

The Sociology Department Colloquium Series presents

# How Places Make Us: the Origins of Novel LBQ Identities in Four Small Cities

a talk with

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**Thursday, November 01, 2018**  
11:40 - 1:15PM  
Rachel Carson College 301

We like to think of ourselves as possessing an essential self, a core identity that is who we *really* are, regardless of where we live, work, or play. But places actually make us much more than we might think.

An ethnographic study of lesbian, bisexual and queer individuals (LBQ) in Ithaca, New York, San Luis Obispo, California, Greenfield, Massachusetts, and Portland, Maine reveals how LBQ migrants craft a unique sense of self that corresponds to their new homes.

Despite the fact that the LBQ residents share many traits, their approaches to sexual identity politics and to ties with other LBQ individuals and heterosexual residents vary markedly by where they live. Subtly distinct local ecologies shape what it feels like to be a sexual minority; city ecology shapes how one “does” LBQ in a specific place. Even in a globalized world, the most personal of questions—who am I? — is in fact answered collectively by the place in which we live.

**JAPONICA BROWN-SARACINO** is associate professor of sociology at Boston University. She is the author of *A Neighborhood That Never Changes*, also published by the University of Chicago Press, and editor of the *Gentrification Debates*.

