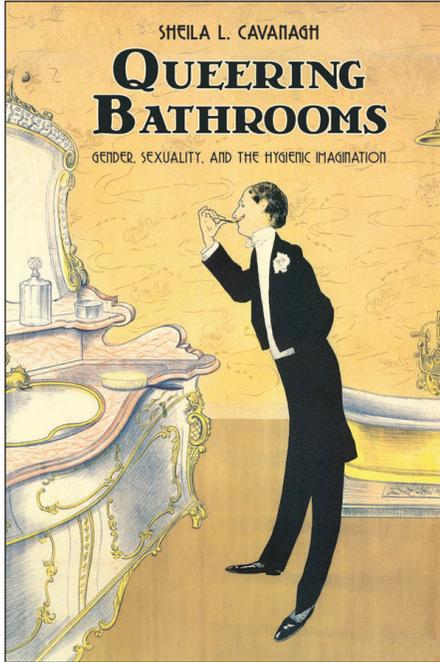




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Queering Bathrooms

Gender, Sexuality,
and the Hygienic Imagination

Sheila L. Cavanagh

Approx. 352 pp / 6 x 9 / October 2010

Paper ISBN 978-1-4426-1073-6 \$29.95

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The gendered nature of public washrooms has become a source of anxiety and political controversy in recent years: queer and trans folk have been harassed for allegedly using the ‘wrong’ washroom, while activists have campaigned for more gender-neutral facilities. In *Queering Bathrooms*, Sheila L. Cavanagh explores how public toilets demarcate the masculine and the feminine, and condition ideas of gender and sexuality.

Based on one hundred interviews with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and/or intersex peoples in major North American cities, the book delves into the ways that queer and trans communities challenge the rigid gendering and heteronormative composition of public washrooms. Cavanagh incorporates theories from queer studies, trans studies, psychoanalysis, and the work of Michel Foucault, and argues that the cultural politics of excretion is intimately related to the regulation of gender and sexuality. Public toilets house the illicit and act as repositories for the social unconscious. Offering suggestions for imagining a more inclusive public washroom, *Queering Bathrooms* asserts that although the subject of toilets is not typically considered within traditional scholarly bounds, it forms a crucial part of our modern understanding of sex and gender.

Sheila L. Cavanagh is an Associate Professor of Sociology and the Sexuality Studies Program Coordinator at York University.

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