2026
Annual Conference / Conférence annuelle
Harbours of Hope:
Sociology in a Divided World
Les ports de l'espoir : la
sociologie dans un monde divisé
Virtual June 1-5 & In-person June 10-13
En virtuel du 1er au 5 juin et en personne du 10 au 13 juin
Canadian Sociological Association
Société canadienne de sociologie
Dalhousie University - Halifax, Nova Scotia
office@csa-scs.ca
https://www.csa-scs.ca/2026-annual-conference

Canadian Sociological Association Conference delegates benefit from the opportunity to learn from, and engage with, scholars and practitioners working within the discipline of sociology.

We are very excited to work in partnership with Dalhousie University's Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology to host our members and the wider community at our 59th Annual Conference. Virtual sessions from June 1 through June 5, 2026 on our zoom platform. In-person sessions will be held from June 10 through June 13, 2026 at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Les délégués à la conférence de la Société canadienne de sociologie ont l'occasion d'apprendre et d'échanger avec des universitaires et des praticiens travaillant dans le domaine de la sociologie.

Nous sommes très heureux de nous associer au département de sociologie et d'anthropologie sociale de l'Université Dalhousie pour accueillir nos membres et la communauté au sens large lors de notre 59e conférence annuelle. Les séances virtuelles auront lieu du 1 au 5 juin 2026 sur notre plateforme Zoom. Les séances en personne se tiendront du 10 au 13 juin 2026 à l'Université Dalhousie, à Halifax, en Nouvelle-Écosse.

The session details are correct at the time of publishing this document but is subject to change.

Les détails des séances sont corrects au moment de la publication de ce document mais sont susceptibles d'être modifiés.

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Welcome Message from the Canadian Sociological Association President

Dr. Mark C.J. Stoddart, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Hello everyone, and a warm welcome to the 2026 Canadian Sociological Association annual conference. This year, our conference is once again being held in two parts to ensure accessible and inclusive participation for as many members as possible. The conference takes place virtually from June 1-5, and in person at beautiful Dalhousie University from June 10-13. At Dalhousie University, we will have the privilege of gathering in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples.

This year's conference theme is Harbours of Hope: Sociology in a Divided World. The conference theme was chosen as a reminder of the power and potential of hope, collaboration, and knowledge-based dialogue as a response to our period of geopolitical anxieties, devastating conflicts, and troubling levels of political polarization and misinformation. The theme was also chosen to reflect the coastal setting of Halifax on the Bedford basin and to help ground our conversations in the local landscape.

This year, we are expecting over 650 participants for our in-person conference and over 200 presenters and chairs for our virtual conference. I would particularly like to draw attention to our three Plenary sessions. First, during our virtual conference (June 5), we will hear Dr. Amal Madibbo's Outstanding Contribution to Sociology keynote lecture, "What is the Colour of Sociology?" Second, on June 11 there is the President's session, "Harbours of Hope: Sociological Perspectives from Atlantic Canada." Third, on June 13 we will welcome, Dr. Martyn Pickersgill for the keynote, "On the Ethic of Access and the Transformation of Mental Healthcare: A Sociology of Psychology." I would also like to highlight the book publishers who are joining us on Friday, June 12 in the Fireside Lounge: UBC Press, University of Alberta Press, University of Regina Press, and Fernwood Publishing. Their presence offers a great opportunity to learn about new work and make new connections.

"The more responsibility you take on, the more help you need" (Silje Karine Muotka, President, Sámi *Parliament, Norway).*

This year marks our first annual conference held independently of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. This could not have happened without extensive help and organizational labour of many people. Sherry Fox took on even more responsibility this year to ensure we have a successful conference outside the traditional Congress format. I also wish to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Emma Whelan, Leola Lefebvre, and the Dalhousie Local Organizing Committee, as well as the Dalhousie student event staff who will help ensure the conference runs smoothly. I also want to thank the members of the Conference Planning Committee, which included representation from the CSA Executive as well as from the Anti-Islamophobia Subcommittee, Decolonization Subcommittee, Equity Issues Subcommittee, Research Advisory Subcommittee, and Student Concerns Subcommittee.

We are excited that our conference is returning to Atlantic Canada for the first time since 2011 and to Dalhousie University specifically since 2003. I hope you can take the time to get a bit of a sense of this wonderful place. I look forward to seeing many of online during our virtual conference, as well as in-person during sessions, at coffee and lunch breaks, and at our Welcome Reception on June 10 at the Pint Public House in Halifax. Thank you all for your contributions to sustaining our sociological dialogue during our time together. Welcome!

Message de bienvenue du président de la Société canadienne de sociologie

Dr Mark C.J. Stoddart, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Bonjour à toutes et à tous, et soyez les bienvenus à la conférence annuelle 2026 de la Société canadienne de sociologie. Cette année, notre conférence se déroulera à nouveau en deux volets afin de permettre une participation accessible et inclusive du plus grand nombre de membres possible. Elle aura lieu en mode virtuel du 1er au 5 juin, puis en personne à la magnifique Université Dalhousie du 10 au 13 juin. À l'Université Dalhousie, nous aurons le privilège de nous réunir sur les territoires non cédés des peuples Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey et Peskotomuhkati.

Le thème de la conférence cette année est « Les ports de l'espoir : la sociologie dans un monde divisé ». Ce thème a été choisi pour rappeler la force et le potentiel de l'espoir, de la collaboration et du dialogue fondé sur les connaissances, en réponse à une période marquée par des tensions géopolitiques, des conflits dévastateurs et des niveaux préoccupants de polarisation politique et de mésinformation. Il a également été choisi afin de refléter le cadre côtier de Halifax, sur le bassin de Bedford, et d'ancrer nos échanges dans le paysage local.

Cette année, nous attendons plus de 650 participants pour la conférence en présentiel et plus de 200 présentateurs et présidents de séance pour la conférence virtuelle. Je tiens particulièrement à attirer votre attention sur nos trois séances plénières. Tout d'abord, lors de la conférence virtuelle du 5 juin, nous aurons l'honneur d'entendre la conférence inaugurale de la distinction pour contribution exceptionnelle à la sociologie de la Dre Amal Madibbo, intitulée « Quelle est la couleur de votre sociologie? ». Ensuite, le 11 juin se tiendra la séance de la présidence, « Les ports de l'espoir : perspectives sociologiques de l'Atlantique canadien ». Enfin, le 13 juin, nous accueillerons le Dr Martyn Pickersgill pour la conférence principale intitulée « Sur l'éthique de l'accès et la transformation des soins en santé mentale : une sociologie de la psychologie ». Je souhaite également souligner la présence des maisons d'édition qui se joindront à nous le vendredi 12 juin au salon Fireside : UBC Press, University of Alberta Press, University of Regina Press et Fernwood Publishing. Leur présence constitue une excellente occasion de découvrir de nouveaux travaux et de tisser de nouveaux liens.

« Plus on assume de responsabilités, plus on a besoin d'aide. » (Silje Karine Muotka, présidente du Parlement *Sámi, Norvège)*

Cette année marque la tenue de notre première conférence annuelle, organisée de façon indépendante de la Fédération des sciences humaines. Cela n'aurait pas été possible sans l'aide considérable et le travail organisationnel de nombreuses personnes. Sherry Fox a assumé encore davantage de responsabilités cette année afin d'assurer la réussite de la conférence en dehors du format traditionnel du Congrès. Je tiens également à exprimer ma profonde gratitude à la Dre Emma Whelan, à Leola Lefebvre et au comité local d'organisation de Dalhousie, ainsi qu'au personnel étudiant chargé des événements à Dalhousie, qui contribueront au bon déroulement de la conférence. Je tiens également à remercier les membres du comité d'organisation de la conférence, qui comprenait des représentants de la direction de la SCS ainsi que des sous-comités chargés de la lutte contre l'islamophobie, de la décolonisation, des enjeux d'équité, de la recherche et des préoccupations étudiantes.

Nous sommes ravis que notre conférence soit de retour dans la région de l'Atlantique, pour la première fois depuis 2011, et plus particulièrement à l'Université Dalhousie depuis 2003. J'espère que vous prendrez le temps de vous imprégner de ce lieu remarquable. J'ai hâte de vous retrouver nombreux et nombreuses en ligne lors de la conférence virtuelle, ainsi qu'en personne pendant les séances, les pauses café et dîner, et lors de notre réception de bienvenue le 10 juin au Pint Public House à Halifax. Je vous remercie toutes et tous pour votre contribution au maintien de notre dialogue sociologique tout au long de notre rencontre. Bienvenue!

Acknowledgements / Remerciements

Dalhousie University Land Acknowledgement

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada.

African Nova Scotian Acknowledgement

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Conference Planning Team / Équipe chargée de l'organisation de la conférence

An event of this magnitude requires many people contributing their time and expertise with a commitment to ensure the success of the Conference.

Un événement d'une telle ampleur exige l'apport en temps et en expertise de beaucoup de personnes.

Canadian Sociological Association Executive Committee and Subcommittee Representatives
Représentants du comité exécutif et des sous-comités de la Société canadienne de sociologie

Dr. Mark Stoddart, Memorial University (Program Chair)
Sherry Fox, CSA Executive Director and Conference Manager
Dr. Leila Benhadjoudja, University of Ottawa
Dr. Catherine Corrigall-Brown, University of British Columbia
Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto
Dr. Timothy Kang, University of Saskatchewan
Nicole McNair, McMaster University
Dr. Dean Ray, York University
Dr. Liam Swiss, Acadia University

Dalhousie University Local Organizing Committee
Comité d'organisation local de l'Université Dalhousie

Dr. Emma Whelan, Department Chair
Dr. Deena Abul-Fottouh
Evan Curley
Dr. Chris Giacomantonio
Dr. Michael Halpin
Leola Lefebvre

Session organizers / Organisateurs de séance :
Many thanks to our dedicated members who volunteered their time to organize nearly 300 paper presentation sessions, panels, and networking meetings!

Un grand merci à nos membres dévoués qui ont donné de leur temps pour organiser près de 300 sessions de présentation d'articles, tables rondes et rencontres de réseautage !

Event Staff (virtual and in-person) / Personnel chargé de l'événement (en ligne et en personne)

Mariana Carneiro, Dalhousie University
Kathleen Daly, Dalhousie University
Susan Goli, Memorial University
Shekara Grant, Dalhousie University
Rachel Kimmelman, Dalhousie University
Nic Kuzmochka, Dalhousie University
Hanna McCamon, Dalhousie University
Tasha Moller, Dalhousie University
Shayan Morshedi, Memorial University
Ceiran Munn, Dalhousie University
Emma Nelson, Dalhousie University
Isla Parker, Acadia University
Reece Ronan, Acadia University
Eli Springthrope, Dalhousie University
Molly Sutherland, Acadia University
Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University

Delegates / Délégués :
Our appreciation as well to you for attending and engaging in knowledge sharing, discussion, and collaboration. Thank you for supporting this event and the Canadian Sociological Association!

Nous vous remercions aussi d'avoir participé et contribué à l'échange de connaissances, à la discussion et à la collaboration. Merci de soutenir cet événement et la Société canadienne de sociologie!

Publisher Engagement / Rencontrez les éditeurs

Representatives and authors from University of Regina Press, University of British Columbia Press, University of Alberta Press, and Fernwood Publishing will be showcasing their latest publications, answering questions, and sharing insights into their work.

Featured Speakers & Books

James Patterson (Director of Operations, University of Regina Press)
Queer & Muslim, University of Regina Press

Jeremy Wildeman (Co-editor)
Canada as a Settler Colony on the Question of Palestine, University of Alberta Press

Andrew Crosby and Jeffrey Monaghan (Authors)
Thin Blue Rage, Fernwood Publishing

Guida Ching-Fan Man (Co-editor)
Anti-Asian Racism and the COVID-19 Pandemic in Canada, University of British Columbia Press

Matt Patterson (Contributor)
The Civil Sphere, University of British Columbia Press

Advertising Sponsors

FERNWOOD PUBLISHING
CRITICAL BOOKS FOR CRITICAL THINKERS

McGill-Queen's University Press

UNIVERSITY of ALBERTA PRESS

UBCPress

University of Regina Press

Review their Sociology Titles

Schedule By Day

Monday June 1, 2026 (Virtual Sessions)

Time	Session Name
12:00pm-1:00pm	(ANS-RC) Animals in Society Research Cluster Meeting
12:00pm-1:30pm	(CRM1) Technologies and Criminal Justice
12:00pm-1:30pm	(OMN1c) Sociology of Religion: Reflections and Intersections
12:00pm-1:30pm	(SAR1) Navigating Belonging: Analyzing how research on South Asian communities explore belonging both in the field and beyond it
12:00pm-1:30pm	(SCS4) Open Discussion: What Students and Trainees Need from Research Assistant Roles
12:00pm-1:30pm	(WPO1b) Outcomes of Workplace Inequality and Discrimination
2:00pm - 3:00pm	(CND-RC) Canadian Network of Durkheimian Studies Cluster Meeting
2:00pm-3:30pm	(CRM3d) Perspectives on Criminal Justice II
2:00pm-3:30pm	(ITD12a) AI, Identity, Harm, and Algorithmic Subjectivity
2:00pm-3:30pm	(OMN1a) Immigration Pathways and Perceptions I
2:00pm-3:30pm	(PSM6b) Transnational Solidarity, Protest Policing, Political Polarization, Voting Preferences
2:00pm-3:30pm	(WPO1a) Professions: Complexities and Challenges
4:00pm-5:30pm	(CRM8) Revisiting Law in Contexts of Sexual and Gender-based Violence
4:00pm-5:30pm	(HEA5) Exploring Local and Global Community-based Crisis Intervention and Response
4:00pm-5:30pm	(ITD5) Privatizing Tomorrow: Elite Imaginaries and the Politics of AI Futures
4:00pm-5:30pm	(OMN1b) Immigration Pathways and Perceptions II
4:00pm-5:30pm	(PSM6a) Social Movements in the Global South
4:00pm-5:30pm	(WPO1c) Work, Employment, and Labour: Pressures, Barriers, and Opportunities
6:00pm-7:00pm	(SCS5) Cripping the Writing Space: Resisting Isolation in Academia

Tuesday June 2, 2026 (Virtual Sessions)

Time	Session Name
10:00am-11:30am	(DIS6) Co-creating Decolonial Disability Research: Methodological Reflections from a Collaborative Journey
12:00pm-1:30pm	(ANS1) Companion Animals and the Human-Animal Bond
12:00pm-1:30pm	(CRM5a) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives I
12:00pm-1:30pm	(DIS7) Decolonial Epistemic Resistance: Repositioning global South Disabled Thinkers
12:00pm-1:30pm	(FEM6) Applying intersectional feminism to better support research assistants
12:00pm-1:30pm	(INE6) Teaching & Learning IE: Pedagogue & Praxis in Classrooms/Communities
12:00pm-1:30pm	(MIG4) Borders, Migration, and Transnationalism in a Post-globalization Era
2:00pm-3:30pm	(CRM5b) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives II
2:00pm-3:30pm	(EDU9) Post Secondary Education: Navigating successful transitions
2:00pm-3:30pm	(FEM2a) Unsettling the Frame: Feminist Interventions in Anti-Feminist Politics, Gendered Violence, Criminalization, and Epistemic Erasure
2:00pm-3:30pm	(INE4) Unpacking Ruling Relations: Institutional Ethnography Towards Systemic and Institutional Change
2:00pm-3:30pm	(MIG1) Community-Engaged Migration Research
2:00pm-3:30pm	(OMN1d) Sociological Perspectives on Health and Care
4:00pm-5:30pm	(CRM6) Community First: Inclusion and Innovation in Public Safety
4:00pm-5:30pm	(DIS5) Author meets critic: Broken Worlds, Disabled Kin
4:00pm-5:30pm	(FEM3b) Gendered Labour, Displaced Blame, and the Political Economy of Work
4:00pm-5:30pm	(MIG8) Diaspora in Motion: Disrupting the Bounded Definition
4:00pm-5:30pm	(TEA5) The Politics of Learning: Sociological Dialogues of Education
4:00 pm-5:00pm	(WPO-RC) Work, Professions, and Occupations Research Cluster Meeting
6:00pm-7:00pm	(EDU-RC) Sociology of Education Research Cluster Meeting
6:00pm-7:00pm	(RAS1) Communicating Research for Social Impact

Wednesday June 3, 2026 (Virtual Sessions)

Time	Session Name
11:00am-11:45am	(FTS-RC) Fat Studies Research Cluster Meeting
11:00am-12:30pm	(RES4) From root to canopy: Context, contours, contestations in a relational commons
12:00pm-1:30pm	(AIS1a) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia I
12:00pm-1:30pm	(APS1) The Highlights and Challenges of Applied and Community-Engaged Sociology
12:00pm-1:30pm	(FTS6a) Fat Studies as a Harbour of Hope I
12:00pm-1:30pm	(ITD2d) (Social) Media Representations of Resistance, Empowerment, and Expression
12:00pm-1:30pm	(URS5) Urban Sociology: Reflections from the City
12:45pm-1:30pm	(RES-RC) Relational Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
2:00pm-3:30pm	(AIS1b) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia II
2:00pm-3:00pm	(APS-RC) Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster Meeting
2:00pm-3:30pm	(FTS6b) Fat Studies as a Harbour of Hope II
2:00pm-3:30pm	(HOU1a) Sociology of Housing and Home I
2:00pm-3:30pm	(ITD2c) Technology & Society: General Topics II
2:00pm-3:00pm	(THE-RC) Social Theory Cluster Meeting
4:00pm-5:30pm	(AIS1c) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia III
4:00pm-5:30pm	(KNW5) Knowledge and the (Fat) Body
4:00pm-5:30pm	(THE6) New Directions for Social Theory
4:00pm-5:30pm	(URS2) Tents & Encampments Today: State of the Research and Literature in Canada
6:00pm-7:00pm	(CRS1) Meet the Editor of The Canadian Review of Sociology

Thursday June 4, 2026 (Virtual Sessions)

Time	Session Name
12:00pm-1:30pm	(ANS2) Agricultural Animals in Society
12:00pm-1:30pm	(ENV2b) Engaged Responses to Environmental Change: Uncovering Destructive Structures, Highlighting Paths Forward
12:00pm-1:00pm	(FEM-RC) Feminist Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
12:00pm-1:30pm	(HEA8) Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Health, Well-being, and Inequality
12:00pm-1:30pm	(VLS1) Anti-Violence Research, Collaboration, and Knowledge Mobilization
2:00pm-3:30pm	(HEA9a) Political Sociology of Health I
2:00pm-3:30pm	(IND5a) Solidarities, Co-Resistance and Complicities: From Turtle Island to Palestine and Across Territories I
2:00pm-3:30pm	(KNW1) Experts and Experiential Knowledge Shaping Truth in Society
2:00pm-3:30pm	(SCY5a) Media, Sport, and Young People's Identities
2:00pm-3:30pm	(VLS11) Gender and Violence in Migration
4:00pm-5:30pm	(ENV2c) Solving Environmental Problems: Action and Inaction in Activism, Communities, and Institutions
4:00pm-5:30pm	(FAS1) Vieilles divisions, nouvelles dynamiques : état des lieux
4:00pm-5:30pm	(INE7) Producing (Inter)Dependence: Relations, Wellness, Health & Technologies (& IE)
4:00pm-5:30pm	(RAE6b) From Yellow Peril to Pandemic Scapegoating: Anti Asian Racism, Cultural Trauma, and Racial Meaning Making In Canada II
4:00pm-5:30pm	(SCL4) Virtual Session: In-groups Within Groups
4:00pm-5:30pm	(SCY5b) Children, Institutions, Structures
6:00pm-7:00pm	(SCS1) Student Perspectives on Academic Freedom in a Polarized Time
6:00pm-7:00pm	(SCY-RC) Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster Meeting

Friday June 5, 2026 (Virtual Sessions)

Time	Session Name
12:00pm-1:00pm	(PLN1) What is the colour of Your Sociology?
2:00pm-3:30pm	(DEV3) Development Sociology
2:00pm-3:30pm	(DIS4a) Sociology of Disability I
2:00pm-3:30pm	(EQS2) Got Pretendians? The Quandaries, Costs, and Consequences of Indigenous Identity Fraud
2:00pm-3:30pm	(GAS3b) Situated Knowledges of Intimacy & Reproduction
2:00pm-3:30pm	(INE8) Embodied Knowledge and Agency: Narratives of Racialized Academics
2:00pm-3:30pm	(PSM8a) Structures vs. Agents: Sites of Control and Resistance in Global Societies I
4:00pm-5:30pm	(BCS1) Black Joy and Futurities: Rewriting Studies on Race/Black Canadian Experiences
4:00pm-5:30pm	(DIS4b) Sociology of Disability II
4:00pm-5:30pm	(GAS4c) Women's, Queer, & Trans Community Needs
4:00pm-5:30pm	(PSM8b) Structures vs. Agents: Sites of Control and Resistance in Global Societies II
4:00pm-5:30pm	(RAS3) Social Studies: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Wednesday, 10 June 2026 (In-person Sessions)

Time	Session Name
9:30am-11:00am	(DEA2a) Death and Society I: Death and Politics
9:30am-11:00am	(GAS5a) Sociology of Sexualities I
9:30am-11:00am	(HEA7) Early Career Symposium: Sociology of Health, Illness, and Medicine
9:30am-11:00am	(IND7) Utilizing Treaty Philosophies to Support Indigenous Research in Academia
9:30am-11:00am	(MIG9b) Diasporic Resistance and Transnational Experiences in a Post-Colonial World I
9:30am-11:00am	(OMN2c) Politics, Ethnicization, and Civil Society
9:30am-11:00am	(OMN3) Undergraduate Voice
9:30am-11:00am	(PSM10) Contesting the State: Colonial Power and Far-Right Politics
9:30am-11:00am	(RAE3a) Navigating Race in a Divided World I
9:30am-11:00am	(SCL1) Culture and Consumption
9:30am-11:00am	(SCY3) The politics, practices and consequences of doing research on and with children in troubled times
9:30am-11:00am	(WPO1d) Care Work and its Consequences
11:30am-1:00pm	(DEA2b) Death and Society II: Grief and Space
11:30am-1:00pm	(GAS5b) Sociology of Sexualities II
11:30am-1:00pm	(HEA14) Health, Rights, and Justice: The Reproductive Landscape in Atlantic Canada
11:30am-1:00pm	(IND8) “As we have always done”: Indigenous Responses to Climate Change
11:30am-1:00pm	(MIG9a) Diasporic Resistance and Transnational Experiences in a Post-Colonial World II
11:30am-1:00pm	(RAE3b) Navigating Race in a Divided World II
11:30am-1:00pm	(RAS2) The Ordinary Crisis: Rethinking Islam’s Position in Social Thought
11:30am-1:00pm	(SCL2) Culture and Inequality
11:30am-1:00pm	(SCS3) Students as Agents of Change
11:30am-1:00pm	(SCY1) Childhood in Changing Global Political & Economic Times
11:30am-1:00pm	(VLS10b) Contextual dynamics of gender-based violence II
1:00pm-1:45pm	(RAE-RC) Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster Meeting
1:00pm-1:45pm	(SCL-RC) Sociology of Culture Research Cluster Meeting
1:00pm-2:00pm	Student Reception

2:00pm-3:30pm	(ANS3) Human-Animal Relations: Advocacy and Reflection
2:00pm-3:30pm	(DEV2) Development Sociology Insights
2:00pm-3:30pm	(GAS5c) Sociology of Sexualities III
2:00pm-3:30pm	(ITD11) Intersectional Identities in Media and Technology: Representation, Algorithms, and the Self
2:00pm-3:30pm	(JFP1) Contesting Colonial Power over Palestine
2:00pm-3:30pm	(KNW6) Sociology of Sociology: Epistemic Hierarchies and Counter-publics of Knowledge
2:00pm-3:30pm	(MIG2) Forced and Precarious Migration
2:00pm-3:30pm	(OMN2b) Exploring Health and Risk
2:00pm-3:30pm	(RAE5) Race, Masculinity, and the Politics of Power
2:00pm-3:30pm	(SCL5) Sociology of Space, Place, and Time
2:00pm-3:30pm	(SCY6) Youth Crime and Contemporary Issues
2:00pm-3:30pm	(VLS9) Restorative/Transformative Responses to GBV
2:00pm-3:30pm	(WPO1f) The Complexities of Work and Inequality
4:00pm-5:30pm	(HEA12) Systems of care and social inequality in Canada
4:00pm-5:30pm	(ITD10) Platform Governance and Online Extremism
4:00pm-5:30pm	(JFP-MT) Justice for Palestine Meeting
4:00pm-5:30pm	(MIG6) Digital Migration Regimes: Navigating Technology and Belonging
4:00pm-5:30pm	(RAE2) Bridging Divides: Sociological Approaches to Race, Ethnicity, and Polarization
4:00pm-5:30pm	(RAS4) Canadian research data infrastructure for quantitative social science
4:00pm-5:30pm	(RUS1) Reimagining Social Infrastructures in Rural and Remote Communities
4:00pm-5:30pm	(SCL3) Cultural Production in Time and Space
4:00pm-5:30pm	(VLS3) Victimization, Violence, Recovery, Resilience, and Prevention
4:00pm-5:30pm	(WPO1g) Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Work and Well-being
6:00pm-9:00pm	Welcome Reception

Thursday June 11, 2026 (In-person Sessions)

Time	Session Name
9:00am-10:30am	(DIS2) Disability justice in the academy and beyond
9:00am-10:30am	(GAS2) Transgender Studies in Times of Crisis
9:00am-10:30am	(HEA6) COVID isn't over: Where are we now? What are we forgetting?
9:00am-10:30am	(INE1) Engaging for Outcomes: Managerial Strategies and Coordination of Work in Healthcare, Education and Research
9:00am-10:30am	(MIG5) Decentering the Northern Gaze: Southern Epistemologies in Migration Studies
9:00am-10:30am	(NET2) Immigrant Networks in the Integration Process
9:00am-10:30am	(PSM1) Movements for and Against Democracy I: Democratic and Anti-democratic Movements
9:00am-10:30am	(RAE1) Structural, Cultural, and Digital Dimensions of Anti-South Asian Racism in Canada
9:00am-10:30am	(SCY4a) Structures of Childhood and Youth: Family, School, Immigration
9:00am-10:30am	(URS4) Urban Informality and Inequalities in the age of Cities
9:00am-10:30am	(VLS6) Military Sociology and the Sociology of War and Peace
11:00am-12:30pm	(CRM3a) Perspectives on Policing I
11:00am-12:30pm	(DIS1) Community-based methods in disability studies
11:00am-12:30pm	(GAS4a) Thinking Power: Reconfiguring Subjectivities
11:00am-12:30pm	(HEA11) Infectious/Chronic Disease and Care
11:00am-12:30pm	(IND9) Public Attitudes toward Indigenous Peoples and Reconciliation in Canada
11:00am-12:30pm	(ITD2a) Technology & Society: General Topics I
11:00am-12:30pm	(MIG3) Privilege and Precarity: Examining Middle-Class Migration
11:00am-12:30pm	(PSM2) Movements for and Against Democracy II: Global Perspectives
11:00am-12:30pm	(RAE6a) From Yellow Peril to Pandemic Scapegoating: Anti-Asian Racism, Cultural Trauma, and Racial Meaning Making In Canada I
11:00am-12:30pm	(SCY4b) Young People's Experiences of their Worlds
11:00am-12:30pm	(URS1) Open Session - Urban Sociology Research Cluster
11:00am-12:30pm	(WPO2) Workplace Harassment, Bullying, & Victimization
12:00pm-1:00pm	(VIS-RC) Visual and Poetic Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
12:30pm-1:15pm	(URS-RC) Urban Sociology Research Cluster Meeting

1:30pm-3:00pm	(CRM3b) Perspectives on Policing II
1:30pm-3:00pm	(EDU5) Equity in K-12 Education: Harbouring Hope or Fuelling Division?
1:30pm-3:00pm	(GAS4b) Thinking Community: Negotiation & Contestation
1:30pm-3:00pm	(HEA16) Navigating uncertainty in health, illness, and medicine
1:30pm-3:00pm	(IND10a) Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and Indigenous Well-Being in Canada I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(INE5a) Disability and Institutional Ethnography I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ITD7) State and Future of Ethnic Media in Canada
1:30pm-3:00pm	(MIG7a) Negotiating Belonging in Settler Societies: Race, Migration, and Nation-Making in Canada
1:30pm-3:00pm	(PSM4) Critical Theories, Social Media, and Social Movements
1:30pm-3:00pm	(SCL7) Book Launch: Critical Friendship in the Modern World
1:30pm-3:00pm	(URS3) The Sociology of Homelessness Governance
1:30pm-3:00pm	(VLS4) Violence and Society: Risk, Harm, and Vulnerability
1:30pm-3:00pm	(WPO3) GenAI and Work
3:15pm-4:45pm	(CRM3c) Perspectives on Criminal Justice I
3:15pm-4:45pm	(EDU8) Education, School-Work Transitions, and Public Policy
3:15pm-4:45pm	(FTS1) Fat Pedagogy
3:15pm-4:45pm	(GAS6) The Construction of Parent and Child in Anti-LGBTQ2S+ Movements
3:15pm-4:45pm	(HEA9b) Political Sociology of Health II
3:15pm-4:45pm	(HOU1b) Sociology of Housing and Home II
3:15pm-4:45pm	(IND10b) Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and Indigenous Well-Being in Canada II
3:15pm-4:45pm	(INE5b) Disability and Institutional Ethnography II
3:15pm-4:45pm	(ITD6) Audio-Visual Digital Methods
3:15pm-4:45pm	(KNW7) Advancing Research on Conspiracy Beliefs: Current Developments and Future Directions
3:15pm-4:45pm	(MIG7b) Differential Exclusion and Refugee Belonging: Lived Experiences in Canada
3:15pm-4:45pm	(VLS5) Violence as a Cultural Process: Advancing Theory and Methods
5:00pm-6:30pm	(PLN2) Harbours of Hope: Sociological Perspectives from Atlantic Canada

Friday June 12, 2026 (In-person Sessions)

Time	Session Name
9:00am-10:30am	(CND1) Durkheimian Studies
9:00am-10:30am	(CRM4a) Canadian Contributions to Criminology I
9:00am-10:30am	(ENV1a) Environmental Sociology 1: Making Sense of Environmental Changes
9:00am-10:30am	(ENV6) Ecological Voices in Media: Critical Perspectives on Education and Citizenship
9:00am-10:30am	(FTS2a) Against Body Fascism I
9:00am-10:30am	(GAS7) Sociology in the Manosphere: Pathways Into and Out of Gendered Radicalization
9:00am-10:30am	(INE2a) Institutional Ethnography and Critical Policy Analysis I
9:00am-10:30am	(KNW2) How Methods and Mediums Shape Disciplinary Knowledge
9:00am-10:30am	(MIG7c) Diasporic Ties and Micro-Politics: Belonging in Divided Societies
11:00am-12:30pm	(CRM4b) Canadian Contributions to Criminology II
11:00am-12:30pm	(EDU3b) Critical perspectives of higher education
11:00am-12:30pm	(ENV1b) Environmental Sociology II: Culture, Identity, and the Environment
11:00am-12:30pm	(FEM7) Women's Caucus Meeting
11:00am-12:30pm	(FTS2b) Against Body Fascism II: Health care focus
11:00am-12:30pm	(GAS8) Constructing and Disrupting Toxic Masculinities
11:00am-12:30pm	(HEA2a) Structural Determinants of Health Equity: Political Economy, Professional Regulation, and Social Conditions
11:00am-12:30pm	(INE2b) Institutional Ethnography and Critical Policy Analysis II
11:00am-12:30pm	(ITD4) New Theoretical Approaches in Digital Sociology
11:00am-12:30pm	(KNW3) Methods and Mediums Shaping Disciplinary and Social Knowledge
11:00am-12:30pm	(MIG7d) Care, Control, and Contestation: Community Advocacy in an Era of Devolved Migration Governance
11:00am-12:30pm	(PSM5b) Social Movements, Political Polarization, Policing Protest, Social Trust and Democracy
11:00am-12:30pm	(RES1) Relational Sociology and Radical Relationisms
12:30pm-1:15pm	(CRM-RC) Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster Meeting
12:30pm-1:15pm	(HEA-RC) Sociology of Health Research Cluster Meeting
12:30pm-1:15pm	(INE-RC) Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster Meeting

12:30pm-1:15pm	(PSM-RC) Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster Meeting
1:30pm-3:00pm	(DIS3) Neurodiversity studies
1:30pm-3:00pm	(EDU3c) Perspectives of schooling and higher education
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ENV1c) Environmental Sociology III: Land and Resistance
1:30pm-3:00pm	(FEM5) Women's Voice of Resistance and the Work of Collective Imagination
1:30pm-3:00pm	(FTS3) Fat Joy and Hope
1:30pm-3:00pm	(GAS3a) Thinking Queer: The Politics of Sexuality
1:30pm-3:00pm	(HEA1a) Embodied Inequalities: Gender, Risk, and the Lived Experience of Health
1:30pm-3:00pm	(INE3a) New Directions in Institutional Ethnography I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ITD8) Hybrid Futures: The Mediatization of Work, Leisure, and Time
1:30pm-3:00pm	(MIG7e) Transforming the City: Migrant-led Inclusion amid Structural Barriers
1:30pm-3:00pm	(PSM5c) Revolution, Transnational Mobilization, and Party Dynamics
3:30pm-5:00pm	(CRM2) Pedagogical practices for teaching difficult topics
3:30pm-5:00pm	(DIS4c) Sociology of Disability III
3:30pm-5:00pm	(EDU2) The sociology of schooling (k-12)
3:30pm-5:00pm	(ENV5) Climate Crisis, Environmental Regulations, and Social Movements
3:30pm-5:00pm	(FEM2b) Gendered Norms, Gender Violence: (Re)productions of Normalization and Harm
3:30pm-5:00pm	(FTS4) Fat Activism & Cross-Liberatory Projects
3:30pm-5:00pm	(HEA1b) Power, Policy, and the Production of Health Inequalities
3:30pm-5:00pm	(INE3b) New Directions in Institutional Ethnography II
3:30pm-5:00pm	(ITD9) Social Media and the Future of Health & Medicine
3:30pm-5:00pm	(SMH6) The Social Roots of Emotion and Well-being
3:30pm-5:00pm	(SOM1) Advancing Theories of Migration
3:30pm-5:00pm	(SPT1) New Directions in the Sociological Study of Gender and Sport
3:30pm-5:00pm	(TEA3) Teaching and Assessment in the Age of AI: Supporting – Not Circumventing – Learning
3:30pm-5:00pm	(THE7) Does Canadian Sociology Need Heterodox Sociology? Yes, Maybe, Maybe Not
5:00pm-6:00pm	(ENV-RC) Environmental Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
5:00pm-6:00pm	(ITD-RC) Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster Meeting

Saturday June 13, 2026 (In-person Sessions)

Time	Session Name
9:00am-10:30am	(CAD1) Borders, Buyers and Boycotts: Canadian Nationalism in the Trump Era
9:00am-10:30am	(CRM5c) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives III
9:00am-10:30am	(ECS1a) Comparative Political Economies in a Divided World I
9:00am-10:30am	(FEM3a) Rewriting the Grammar of Gender at Work: Leadership, Legitimacy, and Structural Inclusion
9:00am-10:30am	(HEA1c) Contested Knowledge: Expertise, Legitimacy, and the Governance of Care
9:00am-10:30am	(ITD12c) AI, Power, and the Politics of the Social
9:00am-10:30am	(PSM12) Iranian Scholars and Students in a Time of War and Political Upheaval: Academic Freedom, Safety, and Institutional Responsibility
9:00am-10:30am	(SMH5) Work and Mental Health
9:00am-10:30am	(SOM3a) Evidence-based Research on Immigrant Integration I
9:00am-10:30am	(THE1) Symposium for Early Career Theorists (SECT)
11:00am-12:30pm	(APS4) Qualitative Research in Sociology: Benefits and Challenges
11:00am-12:30pm	(CRM9) Canadian Cannabis: Markets, Regulation, and State
11:00am-12:30pm	(ECS1b) Comparative Political Economies in a Divided World II
11:00am-12:30pm	(ENV1d) Environmental Sociology IV: Environment, Government, and Industry
11:00am-12:30pm	(FEM3c) Governing Gendered Precarity: Inclusion, Embodiment, and the Privatization of Risk at Work
11:00am-12:30pm	(ITD12b) AI, Inequality, and the Reconfiguration of Knowledge, Labor, and Expertise
11:00am-12:30pm	(OMN2a) Reflections on Social Support, Housing, and the Role of Nonprofit Organizations
11:00am-12:00pm	(PLN3) On the Ethic of Access and the Transformation of Mental Healthcare: A Sociology of Psychology
11:00am-12:30pm	(PSM11) Pygmalion Democracy and the Need for Transformative Education
11:00am-12:30pm	(SOM3b) Evidence-based Research on Immigrant Integration II
11:00am-12:30pm	(THE5) Social Theory
12:30pm-1:15pm	(ECS-RC) Economic Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
12:30pm-1:15pm	(SMH-RC) Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster Meeting
12:30pm-1:15pm	(SOM-RC) Sociology of Migration Research Cluster Meeting

1:30pm-3:00pm	(CRM7) Crime, Deviance, and the Media
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ECS2) The Relational Turn in Economic Sociology : Contours and Limits of Relationality
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ENV7) Climate Politics in a Divided World: From Conflict to Solidarity
1:30pm-3:00pm	(EQS1a) Spatial [In]Justice, Power, and Everyday Life I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(FEM4) Interrogating Feminist Intersectionality in Theory, Research, and Praxis
1:30pm-3:30pm	(HEA15a) The Sociology of Aging and Later Life I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(ITD3) Mobilizing the Digital Public
1:30pm-3:00pm	(SMH2) Mental Health and Social Context I
1:30pm-3:00pm	(SOM2) Recent Developments in Gender and Migration Research
1:30pm-3:00pm	(THE2) Foundations for Social Theory: Classical Perspectives and Metatheoretical Approaches
3:30pm-5:00pm	(ENV9) 'Abundance', 'Luxury', and 'Growth' on a Planet in Crisis: What does this mean?
3:30pm-5:00pm	(EQS1b) Spatial [In]Justice, Power, and Everyday Life II
3:30pm-5:00pm	(SMH3) Mental Health and Social Context II
3:30pm-5:00pm	(SOM4) Sociology of Migration: Politics, Citizenship and Public Perceptions on Immigration
3:30pm-5:00pm	(TEA1) Thinking with Undergrads: Meeting their Worlds, Experiences, and Selves
3:30pm-5:00pm	(THE4) Theory and Praxis: Preparing Social Theory for a Hopeful Future?

Session and Presentation Details

(AIS) Anti-Islamophobia Subcommittee

(AIS1a) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia I
Schedule: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Anti-Islamophobia Subcommittee and Critical Muslim Studies Research Cluster

We invited papers that explore topics in the fields of critical Muslim studies and anti-Islamophobia. We especially encouraged emerging scholars, students, and community members who are working in critical intersectional areas such as anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Black Islamophobia, and gendered Islamophobia to submit their work.

Session Organizers: Ayesha Mian Akram, University of Calgary; Leila Benhadjoudja, University of Ottawa; Nadiya Ali, Trent University; Lucy El-Sherif, McMaster University; and Muna Saleh, Concordia University of Edmonton

Session Chair: Lucy El-Sherif, McMaster University

AIS1a-1 - Beyond Passive Victimhood: Muslim Women's Active Negotiation of Victim Identity amid Islamophobia

Humera Syed, Ontario Tech University

A paper based on the research in this presentation has received the Canadian Sociological Association's Best Student Paper Award*.*

Gendered Islamophobia is well-documented globally, yet the literature frequently positions Muslim women as passive victims of discrimination and violence in the literature. This paper challenges such representations by examining how Muslim women actively negotiate their identities while navigating both Islamophobic victimization and the social expectations attached to being a "Muslim woman." Drawing on a purposive review of qualitative literature foregrounding participant narratives and direct quotations, this study centers Muslim women's own accounts of harm, meaning-making, and response. Grounded in Goffman's (1963) theory of stigma and Zine's (2004) Critical Muslim Feminism (CMF), this analysis reconceptualizes victimhood as a socially stigmatized identity shaped by power, discourse, and epistemological exclusion. While stigma theory illuminates how victimhood is socially managed and negotiated, CMF provides an essential lens for interpreting Muslim women's narratives on their own terms and resisting orientalist and imperial feminist assumptions that frame religious practice, particularly veiling, as incompatible with agency (Bullock, 2007). Findings across the literature reveal that Muslim women engage in ongoing processes of meaning-making through cognitive reframing, impression management, faith-based coping, emotional regulation, and community solidarity. These practices demonstrate that victim identity is actively negotiated within an intersecting matrix of gendered, racialized, and religious marginalization. By foregrounding Muslim women's accounts of identity negotiation, this paper highlights how prevailing epistemological orientations within sociology can obscure the subtle and relational processes through which gendered Islamophobia is lived and managed. When Muslim women's meaning-making practices are filtered through narrow assumptions about agency, victimhood, and religion, key dimensions of identity construction remain analytically invisible. Unless sociological analysis moves beyond these epistemological limits, it risks reproducing the very inequalities it seeks to challenge. Attending to these narratives therefore requires sociological approaches that recognize Muslim women as epistemic agents whose interpretations of harm, selfhood, and social positioning are analytically generative rather than merely illustrative.

AIS1a-2 - Beyond Recognition: Islamophobia, Anti-Palestinian Racism, and the Politics of State Violence

Hadeel Abu Hussein, University of Toronto; Fahad Ahmad, Toronto Metropolitan University

In light of Israel's genocide in Gaza, one is forced to ask how this horror has unfolded. Some scholarship has explained the apathy towards the genocide among Western governments via Islamophobia, understood broadly as a form of anti-Muslim racism (Schotten 2024). This formulation, affirmed under the War on Terror, portrays Muslims, and by extension Palestinians, as civilizational threats, inherently terroristic, and "presumptively antisemitic" (Bahdi & Kanji 2018; Centre for Security, Race and Rights 2023), justifying unabated state violence against them. Recently, the Arab Canadian Lawyer's Association proposed the concept of anti-Palestinian racism (APR), defined as "a form of anti-Arab racism that silences, excludes, erases, stereotypes, defames or dehumanizes

Palestinians or their narratives" (Majid 2022). APR has been used to explain the suppression of popular support for Palestine alongside disregard for Israel's continued devastation of Gaza and occupation of Palestine. This paper explores the conceptual overlaps between Islamophobia and APR. Following critiques attendant to the limits of "official" anti-racism frameworks (Husain 2020; Coulthard 2014), we argue that popular use of Islamophobia and APR is trapped within the politics of recognition. Fully contending with the relationship between these concepts requires an examination of state produced racial knowledges, colonial rationalities rooted in civilizational discord, and the role of Israel as a "laboratory" for counterterrorism. Drawing on global north jurisdictions, we explore cases of Islamophobia and APR and contrast those with the broad deployment of counterterrorism machinery against Palestinians and pro-Palestine activists. We conclude with suggestions for a future research agenda.

AIS1a-4 - On Being a Muslimaẗ Muḥağabaẗ and Researching Gendered Islamophobia in Québec

Zeinab Diab, Indépendante

This paper reflects on my experience as a *Muslimaẗ Muḥağabaẗ* (hijab-practicing Muslim woman) researching gendered Islamophobia under Québec's Law 21, from within a francophone, predominantly white, and historically Christian academic environment. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's theorization of institutional violence, I examine what it means to become *a problem* for the institution: a body that does not "fit," that disrupts norms of academic respectability simply by existing and refusing alignment.

(AIS1b) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia II

Schedule: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Anti-Islamophobia Subcommittee and Critical Muslim Studies Research Cluster

We invited papers that explore topics in the fields of critical Muslim studies and anti-Islamophobia. We especially encouraged emerging scholars, students, and community members who are working in critical intersectional areas such as anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Black Islamophobia, and gendered Islamophobia to submit their work.

Session Organizers: Ayesha Mian Akram, University of Calgary; Leila Benhadjoudja, University of Ottawa; Nadiya Ali, Trent University; Lucy El-Sherif, McMaster University; and Muna Saleh, Concordia University of Edmonton

Session Chair: Muna Saleh, Concordia University of Edmonton

AIS1b-1 - Media Bias and Counter-Islamophobia Praxis: Toward Anti-Discriminatory Journalism in Canada

Presenting Author - Fahad Ahmad, Toronto Metropolitan University

Non-presenting Author - Asmaa Malik, Toronto Metropolitan University

Hate crimes against Muslims in Canada have soared: since 2017, the targeted killings of Muslims in Canada surpassed other G7 nations (Senate Canada 2023). Following October 7, 2023 specially, media representations of anti-Muslim hate crimes reveal persistent biases that normalize

Islamophobia and impede counter-Islamophobia efforts. This paper examines how major English-language Canadian media outlets (*Toronto Star, The Globe & Mail*, *National Post*) frame hate crimes against Muslims compared to hate crimes targeting other minoritized communities, analyzing coverage two years before and after October 7. Drawing on critical discourse analysis (van Dijk 1993) and news framing theory (Chong & Druckman 2007), we identify patterns of differential representation, including inconsistencies in treatment of perpetrators and victims, selective contextualization, and the mobilization of Islamophobic tropes. Our analysis reveals how ostensibly neutral journalistic practices reproduce structures of discrimination, echoing broader patterns of systemic Islamophobia documented in Canada and other Western democracies (Kundnani 2014; Zine 2022). This research seeks to develop an evidence-based best practices guide for newsrooms. The project bridges the theory-praxis divide by demonstrating how theoretical insights into media power and Islamophobic discourse can generate concrete interventions. Our envisioned journalistic guide - developed in collaboration with Muslim journalists whose lived experiences illuminate the structural dimensions of newsroom bias - offers actionable recommendations for editors, reporters, and media organizations. This methodology decentres dominant journalistic epistemologies by centering Muslim voices and expertise. By situating contemporary media bias within longer histories of Islamophobia and colonial discourse, this research avoids the presentism that limits counter-Islamophobia strategies. The guide represents a practical tool for disrupting the normalization of Islamophobia in Canadian public discourse, contributing to the broader emancipatory project of building genuinely inclusive and equitable media systems.

AIS1b-2 - Streaming Empire: Netflix, Gendered Orientalism, and the War on Terror in the Arab MENA

Alia Wazzan, Brock University

This presentation argues that Netflix's capitalist expansion in the Arab MENA market remobilizes the racialized and gendered epistemologies of the War on Terror (WOT) on a global scale. It examines how gendered-Orientalist and gendered-Islamophobic representational categories circulate on Netflix's global screen, reproducing Arab and/or Muslim women through essentialized tropes of terror, sexual looseness, and backwardness. Such representations normalize the racial profiling of the region's populations, cultures, and lands, while sustaining the ideological conditions that legitimize ongoing U.S. reengineering of the Middle East within the framework of the WOT. The analysis draws primarily on postcolonial feminist theory (Loomba; Spivak; Mohanty; Abu-Lughod; Ahmed; Riley; Kabbani; Schick; Fanon; Alloula; Kumar; Beydoun; Hester Eisenstein; Zillah Eisenstein), intersected with insights from cultural studies (Shaheen; Hall; hooks) and neoliberal critical theory (Harvey; Brown; Bazian; Waikar; Mamdani), to establish its conceptual foundations. I propose an "Orientalist continuum" structured through three analytical rubrics—classical, contemporary, and neoliberal gendered Orientalism—which captures the continuity of Western colonial gendered epistemologies that constitute the specified representational categories as they shift alongside imperial foreign and domestic policy agendas initiated by the WOT. Through a critical discourse analysis of Netflix's shows, I identify the gendered representational category of the "harem despots" (in Netflix's *The Spy*), revealing how gendered-Orientalist tropes are mobilized to normalize Israeli occupation and violence against Syrian lands while advocating for a "New Middle East." I then examine Netflix's construction of Western Muslim women who join ISIS as "oppressed-terrorists" (in

Netflix's *Caliphate*), advancing a counter-terrorism pedagogy that normalizes the surveillance of Muslim communities in the West. Finally, I identify the figure of the "saved-empowered Arab woman" (in Netflix's *AlRawabi School for Girls*, *Finding Ola*, *Crashing Eid*, and *The Exchange*), an ambivalent construct that frames empowerment through racialized and gendered WOT logics. These representational categories demonstrate that Netflix p in the WOT.

AIS1b-3 - Systemic Racism and Police-Black Interactions in Alberta: Appraisals from Black Muslims

Ismail Nasirudeen, University of Alberta

This paper examines systemic racism as it is lived and interpreted through everyday police-Black interactions in Alberta. While scholarship on racialized policing in Canada has expanded, it remains heavily concentrated in Ontario and often privileges quantitative approaches. This study addresses both regional and methodological gaps by qualitatively examining routine police-Black interactions in Alberta and by centering the perspectives of Black Muslims, a group that remains underrepresented in research and policy discourse. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 25 Black Muslims residing in Alberta, I explore how participants understand, experience, and perceive their interactions with the police within a broader context of systemic racism. Findings reveal two central patterns. First, I identify ten challenges to Black existence through which participants describe systemic racism as a routine and enduring condition shaping Black life in Canada, manifested through surveillance, criminalization, denial of victimhood, and the erosion of dignity in everyday encounters. These experiences are widely understood as structural rather than accidental, with Blackness itself often sufficient to invite suspicion and unequal treatment, further compounded by other marginalized markers of identity. Second, participants consistently distinguish between individual police conduct and institutional failure. Positive police-Black interactions are largely attributed to individual professionalism, restraint, and ethical commitment, while negative interactions are interpreted as expressions of systemic and institutional deficiencies rather than isolated misconduct. By foregrounding lived experience and ethical appraisal, I challenge simplistic portrayals of policing as either wholly oppressive or uniformly benevolent. Instead, I offer a layered narrative that recognizes moments of police professionalism while situating harm within enduring structures of racial inequality. This study contributes to scholarship on racialized policing by centering Black Muslim voices, highlighting Alberta as an underexamined context, and advancing an ethical framework for understanding police-Black interactions in White majority societies.

AIS1b-4 - The politics of self-reclamation and futurity amongst young Muslim women in Canada

Zain Jassani, University of Calgary

This SSHRC-funded research project which draws on theories of transnational feminism investigates the complicatedness of self-representation through fashion for a generation of young Muslim women in Alberta (18-24 year olds) for whom the clothing they wear represents so much more than just clothing. This Generation Z, through access to the digital space and transnational knowledges and communities, is influenced by instant global connectivity, online shopping, social media solidarity movements, content creators, and transnational communities and connections that were not available to previous generations of Muslim women growing up in the diaspora. We question, how do young Muslim women use fashion as a means of representing their complex, at times

contradictory, identities? How do they develop their personal style and fashion as a visible marker of their self-representation? Ultimately, these fashion choices reveal much about how young people are navigating multiple, overlapping, complex identities, embodiments, spaces, and communities to make sense of who they are and what their place is in the world, particularly in a world replete with sociopolitical crises, economic hardship, ecological devastation, ideological polarization, and rapid technological innovation. This particular community-engaged research project involves photo-capture, focus groups, and a collective workshop space for young Muslim women in Alberta. In the workshops, participants engage in the feminist collaborative practice of creating a collective photobook, to be launched through a transnational digital campaign following the workshop. This pilot project creates space for community to attend to reclamation forcibly taken away by global racial logics, empire-building, and authoritarian regimes; as an act of resistance, this work reclaims power back into the hands of community to advance an epistemological defiance through knowledges produced by Muslim women themselves.

(AIS1c) Critical Muslim Studies and Anti-Islamophobia III

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Anti-Islamophobia Subcommittee and Critical Muslim Studies Research Cluster

We invited papers that explore topics in the fields of critical Muslim studies and anti-Islamophobia. We especially encouraged emerging scholars, students, and community members who are working in critical intersectional areas such as anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Black Islamophobia, and gendered Islamophobia to submit their work.

Session Organizers: Ayesha Mian Akram, University of Calgary; Leila Benhadjoudja, University of Ottawa; Nadiya Ali, Trent University; Lucy El-Sherif, McMaster University; and Muna Saleh, Concordia University of Edmonton

Session Chair: Nadiya Ali, Trent University

AIS1c-1 - Academic Achievement of Muslim High School Students in Toronto

Sarah Masri, McMaster University

This study investigates the academic achievement of Muslim high school students within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), with a specific focus on how race and country of origin intersect to influence educational outcomes. Utilizing a unique dataset comprised of four pooled Grade 9 student cohorts from 2013 to 2016, our analysis is limited to students who self-identify as Muslim. Using an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and predicted margins analysis, we find that Black Muslim students consistently achieve lower high school course averages compared to their Middle Eastern and South Asian peers, even after controlling for factors such as socioeconomic status, parental education, course level, gender, disability, and other background characteristics. Our results underscore that not all Muslim students experience education in the same manner, and that the compounded effects of racialization and migration histories significantly shape their academic trajectories. Guided by an intersectional framework, our research illuminates how structural inequalities manifest within educational institutions, particularly affecting Black Muslim youth. Our findings advocate for more targeted interventions that take into account the complex dimensions of Muslim youth identities, including race, religion, and country of origin, in shaping educational outcomes.

AIS1c-2 - Are you guys packing some bombs?": Revisiting islamophobia, community engagement, and belonging of young Muslim Americans

Aleezay Khaliq, Loyola University Maryland

This paper examines the lived experiences of second-generation Muslim Americans in the post-9/11 United States, focusing on the intersections of Islamophobia, identity, and civic engagement. Using qualitative interviews with second-generation Muslim immigrants in the Washington, D.C, metropolitan area, the study finds that Islamophobia appears overtly, through verbal abuse, harassment, and surveillance, and subtly, through microaggressions and systemic exclusion. These experiences are highly gendered and racialized, with visibly Muslim women, especially those who wear the hijab, facing increased vulnerability. The analysis reveals how these dynamics cultivate a culture of fear, necessitating ongoing emotional labor and self-surveillance in public settings. At the same time, participants display resilience and agency through increased religiosity, community involvement, and civic engagement. Volunteering, political activism, and interfaith collaboration are strategies that foster a sense of belonging and challenge exclusionary narratives while cultivating a sense of belonging among young Muslim Americans. Furthermore, the study illustrates how second-generation Muslims navigate identity at home, in mosques, workplaces, and public spaces, transforming marginalization into social and civic empowerment. The findings suggest that civic engagement serves as both a response to and a strategy against Islamophobia, enabling young Muslims to assert belonging in American society.

(ANS) Animals in Society Research Cluster

(ANS1) Companion Animals and the Human-Animal Bond
Scheduled: Virtual - Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Animals in Society Research Cluster

In Canada, companion animals are present in the majority of homes. We share our lives with our animal companions, which often comes with a deep bond. This session explores the relationships that companion animals and humans share. Presentations in this session invite us to consider what this relationship looks like across the lifespan, invite us to reconsider our traditional conceptualizations of companion animal species, and highlight the ways in which our legal systems may not be aligned with the human-companion animal bond.

Session Organizers: Rochelle Stevenson, Thompson Rivers University; Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

Session Chair: Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

ANS1-1 - Companionship Across Generations and Species: A Qualitative Study on the Companion Animal - Older Adult Reciprocal Relationship

Presenting Author - Izza Babar, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Alan Martino, University of Calgary

This research study focuses on the multifaceted, reciprocal relationships between companion animals and older adults, exploring how these bonds contribute to emotional stability and well-being

in later life. Companion animals, often perceived merely as pets, are integral to the lives of approximately 40% of Canadians aged 65 and older, serving as sources of companionship and emotional support. However, traditional research tends to adopt a human-centric lens, overlooking the agency and experiences of nonhuman animals. This study aims to bridge the fields of critical aging studies and critical animal studies, highlighting the intersectionality of aging and human-animal relationships. The primary objective of this study is to understand these relationships as reciprocal rather than one-sided, enriching our comprehension of both human and animal wellbeing. By examining older adults' experiences with their companion animals, this research emphasizes the mutual emotional labour involved in caregiving and companionship. Key research questions include how older adults derive meaning from these relationships and how they navigate the interplay of their needs with those of their animal companions. The study employs qualitative methods, including photo elicitation (inspired loosely by Photovoice) and narrative analysis, to capture the nuanced dynamics of these interspecies bonds. Preliminary insights suggest that recognizing companion animals as active participants challenges conventional perceptions of care and nurtures a more reciprocal and compassionate understanding of human-animal relationships. Ultimately, this research aspires to contribute to public health and aging policies by advocating for a more holistic understanding of well-being that extends beyond just older adults to also encapsulate their nonhuman companions.

ANS1-2 - Property and Person: Legal Social Constructs With Consequences for Pets

Barbara Hanson, York University

I use a holistic social construction approach to analyze how legal social constructs of “person“ and “property” shape the lives and death of pets. I got interested in this topic while a second career law student in the early 2000s with deep appreciation for animals in general and dogs in particular. This led me to look at legal practice in wills, domestic violence, bailment, and custody following dissolution of relationships My initial research led me to conclude that in some situations a person construct is better and in other situations property is better. I got to this view through my review of case law and secondary sources. This left me with a sense that by and large things were improving for domestic animals. I was happy to prepare my own finances in order to do as much I could to protect my own dogs from being abandoned, lost, unhealthy, starving, preyed upon, abused, injured, unsheltered, or in need of medical treatment in the event of my death or incapacitation. Recently I have come to suspect that things have moved in a negative direction that makes it harder to protect pets. So I decided to update my research and try to make an animal positive contribution by getting my observations into a public forum.

ANS1-3 - Don’t Just Ask About the Pets: Considering Farmed and Large Companion Animals in Social Work Responses to Intimate Partner Violence

Sue O'Neill, University of New Brunswick

As research has emerged regarding the need to protect companion animals to support survivors in leaving an abusive relationship, there is a need for safe options for survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) with companion animals to support survivors in caring for and finding safe accommodation for their animals (Giesbrecht et al., 2025; Spencer, 2024; Stevenson et al., 2017). As

pet friendly IPV programs and offsite animal fostering and boarding programs emerge for companion animals, there is a lack of options available to survivors of IPV with farmed and large companion animals and a need to consider these animals in safety planning and responses to IPV. This qualitative research study included two focus groups and one interview with five service providers across Canada that had worked with survivors of IPV that had relationships with or were responsible for farmed and/or large companion animals during their experiences of IPV. The theoretical framework for this study was a critical feminist framework. In this framework, concepts from ecofeminism and critical animal studies were utilized to provide a survivor and animal centered perspective. Service providers highlighted how the responsibility for caring or arranging for care for these types of animals often fell on survivors of IPV, which did result in some survivors fleeing the relationship, however returning daily to provide animal care which is a significant safety risk. Service providers identified the specialized community knowledge that can result in creative community solutions, however there is still a need for sustainable solutions and funding. Emergency protection orders were suggested by service providers as a potential solution, however there are still safety considerations. Overall, this research study demonstrates the need for service providers to consider farmed and large companion animals in responses to and safety planning with survivors of IPV from rural, remote, and farming communities.

(ANS2) Agricultural Animals in Society

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Animals in Society Research Cluster

Human-animal relations extend past the realm of companion animals, permeating our lives in a myriad of ways. This session explores the ways in which traditional agricultural animals show up in our everyday lives. Presentations in this session explore the impacts of considering the human-agricultural animal bond in policy, the historical agency and regulation of agricultural animals, and the challenging and contradictory ways such animals are presented in popular media.

Session Organizers: Rochelle Stevenson, Thompson Rivers University; Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

Session Chair: Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

ANS2-1 - My Cow Gave Me the Courage to Leave: The Positive Impacts of the Bond Between Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Farmed and Larger Companion Animals

Sue O'Neill, University of New Brunswick

Research has demonstrated the human-animal bond offers positive impacts for survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) such as companion animals acting as sources of unconditional love, support, comfort, and companionship during experiences of violence (Giesbrecht, 2022a; Hardesty et al., 2013; Oosthuizen et al., 2023; Rosenberg et al., 2020). However, there is minimal research regarding the impact of the human-animal bond between survivors of IPV with farmed and large companion animals. This qualitative research study included semi-structured interviews with five survivors of IPV across Canada. A critical feminist theoretical framework guided this research study, with concepts from ecofeminism (such as entangled fates between humans, animals and the environment) and critical animal studies (such as speciesism) woven into the framework. Multiple survivors identified their farmed and large companion animals as sources of emotional support, happiness and safe

physical affection. Survivors' interactions with their farmed and large companion animals often contrasted with the abuse they were experiencing, including experiencing a sense of safety when with their animals, and for one survivor experiencing reciprocal communication with her goats which contrasted the stonewalling and psychologically abusive behaviour of the aggressor. One survivor discussed how her cow was a source of emotional support during her experience of IPV and eventually became a source of courage to leave the relationship and build a violence free life for themselves. For other survivors, bonds with their animals led to experiences of healing from the violence they had experienced. This research demonstrates the power of the human-animal bond with animals that are not typically thought of as sources of emotional support during experiences of IPV.

ANS2-2 - Minotaur beneath the city: a brief regulatory history of cows in Vancouver

Nathanael Lauster, University of British Columbia

Authors like Watts (2013) suggest that recovering the agency of non-human actors is critical to a broader call to decolonize sociology. But how should it be done? And what new tools could it offer? Here I suggest reintroducing the agency of cows as a starting point. Cows were both crucial and disruptive agents in the process of colonial settlement across North America. The agency of cows can be traced through the regulatory histories of their close partnership with colonizing settlers as well as through their subsequent expulsion from settlements turned cities. The gradual symbolic, legal, and spatial differentiation of cow from real city, cow from real property, and cow from real person reveal a recurrent unfolding to the particular Euro-Western epistemology described by Watts; which is to suggest that the exclusion of non-humans from agency isn't something arriving fully formed with colonial settlement, but instead has to be gradually set in place over and over again through the regulation of cows. Inspired by Watts approach but reaching further back than Christianity, I provide a framework for thinking about this process rooted in the story of Theseus' interactions with cow type agents (most famously the minotaur) on the way to establishing Athens. At the same time, I point toward new conceptual tools on offer from taking the agency of cows seriously, and how we can use these tools to better understand regulatory strategies surrounding historical redefinitions of municipal corporations, real property, and real people.

