

CSAA ONLINE SEMINAR SERIES

Date: 26 August 2025

Time: 6pm-7pm AEST

Where: Zoom (see below)

Theorising 'ordinary wellbeing' for queer youth in suffocating conditions

Abstract: 'Wellbeing' has become a keyword in popular and academic understandings of young people. Queer youth, in particular, have historically been narrowly represented as at-risk victims of high school bullying and mental ill-health. Whilst scholars have proposed a counterapproach to studying and representing queer youth, which I brand 'queer thriving', this impulse generates a troublesome victim/thriving dichotomy – a dynamic that fails to apprehend the complex political and economic conditions of the current conjuncture. This paper explores how queer youth articulate and embody wellbeing beyond a victim/thriving framework and considers what their reflections reveal about their conditions of living at the present historical conjuncture, keeping front-of-mind how these conditions shape queer young people's political horizon.

In theorising 'ordinary wellbeing', I examine how queer youth employ practises of 'everyday tending and tenderness' in attempts to sustain life and its meaningfulness amidst large-scale crises that they have limited power as individuals, or as a social category, to transform on their own. I argue that contemporary conditions generate a suffocating atmosphere, defined by the culmination of housing, health, and environmental crises alongside neoliberal logics of individual 'thriving' within a cis-heteronormative world

Speaker bio: Dr James Gardiner is an early-career researcher focusing on issues of wellbeing, youth, gender and sexuality, digital media, and participatory methods.

HOW TO JOIN

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Or, go to <https://monash.zoom.us/join> and enter meeting ID: 899 5544 9004