on Protecting Human Rights: Sexuality, Gender Identity and Asylum in the UK, London School of Economics, October 2011
- "Thorns in my Pride - race and the limits of identity based sexuality politics" – 40th Anniversary Conference of the Gay Liberation Front, London School of Economics, May 2011
- *377 ways of being: sexuality, rights and the subject*: symposium on 'Gender and sustainable social development' in Xian, China in October 2011
- *Taming of the shrewd Meyeli Chhele – (a) political economy of Development's sexual subject* – Conference on Sexuality and the Development Industry, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, April 2008
- *Us, Sexuality types - The post-coloniality of sexuality rights activism - 2nd International Conference on Sexualities, Masculinities, and Cultures in South Asia*, Bangalore, India 2004.

Other recent Papers and Seminars

- *The Philosophical Underpinnings of Unruly Politics*, Social and Political Theory Research Seminar, University of Sussex: October 2013.
- *An important death – Necropolitics and the possibility of transcending intersections*, Annual conference of the International Feminist Journal of Politics, University of Sussex, 2013.
- *A State of Arousal – Eroticism and violence in the making of Homophobia*, Inaugural seminar of Interrogating Gender Seminar series, Institute of Development Studies, November 2010; and at the Law and Social Sciences Network Conference, Pune 2010.
- *Cleavage on the Queer Body: Light, Law and a Politics of Ambiguity*, at the Seminar of the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies, University of Lancaster, May 2009.
- *One of the girls: the Kothi, heris Counsellor and Other Women in India*, Conference of British Association of South Asian Studies, Edinburgh, 2009

- *Slogans have no Footnotes - collaborative mis-recognition and the weaving of queerness into India's 'problem of modernity'*, at Conference on Indian Mass Media and the Politics of Change, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 2008.
- *The Meyeli Chhele Becomes MSM – Epidemiological Knowledge and Idioms of Sexualness*, at international conference on 'Politicising Masculinities: Beyond the Personal', Dakar, 2007.
- *The Soft Boy and heris Hard (Epidemiological) Fact*, at International Conference on "Agency, Sexuality and Law – Globalising Economies, Localising Cultures, and Contesting States", Goa 2007
- *Emergence of the Anus – sexual (subject) positions and the production of epidemiological knowledge: Anthropology of South Asia seminar series*, London School of Economics, 2007.
- *The Social life of Section 377: material for a critical perspective on law related activism*, at the Critical Legal Conference, Hyderabad, 2006.
- *Postcoloniality and Sexuality*, at Workshop on "Sexuality, Nationalism and Fundamentalism", at the World Social Forum, Mumbai 2004.

languages

- Written and spoken: English, Hindi, Portuguese, Kannada and Italian
- Spoken: Urdu
- Functional knowledge: Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Spanish