ANS2-3 - Love, guilt, and hamburgers: A green criminology perspective on human-animal relations in Bob's Burgers

Wesley Tourangeau, University of Windsor

In this presentation, I discuss mediated meanings of meat and animals in *Bob's Burgers*, a popular American animated television series. While the depiction of taken-for-granted ideas like meat eating and 'pet' keeping have the potential to reify harmful normative assumptions and hierarchical human-animal relations, the more outlandish and cartoonish depictions of meat and animals in this show demonstrate its potential role in disrupting axiomatic ideas about animals. In this animated TV show, pre-existing ideas, values, and ideologies that inform the dialogues and themes about meat and animals are transformed through the conduit of media, both reaffirming meat-eating as commonplace, and adding new narratives about guilt, love, and the ambiguity and uncertainty of 'not knowing' in human-animal relations. So, while *Bob's Burgers* may contribute to the ongoing

discursive space that maintains the status of meat eating as self-evident, the wholesome and relatable style of *Bob's Burgers* allows for themes about love and empathy to contribute positive messages about the inherent and intrinsic value of non-human animals. This analysis is realized by drawing insights from constitutive criminology, green-cultural criminology, popular criminology, and zemiology to further advance green criminological scholarship on media, animal harm, and human-animal relations. This expanded field of view provides a means for uncovering a more complete account of the meaning, etiology, and production of animal harms, as well as ideas for mitigating them.

(ANS3) Human-Animal Relations: Advocacy and Reflection

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Animals in Society Research Cluster

Human-animal relations are a key part of our society, though this is not often recognized beyond the companion animal sphere. We share our lives and spaces with a variety of species, including wild, agricultural, and companion animals. This session centres the ways in which human-animal relations are challenged by humans themselves. Presentations in this session examine animal advocacy, the tensions within the animal advocacy movement, and the unique ways in which the human-animal relationship is evidenced.

Session Organizers: Rochelle Stevenson, Thompson Rivers University; Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

Session Chair: Yasmin Koop-Monteiro, Prince Edward Island University

ANS3-1 - Pseudoscience, anti-intellectualism, alienation: Interrogating hunting advocacy organizations' calls to reopen grizzly hunting in Western Canada

Presenting Author - Tandeep Sidhu, University of Manitoba

Non-presenting Authors - Lacee O'Neil, University of Manitoba; McKenzie Duguay and Amy Graham, University of Guelph

Following a series of highly publicized incidents involving attacks and other forms of human-wildlife conflict (HWC), numerous hunting advocacy organizations mobilized a series of discourses to spur public support for reopening grizzly bear trophy hunting. These efforts conflict with the broader consensus in the ecological literature that illustrates how (a) habitat loss, (b) low reproductive success, and (c) other human-related mortalities necessitate a hunting ban. Using Cohen's (1972) moral panic as a theoretical framework, this paper thematically interrogates the discursive frameworks employed by these advocacy organizations to position the grizzly as a 'folk devil' and amplify public fears. Public-facing statements in media and press releases are thematically analyzed using an inductive approach. We find that the efforts of advocacy organizations invoke three overlapping discourses: (1) the use of pseudoscience, (2) anti-intellectualism, and (3) Western alienation. These discursive strategies demonstrate how, despite a public-facing image emphasizing 'science-based management', hunting organizations pursue broader policy objectives that contradict this premise. The discourses employed by these advocacy organizations are contextualized in terms of their capacity to cause social harm. This perspective argues that the victims of these discourses include (a) grizzly bears, (b) Indigenous nations that have sacred relationships with grizzlies, and (c)

rural communities who would otherwise benefit from non-lethal conflict mitigation strategies. The broader significance of the findings is that they challenge the settler-colonial and economic dimensions of the 'North American Model of Wildlife Management and Conservation', demonstrating the value of critical environmental sociology as a vehicle for pursuing conservation and environmental justice.

ANS3-2 - A Study of Demobilization and Remobilization in the Animal Advocacy Movement

Yasmin Koop-Monteiro, University of Prince Edward Island

This study examines the complex and underexamined processes of demobilization and remobilization within social movements. Drawing on Klandermans' model of disengagement and Corrigall-Brown's trajectory model of participation, findings from interviews with 13 animal rights activists — all of which have engaged in high-risk/cost activism — reveal how insufficient gratification and precipitating events serve as key triggers for disengagement, even while ideological commitment remains strong. Notably, the study demonstrates the dual role of precipitating events, which can both demobilize activists and catalyze re-engagement under the right conditions, particularly when strong relational ties are maintained. Additionally, the research expands the literature on burnout by highlighting moral shocks as both mobilizing and demobilizing forces, emphasizing the role of emotional regulation in sustaining activism. By exploring the dynamics of demobilization and remobilization, the study advances theoretical understandings of activist trajectories and offers actionable insights for fostering resilience and sustainability within activist communities.

ANS3-3 - Animals of Hope: Animal Symbols on Gravestones as Expressions of Personality and Positive Meaning

Annika Barzen, TU Chemnitz

In many contemporary societies, gravestones are no longer standardized markers of death but sites of individualized expression. In Germany, where gravestone design allows for a high degree of personalization, symbols are frequently used to communicate aspects of identity, values, and personality beyond the life course. This presentation draws on a visual ethnographic study conducted at a large historic cemetery in an East German city, established in 1874, focusing specifically on animal symbols displayed on gravestones. Using a visual dataset of gravestones featuring symbolic motifs, selected through theoretical sampling, this presentation examines how animals serve as carriers of positive meanings such as hope, strength, loyalty, protection, or emotional warmth. Rather than treating these symbols as purely decorative, the analysis approaches them as meaningful signs through which personality traits and desired posthumous representations are articulated. Methodologically, the paper employs a interpretative and comparative approach to visual meaning-making, moving from descriptive identification of animal motifs (e.g., swan, lion, dog) to interpretive analysis of their symbolic orientations and recurring patterns. Through comparative analysis, ideal-typical clusters of animal symbolism are developed, highlighting how animals function as moral and affective figures within commemorative practices. By foregrounding animal symbolism in funerary contexts, the paper contributes to the sociology of animals and society by showing how human-animal relations extend beyond life into practices of remembrance, where animals become symbolic companions of hope and positivity. The study demonstrates how animals operate as culturally shared yet individually meaningful resources for expressing personality and emotional orientation in death.

(ANS-RC) Animals in Society Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: Virtual - Monday June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Animals in Society Research Cluster

Embracing interdisciplinary approaches, the Animals in Society Research Cluster recognizes and respects that we are all animals in a shared society. We welcome all who are interested in learning more about our cluster activities, the teaching and research that is ongoing in this area or are just curious about Animals in Society! The meeting will provide opportunities to connect with other scholars, space for feedback on our current activities, and discussions about future initiatives.
Session Organizers: Rochelle Stevenson, Thompson Rivers University; Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

Session Chair: Sarah May Lindsay, Trent University

(APS) Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster

(APS1) The Highlights and Challenges of Applied and Community-Engaged Sociology

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster

Community engaged sociology creates opportunities for sociologists, community members, and the public to connect, to motivate social changes, and to 'commit sociology' on a ground level. This type of sociology requires dedication, time, and passion for the 'work' and can construct new challenges for sociologists to overcome. This session features presentations which show that 'work,' providing a glimpse of the behind the scenes of community engaged sociology. The session will also aspire (time allowing) for broader discussion on community engaged sociology, so abstracts can consider points of discussion they hope to evoke. Community engaged sociology is a critical field within the discipline and this session seeks to continue to build community amongst those dedicated to creating change.
Session Organizer and Chair: Ashley Berard, University of Victoria

APS1-1 - Navigating community, ethics, and institutions in community-engaged and participant-oriented research

Jay Tang and Katelin Albert, University of Victoria

Our research is a participant-oriented and community engaged project that seeks to develop insights that can improve accessibility and effectiveness of existing mental health crisis services and to reduce health inequities, mortality, and suicide among 2S/LGBTQ+ people in Atlantic Canada. Broadly, our work aims to 1) understand factors that impact access to, and provision of, crisis services for 2S/LGBTQ+ people; and 2) to understand and assess the anticipated impact of MAID for mental illness on decision-making processes as well as crisis service provision for 2S/LGBTQ+ people. Undertaking this community engaged research has come with both challenges and advancements at the community, ethical, and administrative/institutional levels. Our presentation will highlight insights across these three domains to prompt unique and refreshing conversations into the "behind the scenes" of doing of community engaged research. Specifically, we will highlight: 1) doing community engaged work from a starting place from within the community, 2) navigating research ethics and pushing back against litigious practices meant to protect researchers and universities, in favor of

harm reduction and participant-centered research design, and 3) the administrative challenges and institutional roadblocks we face in processes of community-engaged research.

APS1-2 - Research by and for people who use drugs: A community-based project in Surrey, British Columbia

Presenting Authors - Tara Lyons, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Gina Egilson, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey Union of Drug Users

Non-presenting Authors - Mona Woodward, Pete Woodrow, Nathan Lorenzo, Braiden Laitre, and Dave Webb, Surrey Union of Drug Users; Camille Bédard and Khadija Collier, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

The Surrey Union of Drug Users' (SUDU) is a peer-led and membership driven organization of people who are current or former users of unregulated drugs based in Surrey, British Columbia (BC). The toxic drug supply crisis continues to claim the lives of 5 people per day in the province and while significant research has been conducted in the Vancouver, there is a dearth of evidence regarding the patterns and impacts of this public health crisis on those living in Surrey, BC. As such, in November 2024, Kwantlen Polytechnic University and SUDU developed a partnership to examine the impacts of the toxic drug supply crisis in their communities. The community-based research project is led by people with living/lived experience of substance use (PWLLE) and the primary objective of this work is to create meaningful social change for PWLLE who live in Surrey, and beyond. We believe PWLLE are the experts in this work and are key to influencing policy changes. This presentation will focus on the challenges and successes of the first year of a 3-year study. We will discuss how we built relationships, co-developed the unique mixed-methods research design, navigated Research Ethics Board review, and collected data outdoors. Over 150 interview surveys have been completed in addition to 6 focus groups, including focus groups with women and one conducted in Punjabi. Year one of the project was complicated by structural stigmas including criminalization, lack of housing options, and employment barriers. Unlike other research designs, our data collection was shaped by the weather and changes in the toxic drug supply, which required flexibility and ongoing adaptations. We believe sharing what has worked well, and what has challenged us in our first year is of benefit to others engaged in community-based and social change research.

APS1-3 - Food Sovereignty via Solidarity: Listening to the Lived Experiences of Women Groups in the Global South

Christabell P J, University of Kerala

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2 (Zero Hunger) and 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) emphasize sustainable agricultural practices for a better future. However, as the teeming population worldwide has a high food demand, this leads to a commercial farming practice. That has challenged the food justice as well as the food sovereignty of the marginalized sections in the Global South. Even though women are part and parcel of the food system, they are not always inclusive. As a result, many movements, protests, and activism are going on throughout the landscape of the Global South. A good number of t are solidarity movements where the women play a pivotal role as farmers, processors, and preservers of seeds, enabling marketing in rural and urban areas using innovative methods, including online methods, as activists, as members of non-governmental organizations, and as members of traditional societies. In many of

the cases, they are working in community-supported agricultural activities. Even though a lot of research points in this direction regarding the intersectionality of agrarian practices, the movements that are solely based on solidarity methodology are few. The paper presents the results and findings of an extensive study conducted in India, including a field survey for collecting quantitative data. In addition to that, qualitative information was also collected using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to reveal the lived experiences, strategies, and solutions posed by those who are involved in the activities. The study sheds light on the intersections of food justice, food sovereignty, and sustainable agrarian practices. The findings of the study point to the fact that marginalized voices need to be empowered and brought to the forefront. The solidarity approach acts as a binding force that helps them to move forward to take up new challenges in the real world.

(APS4) Qualitative Research in Sociology: Benefits and Challenges

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster

This session discusses the benefits and challenges of conducting qualitative research and explores ways of engaging in the field and with data to achieve deeper understanding of social phenomena. Presenters describe their field experience as qualitative researchers and the methodological approaches used to navigate any contentions in the field. The aims of the session include generating conversations about the practical applications of field work from a qualitative researcher perspective and its role in promoting social justice.

Session Organizer and Chair: Zoë St. Aubin, University. of Manitoba

APS4-1 - Challenges and Opportunities in Conducting Semi-structured Interviews with Lawyers

Jayzer Flores, Queen's University

This research explores the author’s experiences in conducting 50 semi-structured interviews as part of his doctoral work and the important insights the author gleaned through data collection. The author interviewed 50 lawyers in Canada offering both in-person and remote options to reduce barriers to participation. This article highlights the challenges with interviewing lawyers and elite professions more broadly, including issues related to recruitment. On one hand, some lawyers, like members of other elite professions, may take seriously a commitment to altruism and a commitment to advancing the profession as a whole. This commitment can facilitate interview recruitment. However, at the same, the busy schedules of some lawyers can make scheduling difficult, even among some individuals who show initial interest. The author highlights that despite these challenges, data collection still proved to be fruitful and discusses strategies which helped to facilitate success during the interview. Specifically, in this discussion, the author notes the strengths of an “outsider” status and the importance of relating to the participant. The concepts of reflexivity and cultural capital may be two areas of interest for researchers and social scientists in making sense of the experiences described in the article.

APS4-2 - Why interviewing both parents and their adult children matters in political socialization research

Werner Jungbluth, York University

This study examines the impact of crises and conflicts on political learning, beliefs, and attitudes (Ichilov, 2004). In this context, interviewing 20 parent-adult child pairs in Lima, Peru, about the 1980-2000 Internal Armed Conflict provides valuable insights into political socialization research. In Latin America, political violence tends to be studied within the realm of memory studies rather than political socialization. However, these fields typically rely either on standardized surveys or on qualitative inquiries with victim-survivors (De Waardt, 2014) of atrocities, or the younger generations (post-memory). Without dismissing the valuable findings derived from this research, multi-generational interviews have distinct advantages. The analysis suggests that: a) generational differences produce a simultaneous 'double image' of the present through contrasting narratives about the past; b) comparing accounts from older and younger generations within family contexts helps uncover a more nuanced version of events; and c) stories of violence are shaped not just by geographical location or spatial properties (Kirmani, 2008), but also by the unique life paths of migrant families.

APS4-3 - When communities don't want researchers: Reflections on ethics and process in an era of polarization and academic distrust

Darryn DiFrancesco, University of Northern British Columbia

How can qualitative scholars engage with science-skeptics and conspiracy theorists in a methodologically rigorous, ethically-informed way? In this presentation, I draw on my experience conducting 18 months of semi-covert, comparative internet ethnographic research in ideologically divergent Facebook "mom groups" focused on "science-based" and "natural" parenting. While "science-based" groups welcomed my presence as a researcher, "natural" parenting groups were fearful of a "war on natural medicine" and expressed skepticism about my motivations and the potential uses of community knowledge. I discuss how I navigated these contrasting positions to generate rich, qualitative insights across both sets of groups. I reflect on my experience navigating insider/outsider dynamics, ethical issues (including REB concerns, gatekeeping and consent), and challenges navigating the publication process. In my reflection, I argue that while the ethical dilemmas of researching in such spaces are real, existing ethical guidelines for informed consent on social media research may be unnecessarily prohibitive. As increasing political polarization continues to marginalize scholarly perspectives, I suggest that rigorous research may sometimes require a more flexible, adaptive ethical approach that protects individual participants while enabling the collection of rigorous qualitative data.

APS4-4 - "Without Shame as a Side Dish:" Using Digital Storytelling to Teach Food Dignity in Food Banks

Jade Da Costa, University of Saskatchewan

This presentation screens two digital stories (short multimedia videos) on racialized food insecurity to explore how digital qualitative methods can be used to educate food aid workers about the importance of "food dignity:" the ability to access nutritional and culturally competent food without stigmatization and in accordance with the principles of self-respect, autonomy, and empowerment. Specifically, I will screen two stories from my research project *Exacerbated Hunger*: "Living in the Grey," by Zera Koutchieva-a food justice activist, food bank user, and Indigenous immigrant parent of an autistic child with a PDA profile living in Guelph, ON; and "What's Cooking?" by Alitha Griffith-

a food justice activist from the Barbados and former manager of the Guelph Student foodbank. Both videos advocate for a shift away from charity food models in favour of those that emphasis food dignity and challenge stigma and judgment. The first video, *Living in the Grey*, does this by narrating the storyteller's struggles as a food bank user to feed their autistic child in a system that requires significant labour to receive inadequate food. The second video, *What's Cooking*, approaches the question of food dignity from the opposite perspective, speaking directly to food bank employees/volunteers who fail to see the limits of charity models, blending social critique with art and satire. The screen time is 8-minutes. Prior to screening the videos, I will provide a summary of what I have detailed here and ask attendees to consider how the use of digital methods enables food bank users and food justice activists to address the limitations of food banks in ways that their advocates may be open to, and thus potentially lessen the gap between institutional actors on either side of these services. If time permits, I will ask attendees to share their thoughts after the screening concludes.

(APS-RC) Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster

This meeting of the Applied and Community Engaged Sociology Cluster is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Chair: Ashley Berard, University of Victoria

(BCS) Black Caucus

(BCS1) Black Joy and Futurities: Rewriting Studies on Race/Black Canadian Experiences
Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Black Caucus

This session grapples with and reframes the Duboisan question "How does it feel to be a problem? Often within research on, about, and with Black communities, there is a hyper-focus on exploring and unpacking the ways in which Black communities can resist racial oppression. In so doing, researchers are often asking broad research questions in order to understand and potentially solve racial problems but what are the limitations of this problem paradigm? How can we engage in research and teaching in ways that are nuanced and radical in that they get at the root of the issue, while also not limiting Black experiences to just problems that need fixing? As Scott (2022); Joseph (2022); Lewis-Giggets (2022) contend, Black Joy can be understood as an act of resistance that challenges and refuses the constraints placed on Black people and their lives, rooted in White supremacist ideologies and gazes. In these ways, Black joy is also a means of refusal, which insists on full Black humanity and an imagining of a world and existence outside of White supremacist logics. In this imagining lies an engagement with Black futurity, which Campt (2017) defines as a grammar of possibility and reimagining, rooted in animating and living out a future that must occur-but hasn't yet-in the present.

Session Organizer and Chair: Rhonda C George, University of Guelph

BCS1-1 - Speaking our Truth: Black Female Students' Experiences in Canadian Universities

Sonia Lewis, York University

A university degree is frequently positioned as a pathway to social and economic mobility. Yet, despite narratives of openness and inclusion, Canadian institutions of higher education continue to reproduce structural and cultural exclusions that disproportionately affect Black women (Stewart, 2024; Walkington, 2017). Their access to, and experiences within, these institutions remain shaped by patriarchal systems that regulate academic life and constrain their full participation (Collins, 2000). As a result, many Black women report feeling invisible, marginalized, and excluded from the social, cultural, and institutional fabric of university life (Epstein et al., 2017; Ozoder, 2022). Still, Black women continue to cultivate joy, care, and possibility as they navigate these spaces and pursue their futures. This paper presents preliminary findings from my dissertation, which examines the experiences of Black female students in Canadian universities. Using a qualitative research design informed by Black Feminist Thought and Black Feminist Love, the study centers the narratives of eight intellectuals who self-identify as Black/Afro-Caribbean Canadian cisgender women and who recently completed or were completing undergraduate, graduate, or professional degrees. Thematic narrative analysis was used to identify commonalities, patterns, and themes that emerged from the data (Parcell & Baker, 2017). Preliminary findings reveal that despite the challenges they encounter, Black women continue to thrive by building healing communities, seeking support from loved ones and therapists, establishing boundaries, leaning into spirituality, and enrolling in courses that affirm their identities. These strategies allow them to re-imagine Blackness, Black womanhood(s), and Black identities as expansive, creative, and future-oriented, "without the need for power manifested in domination or the need for perfection" (p. 242). In doing so, they generate spaces where Black joy, Black womanhood, Black community, and Black futures can flourish as sites of liberation rather than oppression. Given the scarcity of Canadian scholarship on Black women's postsecondary experiences, this study offers critical insights into how Black women navigate university spaces with care, tenacity, and joy. The findings underscore the urgent need for institutional accountability and transformative strategies that support Black women's flourishing in higher education.

BCS1-2 - Re/Imagining Approaches to Black Studies in Canadian Universities: An Examination the Internal Factors

Rhonda C. George, University of Guelph

The summer of 2020 represented a time of rapid change as the racial disparities of the global pandemic and the global protests of racial injustice and police violence towards Black communities following the killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and others converged (Balakrishnan et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2022; Dei & Lewis, 2020; Elon Dancy & Wright, 2023; Hanlon, 2021). On the heels of these events, many social institutions within Canada committed resources to combatting systemic anti-Black racism and promoting Black inclusion. These anti-racist efforts were employed across sectors including health care, media, business and education (Dei, 2024; James et al., 2021; Lander, 2021; Matthews, 2021). Within higher education this looked like Black faculty and staff hiring and inclusion and funding for Black Studies in university curricula through an increase in certificate programs and minors at Canadian universities. However, as of the time of writing these institutional efforts and commitments have been met with some backlash towards racial inclusion (and broader diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives (Dei, 2024; Rivers, 2024; Tam, 2024), leaving the future

of these Black Studies inclusions within Canadian universities in question. While much has been said about the aforementioned external factors--that is, the outside and institutional factors and forces that push against Black communities, thinkers, and scholars-- shaping the field's development and the impact on the future of Black Studies in Canada, less has been said about the internal factors *rooted in* Black communities. How can Black communities and thinkers ensure the continued growth and development of Black Studies in Canada despite sociopolitical and institutional constraints? This paper in progress engages with Pattillo's *Black Advantage Vision (BAV)* (2021)(Pattillo, 2021), an asset-based theoretical provocation to identify and explore the internal factors and forces that are shaping and could shape Black Studies in the Canadian context. Patillo (2021) argues that central to BAV is a generative lens that propels analysis and forward motion. As such, this paper locates and thinks through key sites of community and intellectual wealth in the Black Canadian context, which include: 1) the rich diversity of Black communities in Canada, 2) rich intradiasporic exemplars, and 3) hindsight and introspection. I argue that these sites act as opportunities for Black communities and thinkers to push the field of Black Studies in Canada forward in self-determining ways, despite contemporary political currents.

(CAD) Canadian Sociology

(CAD1) Borders, Buyers and Boycotts: Canadian Nationalism in the Trump Era
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Canadian Sociology

Whether by tragedy or farce, the current Trump presidency has generated almost daily opportunities for Canadians to contemplate the fate of their country at the levels of both body politic and civil society. High-level debates around trade policy, military alliances, and sovereignty have as their corollary everyday discussions and practices around buying booze, vacation planning, and anthem-booing. The now routine threats from south of the border have become a clarion call to sociology to address questions of nationalism, belonging, and identity. Papers in this session accordingly explore everyday assertions of Canadianness through mundane practices such as "buying Canadian" and border-crossing.

Session Organizers: Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University; Michael Follert, St. Francis Xavier University; Jim Cosgrave, Trent University

Session Chair: Michael Follert, St. Francis Xavier University

CAD1-1 - Borders as Mirrors: Student Experiences at Niagara's Borders Under Trump-Era Nationalism

Olivia Schmidt, Brock University

Borders are often imagined as neutral and procedural spaces, yet they are deeply shaped by racialization, nationalism, and global political shifts. The Niagara region—one of the busiest U.S./Canada travel hubs—offers a critical site for examining how everyday border encounters are experienced. Under Trump-era nationalism, the border has become increasingly politicized, producing uneven experiences for different bodies and identities. In particular, understanding student border crossers' experiences offers unique perspective into Niagara's border crossing demographic, yet their perspectives are underrepresented in border studies. This research examines

how race, citizenship, and political discourse intersect at the border in subtle, overt, and contradictory ways. Specifically, this study asks whether Brock University students crossing Niagara borders experience xenophobia and/or racism, how white students understand and assess their privilege at the border, and how political events (particularly Trump's presidency) shape perceptions and experiences of border crossing. I employed ten semi-structured interviews with white, racialized, and dual/multiple citizen Brock University students who have crossed the border in the last year. To supplement, I also utilized critical autoethnography to explore my own lived experience, white privilege, and reflections related to border crossing. This qualitative methodology, alongside analysis through the lens of Alpa Parmar's (2020) theory *borders as mirrors* captures lived experiences and situates them within this specific geopolitical moment. Preliminary findings indicate that Trump's presidency has intensified fear, anxiety and uncertainty around border crossing for students. Participants described a deterioration in their perception of both the border and the United States, alongside heightened discrimination and microaggressions tied to non-whiteness and non-Canadian/American citizenship. White participants also frequently noted their relative ease of crossing, contrasting it with racialized peers' experiences. These findings demonstrate how nationalism and racialized normalized practices at the border are interconnected across geographies, and how borders reproduced patterns of oppression while shaping everyday mobility.

CAD1-2 - Shopping as Canadian "Banal Nationalism": A case study on the reshaping of Canadian identity

Presenting Author - Nicolas Petel-Rochette, Université du Québec à Montréal

Non-presenting Author - Débora Krischke-Leitao, Université du Québec à Montréal

Based on the analysis of discursive and graphic materials in open access online, this paper retakes the data of online research focusing on the organization of Canadian citizens on a digital platform to respond to the 2025 trade war. At first, this online community's aim was to promote the consumption of "local" products. When the President of the United States imposed tariffs on goods imported from Canada, this community grew exponentially and became a platform for political participation and collective organization in an attempt to orchestrate some kind of response to this situation. Gradually, the "local" became "national," and "made in Canada" turned into "not-made-in-the-USA." To analyze this trend, the talk discusses consumption as a form of protest and as adherence to certain ideals that underlie a normative stance. Then, the talk brings up the issue of the everyday reproduction of Canadian identity in terms of banal nationalism, and the paradox of using American technological infrastructure to organize a boycott of the United States. Overall, this paper aims to monitor emerging forms of nationalism in order to discuss what they teach us about broader dynamics such as belonging to the "Canadian" territory, and, more broadly, what it means to "be Canadian."

CAD1-3 - What is Canadian Consumer Nationalism?

Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

With the Trump administration's upending of Canada-US trade agreements, some Canadians have begun to boycott American products and services and consume more Canadian products. This paper looks at the nature of these patriotic consumer movements to ask how Canadianness is defined and who is offering definitions. In the complex world of global production, this definition is not necessarily

clear. Is a product or service "Canadian" because some or all of its raw materials or ingredients originate in Canada? Is the product simply manufactured or processed by Canadian workers? Is the company owned by Canadians? This paper inspects the "Buy Canadian" movement as promoted by governments, grassroots groups, and private interests like large grocery chains and asks how Canadians are to imagine Canadianness in the marketplace. More broadly, it asks how Canadians are being asked to imagine Canada and the role of the consumer in the midst of geo-political shifts and threats.

(CND) Canadian Network of Durkeimian Studies

(CND1) Durkheimian Studies

Scheduled: In-person – Friday, June 12 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Canadian Network of Durkheimian Studies Cluster

In recent decades, Durkheimian sociology and social theory have sparked new debates and controversies while informing research on a wide range of contemporary social phenomena and events. Over the past generation, Canadian sociologists have contributed to this renewal in important ways nationally and internationally in both English and French.

Session Organizers: Ronjon Paul Datta, University of Windsor; Tara Milbdrandt, University of Alberta; François Pizarro Noël, Université de Quebec à Montréal; William Ramp, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: François Pizarro Noël, Université de Quebec à Montréal

CND1-1 - Elbows Up: Examining the role of hockey culture in Canadian nationalism

Joshua Sorhaindo, University of Windsor

Hockey it is synonymous with Canadian identity both domestically and internationally, facilitating moments of "collective effervescence", especially around major international tournaments such as the Olympics, the World Juniors, and more recently, the Four Nations Cup. Despite this hegemonic weight that hockey culture and participation have, it is not always welcoming towards women and girls, the LGBTQ+ community, and visible minorities, who are often pushed out or denied opportunities by gatekeepers. Using a radical Durkheimian and Bourdieusian lens, I examine how hockey serves an interest in crystallizing Canadian ideas, while simultaneously acting in an antagonistic manner towards Canada's national project of diversity—thus, there is a tension between "mechanical" and "organic" solidarity producing pathological effects. For example, hockey has a totemic quality within Canadian society, with its symbolism representing a "traditional" perspective of Canada and "Canadianness". Prohibitive costs have historically excluded newcomers and minorities who struggle financially, which also creates a symbolic element for participation, dividing those who are landed with financial means relative to those who are in too precarious of a financial position to participate. However, even with the increase in the immigrant middle class in Canada, there still has not been a similar increase in ice hockey participation. The field of hockey as an arena of competition over cultural capital and power differentials, acts as a legitimizing force that maintains these spatial separations despite the disparity in economic capital narrowing. A critical synthesis of radical Durkheimian and Bourdieusian theory provides means of analysing the symbolic violence

surrounding national culture and they ways this is perpetuated by disparities of cultural and economic capital, thus shaping the space of Canadian belonging.

CND1-2 - Rethinking the Durkheimian Social Fact Beyond Constraint: Institution, Sanction, and Social Totality

François Pizarro Noël, Université du Québec à Montréal

While social constraint is often elevated to the ontological core of Durkheim's sociology, I find that in Durkheim's own work, constraint functions primarily as a diagnostic sign, not as the causal foundation of social order. Based on a closer reading of Durkheim et Mauss' work, this paper exposes a definition of the Durkheimian social fact in which constraint is no longer treated as its constitutive principle, but rather as an empirical indicator of institutionalized social realities. In *The Rules of Sociological Method* and *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim uses law and sanction as modes of objectivations of pre-existing collective states, not as a mechanism generating social cohesion through coercion. Sanctions (positives or negatives) are expressions of the strength or the fragility of the institutions, not their origin. This perspective is further developed through *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, where Durkheim explains that social efficacy operates through collective effervescence, recognition, and sacralization rather than through constraint. The definition of the notion of institution, formulated by Marcel Mauss (with Fauconnet and under the supervision of Durkheim) in the article *"Sociology"*, stabilizes Durkheim's realist ontology of the social. Mauss's analyses of the *fait social total* demonstrate that social totality is defined not by maximal coercion, but by the structural articulation of multiple institutional registers (juridical, moral, symbolic, economic, and embodied). The paper concludes by advancing a renewed definition of the social fact, both dynamic and institutional. Durkheimian social fact is a historically constituted configuration endowed with its own efficacy, observable through regimes of sanction, recognition, and belief, independently of individual intentions. By reducing constraint's role in the explanation of social facts, this approach renews Durkheimian sociology as a critical and empirically grounded framework for analyzing social cohesion, pathology, and moral regeneration.

CND1-3 - Sacred Horizons in a Neoliberal Age: Later Life, Moral Regeneration, and the Radical Durkheimian Imagination

Hermanpreet Singh, Independent researcher

Contemporary neoliberal societies are marked by a profound reorganization of social and moral life in which autonomy, productivity and self-sufficiency are valorized, while dependency, fragility and aged embodiment are consigned to the symbolic margins. In this configuration, older persons are continually viewed as at risk of becoming abject, excessive or socially inconvenient, revealing deep ruptures in solidarity and a cultural drift toward moral indifference. Radical Durkheimian sociology offers a distinctive framework for understanding these developments by foregrounding the pathological dynamics of capitalist and neoliberal societies and highlighting how power relations fracture solidarity and moral life. Through this lens, the counter-moral dynamics that enable regeneration and sustain imaginaries that exceed neoliberal limits also become increasingly visible. This paper argues that later life operates as a privileged site for the emergence of what I call *sacred horizons*, defined as symbolic openings that expose the limits of individualism and gesture toward renewed modes of social and moral interdependence. Employing a radical Durkheimian imagination

illuminates possibilities for reorienting care, reciprocity, solidarity, and shared vulnerability as sources of collective strength and as avenues for mending the *conscience collective,* while advancing more robust commitments to social rights and justice within Canadian society.

(CND-RC) Canadian Network of Durkheimian Studies Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Canadian Network of Durkheimian Studies Cluster

This meeting of the Canadian Network of Durkheimian Studies Cluster is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching.

Session Organizer: Ronjon Paul Datta, University of Windsor

(CRM) Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

(CRM1) Technologies and Criminal Justice
Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Changes and advances in technology have a strong impact on crime and criminal justice. For example, digital technologies facilitate new opportunities for criminal activities and simultaneously transform how victims, offenders, and institutions interact. This session will focus on how technology and criminal justice intersect, exploring areas such as how digital platforms and online networks transform crime, how technological changes influence the criminal justice system, and how online social networks are reshaping crime, victimization, and institutional responses. We invited papers exploring the intersections of technology, crime, and justice from sociological, criminological, and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Session Organizer and Chairs: Tanya Trussler and Leanna Ireland, Mount Royal University

CRM1-1 - Judging Digital Fraud: How Victim and Scam Features Shape Public Perceptions

Leanna Ireland, Mount Royal University

Fraud victims often experience blame or judgment from friends and family. Both victim characteristics and features of the scam likely shape public perceptions. In this study, a conjoint experiment presented participants with fraud cases that systematically varied in victim and scam characteristics, such as method of payment. The study examines how these variations influence perceptions of investigative priority, compensation, and blame. Findings show how social perceptions shape responses to fraud victims and offer insights for policies aimed at supporting them more effectively.

CRM1-2 - Riding in Cars with Strangers: The Uneven Representations of Violence and Crime Between Rideshare Apps and Hitchhiking

Katherine Morton Richards, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

Why is ridesharing through an app widely regarded as safe and legitimate while hitchhiking is framed as inherently dangerous and deviant, despite their shared reliance on getting into strangers' vehicles?

This paper interrogates the uneven social constructions of violence and crime that differentiate ridesharing applications from hitchhiking, arguing that perceptions of safety are shaped less by the realities of interpersonal risk than by processes of formalization, commodification, and platform governance. While the mechanics of ridesharing and hitchhiking differ—waiting in a home/ venue/ hotel versus on the shoulder of a highway—the fundamental act of accepting a ride from an unknown driver remains strikingly similar. In both cases, passengers negotiate timing, destination, and trust with a stranger, and the potential for interpersonal violence persists regardless of whether the encounter is mediated through an app or a roadside exchange. This paper argues that the exchange of money and the technological mediation of ridesharing do not eliminate risk but instead reframe it as manageable, individualized, and exceptional. This research compares and contrasts the media representations of alternative modes of mobility found within ridesharing apps and within hitchhiking. This research analyzes headlines in Canadian national and provincial news regarding rideshare and hitchhiking from 2012-2025 to coincide with the years that Uber has been operating in Canada and hitchhiking, although contested, has persisted. The paper also examines gendered perceptions of safety, noting that women's concerns about ridesharing violence remain pronounced despite its normalization. By comparing ridesharing and hitchhiking, this research reveals how violence is unevenly attributed to forms of mobility based on their market integration rather than their actual risk profiles. Ultimately, the paper argues that ridesharing rebrands stranger encounters in ways that obscure structural vulnerabilities while reinforcing longstanding hierarchies of acceptable and unacceptable mobility.

(CRM2) Pedagogical practices for teaching difficult topics

Schedule: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

University instruction in the social sciences often involves discussing sensitive topics. Our backgrounds as academics often require intellectualizing tough subject matter, yet there are issues with how these topics might impact students, classrooms, and instructors. This round table welcomes all academic instructors and graduate student teaching assistants who teach sensitive issues including, but not limited to, interpersonal violence, victims, war and genocide, hate crime, human sexuality, racism and discrimination, and misogyny. We are accepting discussion topic proposals around best practices, classroom dynamics, trigger warnings, ground rules for engagement, managing boundaries, emotional and psychological impacts, trauma, and disclosure. This round table is meant to elicit discussion to increase our awareness and knowledge around pedagogy techniques for sensitive discussions.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

CRM2-1 - Building Best Practices for Teaching in Precarious Times

Caroline Hodes, University of Lethbridge

Since the 'return to normal' following the COVID-19 global pandemic, post-secondary education is facing unprecedented challenges from the dismantling of equity, diversity and inclusion, to the increasing censure of those who teach in the areas of critical race studies, feminism, gender studies, genocide studies, climate change, extrajudicial punishment and impunity, the list could go on. Some instructors have lost their jobs, others have been put under investigation, and some have been

harassed, doxed and subject to different forms of stochastic terrorism for taking what some might think are the most benign, evidence-based, fact-finding approaches to their pedagogy and academic freedom. To question the rising tide of misinformation, authoritarianism, and the tacit acceptance of state violence against minoritized communities has become a source of fear and anxiety for professors and students alike in post-secondary classrooms. As an Associate Professor in Women and Gender Studies who teaches human rights and political economies, the Charter, gender and social change, trans-inclusive feminist critical race and decolonial theories, at a medium-sized liberal arts university in Southern Alberta, I bring over ten years of experience, challenges and victories to this discussion of pedagogical practices for teaching difficult topics. Amid what some have referred to as a changing global order, I hope that my experience and evidence-based contributions can provide a harbour of hope to this round table as part of the broader discussion of best practices for teaching in precarious times.

CRM2-2 - Gender-Based Violence as Difficult Knowledge: Challenging Beliefs and Addressing Resistance to Learning

Marie Laperriere, Mansura Akter Meghla, and Pius Forkuo, University of Manitoba

The term gender-based violence (GBV) refers to types of violence and abuse rooted in gendered power relations such as domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment, homophobic violence, transphobic violence, and reproductive violence. GBV is pervasive across societies, and its consequences for victims, families, and communities are extensive and severe. While there is a large body of literature examining the impact of prevention programs on the belief systems of violent offenders, little is known about the role that university courses can play in challenging problematic beliefs, or about the impact of GBV courses on students' wellbeing. This research is situated in the pedagogical challenges of teaching GBV as a form of "difficult knowledge". It explores how GBV courses confront students' deeply held assumptions about power, identity, and social structures, in ways that can generate resistance, misunderstanding, and emotional distress. Through a mixed-methods design combining pre- and post-course surveys and focus groups, we examine how participation in a GBV course shapes students' beliefs as well as their sense of safety and inclusion in the classroom. Findings will strengthen course content and delivery and fill important gaps in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and the literature GBV prevention. They will also inform discussions over the necessity of intentionally designed, trauma-informed, and inclusive teaching practices that mitigate harm, prevent the reinforcement of problematic beliefs, and support meaningful learning about violence, privilege, and oppression.

CRM2-3 - Discussions of sexual violence in the university classroom

Presenting Authors - Tanya Trussler and Scharie Tavcer, Mount Royal University

Non-presenting Author - Harpreet Aulakh, Mount Royal University

Teaching about violence in the university classroom can elicit some important and essential discussions for students in the areas of criminal justice and criminology. However, because of the nature of this content, the subject matter can cause challenges for instructors and students. Here we discuss the strategies and challenges for teaching around the topics of sexual assault, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse, and others. Embedded in that discussion are changes over time with respect to expectations and concerns around the mental and physical wellbeing of students. We highlight

discussions around disclosure scripts and trigger warnings, signs of distress in students, and debriefing tactics. Also discussed are the impacts on instructors including issues of occupation stress and repeated exposure to traumatic material. Throughout, we consider how instructor positionality and classroom dynamics shape pedagogical choices. We conclude with a discussion around determining best practices.

(CRM3a) Perspectives on Policing I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Policing services globally are experiencing a time of transition. Some issues impacting policing include technological advancements, societal divisions, transnational demands, fiscal austerity, globalization, changing perceptions, civilian oversight, and political pressures. Policing remains an important area of examination. This session is the first of two policing panels and includes a wide range of topics related to many aspects of policing.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

CRM3a-1 - The perception gap between police and citizens in British Columbia

Presenting Author - Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

Non-presenting Authors - Sara Amin, Independent Scholar; Julie Booke, Mount Royal University

Positive public perceptions of policing are important for preserving the cooperation of citizens with law and for maintaining the legitimacy of the state. Community policing implies a level of interaction and understanding between police and citizens and is considered an important component in creating trust in the police by the public. This paper examines the gaps in perceptions of policing between the public and the police in British Columbia. Research into the perception gap is rare and absent from the Canadian context. In this paper, comparisons on perceptions of policing are made related to: general perceptions, trust in the police, and perceptions of police use of force. We used both quantitative and qualitative responses from two surveys administered to the public (n=809) and police service members (n=180). Results indicate that citizens and police differ in their perceptions; however, the qualitative analysis shows more nuanced and detailed perspectives of policing. Implications, limitations, and areas for future research are discussed.

CRM3a-2 - Examining Confidence in Police Within Canada: Controlling for Family Structure, Geographic Location & Region of Residence

Samantha Blair, McMaster University

Community policing has been characterized as more problematic for some communities than others. An important question emerges: which subgroups feel the most confident in their local police and what factors affect this? Research has linked racial composition of a neighbourhood to resident's perceptions of police, particularly in large urban areas. Within marginalized communities, negative interactions with police are much more likely to occur. I extend these insights to other forms of social marginalization, such as family form and geographic location/region. Therefore, this paper will answer the following research question: *does family structure and/or residential location (i.e. urban*

vs. rural) significantly impact Canadians confidence in their local police service? To answer this question, I analyze secondary data from the General Social Survey Cycle 23, 2009 [Canada]: Victimization, main file where the independent variables are family structure and residential location, the dependent variable being confidence in police. I conduct a combination of univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses consisting of central tendency measures, Chi-Square tests and logistic regression models. Both family structure and residential location significantly predict confidence in police. Stepfamilies are 75% more likely to report low confidence in police compared to intact families, while urban residents show lower confidence than rural residents. These effects persist even when controlling for geographic region. This question explores a crucial component of community policing; with the ongoing debates about police accountability and reform, the results of this research will provide relevant findings for future community policing policy.

CRM3a-3 - The contours of police reform within 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Toronto

Andy Holmes, University of Toronto

Understanding how interactions between police and marginalized communities develop is the subject of debate across multiple disciplines. Competing propositions about how over-policed and under-protected communities (Boehme, Cann & Isom 2022; Krenshaw 2015; Lewish & Usmani 2022) interact with police include arguments of police reform (Bayley 2008; Goldsmith 2005; Simonson 2021), mistrust because of legal cynicism (Campeau, Levi & Fogleson 2021; Carr, Napolitano & Keating 2007; Sampson & Bartusch 1998), abolitionist goals (Davis 2003; Maynard 2017; Phelps, Ward & Frazier 2021), and arguments that some experience degrees of ambivalence among the above perspectives (Bell 2016; Russell 2017). These theoretical frameworks offer competing predictions for how at-risk groups envision criminal justice reform. Drawing on 51 in-depth interviews with both activists and police working on 2SLGBTQ+ issues, one year of participant observation of LGBT police events, and archival data in Toronto, this paper asks: how do reformist, abolitionist, and ambivalent orientations towards policing operate in the work that 2SLGBTQ+ groups do to serve their communities? First, this paper provides a chronology of how police reform happened in Toronto because of 2SLGBTQ+ responses to bathhouse raids since the late 1970s. These events prompted the development of 2SLGBTQ+ police liaison committees that were once public-facing but became increasingly private. Secondly, this paper provides empirical data on how police have attempted to serve 2SLGBTQ+ groups despite both demands for police accountability and mistrust prompted by their removal from Pride parades in 2017 (Holmes 2021). Lastly, this paper traces how abolitionist sentiment towards policing emerges from 2SLGBTQ+ social movement actors critical of the policing of protests. Together, this research provides new theorizing on how disparate approaches to criminal justice reform happen in three ways within a population with a history of intersectional infighting (Ghaziani 2008) involving policing (Giwa et al. 2021; Jenness & Vogler 2025).

CRM3a-4 - Learning Through Relationship: Self-Administered Policing in Akwesasne

Roksolyana Shlapak, University of Toronto

In Canada, Indigenous policing is facilitated through the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP). This framework has been the subject of sustained criticism from First Nations police leaders, community members, and other stakeholders, particularly regarding systemic underfunding, lack of “essential service” designation for self-administered services, and other structural constraints. Existing research

and Program evaluations have largely centered on implementation challenges and little attention has been paid to the lived experiences of police officers policing Indigenous communities. Even fewer research has meaningfully engaged with community members on issues of policing and public safety in their communities policed by FNPP-arrangements. Over the past three years, I conducted extensive ethnographic research in Akwesasne, a Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) community that has developed its own self-administered police service, the Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service (AMPS). Grounded in a relational research approach, this work has been guided by sustained engagement with both AMPS police officers and Akwesasne community members which has shaped the project direction, scope, and knowledge(s) produced. I share several key insights developed through this relational process, specifically the factors that influence policing in Akwesasne, the role(s) and experiences of AMPS officers, as well as community members' experiences with and perceptions of policing. In addition, I offer critical reflections on the role(s) of settler researchers working with/in Indigenous communities, emphasizing relational accountability, reciprocity, and trust as key supporting pillars to relationality.

CRM3a-5 - Her Voice Matters: Moving Toward a Gendered Racialized Understanding of Police Violence Against Black Women in Canada

Britney Andrews, York University

The emerging research on racialized police violence in Canada has drawn heavily on police use of force data to explore racial disparities (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2024). This research on "use of force", while useful, reaffirms institutional and narrow understandings of police violence as predominantly overt, physical, and quantifiable forms of violence. While Black women are not immune to experiencing these forms of brute, physical force, the structural and systemic forces that shape Black women's lives often interlock to produce distinct forms of violence that are more obscure and may not lend themselves to be readily understood as violence (Crenshaw et al., 2015). Without frames to render uniquely gendered experiences of racial police violence visible, Black women's experiences continue to be marginalized, misrepresented, or cast as anomalies within the broader landscape of Canadian benevolence. In a close reading of the lesser-known Canadian cases of police violence against Black women, this paper will draw on critical race feminism to attend to the seemingly banal and quotidian exercises of state power which shape Black women's encounters with the police. By rendering these broader mechanisms and logics visible, this paper aims to offer a more comprehensive account of the operation of police violence against Black women in Canada.

(CRM3b) Perspectives on Policing II

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Policing services globally are experiencing a time of transition. Some issues impacting policing include technological advancements, societal divisions, transnational demands, fiscal austerity, globalization, changing perceptions, civilian oversight, and political pressures. Policing remains an important area of examination. This session is the second of two policing panels and includes a wide range of topics related to many aspects of policing.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

CRM3b-1 - Alternative Policing: Exploring the experiences of police and clients within an Integrated Offender Management Program

Presenting Authors - Adriana Avraam and Sara Blair, Ontario Tech University

Non-presenting Author - Kanika Samuels-Wortley, Ontario Tech University

While largely established in the British context, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) units have increasingly been adopted within Canadian law enforcement as a non-traditional form of policing aimed at managing individuals classified as “prolific” and/or “persistent” offenders. Drawing on predictive analytics, IOM programs identify individuals assessed as being at elevated risk of future offending and subject them to additional surveillance and social supports, such as access to housing, employment and treatment facilities. Advocates of the model emphasize IOM’s potential to enhance public safety, reduce repeat offending and optimize resource allocation. Less examined, however, are the experiences of those tasked with delivering - and those subject to - this model of enforcement and care. Through in-depth interviews with law enforcement officials working within an IOM unit in a large police agency in Canada and clients identified as persistent/prolific offenders, the following study explores how IOM reshapes frontline policing practices, client-officer relationships and institutional definitions of success. Findings reveal IOM as a “grey area” of ‘soft’ policing, characterized by rapport-building, empathy, and the use of multi-sectoral partnerships that, in its infancy, suggest a shift toward proactive engagement and pro-social skill development rather than conventional incapacitation. Limitations on the reliance of broader criminal justice and social service infrastructures will also be discussed.

CRM3b-2 - The Oil-Police Nexus in Newfoundland and Labrador: Preparing for the Away People

Lori Lee Oates, Memorial University

The Hibernia oil field was discovered in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore in 1979, in an environment in which Canada was actively exploring for oil coming out of the Energy Crisis of the early 1970s. In 1981 a report was prepared entitled *The Impact of Offshore Gas and Oil Development on Policing Requirements in Newfoundland* by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The report was concerned with the "influx of highly paid transient workers" coming to the province in relation to the development of an oil and gas industry. This was expected to bring new forms of crime to the province. There was concern about how the attention of police might have to shift in the future and the author saw a need to prepare policing for that eventuality. The report relied on the stereotypes of oil workers and classist tropes to in relation to jealousy of wealth and an environment that would foster illicit activity among transient workers. There was concern about engagement with drugs, alcohol, and sex workers. Today we are increasingly aware of the social implications of resource developments. The worst impacts extractive projects are generally felt by local Indigenous populations, rather than wealthy citizens seeking to protect their neighbourhoods. The report also does not address the concept of the "resource curse" even though scholarly literature on that topic was already becoming available in the 1970s. Such literature indicates that the biggest problem is petro states is often authoritarianism fostered by over investment in the police and military (Wenar 2020). Furthermore, recent investments in policing and responses to protest in Newfoundland and Labrador would suggest that that aspect of the resource curse is very much playing out in policing activities the province.

CRM3b-3 - The distribution of public perception of police in Alberta: Attitudes toward a provincial police service

Presenting Author - Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

Non-presenting Authors - Lars Hallstrom and Nick Yarmey, University of Lethbridge

The Alberta government is currently working towards establishing an Alberta Police Service. While public sentiment appears to be generally opposed to the replacement of the RCMP, here we examine the distribution of attitudes across various sections of the population. Using data collected by Leger in 2023, we demonstrate how views of the provincial police service are distributed geographically and across different groups in Alberta. First, we look at overall views and map those views across Alberta. Second, views are demonstrated by subgroups such as gender, age cohort, race, and political orientation. Third, we compare the impacts of various cofactors on view on a provincial police force using logistic regression. Finally, we outline qualitative responses collected around views of the provincial police service. Areas for future research are also discussed.

CRM3b-4 - Plainclothes Policing and the Construction of Reasonableness in SIU Evaluations

Presenting Author - Annie Li, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Patrick Watson, University of Toronto

Plainclothes policing situates officers in a context where the exercise of state authority is decoupled from visible markers of identification, complicating civilian responses and oversight assessments. While prior research has examined police use-of-force and oversight mechanisms independently, little empirical attention has been paid to how civilian oversight bodies account for officers' plainclothes status when assessing police conduct that results in civilian injuries or deaths. This talk addresses this gap through a qualitative content analysis of Special Investigations Unit (SIU) Director's Reports involving plainclothes police officers in Ontario. It examines whether and how the absence of a visible police uniform is incorporated into SIU evaluations of force. Crucially, this research observes that the plainclothes status is rarely treated as a salient contextual factor in SIU determinations of an officer's reasonableness during use-of-force cases. Instead, oversight narratives tend to prioritize officer perceptions of threat and post hoc justifications of force, while largely excluding consideration of how ambiguity surrounding police identification may shape civilian responses. These findings invite consideration of visibility as a constitutive feature of police authority, and of how the absence of clear police identification shapes civilian oversight narratives.

(CRM3c) Perspectives on Criminal Justice I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Criminal justice and its services globally are experiencing a time of transition. Policing, corrections, courts, Indigenous justice, border security, and military are all impacted by change. Some issues impacting criminal justice include technological advancements, societal divisions, transnational demands, fiscal austerity, globalization, changing perceptions of crime and criminal justice, civilian oversight, and political pressures. Criminal justice remains an important issue during times of change.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

CRM3c-1 - Knowledge is not Power: Canadian Prison Staff and the Needle Exchange Program

Leanne Stevens, University of Alberta

In 2018, Correctional Service Canada rolled out the Prison Needle Exchange Program (PNEP) in response to growing human rights and public health concerns surrounding the spread of HIV and HCV in Canadian prisons. Despite having goals to save lives and reduce harm, an independent program evaluation revealed that uptake remains extremely low, and many qualitative studies identify significant barriers to participation and a general lack of stakeholder support. Existing studies have not systematically compared correctional officers' perspectives with those of other staff—who both represent key stakeholder groups in program implementation. In this paper, I analyze an institution-wide survey of 74 prison staff which asks about their perspectives, familiarity, and opinions surrounding the effectiveness of the PNEP in helping incarcerated people safely manage their drug use. My findings reveal an overwhelming lack of support toward the PNEP; however, differences exist between correctional officers and other staff, with correctional officers being more disapproving toward the PNEP. Interestingly, prison staff's familiarity with harm reduction programs has a negative relationship with PNEP approval, with further analysis revealing this relationship is only significant for correctional officers. Perceptions of harm reduction program effectiveness has a significant positive relationship with PNEP approval. Together, these findings suggest that there is likely a different understanding of "familiarity" between correctional officers and other staff, which may be informed by their unique lived experiences and work responsibilities. Additionally, these findings highlight the importance of staff believing in the effectiveness of programs, with greater belief translating into higher levels of approval.

CRM3c-2 - Examining Evidence-Based Alcohol Policy in New Brunswick

Matthew Stackhouse, University of New Brunswick; Anthony Jehn, St. Thomas University; Greggory Cullen, Mount Royal University

Criminal justice systems are increasingly challenged to address complex social and health-related harms amid rapid changes, including fiscal austerity, shifting public perceptions, and evolving policy environments (Lattimore, 2022). Alcohol-related harm remains a significant driver of justice system involvement through impaired driving, public disorder, violence, and downstream court and corrections demands, with well-established links to injury and interpersonal violence outcomes (World Health Organization, 2024). In New Brunswick (NB), alcohol-impaired driving continues to be a persistent public safety issue and a key point of contact between alcohol-related harms and criminal justice processes (Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, 2024). Evidence-based alcohol policy is therefore both a public health necessity and a strategic element of system-wide planning during this transitional period. Using the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) from 2019 to 2023, this study examines binge drinking patterns in NB and the Atlantic region. First, descriptive statistics compare NB with the rest of Atlantic Canada. Second, logistic regression models estimate the likelihood of regular or monthly binge drinking (versus never or infrequent), highlighting demographic and contextual factors associated with higher-frequency patterns. Third, time-series analysis of pooled NB samples assesses annual trends in binge drinking prevalence. Finally, interaction models explore whether relationships differ across key predictors and over time: Sex × Urban/Rural residence, Sex × Year, Urban/Rural × Year, and Language × Year. By establishing an updated profile of alcohol consumption patterns, this work offers essential evidence to guide policy

development and intersectoral planning across public health and justice sectors. In the context of ongoing system pressures and accountability demands, these findings clarify who is most affected by higher-risk drinking patterns in NB and where prevention efforts can strategically reduce alcohol-related harms, supporting both community well-being and the capacity of the justice system.

CRM3c-3 - Experiences of Family Court in Canada

Mary Premanathan, Niagara University

Family courts play a vital role in adjudicating disputes related to parenting, custody, and child welfare. Despite their significance, there is a notable lack of empirical research in Canada addressing how individuals experience and perceive these legal processes. This study investigates the lived experiences of women within the Canadian family court system, with particular emphasis on perceptions of fairness, decision-making, accessibility, and emotional impact. Considering growing public scrutiny regarding family court outcomes and increased media coverage of high-conflict cases, this research seeks to foreground the perspectives of those directly engaged in these proceedings.

This research utilizes a qualitative-informed survey design to collect data from women across Canada who have participated in family court proceedings. Participants are recruited through targeted outreach to community organizations and support networks serving those affected by family law disputes. The survey includes both closed- and open-ended questions, allowing participants to reflect on their interactions with legal professionals, the clarity of court procedures, perceived biases, and the broader impact of court involvement on themselves and their families. The study is grounded in a critical criminological framework that emphasizes legitimacy, procedural justice, and the gendered dynamics of law. Preliminary findings indicate that many participants find family court processes confusing, emotionally burdensome, and not fully responsive to their lived realities. Respondents often report difficulties with complex legal terminology, power imbalances, and limited opportunities to be heard in judicial decision-making. Participants also emphasize the importance of sharing their experiences, highlighting the value of participatory approaches in justice-focused research.

By focusing on women’s perceptions of family court, this research addresses a significant gap in Canadian empirical literature on family justice experiences. The findings can inform policy development, legal practice, and future research to enhance procedural fairness, accessibility, and trust in family court systems.

CRM3c-4 - The Social Construction of Youth Offending: How Do Age,Gender, Race, and Ethnicity Impact Conviction Offence Types Among Criminalized Young People in Canada?

Presenting Author - Sophie Robia, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Non-presenting Author - Adrienne Peters, Memorial University of Newfoundland

The process of criminal offending, regardless of age, emerges from a combination of structural, socio-legal and interpersonal factors. Offending among young people in particular presents a distinct and complex set of concerns, which should be collaboratively understood and addressed to improve support for young people and reduce youth offending/criminalization. This research lies at the foundation of youth offending, exploring the intersection of key dimensions of social identity, prompting critical questions about age or developmental stage, as well as, race, ethnicity and gender impacts on patterns of criminalization. This study examines the relationship between young people's social identities and involvement in the system. Our research draws on data from a purposefully

selected sample of 254 youth on probation in western Canada to explore the relationship between age, as well as gender, race,and ethnicity on specific types of offending. Preliminary analyses, exploring first conviction only, indicated no statistically significant associations between age at first conviction, race, ethnicity, or gender, and the likelihood of being convicted of certain offence types (e.g., offences against the person).These findings suggest that, within this sample of youth in British Columbia, age alone may not be a determining factor and requires further analysis. The application of a developmental lens on social identity and criminality applied in this research highlights how broader social structures and interpersonal contexts shape pathways to youth involvement in the legal system.

(CRM4a) Canadian Contributions to Criminology I

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Criminology is a multi-faceted field that uses 'crime' as its subject matter but has no single methodological commitment or paradigmatic theoretical framework. Many areas and conversations in criminology, however, are often dominated by work from the US, Britain, and the Scandinavian countries that differ from the Canadian context in significant socio-political, cultural, and economic respects. The main objective of this session is to connect researchers and discuss work that advances our understanding of crime and the criminal justice system in Canada as well as criminological knowledge more broadly.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Timothy Kang, University of Saskatchewan; Daniel Kudla, Memorial University

CRM4a-1 - Anything but here: Structure and agency through the lens of trauma, crime, and addiction

Presenting Author - Timothy Kang, University of Saskatchewan

Non-presenting Author - Sherilyn Clarke, University of Saskatchewan

The relationship between structural constraint and individual action remains a foundational tension in sociological inquiry. This presentation examines this nexus through the lived narratives of people in prison, foregrounding how long-standing social disadvantages lead to traumatic experiences that become deeply embedded in peoples' logics of survival. Participants' accounts reveal that actions often labeled as "criminal" were instead strategies to navigate and escape harm. Yet, the very structures that produced these early traumas continued to shape their trajectories across time, creating cumulative and concomitant chains of risks and disadvantages, of structure and action, that narrowed available choices and reproduced precarity. Even individuals who managed to assemble moments of stability did so on precarious foundations at risk of collapse in the face of any bump in the road, both large and small. By tracing these intertwined layers of trauma, agency, and structural reproduction, this presentation illuminates the long-term consequences of unaddressed trauma and structural inequality, consequences that manifest in cycles of crime, addiction, and persistent struggle for survival.

CRM4a-2 - Assessing the First Police Contact for Early Adolescents and their Involvement with Police throughout Childhood

Presenting Author - Allie Wall and Mackenzie Smith, Western University

Non-presenting Authors - Lisa Heslop and Katreena Scott, Western University

Prior research on adolescent involvement with police has often focused on delinquency and crime. However, children and youth can become involved with police for a wide variety of concerns, including exposure to intimate partner and family violence (IPFV), individual safety, or community safety. To date, limited research has intended to describe the nature and developmental progression of childhood and adolescent involvement with police for issues relating to their health and safety. Using a longitudinal administrative police dataset from Ontario, Canada, spanning from 2002 to 2014, we describe the first police contact for a sample of early adolescent youth (ages 12-14), along with their prior police contacts throughout childhood (ages 0-11). In doing so, we explored how much contact is related to IPFV, and whether primary prevention insights can be gleaned by assessing police interaction patterns across developmental periods. Univariate analyses found that 57% of baseline contacts for early adolescent youth were due to witnessing a police-reported event, with approximately 30% of witness cases being related to exposure to IPFV. 47% of the whole sample had prior involvement with police during childhood, and IPFV was the top reason for childhood (28.4% of interactions) and early adolescent police involvement (20%). Latent class analysis revealed six different patterns of childhood police involvement, with four patterns involving childhood exposure to IPFV. Overall, children and youth are involved with police for a wide variety of concerns, with IPFV being amongst the most frequent reasons for police contact for this population. Future projects will continue to follow the sample of youth throughout adolescence and early adulthood to understand how police interaction patterns differ across developmental periods. Such information may be useful in highlighting the potential missed service opportunities for children and youth, especially those who have been exposed to traumatic events, including IPFV.

CRM4a-3 - "I'd rather be a suspect than be a victim": Exploring Black men's motivations and strategies for gun possession in Toronto

Jackie Sikdar, York University

In the last two decades, gun violence has become a pressing concern in Toronto, with some scholars even recognizing it as a public health issue. More specifically, however, gun violence has long been a devastating and daily reality for Black Toronto, particularly for Black men who face an increased possibility of becoming victims, offenders, and in many cases, both. Despite their vulnerability, images of Black men as "thugs," "gangsters," and "criminals," persist in the public's imagination of gun violence. Such rhetoric, even invoked by Ontario Premier Doug Ford and former Toronto Mayor John Tory, provides an incomplete and inaccurate picture of the Black men who carry guns in Toronto. As a result, the "whys" and the "hows" of their gun possession are left obscured and unanswered. Drawing on the narratives of fifty Black men charged with gun-related offences and/or victimized by gun violence in Toronto, this study explores and clarifies their motivations and strategies for gun possession. Their stories illustrate the immense complexity of their lives including growing up in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, childhood exposure to gangs, guns, and gun violence, and mistreatment at the hands of the police. The convergence of trauma, victimization, the normalization

of violence within their communities, as well as the loss of trust in the police institution have led Black men in Toronto to find their own ways of protecting themselves in the face of gun violence.

