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# Is the Library a gendered space?

Becoming a Trans Inclusive Library Brown Bag  
October 16, 2020  
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# The Tyranny of Gendered Spaces



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*Gender, Place, & Culture* 17:5 (2010)

Research on “planning for non-normative populations and the development and demise of queer space.”

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# Autoethnography

“combines cultural analysis and interpretation with narratives of the self, resulting in thick description of life experiences which reveal emotion and insight in a variety of ways.” (Doan, 636)

**Autoethnography** is a form of qualitative research in which an author uses self-reflection and writing to explore anecdotal and personal experience and connect this autobiographical story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings. ([Wikipedia](#))

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# Spaces

## Public

- City Streets
- Elevators

## Quasi Public

- Work
- Classrooms
- Restrooms

## Semi-Private

- Malls
- Churches
- Performance Spaces

## Private

- Home space
  - Yard
  - Telephone
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# Key Points

- “The performance of gender in space not only shifts with each performance, but in a very real way each performance also changes the space in which it is performed.”
  - “Different types of gendered spaces have varying potential for confrontation and transformation.” (648)
  - “Many people do not understand the power of these little words, and how painful the persistent use of inappropriate pronouns can be.” (647)
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# Conclusion

“Gender strongly influences the ways that spaces are perceived and the kinds of activities that are possible, acceptable, or even safe within them. The tyranny of the gender dichotomy is an artifact of the patriarchal structuring of gendered space and it is time to lay it aside, not just for trans people, but for us all.” (649)

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# Questions

1. In what ways are Libraries gendered spaces?
  2. In what ways do everyday transactions in a Library reinforce or police a gender dichotomy?
  3. How can Library staff mitigate the gendering of Library space?
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