

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Criminology and Criminal Justice

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M.A. in Criminology and Criminal Justice, August 2021, University of Missouri-St. Louis

M.A. in Sociology, May 2018, Northeastern University

B.A. in Sociology and Psychology, May 2016, Mount Holyoke College

Social Places and Substance Use in Shaping Queer Identities

Date: June 28, 2023

Time: 3:30pm-5:00 p.m.

Place: Jim Short Room, 324 Lucas Hall

Abstract

Research has suggested that queer people may be more likely than their cisgender heterosexual counterparts to use substances. Largely, these higher rates are commonly explained through frameworks of victimization or (ab)use that render substance use as a form of coping or inherently problematic. While some queer people do use substances to cope, the social places and contexts in which use often occurs are often obscured or ignored. More recently, contemporary queer criminologists have explored queer substance use and have considered how it is intimately linked to social place, identity formation, and community building. This dissertation draws from queer criminological methodologies to theorize and develop the idea of social places. In particular, it explores how queer people define and create social places, how social places shape identity formation, and how social places are imbued with substances. To investigate, 49 in-depth semi-structured interviews were self-identified queer people who have used substances or frequented queer social places to examine the intersection of social place, contexts, substance use, and queer identity formation. As such, it is argued that social places can be distinguished, imbued with identities, messy, and crucial sites for substance use and identity formations through use.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

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