(CRM4b) Canadian Contributions to Criminology II

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Criminology is a multi-faceted field that uses 'crime' as its subject matter but has no single methodological commitment or paradigmatic theoretical framework. Many areas and conversations in criminology, however, are often dominated by work from the US, Britain, and the Scandinavian countries that differ from the Canadian context in significant socio-political, cultural, and economic respects. The main objective of this session is to connect researchers and discuss work that advances our understanding of crime and the criminal justice system in Canada as well as criminological knowledge more broadly.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Timothy Kang, University of Saskatchewan; Daniel Kudla, Memorial University

CRM4b-1 - Open Secrets and the 'Disappearing Indian': death and violence in Canada against Indigenous women

Krystene Green, McMaster University

This study will investigate how structural racism contributes to the disproportionate deaths and experiences of violence faced by Indigenous women in Canada's criminal justice system. Indigenous women represent five percent of the female population, yet they account for half of federally incarcerated women. The research aims to examine the complex dynamics of Indigenous women involving the intersections of Indigenous identity, the female experience, and the persistent victimization faced by Indigenous women. The research will undertake a systematic investigation into Indigenous women's encounters with the criminal justice system, paying particular attention to sentencing disparities and deaths in custody. Using a mixed-methods approach conducted in three phases: first a statistical trend analysis (2000-2020) using national datasets will identify patterns of mortality rates, victimization, age, geographic location etc. Second a case study analysis of 20 court cases to examine judicial outcomes and Indigenous women's interactions with various levels of courts both as victims and perpetrators. Third, a narrative analysis of public responses to media coverage of these cases will explore discourses and how they shape public opinion and can legitimize structural violence. There are complexities and variances amongst Indigenous women, this research will explore the varied social locations of these Indigenous women, what have they experienced throughout the criminal justice system and the ways in which public discourse about Indigenous women persists in racist and biased ways.

CRM4b-2 - Race, Criminality and Deviance in Criminal Court

Manzah-Kyentoh Yankey, University of Alberta

While research about race and criminality have long been discussed in the United States, less is known about the social constructions of race and criminality in the Canadian criminal court system. Based on six months of ethnographic court observations in the Edmonton Law Courts, this paper focuses on court actors and police officers constructions of race, criminality and deviance in criminal

court. I focus specifically on three themes: Blackness, Indigeneity, and Whiteness. Using critical race theory, intersectionality, and critical whiteness studies, the findings show that police officers, crown attorneys, defence attorneys, and judges associate Blackness, Indigeneity, and other racialized identities with criminality and Whiteness with innocence. Court actors and police officers use racist logics about identity, gestures, physical appearances, body sizes, aesthetics, occupations, alcohol and drug use to frame Black and Indigenous defendants, victims, and witnesses as criminals and White defendants as innocent. Defence attorneys use racialized constructions of criminality to challenge the credibility of Black, Indigenous, and White victims and witnesses.

CRM4b-3 - Supporting Post-Sentencing Recommendations of Impact of Race and Culture Assessments Through Social Prescribing

Presenting Author - Barb Hamilton-Hinch, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Camisha Sibblis, University of Windsor; Natalie Hodgson, African Nova Scotian Justice Institute

The impacts of criminal justice system involvement extend beyond individuals to families and communities. For people of African ancestry, these harms are intensified by entrenched racial disparities across policing, courts, and correctional systems (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2021; Owusu-Bempah et al., 2021; Wortley & Jung, 2020; Zinger, 2022). As a result, justice involvement is associated with adverse health outcomes, including heightened risks of chronic illness, substance use, and mental health challenges. Impact of Race and Culture Assessments (IRCAs), developed in Nova Scotia, are comprehensive pre-sentencing tools designed to support judicial decision-making by contextualizing offences within lived experiences of racism and discrimination. According to the Government of Canada (2024), “IRCAs explain the relationship between the offender’s lived experiences of racism and discrimination and how they inform the circumstances of the offender, the offence committed, and the offender’s experience with the justice system” (para. 2). This project examines the role of Social Prescribing (SP) as a mechanism for operationalizing IRCA recommendations. SP connects individuals to non-clinical, community-based supports that address social determinants of health. Our model adapts the concept of link workers (Kiely et al., 2021) into Community Health Navigators (CHNs) to support reintegration and reduce recidivism. Guided by Critical Race and Intersectionality Theories, this qualitative study employs a convenience sampling approach. Data are collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews using the Black Wellness Wheel (Dennis, 2023), which examines eight domains of wellness: physical, intellectual, emotional/mental, spiritual, environmental, financial, occupational, and social. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Eight to ten interviews will be completed. Themes will be generated through inductive analysis informed by grounded theory. Findings aim to deepen understanding of how IRCA recommendations, when supported through social prescribing, contribute to reintegration and reduced recidivism for people of African ancestry involved in the criminal justice system.

CRM4b-4 - The promise and limits of crime clearance rates in Canada

Presenting Author - Chris Giacomantonio, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Tarah Hodgkinson, Wilfrid Laurier University; Martin Andresen, Simon Fraser University

Clearance rates - which represent the proportion of crime events known to police that are successfully resolved by police (by arrest, or other disposition) - are reported publicly for all police services in Canada. However, decades of police scholarship, in Canada and elsewhere, have treated crime clearance rates with suspicion, or otherwise disregarded this metric. Owing to problems of inconsistency in data recording, concerns about unfair comparisons between police services, and the potential for manipulation of clearance rates by police managers, clearance rates have rarely been studied as a central indicator of police performance or effectiveness. Yet, the resolution of case files through clearance has long been understood to form a core part of what police do, and is an essential step in the onward movement of police work into other parts of the criminal justice system. Building on recent research that demonstrates a consistent relationship between available police labour and crime clearance rates in Canada, this presentation considers the implications for policing research and practice from increased attention to clearance rates. Arguing that clearance rates should not be utilized as a singular measure of police performance, we examine the potential for connecting crime clearance to other measurable and important outcomes such as crime prevention and reduction, court processes, and investigative success.

(CRM5a) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives I
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

This session examines the carceral care complex (Douglas, 2010; Ben Moshe, 2020), understood as the interconnected systems of care, control, and confinement that shape social life in Canada. It explores how institutions such as criminal justice, health, education and welfare systems work together to regulate and manage populations. In settler colonial and neoliberal contexts, care does more than support: it also organizes social life, demarcating who is included, excluded, disciplined, and how. The session highlights the carcerality of care, showing how practices intended to assist can simultaneously contain, control, and surveil, reproducing carceral ableism and sanism.

Session Organizer: Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University

Session Chair: Bilguundari Enkhtugs, University of Alberta

CRM5a-1 - When Care Collides with the Carceral System: Drawing Connections Between Indigenous Aunties, Chronic Pain, and Dementia Care

Jaclyn Tompalski, Marouna Gomes, and Hannah Crouse, Carleton University

The carceral care complex exerts a far-reaching influence across social structures to (re)produce unmet needs, the denial of personhood, and to assert surveillance as an act of care. In an increasingly divided world, it is imperative to identify avenues for solidarity across differences to recognize the interconnectedness of these struggles. Towards this goal, this paper will analyze how the carceral care complex intersects across our three research areas: Indigenous Aunties, chronic pain

experiences among racialized immigrants, and dementia care. The first research project is focused on how Indigenous Aunties provide support to Indigenous people, families, and communities in navigating healthcare, legal, familial, and cultural challenges. However, a significant portion of their role requires them to act as advocates to mitigate harm from these colonial systems. The second project examines how the biomedical model of pain care is reflective of these colonial systems, particularly for racialized immigrants. Current assessment and treatment of chronic pain (CP) aim to quantify subjective experiences of pain, ignoring how CP is socially and culturally mediated. Consequently, control is exerted over bodies in an effort to "cure" experiences of pain, upholding Western knowledge as impartial truth, and positioning immigrant patients as objects rather than experts of their condition. The last project maintains this critical understanding of biomedicine to consider how dementia is produced through social hierarchies of aging. With recent critical dementia scholarship (e.g., Ward & Sandberg, 2023) asserting that dementia must be understood as a political category, there is an opportunity to reimagine dementia care through an ethics of relationality grounded in mutual care and temporal fluidity. This includes how dementia care can reject carceral logics, including the privatization of care, corporal control (e.g., physical restraints), and institutionalization. Together, our paper will challenge carceral logics and offer insights to collectively resist repressive state apparatuses.

CRM5a-2 - Care, Coercion, and Harm: Theorizing the Carceral Layers of Eating Disorder Treatment

Sarah Costantini, University of Guelph

Care is often assumed to be inherently benevolent. However, such a view, risks ignoring the violences that can be and often do get taken up in the name of care with mental health treatment contexts. Unlike general mental health treatment, where critical mental health studies scholars have repeatedly brought attention to, named, and examined coercion, iatrogenic harm, and carcerality, eating disorder (ED) scholars have only begun to name certain practices and processes, such as threats of compulsory treatment, withdrawal of care, among others, as coercive and/or constituting iatrogenic harm. Attention and theorizing as to how such problematic and harmful practices may be constituted as carceral, has yet to occur in ED studies. In this presentation, I draw on Repo's concept of *carceral layers* to illustrate how punitive measures, coercive practices, and iatrogenic harm manifest in ED treatment, while often being construed as optimal "care." I attend to (1) bio-psychiatry and clinician's epistemic authority, (2) exclusion in treatment access, and (3) ward atmospheres, to show how these forces, processes, and practices, variably intersect to both create and govern performance of carceral treatment contexts for those with EDs. Through this, it becomes increasingly evident how violence and care cannot be distinguished. I discuss the implications that theorizing carcerality and naming iatrogenic harm may have for ED care.

CRM5a-3 - Personal Identification, Harm Reduction, and Trans Health in Rural Northern Ontario

Presenting Author - Chris Sanders, Lakehead University

Non-presenting Author - Kristin Burnett, Lakehead University

This paper examines the systemic barriers faced by trans and gender-expansive (TGE) individuals in Thunder Bay when attempting to update their names and gender markers on official documents, such as birth certificates. For TGE individuals, personal identification (PID) that accurately reflects their gender identity is essential for affirming their legal status and securing access to civil rights,

healthcare, and social supports. Mismatches between one's legal and expressed gender identity often lead to discrimination and denial of critical services, compounding vulnerabilities and marginalization. In Canada, birth certificates serve as foundational documents for legal identity, granting access to essential resources, including education, housing, healthcare, and financial services. From a social determinants of health perspective, accurate PID is a critical enabler of well-being, but the process of updating these documents remains fraught with challenges. Drawing on Lipsky's "street-level bureaucrat" concept, we demonstrate how TGE individuals often face complex, bureaucratic, and sometimes dehumanizing procedures, with systemic confusion and inconsistent guidance compounding the difficulties. This project seeks to improve health outcomes for TGE individuals by linking PID accessibility to social determinants of health and thereby inform the development of best practices for healthcare providers and advocacy strategies for policy reform.

CRM5a-4 - When Care Becomes Control: Corruption and Gendered Governance in a South African Women's Correctional Center

Presenting Author - Taylor Paige Winfield, University of Arizona

Non-presenting Authors - Azar Mahmoudi, University of Alberta; Nokukhanya Mbonambi, University of Pretoria

Correctional institutions are commonly framed as sites of care, rehabilitation, and protection, yet for many incarcerated people they function as anti-sanctuaries, spaces where care is entangled with control, surveillance, and harm. This paper examines how practices ostensibly associated with care and order operate as mechanisms of governance through institutional corruption in a South African women's correctional center. Drawing on 18 months of participatory, arts-based fieldwork with 45 incarcerated women, the study combines ethnographic observation with participatory visual methods to surface experiences routinely obscured in official records. These include bribery, favoritism, contraband economies, abuse of discretion, and the manipulation of information, practices embedded in everyday routines of "care" such as access to health services, protection, mobility, and resources. Building on socio-legal and criminological theories of institutional corruption, the analysis shows how corruption is not merely individual misconduct but a structural feature of carceral governance that produces fear, dependency, and gendered hierarchies among both staff and incarcerated women. Centering women's voices and visual narratives, the paper conceptualizes corruption as a modality of carceral care: a system in which vulnerability is managed as risk and access to care is conditioned on compliance, silence, or exchange. At the same time, the research traces how participatory methods can generate micro-sanctuaries within hostile institutional environments. Through collective workshops, participants documented harms, built networks of mutual care, and produced counter-records that challenged official accounts and carceral logics. Situated within debates on the carcerality of care, gendered punishment, and accountability beyond formal law, including the Nelson Mandela Rules, this paper argues that addressing corruption in carceral settings requires more than legal reform. It calls for participatory, relational, and power-aware approaches that redistribute visibility and voice, reimagining anti-corruption as a practice of care, dignity, and resistance within and against the carceral care complex.

(CRM5b) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives II

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

This session examines the carceral care complex (Douglas, 2010; Ben Moshe, 2020), understood as the interconnected systems of care, control, and confinement that shape social life in Canada. It explores how institutions such as criminal justice, health, education and welfare systems work together to regulate and manage populations. In settler colonial and neoliberal contexts, care does more than support: it also organizes social life, demarcating who is included, excluded, disciplined, and how. The session highlights the carcerality of care, showing how practices intended to assist can simultaneously contain, control, and surveil, reproducing carceral ableism and sanism.

Session Organizer: Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University

Session Chair: Tuğçe Ellialtı-Köse, University of Guelph

CRM5b-1 - The Ontario Hospital, Woodstock, 1919-1968: A Pre-Welfare State Societal Valve

Sarah Bergman, York University

In 1903 the Province of Ontario purchased 100 acres of land on the west side of Highway 50 just north of Woodstock from Charles H. Hatch. This parcel of property would become known as The Hospital for Epileptics in 1906, admitting its first patient on April 22 of that year. Over 90 years this institution would run under many names, always for the purpose of warehousing people with labels such as ‘feebleminded,’ ‘epileptic,’ ‘mentally retarded,’ and ‘developmentally delayed.’ Institutions such as the Ontario Hospital, Woodstock were created, in part, to lessen the overcrowding of jails and poorhouses. In reality there were constant transfers of patients between all three. This meant that often people were misplaced into an institution as a form of pre-welfare state social control, recognizing that some people were contradictory to the ideal society and thus needed to be ushered out of sight. The Ontario Hospital, Woodstock was one such place where anyone could be housed to prevent them from participating in, and therefore “devaluing”, the ideal Canadian society. It intrinsically operated as a pre-welfare state societal valve. The purpose of this paper is to pull together themes of racist, ableist, sanist, ageist, settler-colonialist, and gendered hierarchies to tell the story of how institutions such as the Ontario Hospital, Woodstock operated as a pre-welfare state social valve that ran on neglect, abuse, and oppression.

CRM5b-2 - Custody as care: Reading Adolescence as a diagnostic of the carceral care complex

Althea McIntosh, Western University

This presentation advances an analytic reading of *Adolescence* that treats the series as an institutional object rather than as commentary on youth violence or grievance politics. It analyzes the series as a depiction of how adolescent care is organized through custody rather than relation. *Custodial care* is defined as an institutional mode in which responsibility is discharged through procedural containment (documentation, assessment, risk classification) rather than sustained relational engagement. The analysis argues that these procedures reproduce age-based, gendered, ableist, and racialized hierarchies by allocating care, discipline, and neglect according to administratively legible traits rather than articulated needs. Methodologically, the analysis approaches *Adolescence* as an institutional text and codes scenes for observable procedural features,

including documentation, professional neutrality offloading moral responsibility onto protocols, and the reclassification of harm as risk or liability. This procedural focus is not posed against disability justice or abolitionist frameworks; rather, it specifies how carceral care is enacted materially. The series depicts *carceral ableism* and *sanism* not as attitudes but as sorting mechanisms that determine who is considered, treatable, manageable, or dangerous. Across institutional domains, custodial logics operate unevenly on adolescent bodies. Policing defines care as physical containment under risk assessment, positioning masculinized youth as threats rather than subjects requiring care. Therapeutic custody is selectively available to those whose distress conforms to clinical norms, while schools translate gendered peer violence and online harm into conduct problems and reputational risk. The series depicts little sustained resistance to these logics. Moments of hesitation or refusal are absorbed into procedure. This foreclosure of refusal is theorized as *structural violence*, insofar as institutional procedures eliminate alternatives to custody while presenting containment as care. Although set in the UK, the analysis situates these dynamics within broader regimes of *settler colonial governance* familiar to Canadian contexts, clarifying why procedural reform is inadequate.

CRM5b-3 - Safe and Caring Schools? Image Work and Copaganda in School-Police Partnerships

Alexandre Da Costa, University of Alberta

This paper focuses on how school-police partnerships reaffirm the racialized, ableist hierarchies and paternalistic whiteness foundational to carceral forms of care. Specifically, the paper examines how police and K-12 education institutions collaborate in the “image work” (Mawby, 2002) necessary to project and maintain positive meanings of, and associations with, carceral approaches to school safety that station armed police officers in schools (eg. School Resource Officer, or SRO, programs). Historically, police-in-schools programs have emphasized to the public the importance of relationship-building between police and youth as well as highlighted the roles that police officers play as educators, mentors, and informal counsellors in the lives of students. Moreover, school districts have employed language like “safe and caring schools” to characterize policies and initiatives that involve SROs. This situation threatens to saturate what safety and care themselves can mean and who can provide them; it also truncates the imagining of who is included, excluded, and/or made invisible in carceral definitions of “community” that shape educational spaces. Through an examination of visual and written texts (photos, social media posts, websites and promotional materials), the paper examines the ideological and affective characteristics of image work in the school-police nexus that seeks to produce and sustain legitimacy for police-in-schools programs. The paper argues that “image work” and “copaganda” are necessary to maintain daily police presence in the daily lives of youth within the confined spaces and activities of school systems as an unquestioned normative good. To counter this legitimation of carceral care, the paper turns to the theorizations of abolitionist activists and scholars to reaffirm calls to reimagine safety and care within and beyond schools.

CRM5b-4 - He’s someone who has been thrown away’: The Case of Joey Toutsaint and the Space of Exception

Krystal Batelaan, St. Francis Xavier University

Drawing on the work of Giorgio Agamben and Zahir Kolia to examine the case of Joey Toutsaint, I explore how prisons operate as spaces of exception through the use of dangerous offender

designations to justify the treatment of racialized and Indigenous offenders as 'irredeemable' nonhumans. In my paper, I argue that this 'irredeemable' quality is doubly applied to a prisoner through their dangerous offender and Indigenous status respectively, and that by framing the 'dangerous' offender as such, it reinforces the idea that Indigenous peoples are a threat to the Canadian public. Important to this paper, and the case of Toutsaint, is how his treatment is justified through a framework of care both for his wellbeing and for the Canadian imagination insofar as he is perceived as an irredeemable nonhuman who is locked away from the public indefinitely.

(CRM5c) The Carceral Care Complex: Sociological Perspectives III

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

This session examines the carceral care complex (Douglas, 2010; Ben Moshe, 2020), understood as the interconnected systems of care, control, and confinement that shape social life in Canada. It explores how institutions such as criminal justice, health, education and welfare systems work together to regulate and manage populations. In settler colonial and neoliberal contexts, care does more than support: it also organizes social life, demarcating who is included, excluded, disciplined, and how. The session highlights the carcerality of care, showing how practices intended to assist can simultaneously contain, control, and surveil, reproducing carceral ableism and sanism.

Session Organizer: Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University

Session Chair: Marouna Gomes, Carleton University

CRM5c-1 - Between Protection and Punishment: Anti-Trafficking, Care, and Control

Dale Ballucci, Western University

The paper presents findings from an ongoing comparative qualitative study examining anti-trafficking responses across multiple national contexts. Empirically, the study combines policy and legal document analysis with in-depth interviews with frontline actors, including police officers, NGO practitioners, legal advocates, and policy stakeholders involved in trafficking identification and response. Policy analysis focuses on how protection, risk, and vulnerability are constructed within legislation, operational guidelines, and funding frameworks, while interviews examine how these legal and policy frameworks are interpreted, enacted, and at times contested in everyday socio-legal practice. Drawing on the author's previous research on trafficking, policing, and governance, preliminary analysis suggests that emerging logics of control may be embedded within care-oriented interventions, particularly through conditional assistance, surveillance, and discretionary decision-making that operate outside formal criminal punishment. Analytically, the study is informed by the concept of *carceral care*, which highlights the convergence of welfare, humanitarianism, and punitive governance in contemporary regulatory regimes, while remaining explicitly exploratory and attentive to legal, institutional, and national variation. By foregrounding law in action while remaining theoretically reflexive, the paper offers early insights into how care and control are negotiated within anti-trafficking governance as the research continues to develop.

CRM5c-2 - Waiting to be Seen: Examining Indigenous Health Inequalities through the Case of Brian Sinclair

Logan Léger, Concordia University

In Canadian society, First Nation populations face persistent systemic inequalities, particularly within the healthcare systems. These disparities, rooted in ongoing histories of settler colonialism, discriminatory policy, and the devaluation of Indigenous bodies, continue to shape poor health outcomes for Indigenous populations. This paper examines these patterns through a case study of Brian Sinclair, a 45-year-old Indigenous man who died in a Manitoba emergency room in 2008 due to neglect by hospital staff for thirty-four hours. Using a settler colonial and social determinants of health framework, the study analyzes the inquest report and related critical texts to show how land dispossession, the Indian Act, and institutional racism co-produce what McCallum and Perry (2018) term “structures of indifference” within medical institutions. The analysis finds that Sinclair’s death is not an isolated institutional failure, but a reflection of broader biopolitical patterns of systemic Indigenous health neglect. By situating this case within the broader context of colonial governance, the paper contributes to existing Indigenous health scholarship by extending the concept of structures of indifference through a biopolitical and distal determinants lens. It demonstrates how these systems reproduce enduring patterns of Indigenous vulnerability and underscores the need for transformative and decolonizing approaches to Canadian healthcare.

(CRM6) Community First: Inclusion and Innovation in Public Safety
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

We invited graduate students from diverse disciplines to share research and ideas that advance inclusive, community-centred approaches to public safety. Submissions may be made individually or in partnership with other researchers, community collaborators, or faculty mentors. This session provides a space for dialogue and collaboration among presenters and the audience.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Doug Thomson, Humber Polytechnic; Emma Smith, Toronto Metropolitan University

CRM6-1 - Family Time and Drug Use: Improving Public Safety Through Family Interaction and Parent-Child Bonding

Stephanie Lenz, University of Saskatchewan

Incarceration has been the primary method of deterring drug use in North America, particularly since the war on drugs began. However, this approach has been ineffective and has instead contributed to significant collateral consequences, as evidenced by the overdose epidemic. A different approach is therefore essential to public safety, perhaps one that is more social, strength-based, and preventive. Research suggests that time spent with family and the bonds that are formed can reduce adolescent drug use (Dubowitz et al. 2019; Windlin and Kuntsche 2012). To extend these findings, this study examines whether adolescent family time can reduce drug use in young adulthood and whether this occurs through strengthened bonds that young adults have with their parents. Using a prospective sample of 2,612 American respondents from the NLSY97, this study reveals that spending more time with family during adolescence is negatively associated with both the likelihood and frequency of

drug use in young adulthood. Moreover, this study finds that parent-child bonds mediate the association between family time and drug use frequency, but not the association between family time and drug use likelihood. This indicates that spending more time with family during adolescence can 1) minimize the likelihood of drug use in young adulthood, regardless of parent-child bonds, and 2) strengthen bonds with parents, which, in turn, can reduce drug use frequency in young adulthood. Accordingly, this study supports policy initiatives that shift away from punitive tactics to address drug use, towards an approach that facilitates family interaction through greater affordability and access to family leisure activities. This could be implemented via extended child tax credits for lower-income households and community-led programs, such as those promoting family volunteer work, family camp, and family-fun days. Indeed, such reform may effectively foster healthy parent-child relationships and, ultimately, reduce drug use to improve public safety.

CRM6-2 - Community Development Through Qualitative Research: Understanding the Public's Perceptions of Safety and Well-Being

Sophia Pacini, McMaster University; Emma Smith, Toronto Metropolitan University; Doug Thomson, Humber Polytechnic

Community perceptions on crime, safety, and well-being is a growing body of research in Canada. Increasingly, scholars are interested in understanding how community members' perceptions of safety and what is considered "safe" are similar or different from crime statistics and patterns. This research highlights the importance of community-based research for comprehensive community development, enabling scholars to adequately address the needs and concerns of various communities. In Toronto, Canada, the municipal government, business improvement areas (BIAs), and the Toronto Police Service (TPS) are engaging in initiatives to expand community-based engagement on issues related to public safety and community well-being. This presentation will provide an in-depth review of the various community-based engagement initiatives implemented in the city, including the Downtown Yonge BIA's Community Engagement Team and the TPS's Downtown Community Outreach Response & Engagement (CORE) Team. This presentation will outline how community-based perceptions of crime and safety converge from current crime patterns, highlighting the need for community-based research in community development initiatives, and the various challenges and successes of research for community development. Moreover, we will be discussing the benefits of developing multi-disciplinary research networks when conducting community development research and future areas of research.

CRM6-3 - "Their traffickers bank on their lack of awareness": Labour trafficking dynamics and gaps in services

Bilguundari Enkhtugs, University of Alberta

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes in Canada and globally (AHTTF, 2021; Public Safety Canada, 2018). Its two most prevalent forms -- sex and labour trafficking -- have been increasingly documented in Alberta (AB) over the past decade, and are posing immense challenges for anti-trafficking responses. However, while we have a growing amount of research on sex trafficking, we know little about the dynamics of labour trafficking and its potential prevention, detection, or disruption in Canada. This lack of knowledge may hinder the potential efficacy of anti-trafficking responses directed at victim-survivors of labour trafficking. Drawing upon interviews with

NGO workers who assist human trafficking survivors in AB, this paper examines local responses to labour trafficking. It unmasks the distinct dynamics of labour trafficking, including (1) the recruitment, control, and exploitation strategies traffickers employ; (2) challenges and barriers with reporting and investigations; and (3) the need for increased person-centered, long-term support services, such as access to shelters, financial assistance, and counselling. Contributing to the emerging literature that links precarious immigration status to labour exploitation (Beatson et al., 2017), this paper offers empirical insights to promote survivor healing, such as improved coordination among multiple stakeholders and increased awareness-raising initiatives at Canadian borders and in countries of origin where labour trafficking victims are recruited.

(CRM7) Crime, Deviance, and the Media

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

The relationship between crime and the media remains a complex and evolving area of inquiry. Traditional analyses have often focused on how crime, criminality, and deviance are (mis)represented through news, entertainment, and other media forms. While this remains a crucial line of study, emerging forms of media engagement call for broader perspectives. Given that various groups use media to self-represent their activities, this session invites contributions that examine not only representations of crime and deviance, but also how individuals and groups use media to perform, negotiate, or contest such identities, whether through self-representation, public reaction, or participation in mediated moral panics.

Session Organizer and Chair: Duncan Philpot, St. Thomas University

CRM7-1 - Sides of the Fence: Where Toronto, ON News Outlets Stood Leading Up to the Emergency Declarations on Homelessness in 1998 and 2023

Valentina Ornelas, York University

Toronto, Ontario is Canada's most populous city and has the largest homeless population in the country. For most residents, understandings of homelessness are shaped through personal observation and media coverage (Krewski et al., 2006). Media representations often convey signals about the causes of homelessness that differ significantly from its underlying structural realities, thereby influencing public opinion and policy responses. In the past twenty-five years, the City of Toronto has declared homelessness a state of emergency only twice: in 1998 and in 2023. This study examines how homelessness was framed by media outlets at these two crisis points, focusing on coverage from the six months preceding each emergency declaration. Using content analysis, the study analyzes twenty newspaper articles from each period to identify recurring themes and framing strategies. The findings indicate that media narratives in both 1998 and 2023 frequently employed episodic and conflict framing, though with differing emphases. In both periods, coverage highlighted the urgency of moving individuals off the streets and into shelters, particularly during colder months. However, significant differences emerged between the two eras. Media coverage in 1998 relied heavily on deviant framing and often used negative language that portrayed homelessness as a result of individual failure. By contrast, 2023 narratives demonstrated a shift toward thematic framing, emphasizing structural factors, long-term solutions, and human rights considerations. This shift reflects a broader cultural transformation in how homelessness is understood, from an individualized

problem to a systemic and policy-driven issue. Overall, the findings illustrate how media narratives can either align with or obscure the root causes of homelessness, offering valuable insight into the media's role in shaping public opinion and informing policy decisions surrounding Toronto's emergency declarations in 1998 and 2023.

CRM7-2 - When Damage Speaks: Destruction, Deviance, and the Mediation of Moral Order

Juniper Todd, Carleton University

This paper examines acts of destruction—such as slashed paintings in museums, defaced state monuments, and physical damage to gallery interiors—as forms of visual mediation that communicate meaning, provoke public reaction, and become criminalized through their circulation as deviant images. Drawing on cultural criminology, feminist ethics of care, and critical media theory, the paper argues that destruction operates not merely as material damage but as a mediated event that interrupts dominant aesthetic orders and forces institutions to respond. This paper adopts a broad conception of media as visual and aesthetic mediation, examining how destruction circulates meaning through public visibility and institutional response. Rather than treating media as limited to news, digital platforms, or representational texts, this analysis conceptualizes media more broadly as the circulation of visibility: the ways damaged surfaces, broken forms, and acts of erasure function as communicative artifacts within public space. Acts of destruction are shown to generate moral panics, institutional responses, and juridical classifications precisely because they are visually legible and affectively charged. Through case studies including auto-destructive art, monument toppling, and institutional critique, the paper traces how destruction becomes framed as deviance not due to harm alone, but because it disrupts regimes of visual order and care. The analysis further demonstrates how criminal justice institutions act as curatorial agents, regulating which forms of destruction are legible as art, protest, or crime. By reframing destruction as a mode of mediated communication, the paper challenges dominant binaries between care and harm, creation and crime. It concludes by proposing "devotional destruction" as a conceptual framework for understanding how criminalized aesthetic refusals function as ethical, political, and communicative acts within contemporary regimes of mediated moral regulation.

CRM7-3 - "Look what you made me do": An Exploration of Gender, Power, and the Limits of Cancel Culture in Taylor Swift's Discography

Presenting Author - Hannah Walsh, Queen's University

Non-presenting Authors - Jennifer Silcox and Liam Kennedy, King's University College, Western University

Social control theorists have long examined shaming in its myriad forms. In recent years, this has taken the form of *cancel culture,* a phenomenon that can be described as the reputational sanctioning of certain social actors by the broader public. In the present study, we conduct a qualitative content analysis of Taylor Swift's complete discography to trace shifts in how public exclusion and shame are framed in her songs over time. We find that earlier songs tend to present individualized framings of blame, relying on ambiguity to depict gendered scrutiny, whereas later songs articulate more explicit critiques of power and social exclusion. Importantly, our analysis situates these narratives within Swift's evolving economic and cultural position as we interrogate how wealth and social status can mediate vulnerability to being "cancelled." Overall, we show that

while Swift's work critiques the gendered dimensions of social sanctions and moral regulation, it simultaneously illustrates the limits of cancel culture when directed at elite social actors. By conceptualizing cancel culture as a form of social sanction, this study positions popular culture as a complex space of resistance and reproduction relative to the status quo. This work adds to existing cultural criminological understandings of the gendered dimensions of informal social punishment.

CRM7-4 - Performing Extortion: Digital Self-Representation, Spectacle, and Intimidation in Transnational Organized Crime

Harpreet Aulakh, Mount Royal University

Across a series of recent extortion cases involving transnational organized crime groups, violence is not only enacted but deliberately recorded and circulated. Perpetrators film shootings and threats directed at targeted homes and businesses. These recordings are then shared through digital platforms to intensify impact. This paper shows how the use of digital media transforms extortion from a covert criminal activity into a public spectacle, shaping how intimidation, power, and identity are conveyed within crimes targeting South Asian diasporic communities in Canada. Drawing on documented cases where extortion threats are accompanied by online videos, social media posts, and claims of responsibility, the paper argues that digital media is central to extortion, serving as an orchestrated mechanism for intimidation, identity construction, and power display. Using a digital criminology framework, this research conceptualizes extortion-related violence as a form of criminal self-representation in which violence is staged, recorded, and distributed to exhibit credibility, reputation, and reach. The findings show that offender media, news coverage, community discourse, and law enforcement responses together increase the power of intimidation. These interactions turn extortion into a networked spectacle and reinforce organized threat narratives. While parallels can be drawn with digital display of violence in other contexts, such as youth gang activity, extortion networks are transnational, and their performance targets not only direct victims but also diaspora groups, state institutions, and law enforcement agencies.

(CRM8) Revisiting Law in Contexts of Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

This session brings together research examining the potentials and limits of legal and institutional responses to sexual and gender-based violence across diverse contexts. Papers move from structural and governance-focused perspectives on state-led prevention and international accountability, to domestic legal processes and survivor experiences in Canada, and conclude with emerging challenges in digital spaces. Panelists explore how law and institutional frameworks intersect with gender, power, and structural inequality, highlighting barriers to justice, systemic biases, and survivors' lived realities. Drawing on feminist, intersectional, and decolonial approaches, the session encourages discussion on improving legal systems, policy frameworks, and cultural norms.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tuğçe Ellialtı-Köse, University of Guelph

CRM8-1 - When Law Performs Prevention: Sexual Violence Policy and Governance Analysis in Colombia

Luciana Mejia Perez, University of Guelph

While states increasingly rely on legal reform to address sexual violence, persistent rates of victimization raise critical questions about the capacity of law to function as an effective tool of prevention. This paper examines sexual violence prevention as a problem of governance rather than legal absence, using Colombia as a case study. Drawing on decolonial and intersectional feminist theory, the study conceptualizes sexual violence as a structural and normalized form of violence rooted in colonial and patriarchal systems of power. This analysis centers on Law 1146 of 2007, Colombia's foundational sexual violence prevention framework, which established institutional coordination mechanisms for children and adolescents. Subsequent reforms: Laws 1257 of 2008, 1719 of 2014, and 2126 of 2021, are examined as extensions of this framework, revealing a recurring state approach to sexual violence governance. Using qualitative analysis of legislation, institutional evaluations, and policy sources, the paper demonstrates that prevention efforts are undermined by fragmented implementation, institutional neglect, lack of specialization among justice actors, and uneven territorial coverage. Institutions responsible for prevention and survivor support, including Family Commissioners' Offices and Justice Houses, frequently operate under severe resource constraints, contributing to secondary victimization and restricted access to protection. These shortcomings disproportionately affect Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, rural, and displaced women. The paper explores the gap between sexual violence legal rights frameworks and lived outcomes by arguing that these failures are not merely technical but reflect deeper colonial and patriarchal logics embedded within political and legal institutions. As a result, legal reforms often operate performatively, signaling state compliance with international norms without producing transformative prevention outcomes. The study concludes that meaningful sexual violence prevention requires moving beyond formal legal reform toward governance strategies that confront structural inequality, institutional bias, and historical patterns of exclusion, while finalizing with prescriptive policy recommendations for effective sexual violence prevention policies.

CRM8-2 - Female Intimate Partner Stalking Survivors' Perceptions of Police Response

Olivia Peters, University of Guelph

Feminist scholarship concurs that stalking is a significant, gender-based risk factor for femicide and that more research is needed to address police responses to intimate partner stalking (IPS) victimization. Despite this, IPS remains an under-researched phenomenon, particularly in Canada where the lack of survivor-informed resources reinforces the continued individualization of risk. The present study is based on in-depth interviews with 20 female-identifying survivors of IPS. Interviews were conducted using a narrative, story-based approach. Thematic analysis was used to examine survivors experiences with police. Survivors identified systemic issues in Canadian criminal justice response that perpetuate victim-blaming rhetoric, highlighting fear-based requirements and subjectivity of police response as obstacles to accessing resources. Findings suggest that women feel that their victimization must worsen before police intervention is provided, thereby increasing risk of physical, sexual and psychological violence. This study discusses implications for future survivor-informed supports and advances recommendations for improved IPS support and response.

CRM8-3 - 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth and Pathways to Meaningful Justice for Technology-Facilitated Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Presenting Authors - Molly Sutherland, Acadia University; Hanna McCamon, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Emily Lockhart and Allison Smith, Acadia University

2SLGBTQIA+ youth face a unique vulnerability to technology-facilitated sexual and gender-based violence (TFSV). The Canadian government's approach to this issue has emphasized that criminal law offers the best recourse for victims and survivors of TFSV; however, as feminist legal scholars have long argued, criminal law routinely fails to provide justice for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Oppressed groups, including 2SLGBTQIA+ people, have historically been subjected to state violence, which has led to distrust in legal systems and hesitancy towards invoking criminal law. It is critical to understand how 2SLGBTQIA+ youth make decisions about pursuing justice when they perceive that they have experienced sexual harm in an online space. In recognizing that 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are underrepresented in current research on TFSV and gender-based violence more broadly, we seek to remedy a significant gap in the literature regarding how queer, Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse young people do or do not choose to mobilize law after experiencing TFSV. Bringing together legal consciousness and youth sexual citizenship scholarship, we utilize a mixed-methods approach that includes survey research, art-based focus groups, and youth participatory action research across Halifax and the Annapolis Valley. To provide better legal supports for victim-survivors, they must be co-participants in designing and developing improved justice mechanisms for online sexual and gender-based violence moving forward.

CRM8-4 - Misogyny by AI Design: The Manosphere and Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University

This paper examines how the manosphere engages in and normalizes technology-facilitated gender-based violence through the circulation of AI-generated deepfake imagery. Focusing on the 4chan campaign DignifAI, the analysis uncovers how AI technologies are mobilized in the manosphere to discipline women's bodies, sexuality, and gendered expressions. The paper explores how misogyny is technologically enacted, coordinated, and normalized, conceptualizing AI-facilitated harm as a structural expression of gendered power relations which reinforce hegemonic gender norms and reproduces gendered hierarchies across digital and offline spaces. The analysis demonstrates how the DignifAI campaign symbolically reconstitutes femininity, targeting women whose gender expression is marked as deviant, transforming them into idealized embodiments of normative femininity. It further examines the manosphere's representations of Muslim women's bodies, revealing how misogyny intersects with orientalist and colonial fantasies to valorize constrained and subordinated forms of gendered embodiment. Such practices of the manosphere produce material, social, psychological, and economic harms that limit women's agency and autonomy while contributing to their disenfranchisement in digital environments. By framing this violence as misogyny enacted and amplified through AI design, the paper underscores the necessity of intersectional feminist approaches to understanding AI-facilitated gender-based violence and its recognition in law as an emergent, structurally entrenched form of harm within the manosphere.

(CRM9) Canadian Cannabis: Markets, Regulation, and State

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

Canada legalized and regulated the recreational cannabis market in 2018. According to Statistics Canada, most users now purchase their cannabis in the legal market and federal and provincial

government revenue from cannabis is significant. By these measures, the legalized cannabis market has been successful. But, what about other measures of this market? What is the landscape of the Canadian cannabis market? What problems and challenges persist? This roundtable session invited presentations that engage with the economic, state, or regulatory dimensions of cannabis legalization in 2025, especially who is or is not benefitting from this new marketplace. What is the shape of this market in terms of issues like: regional/national/multinational ownership and operations; Indigenous and other marginalized groups' participation or policing; organic/fair trade/coop ownership; and the quality, transparency and accountability of product for consumers. Presentations may include, but are not limited to, the following themes: ownership, licensing, taxation, vending, market participation, Indigenous sovereignty, market diversity, and health.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Joel Zackary Garrod, St. Francis Xavier University; Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

CRM9-1 - Analyzing cannabis legalization impacts on emergency department visits among Ontario individuals with substance use disorders.

Presenting Author - Gwen Ehi, York University

Non-presenting Authors - Elena Levitskaya, Yihong Bai, Peiya Cao, Kristine Ienciu, and Antony Chum, York University

Cannabis legalization represents a significant policy shift with potential implications for acute healthcare utilization, particularly among individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs), a population characterized by elevated risk of emergency department (ED) use and substance-related harms. While prior research has documented increases in cannabis-related acute care use in the general population following legalization, far less is known about how legalization has affected individuals with pre-existing SUDs. This presentation examines how Ontario's phased legalization of non-medical cannabis was associated with changes in cannabis-related and other substance-related ED visits among individuals with SUDs compared with the general population. Using linked population-based health administrative data from Ontario, we conducted a comparative interrupted time series analysis spanning October 2015 to March 2023. Adults with pre-existing SUDs were identified using validated diagnostic algorithms and compared with all other Ontario adults. Monthly rates of cannabis-related ED visits and non-cannabis substance- and alcohol-related ED visits were examined across three policy periods: pre-legalization, Phase 1 legalization characterized by limited retail access, and Phase 2 legalization marked by expanded retail availability and the introduction of edibles and extracts. The analysis assessed both immediate level changes and longer-term trend changes attributable to each legalization phase. Contrary to concerns that legalization would exacerbate acute care use among high-risk populations, individuals with SUDs experienced significant and sustained reductions in both cannabis-related and other substance-related ED visits following legalization. In contrast, ED visit rates increased in the general population. These findings were consistent across sex and age groups and robust to alternative outcome specifications. Overall, the results suggest that cannabis legalization, when implemented within a regulated framework, may mitigate rather than amplify acute healthcare utilization among individuals with SUDs, with important implications for harm reduction strategies, regulatory design, and health system planning.

CRM9-2 - Governing Cannabis in Mi'kmaki: The Impact on Mikmaw Jurisdiction

Joel Garrod, St. Francis Xavier University

Cannabis is the most recent example of how the structure of settler-colonialism continues to operate. In leaving Indigenous peoples out of the *Cannabis Act* (2018) and instead putting them under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government has once again failed to engage in meaningful nation-to-nation agreements, despite its own claims of reconciliation. In this paper, I examine how Canada's legalized cannabis regime rearticulates settler-colonial power in Nova Scotia by ignoring Mi'kmaw jurisdiction and excluding them from the public Provincial retail model. Drawing on an ongoing partnership with *Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn* (KMK), a Mi'kmaw rights organization that takes direction from the Assembly of Novia Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs, I interrogate the social, economic, and jurisdictional impacts of structuring cannabis governance through the Province, rather than the existing *Peace and Friendship Treaties* (1725-1779) that are meant to mediate relations between the Mi'kmaq and the Canadian state. Through an analysis of (1) Mi'kmaw experiences with raids on dispensaries, (2) the frozen rights approach taken by the Nova Scotian Supreme Court in recent legal cases, and (3) the federal failure to create mechanisms for Indigenous self-governance in the *Cannabis Act* (2018), I argue that legalization is a contemporary expression of the long history of Indigenous dispossession, in which Indigenous property regimes are overwritten through state-making and market formation. As part of a larger research project with Dr. Patricia Cormack, the paper concludes with an analysis of the various vendor models of cannabis across Canada, and asks whether private or hybrid-private-public models might reduce some of the frictions associated with the corporate-colonial nature of the *Cannabis Act* (2018), enabling provincial governments to more easily engage in nation-to-nation agreements.

CRM9-3 - Nova Scotia's War on Indigenous Cannabis: Unpacking State Moral Panic.

Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

In the last year, the Nova Scotia government and the RCMP have waged an aggressive campaign against Indigenous cannabis vendors. Indigenous-owned stores have been raided and vendors arrested. Premier Houston has stated that Indigenous cannabis is laced with fentanyl and linked to organized crime and human trafficking. RCMP press conferences stage the requisite weapons (long guns) and drugs (edibles and dry cannabis) to link danger and violence to Indigenous weed. Indigenous vendors point to their international, national, and local treaty rights to sell cannabis on their own terms. The raids on cannabis stores and defaming rhetoric have provoked the cancelation of agreements between the province and Indigenous vendors that had been in the works; some Chiefs have banned Premier Houston and his ministers from their communities. Using Cohen's theory of moral panic, I will examine the explanations offered by the provincial state that justify this extraordinary turn away from negotiation and reconciliation. Some elements of moral panic do not fit Cohen's theory. For example, media have pushed back on government framings, insisting on evidence to back its claims. In fact, Premier Houston's panic seems to be having a hard time getting traction. What remains puzzling is the very issue of why this attack on Indigenous cannabis vendors and why now, amid negotiations with Indigenous groups toward vendor agreements. As part of our broader research on this issue, Dr. Joel Garrod and I are looking at vendor models across the various provincial/territorial jurisdictions in Canada. Since Nova Scotia has a government monopoly on

cannabis sales (through the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation), we wonder if the private or hybrid private-public models of vending provide for better models for nation-to-nation agreements.

(CRM-RC) Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster

The Criminology and Criminal Justice Research Cluster would like to welcome everyone to our annual meeting, which is open to scholars, practitioners, and students who are engaged in the study of crime, criminology, criminal justice, policing, law, penology, or related subjects. The cluster meeting provides an opportunity to connect all those interested in research in criminology and criminal justice. This meeting is open to anyone who might benefit from joining our membership or anyone simply interested in the field in general.

Session Organizer: Tanya Trussler, Mount Royal University

(CRS1) Meet the Editor of The Canadian Review of Sociology

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT

In this open session, the Executive Editor of the flagship journal of the Canadian Sociological Association, The Canadian Review of Sociology, will offer an overview of the editor and associate editor roles, the scope and article types welcomed by the journal, and will hold an open-ended conversation regarding publishing in the journal. The editor will detail the 'workflow' regarding the peer review process, including how articles are received and vetted by not only the editor but the journal's Student Advisory Board. Topics may range from how to prepare initial submissions, whether cover letters are essential, and how to respond effectively to peer reviewed feedback. Details regarding the transition to Wiley's new online submission portal may also be discussed.

Session Organizer: Michael Adorjan, University of Calgary; Executive Editor of the Canadian Review of Sociology

(DEA) Death, Dying, and Grief

(DEA2a) Death and Society I: Death and Politics
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Death, Dying and Grief

This session welcomed theoretical and empirical papers in the broad area of death and society,

Session Organizer: Zohreh Bayatrizi, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Rita Giancola, York University

DEA2a-1 - Death's Domain: On the unstable boundary between the living and the dead

Zohreh Bayatrizi, University of Alberta

This article challenges two dominant interconnected assumptions: that death is a discrete, individual, and biologically determinate event, and that grief follows a linear and bounded trajectory. Drawing

on anthropological, sociological, historical, and medical scholarship, it argues that the boundary between life and death is persistently blurred, biologically, psychologically, and intersubjectively. The paper synthesizes cross-cultural evidence on liminal states of death, medico-legal controversies surrounding brain death, and sensory and relational experiences of the deceased, situating grief as a process shaped by porous boundaries between the living and the dead. It then draws on a firsthand case study to introduce the concept of *vicarious death*, as an example of intersubjective blurring of the boundary between life and death. The paper considers the implications of these complicated cases for both how we approach death and how we handle grief.

DEA2a-2 - Asynchronous Mourning in a Divided World: Qualitative Research under Necropolitical Violence after Flight PS752

Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

A paper based on the research in this presentation has received the Canadian Sociological Association's Best Student Paper Award*.*

How can qualitative research document grief and meaning-making in contexts where political violence fractures truth, temporality, and recognition? The downing of Flight PS752 in January 2020, which killed 176 people, produced not only mass bereavement but a deeply divided social and epistemic landscape shaped by state denial, contested evidence, and unequal recognition across national borders. This paper examines how qualitative researchers encounter, interpret, and ethically navigate such conditions through the concept of *asynchronous mourning*. Drawing on a psycho-socio-cultural qualitative study based on 54 in-depth interviews with bereaved families, clinicians, and community allies- conducted in person in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver and online across the rest of Canada- complemented by social observation at commemorations and public events (2024-2026), the paper analyzes mourning under necropolitical violence as a temporally dislocated social experience. Participants' grief unfolds out of sync with dominant social, institutional, and therapeutic timelines that expect normalization, acceptance, and closure. This temporal misalignment is not a methodological obstacle to be resolved, but a core analytic feature of researching death and mourning in divided worlds. The paper contributes to the sociology of death and dying by showing how state violence governs not only death but the temporal conditions under which mourning can be spoken, recognized, or silenced. It further reflects on the ethical and epistemic challenges of researching grief, justice, and recognition amid political polarization, and argues that qualitative methods must tolerate temporal suspension, ambivalence, and unfinished narratives as legitimate data rather than treating them as analytic failures. By foregrounding asynchronous mourning as both an empirical finding and a methodological challenge, the paper offers a transferable analytic framework for understanding mourning under political violence, where grief, truth, and time are structurally misaligned.

DEA2a-3 - How do social movements mobilize death to contest state sovereignty?

Dean Ray, York University

This article explores how social movements mobilize death, human remains and mourning to contest state sovereignty in three contexts: Turkey, the United States, and Canada. Drawing on cultural sociology and interpretive methods, I argue that activists transform private grief into public resistance by turning death into a cultural site of struggle. The analysis is theoretically anchored in

the concept of sovereignty as an emergent, contested authority and draws on notions of necropolitics and cultural trauma. It examines how Kurdish activists in Turkey defy state-imposed erasure through funerary practices; how ACT UP harnessed queer death and mourning to confront U.S. government inaction during the AIDS crisis; and how Indigenous communities in Canada turned the revelation of unmarked graves at residential schools into a profound challenge to settler-colonial authority. By treating meaning-making around death as a form of contentious politics, I contribute to cultural sociology's understanding of how symbols and rituals can become toolkits for creating cultural change. I conclude that "death against the state"—the strategic use of the dead to demand justice for the living—represents a potent repertoire of cultural resistance with global resonance.

DEA2a-4 - Dying and Caring Without Stable Housing: How Community Palliative Care is Structured, Valued, and Governed

Courtney Petruik, University of Calgary

Palliative care in Canada is organized around assumptions of housing stability, caregiving relationships, and institutional legibility. For people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness, these assumptions render dying itself a site of exclusion. Despite policy commitments to universality and equity, many people at the end of life remain structurally unable to receive palliative care. This paper examines how palliative care is nonetheless made possible for people dying at the social margins and at what cost. Drawing on a doctoral dissertation using institutional ethnography, the analysis begins from the standpoint of clients receiving care from the Community Allied Mobile Palliative Partnership (CAMPP), a small physician-led outreach team in Calgary, Alberta. The study is based on over 100 hours of participant observation, document analysis, and 21 interviews with clients and service providers. Rather than treating access as an individual problem of compliance or navigation, the paper traces how everyday work practices, institutional texts, and dominant palliative care discourses organize who can die with care and under what conditions. The findings show that palliative care for people without stable housing is not absent but precariously assembled. CAMPP reworks the meaning of palliative care by embedding relationship-building, harm reduction, and social support into everyday practice. These are forms of care that are largely unrecognized, under-measured, and unsupported within mainstream healthcare systems. At the same time, this work is sustained through fragile philanthropic funding and accountability structures that position care for marginalized dying bodies as exceptional rather than integral. This paper contributes to sociological debates on death and dying, health equity, and institutional power by demonstrating how inequities at the end of life are actively produced through the organization of care itself. It argues that dying at the margins is an active construction of how palliative care is structured, valued, and governed.

(DEA2b) Death and Society II: Grief and Space

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Death, Dying and Grief

This session welcomed theoretical and empirical papers in the broad area of death and society,

Session Organizer: Zohreh Bayatrizi, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Rita Giancola, York University

DEA2b-1 - Exploring experiences and perceptions of communication around death and dying in Long-Term Care facilities

Erin Scott, University of Manitoba

Current trends in Canada indicate that people are admitted into long-term care (LTC) facilities later in life with more complex and co-morbid health and social care needs with shorter lengths of stay before death. LTC staff must increasingly depend on family caregivers (FCG) to guide end-of-life care, and choices around medical interventions, especially if conversations occur late in the dying process and the resident has lost the cognitive ability to make care decisions for themselves. As common occurrences within LTC, death and dying can be understood as part of the LTC cultural context, and yet dying within LTC has been largely hidden and unacknowledged by the community, resulting in various levels of knowledge and preparedness of FCG. The discourse around dying is further muddled when one considers the vast array of terms utilized to discuss end-of-life (i.e., palliative, terminal, end-of-life), as these can be understood as phases, stages, and as forms of medical care. This study employed an exploratory qualitative research design to investigate the perceptions of LTC staff when discussing the topics of death or dying with FCG; 17 participants from various staffing positions (nurses, dieticians, spiritual care practitioners, etc.) were interviewed regarding their experience. A lack of training around how and when to converse with FCG around death and dying, as well as varied levels of organizational support can result in moral injury. Despite staff often describing themselves as champions, undertaking and ensuring conversations are held, they often depicted needing more structured organizational support, suggesting a lack of perceived agency regarding procedural changes within LTC.

DEA2b-2 - Establishing the Necrospatial Nexus as a Site of Grief Injustice in Institutional Caring Settings

Crystal-Jade Cargill, University of Waterloo

Institutional care settings like long-term care homes embody rich relational geographies structured by complex bonds between residents, healthcare workers, and administrators. These settings function as distinct ecosystems within broader communities, governed by policies, guidelines, and ethical frameworks intended to secure resident rights. Yet these structures can constrain affective bonds, particularly around death, dying, and grief. In the Global North this dynamic is compounded by death denial and stigmas that devalue older adults and those with complex health conditions, rendering old, sick, and (dis)abled bodies disposable. This conceptual framework theorizes the necrospatial nexus, the intersection of necropolitics and spatial politics, to map barriers disrupting death and grief justice in institutional healthcare settings. Spatial politics illuminates how relationships, bonds, and tensions organize care environments, while necropolitics reveals how power structures govern whose lives, deaths, and bereavements merit recognition. Grounded in critical human geography, biopolitics, feminist epistemologies, and critical public health feminisms, the nexus pinpoints policies, practices, and discourses that regulate mourning and perpetuate injustice, clarifying who may die well and grieve their losses in Global North care settings and who may not. The necrospatial nexus equips researchers to trace how spatial and necropolitical dynamics govern the caring commons of institutional settings, exposing harms when death and grief are unjustly managed. It opens pathways for policy reform, grief-responsive care practices, and institutional cultures that affirm the right to mourn. This framework establishes a starting point for

interrogating the political nuances of death, dying, and grief in institutional care, with the necrospatial nexus as a lens for advancing death and grief justice.

DEA2b-3 - On death, dying and fending it off: Advocacy and consumer/survivor businesses in southwest Ontario

Danielle Landry, York University

Beginning in the 1980s, ex-mental patients across southwestern Ontario established a number of small businesses and secured government funding. Through these sites consumers and psychiatric survivors (as they then self-identified) got politically active around shared issues that impacted their lives. This institutional ethnographic study considers the sociological significance of collectively remembering, preserving and sharing activist knowledges and histories. The presentation makes three interwoven arguments. The first is that intimate forms of grounded interpersonal advocacy and an intuitiveness focused on saving and sustaining lives and sustaining a community through its struggles constitute significant activist knowledge-practices. These knowledge-practices share something important: a lifeblood of the community which enabled it to try to push for change and make life more liveable and habitable for consumer/survivors. Examples from interviews and archival materials support the claim that these intimate moments of keeping each other alive were foundational to the politics of the consumer/survivor community and movement. The second argument is that grounded interpersonal advocacy amongst consumer/survivors was enabled by the unique organizational form of consumer/survivor businesses. These sites, of which there were at least 25, helped facilitate the creation of gathering spaces, the building of community, and the sharing of knowledge-practices that enabled advocacy to occur. This involved activities such as collective grieving, memorial services, informal crisis response and suicide prevention, and other dimensions of work related to death, dying and fending it off. These activities took place despite variation across businesses, service sectors and locations across Ontario. Lastly, fostering collective care in the face of death is a known and necessary component of health movements, such as substance user, HIV-AIDS and disabled people's movements. Supporting people to stay alive, and honoring those that don't, is essential and formative for developing a collective politic around the various challenges community members experience. The third interrelated argument is that to understand health movements, intimate and intuitive forms of advocacy ought to be given their due. Additionally, organizational and institutional contexts shape the conditions under which health advocacy may flourish.

(DEV) Sociology of Development Research Cluster

(DEV2) Development Sociology Insights
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Development Research Cluster

Conflict and insecurity are antithetical to development and societal well-being, and yet they are increasingly entwined in global and local contexts. This panel seeks to feature research into the relationship between conflict and development in all their forms. We particularly encouraged submissions from emerging scholars, graduate students, and researchers from the Global South.

Session Organizers: Liam Swiss, Acadia University; Jasmin Hristov, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Liam Swiss, Acadia University

DEV2-1 - Global Corporate Networks Amid the Rise of China's Geopolitical Party-State Capitalism

David Chen, University of Toronto

Recent research in international political economy has increasingly focused on China's new state-capitalist economy and its geopolitical influence. This paper contributes to this burgeoning scholarship by examining the rise of Chinese corporations and their role in shaping global corporate elite network formation, aiming to go beyond traditional global/transnational capitalism theories by incorporating a geopolitical dimension into the study of corporate China. An up-to-date analysis of the board of directors' networks among the 2024 Fortune Global 500 companies reveals a distinct organizational structure of China's party-state capitalism: not only state-owned enterprises (SOEs) but also private firms in China tend to be more state-oriented, rather than forming a self-organizing corporate community—let alone integrating with the Western-centered transatlantic corporate community. The divergent corporate network structures between Chinese state capitalism and Western liberal capitalism, in turn, offer a compelling lens to theorize the return of geopolitics and the escalating US-China great power competition.

DEV2-2 - The End of Aid: Exploring America's Abandonment of Global Aid Norms

Liam Swiss, Acadia University

This paper examines responses to the Trump Administration cuts to American foreign aid and the virtual elimination of USAID. The paper is a content analysis of the research and policy literature that proliferated in response to the Trump Administration's early 2025 abandonment of longstanding aid commitments and institutions. Specifically, the paper will examine the discourse that emerged around these moves as signaling an "End of Aid" and how that discourse was wielded and argued by aid's defenders and opponents.

(DEV3) Development Sociology

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Development Research Cluster

This session explores research on development broadly defined.

Session Organizers: Liam Swiss, Acadia University; Jasmin Hristov, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Liam Swiss, Acadia University

DEV3-1 - Democratizing Access to Agroecological Food in Brazil: The Armazém do Campo Initiative of the Landless Workers' Movement

Presenting Author - Kellen De Abreu, Universidade Federal de Lavras (UFLA) - Brazil

Non-presenting Authors - Joyce Barbosa and José Dias Valadão, Universidade Federal de Lavras (UFLA) – Brazil, Jasmin Hristov, University of Guelph, and Isabela De Abreu, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) - Brazil

The Landless Workers' Movement (MST) is one of the leading socio-territorial movements in Latin America, with more than four decades of struggle for agrarian reform and, over time, the articulation of ecologically based productive practices, collective organization, and continuous processes of popular education. This paper analyzes the contributions of these experiences to Brazilian cities within debates on territorial development and sustainability, taking the *Armazém do Campo* as a reference. It argues that three central contributions emerge for a more symmetrical and sustainable rural-urban relationship: (1) the strengthening of short circuits of food production, distribution, and consumption, promoting rural and urban food sovereignty; (2) cooperative and community-based forms of management, pointing toward participatory models of rural-urban governance; and (3) socio-environmental practices oriented toward ecological regeneration and collective care, with the potential to inspire sustainable public policies. The *Armazém do Campo* constitutes a concrete experience of rural-urban articulation by operating as a space for the direct commercialization of products from agrarian reform settlements and cooperatives. By reducing intermediaries and bringing rural producers closer to urban consumers, this initiative reorganizes food supply flows and challenges the hegemonic model dominated by large retail chains. Beyond its economic role, the *Armazém* also functions as a socio-political and cultural device, integrating consumption, political education, the dissemination of agroecology, and the valorization of peasant knowledge. This study adopts a qualitative approach, based on documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews conducted in a unit of the *Armazém do Campo* in Belo Horizonte (Brazil), mobilizing contributions from the fields of Political Agroecology and the Socioterritoriality of Social Movements. It concludes that the MST's experience offers concrete references for rethinking the relationships between food production and Nature, fostering more resilient, inclusive, and environmentally responsible socio-territorial relations, and highlighting the massification of access to healthy food as a political strategy for democratization.

DEV3-2 - Re-thinking development: The role of sustainability curricula in business education

Bonita Das, York University

Critical sociological scholars have situated development as an extractive activity underpinned by business efficiency practices. Such practices are further affirmed in educational institutions: business education plays an important role in the spread of managerial ideologies which normalize development as extraction and its consequences of linear resource depletion and unequal power relations. This conceptual review paper proposes that the business education focus on the organization as an economically efficient unit - with limited consideration of organizational embeddedness within community - is further reflected in sustainability curricula in business education. While these curricula have been introduced in response to global concerns about climate change, they continue to be framed within existing extractive models of economic efficiency. This framing contrasts with other disciplines, specifically environmental science, the field which directly addresses the challenge of climate change. Environmental science has notably prioritized local, Indigenous and traditional knowledge in addressing the challenge of climate change. This paper reviews empirical environmental science literature to understand how Indigenous knowledge values have been integrated to address climate change. Three knowledge characteristics are reviewed: Indigenous resource knowledge and use as scientific and experiential, environmental manipulation as stewardship not extraction, and a commitment to the collective. These knowledge characteristics support the suggested lens of organization-as-actor within a wider community to make the case to

reconstruct sustainability curricula in business education. The proposed curricula shift of the organization from an economically efficient unit to the organization-as-actor recognizes the role of business education in extractive development activity. It emphasizes the accountability of development activity to community well-being. It further contributes to the sociological focus of development activity within broader human-natural environment interaction.

(DIS) Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

(DIS1) Community-based methods in disability studies
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session brings together scholars engaged in different types of community-based methods in disability studies to discuss their methods, methodologies, and/or ways of doing research as/alongside disabled people.

Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Caitlin Manuel, Carleton University

DIS1-1 - Youth Strive to Accelerate Results: Reflections on Programming for Youth with Disabilities

Olivia Boonstra and Nicole Collier, Eviance

Drawing on 30 years of experience in community-based research, researchers at Eviance created a program called “Youth Striving to Accelerate Results” (YSTAR), which aimed to share Eviance’s knowledge with youth with disabilities (YWD) who are interested in becoming leaders in cross-disability movements. The YSTAR program aims to utilize community research training and practice as a pathway towards creating connection, collaboration, and leadership development within diverse disability communities. Having completed our first year of the program, in this presentation we share what we have learned about community programming for youth with disabilities. This program consisted of three curriculum modules which focused on building community research skills, expanding knowledge about disabilities movements, and exploring the unique interests of our fellows. The curriculum also included co-design sessions, professional development plans, and a focus on boosting self- and collective advocacy skills. These key touchstones within the program were highlighted during our research phase as best practices for engaging with youth (Iwasaki, 2016; McMahon et al., 2023; Tang Yan et al., 2022). Finally, the program ended in a 3-month placement where fellows were given the opportunity to practice the skills they learned at a community organization. This presentation will be a retrospective on the entire project and include staff reflections from the creation of the program through to the end. It will highlight key findings from our external evaluation of the project with input from staff, fellows, and placement partners. As the creators and facilitators of the program, and as youth ourselves, we will highlight the best ways we have found for engaging youth in community programming and research, including what we would do differently in future programs. Having also received an extension on the project, we will share emerging strategies for community youth engagement.

