



**TASA** The Australian  
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**TITLE: Women, queer failure and neoliberalism in tropical Cairns, Far North Queensland.**

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This paper responds to Joanne Baker's sobering analysis of the negative effects of neoliberalism on young women's constructions of gendered oppression. Baker's work was based in Townsville in northern Queensland, however the specificity of the geography in which her participants lived was not considered. I want to expand on Baker's work by taking into account the specificity of place. My research explores indepth semi-structured interviews with 17 women about what living in Cairns in tropical Far North Queensland means to their gendered identities. Drawing on feminist geographical approaches that see gender and space as being co-constituted, I explore how the interviewees construct their gendered identities in relation to living in a hot, humid and 'tropical' space while also negotiating late capitalist discourses of neoliberalism. More specifically, I am testing the applicability of Jack Halberstam's concept of 'queer failure' as a way to understand how the interviewees use their 'tropical otherness', that is a failure to conform to temperate centric and gendered norms of discipline and productivity, to legitimise alternative gendered identities of difference as Far Northern women.