

The Wolfe Institute

Presents

Reconsidering the Political
Aesthetics of Transness:
Excerpts from *The Trans Ordinary*



Preregister on Zoom:



Featuring: Professor B Lee-Harrison
Aultman and Professor Paisley
Currah

Wednesday November 16, 2022
4:00pm to 5:30pm

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It is generally understood that the ordinary is what is common, known, and the background to everyday life. But what if everyday life becomes multiple lives that are set in a relation of multiplicity, difference, and social context? According to B Lee-Harrison Aultman, it is possible to reconsider the common, the known, and the background at different registers. That is to say, “the trans ordinary” takes up varying registers of life in terms of political aesthetics. Trans narratives speak to different modes of living on, surviving, and flourishing. But how does one provide insight into these ordinary scenes of trans life-making without minimizing structural patterns of violence linked to racism, transphobia, and class inequalities? In this event, Professor Aultman reads from selected portions of their book manuscript *The Trans Ordinary* (under contract with SUNY Press) to address how such questions can be approached and answered: careful attention to narrative. The event’s respondent, Paisley Currah, will provide his responses and questions to illuminate other themes from the book’s selection. Containing almost a decade of original archival research retrieved while Aultman was a visiting scholar at the Transgender Archives at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, their book, *The Trans Ordinary*, sets an ambitious goal to reconsider what it means to experience the ordinary across the many forms of life within American trans communities.

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B Lee-Harrison Aultman, Ph.D. (they/them) is a political theorist, educator, and trans activist who received their doctorate from The Graduate Center, CUNY. Their research is intersectionally situated in Trans Studies, Critical Theory, and Black Feminist Thought. Their work has appeared in various peer-reviewed journals such as *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *Wagadu: A Journal for Transnational Women's & Gender Studies*, *Writing from Below*, *LGBTQ Studies: A Critical Reader* (NYU), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of LGBTQ Politics and Policy*, and *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Trans Studies*. Their forthcoming research on trans masculinity will appear in the *Routledge Handbook of Men, Masculinities and Organizations: Theories, Practices and Futures of Organizing*. They're also excited about contributing a chapter to the anthology *Futures of Cartoons Past: The Cultural Politics of X-Men: The Animated Series* (Mississippi).



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Paisley Currah is a Professor of Political Science and Women's & Gender Studies at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center. Currah has written widely on transgender issues, including on topics such as discrimination and sex reclassification, and the transgender rights movement. He is the author and editor of over 30 articles and books and co-founder of the leading journal in transgender studies, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*. Currah's newest book is *Sex Is Sex Does: Governing Transgender Identity*. Currah has advocated for transgender rights at all levels of government, was a founding board member of the Transgender Law and Policy Institute, served on the founding board of directors for Global Action for Trans Equality, and sat on the advisory board of Human Rights Watch's LGBT Program.



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