DIS1-2 - The Potential of Narrative Inquiry as a Methodological Framework for Research with D/deaf Communities

Aïcha Ducharme-LeBlanc, University of Ottawa

Stories are essential elements of our lives and how we give meaning to our lives. Narrative research and inquiry stem from work carried out by researchers such as Clandinin (2013), and Riessman (2008) who understood the importance of sharing stories to bring about social change. In my recent doctoral comprehensive exam, I conducted an extensive review of the use of narrative inquiry as a methodology. One important finding of this examination is that while D/deaf communities in Canada and abroad have rich cultures and epistemologies, they have nevertheless experienced centuries of oppression. This is particularly evident in the context of research, where a body of work addresses the ethical and cultural abuses committed in research conducted *on* D/deaf persons (Baker-Shenk & Kyle, 1990; Harris et al., 2009; Singleton et al., 2014). A few narrative inquiries have been conducted with D/deaf communities, with D/deaf participants (see De Clerck, 2019; West, 2013) however, the compatibility of this methodological framework with the specificities of D/deaf communities has yet to be fully examined. The following research question was explored in my exam and is the topic of this presentation: What are the specific contributions of narrative inquiry as a methodological framework in co-constructing the experiences of D/deaf people? The first part of my presentation will provide a brief overview of narrative inquiry. Secondly, I will examine the oppression of D/deaf communities, specifically in the research context, as well as highlight the richness of Deaf cultures and epistemologies. Finally, building on these literatures, I will articulate three contributions of narrative inquiry as a research framework for documenting and understanding the experiences and stories of D/deaf people: 1) Narrative inquiry as a relational methodology; 2) Narrative inquiry as a tool for social justice; 3) Narrative inquiry as a methodology that honors Deaf cultures and epistemologies.

DIS1-3 - Missing the Body in Disability Sport: Invitation to Engage in Relational Embodiment

Tia Bankosky, York University

Mainstream approaches to care, coaching, training, and education in disability sport continue to ignore the embodied experiences of participants because of the dominance of socialized understandings of disability since the 1970s (Lowry et al., 2022; Townsend, Smith & Cushion, 2015). The embodied reality of disability sport participants and instructors has been ignored despite the goal of disability sport being to provide physical activity adapted to disabled bodies (Powis, 2020). To address these problems of disembodiment and lack of accessibility in disability sport, I argue that instructors, coaches, and teachers should aim to foster understanding of their own and students' embodiments as relational entities as informed by phenomenological (Brighton, Howe & Powis, 2022; Powis, 2020) and posthumanist (Goodley et al., 2021; Monforte et al., 2022) approaches to embodiment as well as drawing from coaching (Côté, J., & Gilbert, 2009; Maclean & Latimer, 2016; Townsend et al., 2022) and teacher education (Kowe, 2003; Zhou, 2022) literature. Disability sport coaches and researchers need to be engaged with a heightened sense of relational embodiment as a mechanism of increasing their empathy for dis/abled bodies and improving the efficacy and accessibility of their pedagogies (Côté, J., & Gilbert, 2009; Scott, 2018; Powis, 2020). Thus, I propose an adapted, systematic, embodied, physical exercise from my own martial arts training (as a disabled teacher and practitioner) as a tool of practicing relational embodiment. In this presentation, I will

introduce part of this exercise as an invitation for researchers, sport practitioners, and coaches to practice heightened awareness as a mechanism of fostering relationality with their students/athletes, environment, and self. I hope to encourage discussion and consideration on how to engage with disability sport pedagogy beyond texts or academia and encourage physical practice to promote change.

(DIS2) Disability justice in the academy and beyond

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

Rooted in Sins Invalid's "10 principles of disability justice," we feature papers from scholars and/or community members engaged in disability justice work within and outside of the academy.
Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Caitlin Manuel, Carleton University

DIS2-1 - Key processing interchanges in K-12 education and their role in constructing and producing disability

Gillian Parekh, York University; Kathryn Underwood, Toronto Metropolitan University; Paulie McDermid, Independent Researcher

Navigating the public education system can be challenging for both students with disabilities and their families, both in terms of securing access to academic supports and practices that affirm positive disability identity formation (Brantlinger, 2006). Drawing on over 50 interviews, our research team has used an Institutional Ethnographic approach (Smith, 2005) to map the trajectories of students and their families as they engage with a variety of system processes. Ladwig and McPherson (2017) argue that the notion of ability serves several institutional functions including ranking, internalizing, stabilizing, externalizing, and moralizing. Employing these functions and applying them to interview data, our team mapped out points of interaction between educators, students and families that identify key processing interchanges that re-construct students' capacity through the production of textual records, trigger an institutional response, and re-orient responsibility for students' academic achievement. These processing interchanges help illuminate how, when and for whom ability is mobilized, ultimately shaping students' pathways and sense of themselves. To exemplify the complex relationships between these system processing interchanges and resultant identity formation, we delve into the experiences of schooling for three Grade 12 students and their families, examining their encounters with the system from early elementary to postsecondary education. We argue that these critical processing interchanges, established early and often through practices related to special education and ability grouping, set the conditions students encounter in secondary school that serve to further justify students' disparate academic outcomes (see Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Domina, et al., 2017). Our paper looks at the normalized practice of organizing students by ability in schools and the processes engaged by systems to justify student stratification as well as explore how disabled students and their families have resisted.

DIS2-2 - Exploring the "Genealogical Precursors" to Southern Ontario's Disability Justice Movement

Nolan Krahn, York University

Disability justice (DJ) scholars maintain that while earlier disability rights movements were important for establishing civil rights for disabled people, these strides largely benefitted those who were privileged by way of gender, sexuality, race, class, and citizenship status (Sins Invalid, 2019). Queer and BIPOC disabled people, the progenitors of disability justice assert, were not the beneficiaries of such privileges. However, multiply marginalized disabled activists were still present and making important contributions to pre-DJ disability rights movements in Canada. To echo Sami Schalk (2023), some earlier disability rights movement campaigns can be understood as "genealogical precursors" to present-day disability justice. Schalk highlights the Black Panther Party's involvement in the 504 sit-ins as an illustration of disability justice principles in praxis before the framework was given a name. I argue that a number of efforts in Southern Ontario's pre-2005 disability rights movements can be characterized in a similar manner. Through a review of academic and grey literature on the history of Canada's disability rights movement, I show how disabled activists were laying the foundations for Southern Ontario's current disability justice movements years before the "conversations that launched the framework we call disability justice" took place (Sins Invalid, 2019, p. 10). I use the DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN) Canada and the Ethno-Racial People with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario (ERDCO) as case studies for disability activism that focuses on multi-layered oppression and goes beyond state-focused tactics. These examples suggest that the histories of disability rights and disability justice as both critical frameworks and movements are not linear or mutually exclusive, but intertwined and co-constitutive.

DIS2-3 - Disability Justice: An Ethical Framework for Socially Responsive Research

Presenting Authors - Erika Katzman, [1]King's University College (Western University); Dani Dilkes, Western University

Non-presenting Authors -Sabine Fernandes and Iris Epstein, York University

Normative constraints shaping institutionally funded academic research pose challenges for researchers committed to upholding principles of disability justice. Institutional structures encourage a focus on outputs, manufacturing urgency through strict timelines, among other mechanisms, to promote productivity. Disability justice, by contrast, compels us to take time, to prioritize critical access and nurture a felt sense of safety through the development of trusting relationships. This paper presents Mobilizing - Collective Inclusion Pathways to Access (M-CIPA), a SSHRC-funded knowledge mobilization project that used community-based co-design to co-create novel models for access in post-secondary education. The project made an explicit commitment to uphold principles of disability justice and drew further guidance from Black feminist disability studies. This paper will trace the research team's journey through project design, team building, and execution, sharing examples that illustrate our successes, failures, and lessons learned throughout the process. It is our collective impression that upholding a commitment to community-based disability justice principles in academic research is not easy, but neither is it impossible; it requires an ability and willingness to critically interrogate and resist conventional and normative ways of orienting to and engaging in research. We conclude that disability justice principles can provide an alternative ethical framework, guiding an ethical standard of research conduct for socially responsive research that surpasses what the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS-2) empowers research ethics boards to protect.

(DIS3) Neurodiversity studies

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session features scholars engaged in sociological and/or interdisciplinary approaches in neurodiversity studies.

Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Michelle Owen, University of Winnipeg

DIS3-1 - A Comparative Analysis of Public Policy and Autism Supports Across the Lifespan in Atlantic Canada

Lauren Peveril, Mount Allison University

Early identification and sustained, equitable supports are central to the well-being of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) for fostering growth, independence and social participation across the life course. In Canada, access to autism diagnosis, funding, and community-based supports remains uneven and fragmented, particularly during the transition to adulthood. This paper examines how public policy frameworks in Atlantic Canada structure access to ASD-related services for childhood and into adulthood, with attention to regional policy differences and age-based exclusions. Using a comparative analysis of existing Atlantic Canadian focus areas, this paper explores how early diagnostic pathways are prioritized while adult services remain underdeveloped. Drawing on neurodiversity and disability justice perspectives, the analysis highlights how current policy frameworks can reproduce inequities rather than supporting autonomy, participation, and lifelong inclusion. The paper argues for integrated, lifespan oriented policy models that move toward community-engaged, rights-based approaches to improve equity and social inclusion. By integrating best practices for early diagnosis, intervention, and continued support, it could foster more consistent and coordinated services for individuals across the lifespan. Using evidence-based policy recommendations, we can advance more inclusive health and social systems that value neurodiversity and foster individual potential. By situating autism policy within broader debates on disability and social inclusion, this research contributes to interdisciplinary neurodiversity studies and sustained attention to ongoing autism policy gaps in Atlantic Canada.

DIS3-2 - Navigating Uncharted Terrain: How Do Neurodivergent Trans International Students from China Experience Canadian Higher Education?

Yan Xue, University of Alberta

The existing literature show that neurodivergent students in Canadian universities have greater needs for academic and non-academic social and mental health supports, but these services often could be inaccessible and ineffective (Ames et al., 2022; Harrison & McCarron, 2023). On the other hand, studies report that Chinese international students, facing racism, xenophobia, and linguistic discrimination, struggle to adapt to the new learning environment with heightened academic pressure (Chen & Zhou, 2019; Xiao, 2024). These findings suggest that the educational system is stratified by intersecting inequalities. However, there are few scholarships that examine the implications of the intersections of gender, neurodivergence, ethnicity, and immigration status on

university life. Building upon neurodiversity studies and international education studies, my presentation examines the question of how neurodivergent trans international students from China navigate Canadian post-secondary educational system. For my doctoral thesis research project, I conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with a total of 30 Chinese trans immigrants living across Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia. I notice the prevalence of diagnosed and self-identified neurodivergent experiences among research protagonists, which I didn't expect when I started my fieldwork. I deploy a neuroqueer theoretical framework (Egner, 2019) to analyze three key aspects of my research protagonists' experiences of transitioning into Canadian post-secondary institution as an important phase of their transnational immigration journey. First, I will discuss about their entwined journeys of unmasking their trans and neurodivergent identities. Second, I will analyze their embodied stresses from these entwined journeys compounded by their experiences of structural disadvantages in the neurotypical-cisnormative educational regime, the implications of which on their academic performance and mental health. Third, I will focus on their agentic subjectivities - assigning meanings to their education through volunteerism despite setbacks.

DIS3-3 - Mapping Contradictions & Re-Imagining the Social Production of the 'Gifted' Adult Subject

Caroline Flocari, Carleton University

Childhood giftedness has been studied since the late 19th and early 20th centuries (NACG, 2005), specifically in the context of childhood education and psychological development (Bucaille et al., 2022; Sternberg et al., 2011). In contrast, 'gifted' adults are an understudied and misunderstood group, as research on adult giftedness firmly remains within the realm of individual development and talent (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009; Jaffré, 2019). Scholarship on 'gifted' adults has therefore focused on their academic and professional achievements, their eminence, and their mental health/illness. The adult 'gifted' identity, as narrowly conceived in the literature, constructs 'gifted' adults as rational individuals who are devoid of relations of power. Without examining the subject formation of 'gifted' adults in the diverse ways *they* articulate it, the lived experiences of 'gifted' adults will remain misunderstood, and they will continue to be excluded from research that may impact their lives and those of other 'gifted' individuals. My research aims to address this issue by focusing on 'gifted' adults using a neurodiversity and relational lens, including those who experience giftedness as neurodiverse or neurocomplex. Through an analysis of both interviews and art-based methods co-designed by a committee of adults with lived experience expertise in giftedness, we explore the subject-formation processes of 'gifted' adults. This research, situated at the crossroads of a material (phenomenological) and a discursive (Foucauldian) sociological approach, aims to shed light on how 'giftedness' in adults can be studied relationally as a neurocomplex group within the umbrella of Critical Disability/Neurodiversity Studies, aligning with "Nothing about us without us" principles. By proposing a sociological reframing that captures the lived and affective experiences of giftedness, this study will challenge existing neoliberal assumptions, position 'gifted' adults as embodied and relational beings across the lifespan and address the marginalization of 'gifted' adults in neuroinclusive advocacy, institutions, and communities.

DIS3-4 - Autistic Identity and Online Gaming: An Autiethnography of a Valorant Gamer

Dante Pio, Carleton University

Critical Disability Studies and Critical Autism Studies use different models to explore neurodivergent identity, such as the medical and affirmation models (Anderson-Chavarria, 2022; Swain and French, 2000). However, there is not substantial literature examining how autistic gamers think and feel about their experiences playing video games and how the medical and affirmation models are used to understand autistic gamers' experiences with ableism in online gaming. This paper presents research from my Master's thesis, where I used an autoethnographic phenomenological approach to explore my own experiences and sense of identity in relation to video games, specifically while playing the first-person shooter (FPS), Valorant. For my autoethnography, I analyzed digital diaries that I audio recorded while playing eighteen sessions of Valorant, taking notes of feelings, thoughts, and communication. For my second methodology, I looked at r/Autism and r/Valorant Reddit forums to understand how other autistic users describe their experiences playing Valorant. Through this research I found that my experiences of playing Valorant are quite complex, as I became attentive to my own emotional regulation and identity management in this ableist online environment. Although affirmation for autistic identity is uncommon in these environments, collective affirmation based on gameplay does exist through congratulatory communication. Ableism still exists in online gaming, and seeing this contributes to frustration and anxiety and its impact of the emotions I experienced and managing such emotions and autistic identity. This research recognizes the positive, negative, and neutral experiences of playing Valorant as an autistic gamer, and the emotional rises and falls demonstrates a need to think further about how to make video game environments less ableist and safer for people of all abilities. as well as acknowledging the benefits of playing the game.

DIS3-5 - The Importance of Mentorship for Neurodivergent Success in Graduate STEM Programs

Liam Cohen, Carleton University

Neurodivergence (Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, etc.) has been linked with heightened creativity and divergent thinking, important traits for STEM fields. Despite this neurodiversity rates in STEM graduate programs are very low. Some barriers that neurodivergent students face is lack of accessible courses/accommodations, ableism, and stigma against neurodivergence in academia. I conducted thematic content analysis on 10 interviews from the podcast Square Pegs which focuses on neurodivergence in STEM. Three themes emerged - neurodiversity, education experiences, and relationships. These themes were then split into 2 categories - positive emotion and negative emotion in order to analyze how participant's experiences impacted them. Code relations revealed a high level of interaction between education experiences and relationships (pos=136, neg=163). Neurodiversity and education experiences also had a high code relation (pos=124, neg=163). The higher level of correlation in negative codes demonstrates the high level of negative experiences that neurodivergent STEM graduates experience compared to positive experiences. Results indicate the importance of community and positive mentorship in facilitating higher rates of neurodivergence in STEM fields. One quote that best demonstrates these results is "I think…if I had had that foundation of support and love and encouragement I- I don't think I would have failed out the first time."

(DIS4a) Sociology of Disability I

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session brings together scholars working in the areas of the sociology of disability and/or disability studies.

Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Tia Bankosky, York University

DIS4a-1 - What Counts as Access? Educators' Meaning-Making for CLD Students with Disabilities

Presenting Authors - Hadia Aslam and Inna Stepaniuk, Simon Fraser University

Non-presenting Author - Mitra Nikimaleki, Simon Fraser University

The concept of access is historically rooted in struggles for educational inclusion, yet remains contested and fluid across policy and practice (Artiles et al., 2025; Ball et al., 2022). From a decolonial perspective, dominant understandings of ability and access are not neutral or universal but are shaped by Eurocentric, neoliberal, and colonial norms that privilege certain ways of learning, communicating, and being (Dirth & Adams, 2019). Educators play critical role in operationalizing access, as their interpretations directly influence student learning. This study examines how educators in Western Canada conceptualize access for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with disabilities in regular classrooms, and how these understandings might reflect or resist colonial logics of inclusion. Guided by decolonial and cultural historical activity theories, we conducted 25 semi-structured interviews with teachers, educational assistants, and inclusion support staff**.** The analysis revealed a complex understanding of access within inclusive education. Educators viewed access as a multidimensional, context-dependent process rather than merely physical placement in mainstream classrooms. Participants emphasized meaningful participation, belonging, and engagement as key components of access. However, definitional ambiguity persisted. Some educators associated access with academic achievement and meeting grade-level expectations, while others prioritized social integration, relationship-building, and participation in the school community. Several participants underscored that access, in and of itself, does not constitute inclusion, framing accommodation as the critical process through which access is enacted. From a decolonial, cultural-historical lens, these tensions reflect competing understandings of ability and access: one grounded in normative, Eurocentric standards of productivity and independence, and another rooted in relational, culturally situated conceptions of learning. These beliefs reveal how educators both construct and constrain access in practice. We argue that redefining access demands a shift away from procedural compliance toward frameworks that center the socio-cultural histories of place, the lived experiences of racialized communities, and meaningful learning.

DIS4a-2 - Co-Creating Access to the Arts: Accessing the Arts in Peterborough/Nogojiwanong

Nadine Changfoot and Leighla Foster, Trent University

The arts have long been a space for marginalized people to gather to find representation, build community, and fight for justice. However, disabled people have been excluded from these spaces because of persistent barriers. While arts organizations are working to identify and eliminate these barriers, a failure to address the underlying systemic presence of ableism and colonialism often ends up recreating the stigma and exclusion they intended to eradicate. Literature on (arts) access for disabled people addresses concrete barriers, including physical, financial, and communicative, which

can be simple to solve, but fall under the radar in a society that has not addressed its embedded ableism. Research exploring creative access and the potential of arts communities to meaningfully challenge ableism and colonialism presents a compelling picture of access that the research project *Accessing the Arts in Peterborough/Nogojiwanong (ATA): Intersectional Disability Experiences of Accessing the Arts* expands. ATA is a collective, creative approach to accessibility that involves decolonizing arts institutions and welcoming experiences of embodied difference and disability. Partnering with Public Energy Performance Peterborough, the primary presenter of dance and movement in the city, the project invited a diverse group of disabled people (with intersectional identities of Indigeneity, race, and queer) to attend two arts presentations. From interviews and a focus group, three recommendations for arts organizations emerge for co-creating accessibility in terms of removing barriers, actively welcoming difference, and challenging existing systems: 1) maintain and update existing access features, 2) implement accessibility training with awareness of attitudinal barriers and how they are culturally created, 3) build collaborative, creative, decolonizing relationships.

DIS4a-3 - "Accessibility is never front of mind": Experiences of disabled queer and trans post-secondary students

Presenting Authors - Liam Ruel, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Simon Fraser University; Tara Lyons, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Non-presenting Authors - Luka Wall, Camille Bédard, Kai Barcellos Luna, Destiny Lang, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

While several studies have independently suggested that post-secondary students who are disabled, queer, and trans can face barriers to their education, few have considered the intersection of these identities. Further, the limited literature on the experiences of disabled queer and trans people often focuses on neurodivergence and mental health conditions, leaving other disabilities and conditions underrepresented. To address these gaps in the literature, we developed a multi-site mixed-methods study to examine the intersectional experiences of queer and trans students attending teaching-focused post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Within this study, we explored the experiences of disabled queer and trans students through an online survey (n = 132) and three focus groups (n = 9). Our sample included students who identified across a range of disabilities and conditions, including neurodivergence, physical disabilities, chronic health conditions, and mental health conditions. Here, we found that only 65% of the students we surveyed felt they had the support they needed to be successful at school. While many were aware of and interested in accessing services offered by their institutions, including counselling and disability-related accommodations, many found that they were inaccessible or feared that service providers would not know how to work with disabled, queer, or trans students. Connecting with queer and trans community on campus helped some students navigate these barriers, but disability and experienced or expected ableism prevented others from getting to know their peers and accessing community spaces and events. Overall, our findings emphasize the importance of considering the intersection of disability when working with queer and trans students. We will discuss our findings alongside student recommendations for post-secondary instructors, staff, and decision-makers seeking to support disability, queer, and trans inclusion on their campuses.

DIS4a-4 - Disability justice in action: Challenges and possibilities for a non-profit

Jenn Bruce and Kelly Fritsch, Carleton University

Disability justice is rooted in decades of social movement practice across the US, Canada, and beyond. While the term is often traced to US-based organizing in the early 2000s (Sins Invalid, 2019), its practices long predate this naming. In Canada, disability justice has taken shape through campaigns, protests, mutual aid and care networks, performance and cultural work, and scholarly and public writing. Although these histories are increasingly documented, far less attention has been paid to how disability justice operates within organizational and non-profit contexts. Founded in 2018, the Disability Justice Network of Ontario (DJNO) is the first organization in Canada to explicitly ground its work in a disability justice framework. As such, it offers a critical case through which to examine what disability justice looks like when enacted within a non-profit structure. This research asks: *What are the possibilities and constraints for a disability justice non-profit organization in manifesting its framework and vision?* Drawing on this case, we also explore what disability justice may offer other non-profits committed to social transformation. This community-based case study employs document analysis, surveys, and participatory workshops to address these questions. While data collection is ongoing at the time of this submission, preliminary findings reveal tensions between the aspirations of disability justice and their material enactment. These tensions are shaped by broader sociopolitical conditions, including a climate of austerity. DJNO sustains a future-oriented politics of hope while operating within a space of deep contradiction: it resists austerity measures that disproportionately harm disabled people while simultaneously experiencing their effects through funding cuts, inaccessible funding structures, and organizational burnout. Taken together, these dynamics raise urgent questions about the capacity of the non-profit model itself to support and sustain disability justice, social transformation, and disabled futures grounded in collective liberation.

DIS4a-5 - Narrative Disability Policy: Examining Prosthetic Funding through Lived Experience

Presenting Author - Alfiya Battalova, Royal Roads University

Non-presenting Authors - Brittany Pousett, Kassi Welch, and William C. Miller, University of British Columbia; Crystal MacKay, Queen's University

This paper highlights narrative and interpretive approaches in sociological research on disability policy, drawing on a qualitative study of prosthetic funding in British Columbia. The research employed semi-structured interviews with 60 people with limb absence, guided by a constructivist paradigm and interpretive policy analysis. The study foregrounds the value of narrative inquiry and the Narrative Policy Framework for capturing the complexity of lived experience and the ways policy is enacted, contested, and resisted in everyday life. The analysis utilized a three-part plot structure—setup, conflict, and resolution—to organize participant stories, while also attending to temporality, sociality, and place as key components of narrative meaning-making. This approach enabled the identification of both dominant policy narratives (e.g., "basic functionality") and counter-narratives articulated by prosthetic users. Participants described the bureaucratic hurdles of securing funding, the emotional toll of having to justify their needs, and the anxiety and delays associated with uncertain or insufficient coverage. These experiences impact not only physical mobility but also mental health, social participation, and the ability to fulfill meaningful roles such as parenting or employment. The narratives highlight how funding limitations can lead to postponed or abandoned activities, exacerbate health inequities, and reinforce ableist assumptions about what constitutes a

"normal" life. Participants also articulated strategies of self-advocacy and resistance, challenging deficit-based narratives and calling for more holistic, person-centred approaches to prosthetic care. The study underscores the need for policy reform that recognizes the full spectrum of needs and aspirations of prosthetic users, and for health systems that prioritize equity, dignity, and participation.

(DIS4b) Sociology of Disability II

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session brings together scholars working in the areas of the sociology of disability and/or disability studies.

Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Inna Stepaniuk, Simon Fraser University

DIS4b-1 - Worlding and Access in Disabled Childhoods

Melody Minhorst, Brock University

Children use secret spaces to play, (re)creating and experimenting with social practices, blurring the boundaries of their physical, digital, and imaginative worlds (Corson et al., 2014; Burke & Marsh, 2013; Reich et al., 2014; Wenger et al, 2024). Disabled children participate in this cultural production, intra-acting with digital and physical environments to world alternative spaces that challenge ableist and adultist norms (Todd, 2024). These secret spaces are moments of 'worlding,' referring to the relational practices through which people reciprocally shape spaces and relationships, 'becoming-with' humans, non-humans, and digital actors rather than simply existing in a world that is already made (Haraway, 2008; Malone, & Crinall, 2023). Often remembered through nostalgic narratives of childhood, such worlding moments are understood as central to play and agency (Holloway & Valentine, 2000), yet disabled children remain largely absent from this literature, despite scholarship attending to children as actors engaged in the ongoing shaping of their worlds (James & Prout, 1998; Spyrou, 2018). How disabled children connect, negotiate, and resist, has been reshaped though the rise of digital community spaces, making digital worlds a critical site for exploring access and participation (Alper, 2023; Balter et al., 2023). Drawing on critical disability studies and new sociology of childhood lenses, as well as disability-led traditions of resistance and community innovation (Hamraie & Fritsch, 2019; James et al., 1997; Spyrou, 2018; Todd, 2024; Wong, 2024), I argue that disabled children world secret spaces, and their lived experiences of worlding contributes to disability-led, access-oriented approaches in creating more habitable physical and digital worlds.

DIS4b-2 - In fragments, split in two: using visual, collaborative autoethnography to re-contextualise my father's experience of coma unconsciousness

Presenting Author - Becky Higgins, University of Sheffield

Non-presenting Author - Craig Higgins, Independent Scholar

"The silence after a felled tree has fallen", John Berger stated, "is like the silence immediately after a death. The same sense of culmination". But what happens if death is grazed against but never fully

actualised? For individuals who have experienced periods of prolonged unconsciousness due to coma, this culmination, this resolution, often never comes. Being unable to recall a period of their own life is a source of ongoing trauma. The physical scars that remain on the body following the events that lead to or occur during coma unconsciousness often tell a story that the inhabitant wasn't witness to. This discussion will focus on my in-progress PhD project, in which myself and my father, who has lived experience of coma unconsciousness, will use a multi-method creative, collaborative autoethnography to question who is given power and trust in carving narratives of unconscious experiences. This research will utilise the visual essay/essay film format to create insights into the experience of coma. Visual essay/essay films allow for the exploration of contradictions, making the form an ideal intervention for holding conflicting ideas at the same time, questioning meanings and opening up possibilities for new ways of telling about 'lost' experiences. In particular, this talk will interrogate ethics and identity when working with intimate others in research, and how interpersonal relationships can highlight, unpick, and re-navigate the norms of narrative building in illness experiences. I will also discuss how the 'live' properties of the visual essays/essay films created have the possibility to inform ongoing, non-clinic based social interventions for other people experiencing coma unconsciousness and its aftermath.

DIS4b-3 - Care Ethics and Disability: Towards a Posthumanist Understanding of Vulnerability, Difference, and Discontinuity

Evan Wicklund, Carleton University

While contemporary critical disability scholarship is grounded in the pursuit of emancipatory politics at both individual and systemic levels, in this presentation I argue that poststructuralism (e.g., Bataille, 1985; Levinas, 1998), and by extension, posthumanist scholarship (e.g., Braidotti, 2022; Wolfe, 2009) introduces new ways of theorizing disability. In particular, these discourses emphasize how pre-subjective desire enables interconnectivity and discontinuity between humans and other actants, such as other sentient-beings (both human and non-human animals) and technological devices. While we are all unavoidably connected to others, bodies which require intimate personal care, assistance with communication, and interpersonal support to complete both daily tasks and life planning, exemplifies the extent of human interdependency. Although posthumanism is a relatively new field of study, I argue that theorizing through a postanthropocentric framework informed by Gilles Deleuze (1994) exemplifies how relationality as a creative act and as both a set of unpredictable molecular interconnective and disjunctive drives, demonstrates how ontological difference provides insights into the ethics of vulnerability. Examining ontological, social, and epistemological representations of disablement allows me to understand how an ethics of care that is based on asymmetrical relationality decentres the prioritization of the autonomous human subject perpetuated by proponents of liberal humanism. While my research acknowledges the systematic discrimination that disabled persons experience in Western societies and is thus aligned with both historical and contemporary disability justice and intersectional approaches to the politicization of care ethics (see, e.g., Adler-Bolton, 2022; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2023), my aim is to develop an ethics which foregrounds the metaphysical and ontological nature of disabled embodiment. Indeed, poststructuralism problematizes the term ‘metaethics’ due to its connotation with universalism and foundationalist systematization, yet I explore how a metatheory of care may be a necessary aporia for positioning disability as provisionally stable focal point for analysis.

DIS4b-4 - Neuroqueering as Methodology: Dismantling Ableism, Neuronormativity, and Cis-Heteronormativity in Sociological Research

Presenting Authors - Elizabeth Straus, Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, Toronto Metropolitan University; Jet Coghlan, Community Co-Researcher

Non-presenting Authors - Kate Ellis and Blossom Cheng, and Carla Rice, Re-Vision: The Centre for Art and Social Justice, University of Guelph; Gowlene Selvavijayan, Community Co-Researcher

As an emerging field of inquiry in sociology and related disciplines, critical neurodiversity studies offers opportunities to reimagine the social in ways that resist and dismantle ableism and neuronormativity. In our community-engaged research project *Beyond the Normative Knot: Life and Praxis at the Gender-Sexuality-Autism Nexus,* we have been exploring ways of dismantling ableism, neuronormativity, and cis-heteronormativity in research praxis with autistic and neurodivergent 2SLGBTQIA+ communities as a team of neurodivergent and LGBTQIA+-identified researchers and community members. This presentation will engage at the critical sociological and interdisciplinary entanglements of queer theory, critical autism studies, critical access studies, and *intra*sectionality to position and explore *neuroqueering* as methodology. We will begin with situating the need for neuroqueering methodologies in the ableist-heteronormative structures shaping traditional sociological and interdisciplinary social science research and the deeply felt epistemic injustices and structural violence experienced by autistic 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in research and society. We will follow this with a theorizing of neuroqueering as methodology, situating our understanding of neuroqueering in the spirit of a neomaterialist politics of possibility and decolonizing praxis and as a resistance to any attempts to fix or place boundaries on what neuroqueer methodology can become. Drawing from critical and creative reflexive representations from autistic 2SLGBTQIA+ team members, critical allies, and storytellers on the project, we explore what neuroqueering methodologies can *do,* at three entangled sites of intervention: (1) doing research as a neuroqueer team, (2) engaging in story-making with diverse autistic 2SLGBTQIA+ communities as a resistance to traditional data generation methods in qualitative research that often erase or exclude autistic 2SLGBTQIA+ stories, and (3) analyzing in ways that challenge hegemonic discourses at the gender-sexuality-autism nexus. Throughout, we argue for the potential of neuroqueering as methodology to contribute to dismantling ableism, neuronormativity, and cis-heteronormativity in/through sociological research practices with autistic 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

(DIS4c) Sociology of Disability III

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session brings together scholars working in the areas of the sociology of disability and/or disability studies.

Session Organizers: Athena Elafros, University of Lethbridge; Christopher Churchill, University of Lethbridge

Session Chair: Cindy Sinclair, University of Toronto

DIS4c-1 - COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, and the Spectral Politics of Disabled Sex, Intimacy, and Erotics

Caitlin Manuel, Carleton University

In the past six years, growing public and academic discussions have drawn together HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 to comment on community-based pandemic resistance, and prevention. As a queer, critical disability and sexuality scholar, I am troubled by normative anti-prophylactic responses to an ongoing mass-disabling event (see Imani Barbarin in Mills et al., 2025). Through this research, I will conduct a meta-ethnography analyzing 18 comparative qualitative studies and analyses engaging COVID-19 and HIV/AIDS across social, political, and medical contexts. The analysis will identify themes, common narratives, and synthesized results across studies, giving particular attention to direct and indirect discussions of disabled sexualities, intimacies, and eroticism. I specifically consider how the spectral politics of disability (Fritsch and McGuire, 2019) are troubled by collective abandonment of generative disability solidarity, where anti-prophylaxis (such as anti-mask-wearing) is normalized as resistance to state-sanctioned violence, at the expense of disabled people whose relations and bodyminds are already always marked by state-sanctioned violence on occupied Turtle Island. Using hauntology as my guiding framework, I follow Cynthia Barounis (2019) who suggests adopting a biopolitical reading practice of pandemic narratives by "taking seriously the historical entanglements of queerness and disability" (p. 25) working against dominant psychoanalytic narratives of queerness as exclusive from disability politics. These historical entanglements are interwoven with dialectic and material eugenic legacies responsible for naturalizing disabled sexualities, intimacies, and eroticisms as undesirable, killable, and forgettable. I offer this analysis as an extension of Barounis' theory of anti-prophylactic citizenship by addressing the hauntological erasure of disabled sexual, intimate, and erotic relations through (anti-prophylactic) narratives of queer kinships that assume an inherent agency and restoration without understanding or considering the ways settler colonialism and its logics of (un)desirability have already marked certain bodyminds and futures as disposable and dispensable.

DIS4c-2 - Canada's Housing Failure: A Disability Rights Analysis of the National Housing Strategy Act

Jeremy Wildeman, University of Ottawa / Canadian Centre for Housing Rights; Michelle Owen, University of Winnipeg

Since 2015, the Government of Canada has made housing rights and affordability a flagship promise, resulting in the 2017 National Housing Strategy (NHS) and 2019 National Housing Strategy Act (NHSA). Despite these frameworks recognising housing as a fundamental right, subsequent pledges, and $115 billion in spending allocations, measurable outcomes show profound failure. Homelessness surged by 49.1% between 2021 and 2025. In Ontario alone, the unhoused population climbed to 85,000. Over 300,000 households are on waitlists of over five years in search of community housing. Disabled people are acutely vulnerable in this crisis, facing lower incomes, pervasive discrimination, and a severe lack of accessible housing. Representing 27% of people over 15 years of age, they face disproportionate risks of homelessness. Meanwhile, unhoused people are at acute risk of developing new disabilities. This paper employs the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as an analytical lens to assess Canada's performance on the right to housing for disabled people under the NHS/NHSA. The CRPD mandates rights for them to live independently, be included in community, choose their own residence, and access services. Our assessment, based on findings

from the SSHRC-RGDI-funded project, 'The Right to Housing for Tenants with Disabilities in Canada', uses data from interviews, focus groups, surveys, and document analysis from four case studies (Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia), to detail how Canada has failed disabled renters. Key findings point to systemic failure: discrimination and unaffordability bar access to housing; a lack of accessible units and community supports fosters isolation; and compound pressures are driving some people to consider Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID). The research underscores a critical gap between Canada's rights-based housing obligations and the lived reality of disabled renters.

DIS4c-3 - Income-Based Inequality in Chronic Pain Management

Madison Wilbern, University of Alberta

Since the epidemiological transition, the health care system has been challenged with a surge in chronic conditions. Not fitting the prototypical patient within the biomedical model, individuals with chronic pain must seek out treatments that incur out of pocket costs. As income is a major predictor in health-related behaviours, individuals with chronic pain unable to access methods of pain management face longer recovery and worse health-outcomes. Weighted data from the 2019-2020 Canadian Community Health Survey is used to examine prevalence of musculoskeletal chronic pain conditions across income groups. Examination of relationships between pain management methods and personal perception of health is analyzed between income groups to determine areas of concern specific to each group. A multiple linear regression model is used for further analysis to determine potential relationships among control variables. Quantitative analysis using Chi Square test and Cramer's V revealed worse reported perceived health and a greater likelihood of belonging to a lower income group in respondents that reported having musculoskeletal chronic pain. Different trends in usage frequency of other health care providers was revealed across income groups among respondents with musculoskeletal chronic pain. These findings indicate economic disparities are present in accessing health care related to chronic conditions. Reform of the health care system is required to ensure lower-income individuals are able to access effective treatment to manage their pain.

DIS4c-4 - The Effects of Community Support on Economic Outcomes for Working-Age Disabled Adults

Jaimie Lepp, University of Alberta

One factor contributing to the poor socioeconomic conditions of working-age disabled adults is social isolation. Without the emotional and practical support associated with a sense of belonging, individuals are often unable to complete the daily tasks necessary to function in their community. This study investigates the relationship between community support and financial wellbeing among disabled adults using novel cross-national survey data from Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the UK, assessing disability, caregiving, employment, and perceived economic insecurity. Using descriptive models and Pearson's chi-squared test, I will analyze whether disabled adults who receive assistance with care activities from any social agent demonstrate greater ease in meeting their monthly expenses. The expected findings inform community reintegration initiatives aimed at increasing disabled adults' access to care and socialization to improve their financial outcomes.

(DIS5) Author meets critic: Broken Worlds, Disabled Kin

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

Charting a politics of solidarity capable of cultivating worlds where we sustain each other instead of the systems that harm us, Broken Worlds, Disabled Kin: Struggles for Collective Survival (2026, University of Minnesota Press) asks readers to reexamine conceptions of breakage, maintenance, and repair, viewing them as tools of abolition and justice. Authors Kelly Fritsch (Carleton University) and Anne McGuire (University of Toronto) argue that we live in a world broken by design: a web of systems that debilitate and destroy through racist and ableist infrastructural neglect, socioeconomic abandonment, and ecological negligence. Fixes for these forms of breakage often conceal and amplify harm—but what happens if we refuse to rehabilitate this inhospitable world? Imagining new forms of solidarity and collective life in the midst of crisis and an increasingly divided world, Fritsch and McGuire offer a radical alternative grounded in disability cultures of access, justice, care, and interdependence.

Session Organizer: Kelly Fritsch, Carleton University

DIS5-1 - Kelly Fritsch, Carleton University

Kelly Fritsch is Canada Research Chair in Disability, Health, and Social Justice and associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. She is co-author of *We Move Together,* an award-winning children's book about accessibility and disability culture, and co-editor of *Disability Injustice: Confronting Criminalization in Canada* and *Keywords for Radicals: The Contested Vocabulary of Late-Capitalist Struggle*.

DIS5-2 - Anne McGuire, University of Toronto

Anne McGuire is professor of critical disability studies and director of the program for Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity at the University of Toronto. She is author of *War on Autism: On the Cultural Logic of Normative Violence,* which was awarded the Tobin Siebers Prize for Disability Studies in the Humanities, and co-author of *We Move Together.*

DIS5-3 - Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University

Katie Aubrecht holds the Canada Research Chair in Health Equity and Social Justice and is an associate professor of Sociology at St. Francis Xavier University. As Director of the Centre for Aging and Disability Justice and the Spatializing Care Lab, her work critically examines and maps the intersections of marginality, mental health, rurality, and resilience across the life course. Her participatory action research program investigates the mental health equity impacts and broader social justice implications of human-rights-based approaches to mental health care in rural contexts.

DIS5-4 - Aparna Raghu, University of Toronto

Aparna Raghu is a PhD Candidate in Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto. Her SSHRC-funded doctoral research, grounded in Critical Disability Studies, explores autistic non-verbal communication among children and youth, drawing on communication studies, posthumanism, and feminist frameworks. Aparna's research also includes projects on disability and food security, food and autism, and ethnocultural food supply chains. She is a parent counsellor, a tutor for autistic

adolescents, and a parent to an 8-year-old son with multiple disabilities. She is currently conducting her doctoral fieldwork among children and youth labelled autistic and non-verbal in Mississauga and Mumbai.

DIS5-5 - Tobin LeBlanc Haley, University of New Brunswick

Tobin LeBlanc Haley is an associate professor at the University of New Brunswick and co-director of the Housing, Mobilization and Engagement Research Lab. A community engaged scholar, her research sits at the intersection of housing studies, critical disability studies, and policy studies.

DIS5-6 - Mary Jean Hande, Trent University

Mary Jean Hande is an assistant professor of Sociology at Trent University. She draws on disability, aging, and mad studies, and specializes in community-engaged research that supports social movements and coalition-building towards more just continuing care systems in Canada. She currently co-leads the Towards Just Care project, an SSHRC Partnership Development aimed at amplifying migrant justice perspectives on care, mapping private-pay home care systems, and highlighting grassroots care initiatives in Canada.

(DIS6) Co-creating Decolonial Disability Research: Methodological Reflections from a Collaborative Journey

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 10:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session will present emerging methodological issues from a transnational research project titled Learning with and from the global South: Engaging young women and girls with disabilities from Southern spaces (ENGAGE). ENGAGE is a collaborative project exploring leadership and activism with girls and women with disabilities across three Southern contexts in Vietnam, India, and South Africa. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2021-2024), we examine how young women and girls participate, negotiate, build leadership roles, and promote knowledge sharing within their communities. Informed by a decolonial disability approach, this research acknowledges that “disability studies in the Global North have disengaged with writings on disability outside of northern contexts, where voices and epistemologies from the South are usually pushed to the peripheries” (Nguyen et al., 2014, p. 148). We therefore engage with marginalized communities in the Global South to reclaim Southern knowledges and resist the “coloniality of power” (Quijano, 2000) that has shaped disability studies through hegemonic Northern epistemologies (Grech, 2015; Nguyen, 2023).

Session Organizers and Chairs: Xuan Thuy Nguyen, Carleton University; Nandini Ghosh, Institute of Development Studies Kolkata

DIS6-1 - Co-Creating Decolonial Disability Research: Methodological Reflections from a Collaborative Journey - Learning with and from the Global South

Nandini Ghosh, Institute of Development Studies Kolkata; Suchandra Bhaduri, Christian College, Kolkata

Engaging girls and young women with disabilities across Southern Spaces (ENGAGE) Project is a collective learning network across three communities in the Global South, namely Vietnam, India, and South Africa. In India this project began in July 2022 where the site was South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India. With about 20 girls and women with disabilities as participants from semi-urban and rural backgrounds the project sought to use art-based methods to foster leadership among girls and women with disabilities. The aim was to create a decolonial space for them to develop leadership skills and advocate for their own rights. Using different art-based methods that are contextually relevant was important here as was the confidence with which the participants could use them. Using the decolonial space, the team in India decided to use a contextually relevant art-based method, theatre, which has been a space where colonial, nationalist, patriarchal or developmental narratives that have dominated narratives could be questioned. As a methodology it challenges the written text, elite language, institutional authorship and hierarchies. For the participants, this method was seen as appropriate to give voice to the oppressed. On the other hand, cellphilms, where the participants created and produced their own films, using cell phones or smartphones, enabled participants from marginalised communities, especially girls and women with disabilities to document, narrate, edit and present their own experiences of isolation and discrimination. Thus, cellphilms allowed girls and women with disabilities to challenge the hierarchies of representation and reclaim narrative sovereignty.

DIS6-2 - Co-creating research with women and girls with disabilities in A Luoi, Vietnam: From knowledge creation to movement

Xuan Thuy Nguyen and Thi Xuan Nhi Truong, Carleton University

This presentation examines how decolonial disability studies (Nguyen, 2023, 2024) can provide a useful methodological and conceptual framework for engaging young women and girls with disabilities in A Luoi, a rural, mountainous area in central Vietnam. This study is a part of the ENGAGE research project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [2021-2024]. In Vietnam, the research team worked with young women and girls with disabilities in A Luoi over the last four years. Our goal was to co-create knowledge through the use of participatory tools and methods, such as photovoice, zine-making, and collage-making, fostering collective leadership and designing participatory spaces for these women and girls to tell their stories as a way of building relationships with their disabled peers and communities. Situated in the Vietnamese social and historical context, we argue that this decolonial approach can be particularly powerful for historically colonized communities because it enables these young women and girls to articulate specific challenges and struggles that they have encountered through participatory arts-based research and other forms of community-engaged activism. By demonstrating their collective capacity to negotiate and unsettle the ableist and patriarchal approach to leadership, this approach can offer a unique epistemological and methodological standpoint for understanding the struggles of young women and girls with disabilities in the context of poverty and exclusion in the global South.

DIS6-3 - Collaborative Knowledge-Making in Action: Methodological Insights from Decolonial Participatory Research with Girls with Disabilities in Rural South Africa

Thandile Butana, Community Programmes and Rehabilitation, Blind SA; Dana Corfield, York University

This paper explores the methodological insights from the South African site of the ENGAGE project, a transnational collaboration across Vietnam, India, and South Africa. At this site, we worked in KwaZulu-Natal alongside girls with intellectual disabilities and Deaf girls from two special schools, using participatory arts-based methodologies including drawing, collage-making, journey mapping, and cellphilms. Situated within South Africa's layered histories of colonialism and apartheid, disability in this context cannot be separated from racialized dispossession, migrant labour systems, spatial segregation, and persistent health and educational inequities (Ned, 2025). As such, and because we worked primarily with Black girls in rural communities shaped by poverty and structural exclusion, we centered their everyday realities and perspectives and made their embodied experiences central to the research design and the questions we asked. And, in line with the aims of decolonial disability frameworks (Nguyen, 2023), participants were positioned as co-researchers and holders of situated, embodied knowledges from the outset. Through this process, tensions appeared between school as a space of relative belonging and community contexts marked by stigma, gendered expectations, and constrained futures. Journey mapping then enabled further reflection on confidence, leadership identities, and collective growth. The use of participatory arts-based methods thus created linguistically inclusive spaces (including South African Sign Language) where girls could narrate and contest these issues using their own voices, while preparing for broader community dialogue. We therefore argue that collaborative, arts-based methodologies do more than include girls with disabilities in research; they can disrupt colonial and ableist hierarchies of knowledge production and reimagine leadership as collective, relational, and grounded in everyday resistance and care.

DIS6-4 - Leadership of Women and Girls with Disabilities from the Global South in Decolonial Disability Research: Building Transnational Networks for Collective Power and Social Change

Linh Thuy Dang, Brock University and Carleton University; Dana Corfield, York University; Xuan Thuy Nguyen, Carleton University

The decolonial disability approach creates opportunities for collaborative activism across colonized contexts. The Youth Leadership Circle (YLC) exemplifies this approach by positioning research as decolonial practice that challenges colonial power structures and centers Global South perspectives (Nguyen et al., 2024). To connect the girls and young women with disabilities from three countries, we established a YLC group include twelve young women and girls with disabilities and their individual assistants. This group sought to foster relationship-building, leadership development, and engagement among girls and young women with disabilities (Nguyen et al., 2024). YLC members were selected through a process tailored to the cultural specificities of different contexts. As knowledge producers, the participation of YLC leaders plays a crucial role in guiding research agendas and activities that respect the autonomy of women and girls with disabilities and community legitimacy. By taking leadership roles and making decisions in research, YLC leaders transform the research into a culturally grounded practice, integrating their knowledge and perspectives across all phases of the project. In this way, collaborative and decolonial disability approaches to the YLC group facilitate a process of challenging colonial structures that have historically marginalized Southern epistemologies as well as reorienting conventional ableist, patriarchal, and colonial frameworks in leadership. However, Decolonial Disability Research requires significant effort to navigates a complex negotiation between opportunities and tensions. It illuminates the empowering flow of knowledge across Global South communities, yet also exposes the ongoing challenges of unequal access and

structural inequality within transnational research between the Global North and Global South (Nguyen, 2020). It is essential for researchers to engage in reciprocal learning and unlearn colonial research practices. Rather than positioning themselves as academic experts, researchers must engage in reflexivity, interrogate power dynamics within the research process, and actively work on redistributing power by fostering youth-led spaces.

(DIS7) Decolonial Epistemic Resistance: Repositioning global South Disabled Thinkers

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Disability Research Cluster

This session, convened by the Decolonial Disability Studies Collective, articulates a framework for examining how the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) permeates bodies, institutions, and epistemic formations. By centring the normatively in/complete body as a critical site of contestation, the panel situates disability within the material and epistemic continuities of colonial dispossession (Meekosha, 2011). Given Northern scholarship's hegemony over Southern knowledge (Connell, 2007; Swartz, 2018), we stress the need to decolonize Dis/ability Studies and recognize how postcolonial structures produce debility (Puar, 2017).

Session Organizer and Chair: Hoa Bui, Carleton University

DIS7-1 - Between Survival and Excellence: Agency of Global South Disabled Women in Canadian Higher Education

Linh Thuy Dang, Brock University

Drawing on theory from critical disability studies with a decolonial approach, emphasizing intersectionality, my research aims to provide a thick description of the journey of female disabled international students from the Global South to Canada for higher education. Through conversations with six interviewees and reflective thematic analysis alongside current literature, the findings highlight the unmatched incongruence between their expectations and Canada's harsh living conditions as well as existing social discriminations that push them into a struggle to survive. However, they are not merely 'victim' of the system, but active players who could negotiate with circumstances by means of resilience and resistance. They create a hybridity between locally embodied and Western epistemologies, to not only deal with immediate situations but also thrive for academic excellence. The study delivered their recommendations to improve disabled international students' living and studying experience, including how to improve support systems as well as policy development. Ultimately, this study suggests that international education while often shaped by colonial and neoliberal agendas, also holds transformative potential. Through reflection, resistance, and reciprocity, international education can evolve into a space of learning and unlearning that challenges Western epistemic dominance, fosters decolonial forms of knowledge exchange, and amplifies the value of knowledge from the Global South. The significance of this research in the body of literature is that it considers the dimension of disability within the scope of intersectional identity, of which other research rarely considered. My approach will widen the scope of consideration when it comes to entangled forms of bodily and ideological marginalization.

DIS7-2 - Disrupting Power Dynamics through Research Participation with Women and Girls with Disabilities in Vietnam

Hoa Bui, Carleton University

Despite advances in Vietnam's legal framework on disability, such as the 2010 Law on Persons with Disabilities and the country's ratification of the CRPD, women and girls with disabilities remain marginalized across education, health, and socio-political participation. Their exclusion is shaped by Vietnam's complex cultural and historical contexts (Nguyen & Deborah, 2021), influenced by prolonged periods of colonization by multiple empires, including China, France, and the United States. Globally, the coloniality of power, particularly the coloniality of knowledge (Quijano, 2007), continues to sideline the voices of women and girls with disabilities in the Global South, positioning them as objects of study rather than as knowledge producers (Nguyen, 2016, 2018, 2020). Within these contexts, my research explores how participatory research engagement among women and girls with disabilities in Vietnam can become a site of resistance that disrupts dominant power relations in knowledge production and challenges dominant narratives of disability and gender in Vietnam. Drawing on decolonial feminist and decolonial disability justice frameworks (Lugones (2007, 2010; Nguyen, 2023; Puar 2017), the study investigates how their participation in research reflects potential forms of collective leadership and activism that challenge Western epistemic dominance and colonial gender hierarchies. Using participatory and arts-based methods, the study situates research itself as an epistemic and political process through which women and girls with disabilities co-create knowledge, reimagining research as a decolonial and justice-oriented practice in the Global South.

DIS7-3 - Chemical Commons: Breathing with the Survivors of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy

Yash Gupta, University of Bremen

"At first, it smelled of LPG gas, of burning chillies," recalls my father, Rakesh Gupta, of his experiences on the night of December 2-3, 1984. He was fourteen when over forty tonnes of methyl isocyanate (MIC), among the world's most noxious gases, leaked from the nearby subsidiary of the Union Carbide Corporation. Recurrently cited as the worst industrial disaster in recorded history, *the Bhopal Gas Tragedy* (BGT) continues to inscribe molecular inheritances of debility, unsettling linear trajectories of recovery and progress. Yet, four decades on, scholarship remains limited in its engagement with survivors' crip embodiments, particularly at the intersection of Postcolonial Sociological Theory, and Critical Dis/ability Studies. Situated within this intersection, this study theorises toxic intimacies as biosocial entanglements that circulate through DNA, shared space, and intergenerational proximity. Specifically, I call attention to dis/abling inheritances within communities impacted by the BGT, tracing how survivors' *collective* and *embodied* exchanges with chemicals, and with one another, constitute post/colonial frameworks of bodily contradiction. I argue that the hyperobjectivity of MIC materialises as a molecular aporia: while toxicity seeks to truncate genealogies, it simultaneously engenders modes of care that counteract its effects. Drawing on fieldwork with dis/abled survivors and print media published by the Bhopal Medical Appeal, I develop an *intergenerational reading of dis/ability*, attending to the production of debility in the Global South. Methodologically, I enact a *Bhenga*[1] reading praxis—an autoethnographic approach grounded in my position as a dis/abled second-generation survivor—that foregrounds embodied perception as a site of decolonial interpretation. By situating Bhopal within scales of the industrial, ecological, and genetic, this paper

argues for a multiscalar approach to narrativity that recognises how events persist across non/life, demanding frameworks attentive to both their debilitation and the alternative futures they engender.

[1] *Bhenga* (Hindi, Urdu): Crooked; A north Indian slur used against people with strabismus.

DIS7-4 - Navigating Coloniality and Ableism: Lived Experiences of Vietnamese Scholars with Disabilities across Borders

Phuong Mai Anh Tran, University of Ottawa

This presentation draws from my doctoral research on international scholarship programs and focuses on a subset of seven Vietnamese scholars with disabilities who studied abroad under international government-funded scholarships designed to contribute to development in their home-country contexts. Using a decolonial disability studies lens, the paper examines how these scholars navigate intersecting structures of coloniality, ableism, and developmentalism within both Global North education systems and Vietnam's institutional settings. Their narratives reveal tensions between empowerment discourses embedded in scholarship programs and the structural barriers that continue to marginalize disabled scholars' epistemic and social contributions. By foregrounding their lived experiences, this study contributes to decolonial efforts to reimagine knowledge and inclusion beyond normative framings of productivity and meritocracy.

(ECS) Economic Sociology Research Cluster

(ECS1a) Comparative Political Economies in a Divided World I
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Economic Sociology Research Cluster

The global political economy is currently undergoing a great transformation, as growing geopolitical conflicts, rising global economic protectionism, and intensifying U.S.-China power competition have increasingly shaped the global arena. Against the reality of a changing world, a comparative perspective on (global) political economies has become ever more prominent within sociology and the social sciences more broadly. Our session brings together a wide range of presentations on topics critical to understanding the changing global economic and (geo-)political order in comparative perspective. Session A (ECS1a) features three presentations focusing on Chinese political economy, U.S.-China relations, and the changing international order. Session B (ECS1b) features four presentations on urban governance, global trade, and racial capitalism across different national contexts.

Session Organizers: David (Dawei) Chen, University of Toronto; Ding Wang, York University; Tong Wang, University of Toronto

Session Chair: Tong Wang, University of Toronto

ECS1a-1 - Contesting Order in a Multipolar World: The Liberal International Order, a Rules-Based Alternative, and the Challenge of Revisionist Neo-Imperialism

Jeremy Wildeman, Carleton University

This paper argues that the post-Cold War international system is now a site of competition between three paradigms of order: the universalist Liberal International Order (LIO), the selective Rules-Based International Order (RBIO), and a unilateralist neo-Imperialism. Each represents a successive US strategic adaptation to maintain primacy. The first established was the LIO, a US-led project founded on principles of democracy, free trade, and multilateralism via institutions like the UN. Its Cold War utility in containing the USSR was sustained by Western powers, and its post-Cold War dominance epitomised by the UN-sanctioned Gulf War and Western control over Global South development through the IMF and World Bank. Nonetheless, the underlying universality of this economic framework facilitated the rise of the Global South, led by China. As these states gained influence within the institutions of the LIO, the United States and its Western allies pivoted to the RBIO. While rhetorically continuous with the LIO, the RBIO operated as a more flexible, selective framework with opaque rules favouring Western interests. The system relied on exclusive Western-led bodies like NATO to enforce their will, circumventing an increasingly contested UN. The continuous ascent of China and Russia, however, challenged a United States hollowed out by deindustrialisation and debt from military over-reach. In response, US strategy entered a third, overtly unilateral phase characterised by revisionist neo-imperialism: economic coercion, decoupling, and a transactional 'America First' approach that subordinates multilateral norms to Great Power competition. This signifies a move away from sustaining any institutional order toward an assertive national interest, breaking the fundamental taboos of prior systems. The result is a fragmented system where these three logics collide. This tripartite contest not only describes the global system today but actively drives instability, as actors manoeuvre within competing frameworks, making coherent global governance elusive and conflict more unavoidable.

ECS1a-2 - China's New State Capitalism Going Global: Origins and Paradigm Shifts in the Go-Out Policy and the Belt and Road Initiative

Presenting Author - David Chen, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Ding Wang, York University; Lynette Ong and Tong Wang, University of Toronto; Hao Zheng, Renmin University of China; Zhihang Yuan, Zhejiang University

The global reach of China's new state-capitalist economy through signature state projects, such as the Go-Out Policy and the Belt and Road Initiative, has drawn considerable attention in recent international political economy and international security research. While researchers have often focused on the distinct features of Chinese state capital and the potential international backlash it may face, few have studied how China responds to emergent challenges and risks in the global economy by undertaking major paradigm shifts in these projects. Our paper addresses this gap by conducting a longitudinal textual analysis of *Qiushi* magazine, the Communist Party's top theoretical journal, from 2013 to 2025. The findings show that China has markedly changed its position from portraying its global reach in a non-confrontational way that does not challenge the US-led international order to a more forthright stance that increasingly presents itself as a defender against Western hegemony, a facilitator of global economic cooperation as an alternative to trade protectionism, and a promoter of the interests of the majority of Global South countries.

(ECS1b) Comparative Political Economies in a Divided World II

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Economic Sociology Research Cluster

The global political economy is currently undergoing a great transformation, as growing geopolitical conflicts, rising global economic protectionism, and intensifying U.S.-China power competition have increasingly shaped the global arena. Against the reality of a changing world, a comparative perspective on (global) political economies has become ever more prominent within sociology and the social sciences more broadly. Our session brings together a wide range of presentations on topics critical to understanding the changing global economic and (geo-)political order in comparative perspective. Session A (ECS1a) features three presentations focusing on Chinese political economy, U.S.-China relations, and the changing international order. Session B (ECS1b) features four presentations on urban governance, global trade, and racial capitalism across different national contexts.

Session Organizers: David (Dawei) Chen, University of Toronto; Ding Wang, York University; Tong Wang, University of Toronto

Session Chairs: David (Dawei) Chen, University of Toronto; Ding Wang, York University

ECS1b-1 - Status Quo and Low Risk: The Historic Strategies of Planners and Lenders in Vancouver and London

Karissa Ketter, University of British Columbia

The housing within a community is distributed in part according to ideals set out in community plans and lending evaluations. Socio-spatial stratification is shaped by the actors in this sector, their biases, and goals. This historical comparative research project addresses a central theme in the study of urban governance: the extent to which urban planners and mortgage lenders contributed to the socio-spatially stratified distribution of housing within Canada and England's most unaffordable cities: Vancouver and London. Vancouver and London have different histories of housing, government, and politics; yet, these cities share many strategies and technologies for urban governance. By conducting a content analysis on archival records from these sectors, it became clear how the actors prioritized preserving the status quo — or maintaining the existing character, diversity, and composition — and low-risk lending over the responsibility of supplying housing to these cities in 1950-2000. Urban planners sought to preserve the status quo by conducting affinity-based characteristic evaluations such as marital status, family-stage, employment sector, taste, and behaviour. Meanwhile, mortgage lenders at banking institutions implemented credit scores to transform their affinity-based character evaluations into dehumanized and deskilled labour. Vancouver and London both experienced dramatic shifts between efforts to promote neighbourhood homogeneity, resulting in a fleeing of the middle class, and subsequently promoting a social mix to draw those households back. The changes in policy during this time made dramatic impacts on the composition of each city, proving just how influential these fields of urban governance can be. The worsening housing inequality that infests global cities today is, in many ways, one glimpse into a long history of manufactured inequality. One only needs a glimpse at Vancouver and London to see the race and class-based sorting that has been achieved by decades of status quo planning and low-risk lending.

ECS1b-2 - The Mobility and Assemblage of Nighttime Economy Policies in China

Presenting Author - Tong Wang, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Hao Zheng, Renmin University; David Chen, University of Toronto; Ding Wang, York University; Zhihang Yuan, Zhejiang University

As a new and powerful strategy for stimulating urban vitality, the nighttime economy (NTE) as an urban model is diffusing rapidly and extensively across China, yet the patterns and underlying causes of such diffusion remains under-investigated (Chu et al. 2021, Yu 2021). Research on Chinese policy diffusion has largely treated policy objects as relatively stable and coherent packages, but overlook how they are adaptively reconfigured across administrative and spatial boundaries within mobility networks and how local contextual factors shape policy components (Ma 2014; Zhu 2014; Zhang and Zhu 2019; Guo et al. 2024). A small and growing literature on Policy Mobility emphasize the local mutation and adaptation of Chinese policy models, as well as the underlying material, institutional, and social networks, but is largely limited to qualitative case studies (Chang 2017, Sheng and Han 2022, Romano 2024). This study combines the theoretical perspective of Urban Policy Mobility (McCann and Ward 2012) and Urban Model Space (Keidar and Silver 2022) to conceptualize NTE policies as entities that flow, mutate, and (re-)assemble among urban nodes. It employs Topic Modeling (BerTopic) and Multi-scale Geographically Weighted Regression to examine the discursive space of the NTE model and uncover patterns around the adoption of policy discourses, using policy documents from 93 Chinese cities. It integrates a comprehensive set of local urban contextual factors to reveal how NTE policies flow and are differentially reassembled based on each city's competitive nightlife resources. The findings enrich the empirical foundation of policy mobility in global urban governance from the Chinese context and sheds light on how municipal-level decisions intersect with broader socio-spatial forces through robust, data-driven methods.

