

Transgender topics on tap

Aaron Devor this Saturday at ArtSpring

SUBMITTED BY SALT SPRING FORUM

All-gender and gender-neutral signs are appearing on local single-stall bathrooms, including at ArtSpring, Salt Spring Coffee and in some of our public schools.

This is a very important change, since it represents increased acceptance, inclusion and safety for those who do not necessarily fall within the gender binary.

But in the United States, the Trump administration has just reversed protections from discrimination for transgender students, which had included allowing them to use bathrooms and locker rooms corresponding with their gender identity.

From non-binary people to pronouns to gender diverse children, the way we as a society think about gender is in transition. Some people are beginning to understand gender as a spectrum rather than as a binary.

Legislation in Canadian provinces increasingly protects gender identity and expression. Gender neutral bathrooms are providing safer bathroom access for people with a range of gender identities. The media is granting more coverage to trans issues and trans celebrities.

But despite these signs of increased acceptance, transgender and other gender-variant people face many challenges, including a higher risk of unemployment, harassment, homelessness, suicide and violence.

The Salt Spring Forum aims to foster community discussion and learning on the great issues of our time. For this reason, we are honoured to host Aaron Devor, the world's only research chair in transgender studies, for a special conversation about gender on Saturday, March 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the ArtSpring gallery.

Devor is a professor of sociology who has studied and taught transgender topics for more than three decades. From 2002-2012,



PHOTO BY BRIAN SARGENT

Sociology professor Aaron Devor, who is also the world's only research chair in transgender studies.

he was dean of graduate studies at the University of Victoria.

Devor is the founder and academic director of the world's largest transgender archives, located at the University of Victoria. These archives contain records of research related to trans and gender non-conforming people that go back over 100 years as well as records of activism that span over 50 years and come from 18 countries across five continents.

Since 1999, Devor has also been a member of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health's standards of care committee, which creates international guidelines for the appropriate care of transgender people.

Please join us for this special, inclusive, highly informative event, moderated by Salt Spring Forum manager Julian Paquette.

Tickets are available at ArtSpring and Salt Spring Books.