

Urban Regulation of Sex Work: Precarised Living and Working Conditions in Aachen's Inner City

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In Aachen, Germany, prostitution has long been concentrated in the historic red-light district of Antoniusstraße, while street-based sex work takes place in the nearby area around Kaiserplatz. Both areas are currently under pressure from urban redevelopment, housing interests, and intensified regulatory interventions. These conflicts illustrate how sexuality, housing, and urban governance intersect in the regulation of sex work. Drawing on situational analysis (Clarke) and an intersectional feminist perspective, this study analyses how spatial regulation, institutional practices and moral discourses shape the living and working conditions of sex workers. It combines document and archival research with qualitative interviews and participant observation. The analysis shows that prostitution in Aachen is spatially and institutionally divided between brothel-based and street-based sex work. While brothel prostitution is considered manageable and tolerated within the established urban area, street sex work, often associated with homelessness and drug use, is more strongly policed and problematised. Historically and today, municipal strategies seek to manage prostitution through processes of spatial concentration, displacement and increasing invisibilisation. These governance strategies produce uneven forms of precarity. Policies prioritising urban order, cleanliness, and resident security can undermine the safety and working conditions of sex workers. Thus, housing insecurity, spatial regulation, and moralised discourses intersect in ways that reinforce marginalisation and limit access to urban space. Situating sex work within

The House Down Boot Scootin’ Boogie: Exploring the Performative & Affective Spacemaking of Queer Country Music Counterpublics

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Whether one admits to being an avowed listener of country music or not, there’s something undeniably captivating about Orville Peck. Since the premiere of his self-produced debut album in 2019, Peck has collaborated with numerous country music legends as well as queer icon, drag queen, and country folk singer-songwriter Trixie Mattel. In doing so, he’s worked to further bridge the menacing divide often perceived to exist between queer culture and country music. All the while, Peck has swiftly garnered an impressive cross-genre following. Using Peck as a point of reference, this presentation draws on qualitative research undertaken at several concerts of Peck’s 2022 promotional tour of his second studio album as well as the author’s own autoethnographic reflections as someone who has inhabited spaces organized around or simultaneously with country music for much of their life in order to understand and contextualize perceptions of the convergences and divergences of queerness and country music and the implications these perceptions have in the production of queer-affirming spaces organized around country music. This presentation suggests that rather than seeking to assimilate into or fully reject mainstream country music, the spaces co-generated by Peck and his concert audiences constitute a disidentificatory counterpublic (Muñoz 1999) that spatially manifest to become an affective site of queer kinship, healing, and renewal that

Queer T(R)Opographies of Warfare: Can the Bunker Be Queer?

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Increasing rumination in Europe, regarding rearmament, higher defence expenses, and enrolment in the army, reignites a fantasy of “a real ‘return’ to war” (Gros, 2026). This phantasmatic speculation frequently involves state-level geopolitics, rarely interrogating the spatial and embodied internalisation of such contingencies. In early 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine triggered paranoia and panic attacks in me. The recurring threats to peace that followed and bring us to the present multi-angled warmongering repeatedly posed the same concerns in me, both as a migrant and as a scholar, leading me to the creation of a symbolic precarious queer bunker, with inadequate supplies unlikely to sustain me. In this paper, I aim to explore the relationship between the imagined bunker shaped by paranoia and queerness as a spectral existence or a ghostly presence. Specifically, I reappropriated my self-infused paranoia to revise space in terms of community, materiality, and interdependence. Through autoethnography, I mitigate the tension of what it means to live a queer life in the present geopolitical situation. I draw from affect theory’s insights on spatiality and biopolitics (Ahmed, 2006, Berlant, 2007; Calvillo, 2023; Puar, 2017) to approximate this precarious queer bunker, to fill it with objects and affects and discuss its phantasmatic implications. To the question of whether the bunker, materialising the personalised (as in not collectively shared), commercialised, military-industry complex infused protective space, can be queer, my stake is only partial, situated, and highly contingent: queer survival exceeds the conventional individual/communal and the precariousness/security binaries. Safety is