ECS1b-3 - Crisis and transformation of the Neoliberal Multilateral Order of Cooperation. A view from South America

Ernesto Vivares, FLACSO Ecuador

This presentation discusses the crisis and transformation of the Liberal Multilateral Order of Cooperation (LMOC) from a South American perspective, arguing that its erosion is rooted in long-term structural processes rather than recent political shifts in the Global North. It situates the crisis within the historical contradictions of neoliberal globalization and the financialization of Financing for Development (FfD) since the 1990s. Drawing on the South American Global Political Economy (SAGPE) approach, the chapter conceptualizes the LMOC as politically and historically embedded within the Liberal International Order, rejecting assumptions of institutional neutrality and universal liberal values. Empirically, it traces cycles of decline, fragmentation, and absorption of multilateral cooperation in South America up to 2024. The analysis shows that the LMOC fragments and merge into three competing multilateral projects led by the United States, China, and the European Union, each reflecting distinct geoeconomic strategies. Their coexistence produces constrained polyvalence for South American states, enabling limited maneuver while reproducing new forms of dependency and discipline.

(ECS2) The Relational Turn in Economic Sociology : Contours and Limits of Relationality

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Economic Sociology Research Cluster

The concept of "relationality" has become the focus of a growing number of reflections and studies within the sociological discipline. This session thus seeks to explore the intersections between social relations and economic action, between interaction and transaction. We aim to collectively engage with and further recent empirical and theoretical developments in this field, emphasizing the contours and limits of the notion of “relation,” what it reveals or conceals about power, gender, race, and inequality dynamics at play in contemporary economic worlds, and how it allows us to rethink current forms of exchange, labour, and value.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Claudel Lamoureux-Duquette, Université de Montréal; Steven Therrien, Université de Montréal

ECS2-1 - Decolonial Economics and Indigenous Community Development: Collaborative work with the North Shore Tribal Council.

Presenting Author - Timothy MacNeill, Ontario Tech University

Non-presenting Author - Niigaaniin Mamaweswen, North Shore Tribal Council

Decoloniality has often been understood as deeply related to relationality where Indigenous communities are concerned. As a theoretical construct, this understanding works well and has become a center point of both Indigenous politics and critical development studies. When communities and Indigenous organizations attempt to “decolonize” local economies and government-citizen relations within a settler-colonial system, however, these straight forward constructs become complex and sometimes contradictory. These concepts are explored in a reflection on an eight-year ongoing research collaboration with Niigaaniin, the Social Services area of the North Shore Tribal Council, which operates across seven Anishinaabe First Nations in the Robinson-Huron Treaty area of Northern Ontario. Under Niigaaniin lead, we have initiated three large community development and research projects. Each of these were steps in a plan to first decolonize social services, then local economics and community development in a context of continued marginalization, and intergenerational trauma, but also with an understanding of opportunities introduced by the Robinson-Huron Treaty Annuity settlement as well as continuing efforts toward truth and reconciliation in Canada. This has represented an exploration on how to do Indigenous economics through the Anishinaabe lens of *Nda-nwendaaganag* or ‘All My Relations.’ These themes are addressed through reflection and a description of the ongoing projects at Niigaaniin.

ECS2-2 - Assembling Security: How work, Income Assistance, and Structural Constraints Shape Income-Spending Patterns Among PWLLE, Vancouver

Presenting Author - Shermeen Bano, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Author - Lindsey Richardson, University of British Columbia

Economic sociology has long shown that money is socially differentiated and embedded in connected lives (Zelizer, 2005), while the sociology of health documents a persistent socioeconomic gradient in health; yet these literatures have rarely been integrated to examine how employment, income, and structural constraints jointly shape the use of money and everyday material outcomes in contexts of

extreme disadvantage. Moving beyond income level alone, this study analyzes income-spending orientations as a relational indicator of material security, using people with lived and living experience of drug use (PWLLE) as a case to examine how work and income are organized within constrained and structurally precarious institutional environments. The study asks: What combinations of economic activities and structural conditions shape distinct income-spending orientations among PWLLE receiving income assistance in the Downtown Eastside (DTES)? In doing so, the paper extends Viviana Zelizer's relational economic sociology by showing how earmarking, obligation, and interdependence operate within materially constrained social contexts. Using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and thematic analysis of 41 in-depth interviews from the Assessing Economic Transitions (ASSET) Study (2019-2024), the paper identifies multiple configurational pathways linking work arrangements and structural conditions to distinct income-spending orientations. Findings identify no single condition as necessary or sufficient; instead, outcomes emerge through specific combinations of work type, income assistance, and structural precarity. Survival-oriented spending is produced through pathways marked by the absence of formal employment, where income assistance and informal work together sustain only basic needs. Stability-oriented spending arises through pathways characterized by the presence of formal work, including in some high-precarity contexts, underscoring the stabilizing role of predictable earnings. Leisure-oriented spending emerges through pathways involving work, differing across low- and high-precarity contexts, shaped by debt, housing instability, and justice involvement. The results underscore the importance of policy approaches that combine income support with employment stability and structural reforms.

ECS2-3 - Selling Finance Through Relationships: The Relational Life of Financial Multilevel Marketing

Steven Therrien and Claudel Lamoureux-Duquette, University of Montreal

Multilevel marketing (MLM), notably characterized by its operation outside traditional distribution channels, is a form of direct selling in which products and services are marketed by independent advisors who meet with clients on an individual basis (DSA, n.d.). This model encompasses a steadily growing range of products and services, including companies that specialize in the sale of financial products, the most well known of which is Primerica. These companies emerge and gain traction within a specific context, namely, the democratization or massification of finance, marked by the increasing participation of households and individuals in financial markets over recent decades through both direct and indirect investment (Agunsoye, 2024; Langley, 2008; Nyqvist, 2016). While the manifestations of everyday finance are numerous, the growing popularity of MLMs specializing in financial services warrants closer examination, not from a macrosociological perspective, but rather by identifying the modalities through which finance becomes embedded in everyday and relational practices. In this paper, we examine one manifestation of this phenomenon: the online promotion of training programs sold by these companies and aimed at amateur investors. We seek to demonstrate the fundamentally relational nature of these online trainings, both in their network-based organization, typical of MLM companies (Coughlan & Grayson, 1998; Gabbay & Leenders, 2002; Huang, 2017), and in the discourse they promote. We argue that analyzing the intersection of multilevel marketing practices and financial products sheds light on the relational dynamics at the heart of everyday financial practices. Using a keyword-based search, we identify the most popular informational videos on financial products marketed by an MLM company on YouTube, which

constitute the corpus for a thematic content analysis. By analyzing the discursive modalities at work in these trainings, we aim to contribute to microsociological research attentive to the entanglement of moral and economic worlds in everyday life.

ECS2-4 - Hyper Neo-Liberal Capitalism & Canada's food affordability crisis: Sociological Imagination Arrested.

Zoe St. Aubin, University of Manitoba

System change not climate change was a sign at the 2019 climate rally in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This simple sign attempted to call into question the social structure we are embedded in and reinforcing: hyper neo-liberal capitalism. This type of social structure is characterized by dismantled unity, growing income disparities, polarization, receding human development and environmental degradation (UNDP, 2022). These trends are signs of a dysfunctional social system. The rise of hyper neo-liberal capitalism has brought society to an impasse. Filip (2020:3) describes the feverish pace in the rise of neo-liberalism of the 1980's as '*intellectual and moral bankruptcy'*. This trajectory continues regardless of the global economic crash in 2008 and has brought global society to a mass production consumption enslavement (Woods 2017; Filip 2020). I argue that the current conjuncture of capitalism calls for the revisiting of the re-conceptualization of human freedoms, however under the most pluralistic social conditions. In this paper I map how neo-liberalist ideologies deviate far from enlightenment ideas of human freedoms. I use the current food affordability crisis in Canada as a case study to illustrate the violence committed by contemporary capitalism and the dominance of neoliberal ideology in policy. The pathway of this paper aims to identify Canada's food affordability crisis as the consequences of hyper neo-liberal capitalism towards arresting our sociological imagination of building a more suitable social system fostering the potential of human development.

(EDU) Sociology of Education Research Cluster

(EDU2) The sociology of schooling (k-12)
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

This session features papers that draw on empirical, theoretical or methodological issues in K-12 education. The presentations will delve into historical, comparative, and empirical research that shed light on contemporary challenges in schools.

Session Organizers: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University; Maria Brisbane, University of Waterloo

Session Chair: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University

EDU2-1 - Education and Capitalism: Power, Alienation, and the Illusion of Choice in Public High School Course Organization

Molly Sutherland, Acadia University

My master's thesis is a thorough examination of the existing theoretical and empirical bodies of literature in the field of education with the goal of establishing an anti-capitalist critique of the organizational structure in Nova Scotia public high schools known as "streaming." Although a narrative exists that streaming has been surpassed, if not abolished, I assert it has simply been

reframed into a more palatable form, and that it acts as a systemic force in reproducing inequality. Often praised as progressive, this structure of education in Canada ultimately upholds the segregation of racialized groups while reinforcing capital and colonial expressions of domination. By utilizing "streaming" as an avenue into a broader conversation of the sociological and political issues of modern schooling, this research outlines how our public education system normalizes alienation in students' learning, instills notions of innate intelligence and the differentiation of students, suppresses the potentiality of class solidarity from early childhood, and reproduces generational socioeconomic inequalities while simultaneously justifying their existence. Rather than being a site of empowerment, our capital-first structure of education works tirelessly to stifle students' creativity and deny them as active mobilizers and producers of knowledge. This work establishes a demand for educational critique that is rooted in anti-capitalist thought and pushes beyond the boundaries of individualized, reformist solutions, which are insufficient when hoping to pursue long-term systemic change.

EDU2-2 - Parental and community support in kids' private music education - 'Sunny Day School of Music'

Jelena Arnautovic, University of Toronto

Parental and communal support are crucial for kids' success in learning to play an instrument. Families and communities that are aware of the importance of music education for cognitive development and strengthening confidence provide the greatest support in kids' music education. Anita Collins's 'Music Advantage' and Andrea Creech's 'Parental Support' are some of the most interesting recent studies on that matter. As a founder, director and teacher at 'Sunny Day School of Music', a private music school in Toronto (founded 2021), I conducted empirical qualitative research on how parental and community support in kids' music education actually works. The students at my music school have been observed over the last 3 years. They are 3-10 years old, and they live in the Deer Park area in Toronto, where my music school is located. In this research proposal, I will explain how the support of the local school, daycare, churches, and the wider community contributed to the growth of my music schools and the success of my students by providing the concert space, inviting me to organize music workshops, and recommending me to the neighbours. Secondly, I will survey 6-10 parents of my music students, asking them to explain how they motivate their kids to practice music at home and to attend music lessons regularly. Some of my very talented students quit playing the instrument and chose to commit to some other activity (mainly sports). On the other hand, research shows that most students who take music examinations and participate in music festivals receive strong parental support, with parents establishing clear home practice schedules and maintaining an unquestioned commitment to regular music lessons.

EDU2-3 - Caregiver and Educator Perspectives on Substance Use and Substance Use Education in Ontario

Presenting Author - Jennifer Silcox, King's University College at Western University

Non-presenting Authors - Tara Bruno and Laura Rosen, King's University College at Western University

Evidence indicates it is common for youth to experiment with using psychoactive substances, while also engaging in risky substance-related behaviours (Aldridge et al., 2011; Boak et al., 2022).

Especially concerning is the ongoing opioid crisis (Moore, 2024) and increasing non-medical use of opioids among Ontario students (Boak et al., 2022). We asked Ontario caregivers and educators in 2025 and 2026 about their perspectives on substance use among youth in their care, as well as substance use education in Ontario. This paper outlines early study findings on caregivers' and educators' knowledge (including gaps in knowledge) of substance use, harms, and education. We identify if and how Ontario caregivers and educators are informing youth about substances and how young people may reduce substance-related harms. Future phases of this research include identifying and co-developing evidence-informed and accessible resources for caregivers and educators to help delay, prevent, and reduce substance use harms for young people in Ontario and beyond.

EDU2-4 - Social-Emotional Learning, Student Achievement, and Socio-Economic Stratification: The Role of Educator Perspectives and Reference-Group Effects

Sophia Mathies, University of Toronto, OISE

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills refer to an individual's abilities and characteristics across a wide range of non-cognitive skills such as persistence, sociability, empathy, responsibility and emotional control. SEL skills are malleable and complementary with cognitive skills, meaning they can be cultivated alongside the grade advancements and curriculums of the schooling system, making classrooms an ideal environment for their focus. Having a strong foundation in SEL skills is important for the holistic development of children and adolescents to navigate the modern social world, and previous research has documented that these skills are positively associated with high academic achievement, good well-being, and success in the labour force. Due to these promising outcomes, and from pressure on schools to prioritize positive student experiences in the wake of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, SEL skills have increasingly become the topic of both current educational research and official curriculum policies. Despite existing research that reports positive associations between SEL skills with important educational outcomes like academic achievement and student well-being, little is known about the nature of these relationships in three specific domains: (1) how they may be variable by demographic characteristics like socio-economic status (SES), (2) how they may be influenced by educator perspectives on SEL, and (3) whether reference-group effects (i.e., comparison to similar others) may depress the self-ratings of SEL skills of students in higher-achieving and higher-SES school contexts. In a 3-paper style doctoral dissertation, these domains will be explored by conducting regression analyses and 3-level multilevel models using data from the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). This conference presentation will share the preliminary findings of this dissertation research.

EDU2-5 - Social Media and Adolescents' Thoughts and Beliefs about University Admission and Success

Presenting Authors - Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University; Michelle Shev, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Maria Brisbane, University of Waterloo; Khandys Agnant, McGill University; Aron Belick, Queen's University

Social media content influences the ways in which adolescents transition from high school to work or postsecondary education. Teachers, guidance counsellors, family members, and friends also share their views related to readiness and possible postsecondary pathways. This presentation draws from

a bilingual qualitative inquiry conducted in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba that examined the perspectives of adolescents about university and youth outreach on social media about university education. The objectives of this inquiry include exploring adolescents' perspectives of university to engage in effective youth outreach on social media with short, animated films. A total of 14 focus groups were conducted with 88 adolescents aged between 15 and 18 years old in Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg in English or in French. The findings reflect that adolescents hold a continuum of thoughts and beliefs about who is accepted in university, who is likely to successfully complete a degree, and how they navigate the plethora of information about university education found on social media.

(EDU3b) Critical perspectives of higher education

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

This session includes presentations that present critical analyses and case studies of higher education structures, programs, and practices.

Session Organizers: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University; Maria Brisbane, University of Waterloo
Session Chair: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University

EDU3b-1 - Indigenous Resistance in University Classrooms: Undergraduate Writing, 1960s-1980s

Julia Stryker, Memorial University, University of Saskatchewan; Jared T. Hogan and Rochelle Côté, Memorial University

From the 1960s to the 1980s, professors in various departments at Memorial University-Newfoundland and Labrador's only university- assigned their students reports on their own communities. Completed during Resettlement in Newfoundland and just after Indigenous Relocation in Labrador, these assignments bore an atypical weight as records, quite literally, of vanished and vanishing communities, shifted and shifting identities, and incomplete and ongoing colonialism. Constructed with varying disciplinary frameworks and at differing levels of expertise, these assignments provide insight into provincial history and identity in colonial education systems at a critical period of change. A preliminary discourse analysis of student papers (n = 46), found in Memorial's Maritime History Archive, reveals the competing impulses of individuation and conformation in the complex context of economic hardship, social upheaval, and introduction to larger and more diverse social settings. This is particularly relevant in the midst of the concurrent political push for federal recognition of Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland and Labrador. Students completing these assignments faced confrontation with the limited available secondary sources, often constructed from a strictly settler viewpoint, and the use of settler-chosen terminology to discuss their own identities, communities, and histories. Instead of strict conformation to settler-centric educational standards and language, our analysis found that students discussed their communities, history, and their own identities with a nuanced view of interactions between Indigenous and settler cultures, neither wholly accepting colonial frameworks nor disconnecting from Indigenous pasts. Tension between students' self-conception, educational requirements, and community creation and re-creation evident in the student papers demonstrate the subtle operation of colonialist coercion in action, but also deep and persistent resilience, particularly of Indigenous identity, within colonial education structures.

EDU3b-2 - Beyond "International Student Experience": Non-Belonging, Colonial Legacies, and the Internal Diversity of Indianness in Canadian Universities

Anya Chugh, Mitchell McIvor, and Daniella Hidalgo Gilbert, University of Toronto

Research on international students in Canada has grown substantially, yet it continues to treat "the international student" as a largely coherent category, often centered on East Asian populations and abstracted from both colonial history and internal cultural diversity. This paper intervenes in that literature by centering Indian international students and third-culture individuals and asking a more analytically demanding question: how is non-belonging socially produced across colonial legacies, linguistic hierarchies, cultural heterogeneity, and educational pathways? Drawing on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with twenty-five Indian-origin students in Canadian universities, the study conceptualizes non-belonging not as the simple absence of inclusion, but as a layered and shifting condition shaped through everyday interactions within both host society and co-ethnic communities. The findings show that non-belonging is simultaneously external and internal: produced through racialized assumptions about language and intelligence rooted in colonial hierarchies, and through the flattening of "Indianness" that erases profound regional, linguistic, and class-based differences within Indian student spaces themselves. Importantly, the analysis complicates dominant narratives of international student adjustment by demonstrating that educational background and transnational upbringing structure how students navigate academic life, without straightforwardly translating into social belonging. Third-culture participants, for instance, experienced smoother academic and cultural transitions, yet remained subject to racialization and conditional acceptance. By foregrounding colonial history and internal diversity, this paper challenges homogenized models of international student experience and argues for a more historically and sociologically grounded account of belonging in higher education.

EDU3b-3 - A healthy (yo)U is a healthy U(niversity): B.U. Be Well.

Steven Cole, Bishop's University

A rich literature has examined the ways in which universities are increasingly governed by neoliberal procedures and policies. Rather than centres of intellectual exploration, expression, and co-development, the university has been reconstructed as an intellectual marketplace in which academic entrepreneurs compete with one another. A second body of literature has examined the ways in mental health has come to embrace this same neoliberal mindset. Through an empirical examination of a Canadian university's "wellness campaign", this paper illustrates the ways in which university governance and mental health coalesce within self-managed practices of productivity. Deploying performance metrics to differentiate the healthy from the unhealthy, the healthy academic subject is one who meets performance goals through productive self-management. Conversely, the unhealthy academic fails to meet perform goals and must be nursed back to health through the internalization of self-managed productive practices. Having illustrated the university's wellness campaign, the presentation then asks (non-rhetorically) how academics may resist such management practices and, as Foucault suggests, "refuse to be what they are."

EDU3b-4 - Recentering Hate? Double Standards and Dismissals in Alberta Universities

Caroline Hodes, University of Lethbridge

Increases in funding and interest in far-right studies that seek to address polarization are taking place concurrently with the defunding, restructuring and, in certain cases, dismantling of programs and departments that were created as part of the gains of civil rights movements in Canadian universities. Questions emerge in response to these phenomena that mirror those raised in the context of similar academic interventions such as "whiteness studies." When attempts at addressing hate are not sufficiently attentive to power relations, they can reproduce what they seek to dismantle and create academic apologists for abuse, particularly when researchers flatten out power relations by asking those who have been the targets of hate speech to overlook violence in the name of civility. This concurrent process can and has led to the reinforcement of discriminatory double standards in academic settings when the application of legal and institutional processes associated with academic freedom and freedom of expression leads to the erasure of important power relations between individuals, and between and within collectives. These double standards sustain violent forms of harassment and abuse and have led to forms of stochastic terrorism. They are most apparent when considering what is formally recognized in law as hate speech, and whether diverse publics believe that it ought to be recognized as such. This paper examines the disconnect between what the existing jurisprudence around freedom of expression, and current meanings of academic freedom intend and the realities of how they are applied in post-secondary institutions in Alberta. Drawing on three case studies that include university responses to anti-genocide encampments, IRS denialism, and online posts about Charlie Kirk, this paper emphasizes how popular misconceptions of law can inform the decision-making of those in positions of authority tasked with evaluating the impacts and differences between academic engagement, opinion, and hate speech.

(EDU3c) Perspectives of schooling and higher education

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

This session features papers that draw on empirical, theoretical or methodological issues in higher education. The papers are written from a wide range of theoretical paradigms, and research methods that discuss experiences in postsecondary settings.

Session Organizers: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University; Maria Brisbane, University of Waterloo

Session Chair: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University

EDU3c-1 - Institutional Logics and Unequal Access: First-Generation Students and Student Services in Higher Education

Presenting Author - Mingjun Gao, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Meiting Chen, McGill University

First-generation students (FGS) often have to navigate higher education systems structured around implicit middle-class norms and dominant cultural expectations. Although existing research has documented disparities in service use and academic outcomes, much of this literature emphasizes individual motivation or resource deficits, while paying limited attention to how institutional designs and organizational practices systematically shape access. This study conducted a systematic review of peer-reviewed research on FGSs and institutional support practices in higher education. A comprehensive search was carried out using PsycINFO and EBSCO, targeting studies addressing

advising systems, academic support programs, mentoring initiatives, and institutional outreach efforts. A total of 2,307 papers were screened by title and abstract, and 618 of them proceeded to the full-text screening according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. 63 studies were retained for analysis, using codes on institutional structures, service delivery practices, and patterns of student-staff interaction, enabling systematic comparison across institutional contexts. Thematic analysis identified three interrelated barriers shaping FGS engagement: economic constraints, institutional obstacles, and gaps in navigational capital. These conditions are associated with institutional belonging, help-seeking practices, and participation in academic support spaces. Across institutional settings, FGSs frequently encountered unclear procedural expectations, limited personalized guidance, and fragmented service infrastructures. The findings demonstrate how dominant organizational cultures and service delivery models privilege students whose backgrounds align with institutional expectations, reinforcing stratified patterns of service utilization and reproducing class-based inequalities. This study highlights how classed assumptions embedded within student support systems systematically disadvantage first-generation students. Reducing inequality requires redesigning service practices through proactive outreach, culturally responsive advising, and the integration of students' diverse starting positions into institutional planning and evaluation processes. More broadly, the findings underscore the importance of aligning institutional accountability frameworks with equity-oriented service provision in order to promote more inclusive patterns of participation and persistence.

EDU3c-2 - Am I Being Productive? Managing time, technology, and expectations among university students

Adri Prattas, Queen's University

Recent research examining time management in the higher education setting suggests that students are facing increasing expectations and pressure to effectively organize, schedule, and manage their own time. Building on this, my research aims to examine how undergraduate students interpret, negotiate, and manage expectations around the organization of their time through devices, platforms, and apps, in the university context. My research questions are: 1) how do students organize their daily/weekly tasks; 2) in what ways do pervasive technologies both provide mechanisms for coping with and produce expectations about time management; and 3) how do students interpret, evaluate, and reflect on how their time is organized and managed? Methodologically, I am recruiting undergraduate students at Queen's University (N=15) for a quota sample from three faculties: Engineering (N=5), Business (N=5), and Arts and Science (N=5). Students in these faculties have different institutional schedules, with varying informal expectations about how much time should be spent on extracurricular activities, and the amount of temporal autonomy versus structured time. Phase 1 of data collection uses time-use diaries, where participants document how their time is scheduled and experienced during the week, including timing, duration, and nature of the event, task, and activity. Phase 2 involves in-depth semi-structured interviews with the students to contextualize data from their diaries, including the degree of choice about timing, how participants scheduled their tasks, and how different kinds of time are described. Critically approaching narratives of 'time management' and productivity, and exploring how these are navigated, is vital for understanding issues around students' well-being.

EDU3c-3 - Assuming Behaviorism and Tensions in Canadian Postsecondary Grading

Anastasia Kulpa, University of Alberta

Learning objectives loom large in policies and practices of grading in Canadian postsecondary education, with many institutions requiring them on syllabi, with the expectation that evaluations of students will focus on demonstrations of having met those objectives. The notion that learning can, and indeed, must be demonstrated in a set of exercises and performances, determined ahead of time by an educator, reflects a deeply behaviourist notion of learning, and how it can be observed. Although nearly all postsecondary faculty use of learning objectives in their teaching, very few consider themselves behaviourists. Drawing on interviews with psychology faculty at Canadian medical-doctoral institutions, this paper investigates how faculty navigate the tensions between their espoused philosophical orientations to grading, which are often more progressive and emancipatory, and the philosophical ideas which underpin their practice, such as the behaviourism inherent in the primacy of learning objectives and their measurement. By and large, participants in this study do not acknowledge the tensions and incompatibilities of these philosophical ideas; they assume the necessity of learning objectives and their measurement is a foregone conclusion, and do not consider this practice incompatible with emancipatory goals for education, such as the transformation of the self, and democratic participation.

(EDU5) Equity in K-12 Education: Harbouring Hope or Fuelling Division?
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

The enhancement of educational performance and outcomes across populations remains an area of prominent focus in school jurisdictions throughout Canada and other jurisdictions. This is accompanied by a wide range of initiatives dedicated to ensuring that schooling prepares learners to meet challenges and uncertainty associated a changing world. However, at a time when there is promise to make schooling more fulfilling and relevant for students who have historically faced barriers to educational success, mounting political pressure threatens to dismantle equity, diversity, and inclusion support and other measures deemed by critics to be overly ‘woke’ and ideological in nature. Sociological insight is needed to understand how tensions shape the lives and schooling experiences of diverse student groups. This session includes papers that explore empirical as well as theoretical and conceptual dimensions of debates and initiatives oriented to enhance educational outcomes for equity-denied groups.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Terry Wotherspoon, University of Saskatchewan; Emily Milne, MacEwan University

EDU5-1 - Discipline and Include: Governmentality, Neoliberalism, and Inclusive Educational Reform in Nova Scotia

Nancy Spina, Cape Breton University

This paper focuses on the neoliberal educational reforms that have promoted equity and inclusion in the Nova Scotia K-12 educational system from the early 2000s to the present. It critically examines how neoliberal educational discourses have legitimized data-driven and evidence-based system wide interventions to respond to the individual needs of every child acknowledging differences among

learners and therefore ensuring educational equity and inclusion for all. More specifically, I focus on the multi-tiered frameworks of Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Effective Behaviour Support (PEBS), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) comprising the Multi-Tiered Support System characterizing the 2020 Inclusive education policy in the province. These frameworks aim at offering all students the necessary academic, behavioral and emotional support to all learners and reduce the academic and discipline gap between white, able-bodied, middle- class learners and traditionally marginalized ones. Building on the work of critical scholars in the sociology of education studies who have focused on the impact of neoliberal reforms in education (Peters, 2017; Ball, 2013; Bourassa, 2021), I rely on a Foucauldian analytical framework centred upon the concept of governmentality and genealogy as a methodology(Foucault, 1991, 2010; Bevir, 2010) to argue that the frameworks introduced by the Nova Scotia provincial government represent instances of neoliberal technologies that are instrumental in creating different educational subjects. Some possessing the 'potential' to become future neoliberal, productive, and docile citizens while others who are "at-risk", can only avoid educational and social exclusion if they respond positively to the normalizing logics of RTI, PEBS and SEL (Foucault, 1991; Choi, 2015; Oßwald, 2024).

EDU5-2 - Handcuffed in the Hallway: Effects of Police in Schools on Suspensions and Arrests

Alice Romo, OISE, University of Toronto

"*That same police officer I had asked for help, came over to me and arrested me, in front of everyone, then escorted me to the police car handcuffed - but I didn't do what he said I did"* said a youth in Toronto as I sat in a school board hearing, with his mother and other community parents and organizers. This was not the first time I was listening to a Black youth recount being falsely accused and arrested at their school. The controversial School Resource Officer (SRO) program is one of many iterations of historically punitive school disciplinary policies. In Toronto it was initiated in 2008, assigning uniformed police officers to schools. Upon the SRO program's inception, an increase in school-related arrests of racialized youth in low-income Toronto neighbourhoods prompted parent and community advocacy against the program. This sparked a review by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), which resulted in trustees ending the program in 2017. Ontario Bill 33 was recently passed and requires all provincial school boards to implement the SRO program wherever the programs are offered to schools in the city. This new bill has made this study very urgent and timely. My research draws from theories of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) and its intersection with education, also known as the School to Prison Pipeline or School-to-Prison Nexus, to understand the increased rates of punitive exclusionary discipline with the use of SROs and the racial disparities accompanying. I hypothesize that the removal of the SRO program in the TDSB is associated with a decrease in suspension rates and school related arrests, in comparison to neighbouring school boards that continue to use the SRO program. This presentation will look at descriptive analysis of suspension rates, youth arrests and statistical findings of this study.

EDU5-3 - Mandated but Fragmented: School Board Census Data and the Limits of Anti-Racism Policy in Ontario

Alexandra Pulchny, St. Thomas University; Jacqueline Villanueva and Karen Robson, McMaster University

Within the Canadian educational context, persistent gaps in race-based and identity-based data have limited our ability to both understand and address systemic inequities in schools. Since 2006, following a recommendation from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) based on findings around racial disparities in student disciplinary measures, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has been the sole jurisdiction in Ontario regularly administering and collecting a student census. In 2017, with the passing of the Anti-Racism Act, the Ontario government sought to mandate the collection of student censuses by all publicly funded school boards, with results made publicly available and accessible by January 2023. Yet by late 2025, only 75% of boards had undertaken this task, and even among those, many produced outdated or incomplete data, omitted mandated questions, or lacked research capacity. Our study offers the first systematic examination of school board census initiatives that emerged from the 2017 Anti-Racism Act. Drawing on a dataset assembled from 2019-2024, including survey instruments, reporting practices, question frequency, response rates, demographics, linked datasets, and media coverage, we explore how boards have operationalized and interpreted the census requirements as outlined by the Ontario government. Situating these practices within recognition-based politics, the “wicked problem” framework, and Max Weber’s “ideal types”, we trace how organizational logics and policy ambiguities shape data practices. We visualize geographic patterns in census implementation through ArcGIS Online. Our findings reveal a highly fragmented data landscape, with limited analytical or policy utility. With the absence of standardized instruments, provincial consolidation, or integration with data from the Ministry of Education, cross-board comparisons and evidence-informed interventions are impeded. We conclude this exploratory study by questioning the purpose and value mandated census data have when barriers in implementation, governance, and comparability prevent it from being used at its highest potential.

EDU5-4 - Pathways to Post-secondary: Examining First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Opportunities

Presenting Authors - Erica Thomson, McMaster University; Samantha Mullin, MacEwan University; Lauren Alston, University of Alberta

Non-presenting Authors - Terry Wotherspoon, University of Saskatchewan; Emily Milne, MacEwan University

There is an urgent need to support educational equity among Indigenous students (Anderson, 2016; Government of Canada, 2022; Levinson et al., 2022; Meyer, 2001; OECD, 2022; TRC, 2015). Often, educational inequity is manifested in academic streaming practices that disproportionately limit Indigenous and other equity-deserving students' access to post-secondary education (PSE, Francis et al., 2019; Gamoran, 1992; Hallinan, 1994). Students from racialized backgrounds tend to be steered toward non-academic/applied streams, even considering similar levels of academic achievement (Clandfield et al., 2014; Hay et al., 2004; Robson et al., 2019). Furthermore, academic streaming has been linked to lower graduation and achievement test pass rates, self-esteem, attitudes towards schooling, teacher perception and expectation, and academic performance for those in applied streams, as well as higher absenteeism and suspension rates, decreased sense of belonging within school communities, and limited PSE opportunities (Johnston & Wildy, 2016; Maharaj & Zareey, 2022; Parekh, 2013). This paper presents the results of a multi-year, community-based research project that addresses these issues by examining how streaming occurs in Alberta schools and how it limits Indigenous students’ access to PSE. Using the findings of interviews and focus groups across 16 schools and 9 school divisions, with 266 participants (128 Indigenous students, 43

parents/caregivers of Indigenous students, 76 non-Indigenous school staff, 9 Indigenous school staff, and 10 parents/caregivers who were also school staff), three key issues were identified: 1. Lack of awareness and understanding among students, parents/caregivers, and school staff about educational pathways and course selection; 2. Availability of appropriate student supports to mitigate compounded learning gaps; and 3. The need to build relationships, understanding, and respect within schools. This presentation explores the significance of these results, detailing participants' experiences and sharing recommendations for educational stakeholders looking to address these complex challenges.

(EDU8) Education, School-Work Transitions, and Public Policy

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

This session features quantitative and mixed-method papers that deepen our understanding of educational outcomes in secondary and postsecondary settings as well as school-work transitions. We are particularly interested in research examining inequalities experienced by underrepresented groups in relation to educational pathways and trajectories, school and field of study selection, educational aspirations, academic performance, retention and program completion, student loans and repayment, and early labour market outcomes.

Session Organizers: David Zarifa, Nipissing University; David Walters, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Addison Kornel, University of Guelph

EDU8-1 - Career Aspiration and Digital Work Pathways: Exploring School-to-Work Transitions among University Students in Bangladesh

Manzuma Ahsan, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Education plays a central role in shaping social mobility and career trajectories of individuals, particularly during the transitions from higher education to the labour market. In the context of rapid technological change and the expansion of digital platforms associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, university students' career aspirations are undergoing significant transformation. This study explores how university students in Bangladesh conceptualize and prioritize career aspirations, with a specific focus on digital work pathways and school-to-work transitions in the digital age. Using a qualitative research design, the study draws on students' perception and experiences to examine how aspirations are formed in relation to both conventional employment sectors and emerging digital platforms. The findings indicate that students continue to value corporate employment, development-sector work, and outsourcing opportunities due to their perceived economic stability and professional status. However, there is growing attraction towards digital platforms-based careers - such as online entrepreneurships and even content creation on YouTube, TikTok, and other social media platforms - which are viewed as offering rapid economic returns, social visibility, and flexible work arrangements. These aspirations are strongly shaped by expectations of short-term financial gain, "name and fame", and perceived accessibility within digital economy. At the same time, the study identifies significant challenges related to skill preparedness, sustainability of digital work, and uncertainty in long-term career outcomes. The findings suggest that while digital platforms are reshaping school-to-work transitions, they also intensify economic pressures and aspirations

centered primarily on immediate rewards. The study concludes that supporting university students' transition into an increasingly digital labor market requires targeted education policies, structured careers guidance, and skills-oriented training initiatives. Such interventions are essential to help students navigate digital work pathways more effectively and align career aspirations with sustainable employment outcomes in the digital economy of Bangladesh.

EDU8-2 - From Classroom to Co-op to Career Planning: A Case Study on the Transitional Barriers between Postsecondary Education and Employment

Mrittika Dreesha, University of Waterloo

Amid growing concerns about the employability of Arts postsecondary students in Canada, this qualitative case study examines how co-operative education (co-op) shapes Arts students' school-to-work transitions and whether it mitigates the perceived disconnect between academic training and labour market outcomes. Guided by Bourdieu's *theory of practice* and Tomlinson's framework of *graduate capita*l, the study draws on 42 semi-structured interviews with fourth-year Arts co-op students at the University of Waterloo, which is the world's largest co-op institution and serves as an exemplar of well-established work-integrated learning programs. The analysis addresses two questions: (1) what challenges do Arts students encounter as they move from classroom learning into co-op placements and subsequent career planning, and (2) what institutional changes do they recommend to better support these transitions? Findings identify five interrelated barriers: limited access to discipline-relevant placements, inadequate curricular preparation for workplace expectations, inconsistent departmental advising, networking workshops perceived as misaligned with Arts students' needs, and weak peer-mentorship supports. To address these barriers, students suggest implementing standardized co-op guidelines across Arts programs, strengthening communication between students and co-op offices, expanding employer partnerships, establishing monthly program evaluations, and hosting discipline-specific workshops. Furthermore, considering heightened academic pressures, competitive labour market conditions, and prevalent mental health concerns, students strongly advocate keeping co-op participation optional in Arts programs. Aligning with students' recommendations, this study empirically demonstrates the necessity for postsecondary institutions to tackle the existing barriers to maximize the value of co-op in facilitating students' successful school-to-work transitions.

EDU8-3 - From Global Convergence to Local Divergence: Vocational Education Policy in China and Canada

Presenting Author - Mingjun Gao, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Meiting Chen, McGill University

In the context of globalization, higher education systems have increasingly adopted similar policy frameworks and governance models. Western-originated vocational education has been widely embraced as an employment-oriented pathway embedded within post-secondary education systems. Existing research has primarily conceptualized vocational education as a policy instrument or a mechanism of labor market governance, while paying limited attention to how such models are re-embedded within diverse social structures and generate differentiated institutional outcomes and social meanings. This systematic review adopts a comparative higher education perspective to examine vocational education practices in China and Canada, illustrating how similar policy

frameworks produce distinct institutional functions. Drawing on theories of policy borrowing and path dependence, the study demonstrates how local implementation is constrained by historically embedded institutional arrangements and sociocultural expectations, resulting in structural divergence in practice. Using ERIC and EBSCO, 1,602 papers were retrieved for title and abstract screening, with 311 advancing to full-text review. Following predefined inclusion criteria, 36 studies were retained and coded for thematic synthesis. Preliminary thematic analysis identified two major themes. The first concerns governance orientation: China's vocational education is primarily framed as a state-led policy instrument, whereas Canada's is positioned as a practice-oriented training institution granting labor market-relevant qualifications. The second theme addresses institutional positioning, highlighting differences in system integration, credential recognition, and quality assurance mechanisms. Together, these differences shape patterns of access, status, and mobility within each system. The findings indicate that China's adaptation of Western vocational education models is not a linear process of replication, but a reframing shaped by historically embedded institutional structures and value systems. Policy transplantation alone is therefore insufficient for effective localization. Meaningful vocational education reform requires attention to the systemic conditions that structure institutional legitimacy, social valuation, and educational stratification within higher education.

EDU8-4 - Not All STEMs Bear the Same Fruit: Investigating Early Earnings Outcomes Two Years After Graduation

Presenting Author - Addison Kornel, University of Guelph

Non-presenting Authors - Nida Ansari, University of Guelph; David Zarifa and David Walters, Nipissing University; Roger Pizarro Milian, University of Guelph

While the Ontario government has prioritized STEM education as a primary driver of economic success, the immediate financial returns for graduates vary drastically across disciplines. This study investigates the relationship between educational background and early-career earnings by drawing on novel data linkages within Statistics Canada's Education and Labour Market Longitudinal Platform (ELMLP). Specifically, we analyze how academic field of study and university prestige (proxied by Maclean's rankings) are linked to the income of Ontario university graduates two years post-graduation, controlling for socio-demographics and prior academic testing outcomes (EQAO). Our analysis of students who graduated between 2018 and 2020 challenges the prevailing narrative that all STEM fields offer a financial premium, revealing that physical and life sciences graduates earn significantly less than their peers in the social sciences, two years after graduation. While engineering and computer science graduates continue to see high returns, students entering the natural sciences under the impression of a lucrative financial payoff are currently misguided. A significant portion of this wage gap persists even after controlling for prior academic testing and institutional prestige. These findings suggest that provincial funding models may be overlooking a stark misalignment between STEM advocacy and the actual economic outcomes of science graduates in Ontario.

(EDU9) Post Secondary Education: Navigating successful transitions

Schedule: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

The presentations in this session explore how post-secondary students transition between institutions and prepare for workplace challenges.

Session Chair: Mrittika Dreesha, University of Waterloo

EDU9-1 - "The Math Ain't Mathin'": The Epistemicide of High School Mathematic Classrooms

Korina Thomas-Reynolds, Queen's University

Mathematical identities are constructed through the interconnection of history and practice. With African history being systemically erased from the discipline, mathematics becomes a site of ontological and epistemic violence. this erasure is manifested through policies and discourses that delegitimize Black high school students in mathematic spaces. Thus, the construction of positive mathematic identities becomes contingent on identifying, unlearning, rencentering African knowledge. This research examines: (1) how Africentric pedagogies shape Black students' mathematical identities over time; (2) how classroom demographics and teacher practices influence belonging for Black youth; and (3) how counter-stories can be translated into pedagogical approaches that resist systemic indifference and rebuild students' intellectual self-concept. Grounded in a Fanonian framework, this study investigates how deficit narratives, unbelonging, and epistemicide manifest within mathematics education. Using narrative inquiry and Africentric Participatory Action Research, the project centres Black epistemologies through storytelling circles and semi-structured interviews. Fifteen Black high school students from Ontario, Alberta, and Nova Scotia will be purposively sampled to reflect diverse ethnicities, gender identities, and migration histories. Data will be gathered before, during, and after participation in an Africentric mathematics program. Preliminary classroom-based observations indicate that unbelonging functions as a psychic rupture—an obscuring of Black brilliance through systemic indifference. Early insights suggest that Africentric pedagogical practices foster cultural grounding, relational accountability, and strengthened mathematical identity. These emerging patterns illuminate the urgent need to dismantle Eurocentric framings of "neutral" mathematics and expose the logics that render Black students absent, disengaged, or pathologized. This project contributes to de/anti-colonial scholarship by conceptualizing mathematics classrooms as potential sites of healing, cultural restoration, and liberatory possibility.

EDU9-2 - How women engineer students view family work balance in their future plan?

Minxuan Hou, Western University

Women remain underrepresented in engineering, particularly in male-dominated subfields, despite decades of policy initiatives. While research has extensively examined workplace experiences and structural barriers faced by women engineers, far less attention has been given to how gendered norms in engineering education shape women students' anticipations of future career and family balance before entering the labor market. This study addresses this gap by investigating how women engineering students understand, negotiate, and plan for the relationship between professional careers, marriage, and potential motherhood. Drawing on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with undergraduate and graduate women studying engineering at a comprehensive university in

southwestern Ontario, Canada, this study explores how students interpret cultural expectations embedded within engineering programs. The analysis is informed by theories of gendered organizations, "doing gender," and gendered role expectations, which conceptualize engineering education as a social space that normalizes uninterrupted commitment, long hours, and technical productivity. These norms implicitly frame engineering careers as incompatible with caregiving and shape women's imagined life trajectories at an early stage of career development. The study asks how women engineering students anticipate balancing careers and family life. How do engineering cultures influence expectations regarding marriage and motherhood? How do women students negotiate or resist perceived tensions between career commitment and family responsibilities? By shifting analytical attention to anticipatory planning rather than post-career outcomes, this study highlights the educational stage as a critical site where gendered constraints and strategies take shape along the engineering pipeline. The findings will underscore the importance of transforming institutional cultures to allow more inclusive visions of professional and family life.

EDU9-3 - Post-secondary Transfer Students Transitions in Ontario Post-secondary Education Institutions

J Sparks, University of Toronto

This presentation will explore post-secondary education (PSE) student transitions post-transfer. Post-transfer is defined as a specific part of a transfer student's learning journey; a transition period beginning after a current or former PSE student has transferred by enrolling in a new program or at a new institution. The presentation will highlight students' post-transfer experiences using recent research findings derived from interviews conducted with student affairs professionals and an Ontario-wide content analysis of publicly funded PSE institution websites. As well, student services and resources in support of students' post-transfer transitions will be discussed. The presentation will conclude by outlining a new conceptual framework for understanding PSE student development through transfer transitions in Canadian higher education.

EDU9-4 - Internationalization for Who: Re-centring Refugee Students within the Postsecondary-Migration Nexus

Nidhi Menon, University of New Brunswick; Zuhra Abawi, York University

As of 2024, global displacement has reached unprecedented levels, with over 123 million people forcibly displaced due to war, persecution, climate catastrophe, and geopolitical instability (UNHCR, 2024). Among them, young people constitute a significant portion, many of whom aspire to rebuild their lives through access to higher education (Bajwa et al., 2017). Canada remains one of the world's top destination countries for refugee resettlement, yet pathways for refugee access to postsecondary education remain deeply inequitable. Although Canada is often lauded for its commitments to diversity and inclusion, settler-colonial hierarchies and racialized politics of belonging continue to shape which displaced bodies are seen as deserving of education, opportunity, and protection (Blinded, 2025). The migration-postsecondary education nexus has become increasingly salient in recent years, as shifting landscapes of migration politics directly influence internationalization outcomes in postsecondary education. These dynamics underscore how forced migration, race, and higher education intersect within the internationalization arena, revealing who is positioned as a global learner and who is rendered invisible within Canadian higher education

institutions (HEIs). While the dominant literature on internationalization continues to centre international students who are depicted as neoliberal, economic contributors, the experiences of refugee students are largely silenced. This conceptual essay seeks to visibilize the invisibility of refugee **s**tudents in internationalization practices within HEIs upheld by policies and practices of whiteness and settler-colonialism. We utilize Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice to frame the active and intentional silencing of refugee students in accessing epistemic goods in HEIs within the settler-colonial state. The paper calls for holistic, anticolonial and antiracist approaches to internationalization in HEI as refugee student populations are projected to continue increasing.

(EDU-RC) Sociology of Education Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Education Research Cluster

Sociology of education covers a wide methodological, theoretical and conceptual terrain. While research in this area is most associated with examinations of schools, inequality, and economic development, this scholarship intersects with a variety of research including studies of early child development, parenting, childhood and adolescence, and health. The Sociology of Education Research Cluster will serve to enhance dialogue and networking among sociologists of education in Canada. Our meeting will more comprehensively envision the goals and priorities of the cluster.

Session Organizers: Johanne Jean-Pierre, York University; Maria Brisbane, University of Waterloo

(ENV) Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

(ENV1a) Environmental Sociology 1: Making Sense of Environmental Changes
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

Environmental sociology covers all levels from the micro to the macro. In this first of a series of environmental sociology sessions, we set the stage by looking at individuals and how they make sense of climate change. Presentations include an international survey, a qualitative study of online climate talk, and three case studies of how communities deal with environmental risk and change.

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University; Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

Session Chair: Lisa Seiler, York University

ENV1a-1 - Proximity to Environmental Risk and the Willingness to Sacrifice for Environmental Improvement

Brook Bartlett, University of Calgary

Climate change is an increasingly threatening issue on a global scale, yet there remains a lack of understanding of the degree to which individuals are willing to personally sacrifice to mitigate climate change. According to Adger (2006), vulnerability is conceptualized as the state of susceptibility to harm from exposure to stresses connected to environmental and social change, accompanied by a restricted capacity to adapt. This research will examine whether the proximate relationship on the

individual and national level to the side effects of climate change impacts the willingness to sacrifice for environmental improvement. Multilevel models will be used to analyze data from the 2020 International Social Survey Programme, examining 44,043 individuals from 28 nations. I expect to show that higher levels of exposure to climate effects, both on the individual and national level, will be associated with a higher willingness to sacrifice for environmental improvement. With this research, I expect to contribute to the sociology of vulnerability by showing that exposure to climate change risks on an individual and national level may impact perception and willingness to engage in two distinct measures of sacrifice for environmental improvement, possibly propelling social change.

ENV1a-2 - Listening to everyday climate talk: A qualitative study of narratives, emotions, and coping

Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University

As climate change becomes increasingly felt in everyday life, Canadians make sense of it through ordinary talk about weather, affordability, health, and the future where meanings of risk and responsibility are negotiated in real time. This paper examines “everyday climate talk” as a cultural and emotional process: how people narrate climate change, express feelings, and describe coping within routine, informal conversations. Drawing on digital ethnography, I analyze public discussions from Canada-wide online community spaces over an eight-week period, purposively sampling threads that link climate change or extreme weather (e.g., wildfire smoke, flooding, storms, heat) to lived experience and everyday decision-making. The dataset includes original posts, comment threads, and ethnographic fieldnotes documenting interactional dynamics, recurring metaphors, and moments of agreement and conflict. Using a hybrid of narrative and thematic analysis, I identify (1) dominant storylines through which climate is rendered meaningful (e.g., “just weather,” “a tipping point,” “system failure,” “adaptation as necessity”); (2) emotional registers that accompany these narratives (worry, anger, grief, fatigue, humor, and hope); and (3) coping and sense-making practices, including practical adaptation, mutual aid, political engagement, moral evaluation of responsibility, and strategic avoidance. Preliminary patterns suggest that climate change is frequently recognized through proximate experience and temporal comparison (“it didn’t used to be like this”), while disputes over evidence, blame, and agency shape whether conversations move toward collective concern, resignation, or polarization. By treating mundane digital conversation as an empirical site of climate meaning-making, this study contributes to environmental sociology debates on risk, emotion, and mediated publics, clarifying how everyday narratives can both normalize climate disruption and motivate social response.

ENV1a-3 - "If you make a river a lake...": Using comparative impact assessment to assess cognitive and affective impacts from dam removal interventions

Keahna Margeson, Dalhousie University

Communities around the Bay of Fundy, Canada, are increasingly at risk from sea level rise, storm surges, and changing precipitation patterns. Risks are compounded by the fact that infrastructure, including barriers across rivers such as dykes and causeways, have become outdated, expensive to maintain, and in some cases, are no longer in compliance with environmental regulations. Barrier infrastructure requires re-examination considering modern values and technology that allow, or require, more social and environmentally sound approaches for development. Barrier removal is

often locally contested, yet few studies focus on understanding local people's experiences with interventions to modify barriers and restore river landscapes. This research addresses this gap using a mixed-methods comparative social impact assessment to assess cognitive and affective impacts throughout the proposal, implementation, and post-construction stages of barrier removal interventions. Our study sites are the Petitcodiac River, where a causeway was partially removed and natural tidal flow re-established, and the Avon River, where causeway modifications are under consideration. Findings from this work indicate there is a u-shaped curve of public acceptance in the Petitcodiac case: public attitudes towards restoring tidal connectivity were generally favourable in the planning stage, declined during implementation, and then increased post-construction. The first two stages have been echoed in the Avon case. We highlight key similarities and differences between the sites and discuss how impacts from the Petitcodiac may inform impacts for the Avon. Results from the study indicate that the strengths of this CSIA approach lie not in predicting impacts, but interpreting experienced impacts, concerns, and social acceptance.

ENV1a-4 - An exploratory study of the social and socio-emotional impacts of ecological loss among smallholder farmers

Abu-Hena Mostofa Kamal, University of Saskatchewan

Coastal ecological degradation across the world is having social, emotional and material impacts, yet limited attention is paid to how marginalized communities experience and interpret the consequences. Bangladesh is an ecologically vulnerable country, with smallholder farmers living in severely impacted coastal sub-districts. This study explored the ways in which ecological loss impacts the lives of farmers in southwest coastal Bangladesh. Synthesizing perspectives from political ecology and attachment theory, this study examines the idea of relational ecological grief to conceptualize how ecological loss simultaneously transforms human-ecology relations and the socio-emotional foundations of everyday life. Guided by a constructivist paradigm and a phenomenological research design, this qualitative research explores the lived experiences of ecological loss through in-depth interviews with smallholder farmers (20) and key informant interviews with local stakeholders (20) from Harinkhola and Borobari villages, under Koyra sub-district, Khulna, Bangladesh. Interviews were conducted in Bengali, translated into English, and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to inductively identify emergent themes. Findings show that ecological loss is experienced both as material dispossession and as a relational and emotional crisis. Participants describe grief over loss of land, yield, and biodiversity. Findings also reveal fear of anticipated loss, food insecurity, and erosion of socio-cultural identity, belonging, and intergenerational continuity. These experiences, as the findings indicate, are shaped by broader political and economic processes, including weak governance, elite capture through shrimp aquaculture, and growing market exploitation, which intensify vulnerability and environmental injustice and amplify social inequality. This study suggests that ecological loss generates socio-emotional and material rupture within smallholder farming communities, shaped by socio-cultural and political-economic systems. These dynamic further manifests social injustice, identity crisis, and a sense of exclusion.

ENV1a-5 - Inequality and Climate Change in Ecuador: Culture and Collective Memory in Risk Management in the Guápulo Neighborhood

Cheryl Martens, Universidad San Francisco de Quito

In 2024, the historic neighborhood of Guápulo, in eastern Quito, experienced the most severe forest fires in its recorded history, followed in the winter of 2025 by destructive landslides caused by intense rainfall. These events reflect broader dynamics in Latin America, and globally in which rapid and unequal urbanization, informality, and social inequality intersect with climate change, and are related droughts and extreme precipitation. Urban risks, as discussed in the literature, are socially produced through historical patterns of spatial inequality and uneven state intervention (Lefebvre, 1991; Wacquant, 2008). This paper examines the role of cultural practices and collective memory in disaster risk prevention and response in Guápulo, focusing on how these processes differ across social groups. Drawing on interviews and participatory workshops with residents and using an intersectional perspective, the study analyzes how historical memory interacts with structural conditions, such as informality and uneven infrastructure, to shape neighborhood cohesion and collective risk management in the face of climate-related hazards.

(ENV1b) Environmental Sociology II: Culture, Identity, and the Environment

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

In this environmental sociology session, we consider the interplay among the environment, identity, and culture. This series of qualitative studies challenges us to rethink our assumptions of what constitutes an environmental identity, focusing on the far right, Canadian farmers, and university campuses.

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University; Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

Session Chair: Lisa Seiler, York University

ENV1b-1 - Science in the Sociology of Environmental Politics

Nicolas Petel-Rochette, Université du Québec à Montréal

For nearly forty years, social scientists have been calling for an examination of the epistemological foundations of the modern division between nature and culture. For some authors, the most famous of whom is perhaps Bruno Latour, it is unclear whether science is concerned exclusively with nature. On the contrary, culture appears to be shaped and co-produced by a whole network of technoscientific systems, which act as cultural mediators and contribute to shaping our daily lives. While this lesson is widely accepted by many disciplines, environmental sociology focusing on far-right ecologies does not seem to have fully embraced it. In the Anthropocene, a certain sociology at the intersection of environment and politics continues to approach conservative ecologies and ecofascism as denials of scientificity. Drawing on my own doctoral studies and fieldwork, this paper will argue against this idea and present a working hypothesis central to my research: neither ecology nor science are exclusive to the left. As long as we do not take far-right ecological projects seriously, it will be difficult to conduct accurate and nuanced research on the social project underlying a certain conservative projection of the connection between nature and culture. By focusing on the normative basis of the concept of biodiversity, this paper will show that, faced with the crises of objectivity in the Anthropocene, the far right is fighting for hegemony at the heart of the objectification mechanisms that are too quickly and too often associated with the supposed exclusive domain of

progressive scientists and elites who “respect” nature. What if the definition of this “respect” for the environment were not so obvious after all?

ENV1b-2 - Why Switch? The Role of Culture, Values and Identity in Regenerative Farming

Presenting Author - Nnenna Princess Okeke, University of Regina

Non-presenting Authors - Amber J. Fletcher, University of Regina; Glenn C. Sutter, Royal Saskatchewan Museum

Regenerative farming is recognized as an effective way to put prairie agriculture on a more sustainable path. Regenerative agricultural practices are focused on the preservation of soil health and the sustainability of the agri-food sector. While many studies have examined regenerative agriculture from an agronomic perspective, few studies have considered the less-tangible social, cultural, and subjective dimensions of this topic. Drawing on qualitative interviews with regenerative farmers in Saskatchewan, this presentation analyzes how cultures, values, and identities shape farmers’ motivations for transitioning to regenerative agriculture. The results shed light on the importance of local heritage, as it underpins culture, and how regenerative practices might help farmers avoid socio-economic 'traps' associated with the Anthropocene. Through this lens, we examine producer beliefs, values and identities that inform regenerative agricultural practices. The findings explore socio-cultural dimensions such as principles of care, community structure, social relations, and land relationships that influence transformations in both physical landscapes and farmers’ mindsets. The insights could prove valuable for those wishing to promote and support regenerative agriculture, while also considering its limitations. Given potential constraints associated with the Anthropocene traps and the cultural foundations of local food production, the shift to regenerative agriculture contributes to the debate on agricultural sustainability.

ENV1b-3 - Analyzing gender-based motivations within environmental engineering and related environmental fields of study in Canada

Maya Balzarini, University of British Columbia

While engineering fields of study generally see high male-identifying student compositions, the recent emergence of environmental engineering in Canada has attracted far more female-identifying students. This presentation explores gender balance within environmentally-related fields of study in Canada with a specific focus on environmental engineering. Therefore, this research asks the following question: To what extent are women overrepresented in environmental engineering, and why? Through a mixed method design, the study aims to quantitatively compare gender (im)balance within environmental engineering programs and other engineering subfields at Canadian universities. The presentation is also based on interview data with UBC students in environmental engineering to gain insight into the motives behind field of study choices, and to uncover if any motivation-based differences exist. By gaining a deeper understanding of gender mechanisms within environmentally-related fields, the study aims to fill a crucial research gap that would bridge the devaluation of women’s work and environmentalism. Based on my current data collection, I expect to find that women’s overrepresentation in environmental engineering is connected to gender socialization, a sense of belonging within the specific field, and devaluation of the subject. Ultimately, this research is significant as it has the potential to inform departmental policies that can lead to

more equitable access, belonging, and valuation within environmental engineering, regardless of gender.

ENV1b-4 - Bad Harvests?: Campus-Sustainable Food Initiatives in Montreal through the Pandemic COVID-19 & The (Re)Turn to Local

Julia Lunot, McGill University

The COVID-19 pandemic reignited political and scholarly interest in local food systems as potential buffers against supply-chain disruption, food insecurity, and ecological crisis. In Canada, this moment was accompanied by renewed government funding and institutional rhetoric positioning "local" and "sustainable" food as pragmatic and ethical responses to pandemic-induced uncertainty. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with workers employed by campus-based sustainable food initiatives in Montreal, this paper examines how local food organizing was experienced and reworked through the pandemic, with particular attention to labour conditions, bureaucratic constraints, and the tensions between rhetoric and reality within university-affiliated food systems. Focusing on the community-university hybrid model, this study contributes to critical scholarship on alternative food networks (AFNs) by situating campus sustainable food systems (SFS) within broader debates around precarity, moral entrepreneurship, and the "local trap." Findings suggest that while interviewees expressed strong ideological commitments to sustainability, food justice, and community engagement, the pandemic exacerbated structural vulnerabilities, including low wages, unstable funding, and limited worker protections-all of which were compounded by pandemic-related disruptions. This paper finds that the significance of campus sustainable food initiatives during and after COVID-19 lies less in their capacity to meaningfully resolve food insecurity at scale, and more in their function as sites of praxis, education, and social connection. While interviewees remained committed to the ideals of local and sustainable food, they were also acutely aware of the limited reach and structural constraints of their work. In the context of pandemic-induced isolation, inflation, and institutional precarity, campus SFS initiatives operated as pedagogical and affective infrastructures: spaces where theoretical commitments to sustainability, food justice, and community could be enacted, taught, and felt, even as their material impact remained uneven and fragile. This reframing complicates celebratory narratives of local food by foregrounding both its symbolic value and its structural limits within university settings.

(ENV1c) Environmental Sociology III: Land and Resistance
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

This environmental sociology session explores the importance of land and various types of resistance against dispossession by hegemonic forces. These theoretical and qualitative presentations span the globe. Study sites include Palestine, the Philippines, Japan, and Canada.

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University; Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

Session Chair: Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University of Newfoundland

ENV1c-1 - Chlorophyll Colonialism: Settler afforestation and more-than-humans in occupied Palestine

Maren Savarese Knopf, University of New Brunswick

This paper examines how Zionism, land-based identity, and ecological transformation become integral within colonial settlement through afforestation in occupied Palestine. The paper introduces and develops the concept of chlorophyll colonialism to describe the unique more-than-human capacity of plants within colonial projects. In doing so, it examines the use of afforestation and ecological "restoration" that conceals and justifies ongoing Palestinian land dispossession by re-storying and replanting the landscape. Thus, the complex role of agential more-than-humans, like trees, within settler colonialism is discussed. In doing so, the paper suggests that more-than-humans can facilitate and act as a unique type of settlers, while also contributing towards Indigenous Palestinian resistance. The result has been invigorated efforts to establish, literal- rooted- land claims by both Zionist settlers and Indigenous Palestinians. By tracing the historical and modern-day impetus for Israeli afforestation, the paper argues that Zionist environmental narratives claiming to "make the desert bloom" both materially and ideologically mask Indigenous human and more-than-human displacement, destruction, and genocide. In doing so, the paper seeks to intervene in classical anthropocentric understandings of how and by whom colonialism is facilitated. Thus, the paper resists framing more-than-humans as passive recipients of action wherein colonialism is inscribed upon them and denies more-than-human agency. A broader exploration of settler colonialism is undertaken to demonstrate the complex and overlooked role of more-than-humans within settlement and resistance.

ENV1c-2 - Depoliticizing Narratives in the Studies of Migrant Community Urban Agriculture: Land, Labour, and Embodiment

Riann Lognon, University of Calgary

This paper reviews the scholarship examining migrant community urban agriculture through the lenses of southern theory and racial capitalism. In so doing, I argue that this body of work has depoliticized migrant community urban agriculture along the axes of land and embodiment. In the literature, community gardens have been touted as important community development spaces providing aesthetically beautiful, therapeutic green spaces (Tomkins et al. 2019), a transformative means of addressing food injustices (Cadieux and Slocum 2015), and essential spaces for environmental protection through enhancing local biodiversity and educational opportunities for nearby residents (Kanosvamhira and Shade 2025; Milbourne 2012). Other scholars are concerned with the political nature of community garden spaces as competing understandings of land use, aesthetics, and gardening norms are contested (Harwood 2005; McClintock 2014; Strunk and Richardson 2019). Despite the plethora of research examining the politics of community urban agriculture, migrant community urban agriculture is typically theorized in terms of how gardening and farming activities can facilitate integration, often within a neoliberal economic conception of integration, both historically and contemporarily (Lognon 2024; Tsu 2021). I argue that southern theory and racial capitalism can be used as lenses through which we might consider migrant community urban agriculture in relation to 1) land dispossession and hunger in the Global South (Banerjee & Connell 2018; Banerjee, Khandelwal, & Sanyal 2024); 2) food apartheid (Mclintock 2018; Reese 2019); 3) wastelanding and forced displacement as a strategy of capital accumulation

(Danewid 2024); 4) critiques of racialized discourses of 'climate migration' that deny the culpability of host countries in the Global North in configuring circumstances of climate displacement (Lognon et al. 2025); 5) constructions of migrants as climate threats (Ahuja 2021) and/or apathetic environmental actors according to a white environmental ethic (Hickcox 2017); and 6) racialized associations between land and labour (Valdez 2023).

