

**Stony Brook University  
The Graduate School**

Doctoral Defense Announcement

**Abstract**

**Making Room for Queer Spatiality: Discursive Designs of All-Gender Spaces**

By

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With the rise of so-called ‘bathroom bills’ legislation and increasing attacks on LGBTQ+ populations, all-gender sites such as inclusive public restrooms, community centers, and alternative group sex/fetish events have come to function as sanctuaries for gender and sexual marginalized peoples. Their inclusive admissions and re-signification of space suggest a potential radical shift in spatial discourse. In considering the queer praxes of these locales, then, I ask what all-gender spaces may offer beyond immediate harm-reduction practices. How do trans, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming users understand their spatialities in context of these new delineations? What site-specific instruments are called upon to reaffirm and reauthorize subjugated identities? How do users’ expectations and experiences differ from the mission statements of site curators and host institutions? And how might this occupation of place and power inform future (re)designs? My dissertation responds to these queries by using the mutual relations between social space and its social agents as a point of departure to interrogate what is queerly possible in spatial identity formations. To apprehend the sociopolitical scope of this qualitative study, I call upon an interdisciplinary analysis and methodological framework fashioned from feminist and sociological studies, trans and queer studies, as well as human geography. I argue that the potentially queer(ing) policies and practices of all-gender spaces can create discursive and physical spaces reactive to spatial and social inequities. I concurrently argue that without setting conditions of engaged queer politics, all-gender spaces are drained of their political potential, returning to a static reproduction of hegemonic norms.

**Date:** Friday, September 9th

**Program:** Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. (EST)

**Dissertation Adviser:** Mary Jo Bona

**Place:** WGSS Seminar Room, Humanities 2052

\*If an outside member of the community would like to attend the defense, please contact Jackie Donnelly at [jacqueline.m.donnely@stonybrook.edu](mailto:jacqueline.m.donnely@stonybrook.edu)