ENV1c-3 - Stewardship Amidst Structure: Understanding Environmental Agency through Modern Treaty Agreements in British Columbia

Tennyson Connor, University of British Columbia - Okanagan

This paper utilizes a decolonial sociological lens to analyze the effects of comprehensive land claims agreements (also called modern treaties) in British Columbia, focusing on how such agreements promote Indigenous agency through the reallocation of land ownership while operating within and emerging from neoliberal social and political structures that shape and limit the exercise of Indigenous land stewardship, particularly in regard to resource extraction. The analysis centres on the tensions produced through these treaty frameworks, between Indigenous self-determination and the broader structural constraints inherent to neoliberal capitalism. Utilizing secondary data analysis of treaty texts and provincial, federal, and Indigenous governments' public resources regarding the treaties, the study consults current environmental sociological and economic research to bring modern treaty policies into a broader academic conversation about environmental justice, economic exclusion, and land governance amidst neoliberal policy structures. This policy analysis demonstrates the role of dominant social forces, such as capitalist growth imperatives, fossil-fuel dependence, and cultural norms surrounding property ownership and utilization, in shaping Indigenous communities' abilities to resist resource extraction agreements and resulting ecological degradation. These dynamics are further contextualized within a socio-historical backdrop of Indigenous peoples' ongoing marginalization, economic exclusion, and cultural and epistemological disruption in BC. This analysis offers an important contribution to existing literature through its critique of agency-centred environmental justice approaches, which risk reproducing existing experiences of environmental racism and disproportionate exposure to climate change impacts when lacking an equal emphasis on structural upheaval.

(ENV1d) Environmental Sociology IV: Environment, Government, and Industry

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

The presentations in this environmental sociology session are broadly connected through the theme of governance. The first two papers discuss positioning on climate change at the international level and in Canadian municipalities. The later three papers explore the governance of specific industries in Canada and elsewhere in the face of global climate change and challenging national contexts.

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University; Fatemeh Zahmatkesh, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

Session Chair: Lisa Seiler, York University

ENV1d-1 - A patchwork of climate commitments: Assessing mitigation approaches across Canadian municipalities

Aryana Soliz, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Concordia University, Montreal

Non-presenting Authors: Adriane MacDonald, Concordia University, Montreal; David Talbot, École nationale d'administration publique (ÉNAP); Eduardo Ordonez-Ponce, Athabasca University; Ying Zhou, University of Waterloo; Samantha Hall Linton, University of Waterloo; Amelia Clarke, University of Waterloo; Amr ElAlfy, University of Waterloo

Local governments are widely regarded as key leaders in the global response to climate change. Understanding if and how municipalities commit to climate mitigation is crucial for assessing their contribution to global emission-reduction goals and identifying barriers to effective climate transitions. Here we provide an assessment of local climate action planning and implementation strategies. Drawing from an original survey dataset from local governments across Canada (N=256), we identify in a cluster analysis six climate governance typologies: Comprehensive Climate Advocates, Foundation Builders, Internal Impact Architects, Unseen Leaders, Silent Implementers, and Climate Bystanders. Whereas municipalities in the top-performing cluster have adopted the most convincing approaches, subsequent clusters highlight inconsistencies regarding planning, budgeting, implementation, and reporting, revealing a polarized climate action landscape. Association analysis points to limited influence of existing sub-national policies on local climate action and setbacks for smaller municipalities, while also showing a need for nuanced analysis. These results can help to inform climate action scholarship and policymaking, providing insights into the comprehensiveness of mitigation strategies across different types of municipalities and the need for continued assessment of multi-level accountability mechanisms.

ENV1d-2 - Obstructing a just transition: The nuclear coalition, the corporate community and the Canadian state

Presenting Author - J. P. Sapinski, Université de Moncton

Non-presenting Author - M. V. Ramana, University of British Columbia

Nuclear electricity generation has been a major topic in Canada’s energy policy discussions over the last decade, mostly revolving around small modular nuclear reactors. Today, the federal and provincial governments assume such reactors will play a key role in achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions targets, and have offered financial and policy incentives for the organizations developing these nuclear power plants. Beyond government ministries and agencies, many other organizations also promote small modular reactors and nuclear electricity, including private corporations, industry associations, non-governmental organizations, research centres, and electric utilities. In this paper, we conduct a social network analysis of interlocking boards of directors - inter-organizational linkages at the governance level - to map out the composition and structure of this nuclear coalition. We analyze the cohesiveness of this coalition, its embeddedness within the Canadian corporate community, and its relationship with the Canadian state. We find that the nuclear coalition is moderately cohesive, and that it connects very little with the top corporations and elite organizations of the country, potentially explaining the key role the federal government appears to play in bringing together its participants. This analysis informs our discussion of the role of the state in promoting nuclear power within the energy sector and shaping any potential transition

to different energy sources. We follow Antonio Gramsci in interpreting these changes as an example of a passive revolution, and an attempt to maintain existing economic relations by partially, perhaps even minimally, transforming the economic and energy foundations of the current capitalist regime. The state, we argue, is obstructing the possibility of a just transition.

ENV1d-3 - Representation of Artisanal Mining and Miners in Nigerian News Media: Tiny signs of hope amidst threats?

Presenting Author - Obasanjo Oyedele, Memorial University

Non-presenting Authors - Mark Stoddart and Nicole Power, Memorial University of Newfoundland

The artisanal and small-scale mining sector in Nigeria accounts for app 70% of the nation's mineral extraction. The sector was formalized to boost revenue, reduce unemployment and support the economic diversification policies of the government. Weaknesses in mining governance, illegal mining by unlicensed operators, chronic environmental problems and criminal exploitation of the system by bandits and terrorists owing to regulatory lapses are re-constructing this harbour of hope and reducing its effectiveness. The media are central to the framing of activities in the sector and a responsible for shaping public understandings of key issues and actors in artisanal mining governance. Although previous studies have documented the environmental and regulatory challenges affecting the sector, we extend the conversation by examining news media representation of artisanal mining governance, the depiction of artisanal miners' agency and how the sector is linked to themes of hope and despair in a divided nation. We employ critical content analysis and visual analysis to analyze the frames articulated by news headlines, news stories, and photographs related to artisanal mining in major national newspapers. Our analysis highlights how media framing has implications for public perceptions and understandings, state actors' responses to regulatory lapses, and the larger discourse of criminality in Nigeria's extractive industry.

ENV1d-4 - Salt in the wound: Exploring the practicalities and politics of saline IV mobilities in a changing climate

Stephanie Sodero, University of Manchester

In 2017, one of the largest producers of saline IV solution in the United States, Baxter International, ground to a halt when Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. Mundane and ubiquitous, saline IV solution is used to deliver medications, resuscitate patients and clean wounds. It is taken for granted until it is missing in action. Notably, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration did not require pharmaceutical companies to have back-up plans. Informed by 'vital mobilities' (Sodero and Sinclair 2025), which explores how external societal circulations shape internal bodily circulations, I examine the practicalities and politics of saline IV solution shortages. I delve into the patient-level scrambles, the broader systemic patching and the pushes for transformation as a means to understand the fine-grained interface of human health and climate change.

(ENV2b) Engaged Responses to Environmental Change: Uncovering Destructive Structures, Highlighting Paths Forward

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2016 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

This session describes a range of responses to environmental change. It examines how current socio-ecological systems entrench and create climate vulnerabilities. It provides a discussion of innovative approaches to understanding environmental change in sociology. It also describes critical paths forward in this time of environmental crisis. In this session, presentations will discuss stewardship work at the intersection of human and more-than-human communities, current policies that exacerbate the effects of climate change, and how working with emotions such as grief, awe, compassion, and empathy are critical responses to environmental change.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

ENV2b-1 - Collaboration and conflict emerging in stewardship practices: Insights for more-than-human conservation

Christine Beaudoin, Université de l'Ontario français

We are in a parc in Toronto. Thorny plants grow from the ground. Large leaves cast a shadow. Litter is everywhere to be found. Yet, human and more-than-human forces are coming together to survive and provide ecological equilibrium in the very specific and local areas they inhabit. My work makes visible the complex relational dynamics that emerge between humans and more-than-human actors encountered in sessions of nature stewardship. I started volunteering with a local nature stewardship group in Summer 2025 in Toronto and started conducting fieldwork research through participant observation with the group in Fall 2025. In this presentation, I share stories of entanglement, collaboration and conflict that emerge as part of stewardship practices. I explore the preliminary results of this participant observation in ways that highlight both the symbolic and material tensions that emerge in the field. The project raises questions about our relationship to the land and other species, including a problematization of the concepts of invasive species (seen as undesirable and problematic) and native species (seen as desirable, indicators of a healthy or recovering ecosystem). This presentation also unpacks debates that arose in the fieldwork around best practices for volunteer stewardship, and how decisions are made about stewardship actions. For example, there are debates about which tools to use, how to use them and when to use them to tackle different invasive species. Language reveals itself as an important mediator to coordinate actions around stewardship but also a limited tool that fails at addressing the embodied relationships that make up stewardship practices. I use a relational approach to analyze the creative and collaborative synergies as well as the destructive and conflictual tensions among and between humans and the more-than-human. I am affiliated with the Environmental Studies Association of Canada and the Canadian Sociological Association.

Nous sommes dans un parc à Toronto. Des plantes épineuses poussent sur le sol. De grandes feuilles projettent leur ombre. On trouve des déchets partout. Pourtant, des forces humaines et plus qu’humaines s'unissent pour survivre et assurer un équilibre écologique dans les zones locales qu'elles habitent. Mon travail rend visible les dynamiques relationnelles complexes qui émergent entre les humains et les acteurs plus qu’humains rencontrés lors de séances de stewardship. J'ai commencé à faire du bénévolat auprès d'un groupe de stewardship environnemental à Toronto pendant l'été 2025 et j'ai commencé une recherches terrain par le biais d'une observation participante à l'automne 2025. Dans cette présentation, je partage des histoires d'enchevêtrements, de collaboration et de conflits qui émergent dans le cadre des pratiques de stewardship. J'explore les résultats préliminaires de cette recherche pour rendre visible les tensions symboliques et matérielles qui émergent sur le terrain. Le projet soulève des questions sur notre relation au territoire et aux

autres espèces, notamment en problématisant les concepts d'espèces envahissantes (considérées comme indésirables) et d'espèces native (considérées comme désirables). Cette présentation aborde également les débats qui ont émergé autour des meilleures pratiques de stewardship et de la manière dont les décisions sont prises concernant ces pratiques. Par exemple, des débats ont lieu sur les outils à utiliser, la manière de les utiliser et le moment où les utiliser pour lutter contre différentes espèces envahissantes. Le langage se révèle être un médiateur important pour coordonner les actions de stewardship, mais aussi un outil limité qui ne rend pas compte de la matérialité des pratiques de stewardship. J'utilise une approche relationnelle pour analyser les synergies créatives et collaboratives ainsi que les tensions destructrices et conflictuelles entre les humains et acteurs plus qu'humaines. Je suis affiliée à l'Association canadienne d'études environnementales et à la Société canadienne de sociologie.

ENV2b-2 - (Re)Imagining Environmental Subjectivities for Just Futures

India Appleton, University of British Columbia

Recipient of the Social Theory Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

This paper argues that imaginaries of our environment and climate change are shaped by environmental subjectivities, and that critically interrogating these orientations through a reflexive decolonial approach is necessary for developing justice-based climate adaptation strategies. The filter of environmental subjectivity is created through macro-social, cultural, political, and economic structures. This paper will primarily engage with the structure of coloniality as an informant of environmental subjectivities, through which imaginaries are created. I draw on imaginaries to explore how people understand relations with the more-than-human world, crisis and conceptions of futurity. Through critical analysis, I ponder the change that arises from understanding how our subjectivities and the imaginaries they produce have material consequences that further reproduce social and environmental inequalities. A decolonial and reflexive stance on climate change and environmental imaginaries asserts these orientations as embedded in empirical science while also deeply political, relational, rooted in history and positionality. Central to decolonial theory in research is the practice of dismantling colonial ideologies, hierarchical power relationships, and their impacts on lands, bodies and minds (Sultana 2025. I aim to use this method to destabilize my own orientations amid the climate crisis as a young person, a student, and a settler, navigating my relationship to and involvement within systems of climate coloniality. Rather than looking for solutions or assuming an expert title, this piece aims to learn, unlearn and reflect on Euro-Western epistemic orientations through reflexive practices as a starting point. Rather than knowledge production, this paper aims to dismantle and deconstruct, to lay bare the mental landscape of our changing climate, with the hope of generating a broader discussion on climate change imaginaries.

ENV2b-3 - "Where is the love?": How emotions in climate communications influence effective and equitable climate action.

Lauren Smith, Royal Roads University

The inequitable and unjust impacts of climate change can no longer be ignored: we-those in the Global North responsible for the majority of carbon emissions-must take steps towards climate mitigation and resiliency. Yet, climate communication often utilizes emotional language that can be counterintuitive to effective, equitable, and sustainable change. Narratives of "doom and gloom"

dominate, despite repeated findings that “fear won’t do it” (O’Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009). These fear-based messages evoke mortality reminders that are existentially troubling and can result in counter-productive behaviours that harm environmental goals (Smith et al., 2022). Over 35 years, social scientists have tested Ernest Becker’s death denial theory and have demonstrated that we repress mortality awareness to avoid thinking about death’s inevitability. To these mortality anxieties, we engage in specific self-esteem boosting behaviours to establish *symbolic immortality*. These behaviours include reinforcing what’s important to our social identities; in capitalistic cultures this can have harmful environmental consequences. Moreover, assuaging our death anxieties can include strengthening bonds with ingroup members - and distancing from outgroup ‘others’. Beyond the obvious equity consequences, this is detrimental for pro-environmental outcomes. Despite research showing diverse groups make more equitable and effective sustainability decisions (Vollan & Henry, 2019), decision-making groups with the most power are often predominantly white and male. Our psychosocial responses to existentially threatening climate change make it even more challenging to increase diverse representation in these spaces. Emerging research on alternative emotional framing for climate communications provides opportunities for increasing diversity in sustainable decision-making and improving pro-environmental outcomes. Positive, self-transcendent emotions (such as awe, compassion, hope, and empathy) have been found to increase prosocial behaviour, nature connection, and care about concerns beyond the self. This paper lays out pitfalls of negative emotions in climate communications and opportunities positive emotions bring for equitable and sustainable climate resilience.

ENV2b-4 - Disasters, Wildfire Preparedness, and Communities of Unsettled Futures in the Cariboo-Chilcotin, BC

David Champagne, University of British Columbia

How do exceptional wildfire seasons affect rural inhabitants’ wildfire preparedness? In British Columbia, the summer of 2017 marked the beginning of a series of unprecedented wildfire seasons. In 2017, the Cariboo region and the town of Williams Lake were disproportionately affected. However, many scholars underline how legacies of settler colonial state, regional, and local wildfire preparedness schemes as well as recent efforts since are insufficient to address the present scale and scope of wildfires. The overly reactive governance of wildfires in BC risks offloading an environmental burden onto individuals and communities who may lack adaptative capacity. Yet, in a province where most of the landscape is severely prone to disastrous wildfires, little research evaluates how such localities showcase distinct forms of wildfire preparedness. As wildfire preparedness is integral to settler-inherited modes of living in the Cariboo and “on the frontier”, exploring how inhabitants navigate increasing environmental risks is essential to understand how communities continue to inhabit such disaster-prone environments. To find answers, I use a mixed-methods approach and focus on the Cariboo region in the context of the megafires of 2017, 2018, and 2021. I investigate wildfire-related policies from Regional and Provincial governments, and draw from 60 semi-directed interviews with elected officials, planners, and inhabitants of the Cariboo Region. I show how wildfire preparedness involves an uneven struggle over the production of disaster-proof futures. I argue that wildfire preparedness under present socio-institutional conditions involves a process of environmental endangering and a systematic under-preparedness of rural areas. Finally, I discuss the wildfire response of Cariboo region residents’ and its relevance for research on climate injustice more broadly.

ENV2b-5 - Russia's Reliance on the Western Siberian Petroleum Basin

Pavel Vlasov, University of Victoria

In order to secure a position in our dramatically fossil-fueled corporate future, Russia has, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, pursued the development of an energy empire grounded (literally) in its immense hydrocarbon reserves and reified through the construction of pipelines, export terminals, and transnational energy corridors. At the heart of Russia's so-called "energy empire" (Kim & Blank, 2015, p. 95) lies the West Siberian petroleum basin (WSPB), which is the largest petroleum and natural gas basin in the world1 . This basin is the proverbial 'golden goose' for the country, supplying roughly 70% of Russia's total oil production and 90% of its natural gas (Balmaceda, 2021). This paper is structured in two parts. The first part traces the political economy surrounding the history of the WSPB from its discovery and early development in the Soviet period, through its post-collapse restructuring and Yeltsin-era distortions, to its eventual transformation under Putin. The second part, through mapping the dimensions of the corporate-capitalist elite networks that shape decision making and governance around the WSPB and its resource expropriation, explores how Russia has entered a spiral of increasingly complex and destructive non-renewable resource commodity relations, as evidenced by: 1) the country's "carbon lock-in" (Unruh, 2000, p. 817), in which reliance on hydrocarbons creates entrenched infrastructural and political path dependencies; 2) the strategic management and control of fossil fuel production and exports, which serves as a mechanism for capital accumulation; and 3) Western Europe's dependence on the first two conditions, which in turn reinforces Russia's capacity for surplus production and continued profiteering. The overarching aims of this paper are to trace and problematize the commodity chain of the WSPB, from the processes of extraction, appropriation, depletion, and to the eventual commodification of the region's hydrocarbons as global energy assets.

(ENV2c) Solving Environmental Problems: Action and Inaction in Activism, Communities, and Institutions

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

This session addresses a range of means for solving environmental problems, including knowledge of what works and in how these solutions are implemented or not. Topics range from renewable energy, through to social scientists as agents of change, government and institutions as agents for change in water management, and environmental justice discourse. Collectively, these presentations provide an overview of several key areas of solving environmental problems, and provide an analysis of how grassroots movements and institutionally-led efforts afford different challenges when attempting to solve these problems.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tyler Bateman, University of New Mexico

ENV2c-1 - From Neighbourhood Houses to Energy Justice: The Social Foundations of Community-Led Renewable Energy Development

Presenting Author - Charlotte Taylor, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Authors - Holly Caggiano and Alex Tavasoli, University of British Columbia

Canada's community-led renewable energy (CRE) landscape is rapidly expanding amid discussions of the justice and equity dimensions of the renewable energy transition, with 214 co-operative generation projects already operating across the country. Despite evidence that CRE projects strengthen pro-environmental outcomes, local revenue generation, and social connectedness, persistent challenges include difficulty sustaining volunteer engagement and reliance on precarious funding sources that privilege neighbourhoods with an existing base of strong social cohesion. To examine these dynamics, I conducted twelve semi-structured interviews with CRE experts and local leaders in Vancouver, BC. Drawing on Anderson's concept of imagined communities and Klinenberg's theory of social infrastructure, this study explores how institutional conditions enable or constrain CRE development and assesses opportunities for sustainable infrastructure that accounts for differential neighbourhood capacities. Interviewees consistently identified funding and jurisdictional support as integral to CRE success. However, analysis reveals a deeper structural challenge. While shared environmental identity can foster imagined communities that transcend geography, social capital cannot be sustained without institutional support and local infrastructure. CRE projects rely heavily on established neighbourhood houses, community centers, and public spaces. Practitioners emphasized that technical capacity and environmental commitment alone cannot replace strong place-based identity and social infrastructure as vital supports for CRE development. These results suggest that prioritizing investments in social infrastructure can strengthen the social foundation required for CRE mobilization and support more equitable energy transitions that align with social justice and climate goals. CRE policies risk reproducing inequalities by privileging neighbourhoods with established community organizations and volunteer networks while marginalizing communities that lack the institutional support and social infrastructure necessary for CRE development. Effective climate policy must recognize that renewable energy transitions require parallel investments in community spaces and institutions that promote social connectedness and the collective mobilization of locally-owned, sustainable infrastructure.

ENV2c-2 - Between Knowledge and Action: Environmental Social Scientists as Mediators in Contemporary Environmental Activism

Mehdi Hosseini Dehaghani, University of Victoria

Environmental activism has become a central force in addressing climate change and ecological degradation, yet the role of environmental social scientists within these movements remains less studied. This paper explores how environmental social scientists understand their roles, identities, and impacts within environmental activism, focusing on how they navigate the intersection of knowledge production, grassroots mobilization, and policy engagement. Drawing on qualitative semi-structured interviews with environmental social scientists based in Canada, the paper examines how participants conceptualize their dual positioning as scholars and activists. The analysis develops three core arguments. First, participants present themselves as mediators between knowledge and action, emphasizing the co-production of knowledge with activists rather than the top-down application of expert authority. Second, they emphasize shifting environmental concern away from individualized responsibility and toward collective strategies that address structural drivers of ecological harm. Third, they highlight movement resilience as dependent on strategic partnerships, intersectional collaboration, and affective support practices that sustain long-term engagement. The paper concludes that environmental social scientists play a critical but complex role in contemporary environmental activism: not as neutral observers, but as embedded actors who translate between

theory, lived experience, and policy. By illuminating these dynamics, the study contributes to environmental sociology by clarifying how knowledge, justice, and collective action are negotiated in practice, and by identifying opportunities and constraints for more inclusive and effective environmental movements.

ENV2c-3 - Public trust: Consumer confidence in tap water quality versus quantity and household water quality management

Presenting Author - Dilmika Ronali Tennakoon, National water supply and draignage board Sri Lanka

Non-presenting Authors - M.T.M. Mahees Mahees, University of Colombo Sri Lanka; M.N.Vineeshiya Vineeshiya, The Open University of Sri Lanka

Nearly 2.2 billion people in the world in 2024 suffered from a lack of access to drinking water. The National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB) in Sri Lanka ensures the delivery of a reliable water supply that meets the general public's expectations for both water quantity and quality. The study examines public trust in the piped water supply and the consumers' behavior and perceptions of water quality and quantity by exploring household water quality management practices. A mixed-methods design was adopted, and data were collected by administering a structured questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of 750 households within three NWSDB water supply schemes. Nine focus group discussions explored trust narratives, perceptions of quality and quantity, including community- level dynamics, and coping strategies. The findings illuminate multiple paradoxes in trust- behavior disconnection. Distrust in piped water was not the driving force for household water treatment; rather, health safety, reducing residual chlorine, and concern for ill and vulnerable household family members. Organoleptic qualities, especially the water clarity, are the major driver from the perspective of consumers in water quality. On the other hand, Water quantity is the major concern in vulnerable communities rather than the water quality. Hence, the public confidence is multidimensional and context-specific, based on the existing operational conditions and the lived experience of consumers rather than the abstract trust or distrust factors.

ENV2c-4 - Exploring the role of government policies in household co-adoption of clean energy technologies in Saskatchewan

Angel Chow, University of Regina

Saskatchewan has the highest greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per capita, which is 254% above the national average. Saskatchewan’s electricity is mainly powered by fossil fuels (65%) with 35% coming from renewable energy sources. The Prairie province has the greatest potential of solar photovoltaic generation in Canada. But solar power only contributes 2% to the total electricity generation. Electricity, heat production and road transportation account for 35% of the provincial GHG emissions from the energy sector. Globally, the deployment of clean energy technologies, such as solar panels, heat pumps and battery electric vehicles, has mitigated 2.6 billion tonnes of CO_2 emissions annually from 2019 to 2024. Switching to clean technologies, including battery electric vehicles and heat pumps, has the potential to save Saskatchewan households thousands of dollars annually and reduce emissions by 5% monthly. A multitude of studies provide evidence of positive spillover effects of clean technology deployment and show that household co-adoption of low-carbon technologies improves energy efficiency, saves energy costs and mitigates emissions from the energy sector. Multiple studies show that government policies play a key role in removing cost barriers and driving

household deployment of clean energy technologies. Thus far, federal green initiatives have only stimulated a slight uptake of clean energy adoption in Saskatchewan households. A 2025 national survey shows that nearly half (49%) of Saskatchewan participants support fossil fuel projects over clean energy projects. Little is known about the reasons for the low levels of interest and uptake of clean energy adoption in Saskatchewan. This research aims to fill this gap by providing a better understanding of the role of government policies and identifying drivers and barriers of household deployment of climate solutions. With a mixed-methods approach, this study examines energy transitions by conducting a comparative policy analysis, interviews of multiple stakeholders and a web-based survey.

ENV2c-5 - Environmental Justice: From Social Movement to a Scientific/Intellectual Movement

Presenting Author - Julian Torelli, McMaster University

Non-presenting Author - Gregory Hooks, McMaster University

This research examines the emergence of “environmental justice” in academic discourse and the manner in which this discourse changed over time. Taking advantage of a large and comprehensive corpus of articles (more than 800,000 articles [full-text] provided by JSTOR), we provide an empirically rich assessment of the emergence of the term “environmental justice” - first in non-indexed journals (early 1990s) and subsequently appearing in prominent indexed journals across the social sciences and environmental studies. We mobilize natural language processing techniques to analyze the pattern of topics found in these articles over time and across disciplines. The concept of “environmental justice” emerged from social movements operating outside the academy and outside government offices. It is a marker of success that this social movement succeeded in institutionalizing environmental justice in the state and the academy. One consequence of this success is that the themes emphasized in research articles shifted with this institutionalization. Over time, research articles placed less emphasis on race, class and communities while placing greater emphasis on government agencies, policies, and identity politics. On the one hand, the diffusion and institutionalization of “environmental justice” in the academic literature (and the state) is a clear and notable success for a grassroots social movement. At the same time, our examination of the changing patterns of topics in research articles discussing “environmental justice” highlights ways in which the central emphases of grassroots activists received less attention as the priorities of academic researchers and policy makers became more prominent.

(ENV5) Climate Crisis, Environmental Regulations, and Social Movements

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

This session is cross-listed with the track (PSM) Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster. Climate crisis, environmental regulations, nature conservations, and just energy transition are among the many issues addressed by multi-scalar social movements. This session presents a set of papers, which engage with strategies, tactics, and challenges to addressing these issues. It includes the challenges of environmental mobilizations engaging with the state-led regulatory processes, the divisions within environmental movements vis-à-vis the fight against climate change, the influence of social movements in reshaping urban environmental imaginaries (human-nature connectedness), and contested discourses about phaseout of fossil fuel and the role of social movements, advocacy

groups, and business organizations in influencing the debate over just transition. Overall, these presentations inform the audience about varying degrees of successes and challenges in addressing pressing environmental and climate concerns.

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University; Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University

Session Chair: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Lisa Seiler, York University

ENV5-1 - Mobilizing the Conservation Movement on Climate Change?

Lisa Seiler, York University

The North American environmental movement began with nature conservation and preservation organizations, and those organizations continue to attract more money and supporters than the rest of the environmental movement. The conservation movement plays an important role in the fight against climate change. Conservation organizations provide carbon offsets, which, although problematic, have been a key component of the international carbon market for decades. At the local level, conservation organizations engage supporters and volunteers in tangible, visible projects that often address climate mitigation and/or adaptation, such as tree plantings and watercourse remediation. Through interviews with communications personnel at Ontario-based conservation organizations, this study revealed that many were reluctant to mention climate change in their communications. Without explicitly making the connection between their work and climate change, that connection could be unrecognized by constituents, resulting in a continuing 'spiral of silence' on climate change. Views of the environmental movement were not always flattering. This presentation explores divisions within the environmental movement and asks how the conservation movement can be better mobilized in the fight against climate change.

ENV5-2 - How Socio-Environmental Movements shape Human-Nature Connectedness between Residents and Urban Waterways: The Case of the Santa Catarina River

Natalia Rodriguez Chavez, University of Calgary

Urban waterways have long shaped the social, ecological, and political development of cities, yet the meanings residents attach to them are far from fixed. This study examines how socio-environmental movements influence human-nature connectedness between residents and urban waterways, using the Santa Catarina River in Monterrey, Mexico, as a case study. Based on a preliminary analysis, the river is framed through three dominant narratives: an extractivist perspective that positions the riverbed as developable land, a risk-oriented perspective emphasizing flood control and containment, and a conservation-oriented perspective promoted by socio-environmental movements advocating for ecological restoration. Drawing on environmental sociology and urban political ecology, this research investigates how participation in socio-environmental initiatives challenges extractivist and risk-based framings and fosters alternative relationships between residents and the river. By foregrounding lived experiences and meaning-making processes, using qualitative methods, this research addresses limitations in existing scholarship that prioritizes infrastructural analyses or quantitative measures of environmental attitudes. The study contributes empirical insight into how socio-environmental mobilization reshapes urban environmental imaginaries and strengthens human-nature connectedness, with implications for more inclusive and

ecologically grounded approaches to urban water governance under conditions of accelerating climate change.

ENV5-3 - (Mis)use of Climate Finance and the Politics of Development Aid in Bangladesh

Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick

Scholarship on the politics of development aid persuasively demonstrates that aid is strategically used to advance donors' interest, often dubbed 'targeted development' in the Global South. This paper builds on this scholarship to focus on a contested aspect of targeted development in recent years. Donor practices to advance their economic and political interests strengthen the carbon lock-in energy regime in the Global South. Such practices, eventually, contribute to deepening climate injustice. Many climate-vulnerable countries, which historically made negligible contributions to global warming, are significantly increasing the use of fossil fuel energy infrastructure financed by their donors. Such a donor-financed energy regime is eroding their moral position in global climate negotiations to demand fair and just financial support. This paper examines the Japan-Bangladesh economic partnership in recent years, particularly Japan's role in locking Bangladesh in a carbon-intensive energy regime. To develop the argument mentioned above, it draws on recent scholarship on the political economy of energy transition and analyzes a set of project reports (published by the Bangladeshi and Japanese governments), media reports, and grey literature of local and transnational advocacy groups. It focuses on Japan's use of its share of global climate finance for climate-vulnerable countries to create business opportunities for its fossil fuel-centered corporate groups in those countries. Although donor practices strongly promote their contributions to the recipients' development agenda, their strategic use of new financing (climate finance) binds climate-vulnerable countries into a long-term carbon lock-in energy regime. Such (mis)use of climate finance demonstrates donors' moral bankruptcy in confronting the global climate crisis. This paper, therefore, calls for reimagining development aid in the era of climate crisis to meaningfully address climate injustice inflicted on climate-vulnerable countries.

(ENV6) Ecological Voices in Media: Critical Perspectives on Education and Citizenship

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

This roundtable examines the intersections between social movements, media power, and eco-citizenship through a critical lens. It builds on recent research that applied critical frameworks such as Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model to analyse how newspapers include non-profit environmental organizations and civil society actors in their coverage of ecological issues. Combined with the Media Observatory's thematic grid on ecology, this analysis highlights which topics grant these actors visibility, and which ones systematically exclude them. These findings open a broader sociological dialogue about the implications of such dynamics for democracy, ecology, education, and citizenship. The discussion will explore how a stronger media presence for environmental and civil society organizations could contribute to contextualizing extreme weather events, rebuilding trust in the media, and fostering eco-citizen engagement. It will also question how critical, ecological, and democratic media education can empower citizens to interpret and respond to environmental information in transformative ways.

Session Organizers: Alexis Legault, Université du Québec en Outaouais; Paul R. Carr, Université du Québec en Outaouais; Gina Thésée, Université du Québec à Montréal;

ENV6-1 - Alexis Legault, Université du Québec en Outaouais

Alexis Legault is a doctoral candidate in Education at the Université du Québec en Outaouais and a lecturer in the Department of Preschool and Primary Education at the Université de Sherbrooke. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). His research focuses on different forms of citizenship in education, particularly ecological citizenship and global citizenship. He also mobilizes decolonial perspectives to analyze the relationships between knowledge and capacities for collective action.

ENV6-2 - Gina Thésée, Université du Québec à Montréal

Gina Thésée is a Full Professor in the Faculté des sciences de l'éducation at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). She is Director of the Institut de recherches et d'études féministes (IREF) and Co-Chair of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). Her research focuses on the education of people in situations of multiple vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to systemic racism, domination, oppression, and exclusion.

ENV6-3 - Paul R. Carr, Université du Québec en Outaouais

Paul R. Carr is a Full Professor in the Department of Education at the Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada, and is also the Chair-holder of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). His research focuses on political sociology, with specific threads related to democracy, global citizenship, media literacy, peace studies, the environment, antiracism, and transformative change in education.

(ENV7) Climate Politics in a Divided World: From Conflict to Solidarity
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

Climate politics reveals the divisions that characterize our world. Conflicts over climate policy and energy transitions fracture communities along lines of class and generation, create territorial disputes at multiple scales, pit fossil fuel workers against climate activists, and expose competing visions of economic futures. Yet responses to climate change also generate unexpected solidarities that cross these boundaries, creating possibilities for collective action even amid deepening polarization. This session examines how climate politics simultaneously reflects and challenges political divisions in Canada and beyond.

Session Organizer and Chair: Sébastien Parker, University of Prince Edward Island

ENV7-1 - Canadian Disability and Climate Change Network and Strategy: Creating New Pathways for Collaboration

Olivia Boonstra and Evan Wicklund, Eviance

In 2024, Eviance (Canadian Centre on Disability Studies Incorporated) undertook a multi-year project which addresses the overlapping issues and actions related to climate justice and the cross-disability movement in Canada. This project, "Canadian Disability and Climate Change Network and Strategy"

aims to close gaps in research on climate change and disability and facilitate opportunities for diverse actors working in this space to collaborate and develop solutions towards creating equitable responses to climate change. The objectives of this project pay specific attention to how both academic and community research tends to either omit and/or underprivilege experiences of people with disabilities (Abualghaib, n.d.; Jodoin et al., 2023; Uddin et al., 2024). This project aims to begin addressing the ways that PWD have been excluded from these discourses and work to enhance accessibility and inclusivity in climate movements while encouraging PWD to become further involved in climate action. There is often too much focus on the ways in which climate action and disability rights can be at odds or at times pitted against each other, such as issues around accessible and low emission transportation (IDA, 2021; Ortiz, 2023; Salvatore & Wolbring, 2021). We hope that by highlighting the shared interests and sites for solidarity between disability and climate movements, further paths for collaboration will be created. This presentation will cover the details of the large-scale project, including our local grants program, our climate and disability networks, and the ongoing research activities. We will also share the results of our completed literature review which covers emergency management, impacts of climate change on PWD, solutions and recommendations, and other key topics. Overall, this project aims to raise consciousness about this issue and begin breaking down the barriers that can silo and isolate this work.

ENV7-2 - Climate Urgency and Stakeholder Engagement in Taiwan's Energy Transition

Presenting Author - Chiao-Chi Chen, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Non-presenting Authors - Mark Stoddart, Memorial University of Newfoundland

This study examines a persistent problem in climate and energy governance: the gap between formal stakeholder consultation requirements and the lived experience of meaningful public participation, with direct implications for energy justice. Focusing on renewable energy development in Taiwan, the analysis explores how state-led climate urgency discourse and pre-structured policy decisions shape the scope and limits of stakeholder engagement in practice. While renewable energy is framed as essential for climate mitigation, the governance arrangements through which it is implemented often constrain citizens' capacity to influence outcomes. Based on interviews, document analysis, and case studies of solar energy projects, the paper argues that stakeholder engagement in Taiwan has become institutionalized as a procedural requirement rather than a substantive mechanism for participation. Government-led zoning, land-use designations, and early-stage policy commitments significantly narrow the space for public input, leaving affected communities with limited leverage in decision-making processes. As a result, consultation frequently functions to legitimize predetermined development trajectories, contributing to perceptions of procedural injustice and political exclusion. Drawing from the Taiwan case, the paper demonstrates how widely recognized energy justice principles emphasizing meaningful stakeholder engagement are difficult to realize in practice. The analysis shows that engagement is shaped less by sectoral context than by governance arrangements that pre-structure participation through institutional frameworks, discursive justifications, and the timing of decision-making. Across climate governance settings, energy justice failures emerge not from the absence of consultation frameworks, but from processes that treat engagement as a technical requirement rather than a substantive political practice.

ENV7-3 - Contested consultations and 'meaningful' involvement in energy development: Lessons from Atlantic Canada and Northern Norway

Presenting Author - Mark Stoddart, Memorial University

Non-presenting Authors - Nathan Andrews, McMaster University; Chiao-Chi Chen, Memorial University

This paper develops a framework for 'meaningful' involvement in northern energy development and decarbonization projects from the vantage of contested consultations. Building on insights from fieldwork in Northern Norway and Atlantic Canada, we examine how consultation regimes —shaped by international guidelines, national expectations and climate goals, and corporate practices — are actively navigated by rightsholders, stakeholders, companies, and civil society organizations. We illuminate four dynamics: remaking northern regions around energy resource extraction and energy transitions; corporate presence and community relations; contestation over corporate-led energy transition narratives; and north-south/rural-urban political economies. These dynamics illuminate tensions around recognition, distributional justice, youth retention, and social sustainability, and reveal how formalistic checkbox modes of participation can undermine legitimacy and amplify conflict. Rather than downplaying protest, good practices of engagement can build on lessons from contestation, including: broadening engagement beyond specific project silos, and investing in long-term relational governance and benefit-sharing grounded in community interests.

ENV7-4 - Environmental Attitudes in Atlantic Canadian Belief Networks: Ideology, Partisanship, and Provincial Context

Presenting Author - Sebastien Parker, University of Prince Edward Island

Non-presenting Author - Yasmin Koop-Monteiro, University of Prince Edward Island

This paper examines how environmental attitudes connect to partisan identity across Atlantic Canada, asking whether environment functions as a distinct political cleavage or serves as an expression of left-right ideology. Using Canadian Provincial Election Studies data (2020-2023) from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador, we employ belief network analysis and formal mediation models to map the structural organization of environmental attitudes within provincial political cognition. Environmental attitudes occupy highly central positions in belief networks across all provinces, showing stronger linkages to partisan identity than other major issue domains including immigration, economic evaluations, and political efficacy. However, the mechanism connecting environmental attitudes to partisanship varies substantially by provincial context. In New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, approximately half of the environment-party relationship is mediated through left-right ideology, with left-party identifiers showing significantly tighter environmental attitude constraint than their right-party counterparts. Environment appears ideologically captured by the left in these provinces. In Newfoundland and Labrador, by contrast, the environment-party relationship operates more directly, and thus more independently of ideology. Environmental attitudes connect to partisan choice through a different pathway, one that reflects neither ideological positioning nor federal-provincial grievance, but likely direct material interests tied to the oil-dependent economy. These findings suggest that understanding climate politics in Canada requires attention to how environmental attitudes are cognitively organized within different provincial contexts. The same attitudes can be tightly bound to ideological packages in some regions

while operating as a structurally independent dimension elsewhere. This provincial heterogeneity has implications for coalition-building: where environment is ideologically sorted, cross-partisan cooperation faces cognitive barriers absent in contexts where environmental attitudes remain decoupled from left-right identity.

ENV7-5 - Generational divides: Plogging as a case study for hope

Presenting Author - Kelsey Harvey, Cape Breton University

Non-presenting Authors - Madison Bird and Kristi Allain, St. Thomas University; Kaneera Uthayakumaran and Meridith Griffin, McMaster University; Allison Jeffrey, University of Bath

Environmentalism is represented by the media as divided along age-based lines. Younger people, like Greta Thunberg, are depicted as eco-warriors who are fighting for sustainable futures. Older people, however, are blamed for causing climate change and depicted as lacking concern about environmental issues. The aim of this study was to examine intergenerational conflict and solidarity in physical culture eco-activism to understand how generational divides are enacted in these spaces. Toward this aim, we researched the politics of age in plogging, a physical activity wherein people pick up litter while jogging or walking. We conducted go-along interviews to concurrently observe and interview 19 ploggers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Ontario. Participants ranged from 23-82 years of age. For our analysis, we drew on Freirean ecopedagogy, which draws attention to the links between social and planetary (in)justice, as well as emphasizes pedagogies of hope. Our analysis focuses on the entanglement of litter, as a planetary injustice targeted by ploggers, and eco-ageism, wherein older populations are stereotyped as weak/frail/at risk and disconnected from nature due to age-biased systemic barriers. Despite recognizing that capitalism was a primary driver of planetary injustice, older participants embodied generational divide narratives through experiences of generational guilt, which motivated their engagement in plogging. These individuals also practiced plogging to resist eco-ageism, demonstrating their strength, health, and connection to nature. Younger participants' accounts demonstrated plogging's hope as a catalyst for forming intergenerational relationships. As such, plogging may help foster intergenerational communities to support planetary citizenships.

(ENV9) 'Abundance', 'Luxury', and 'Growth' on a Planet in Crisis: What does this mean?
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

Despite recent popularity of terms like 'abundance' and 'green growth', it remains unclear whether these ideas are compatible with the realities of the climate crisis. This session engages in critical dialogue by examining what concepts of 'abundance', 'luxury', and 'growth' look like on a burning planet. Some presentations emphasize the role of waste, over-consumption, and consumerism as drivers of the climate crisis, while others explore alternative futures grounded in sustainability.

Session Organizer and Chairs: Brook Bartlett, University of Calgary; Ethan Fortin, University of Victoria

ENV9-1 - Waste and Abundance: Lessons from Marine Debris Plastics

Jenn MacLatchy, Dalhousie University

Using a heart-shaped balloon printed with an image of abundant smiling cartoon sea life that I found floating in the ocean as a metaphor, I argue that one path away from capitalist destruction of natural abundance is to consider the incredible abundance in materials that have been deemed waste. Plastic waste is usually, and correctly, understood as a problem because of its toxicity and ability to choke marine life. However, what is considered waste is often not a result of any quality of an object itself, but rather is simply a fact of it being out of place in time and space (Strasser, 1999). This paper will look at plastic waste as artifacts of the Anthropocene that illustrate how the capitalist colonial system of consumption results in human disconnect from the abundance of the living world. By meticulously collecting and examining bits of plastic waste, I aim to reframe waste not as a word that describes a material, but rather, as a verb that describes what the capitalist system of consumption does to the abundance of materials (Thill, 2015). The balloon, which appeared to be an expression of love for ocean creatures, partially disintegrated into microplastics in my hand. This ironic misalignment of message and material shows the flaws in the way of thinking that imagines abundance as something that can be bought from a store while laying waste to the actual abundance that already exists. In the end, this paper argues that we might just skip making so many abundant plastic items in the first place and instead focus our value and desire on abundance in the lives, labour, and ecosystems that would otherwise be used to make these objects (Humes, 2012; Thill, 2015).

ENV9-2 - Abundance and Degrowth as Decolonization

Lori Lee Oates, Memorial University

The 'abundance movement' has been popular across the industrialized North ever since the publication of the book Abundance by Klein and Thompson in 2025. It largely focuses on what the authors perceive as over regulation, particularly in the United States, that prevents the development of infrastructure for the green economy. Environmental regulations are one of the key targets that the authors claim add to the cost of infrastructure. They reject the concept of degrowth as a solution to climate change on the basis that it cannot be implemented quickly enough and that public will not accept the scarcity it requires. Certainly, Canada has been embracing the deregulation model through Mark Carney's Building Canada Act (Bill C-5) which embraces the concept of a list of regulations and consultations up front for private investors who wish to take on major projects, rather than adhering to legislation and regulations. There has been push back on this approach from Indigenous and environmental groups, on the basis that the legislation is colonial and potentially takes us back to the days before Silent Spring (1962). However, what the authors of Abundance miss is that the solutions to the climate crisis are also the solutions to the affordability crisis and North-South inequality. It has been effectively argued by scholars such as Jason Hickel that many of the systems that support the abundance of the industrial North are ongoing colonialisms that extract wealth from the global south. They are built on a capitalism system of over consumption and ways of organizing the economy that also contribute to the expanding inequality in the North. My paper will argue that addressing climate change will not occur by furthering the capitalist system enables "abundance". Furthermore, only decolonizing global economic systems and class relations can accomplish this.

ENV9-3 - 'The Genesis of Food:' Storying Ecological Heath as Food Abundance

Jade Da Costa, University of Saskatchewan

This presentation screens two digital stories (short multimedia videos) to explore the interconnectedness of food sovereignty (the ability to grow, harvest, and distribute the food in which we consume) and ecological health. Specifically, I will screen two stories from my research project *Exacerbated Hunger*: "The Genesis of Food" by Janielle Maxwell, a Jamaican Canadian food youth activist-scholar, and "Nii'kinaaganaa (All Our Relations)" by Nookomis Carol, an Indigenous elder and knowledge sharer living in the Haldimand Tract. Both stories advocate for Indigenous food systems of, what I call, "food abundance:" an unfettered access to organic foods that is derived from living in relation to the land. The first video, T*he Genesis of Food*, does this by narrating the loss of food sovereignty to global imperial systems and begging for the return to "food abundance," in which global Indigenous communities treated the world as an extension of our own beings, thus sustaining the land as she sustained us. The second video, *Nii'kinaaganaa*, takes up the plea of the first video but flips the desire to "return" on its head, asking us to instead listen to our non-human kin (to creation and all our relations) to better embrace the overarching abundance of today and, in so doing, embrace the forever abundance of creation. The total screen time is a 10-minutes. Prior to screening the two stories, I will provide a short summary of what I have detailed here. Afterwards, I will conclude by asking attendees what the implications of concerting food sovereignty and ecological health are for food, health, and climate justice alike, ultimately leaving them with the wider question of what it means to embrace the *Genesis of Food* by way of listening to *All Our Relations*.

ENV9-4 - Fashioning futures: Emergent environmental and cultural narratives in alternative clothing practices

Rebecca Nachtigall, University of Toronto

Environmental sociologists have argued that addressing climate change requires "aspiring to have less" (Elliott 2018:326), signaling a major shift away from status quo consumerism and growth politics. Yet this transition need not be understood as sacrifice. This study examines environmental clothing futures by drawing on scholarship that emphasizes what is to be gained from alternative ways of being (e.g., Schor 2010; Soper 2008). Fashion scholar Morna Laing (2024:337) investigates what "our sartorial dreams and desires [might] look like if we were to explore them from the perspective of citizens rather than consumers", theorizing sustainability through desire. Building on this theoretical convergence and drawing on interviews with 28 thrift shoppers and participant observation at a large monthly clothing swap, the present study asks: How do second-hand clothing practices enable sartorial joy detached from the mainstream fashion industry? How do participants frame this alternative fashion practice in relation to the industry's environmental problems? I find that people who thrift and swap clothing subvert the consumerist desire for novelty by embracing creativity, social connection, and pro-environmental values. Mainstream fashion consumption evokes guilt and apprehension, but buying, trading, and wearing second-hand apparel emerges as an overwhelmingly enjoyable sartorial experience. This research offers insights into joy- and desire-oriented approaches to alternative (fashion) futures. Research shows that climate anxiety can be disempowering in the absence of timely cultural narratives that help us make sense of the transition to "more sustainable organizations of material life" (Ford and Norgaard 2024:451). Meanwhile, emotions like hope (Davidson 2024) and pleasure (Schoolman 2019; Soper 2008) can be central to pro-environmental change. In attending to the cultural and emotional dynamics of second-hand clothing practices, this study can inform theorizing on alternative futures that disconnect desire from status-quo consumerism and reframe the dominant conception of abundance.

(ENV-RC) Environmental Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 5:00pm ADT
Track: Environmental Sociology Research Cluster

The CSA Environmental Sociology Research Cluster brings together a diverse network of sociologists whose research helps us better understand the social causes and consequences of environmental issues, and provides insight into transitions towards ecological and social sustainability. This research cluster will have its annual meeting at the 2026 Conference at Dalhousie University to provide an overview of recent activities and next steps, and also provide space for open discussion. New and returning participants are welcome!

Session Organizers: Lisa Seiler, York University

(EQS) Equity Issues Subcommittee

(EQS1a) Spatial [In]Justice, Power, and Everyday Life I
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm
Track: Equity Issues Subcommittee

Every space tells a story of power - of how controls it, who is excluded, and how inequality is built into its very form. Spatial justice, then, is not only a question of who has access to space, but also of how space produces and reflects social hierarchies, boundaries of exclusion and inclusion, domination/subordination, and resistance. From segregated neighbourhoods and gentrified districts to Indigenous land struggles and the privatization of public spaces, spatial configurations materialize the power relations of class, race, gender, and colonialism in everyday life. By centring the spatial dimensions of power, this session aims to generate new insights into how space functions as a medium of authority, resistance, and transformation, and how spatial justice might be reimagined through alternative practices of spatiality.

Session Organizers: Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University; Kristen Hardy, University of Winnipeg; Jessica Braimoh, York University; Foroogh Mohammadi, Acadia University; and Dean Ray, York University

Session Chairs: Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University

EQS1a-1 - Between Loneliness and Belonging: Newcomer youth reimagining the city

Fateme Ejaredar and Pallavi Banerjee, University of Calgary

Newcomer youth of color actively navigate and reinterpret the city as they build new forms of belonging through memories, emotions, and embodied experiences of the city. Understanding these perspectives is crucial as dominant urban narratives rarely reflect their lived realities or the challenges they face. In a photography project with YARI Collective, a multi-method, youth-led anti-racism, community-based study, we reimagined the city through newcomer youths' perspectives and knowledges. In this particular part of the project, we focused on how the newcomer youth of colour experience loneliness in the city of Calgary. Through qualitative interviews, youths reflected on memories and how they remember and relive them, in addition to the urban spaces they turn to during moments of loneliness. Then, Leon, a youth participant, and I would go to photo walks and in addition to conversing about his experiences of the city and how he likes to reimagine it, we would

photograph the sites where the other youths had described in their stories. Usually, after taking the photos, we would return to the person who had told us their story of that specific place and have a follow up conversation in which we would make sure that they see their perspective in the photo Leon had taken. Capturing the stories of the other youths in the lens of Leon's camera, was a way of retelling the stories while at the same time acknowledging and honouring their agencies. Grounded in participatory and decolonial methodologies and critical storytelling, in this project we challenged the traditional research hierarchies by centering youth agency, creativity, and lived experience. Through this project we mapped belongingness through the perspective of the youths and highlighted the potential of their insights to inform more inclusive understandings of urban life and newcomer resettlement policies.

EQS1a-2 - Belonging at the Margins: Integration and Racialization in Rural Nova Scotia

Foroogh Mohammadi, Acadia University

This research explores the experiences of second-generation youth (15-29 years old) immigrants (voluntary and forced migration) from Iran in navigating their identities in rural Nova Scotia. I ask how these groups identify themselves in relation to their heritage and being Canadian, and what these identifications reveal about their sense of self and their relationship to Canadian society. Drawing on intersectionality and critical race theories, I examine the experiences of racialization and othering of the participants and challenge the concept of immigration integration. Using qualitative methods, including semi-structured, in-depth interviews and arts-based methods, including photography and drawing, I demonstrate how the participants navigate their identities in these White-dominant non-traditional immigration gateways across rural Nova Scotia and how they negotiate and permeate the boundaries of belonging to Canada. With a focus on the everyday experiences of racialization, othering, and belonging, I examine how the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion have evolved around categories of difference. Focusing on the youths' distinct lived experiences in a liminal space, I illustrate what it means to be Canadian from their perspective. This study shows how integration discourse tends to create categories of difference, lead to expanding the mainstream, and produce gendered and racialized non-belonging. This study demonstrates the Immigrants' commitment to forging a sense of belonging and its significance in the context of migration, and questions the state of integration that is tied to the hierarchical differentiating and treatment of immigrants.

EQS1a-3 - Penalties and Privileges: The Story of my Family's Settlement in Canada

Saudia Jabar, McMaster University

How do settlers of colour understand the multiple, complex positions they hold as both beneficiaries of settler colonialism and second-class citizens as a result of racism and white supremacy? Research in settler colonial studies and decolonial thought has explored the role of white settlers and their privilege in depth, but this paper enhances the existing literature by using critical works such as Phung (2011) and Tuck and Yang (2012) to reflect the nuances present in the lives of settlers of colour and the spaces we occupy. I use an autoethnographic approach to engage Indigenous methodologies of storytelling and values of relationality in my work. I discuss the historical context under which my family migrated from Guyana to Toronto, Canada, the people who occupied Toronto prior to colonization, and recent relations between Indigenous people and settlers in the city. Further, I

examine the implications of my parents' migration to Toronto—tracing how racialized settlers are complicit in settler colonialism by way of settlement, material gain, and narratives that erase Indigenous people—and ultimately aim to strengthen anti-racist and decolonial solidarities across racial boundaries.

(EQS1b) Spatial [In]Justice, Power, and Everyday Life II

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm
Track: Equity Issues Subcommittee

Every space tells a story of power - of how controls it, who is excluded, and how inequality is built into its very form. Spatial justice, then, is not only a question of who has access to space, but also of how space produces and reflects social hierarchies, boundaries of exclusion and inclusion, domination/subordination, and resistance. From segregated neighbourhoods and gentrified districts to Indigenous land struggles and the privatization of public spaces, spatial configurations materialize the power relations of class, race, gender, and colonialism in everyday life. By centring the spatial dimensions of power, this session aims to generate new insights into how space functions as a medium of authority, resistance, and transformation, and how spatial justice might be reimagined through alternative practices of spatiality.

Session Organizers: Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University; Kristen Hardy, University of Winnipeg; Jessica Braimoh, York University; Foroogh Mohammadi, Acadia University; and Dean Ray, York University

Session Chairs: Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University; Dean Ray, York University

EQS1b-1 - Homes Beyond Halifax: Tackling Rural Housing Insecurity in Nova Scotia

Presenting Author - Laura Fisher, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Author - Mary Sweatman, Acadia University

The housing crisis and homelessness in Nova Scotia presents differently in rural areas than it does in urban areas; rural poverty and housing insecurity is often less visible than in urban centres. Homelessness is still often perceived as an urban problem. This paper examines how space operates as a site of power even in rural settings. Preliminary analysis of 16 qualitative interviews -12 with unhoused or recently unhoused participants in rural Nova Scotia, and 4 with service providers- this paper uses a feminist and community-based methodology to examine rural experiences of being unhoused in Nova Scotia. Interviews were completed in fall 2025 and analysis is currently underway. Lived experience and perspectives on the way rural spaces shape the phenomenon of being unhoused are prioritized in this paper and are used to frame the most useful policy recommendations for this population. Almost every interviewee emphasized the importance of accessible mental health care that is available, long-term, trauma and substance-abuse informed, and paired with sustainable housing. In rural areas mental health care is even more limited, and factors such as poor transportation options and waitlists for services compound its inaccessibility. Mental health care has sometimes been structurally disconnected from housing policy. This paper frames homelessness as a spatial justice issue and focuses on the often-neglected rural experience as well as contributes to debates on spatial justice by centring rural lived experiences.

EQS1b-2 - "Removed from the City": Young Single Mothers, Space, and Resistance

Presenting Authors - Jackie Kennelly and Eileen Bédard, Carleton University

Non-presenting Authors - Kahlea Wells, Carleton University

Relying on first and second round qualitative interview data with 9 young single mothers who have transitioned out of homelessness and into affordable housing in Ottawa, this paper will explore how the spaces of affordable housing (re)produce social exclusion and hierarchies while highlighting the ways young single mothers actively resist these social processes. The young single mothers in this study are part of a larger longitudinal study in Ottawa with 55 formerly homeless youth (ages 18-30) on their transition out of homelessness and their ensuing social, economic and health outcomes. Young single mothers are acutely aware of space and the impacts spatial exclusion have on themselves and particularly their children. The following sites will be explored in this paper as sites of (re)produced social exclusion and resistance: affordable housing neighborhoods, parks, and affordable housing units. Young single mothers characterize their affordable housing neighborhoods as “removed” from the city, characterized by challenges to create social networks and access social services and everyday necessities. Parks are largely understood as third spaces where children can create social networks and engage in leisure activities. The young single mothers in this study challenge this norm, highlighting social exclusion due to the inaccessibility of parks in their neighbourhood caused by anti-social behaviour by other residents and lack of maintenance. Lastly, affordable housing units are positioned within this analysis as sites of resistance. Young single mothers in the study unanimously demonstrate that affordable housing units are not designed for young single mother household due to safety concerns with appliances, lack of physical space and issues with repairs and pest infestations. Yet, young single mothers are creating new spatial realities within their affordable housing units for their children.

EQS1b-3 - Certainty in decline: Spatializing struggles for social reproduction

Presenting Authors - Katie Mazer, Acadia University

Non-presenting Author - Suzanne Mills, McMaster University

Many rural and peripheral regions in Canada have faced outmigration for decades as people moved to major urban centres for jobs and economic opportunity. Over the past ten years, however, some regions saw a reversal of internal migration trends, with positive population growth and net in-migration from urbanized regions of Canada for the first time in half a century. While inter-regional migration patterns have historically been shaped by the geography of production and employment, recent trends are notable because they follow geographies of *disinvestment*. This paper explores the causes and consequences of this move to peripheral economies, drawing on interviews with 67 people who moved to the Maritimes or Northern Ontario from other parts of Canada between 2019 and 2023. We argue that the recent population reversal signals the broader crisis of social reproduction in which life’s necessities are increasingly out of reach, even for those with secure employment. Our research shows that recent urban-to-rural migration was driven by the inter-regional rent gap, as people sought to escape two related crises: unaffordable housing and the colonization of life by work. But, as migrants have exploited local histories of decline and disinvestment to secure better housing and quality of life, crisis conditions in rural communities have

intensified. Responding to this case, we propose a feminist theory of uneven development that attends to the role of struggles for social reproduction in shaping geographical political economy.

EQS1b-4 - "Super citizens": gendered participation in urban revitalization

Mélusine Dumerchat, Université du Québec À Montréal

Montreal's urban revitalization program relies on citizen participation, in which women occupy a central yet often underexamined role. As community workers and volunteers, women are heavily involved in consultative bodies as well as in the maintenance and greening of public spaces. Beyond the apparent "inclusion" of women in such programs, what does their participation actually entail? Drawing on preliminary findings from my doctoral research, which combines semi-structured interviews, ethnographic observation, and documentary analysis, this paper examines how women's participation is structured, and the effects it produces on urban planning and women's everyday uses of public spaces. While scholarship on gentrification informed by critical geography has predominantly approached this process through class-based analyses, gender and feminist studies have demonstrated how gender intersects with class in the process of gentrification (see, for example: Rose, 1989; Bondi, 1999; Hubbard, 2004; Kern, 2009; Van Den Berg, 2016; Sakızlıoğlu, 2024). Despite this growing body of literature on gender and gentrification, our understanding of the interrelations between gender and other social relations remains limited. By examining the gendered dynamics embedded in urban revitalization processes, this paper seeks to highlight an often-overlooked dimension of gentrification and its social consequences. It concludes by emphasizing the need for further feminist research on gentrification, and for feminist praxis aimed at contesting the gendered forms of exploitation and dispossession at the core of the production of space.

EQS1b-5 - Below the Snow Line: An Exploratory Study of Immigrant Labour and Housing in Whistler

Dewi Wahono, University of British Columbia

Ski resort towns like Whistler depend on seasonal migrant labour, yet workers' experiences are shaped by restrictive immigration pathways and a worsening housing crisis. Although research has examined the corporatization of ski resorts and Canada's temporary labour programs, little is known about how these forces intersect to influence economic security for migrant workers. This thesis asks how seasonal labour and housing conditions affect temporary foreign workers' economic security, and how immigration pathways, particularly the International Experience Canada (IEC) and Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Programs, shape job mobility, housing access, and vulnerability in Whistler's tourism economy. Using semi-structured interviews with migrant workers and local experts, along with analysis of census data, housing reports, and immigration policy documents, the study examines how labour, migration policy, and housing interact in a ski resort town. Preliminary findings suggest that closed work permits and employer-tied housing heighten precarity for Global South migrants as rising corporate control drives up living costs and destabilizes work. These dynamics point to the need for policies that integrate housing, immigration, and labour considerations in seasonal tourist economies.

(EQS2) Got Pretendians? The Quandaries, Costs, and Consequences of Indigenous Identity Fraud
Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Equity Issues Subcommittee

A growing number of public cases of Indigenous identity fraud have caused society and the academy to consider the boundaries of Indigenous identity. Indigenous identity fraud refers to the misrepresentation and misappropriation of Indigenous identity by persons who do not have a legitimate connection to an Indigenous community. Questions of citizenship, membership, kinship, and belonging have long been the subject of debate inside Indigenous Communities, however, only recently have they become the subject of settler media attention, public spectacle, and academic scrutiny. Settler involvement can make it seem as if Indigenous identity fraud is a clear cut, real or fake dichotomy, when questions of power, legitimacy, and definition are central. Settler institutions demand identity legibility while Indigenous identity is inherently relational. How is fraud defined, who defines it, and under what relations of power? What shifted in universities, grant systems, hiring, and cultural politics make “pretendianism” both profitable and precarious? The costs for Indigenous Peoples and communities are clear—identity fraud impacts the social, legal, and cultural tissues of Indigenous life by allowing persons to speak from a position of authority without any connection to or lived experience of Indigeneity. Pretendianism deprives Indigenous Peoples of access to scarce resources. However Indigenous identity policies in settler organizations have just begun to grapple with the impacts this may have on Indigenous Peoples, who have complex relationships with their Indigenous communities due to colonial violence and socio-legal historical complications created by colonial laws. How do institutions protect themselves from fraudulent pretendians while being sensitive with Indigenous people who are required to share personal and generational stories of colonial violence and being severed from their kin? This invited session will bring together scholars, organizers, and community members engaged with Indigenous identity fraud through research, governance, activism, or lived experience. Our aim is to open a dialogue on how identities are formed, recognized, contested, and institutionalized, and to theorize the causes and consequences of Indigenous misrepresentation for our collective futures.

Session Organizers: Dean Ray, York University; Angele Alook, York University; Jeff Denis, McMaster University

EQS2-1 - Angele Alook, York University

Dr. Angele Alook is an Associate Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies at York University. As a member of Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory, her research has mainly focused on the political economy of oil and gas in Alberta. She specializes in Indigenous feminisms, life course approaches, Indigenous research methodologies, cultural identity, and the sociology of family and work. She is a co-investigator on the SSHRC-funded (Partnership Grant) Corporate Mapping Project, where she completed research with the Parkland Institute on Indigenous experiences in Alberta’s oil industry and its gendered impact on working families. Angele is also a member of the Just Powers research team, a SSHRC-funded Insight Grant. Angele is a member of the Just Powers research team, which is a SSHRC-funded Insight Grant. Through the Just Powers project Angele has been able to produce a documentary called "Pikopaywin: It is broken" which features stories on the land with Indigenous traditional land users, environmental officers, and elders. She is directing her research toward a just transition of Alberta’s economy and labour force and the impact climate change has on traditional Treaty 8 territory.

EQS2-2 - John Hupfield, York University

John Waaseyaabin Hupfield is Anishinaabe from Wasauksing First Nation. Currently living and working in Toronto, he is a grass dancer, urban Indigenous community member, and father/uncle raising his 2 daughters and 3 nieces alongside his partner of 17 years. Hupfield completed his MEd and PhD at York University where he researched the role powwows, kinship systems, and the 'dance spirit' play within Anishinaabe contexts of education and pedagogy. He teaches at York University in the Faculty of Education and recently took on the role as Wüléelham Director, overseeing the Waaban Indigenous teacher education program, and the Urban Indigenous Masters cohort. His family travels the powwow trail extensively, bringing them across Turtle Island to dance, sing, and pray in a good way. Within his work, he centres relationality, place-based knowledge, and the importance of dibaajimowinaan (stories) as core tenets of his pedagogical stance. As an intergenerational residential school survivor, his mother attended the state-run Mohawk Institute Residential school, he witnessed first hand the impacts of assimilationist policy and its impacts on the Anishinaabeg nation. Intergenerational trauma, loss of family and kin, rampant self-medicating, poverty, the 60s scoop impacted both Hupfield and his partner's family, resulting in myriad ruptures and disconnections of kin. His work's central goal is to centre and assist in the revitalization of Anishinaabewin, the cultural ways of knowing and being, that have helped the Anishinaabeg nation thrive pre-contact, survive colonization in its early stages, and contribute to cultural continuity into future generations.

EQS2-3 - Dean Ray, York University

Dr. Dean Ray is a settler-scholar who works in partnership with Indigenous communities. His research focuses on building ethical relationships with Indigenous Peoples and understanding how these communities create, maintain, and grow organizations. Dean is a language learner and speaker, spending five years learning Nłeʔkepmxcín from elders in the Nicola Valley region of British Columbia. He is excited by the mission of the centre and to work with scholars at York to further Indigenous resurgence and decolonization.

EQS2-4 - Holly LaForme, Centre for Indigenous Student Services, York University

Holly LaForme is a proud member of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, where she grew up and remains actively involved since recently relocating to the Greater Toronto Area. Holly is a University of Guelph alumna with diverse experience spanning federal public health policy, lifelong educational advocacy within the indigenous child and family services system, and post-secondary student services. She is actively involved in local, provincial and national level leadership committees focused on Indigenous opportunities and advancement. Holly is passionate about lifelong learning, cultivating strong community relationships, and fostering collaborative and inclusive learning environments within post-secondary education.

(FAS) Francophone Affairs Subcommittee

(FAS1) Vieilles divisions, nouvelles dynamiques : état des lieux
Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Francophone Affairs Subcommittee

Le sous-comité des affaires francophones sollicite des présentations en français sur des recherches qui abordent ces objets dans une perspective de la division et de la différenciation, qu'elles soient tournées vers le passé ou le présent. Afin de maximiser les présentations en français, notre thématique souhaite ratisser large et ouvrir la porte à toute forme de recherche sociologique, qu'il s'agissent d'études de cas ou de discussions théoriques, ou bien de contributions à des sous-disciplines spécifiques comme la sociologie politique, historique, de la culture, du travail, etc. Tous les thèmes sont les bienvenus, tant qu'ils intègrent ou articulent minimalement une dimension de clivage, d'inégalité, de division, de découpage ou de différenciation.

Organisateur et président de séance: Guillaume Durou, University of Alberta

FAS1-1 - L'effet des projets d'infrastructures énergétiques ou fédérales sur la polarisation idéologique et régionale au Canada

Charles Berthelet, EHESS / UQAM

Dès les années 1990 et davantage encore depuis les années 2010, de nombreux dirigeants ou militants du mouvement en faveur de l'indépendance politique du Québec ont bonifié leur argumentaire par la rhétorique et la thématique de l'environnement. Ce faisant, ils ont également promu une identité « verte » soi-disant propre au Québec, notamment par comparaison avec le (reste du) Canada dont le palier fédéral se trouve alors décrit et décrié comme un État pétrolier. Cette représentation identitaire d'un « Québec vert » injustement enchâssé dans une « fédération fossile » n'a cependant pas été inventée de toute pièce et n'a pu prospérer sans événements favorables et transformateurs - lesquels ont permis à des entrepreneurs identitaires au Québec de constituer ou d'actualiser le Canada et ses avatars en tant qu'altérité(s) significative(s) du nationalisme québécois.

À partir d'une analyse thématique de discours ainsi que d'entretiens et de terrains d'observation ethnographiques, cette contribution exposera et explicitera donc les effets médiats que sont les retombées identitaires de certains projets (réalisés ou non) d'infrastructures énergétiques ou fédérales, dont la construction de l'aéroport de Mirabel (désormais fermé) et l'agrandissement envisagé de Montréal-Trudeau, les projets Énergie Est de TransCanada et Énergie Saguenay/GNL Québec, l'installation du dépotoir de déchets nucléaires Chalk River, ou l'agrandissement du port de Montréal à Contrecœur. Il appert en effet que le développement d'un éconationalisme au Québec répond directement à l'évolution des dynamiques régionales au sein de la fédération canadienne, notamment à la défense par des provinces de l'Ouest (et leurs représentants à Ottawa) de leurs industries gazière et pétrolière, ainsi qu'aux relations entretenues par le gouvernement québécois avec les gouvernements fédéraux successifs. Comprendre l'émergence d'un éconationalisme au Québec, c'est donc aussi mieux comprendre l'évolution du Canada en tant qu'ensemble fédératif, de même que le positionnement de celui-ci sur le plan domestique comme dans le monde.

FAS1-2 - Quand les données fragilisent le continuum éducatif francophone : trois lacunes systémiques dans le domaine de la petite enfance francophone minoritaire

Brigid Burke, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne (ACUFC)

Malgré des investissements fédéraux majeurs et les efforts soutenus des acteurs sur le terrain, d'importantes iniquités persistent dans l'éducation à la petite enfance au sein des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire (CFSM). Cette situation est préoccupante, car l'éducation à la petite enfance constitue la porte d'entrée du continuum éducatif francophone. La qualité et la disponibilité des services et de la formation influencent directement le développement langagier et culturel des enfants, leur transition vers l'école de langue française et, ultimement, la vitalité des communautés francophones minoritaires. S'appuyant sur des constats issus de projets pancanadiens de l'Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne et sur une analyse documentaire (ententes fédérales-provinciales, rapports officiels), cet article examine comment des divisions liées aux données posent un défis pour le développement du secteur. Il met en lumière trois lacunes systémiques :

1. Une lacune statistique : l'amalgame ou la suppression des données francophones crée une invisibilité qui masque les besoins réels en formation, en main-d'œuvre qualifiée et en places francophones dans les centres éducatifs à la petite enfance.

2. Une lacune institutionnelle : les divisions entre les gouvernements provinciaux et le gouvernement fédéral produisent des systèmes de données fragmentés et incompatibles, ce qui entrave une planification stratégique ancrée dans les besoins réels des CFSM.

3.Une lacune épistémique : la séparation entre la formation collégiale, la recherche universitaire et les savoirs pratiques crée des obstacles à la circulation et à la valorisation des connaissances nécessaires au renforcement du continuum éducatif francophone.

En conclusion, cet article réfléchit à des pratiques prometteuses et souligne l'importance des collaborations ciblées, notamment par la mobilisation des connaissances entre collèges, universités et milieux éducatifs et communautaires. Cette collaboration intersectorielle est présentée comme une condition essentielle pour consolider le continuum éducatif francophone et soutenir la vitalité à long terme des CFSM.

FAS1-3 - Structure et inégalités de classe au Québec : des rapports de production au capital social, économique et culturel

Guillaume Durou, University of Alberta

Cette communication propose une analyse exploratoire des formes de capital qui structurent les inégalités au Québec. En partant des rapports de production qui structure les positions de classe, il s'agira d'examiner comment les capitaux social, culturel et économique se distribuent et s'articulent dans l'espace social québécois contemporain. Notre démarche s'appuie sur les données du *Great Canadian Class Study* (GCCS), qui permet de cartographier les positions sociales à partir d'indicateurs multidimensionnels tout en respectant leur connectivité aux rapports sociaux de production capitaliste. Nous analyserons particulièrement les spécificités québécoises en matière de transmission du capital culturel et économique, dans un contexte marqué par les transformations du capitalisme avancé (inflation, endettement, crises diverses). Les résultats préliminaires révèlent des configurations distinctes qui permettront de remettre en question les modèles classiques de

stratification sociale et d'identifier des dynamiques propres au contexte québécois tout en combinant dans un même effort les apports majeurs des approches marxiste et bourdieusienne. Enfin, elle permettra une meilleure compréhension des mécanismes de reproduction sociale -et de mobilité le cas échéant- et ouvre des pistes de réflexion sur la persistance des inégalités contemporaines.

(FEM) Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

(FEM2a) Unsettling the Frame: Feminist Interventions in Anti-Feminist Politics, Gendered Violence, Criminalization, and Epistemic Erasure

Schedule: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This session brings together feminist sociological analyses that unsettle dominant social frames, exposing the structural and cultural mechanisms through which gendered meanings and corporeal and epistemic violences are produced and sustained. From the aesthetics of the "dark feminine" influencer, to women's criminalization under conditions of structural inequality, to bureaucratic violence in abortion access, to the racialized exclusions embedded in the genealogy of "rape culture," the papers demonstrate how gendered power operates through framing across cultural, legal, and epistemic domains.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University

FEM2a-1 - Reactionary aesthetics and the politics of dark femininity

Presenting Author - Meaghan Furlano, Western University

Non-presenting Author - Emma Cowley, University of Northampton

In recent years, feminist politics in North America and Europe have faced a renewed reactionary backlash. Drawing on Naomi Klein's articulations of 'Mirror Worlds,' Alison Winch's and Akane Kanai's descriptions of 'girlfriend culture,' and Asa Seresin's 'heteropessimism' as key theoretical frameworks, we explore how online anti-feminist actors reproduce reactionary politics, particularly through re-entrenching bioessentialism, promoting self-responsibilization, and fuelling fatalist affinities. We situate heteropessimism within the online persona of the dark feminine influencer: a persona that blends femme-fatale aesthetics with advice promising women romantic success if they 'tap into' an idealized 'dark side' to attract a professed 'high-value' man. Using a critical thematic analysis of 1946 Instagram posts from a prominent dark feminine influencer on Instagram, we explore how this emblematic influencer deploys curatorial strategies to participate in gender regulation, neoliberal governance, and the policing of femininity and masculinity in backlash times. We argue that the dark feminine influencer's aesthetics and discourse reveal mediated anger and despair about heterosexual relationships but ultimately submit to the fatalistic belief, just like those in the manosphere, that heterosexual culture is beyond repair and must therefore be gamified and 'beat.' In closing, we propose hetero*respair* as an alternative social imaginary that offers a caring,

hopeful vision for heteroculture that resists the nihilism of heteropessimism and fatalism of reactionary worldviews.

FEM2a-2 - Inequality as a Pathway to Women's Criminalization: Feminist Approaches to Studying Pre-incarceration Experiences in South Africa

Presenting Author - Taylor Paige Winfield, University of Arizona

Non-presenting Authors - Azar Mahmoudi, University of Alberta; Nokukhanya Mbonambi, University of Pretoria

South Africa remains the most unequal country globally, with stark disparities in wealth, income, and access to resources disproportionately affecting Black women. Structural inequalities rooted in colonialism, apartheid, and systemic marginalisation have entrenched the socio-economic exclusion of millions, particularly women disadvantaged by gender, race, and class. This study explores how these inequalities shape women's pathways into crime and incarceration. Drawing from an 18-month ethnographic study, participatory arts-based workshops, and interviews with 29 incarcerated women in a South African correctional centre, it critically examines how poverty, unemployment, and exclusion underpin women's criminalisation. Findings reveal that most women enter the justice system not due to habitual offending but as individuals navigating survival within constrained socio-economic realities. Economic hardship, exploitative labour, and limited education push many into informal economies, where survival strategies, such as petty theft, fraud, or drug-related activities, are often criminalised. Abusive relationships and coercion by male partners further entangle women in offences beyond their control. Yet, the justice system routinely overlooks these structural drivers, focusing on punishment rather than rehabilitation, thereby deepening women's marginalisation. This research challenges dominant criminological perspectives that detach crime from its socio-economic context. By centring women's lived experiences, it calls for a justice framework addressing the root causes of female offending through targeted socio-economic reforms instead of punitive incarceration. The study contributes to feminist criminology and social justice debates by demonstrating that reducing inequality is vital to breaking cycles of women's criminalisation and imprisonment in South Africa and beyond. Without structural transformation, the justice system will continue to punish poverty rather than eradicate it.

FEM2a-3 - Beyond Legality: Bureaucratic Violence and Obstacles to Abortion Care

Presenting Author - Ashley McKay, McMaster University

Non-presenting Author - Melanie Heath, McMaster University

Research across the globe demonstrates that pregnant people continue to face significant barriers to accessing abortion care, even in settings where abortion is legally permitted. These barriers operate across multiple domains. Material constraints include the cost of services, travel requirements, and uneven geographic distribution of providers, all of which can delay or prevent access. Psychological barriers such as fear, uncertainty, and anxiety surrounding the abortion process, further shape individuals' ability to seek care. Social and structural factors, including stigma and discrimination, also play a critical role by discouraging disclosure, limiting support, and constraining service availability. Together, these forces illustrate that legal access alone does not guarantee meaningful or equitable access to abortion services. A nascent body of literature considers the importance of administrative

and bureaucratic systems in shaping abortion care access. Complex procedures, fragmented systems, and opaque rules create additional obstacles that can be less visible than legal restrictions but no less consequential, contributing to delays in care and disproportionately affecting those with fewer resources or less institutional familiarity. Building on this scholarship, the current paper advances the concept of "bureaucratic violence" to capture how operational processes themselves can produce harm. Drawing on 36 in-depth interviews with reproductive health professionals and advocates, we examine three forms of bureaucratic violence. First, general bureaucratic impediments mean that individuals face poor access to information and technological challenges to accessing care. Second, bureaucratic processes lead to funding issues that serve as barriers for some populations to get services. Finally, bureaucratic procedures for billing create obstacles for some to obtaining the care they need. Overall, this article uncovers how, beyond laws and policies, bureaucracy can serve as a formidable barrier that results in violence against pregnant people's bodily autonomy and their ability to access abortion.

FEM2a-4 - from ida b. wells to #metoo: race, academic capture and the making of "rape culture"

Sandrine Ricci, UQAM

Over the last decade, mobilisations such as #AgressionNonDenoncée (#BeenRapedNeverReported) and #MeToo have not only exposed the scale of sexual violence in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, but have also denounced the social mechanisms that enable it, render it invisible, or shift responsibility from perpetrators to victims. In this context, "rape culture" has become a central concept, used to name the practices, discourses, and representations that normalise sexual violence, particularly against women. Yet its growing circulation has coincided with a process of conceptual routinization that often detaches the term from its militant roots, while feminist analyses of its genealogy, uses, and blind spots remain limited. This paper examines how dominant accounts of rape culture's origins (Phillips, 2017) associate the concept with a white, academic feminism, thereby reproducing forms of epistemic exclusion. Canonical narratives which credit radical feminists downplay their embeddedness in broader social movements, including antiracist struggles, and also marginalise foundational contributions from Black feminists. Long before the term "rape culture" circulated, Ida B. Wells, followed by Angela Davis and others, theorised rape as a technology of racial domination rooted in slavery, segregation, and institutional racism. These contributions, however, are rarely acknowledged as part of the concept's intellectual history. Drawing on my doctoral research in feminist sociology, this paper reconstructs a more complex genealogy of the politicization of sexual violence within which the idea of *rape culture* took shape. The analysis combines a critical review of historiographical scholarship and activist sources on the US anti-rape movement with a content analysis of fifty academic articles mobilising the concept. By moving from genealogy to critique, the paper argues for a re-politicization of "rape culture" through the reintegration of marginalised feminist voices, in order to strengthen its analytical and emancipatory potential within a feminist sociological imagination.

FEM2a-5 - Unforgetting Sexual Violence During the Troubles: An Investigation of Individual and Collective Meaning-Making

Mary-Catherine Croshaw, York University

Until recently, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) was systemically excluded from the historical record of the Northern Irish conflict of 1969-1998. Survivors were silenced during the peace process, and sexual violence was not mentioned in the peace agreement that ended the conflict. CRSV has been excluded from post-conflict reconciliation schemes; it is not mentioned in state- or community-led commemorations of the conflict; and it was largely absent from academic literature before 2010. Recent events in Northern Ireland have shattered the silence on CRSV and forced the issue to the forefront of public discourse. This has forced survivors, and Northern Irish society more broadly, into a process of "unforgetting." Unforgetting is a process, both individual and collective, of returning to events of the past which have been silenced or suppressed; of actively bringing those events to the surface (whether that means public discourse, personal memory, or anything in between); and of making them meaningful in light of new knowledge or events (Takseva, 2025). This project has three goals. First, I identify and interrogate hegemonic narratives about CRSV created through unforgetting at sites of power, including the state and the academy. Second, I examine how survivors of CRSV make sense of this phenomenon- in other words, how unforgetting unfolds at an individual level. In doing so, I pay particular attention to the temporality of this experience, analyzing the relationship between past and present. I aim to understand how recent events shape individuals' understanding of the past and allow them to make meaning of their experiences with CRSV. Finally, I compare hegemonic and personal narratives, and analyze how they are alike and how they differ. In doing so, this project contributes to a deeper understanding of how the past is being reconstructed in Northern Ireland, and how CRSV is remembered in post-conflict societies.

(FEM2b) Gendered Norms, Gender Violence: (Re)productions of Normalization and Harm
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This session examines the production of gendered and racialized harm across social and institutional contexts, and how critical race and intersectional feminist interventions generate transformative and hopeful possibilities.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario

FEM2b-1 - Experiences of Everyday Racism among African Caribbean and Black Women in Windsor Essex

Presenting Authors - Jane Ku, Amanda Opare, Francisca Omorodion, Judy Sinanga-Ohlmann, and Princess Amy Ann Small, University of Windsor

Non-presenting Author - Rong Luo, University of Windsor

This paper will offer an initial report of research findings from a SSHRC-funded project which explores the racialized experiences of African, Caribbean and Black women in Windsor Essex. We will provide a preliminary analysis of our surveys with 300 women and 30 interviews to show the uniqueness of Windsor Essex and conceptualize what racism looks like for women in this area. The research uses Philomena Essed's theory of everyday racism, critical race theories and intersectionality to analyze racialization as an ongoing and cumulative process of knowledge production, identity construction

and group contestations over the meanings of race and racism that is situated, specific, local but transnationally mediated.

FEM2b-2 - Real Men" and "Loose Women": Gendered Double Standards in Zimbabwe's DNA Paternity Debates

Shingirai Mandizadza, The King's University, Edmonton

Public conversations emerging from a Zimbabwean YouTube platform- *The Closure DNA Show,* offer a revealing lens into how gender, sexuality, and moral responsibility are negotiated in contemporary society. Although the show's paternity disputes involve both men and women engaging in premarital or extramarital sexual relationships, audience commentary overwhelmingly assigns blame to women, even in situations where married men have clearly initiated or sustained these relationships. Data consists of viewer comments posted in response to specific episodes of the *DNA Show*. Using Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), the study applies a qualitative discourse approach focused on moral evaluation, gender scripts, and constructions of sexuality. This analytic framework highlights how male infidelity is frequently naturalized as biologically driven, inevitable, or socially tolerable, while women's sexuality is cast as morally suspect, manipulative, or "loose." At the same time, contradictory discourses surface: men are criticized for irresponsibility, dishonesty, abuse, and hypocrisy, revealing public discomfort with masculine entitlement and the social harms it produces. These tensions reflect broader patterns in which extramarital relationships function not only as sexual encounters but also as performances of classed masculinity and social prestige. Audience reactions further illustrate how wives navigate these dynamics by publicly supporting unfaithful husbands, demonstrating the strategic investments women often make in marriage as a central pillar of adult identity. Overall, the paper argues that the *DNA Show* operates simultaneously as a regulator and mirror of gender norms—reproducing patriarchal sexual scripts while exposing their contradictions. Paternity disputes thus become a public arena in which ideals of "real men," "good wives," and legitimate sexuality are actively contested.

FEM2b-3 - Mother Poland in a straitjacket: Feminist investigation at the nexus of psychiatry, religion, and gender normalization

Agnieszka Doll and Braelyn Spruce, University of British Columbia

While psychiatry and religion are often seen as separate or even opposing fields, the current psychiatric and public health literature supports the broader involvement of clergy and faith-based organizations in advocacy and service delivery for people with mental illness. This literature argues that faith, religion, and church communities may provide patients with a source of strength and greater access to services, facilitating and potentially expediting mental health recovery. Yet, as Christian nationalism gains power in right-wing politics, religious institutions and corporations benefit from support for hierarchical, patriarchal gender roles, reinforcing inequities. In this presentation, we will suggest that psychiatric care delivered in partnership with the Church can become a site of gender normalization and policing for women and other differently located folks who resist heteronormative social structures. The case of Catholic Poland, a religion-homogeneous country, is used as a case study to illuminate how psychiatry and the institutionalized Catholic Church (including state-financed pastoral services for patients in psychiatric facilities) work in tandem to impress on psychiatrized women traditional gender roles and a heteronormative, patriarchal family

order. This can be seen as the Polish Catholic Church's attempt to combat the 'moral degradation' attributed to the influx from the West of so-called 'gender ideology'. Using a feminist lens, we demonstrate how women hospitalized in psychiatric facilities in Poland may be subjected to compounded pressure to adopt a particular kind of 'normality' as they demonstrate mental health recovery. Accordingly, we argue that the intersection of hegemonic religion, gender, and psychiatry as a site of gender normalization requires more attention from feminist scholars, particularly in light of the ongoing intensification of *new evangelization* missions across various Christian denominations.

FEM2b-4 - An intersectional feminist review of Canada's Bill C-48 bail reform

Natalie Snow and Brook Madigan, Niagara University

This paper reviews existing scholarly literature and legislation on Canada's recent bail reforms with Bill C-48 that significantly expanded reverse onus on provisions for domestic violence. It requires accused individuals with prior violent/intimate partner (IPV) offenses to prove why they should be released, thus prioritizing community safety and changing the presumption from release to detention in these cases. Drawing on peer reviewed studies and research that explore mandatory arrests for IPV, the literature consistently demonstrates that these current bail reforms will increase: the criminalization of survivors of IPV and mothers, with particular emphasis on Indigenous women, women of color, and marginalized communities, and increase the overall the risk of femicide for victims and survivors. Additionally, the paper reviews these systemic consequences of Bill C-48 utilizing an intersectional feminist perspective. The paper identifies key gaps within the literature, particularly the need for more community-based research on the impacts that Bill C-48 will have. The review concludes by discussing implications for social justice and policy, and how future bail reforms should include a survivor-centered approach that aims to incorporate survivors' voices and experiences that actually enhance safety, instead of diminishing it.

(FEM3a) Rewriting the Grammar of Gender at Work: Leadership, Legitimacy, and Structural Inclusion

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This session advances a sociological rethinking of gender at work by examining how leadership, legitimacy, and labour participation are socially constructed long before and far beyond formal employment settings. Moving across STEM leadership, digital tech labour, classical music composition, and disability entrepreneurship, the papers interrogate how gendered norms shape access to opportunity, recognition, and economic security.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Nicole McNair, McMaster University

FEM3a-1 - From Potential to Power: Understanding the Early Formation of Women Leaders

Presenting Author - Jessica Pulis, Sheridan College

Non-presenting Author - Sara Cumming, Sheridan College

Women remain persistently underrepresented in leadership positions within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, despite decades of policy initiatives aimed at improving gender equity. Existing research has largely focused on structural barriers and organizational cultures that limit women's advancement, but comparatively little attention has been paid to how formative experiences in adolescence and early adulthood shape the emergence of leadership trajectories in these fields. *Pathways to Potential* addresses this gap by examining the early life factors that contribute to women's progression into STEM leadership roles. Drawing on a large-scale national survey of women currently occupying leadership positions across STEM sectors, this study investigates how early influences—such as family support, mentorship, educational opportunities, extracurricular engagement, and early exposure to STEM environments—contribute to leadership development. Quantitative analyses explore how these factors relate to leadership outcomes, with a focus on identifying common patterns in the formative experiences of women who advance into positions of authority. Findings from the survey, the first phase of a mixed-methods research design, will inform subsequent qualitative inquiry and the development of evidence-based strategies to cultivate leadership potential in girls and young women. By foregrounding the role of early developmental experiences, this project offers new sociological insights into the social foundations of leadership in STEM.

FEM3a-2 - Inside Grammar, Outside Script: Success and Genius at the Association of Canadian Women Composers

Judith Valerie Engel, University of British Columbia

Success stories in Western classical music are permeated by narratives about white, male, European 'genius,' and tales of child prodigies. Despite ongoing efforts for a diversified canon, recent statistics show a decline in the number of women's works performed internationally (Di Laccio and Hardman 2024). As an all-women organisation (meaning any 'women-identified' persons), the Association of Canadian Women Composers (ACWC) explicitly seeks to advance women's work and visibility in a traditionally male-dominated field. Analysing the official publications of the ACWC between 2014-2025, I find the construction of internal values that challenge normative measures of 'youthful success' and reject traditional notions of 'genius.' The implicit tenets of the ACWC are expressed through what I term inside grammar, building on intersectional scholarship on (e)valuation, grammars, and identity. These values are further articulated through contrasting outside scripts employed by guest contributors or infrequent writers with less proximity to the ACWC, whose benchmark for 'professional success' follows more traditional, androcentric standards. Analysis of the journals suggests that degrees of involvement and proximity to the ACWC are directly proportional to the extent to which contributors employ inside grammar. While both inside and outside groups address similar topics, they do so through markedly different rhetorics and evaluative subtexts. Peripheral writers rely on establishing personal worth through conventional markers of success, including legacy-building via associations with prominent male mentors, formal university credentials, 'emerging composer' awards, high-profile performances, and engagement with 'high-brow' genres such as orchestral and other resource-intensive forms of composition. In contrast, frequent contributors valorise community engagement, composing alongside teaching or performing, and creating educational materials, including compositions for children, which are explicitly framed as demanding and meaningful forms of creative labour. The results show how

organisational membership can create and strengthen alternative strategies for defining success for individuals excluded from dominant definitions of 'genius.'

FEM3a-3 - Spotlight on women entrepreneurs with disabilities: Insights into the entrepreneurial experiences of women with disabilities

Nicole Collier, Eviance

In 2025, Eviance (Canadian Centre on Disability Studies Incorporated) undertook a multi-year systemic change project to better understand the experiences of women with disabilities in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. Women with disabilities play an essential role in social and economic growth, however they face many systemic barriers to accessing innovation and entrepreneurial opportunities and resources (Balcazar et al., 2023; Statistics Canada, 2020). The 'Spotlight on Women Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SWED)' Project aims to transform the entrepreneurship ecosystem's capacity to support diversely located women with disabilities, and to develop strategic interventions that create more accessible and equitable pathways in entrepreneurship. This project examines how entrepreneurial opportunities and structures do not consider the experiences of women with disabilities. Despite what is known about women's entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurship of people with disabilities, there is limited information that considers how these intersecting identities impact the experiences of women entrepreneurs with disabilities in Canada (Women's Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub, 2024). Women with disabilities often pursue entrepreneurial opportunities due to interest and passion, but many explore entrepreneurship and alternative employment options due being underrepresented in the traditional workforce (Canadian Human Rights Commission, n.d.; Statistics Canada, 2021). The project aims to support increased data collection and knowledge sharing to inform evidence-based programs and services that encourage the participation of women with disabilities in the entrepreneurship ecosystem and contribute to their economic prosperity. This presentation will cover early findings from the environmental scan and engagement with system actors through the Working Group process. Details on the ongoing focus group and interview process will also be shared, as well as information on the data collection and mobilization strategy. Overall, this project looks to increase partnerships and mobilize shared knowledge within the entrepreneurship ecosystem to better understand and support the experiences of women entrepreneurs with disabilities.

(FEM3b) Gendered Labour, Displaced Blame, and the Political Economy of Work
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This panel examines how gendered labour is structured, justified, and contested across diverse global contexts—from digital influencer cultures and multi-level marketing schemes to plantation economies and Canadian universities. Bringing together scholarship in gender sociology, labour process theory, Black feminist thought, and political economy, the panel interrogates how contemporary capitalism reorganizes women's work while displacing structural critique onto individualized narratives of choice, empowerment, and resilience.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University

FEM3b-1 - Understanding the discombobulated politics of social media tradwives

Meaghan Furlano, Western University

This presentation examines what I call the discombobulated politics of the tradwife, a popular social media aesthetic embraced by women who champion “traditional” Western gender norms, the nuclear family, and pronatalism. Tradwives have become formidable cultural figures due to their vast audiences, ties to far-right politics, and ability to mobilize around widely shared emotions. I understand their politics as discombobulated insofar as they advance a false cause for a social world that can be more accurately explained through established social scientific frameworks, such as those advanced by Harry Braverman in his 1974 book *Labour and Monopoly Capital*. In this presentation, I identify recurring tradwife critiques of “feminism” and use Braverman’s analysis to rebut these misframings, redirecting attention to the true structural driver of discontent: monopoly capitalism. By disentangling tradwives’ animus toward “feminism” and relocating it within the dynamics of capital (or a “feminism” that is really capitalism in disguise), this presentation provides a more precise account of the forces contributing to the contemporary anti-feminist backlash. It concludes that while tradwives often identify real social problems, the emancipatory impetus that would otherwise steer them toward left-wing politics is subverted by the malevolent actors of what Naomi Klein calls the Mirror World.

FEM3b-2 - The Experiences of Cohort Hired Black Women Professors in Canadian Universities

Shaunette George, McMaster University

Between 2020 and 2025, higher education institutions in Canada engaged in cohort hiring of Black professors in response to anti-Black racism in academia. Existing studies confirm the positive impact of Black professors on the educational community (e.g., student engagement, curriculum, representation, etc.) while also addressing the systemic barriers they face, such as isolation, tokenism, and exclusion. However, there remains significant variation in the experiences of Black men and women professors. Furthermore, the existing Canadian research has not fully captured and presented findings relating to the important intersection of gender, Blackness, well-being, systemic racism, and changing social context in higher education. Following recommendations initiated by the Black academic community, cluster and cohort hires were intended to boost Black professors' representation in academia, with a covert expectation to rectify anti-Black racism in higher education. Based on interviews with 18 Black women professors hired in cohort/cluster faculty positions between 2020 and 2025, this paper explores the unique experiences and realities of women professors situated within the nexus of structural anti-Black racism, altruism, and objectification by higher education institutions in Canada. The existing literature recognizes that Black women professors are subjected to racial stereotypes, like those of the "mammy, maid, and mule," (Porter et al., 2025). They are also ascribed the archetype of the 'Strong Black Women' where they are expected to uphold care for entire Black and academic communities at any cost, including their own well-being and quality of life (McGee, 2025). Key emerging themes recognize excessive and tokenized gendered labour related to service, teaching and administrative roles, undue pressures to perform and meet job expectations while navigating structurally violent and exclusionary environments, and the role that communities play in mitigating the impacts of these factors and others, such as the impact of COVID-19.

(FEM3c) Governing Gendered Precarity: Inclusion, Embodiment, and the Privatization of Risk at Work

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This session examines how gender-diverse and marginalized workers navigate labour regimes structured by exclusion, moral regulation, and neoliberal individualization. Across contexts—public-sector employment in Bangladesh, childcare systems in Dhaka, corporate networking cultures in China, and multi-level marketing economies in Canada—the papers interrogate how gendered labour participation is shaped by institutional design, social norms, and embodied performance.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario

FEM3c-1 - Implications of Government Policy in Mainstreaming Employment Opportunities for Transgender Hijra in Bangladesh

Md. Liton Hossen, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Employment is a right of all citizens of the people's republic of Bangladesh, who are capable of working according to their abilities. The purpose of this paper is to shed light on the implications of the legal framework (Policy Instruments) of the state in mainstreaming employment for transgender Hijra in the governmental sectors. Secondary sources (documents and existing academic research literatures) have been reviewed to understand the processes through which Hijra are excluded from formal employment sectors. The study employs Face to Face Interviews (Key Informant Interview and In-depth Interview) as its primary source of data. A thematic analysis technique has been used to identify, organize and summarize the primary data according. Study participants include both administrative officials (policy-makers & officers) from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Bangladesh, Hijra leaders, and Hijra people victimized by a 2014 employment initiative. The research finds that institutional factors, including the gap of proper employment policy definitions of Hijra people, the discriminatory practices of constitutional law and international covenants, and the gap of proper Hijra identification policy formulation were central to this victimization. Finally, the paper suggests some recommendations for promoting employment rights of Transgender Hijra in the formal sectors of Bangladesh.

FEM3c-2 - The impacts of childcare challenges on working mothers: Examining the state's role in adapting parenting and employment

Shafiqul Islam, North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

While the number of married women in the formal workplace has increased, earlier studies show that their household duties, especially childcare, have remained unchanged globally. Unlike many developed nations, underdeveloped countries like Bangladesh have insufficient state protection of childcare, embroiling mothers' labour-market engagement. While earlier research documents how deregulated and insufficient childcare arrangements impaired children's development and education, and parents' health and well-being, the impacts on mothers' labour market participation and key outcomes remain largely unexplored. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate how childcare

is organised at both parental and non-parental levels, highlighting how working mothers navigate their childcare responsibilities while maintaining their careers in Bangladesh, where childcare is still considered a private and familial responsibility. Given that childcare is a multilayered task, by using the ecological systems theory, this qualitative study explores the following research questions: a) What are the current childcare facilities and constraints that constitute working mothers' childcare arrangements? b) What message of struggles is embedded in Bangladeshi working mothers' narratives about their experience with navigating childcare and work-life? How do the constraints of multilayered (e.g., at micro, meso, and macro levels) childcare arrangements affect working mothers' labour market participation and key outcomes? Using in-depth interviews, data were collected from 30 participants, including working mothers, fathers, and experts, across various locations in Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital. The thematic analyses demonstrate that the burden of childcare significantly affects working women's labour-market engagement, with the majority of care still resting on mothers. However, findings also indicate that childcare arrangements are evolving to some extent at different levels in contemporary Bangladesh. This study contributes to the existing literature on work-life conflicts by examining insights from the perspective of employed mothers. The current study calls for overarching policy interventions to foster women-friendly childcare policies, to ensure working mothers' career stability and equality.

FEM3c-3 - Strategic Sobriety: Somatic Labor and Agency among Chinese Professional Women in Workplace Drinking Rituals

Xuanchi Liu, McGill University

Sociological research has long theorized drinking sites as "gendered performance arenas" where masculinity is naturalized and rendered invisible through displays of bodily competence. In the Chinese professional sphere, workplace drinking is often theorized as a site of gendered exclusion with highlighted risks of sexual harassment. However, this paper argues for a more nuanced understanding of Chinese professional women as active agents who employ sophisticated strategies to navigate the "double bind" of professional inclusion and the risk of sexual harassment. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 40 women and 20 men, alongside participant observation, this study examines how women proactively navigate the dual pressures of professional integration and the management of gendered risks. The findings suggest that women do not simply experience exclusion; they perform somatic labor—the tactical management of biological boundaries—to negotiate their status. Rather than accepting the role of the sexualized "guest," many women utilize "protective performances" or calibrated drinking to maintain their "professional mask." These strategies allow them to access the networking benefits over the dinner table while actively mitigating the structural risks. Theoretically, this paper expands Arlie Hochschild's emotional labor into the realm of the somatic. I define somatic labor as the conscious disciplining of physical endurance and bodily display to survive and thrive in gendered corporate environments. By centering women's agency, this research challenges the victimization narrative in Chinese sociological studies. It reveals the workplace drinking table not just as a site of harassment, but as a contested arena where women proactively negotiate power, membership, and bodily autonomy. This study moves the conversation from victimization to a critical analysis of how gendered bodies are disciplined, performed, and strategically utilized as capital in the gendered corporate landscape.

FEM3c-4 - Neoliberalism, Women, and Work: The Case of Multi-Level Marketing

Claudel Lamoureux-Duquette, University of Montreal

Multi-level marketing (MLM) is a form of direct selling in which distributors sell products or services outside traditional distribution channels by addressing customers directly (DSA, n.d.). Many companies use this sale system, such as Amway, Tupperware, Avon, and Arbonne. These companies direct their recruitment efforts toward women (Keep & Vander Nat, 2014), who today make up 84% of the Canadian direct selling workforce (DSA, 2022). The MLM model, however, is based on an idealized representation of women's work and entrepreneurship. It presents itself as an opportunity for women's emancipation, through flexible work that can be done at home, among other women, at one's own pace, and that offer an ideal work-life balance (Rees, 2023). This promise rests on an entrepreneurial ideology centred on individual responsibility, resilience, and meritocracy (Kreydatus, 2015; Lamoreaux, 2013), fully embedded in the neoliberal imaginary, in which success is said to depend solely on personal effort and an unwavering work ethic (Winter, 2021). Based on a literature review, this paper will analyze MLMs as a gendered neoliberal form of work that instrumentalizes women's aspirations to autonomy to reinforce an individualized, precarious, and largely invisible model of labour. I will show that this form of employment relies on the exploitation of women's relational work and emotional labour, which is often unpaid or poorly remunerated and carried out within familial and friendship networks. Finally, I will examine the exclusionary dimensions of multi-level marketing. The valorized model is that of a high-performing female entrepreneur - white and middle class - while the experiences of mental overload, financial instability, and marginalization lived by distributors are largely rendered invisible. Presented as a space of emancipation and autonomy, multi-level marketing in fact relies on a seductive narrative of so-called liberating work, which nonetheless contributes to reproducing gender and class domination.

(FEM4) Interrogating Feminist Intersectionality in Theory, Research, and Praxis
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

This session critically engages with the concept and practice of intersectionality as an academic and political project. In seeking to understand its intellectual and activist origins, co-optations, and continuing relevance, the session poses the following questions: How is intersectionality articulated and applied today, what does it offer? How do analyses and action that are intersectional transform and expand feminist and sociological projects? Can intersectional frameworks account for complex identities and social locations without privileging particular oppressions or statuses of social stratification? Is it helpful to supplement intersectional analysis with other frameworks (e.g. queer theory, crip theory)? What is the role of intersectional research in challenging Whiteness, carceral/militarized state violence, sexual and gender-based violence, and other multidimensional oppressions? What strategies does intersectionality bring to address inequality and advance inclusiveness? How does intersectionality shape coalition and solidarity building strategies?

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario

FEM4-1 - Mapping Power: A Meta Synthesis of Intersectionality in Intimate Partner Violence Research

Claire Sharpe, University of New Brunswick

Within the research area of intimate partner violence (IPV), Feminist Intersectionality is a particularly notable framework for use because it situates survivors' experiences within broader social structures. Female-identifying survivors of IPV are not solely affected by the control tactics or violence of their abusive partner but are also significantly influenced by systemic inequities that mediate their access to safety and support. By understanding how using Intersectionality in IPV research can help to advance inclusive findings, we can progress in recognizing the unique challenges faced by survivors from diverse social locations. In my proposed presentation, I aim to provide a comprehensive overview of how Intersectionality is currently applied in IPV research. I will be discussing a meta-synthesis of recent studies that effectively incorporate intersectional perspectives, and I will explore the implications of these findings for IPV research. Alongside this, it will be pertinent to address the corresponding frameworks that go with Intersectionality in IPV research, such as decolonial theory, critical race theory, and entrapment theory. I will also address some of the critiques and discussions surrounding Intersectionality's role in contemporary Sociology in relation to IPV and consider whether it remains an appropriate framework in understanding the dynamics of control in intimate relationships. Specifically, questions about whether the framework can effectively encompass the diverse experiences of all survivors, particularly as societal norms and power dynamics shift.

FEM4-2 - Accounting for age in intersectional analysis: Girls of colour in Scotland contending with hegemonic femininities

Thalia Thereza Assan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Recently, scholars have argued that intersectional theory has not paid sufficient attention to age as an axis of power. This paper brings Black feminist theory into conversation with childism - the deconstruction of adult-centric beliefs and practices that systematically marginalise children - to explore the experiences of girls and young women from marginalised ethnic communities in Scotland. It draws on findings from a 15-month ethnography conducted in 2020-2021 with girls and young women aged 14-20 in Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS) - an anti-racist youth work organisation catering to racialised young people. Firstly, I analyse how participants navigated degrading notions of girliness and white beauty standards espoused by peers, which furthered their othering in white-dominated educational institutions. The unique social pressures of school and adolescence informed how participants negotiated these gender norms. Secondly, I interrogate the gendered expectations and restrictions imposed by teachers and parents in the adult-dominated institutions of family and school, such as dressing "modestly", having "appropriate" interests and taking on domestic responsibilities. This reflected and exacerbated intergenerational tensions. Thirdly, I illuminate how participants shared the above experiences with supportive peers and youth workers of colour from IYS. Through activist practices of critical pedagogy and media-making, for instance on the socio-political meanings of their hair, participants challenged racist, demeaning and adult constructions of femininities. Nevertheless, some felt that IYS peers held onto a binary conceptualisation of gender, thus excluding gender non-conforming young people. This paper demonstrates the analytical significance of attending to the intersections of race and gender with age, particularly power relations within adult-dominated institutions. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of the location of

girls and young women from marginalised ethnic communities in the matrix of oppression, how they are subjected to and contend with hegemonic femininities and the relationships and practices that enable their resistance.

FEM4-3 - Mapping out intersectionality to learn it as we practice it

Olesya Kochkina, University of Alberta

Intersectionality is often viewed as a gold standard within social justice-oriented research and praxis projects. However, there is little guidance on how to implement it in real-life situations. Our project, titled "Intersectionality in Action Partnership", addressed this gap by integrating intersectionality into community-based research on equitable housing and by figuring out answers to a question: *What can we learn about intersectionality by practising it?* We used situational mapping (Clarke, 2005), adapted to reflect temporality (Knopp, 2025) and intersectionality, as an analytic tool to better understand the works of intersectional complexities within our project. While the research is still ongoing, our preliminary findings highlight the uncomfortable and generative manifestations of intersectional dynamics between the team and the external partners, between academics and the communities, as well as within the team itself. We found that in a diverse group, investment of time is necessary for bridging potential epistemic and disciplinary disconnects. Also, we had to contemplate the question of how to 'intersectionalize' research design in a real-life community-engaged research situation. In addition, by attending to change over time, intersectional relations of power, embodied in our own experiences and impacting the learning process and research, were further illuminated. Time is essential for addressing challenges, while time itself is subject to intersectional dynamics within a situation of 'learning by doing', as we could clearly see from our intersectional situational mapping. Our experience helped us develop tools and approaches for moving from intersectionality as a check box to intersectionality as a transformative force. We hope that they will be useful to other teams striving to make their projects truly intersectional.

FEM4-4 - Afro-Latina Feminism, State Violence, and Collective Healing - They Tried to Bury Us, but Didn't Know We Were Seeds

Sarah Lennon, University of British Columbia

Afro-Latina women across the Americas continue to confront racialized and gendered state violence, made starkly visible through the 2018 assassination of Brazilian councilwoman Marielle Franco and the 2024 police killing of Afro-Colombian migrant Vanessa Rentería in Canada. While these cases have drawn public attention, Afro-Latina women's transnational experiences of violence, resistance, and healing are rarely centered, particularly within frameworks of Latinidad and Canadian multiculturalism that erase anti-Blackness. This project examines what these cases reveal about cross-border patterns of anti-Black state violence and how Afro-Latina women mobilize collective memory, care, and political resistance in response. Using discourse analysis, interviews with activists, and participant observation in feminist organizing spaces, the study centers Afro-Latina voices and shows how grief is transformed into collective action, challenging dominant narratives and reimagining justice through relational, community-based praxis. By foregrounding Afro-Latina women's transnational struggles and solidarities, this research offers a critical intervention into sociological and legal debates on state violence, demonstrating how community-based praxis can inform more just, decolonial approaches to accountability, care, and human rights across borders.

(FEM5) Women's Voice of Resistance and the Work of Collective Imagination

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

As Angela Davis (2016) reminds us, freedom is not only endemic to struggle, but tracing the connections between struggles is itself a vital feminist practice. Davis further emphasizes that the intersectionality of struggles must guide social change, challenging us to cultivate communities of solidarity, and to develop frameworks that allow us to connect across movements and act collectively. Yet this labor of struggle, and the spirit of collective resistance, are continually constrained by structures of oppression. As Saidiya Hartman (2020) observes, it is intrinsic to systems of power to police the boundaries of what can be imagined as possible. Building on these insights, the session positions the intersectionality of struggles as foundational to social transformation, highlighting its critical role in renewing women's voices of resistance, fostering radical imagination, and sustaining hope. The papers reflect on the labour of struggle, of reimagining epistemic structures that challenge the silencing, fragmentation, and marginalization of women's voices across intersecting struggles.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Independent Scholar

Session Chair: Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario

FEM5-1 - Examining the Intersections of Indigenous Motherhood, Activism & Fear in the National Inquiry of MMIWG

Nicole McNair, McMaster University

In 2019, the Final Report from the National Inquiry of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) outlined the *deliberate* violence targeting Indigenous women. The longstanding violence experienced by Indigenous women within the colonial borders of Canada contributes directly to mother-child separation through disappearance and homicide, but additionally, with forced sterilization, birth alerts, and gendered bureaucratic management, such as sex-based policies in the *Indian Act*. Challenging these practices can be frightening, yet fear exists within a complex interplay wherein it can simultaneously be a motivating factor for resisting, and a deterrent for it. When inaction leads to increasingly harmful outcomes, many activist mothers believe the risks associated with action outweigh those of inaction, especially when considering their children's futures. This interplay is particularly evident when Indigenous activism is met with colonial violence that contributes to ongoing separation of mothers and children. Indigenous mothers on the frontlines face an increased threat of criminalization and once implicated in the carceral system, they risk losing access to their children. Despite having fears, Indigenous mothers are often at the forefront of movements fighting for their children's futures, knowing the threat of mother-child separation exists. Through a comprehensive frequency analysis of the Community Hearing transcripts from the National Inquiry of MMIWG, this paper presents an overview of how motherhood, activism and fear are articulated by various peoples in different localities, specific to Indigenous community engagement addressing gender-based violence. Analyzing the frequency of key terms will also highlight main themes related to Indigenous views on motherhood and kinship, the leadership roles of Indigenous women, and the risks associated with action and inaction. These findings will help to

better understand how Indigenous mothers grapple with their participation in activism, despite feelings of fear, when their resistance puts them at risk of being separated from their children.

FEM5-2 - Beyond the Indigenous spectre: Horror cinema as decolonial education

Denise Humphreys, Carleton University

This research focuses on co-creating a horror film that draws on Indigenous storytelling, educates the public about settler colonial gendered violence, showcases decolonial love and Indigenous feminist resistance. The project focuses on the questions: How can engagement with decolonial horror film contribute to addressing settler colonialism in Canada? How can the creation and sharing of such films facilitate Indigenous storytelling and unsettle the colonial imagination in North American horror narratives? There is growing discussion among Indigenous scholars, creatives, and others about the potential of the horror genre as a space for decolonial storytelling. Decolonial film can turn colonial tropes on their heads and tell Indigenous stories. Without support for Indigenous storytelling, there is a risk of reifying settler myths and the violent status quo of colonialism, both on- and off-screen. Sharing and learning from Indigenous stories can subvert the attempts of settlers to rewrite colonial legacies. The sharing of a decolonial horror film in this research project contributes to equipping viewers with the tools to see the presence of Indigenous women in popular culture when it is often portrayed as a thing of the past, and engage with others in their lives about these representational issues and the day-to-day violence faced by Indigenous women and LGBTQ+ people. Additionally, this project focuses on film screenings alongside the facilitation of learning circles to support community learning and actions and to grow collective imaginations of gender and racial justice.

FEM5-3 - Towards mending: Textual collage as feminist methodological intervention

Meg Ingram, University of Guelph

Drawing on feminist knowledges on what it means to re-search or re-attend to what is discarded, in this presentation I explore the methodological implications of taking up and collaging *scraps*. I attend to embodied knowledge, memories, and details inaccurately recorded, discarded, or never made visible in formal records as a method of counterarchiving. While arguing for broad methodological application, I specifically interrupt the assumed accuracy and authority of medical records by exploring the invisibilization of both what is omitted and the errors in inclusions. Exploring what is invisiblized, I look to the spectral scraps of embodied knowledge and experience that haunt formal documentation. Building from a theoretical framework comprised of hauntology, scrapwork, and agential realism, I argue for a collage-based counterarchiving method that intervenes on the authority of the institutional record to make possible new ways of remembering experiences that exceed the written archive and affirm embodied experience and individual agency. In making this argument, I first take up a scrap of my own medical record: 15 lines of clinical notation detailing the supposed unremarkability of my most traumatic medical experiences. With this record, I then undertake a reparative reading of the details, counterarchiving my experience by engaging collage as a feminist, queer, and disabled method. Then by engaging in the agential cutting and pasting memories and alternate knowledge together with the formal record, I adhere my embodied experience back to my body. Ultimately, I locate this counterarchiving method as a rejection of pure medical authority, and an invitation to not just correct, but *mend* the narratives in formal records—

making visible and weaving together sometimes conflicting knowledges. In doing so, I orient towards not just a reparative reading (Sedgwick 1997), but a *mendful* one.

(FEM6) Applying intersectional feminism to better support research assistants

Schedule: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

Uncertainty and underemployment are growing features of graduate and postdoctoral training—particularly for those navigating structural inequities based on race, class, disability, citizenship, gender, and caregiving responsibilities. In the context of ever-increasing neoliberal pressures and labour precarity in post-secondary institutions, graduate student employment is often casual, underpaid, and undervalued. Yet, research assistantships are among the few academic opportunities for mentorship, skill development, and networking beyond formal graduate program work. Sociologists often focus on addressing these structural inequalities and political polarization in their research—beyond the ivory tower. Less attention is given to how we, as academic employers, may reproduce or counter these inequalities in our everyday research practices and employment relationships. Panelists will explore various themes related to the core question: How can we apply intersectional feminism to better support research staff?
This panel centers reflexivity, situating our experiences within our positionalities and institutional constraints, and recognizing potential harms and exclusions alongside successes. The aim is to offer an open, collaborative environment for mutual learning, critical reflection, and shared accountability. This is a two-part series with (SCS4) Open Discussion: What Students and Trainees Need from Research Assistant Roles

Session Organizers and Chairs: Terra Manca, Athabasca University; Jeongwon Gim, University of Alberta

FEM6-1 - Benita Bunjun, Saint Mary's University

Dr. Benita Bunjun (she/they) is an Associate Professor in Women and Gender at Saint Mary's University in Kjipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki (NS, Canada). Her research examines organizational and institutional power relations with a focus on colonial encounters within academic and non-profit organizational spaces. She is the editor of Academic Well-Being of Racialized Students (2021 - Fernwood Publishing) centering transnational kinship relations. Dr. Bunjun is deeply committed to the academic well-being of Indigenous, Black and students of colour (and alumni) across their intersections and is the Faculty Coordinator of *Racialized Students Academic Network* (RSAN).

FEM6-2 - Danielle Peers, University of Alberta

Danielle Peers (they/them) is a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Disability and Movement Cultures, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation at the University of Alberta, and the University of Alberta's Academic Lead, Disability, Cultures and Access. Dr. Peers mobilizes intersectional critical disability approaches to study how embodied practices and movement cultures can be used to transmit and transform a community's values, practices, and inequities.

FEM6-3 - Kimberly R. Huyser, University of British Columbia

Kimberly R. Huyser is a member of the Navajo Nation and an Indigenous sociologist at the University of British Columbia. Overall, the central intellectual motivation driving her research agenda is to gain a deeper understanding of the social conditions that undermine health, as well as to identify the cultural and social resources leveraged by Indigenous populations to further their individual and collective health and well-being. Her current and future research contributes to our understanding of the social determinants of health problems faced by Indigenous peoples and it furthers our comprehension of the social mechanisms that undergird population health.

FEM6-4 - Godfred O. Boateng, York University

Dr. Godfred O. Boateng is an Associate Professor of Global Health at York University and Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Global Health and Humanitarianism. He directs the Global and Environmental Health Lab and is a Faculty Fellow at the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research. Dr. Boateng is a transdisciplinary health scholar whose research examines how food, water, energy, and housing insecurities intersect with environmental change and structural inequities to shape health outcomes globally. His work advances innovative measurement tools and equity-centered approaches that inform public health policy, humanitarian practice, and sustainable systems transformation.

FEM6-5 - Ann Kim, York University

Ann H. Kim is Associate Professor of Sociology at York University. She studies migration, race, and ethnicity, and has a long-standing interest in the Korean Canadian diaspora. She is current Director of York's Korean Office for Research and Education (www.yorku.ca/research/kore) and co-editor of three volumes, *Korean Immigrants in Canada: Perspectives on Migration, Integration, and the Family* (UTP 2012), *Outward and Upward Mobilities: International Students, Their Families and Structuring Institutions* (UTP 2019), and *International Students from Asia in Canadian Universities: Institutional Challenges at the Intersection of Internationalization, Racialization, and Inclusion* (Routledge 2024). She is also a member of the RAIS Collective, which has a forthcoming book, *Not Your Cash Cow, Not Your Scapegoat: Student Migration and Canadian Universities* (Fernwood 2026).

(FEM7) Women's Caucus Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

The CSA-SCS Women's Caucus is a space that provides opportunities for women to reflect together on diverse and shared features of our lives and professional work that are shaped by contemporary EuroPatriarchy and women's movements for change. The grounded and collaborative thinking of the Caucus helps members/attendees to identify emergent issues and action priorities that aim to change discriminatory and/or biased practices, especially within Congress and scholarly institutions.

Session Organizers: Natalie Snow, Niagara University; Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ronnie Joy Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Public Scholar

(FEM-RC) Feminist Sociology Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday 4, 2026 @ 12:00pm
Track: Feminist Sociology Research Cluster

The CSA Feminist Sociology Research Cluster welcomes both continuing and new members with a feminist sociological approach. This cluster provides a communications hub and meeting places for feminist scholars within sociology to share ideas and research, to discuss common concerns within the discipline, and also to connect and converse with feminists within and across geographic and disciplinary lines. It encourages and organizes feminist sessions within sociology and also with other disciplines. This meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities.

Session Organizers: Sonia D'Angelo, Wilfrid Laurier University; Natalie Snow, Niagara University; Ronnie Joy Leah, Athabasca University; Rashmee Karnad-Jani, Public Scholar

(FTS) Fat Studies Research Cluster

(FTS1) Fat Pedagogy

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

This session explores the intersections of fatness and education through critical, interdisciplinary, and liberatory lenses and engages with fat pedagogy by facilitating dialogue on how fatness is constructed, regulated, resisted, and reimagined within formal, informal and non-traditional education contexts. Fat pedagogy emerged from the courageous inquiry and praxis of fat teachers who sought to challenge students to think differently about body size and fatness (Cameron & Watkins, 2018) The Fat Studies Reader (2009), and subsequent works further expanded these efforts, making space for fat studies research and course development. Responding to the possibilities educational interventions hold to challenge the structural oppression of multiply marginalized fat people, fat pedagogy builds on fat activism, fat studies and critical pedagogy. Grounded in questions of power and positionality, fat pedagogy recognizes that education is never neutral but rather operates as a site where dominant ideologies are both reproduced and contested (Freire, 1970). Although fat pedagogy holds possibility to generate more nuanced and affirming understandings of fat embodiment that reframe fatness as a valid human experience, as Erin Cameron and Constance Russell (2021) note, the field remains nascent with significant gaps.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University; Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

FTS1-1 - Draw Me Like One of Your Fat Girls - Fat Pedagogies in Comics

Mollie Cronin, Independent Scholar

In the first weeks of 2026, comics artists Mollie Cronin and Nicole Testa Laliberty met over Zoom. Longtime fans of the other's work, both are prominent voices in a very small group of cartoonists writing on fatness and liberation today. The two had both recently taught comics workshops and met to discuss their experiences and teaching approaches, and to begin the process of creating a

collaborative comic on the topic. Their respective workshops had centered on the themes of drawing fat bodies/characters in comics, and they discussed their strategies as well as their roles as fat educators in comics spaces. My proposed paper will explore Cronin and Testa Laliberty's findings on fat pedagogies in comics, and our resulting collaborative comic on the topic as a pedagogical tool itself. Both Testa Laliberty (Connecticut, USA) and Cronin (Ontario, Canada) are cartoonists whose work illustrates their lived experiences as fat people, while addressing systemic and cultural forces of fatphobia. In their workshops, participants learned how to meaningfully represent fat characters, approach representation of fatness in creative and imaginative ways, and to consider fatness as part of their world building when telling stories. Both Cronin and Testa Laliberty were able to use their own comics art as pedagogical tools in their workshops, demonstrating how fat bodies and characters can meaningfully be represented in this medium. These workshops were open to all comics/drawing skill levels, and demonstrated the accessible nature of comics making as a valuable tool for fighting and unlearning fatphobia. Presented by Cronin on behalf of the two artists, this paper will explore how fat pedagogies fit into the world of comics (via these workshops), and how the reading and making of comics can in turn be valuable pedagogical tools for fat liberation.

FTS1-2 - Sharing Collage and Zine-Making as Fat Pedagogies

Brooke Hull, Pennsylvania State University; Mackenzie Edwards and Ramanpreet Bahra, York University

In this paper presentation, we will share the process and reflection on our experiences using collage and zine-making as tools for fat pedagogy. Working within the Fat Studies Research Cluster, located in the Canadian Sociological Association, we first held a session to discuss ways in which we all resist anti-fatness. Then, in a second session, members of the research cluster created visual collage representations of their resistance toolkits to be shared as a zine. Drawing on collage as a feminist practice that centers emotion and lived experience, collage as a "method of liberatory research" creates embodied moments for our fat and fat-ally participants to share their lived experiences (Vaughhan, 2005, pg. 31). Collage is also helpful in conceptualizing complex ideas by "fleshing out different facets in order to get a nuanced understanding" of these ideas (Bulter-Kisber and Poldma, 2010, pg.3). As fat experiences are complex and often misunderstood, collage creates a new entry point for understanding this complexity. By then sharing these collages as a zine - a historically fat and queer tool for sharing, protesting, community-building, and more - the work activates a collective whole that can share many fat experiences. We thus name collage and zine-making as fat pedagogies for how they "consider[s] the everyday ways in which we learn and teach about fatness" - a definition used by authors of "The Fat Pedagogy Reader," (2016, pg. 4). This learning, teaching, and further sharing of fat lived experience expands the fields of fat studies, creates fat community, forwards fat liberation, and importantly complicates intersections in other field, demanding fat experiences be widely acknowledged.

FTS1-3 - Exploring anti-fat bias within health-related undergraduate programs

Presenting Author - Maddie Katz, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Robb Travers, Paula Fletcher, and Ketan Shankardass, Wilfrid Laurier University

Anti-fat bias negatively influences fat people's well-being. This bias is present in healthcare and fitness contexts, where emphases on bodies and weight are salient. Healthcare and fitness professionals often re-learn anti-fat bias in their education through a weight-centric paradigm of health, which frames weight as a primary indicator of health (good or bad), an individual responsibility, and a direct reflection of individual behavioural choices (i.e., diet and exercise). The failure to control one's weight within societally acceptable levels is seen as a moral failure rather than resulting from complex factors relating to the social determinants of health (i.e., environment, economic status, education). Healthcare and fitness professionals may then hold anti-fat bias towards their patients, perpetuating negative health outcomes. Additionally, fat students in these programs may experience anti-fat bias through course curricula and school environments. This study explored the experiences of 46 fat students in undergraduate health-related programs at an Ontario university to understand the effect anti-fat bias had on their well-being. Students described their experiences through free-text responses on an online, anonymous mixed-methods survey investigating weight stigma, body image, and eating habits. For the current project, the qualitative data was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's Reflective Thematic Analysis. Students reported how healthism and a weight-centric model of health manifested in curricula, as well as the ways in which they struggled with body self-consciousness and concerns about not belonging in their programs due to their weight, both physically and mentally. In spite of their experiences, they recognized the complexities of health, discussing appreciation for holistic health frameworks. Results highlight the importance of addressing anti-fat bias at post-secondary institutions and the need for systemic interventions at program levels to better equip the next generations of healthcare and fitness professionals to appropriately and compassionately approach weight and body size.

(FTS2a) Against Body Fascism I

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

This session interrogates the broader state apparatuses of fascism in North America and their impact on fat people. The concept of "body fascism" names the violent disciplining of bodies deemed unruly, excessive, or non-normative (Wright, 2014; Gibson, 2014; Griffin, 2017; Rodier, 2024). This disciplining can range from fatphobic microaggressions, invalidation of health concerns and GLP-1s as a remedy, or the social and literal murder of fat people across the intersections. In the context of rising authoritarianism, neoliberal lifestyle eugenics and aesthetics, and medical gatekeeping, body fascism manifests through the mutual constitution of fatphobia (sizism, shapeism), ableism, transphobia and femmephobia, anti-Blackness, racism, and other interlocking systems of oppression. Fat bodies, especially those racialized, disabled, femme, and queer, are disproportionately targeted by these regimes, rendered hypervisible and disposable in public discourse, policy, and institutional practice. This session aims to create a space of affirmation, critique, and possibility, where fatness is not pathologized but celebrated, and where sociological inquiry becomes a tool for collective liberation.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University; Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University

FTS2a-1 - Conceptualizing anti-fatness within transgender and gender-diverse contexts

Maddie Katz, Dalhousie University

This paper examines how anti-fatness operates as a mechanism of normative gender regulation for transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) people in a North American context. While fat studies scholarship has long documented the pervasive contempt directed towards fat people the field can benefit from further analyses at the fat/trans intersection. Drawing on historical work and theories of healthism, biopower, and cis/heternormativity, this paper extends existing analyses by interrogating how anti-fatness shapes (and constrains) the possibilities of TGD embodiment. I argue that anti-fatness functions as a norm of gender policing, restricting who is able to be recognized as a "valid" TGD person. I first decouple anti-fatness from dominant health discourses. Using the works of Strings (2019) and Robinson (2020), I demonstrate that anti-fatness is deeply rooted within and functions to maintain white settler colonialism, positioning thinness as the ideal form of white gendered embodiment. Examining anti-fatness as a colonial project reveals how anti-fatness works to maintain hierarchies of value through the application of shame, abjection, and disciplining of bodies falling outside of thinness. I then examine how fatness is gendered. Normative gender expression relies on thinness as a visual marker of legibility. Fat bodies therefore disrupt cis/heteronormative expectations of what properly gendered bodies should look like. Although queer communities may offer expanded possibilities for fat embodiment, they often reproduce anti-fatness. Fat TGD people, already transgressing normative gender, face intensified stigma that de-legitimizes their experiences, privileging trans narratives focused on thin, binary, medically-assisted transitions. This dynamic reinforces broader systems of white settler colonial cis/heteronormative systems of power. I argue that queering fatness offers a liberatory framework to resist body fascism and normative gender. By theorizing fatness as a site of possibility, rather than a deviation of gender norms, I highlight how fat TGD experiences challenge and expand the boundaries of gender itself.

FTS2a-2 - Against the Future We're Promised: An Anti-Social Temporal Framework in Fat Queer Theory

Carly-Ann Haney, University of Calgary

This paper introduces an *anti-social temporal theoretical framework* grounded in Fat queer theory. Rooted in a critical Fat epistemology, this framework values fatness, situates power within institutional structures, and resists normative structures that position Fat bodies as problems to be corrected. Drawing on queer theory as both a noun and a verb, this approach queers dominant assumptions about embodiment, normativity, and futurity, extending queer theory beyond sexuality and gender to interrogate fatness as a site of social regulation and disruption. Inspired by contemporary Fat queer scholarship, particularly Taylor (2021) and White (2012, 2014), the mapping of queer approaches in Fat Studies brings together two complementary theoretical strands: Fat temporalities and anti-social queer theory. Fat temporalities interrogate how time is mobilized through obesity discourse to deny Fat bodies livable presents and futures, positioning fatness as either a temporary failure awaiting thinness or a body without a future. In contrast, Fat temporalities create space for "Fat time," wherein fatness is honoured as present, enduring, and desirable. Anti-social queer theory further destabilizes liberal politics of inclusion by rejecting healthism, the "good fatty" ideal, and moralized health narratives that condition care and respect on behavioural compliance. Rather than seeking redemption within dominant systems, anti-social queer theory

embraces disruption, failure, shame, and negativity as productive sites for imagining multiple livable Fat embodiments. Together, these perspectives form an anti-social temporal framework that offers a critical perspective, particularly for exploring and transforming healthcare systems that produce and maintain fat stigma while foreclosing Fat futures. This framework advances sociological debates on embodiment, temporality, and power by refusing health-based moral hierarchies and insisting on Fat futurity beyond thinness, productivity, or wellness. In doing so, it offers a critical, future-oriented contribution to Fat Studies, reimagining care, time, and embodiment outside normative regimes of value.

FTS2a-3 - Naming and Explicating the Curative Imaginary of Fatness

Faith Stadnyk, Carleton University

This paper explores what I term the curative imaginary of fatness, a normalizing temporal script that constructs thin, white, (settler) colonial, able-bodyminded futures as not only the most desirable but also the *only* comprehensible and imaginable futures in colonial societies shaped by an obsession with linear progression toward perfection. The curative imaginary of fatness justifies and carries out the eradication of fatness through mandating adherence to thin, colonial, curative time, which is done in the name of achieving 'better' futures. I focus specifically on three groupings: internalization, state violence, and medical landscapes. First, I argue that eating dis/ordered distress can be understood as an *internalized* curative imaginary of fatness. Preoccupation with eating orders, driven by a curative imaginary of fatness that regulates people towards thin futures as the best—and also the only—option, causes bodymind harm as people are disciplined into living for their imagined thin selves that do not ever actually come into fruition. Secondly, I argue that this imaginary imagines non-white peoples as 'backward' threats to 'better' futures due to their fatness and/or lack of cultural and individual adherence to manifesting thin futures. These 'threats' are thus positioned as needing to be violently eliminated, regulated, or assimilated. Simultaneously, the embeddedness of the curative imaginary of fatness amongst white and (settler) colonial people is constituted as 'modern' and 'civilized' or as curative progress. Finally, I argue that medical veins construct fatness as a disease that is unhealthy and literally killing people, precluding any futures at all. I also argue that it simultaneously constructs itself as cure or as a necessary path towards perfect, sane, and healthy futures. Explicating this concept makes its violence and ubiquity legible and opens up opportunities for resistance.

FTS2a-4 - Against Body Fascism: Neoliberal Eugenics, Medical Authority, and the Governance of Fat Life in Canada

Areeba Iftikhar, Independent

This paper examines body fascism as a regime of bodily governance that disciplines fat bodies through medicalization, surveillance, and neoliberal imperatives of productivity and self-management. In Canada, fatness is routinely framed as a public health threat, legitimizing coercive interventions embedded within provincially administered healthcare systems, public health campaigns, and risk-based policy discourse. Building on Sabrina Strings' analysis of the racial origins of fat phobia, Julie Guthman's critique of obesity discourse as a neoliberal moral project and Alison Kafer's work on compulsory cure and rehabilitative futures, this paper argues that fascism in Canada operates through routinized institutional practices that normalize bodily conformity as civic

responsibility. Public health messaging, biomedical risk frameworks, and pharmaceutical interventions, including GLP-1 agonists regulated through Health Canada, function as tools of neoliberal eugenics that recode fat bodies as problems to be managed rather than lives to be supported. Grounded in feminist, crip, and fat auto-theory, this analysis is informed by my situated experience as a fat, South Asian, non-binary, immigrant with Type 2 diabetes navigating GLP-1 treatment within Ontario's healthcare system. Prescribed for metabolic management rather than weight loss, this treatment reveals how medical necessity is unevenly recognized across bodies shaped by race, gender noncomformity, disability, migration status, and socioeconomic position. Within Canadian public health discourse, South Asia and gender-divergent bodies are frequently positioned as inherently high risk, rendering fat racialized populations subject to intensified surveillance and pre-emptive intervention. Following Nishant Upadhyay's work, this paper understands such targeting as anticipatory body fascism, wherein race, fatness, and gender variance converge to justify moralized regulation. Through practice-based analysis from clinical, educational, and policy contexts, this paper traces how biomedical authority obscures the political nature of bodily regulation. Fat resistance is theorized not as an individual body acceptance, but as collective refusal and insurgent knowledge within settler-colonial governance structures.

(FTS2b) Against Body Fascism II: Health care focus

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

This session interrogates the broader state apparatuses of fascism in North America and their impact on fat people. The concept of "body fascism" names the violent disciplining of bodies deemed unruly, excessive, or non-normative (Wright, 2014; Gibson, 2014; Griffin, 2017; Rodier, 2024). This disciplining can range from fatphobic microaggressions, invalidation of health concerns and GLP-1s as a remedy, or the social and literal murder of fat people across the intersections. In the context of rising authoritarianism, neoliberal lifestyle eugenics and aesthetics, and medical gatekeeping, body fascism manifests through the mutual constitution of fatphobia (sizism, shapeism), ableism, transphobia and femmephobia, anti-Blackness, racism, and other interlocking systems of oppression. Fat bodies, especially those racialized, disabled, femme, and queer, are disproportionately targeted by these regimes, rendered hypervisible and disposable in public discourse, policy, and institutional practice. This session aims to create a space of affirmation, critique, and possibility, where fatness is not pathologized but celebrated, and where sociological inquiry becomes a tool for collective liberation.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University; Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

FTS2b-1 - Regulating Fat Bodies: Indigenous Embodiment and Colonial Health Knowledge

Courteney Morris, The University of Western Ontario

Sharing preliminary findings from a critical literature review, situated at the intersection of fat studies and Indigenous health geographies. Across Indigenous health and geographic scholarship, Indigenous fat bodies are approached through biomedical and epidemiological frameworks that emphasize risk, intervention, and population-level outcomes. These approaches have been vital for identifying

structural health inequities and challenging individual blame; however, they render Indigenous fat bodies as objects of governance rather than as sources of embodied and relational knowledge. Within fat studies and critical geographies of obesity, scholars have powerfully challenged anti-fat stigma and medical authority. Both bodies of scholarship are largely produced through settler positionalities, which have limited sustained engagement with Indigenous epistemologies, colonial governance, and Indigenous body sovereignty. Indigenous health geographies and related literature offer important correctives by foregrounding colonial histories, structural determinants of health, and relational understandings of wellness. Indigenous fat embodiment, however, remains undertheorized, particularly in urban contexts, where fat bodies are frequently discussed in terms of risk and outcome rather than lived experience. Bringing these bodies of scholarship into conversation, this presentation identifies an epistemic absence: Indigenous fat lives remain underrepresented as knowing subjects whose embodied experiences offer insight into how health, care, and governance are lived and negotiated. Grounded in Anishinaabe and Métis relational ways of knowing, these preliminary insights advance a pluriversal approach that recognizes Indigenous fat embodiment as a site of body sovereignty, relational knowledge, and refusal of deficit-based framings. This epistemic orientation shapes the thesis's theoretical direction. It centers the lived experiences of fat Indigenous women as a key analytic site for clarifying how colonial health regimes are encountered, negotiated, and reworked in urban contexts. The emerging field of Indigenous fat studies moves beyond white, settler positionalities, and this analysis clarifies how pluriversal, relational approaches generate new ways of knowing health, place, and governance.

FTS2b-2 - Mothers be good to your daughters, too: The fat body, health care, and the mother-daughter relationship

Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University

In 2022, I defended my doctoral dissertation on how fat women face barriers to accessing health care in Canada, based on their body size. As I analyzed the data and wrote my dissertation, I continuously saw answers to a research question I had not asked: how does fatphobia in health care impact the mother-daughter relationship in the home? Specifically, throughout my interviews with participants, it was clear that during childhood, parents, especially mothers, seemed to act almost as the doctors ‘representative’ in the home, enforcing the weight loss messaging dispensed in the doctor’s office. The constant exposure to anti-fat bias in the home, perceived as at the direction of the doctor, contributed to fraying the relationship between parent and child. In my study, I spoke exclusively to women or folks assigned female at birth, and they spoke almost exclusively of their mothers. I was unable to explore this topic in my dissertation, so in this paper, I want to return to my conversations with these women and explore the impact of anti-fat bias in health care on the mother-daughter relationship in the home.

FTS2b-3 - Navigating the In-Between of Health and Anti-Fatness: the stickiness of GLP-1s

Nicholas Villarreal, University of California, Davis

In a society predicated on anti-fatness, the advent of a new diet technology has flooded the market and the veins of millions. The mass prescribing and distribution of GLP-1’s is demonstrative of the continued pathologization of fatness and the embrace of Western curative logics of eugenics. These medications are difficult and often sticky to navigate-as they are a vital component of treating Type

II Diabetic (T2DM) patients and can have necessary health benefits, they are also increasingly mobilized within a cultural economy of thinness. People frequently weaponize and invoke healthism narratives to justify using weightloss injectables "for their health." This argument relies on ableist tropes about the fat disabled body-particularly when these medications are used purely for anti-obesity reasons--as sites of excess and risk that need to be corrected and reformed for normativity sake. Especially as emerging research demonstrates that prolonged use of GLP-1's can have debilitating and serious adverse effects on the body-with reports of vision impairments, to increased cancer risks, and the normalization of disordered eating-weightloss injectables are not a neutral technology, nor can they be separated from this political moment of embracing extreme thinness. In this paper, I examine how GLP-1-mediated weightloss has contributed to a resurgence of bodily surveillance, and the intense cultural pressure for fat people to pursue pharmaceutically/medically-induced weightloss regardless of their individual health status. Through digital ethnography, I analyze online discourse surrounding socially-mediated weightloss, celebrity thin culture and the politics of health, demonstrating how these narratives normalize medically-prescribed disordered eating. Finally, I offer a politics of what it means to navigate this specific moment of thinness, and how to improvise and negotiate each conversation in the face of anti-fatness.

(FTS3) Fat Joy and Hope

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

In light of the broader theme of CSA, "harbours of hope," this session will foreground the affective, sensorial, and temporal elements of fat sociology in a divided world. Drawing from the interdisciplinary field of fat studies, queer theory, and disability justice, hope and joy are not mere emotions experienced; they are epistemologies that invite us into the various acts of resistance marginalized communities take up to survive the divisions of bodies and the world. Affect scholars suggest hope is a structure of feeling that paves the way for fat utopias, while joy ruptures the space in its own modality without hinging onto a positive emotion (Muñoz, 2009; Ahmed, 2010). It can also be seen as a radical refusal and political act that disrupts dominant scripts proposing a fattened-, crip- time and space that propels us to new expressions of a life (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Wilson, 2011; Bahra & Overboe, 2019; One Future Collective, 2021). Together, hope and joy are framed as ways of surviving, knowing, and transgressing the very systems that oppress us.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University; Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

FTS3-1 - Makhi, Paneer and Cream: La Joie de Vivre

Rohini Bannerjee, Saint Mary's University

This spoken word contribution, peppered with French, English, Urdu-Hindi and Punjabi, will be an ode of joy to the fat Brown body I have been given in this lifetime. A love letter of sorts, I will explore joy in my mid-section, instead of the imposed shame and grief. My belly is the rising cream, the warm makhi of chai, the thick paneer in masala, la joie de vivre de ma féminité.

FTS3-2 - Hope Beyond Compliance: Fat Care, Refusal, and Temporal Resistance

Carly-Ann Haney, University of Calgary

This paper explores *Fat hope* as an emergent, relational practice within primary healthcare. Drawing on qualitative and arts-based data from a doctoral study with Fat service users, I examine how participants' experiences complicate dominant narratives that frame Fat healthcare solely in terms of denial, delay, and inevitable failure. While participants described significant structural harm, they also identified moments of care that resist weight-centric logics. In particular, they describe encounters in which providers honoured informed consent, decentered weight, and engaged Fat bodies as worthy of care in the present. These moments offer not false optimism, but glimpses of a Fat-positive present and the possibility of a more livable healthcare future. Rather than locating Fat hope in distant reform or institutional promises, this paper theorizes hope as enacted through everyday practices. Participants' acts of resistance include refusing to be weighed, asserting boundaries, delaying care as self-protection, and seeking Fat-affirming practitioners, which are read as speculative Fat futurities in the now. I argue that these practices disrupt chrononormative expectations that condition care on weight loss, health productivity, or compliance. Through refusal, slowness, and non-compliance, Fat service users rework time itself. The paper further advances Fat kinship as a model of Fat hope. Participants' stories reveal how care is generated collectively through shared embodied knowledge, advocacy, and relational world-making rather than through assimilation into "good fatty" ideals. Fat kinship sustains Fat life by producing belonging, mutual recognition, and alternative futures beyond liberal politics of inclusion. By centring Fat hope as lived, fragile, and insurgent, this paper contributes to Fat Studies and queer theory by reframing care as a site of temporal disruption and collective possibility. Fat hope, I argue, is not aspirational thinness or health attainment, but the ongoing practice of making Fat life livable—now and into the future.

FTS3-3 - Our plates are full

Khush Bakht Memon, Radical Mess, Krasman Centre; Jules Vodarek Hunter, The AMY Project, Centre for Training in Psychotherapy

In a world where Body Mass Index (BMI) is an accepted standard to measure health and wellness, sharing a meal with your fat folk without the urge to hide the plate is a radical act. An act that nudges you to imagine: a fat future where eating till you feel full isn't tied to apologies and the constant awareness of erasing yourself into invisibility. "It's fat on fat on fat, it's delicious, it's human, it's fat joy, liberation, it's nourishing, it's history making." (SummerWorks, 2025, para. 1). This was the opening line of the show's synopsis that we co-created through a program called *Fat Fables.* The program guided nine fat queer and trans individuals from diverse backgrounds through a journey of creation, dramaturgy and theatrical performance. It encouraged community building, care and facilitated artistic exploration. We shared our lived experiences in both public and private spaces, drew inspiration from fat and queer histories, strengthened our connection to our fat ancestors, and created a space to thrive and imagine our collective fat future. This presentation will be an autoethnographic reflection on the program's creation and artistic exploration phase, drawn from the experiential accounts of the director, Jules, and the artist participant, Khushu. It will highlight the joy we experienced in sharing and enjoying meals together, without the usual urge to excuse our full plates. Additionally, describe how this brave space we shared was created: we ranted, swore, cried, laughed, hugged and learned from moments of rupture, reflection, and repair while sitting in chairs

with enough space to wiggle and relax. This phase encouraged us to envision a barrier-free future and equipped us to become the stars of our theatrical production without leaving any part of ourselves behind.

FTS3-4 - Situating Ozempic: Finding hope in times of fat disappearance

Deborah McPhail, University of Manitoba

Recently, fat studies scholars and activists have felt compelled to confront ontological crises precipitated by the emergence of GLP-1s. Indeed, this moment seems truly significant, wherein Fat Studies must explore complicated and knotty questions of whether or not there will continue to be a fat body to, in fact "study." This is not the first time, however, scholars have pointed to fat eugenics; GLP-1s have emerged within existing materialized discursive fields of disappearance where fatness has continued to exist as an impossible embodiment. This paper explores such fields of emergence by providing a mini-genealogy of GLP-1s, focusing on two other recent inflections of fat eugenics: the containment of the fat reproductive body; and the refusal of emergency care during Covid-19. Outlining the complicated forms that eugenics can take - so-called "soft" and "hard" variations - the paper explores the nuanced and materialized ways in which fat eugenics have been practiced to minimalize the fleshiness of the body. First, I examine poststructural qualitative research I conducted with fat women-identified participants outlining the ways in which they were discouraged and prevented from becoming pregnant through biopolitics of risk. Second, using MBembe's "necropolitics," I reflect on the refusal of ventilators in emergency rooms and ICUs for fat people during the Covid-19 epidemic, with particular emphasis on a medical triage protocol adapted in Ontario for use during Covid surges, the "Clinical Frailty Scale" which positioned fat people as less likely to acute disease and, thus, a waste of clinical resources. In outlining these two eugenic projects that have occurred prior to the mass use of GLP-1s, perhaps it becomes more possible to consider a fat future, allowing fat studies scholars to approach this moment as one among many, in which, despite a bio/necropolitics of disappearance, fat bodies persist.

(FTS4) Fat Activism & Cross-Liberatory Projects

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

This session explores how scholars, activists, and community organizers explore fat activism as a site of cross-liberatory praxis. As May Friedman writes in Fat Studies: The Basics (2025), the field "both documents the creation of community and cultivates academic and social communities in its very making" (p. 126). In cultivating fat care and community through scholarship and activism, emerging dialogues increasingly recognize fatness as simultaneously queer, racialized, and disabled. It is therefore vital to extend sociological inquiry into the intersectional dimensions of fat embodiment. Fat activism offers fertile ground for reimagining justice through collective transformation. Fat liberation is not a siloed issue; it is deeply entangled with disability justice, anti-racist organizing, 2SLGBTQIA+ resistance, climate change, and Indigenous sovereignty. This session seeks to explore fatness, fat activism, and fat scholarship as political and relational experiences that can cross-pollinate with other liberatory movements in their critiques of capitalism and settler ableist projects, and in their affirmation of all expressions of life.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University; Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

Session Chair: Carly-Ann Haney, University of Calgary

FTS4-1 - "Pleasantly Pump" Friendships: Creating Connection Through Fat Friends and Fat Films

Allegra Morgado and Mollie Cronin, York University

We met in 2024 in our PhD orientation, becoming fast friends through our overlapping fields of study, a shared doctorate supervisor, and the balance that occurs when a highly organized Virgo befriends a chill-loving Taurus. In this dialogue, Allegra Morgado and Mollie Cronin will discuss the caring force of fat friendship in the so-called "age of ozempic,"by revisiting a shared childhood love of the 2007 musical adaptation of *Hairspray,* a film that highlights fatness in all of its ample—and at times ambivalent—glory.This past spring, while both presenting at a conference in New Orleans on fatness in pop culture, Allegra researched mother-fat daughter dyads in film, including *Hairspray* (2007). While we reminisced on the impact of such a film in the diet-centric and fatphobic media landscape of the early aughts, Mollie also encouraged Allegra to watch John Water's original 1988 version of *Hairspray*—a queerer, campier, and perhaps *fatter* version than its more sanitized musical remake. Nearly one year after this initial conversation, the two of us will sit down for Allegra's first viewing together of the Water's classic and discuss our affective experiences in watching a film where being "pleasantly plump" (Waters, 1988) is a key part of the plot. We will also discuss the trope of the "fat friend" sidekick to the slim protagonist in popular culture and how our perspectives on fat friendships have expanded after diving further into fat liberation work and fat studies. We will explore the "constellations of co-resistance" (Maynard & Simpson, 2019) inherent to our fat friendship and the intimacy of known experiences of oppression within fat friendships (Cooper, 2021; Taylor, 2021). Drawing on fat studies scholarship, we will explore how caring corpulent kinship can be sustenance for fat joy in anti-fat times (Luna & Pashall, 2023; Kost & Jamie, 2022; Brownstone et al., 2023).

FTS4-2 - "You feel what you wear": dress and the affective politics of fat embodiment in the Ozempic-era.

Jennifer Jolie, University of Guelph

This paper examines how fat embodiment is materially and affectively shaped through everyday encounters with plus-size clothing. While fat scholars and activists have worked to establish fatness as a morally neutral and natural form of human body diversity, dominant institutions, including healthcare, fashion, and media, continue to frame fat bodies as risky, deviant, and in need of correction. Within this context, fatness operates as a "sticky" affective category (Ahmed, 2010) that adheres to bodies across time, producing enduring moral judgement even when bodies change. Clothing emerges in this research as a key yet underexamined site where these dynamics are lived and felt. For fat people, specifically those who are racialized, gendered, and disabled, garments frequently materialize exclusion through limited sizing, poor construction, and narrow aesthetic norms that delimit who can appear professional, desirable, or socially appropriate. These constraints generate significant emotional and logistical labor for fat people as they work to assemble outfits that feel comfortable, affirming, and situationally appropriate; often facing heightened consequences when these efforts fail. Such encounters produce affective intensities, frustration, vigilance, shame, and exhaustion, that structure fat embodiment in time and space. At the same

time, this paper attends to moments where clothing enables pleasure, recognition, and self-expression. Drawing on feminist new materialist approaches, I consider plus-size garments as vibrant and agentic that carry material traces, fat histories, and affective resonance. The softness of worn fabric, the stretch of a well-fitting garment, or the imaginative possibility of a prior fat wearer can generate forms of joy that are not reducible to positivity, but function as brief disruptions of fatphobia. By foregrounding clothing as a material and affective dimension of fat life, this research reveal both the restraint and possibility embedded in the everyday embodied practices of getting dressed in a fatphobic world.

FTS4-3 - How Fat People Tell Their Stories: Fat Activism, Fame, and Everything Between

Judith Schreier, Humboldt University of Berlin

Aubrey Gordon's highly praised *What We Don't Talk About When We Talk About Fat* (2020) and Sonya Renee Taylor's *The Body Is Not an Apology* (2018) exemplify a burgeoning genre that I describe as fat life writing—a category within life writing that has not yet been thoroughly examined in academic discourse. Over the past decade(s), the media landscape has seen a surge in first-person narratives from individuals discussing their experiences of living in fat bodies. These narratives extend beyond traditional weight-loss stories, offering a distinctive blend of feminist autobiography and self-help. Some works of the genre combine the concept of autotheory (Fournier) with an approach informed by fat studies, including transformative responses, reactions, and resistances to anti-fatness. This fusion of styles builds a cornerstone of contemporary fat life writing by people who reject the pathologization of their bodily existence that shapes Western societies. Fat life writing includes not only works by fat activists but also by celebrities like Gabourey Sidibe's *This Is Just My Face: Try Not To Stare* (2018) and Michelle Buteau's *Survival of the Thickest* (2022). Celebrity fat life writing raises new questions about the genre, often focusing on fame, acceptance of the non-normative body, and 'self-love' while also capitalizing on their narratives. These publications give in to the pressure of disclosing private details about their lives and how their bodies came to be, as well as conceding to anti-fatness. This blend of personal and public exploration situates fat life writing within broader societal discourses, ranging from the much-contested body positivity to fat liberation.

FTS4-4 - Under the Auntie Gaze: Fat Brown Refusals of Body Fascism

Ramanpreet Bahra, York University, Wilfrid Laurier University

This paper advances a fat South Asian studies intervention into the theme against body fascism by drawing on findings from my doctoral research project, Feeling Fat, Feeling Brown: The Lived Experience of Fat South Asians in Ontario. Bringing fat studies into conversation with racialization, debility, and diasporic social regulation, I trace how body fascism materializes in the everyday through what I term the auntie gaze: a disciplinary mode of surveillance, commentary, and moral regulation that polices fat South Asian bodies under the guise of care, cultural continuity, and communal belonging. Participants describe the auntie gaze as a mechanism that enforces heteronormative femininity, healthism, and racial respectability, producing embodied forms of shame and exhaustion. Drawing on interview data, the paper examines the cultural politics of "feeling brown and fat," illustrating how the embodied experience of difference is intensified through affective relations, familial expectations, and the emotional "stickiness" that clings to fat brown bodies (Ahmed, 2014). It interrogates the emotional, physical, and social dimensions of compulsory

thinness - a nexus of sizeism, shapeism, heteropatriarchy, and whiteness that structures everyday encounters and bodily reactions. At the same time, participants articulate practices of refusal, reorientation, and em(BODY)ment that unsettle the authority of body fascism. These include aesthetic experimentation, fat community-building, becoming the "fat feminist killjoy" (Jolie, in press), and cultivating alternative epistemologies of care. Through these practices, participants construct an archive of embodied experience that exists outside the box of normalcy (Bahra, 2018). By foregrounding these strategies of resistance, this paper positions fat South Asian subjects not as passive recipients of disciplinary power but as theorists of their own liberation. It contributes to broader conversations on how racialized communities navigate, reproduce, and contest body fascism, while demonstrating how fat, racialized, and disabled embodiments generate knowledge essential to imagining more livable futures.

(FTS6a) Fat Studies as a Harbour of Hope I

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

In a world increasingly fractured by political polarization, ableist austerity, and racialized surveillance, fat studies offers a generative site for sociological dialogue, resistance, and hope. This open session invited scholars, activists, artists, and community organizers to explore fatness as a sociopolitical concept and lived experience, one that shapes how we sense, feel, know, and belong across space and time. Central to these experiences is the positioning of fat bodies as threats to public health, productivity, and normative citizenship. Drawing on an intersectional fat standpoint, fat activism and scholarship challenge these logics, offering alternative visions of embodied knowledge, relationality, care, and liberatory praxis.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

Session Chair: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University

FTS6a-1 - Fat Studies Art is Political

Derek Newman-Stille, Trent University

Four years ago, I introduced a Fat Studies course at Trent University. One of the key features that I included in the course was an art-based research (ABR) project where students are asked to create their own art that comments on ideas around fat in society. In addition to the art work, students are asked to provide an artist's statement that contextualizes their art work and provides some understanding of the message audiences are to taken from the work. The benefit of engaging with art is that it allows for multiple intelligences and multiple modes of engaging with ideas or thoughts from the course. ABR is a catch-all term for using artistic modes of engagement with research materials. Tom Barone and Elliot W. Eisner define ABR as "an effort to extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that would otherwise be ineffable" (2012: 1). Art can be a mode of inquiry that captures meanings that might not be captured by other forms of communication, like the essay. This assignment frequently results in the "aha moment" by students, where suddenly everything comes into clear focus for them. Students regularly comment on the power of this assignment in their course evaluations and in personal emails. Because this course is housed in the Gender and Social Justice department, I tell students that

our work is not limited to the classroom, rather a feminist project is interconnected with community action. I encourage students to present their work online or in other spaces and I collaborate with the university library to have a display in their space for students to engage with Fat Studies. Using the example of the Art is Political assignment from my course, this paper will explore the role of ABR in Fat pedagogy.

FTS6a-2 - Cartographies of the Colonized Body: Aesthetic Violence and Fatphobia in Lima, Peru

Rosario del Pilar Rodriguez Romani, York University

This paper presents the main conclusions of a situated research project on aesthetic violence and fatphobia in Lima, Peru, approached as structural phenomena with deep colonial roots rather than as individual prejudice or cultural preference. I argue that Lima operates as a colonial aesthetic engine: a central node that produces, legitimizes, and projects a narrow bodily ideal that is symbolically and materially imposed across the country. Through this process, fatphobia and aesthetic violence become normalized and unevenly distributed, with fat women bearing a disproportionate burden of harm. Drawing on feminist and decolonial methodologies, including in-depth interviews, body mapping, and autoethnography, I conceptualize fat women's bodies as living archives of aesthetic violence, fatphobia, and everyday resistance. These bodies carry the sedimented effects of medical pathologization, media mockery, social surveillance, and spatial exclusion, while simultaneously holding embodied strategies of survival, refusal, and care that challenge dominant narratives about fatness. A central finding of this research concerns the absence of official data in Peru on eating disorders, aesthetic interventions—including deaths and severe health consequences linked to cosmetic procedures—and fatphobic bullying and harassment in both public and private spaces. I argue that this absence does not signal a lack of these phenomena, but rather constitutes a form of epistemic erasure that actively obscures structural violence, limits political accountability, and constrains public health responses. Finally, the paper highlights the role of grassroots collectives such as Antigordofobia Perú, which demonstrate how both digital and physical spaces can function as affective and political infrastructures of survival. These collective spaces generate alternative geographies of dignity, care, and resistance, transforming shared vulnerability into organized hope. In this sense, fat studies emerges not only as a critical field of analysis, but as a harbour of hope from which collective futures beyond aesthetic violence can be imagined and practiced.

FTS6a-3 - Unmarriageable Bodies: Gendered Weight Stigma and the Social Exclusion of Fat Muslim Indian South African Women

Azeeza Rawat and Gabisile Mkhize, University of KwaZulu-Natal

Abundant research indicates that fat women face higher levels of body shaming, systemic weight-based discrimination, scrutiny of eating habits and stricter beauty ideas, yet fewer studies explore heterogeneity between fat women in terms of race, culture, religion, nationality, sexuality and disability. Fat studies and weight stigma research has primarily focused on Western and secular contexts, thereby neglecting the lived experiences of 'fat' women from varying cultural and religious contexts in non-Western nations. Furthermore, investigations of body size discrimination have often adapted a more individualistic approach rather than a familial or communal approach. This paper argues that in the Muslim Indian South African community where traditions are closely upheld,

external fat-phobic criticisms are heavily centered around marriage and remaining desirable to one's husband. In a context that so heavily values marriage and thinness, fat non-married women face stigma on several levels and across multiple generations. Drawing on in-depth interviews with six fat Muslim Indian South African women of different generations from one family and an autoethnographic journal kept by the researcher, all of which were analysed using fat feminism, intersectionality and social constructionism, the study examines how desirability and marriageability are experienced by fat women in this context. By bringing intersectionality into dialogue with fat studies and fat feminism, this paper highlights the importance of investigating fatness within overlooked contexts and marginalized identities.

(FTS6b) Fat Studies as a Harbour of Hope II

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

In a world increasingly fractured by political polarization, ableist austerity, and racialized surveillance, fat studies offers a generative site for sociological dialogue, resistance, and hope. This open session invited scholars, activists, artists, and community organizers to explore fatness as a sociopolitical concept and lived experience, one that shapes how we sense, feel, know, and belong across space and time. Central to these experiences is the positioning of fat bodies as threats to public health, productivity, and normative citizenship. Drawing on an intersectional fat standpoint, fat activism and scholarship challenge these logics, offering alternative visions of embodied knowledge, relationality, care, and liberatory praxis.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

Session Chair: Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

FTS6b-1 - I was bullied as a child, and it still shapes my life: Using autoethnography to understand the lasting impacts of childhood bullying

Gurnoor Kaur Suri, University of British Columbia

Childhood bullying and its impacts on wellbeing and development have been extensively researched through interdisciplinary lenses. One of its types, appearance-related and weight-based bullying, is found to be predictive of poorer psychosocial impacts, many of which extend into emerging and lasting adulthood. But how does that happen? Current research comments little on the underlying process and symptomatic re-appearance of childhood bullying in young adulthood, several years after the instance(s) of bullying. In my research, I evoke the sociological tool of autoethnography to argue that autobiographical and retrospective narratives can be used to identify and analyze how the impacts of childhood bullying fare into adulthood. By using autoethnography, I leverage the artistic medium of personal storytelling by narrating my own experience of being bullied, and then thematically analyze it to demonstrate how a victim "embodies" experience in adult life. Through embodiment, I propose that being a bully victim fundamentally shapes one's approach to new adult life experiences, such as navigating different friendships and external appearance. New life events serve as "reminders" of this embodiment by linking unrelated experiences to past bullying encounters. Autoethnography shows to be an exciting and innovative scientific tool to contextualize and produce new key variables of interest for bullying scholarship.

FTS6b-2 - Co-Creating Fat Liberation through Visual Collage, By and For Fat Folks

Brooke Hull, Pennsylvania State University; Mackenzie Edwards and Ramanpreet Bahra, York University

In this workshop, a team of three interdisciplinary fat folks working within academia will lead participants through a visual collaging exercise that forwards fat liberation. This workshop was ideated and experimented on with members of the Fat Studies Research Cluster located in the Canadian Sociological Association. By first defining tools used to resist anti-fatness, members of the research cluster created visual collage representations of their toolkit to be shared as a zine. In this workshop, this visual creation method will ask a new question - "What does a future centering fat liberation look like?" - and lead participants through collaging their responses. Collage is helpful in conceptualizing complex ideas by "fleshing out different facets in order to get a nuanced understanding" of these ideas (Bulter-Kisber and Poldma, 2010, pg.3). Drawing on collage as a feminist practice that centers emotion and lived experience, this workshop uses collage as a "method of liberatory research" that is embodied in our participants (Vaughhan, 2005, pg. 31). Collage thus allows us as researchers, as well as our participants, to explore liberatory fat futures in a way that honors and centers fat experiences. The outcomes of this workshop will be a series of collages and thick descriptions that will be compiled into a public-facing zine, by and for the fat community.

FTS6b-3 - Imagining Better Fat Medical Encounters: Results From Qualitative Interviews of Ontario Trained Physicians

Elizebeth Thorkelson, Toronto Metropolitan University

Fat studies scholars and weight stigma researchers have made strides in developing training mechanisms for physicians, teaching them how to identify weight stigma in their practice and how to practice weight-inclusive care. While these interventions are important, we must not stop at finding interventions that work to reduce weight stigma in medical encounters. Rather, fat studies researchers must seek to understand how anti-fat beliefs, attitudes and actions function within medical practice and education. Fox (2024) uses assemblage theory informed by Deleuze and Guattarian thinking to describe how these anti-fat beliefs, attitudes and actions within medical practice and education constitute an eliminationist project. One example of this eliminationist project can be found in medical encounters, where obesity elimination becomes the sole focus of medical appointments and treatment. Seeking to better understand obesity elimination, my masters thesis research investigates how medical training in Ontario is oriented towards enacting obesity elimination. This paper was formed from the findings of one portion of my masters research which included interviews with physicians who conducted their medical training in Ontario. In the interviews with these physicians I found that physicians who were passionate about reducing weight stigma in the medical system had a myriad of ways that they resisted against contributing to bias throughout their medical training. I propose that these acts of physician resistance can be used to imagine better fat medical encounters. This paper presents the findings from my research, as well as a proposal for how tangible changes made through a partnership between physicians and their patients can make a powerful difference in improving the quality of medical care that fat people receive.

(FTS-RC) Fat Studies Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Fat Studies Research Cluster

The CSA Fat Studies Research Cluster extends an invitation to new members who are interested in engaging in critical research related to weight, bodies, stigma, 'health', and social justice. This cluster serves as a communication hub and a meeting place for sociologists who work in the field of fat studies, both within Canada and globally. As a space committed to advancing scholarship, attendees will have the opportunity to network and share their research.

Session Organizers: Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

(GAS) Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

(GAS2) Transgender Studies in Times of Crisis
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Transgender studies is more urgent now than ever, following the U.S. executive orders that sought to reinscribe biological sex/gender and deny necessary healthcare to trans children. Amid mounting attacks on trans people globally, an indignant and defiant transgender studies is called upon to contest the onslaught of anti-trans 'thought' and politics. Fortunately, transgender studies was born from "a deep and abiding rage" (Stryker 1994) that refused the misrepresentations of trans experience in medicine, feminism, queer theory, and sociology and reasserted trans people's authority to speak about ourselves on our own terms. We invited papers that continue in this proud tradition—writing and theorizing transness in ways that centre the perspectives and experiences of trans people. Times are tough, but we will have a ki.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Toby Anne Finlay, York University; Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

GAS2-1 - Identity Freeze: Anti-Trans Legislation in Alberta

Lindy Kokaritis, University of Calgary

Current research on LGBTQ+ experiences is situated within a metronormative understanding, meaning that cities with vibrant queer communities are not studied and are assumed to not exist. Ultimately, the lack of research outside of 'metropolitan' areas limits our understanding of unique challenges and the impact of legislation upon multiplicities of identity. The purpose of this research builds off previous thesis work, discussing the importance of social media in maintaining, building, and fostering both community and identity for LGBTQ+ youth in less studied cities, and applying this to anti-trans legislation for Albertan youth. This research details the importance of community and representation, the role of technology as an identity construction site, and a specific focus on trans and racialized identities as experienced simultaneously rather than additive. When physical community building is denied, the importance of social media becomes even more relevant in understanding the experiences of trans youth. Ultimately, the question of how anti-trans legislation impacts trans youth in terms of regression, growth, and ability to form identity, is further amplified

through theories of metronormativity; how trans Albertan youth feel the multiplicity of time as a resource, access and lack thereof to supportive care and community, and the effects of a budding moral panic in less studied locations. Through ethnographic work including interviews and content analysis, this research seeks to understand the lived realities of those impacted in Alberta by legislation, and whether social media provides essential access to trans youth.

GAS2-2 - The Four Horsemen of the Gender Apocalypse: Transphobic Rhetoric and White Nationalist Narratives of Victimization

Naiomi Perera, York University

Hateful campaigns targeting the transgender community have threatened their rights, safety, and access to life-saving healthcare, and these mobilization have created a dangerous and hostile environment for educators, healthcare providers, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, especially transgender children and youth. In this paper, I investigate how far-right actors use transphobic discourse to serve their political strategies and goals. To do this, I use critical discourse analysis to examine the official website of the "1 Million March 4 Children" campaign. This Canadian campaign involved protests across the country, which opposed the presence of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) education in schools, and gender-affirming healthcare for minors. Using this campaign as an example, I highlight how narratives of victimization and their underlying assumptions about race, gender, sexuality, and power are embedded in the anti-trans sentiments of the Canadian far-right. By analyzing these narratives and identifying how hyperbolic representations of opponents are used to attract people to this hate movement, I show how the far-right is using transphobia to build broader support for far-right and white nationalist politics.

GAS2-3 - Trans-forming the Civil Sphere: Civil Sphere Theory and the Need for Trans*-Centered Sociological Theory

Anna Henry, University of Guelph

Recipient of the Social Theory Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

Jeffrey Alexander's (2006) civil sphere theory presents a hopeful picture of a multi-cultural society, one in which civic institutions are re-shaped by social justice movements to expand concepts of citizenship to increasingly diverse groups. However, this vision seems to be collapsing rapidly, especially regarding trans people. This paper examines how current theories regarding social justice movements, such as civil sphere theory and the Fraser/Honneth recognition theory fail to fully account for the current situation faced by trans people. It also argues that sociological theory cannot explain and address the needs of trans people because it has primarily been developed to explain the situation of other groups. This paper argues that sociological theory cannot address the exclusion of trans people in society without coming up with a theory that focuses on trans social inclusion directly. It ends with a call for more sociologists to examine social inclusion/exclusion from the point of view of trans people,

GAS2-4 - Gender is Like … Seafoam, Werewolves, the Cosmos, and More: Conceptualizing Gender within Trans Spaces

J Overholser, University of Calgary

In the current local, national, and global climate-where trans individuals are one of many groups facing extreme attacks on their personhood and existence-it has never been more important that we continue to write, theorize, and research transness from our own trans perspectives. While the research that I will be presenting on is part of my larger doctoral thesis, I will be specifically focusing on how my participants and I co-created a distinctly trans space in which to communicate. Such a space, while unable to *isolate* or *remove* us from the hegemonic cisgender world of dominant society, does something akin to insulating us (however temporarily) from the pressure to conform to cisgendered expectations; in which my participants and I are able to explore gender in ways we would otherwise be unable to. This presentation will explore the diversity of possibilities for discussing and understanding gender that become possible when trans individuals experience freedom from the constricting walls of hegemonic conceptualizations of gender. In my presentation I will be drawing from preliminary results from my research to discuss the ways that my participants and I collaboratively construct such a trans space-from more abstract theoretical consideration to practical methodological decisions. I will also be exploring the resulting diverse and novel ways of conceptualizing gender that arose from within these spaces of endless possibilities. Throughout this presentation I will highlight how the unique intersections of gender, race, neurodiversity, class, and more, came to influence each person's experiences of their gender, their trans* subjectivities, and their ways of communicating such information Importantly, this study is first and foremost an exploration of the diversity of contemporary trans* experiences through a distinctly trans*perspective-one which fights for institutional recognition of the value of trans experiences.

GAS2-5 - The Transsexual Was Now a Species: Notes for The History of Autogynephilia

Toby Anne Finlay, York University

Readings of Michel Foucault's (1978) *The Will to Knowledge* in trans historiography have questioned his adoption of the homosexual category to denote the subject that first emerged with the transmutation of acts to identities in modern sexology (Chauncey 1983; Hekma 1994; Prosser 1999; Sutton 2014). This critique contends that the categories introduced in the sexological discourse of the late-19th century, such as 'sexual inversion' (Krafft-Ebing 1886), did not differentiate between gendered and sexual non-conformity as we do today. Foucault's transposition of the homosexual category onto this emergent subject then obscures the categorical indeterminacy of 'gender' and 'sexuality' that had persisted in the discipline of sexology across the 19th and 20th centuries.

This paper traces this categorical entanglement of 'gender' and 'sexuality' through the genealogy of sexuality by following a different sexual subject first introduced in early sexology, 'automonosexualism' (Rohleder 1907; Hirschfeld 1918), and later revived in the psychiatric classification of transsexuals in the Gender Identity Clinic of the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in the late-1980s. 'Automonosexualism,' which denotes the turning of the sexual instinct inwards to the self, provided the foundation for Ray Blanchard's (1989) conception of 'autogynephilia,' which suggests that transsexual women are sexually aroused by the idea of themselves as women. Taking this genealogical transformation as a starting point from which to read transsexuality into *The History of Sexuality*, opens a different approach to trans historiography which would examine how this entanglement of 'gender' and 'sexuality' has itself been pathologized. Rather than adjudicating the proper categorization of the subject who "was now a species" as either homosexual or transsexual (Foucault 1978, 43), this approach contends that the body has historically been captured by the

dispositif of sexuality in precisely those cases where the categorical separation of 'gender' and 'sexuality' was confounded.

(GAS3a) Thinking Queer: The Politics of Sexuality
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Session Organizers and Chairs: Toby Anne Finlay, York University; Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

GAS3a-1 - "I can't be queer without being political": Queer Tamil diasporic comedy in Sudarshan's stand-up performance as political resistance

Shreyashi Ganguly, York University

This paper explores the political ramifications of diasporic comedy through the stand-up performances of Sudarshan, a queer, Tamil comedian based out of Toronto. I begin by examining how Tamil diasporic comedy constitutes a transnational social space, bringing together the Tamil diasporas of India and Sri Lanka, and analyze how Sudarshan not only inhabits this space but also actively shapes it through humorous discourse. Using case study as a research methodology, this paper draws on Sudarshan's live stand-up performances, digital comic content and insights from an in-depth interview. It highlights how humour is central to ways in which Sudarshan reflects on the tensions intrinsic to his identity as a second generation Canadian, child of refugees, and member of the Eelam Tamil diaspora that has endured a politically violent past and continues to live through its aftermath. Sudarshan mobilizes humour as a form of resistance to normative understandings of sexuality while also offering a critique of the political structures that continue to shape his life. The fact that his comedy is catered to the Tamil diaspora allows him to create an affective solidarity on the basis of a shared language and culture and shared history of violence and genocide. The interview with Sudarshan informs an understanding of how he understands his own positionality as a sexualized, gendered and racialized individual and how he frames his comedy as emerging out of the tensions of the multiple axes of his identity. This paper also interrogates how Sudarshan perceives his comedy as an expression of a Tamil voice, addressing a gap in Eelam representation in mainstream popular culture. At the same time, I also delve into how the comedian's commentary on political issues has led him to face severe backlash in digital spaces, with his racial, sexual identity very often becoming the target in the process.

GAS3a-2 - Thrust for Canada: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Nationalist Ideologies Across Season One of Heated Rivalry (2025)

Aaron Glenn and Katie Merritt, University of New Brunswick

The Crave original series *Heated Rivalry* (2025) is the first Canadian mainstream television series centering gay hockey romance. Set to the soundtrack of Québécois synth, *Heated Rivalry* reflects unprecedented discourses of bisexual and gay male sexuality. Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), we investigate how homonationalism (Puar, 2007), orientalism (Said, 1978), and hegemonic masculinity (Demetriou, 2001) impact characterizations of bisexual and gay men within *Heated Rivalry.* Hegemony within hockey upholds discourse around what it means to be Canadian, suppressing challenges of non-heteronormativity, and external hockey nationalisms, like that of Russia (Allain, 2019). We argue that *Heated Rivalry* reflects what Goldmark (2015) calls the "critical

paradox" of queer progress wherein a story of queer advancement is performed in a "fiction of national improvement" that is integrated into mainstream representations (p. 510). *Heated Rivalry* reflects a Canadian imaginary that upholds queerness as having already been embraced, reinforcing a model of social progress where only specific types of sexual identities are permitted to enter the concept of the nation. We argue that representations in the series reflect stereotypical and problematic ideas of cultural difference rooted in hegemonic and normative discourses. Our analysis reveals that Russian embodiment in this series is imagined through orientalist discourses which reflect a specific aspect of homonationalism that is predicated on Canadian ideals of national belonging anchored in queer neoliberalism. Overall, we argue that *Heated Rivalry* demonstrates that representations of queerness are most valued by mainstream culture so long as they can be homologized and regurgitated to serve nationalist ideologies.

GAS3a-3 - The American War on Drag: Moral Panic & Drag from 9/11 to the Trump Administration

Chloe Sykes, Carleton University

In the nearly 25 years since 9/11, the war on terror has changed the landscape of all conversations surrounding national security - including gender and sexuality. This work traces the history of moral panic and national security concerns in America against the queer art form of drag, from the post-9/11 war on terror to the current Trump regime. This history is approached through the analysis of two narratives utilized by American news media: (1) Moral and sex panic emerging from the post-9/11 war on terror, and (2) the more recent push to protect future citizenship through "protecting" children from drag. As Canada steadily ramps up its national security efforts, this research invites us to consider the risks national security poses to queer art and expression. Through this understanding, we may begin to better understand and push back against similar patterns in Canada whilst reaching across the divide to provide allyship to our queens & kings in the south.

GAS3a-4 - Political Affiliations and the Attitudes of Bi+ College Men

Corey Tatz, Indiana University Bloomington

Within the field of bisexuality+ studies, the focus is often on bi+ individuals who do not fit within the confines of the hegemonic masculine group and are outsiders of sorts. My research aims to look at bi+ college-aged men who assimilate within the dominant group and are part of a larger "bro culture", which include members of athletic teams, social fraternities, ROTC, and the Kelley School of Business here at Indiana University, Bloomington. Memberships in these organizations can become status symbols on college campuses, creating exclusive in-groups. The bi+ label is not a central part of the identity of these men, and in fact, they often feel a need to conform within standards of hegemonic masculinity so they do not stand out. My dissertation is a longitudinal qualitative study examining bi+ college bros across a time period of six-to-sixteen-months. In this presentation, I will discuss the political beliefs and attitudes of my approximately 15 participants which were not uniform. I also hope to look at their positionality in terms of class and wealth, their adherence to whiteness and traditional gender norms. While the majority of my participants tend to either be apolitical or moderately liberal in their thinking and mindsets (e.g., what does it mean to be members of the Democratic Party while also assimilating within a dominant group on campus?), there are students who have more libertarian mindsets, especially among business undergraduates. And while there are a few conservative individuals in the study who have strong opinions, especially on

immigration issues, they are in the minority. I also hope to discuss conversations about Turning Point USA, Charlie Kirk, and the current political landscape in Indiana and the United States.

(GAS3b) Situated Knowledges of Intimacy & Reproduction
Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Session Organizers and Chairs: Toby Anne Finlay, York University; Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

GAS3b-1 - Menstrual pedagogies: A transnational movement breaking the taboo in Latin America

Estefanía Reyes, Western University

Traditional models of menstrual education in Latin America and beyond have proven insufficient, poorly timed, and ideologically biased. In response, grassroots collectives across Latin America are developing critical menstrual pedagogies that offer alternative approaches grounded in the lived, political, and cultural dimensions of menstruation. This research examines how these pedagogies depart from conventional menstrual education and how they contribute to challenging broader systems of domination, including patriarchy, colonialism, and neoliberalism. My qualitative analysis is based on interviews, talking circles, participant observation, and art-based methods, such as body mapping and participatory mapping, with menstrual educators and girls and young menstruators participating in their initiatives across various countries in Latin America. Drawing on decolonial theory, critical pedagogies, and transnational feminist frameworks, I advance two central arguments: First, feminist menstrual educators in Latin America reframe menstruation as a multidimensional experience—embodied, symbolic, and spiritual, as much as physiological. Second, they cultivate this reframing through the development of a feminist and decolonial menstrual consciousness, alongside pedagogical practices marked by the hybridization of spirituality, ludic engagement, and critical storytelling. This paper contributes to critical menstruation studies and feminist education scholarship by foregrounding critical pedagogical practices as sites of epistemic production and political praxis. Empirically, it offers one of the first regionally grounded analyses of menstrual pedagogies in Latin America. Conceptually, it advances understandings of how menstrual education can operate as a decolonial feminist intervention that reworks issues of gender, resistance, and political subjectivity.

GAS3b-2 - Reimagining Reproduction: Lesbian Couples and the Making of Family

Samadrita Chowdhuri, University of Alberta

This paper examines how lesbian couples navigate and reconfigure family-making through in vitro fertilization (IVF), a reproductive pathway historically shaped around heterosexual, biologically based norms. While IVF expands the possibilities of parenthood for same-sex couples, it is embedded within broader social structures—repronormativity, heteronormativity, and mono-maternalism—that define who is recognized as a legitimate reproductive subject and what forms of family are considered natural or desirable. Using the theoretical lenses of “doing gender” and “undoing gender,” the paper analyzes how lesbian couples both accommodate and resist these normative expectations as they move through fertility treatment. The analysis demonstrates that lesbian couples often “do gender” by engaging with institutional and cultural expectations that privilege biology, gestation, and heterosexual family structures. Decisions about who carries the pregnancy,

how donors are selected, and how parental roles are presented in medical and legal contexts reflect the strategic ways couples navigate systems that continue to privilege heterosexual reproduction. These practices illuminate how normative pressures shape lesbian reproductive choices, reinforcing hierarchies such as the primacy of the gestational parent and the privileging of biological ties. At the same time, the paper shows how lesbian couples also "undo gender" through practices that unsettle normative assumptions surrounding motherhood, family, and reproduction. Collaborative reproductive strategies—such as reciprocal IVF, shared maternal identities, egalitarian childcare, and reimagining donor sperm as a tool rather than a paternal contribution, challenge the foundations of heteronormative and mono-maternal structures. These interventions demonstrate the transformative potential of queer reproductive practices to decenter biological essentialism and expand cultural understandings of kinship. Ultimately, the paper argues that lesbian couples' experiences with IVF reveal reproduction as a site of both conformity and resistance. Their navigation of assisted reproduction exposes the tension between normative expectations and queer possibilities, highlighting how family-making can simultaneously reproduce and disrupt dominant gendered and heteronormative frameworks.

GAS3b-3 - Negotiating Adolescent Intimacy at Home: Parental Governance of Space and Sexuality in Medellin, Colombia

Julien Brisson, University of Toronto

Questions around adolescent sexuality remain socially controversial, particularly when it comes to the spaces in which intimate relationships unfold. While public health and educational systems often acknowledge adolescent sexual activity through comprehensive sex education, there is comparatively little discussion about where such relationships can - and cannot - take place. Adolescents, who typically reside with their parents, exercise a form of bounded agency spatially constrained by parental household norms. This study explored how parents in Medellín, Colombia, interpret and negotiate the presence of adolescent romantic partners within the home, particularly regarding overnight stays and private intimacy. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 28 parents of 35 adolescents aged 10-19 years old (mean 14), with close to equal representation between boys (51%) and girls (49%). Through thematic analysis, three core tensions were identified: (1) recognition versus restriction, where parents admitted awareness of their child's sexual activity but refused permission for partners to sleep over; (2) gendered spatial norms, in which household rules were more permissive for sons than daughters; and (3) moral boundary work, where allowing intimacy at home was perceived as legitimizing early sexuality. Parents described balancing protection, trust, and uncertainty, often negotiating rules situationally rather than through fixed standards. In a context of polarized moral discourses surrounding youth sexuality, these negotiations reveal the home as a contested but dialogic space, where parents grapple with competing values rather than fixed positions. By illuminating how everyday family practices mediate broader social anxieties, this study positions sociological analysis as a 'harbour of hope' for dialogue across generational divides. These findings illuminate how parental governance of domestic space operates as a key site for regulating adolescent sexuality, revealing the interplay between affect, control, legitimacy, and moral responsibility. The study contributes to sociological debates on intimacy, youth agency, and the spatial politics of the home.

(GAS4a) Thinking Power: Reconfiguring Subjectivities

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Session Organizers and Chairs: Chris Tatham, University of Guelph; Toby Anne Finlay, York University

GAS4a-1 - Between Misogyny and Inclusivity: Gender Relations in Video Gaming Communities

Max Kehl, Dalhousie University

Gender relations can be incredibly tense in male-dominated contexts. This is especially true in video gaming where gendered identification and interactions are made more complex through differing levels of anonymity, control over gender markers such as character avatars, and the presence of both offline and online harassment. While online video gaming has historically been gendered masculine and gendered harassment is well-documented in these spaces, close to half of all gamers are women. The increased presence of women changes men's performance of gender by allowing for direct misogyny through harassment or the opportunity for increased inclusivity that challenges gendered power hierarchies. This study analyzes how men who frequently participate in online video gaming view gender relations in gaming culture and navigate gendered interactions in online play. Qualitative analysis of 16 interviews demonstrated how male gamers negotiate the line between "trash talk" and harassment based on discussion content, gaming skill, and in-game strategy. Three themes were identified: 1) awareness of gendered power hierarchies, 2) strategies to mitigate harassment, and 3) impacts to self-conception of masculinity. An awareness of gendered power hierarchies emerged from how the negotiation between trash talk and harassment broke down when female gamers were present, often based on negative stereotypes towards women who game. Participants used various strategies to mitigate harassment towards themselves and others, reporting that mitigation methods differed depending on in-game context. Furthermore, witnessing gendered harassment in online gaming and misogynistic content on social media impacted how participants viewed their own masculinity. Participants reported purposefully avoiding appearing as "stereotypically masculine" to distance themselves from "toxically masculine" men, to increase the comfort and safety of women and LGBTQ folks they socialized with. Findings are discussed in relation to inclusive masculinity theory, identifying how the practices of inclusive masculinities change in online contexts.

GAS4a-2 - Beyond Statist Biopower: Nationalism as Biopower in Kashmir

Idreas Khandy, Anglia Ruskin University/Cambridgeshire Doctoral Training Partnership

In *The History of Sexuality (Vol. 1),* Foucault's discussion of biopower does not give the State a monopoly over its exercise, and rightly so. Yet, it still comes close to characterising these dynamics in a way in which the State appears as if it were a conductor that synchronises biopower from the micro through the meso to the macro to 'make live and let die.' This fostering of life unfolds as the fostering of a certain kind of subjectivity, whilst foreclosing the conditions of possibility for others, that is, letting die. However, this formulation does not account for how subjectivities marginalised and declared 'aberrant' through the triangular exercise of power nonetheless remain alive and active in the field of power relations. The subjectivities I speak of are those produced by nationalisms that oppose States. To understand this, building on Foucault's oeuvre, I argue nationalism (especially when it opposes a State), in addition to being a productive discourse, must also be seen as a form of biopower that not only produces the putative nation, but also makes prognoses concerning the

nation's longevity and prosperity, which takes the form of constructing a regime of truth that dictates what behaviours are lauded and which ones are penalised not by the State but by an anti-State nationalism. To illustrate this argument, I take the case of Kashmiri nationalism to show how it operates as a non-Statist biopower to produce and entrench a *sui generis* Kashmiri subjectivity that stands in an agonistic relation with the biopolitical regime of the Indian State, seeking to supplant it with an *Indianised* subject. If the Indian State exercises biopower through welfare conditionality, surveillance, and infrastructural control to produce the subject it desires, Kashmiri nationalism generates normative models of authentic Kashmiri identity, enforced through moral sanctions, behaviours, and collective duties.

(GAS4b) Thinking Community: Negotiation & Contestation

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Session Organizers and Chairs: Chris Tatham, University of Guelph; Toby Anne Finlay, York University

GAS4b-1 - Navigating Normativity: Queer Women's Fertility Desires and Intentions on the Edge of Demographic Change

Minsung Jang, Western University

My research examines how women's self-identified sexual orientation and their sexual identities influence their fertility desires, as well as how these fertility desires are interconnected with the queer identity formation. My current project investigates the intersection of sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and adverse social experiences to understand their collective influence on the fertility desires and intentions of women. While demographic research has extensively covered fertility declines associated with the "Second Demographic Transition" and shifting family diversities, the specific impact of gender and sexual identity remains underrepresented in primary demography literature. Existing studies on LGBTQ+ fertility often rely on binary comparisons between heterosexuals and lesbians, frequently omitting bisexual women or failing to account for income disparities that critically affect access to parenthood for sexual minorities. This study aims to address these gaps through two research questions. First, it examines how sexual identity affects fertility intentions by comparing heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual women. Second, it analyzes how adverse social experiences and discrimination influence these fertility intentions. Theoretical framing is drawn from Queer Theory, which views sexuality as a product of social relations, and the Second Demographic Transition theory, which links fertility declines to individualism and the decoupling of marriage and procreation. The study utilizes pooled public data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) spanning 2011 to 2023. The sample focuses on reproductive-age women (25-49) who are currently childless and self-identify as lesbian or bisexual, alongside a heterosexual comparison group. The analytical approach involves descriptive statistics followed by multivariable logistic regression using Stata. Control variables include race and education level, income levels, and residential location (urban, suburban, or rural) to isolate the effects of sexual orientation-based discrimination. This quantitative analysis aims to provide a more comprehensive illustration of family diversity to inform inclusive social policies.

GAS4b-2 - Intra-Community Differences in Experiences of Minority Stressors among 2S/LGBTQIA+ People in Canada

Presenting Authors - JP Armstrong, NorQuest College; Landon Turlock, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Todd Coleman, Wilfrid Laurier University

Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (2S/LGBTQIA+) community members have long faced discrimination. Although attitudes towards 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in Canada have advanced, the current rise in anti-2S/LGBTQIA+ prejudice threatens this progress. Experiences of discrimination can have significant consequences for community members' psychological wellbeing, sense of safety, and social participation. Notably, trans and gender diverse people, as well as 2S/LGBTQIA+ people with intersecting marginalized identities, are disproportionately affected by such prejudice. This presentation will share quantitative data from a larger community-based, mixed methods research project that sought to measure the social and economic wellbeing of Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (2S/LGBTQIA+) community members across Canada. Data were collected between March 2024 and October 2025 using a cross-sectional survey administered both online via Qualtrics and offline through paper-and-pencil. In addition to sociodemographic questions, this survey included the LGBT Minority Stress scale. The present analysis employs Latent Profile Analysis to identify intra-community differences in experiences of minority stressors (e.g., identity concealment, microaggressions, discrimination, rejection anticipation, internalized stigma, and community connectedness). We will share these findings as well as implications for reducing and responding to increasing levels of anti-2S/LGBTQIA+ prejudice and discrimination.

GAS4b-3 - COVID-19, lockdowns, and queer subjectivity: Queer affordances in a shrunken pandemic landscape

Presenting Author - Nakharathep Lo, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Jessica Fields, University of Toronto

While many Toronto residents experienced adversity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these effects were intensified for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Research studies demonstrate that many sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) living in Toronto experienced higher rates of financial insecurity, abuse, homophobic and transphobic violence, social exclusion, and mental health crises. Likewise, 'forced togetherness' was a unique indirect effect of the public health measures (e.g., stay-at-home orders); many SGMs were required to isolate in precarious situations. Drawing on 45 semi-structured interviews with adult 2SLGBTQIA+ Torontonians, this study explores how SGMs enacted queer subjectivities despite shrunken environments due to restrictive public health measures during the COVID-19 lockdown periods. Particularly, I build on the concept of queer affordances to demonstrate how queer Torontonians 'hacked' their environments to navigate gender identity and sexuality during Toronto's state of emergency procedures. For many young-adult queer Torontonians, particularly racialized students, the pandemic intensified shrinkage; many of these students were forced to choose between safety and identity. Accordingly, this forced togetherness, in tandem with the lockdown period, constituted a temporal disruption whereby queer desire was subjugated to cisheteronormativity. Due to the closure of physical spaces, queer time was intensified; participants frequently expressed a desire to experiment with their queerness following the loosening of

restrictions. On the other hand, despite the reduced opportunities for interpellation in the social context, many queer SGMs 'hacked' their environments by utilizing virtual modalities and arranging social interactions in accordance with public health guidelines. These findings provide qualitative insights for understanding how SGM adults in Toronto from diverse social locations navigated gender and sexuality during the COVID-19 lockdown periods.

GAS4b-4 - HIV Criminalization, Relationships & the Experiences of Racialized People Living with HIV

Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

This paper examines the experiences of 25 Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people living with HIV (RPLWH) in Canada as they navigate disclosure, sexuality, relationships, and life under HIV criminalization. Participants describe encountering significant HIV-related stigma within their communities. In response, RPLWH adopt a range of strategies to manage both the legal landscape and the intense stigma they perceive, which in turn shapes their sexual lives. These strategies include concealing their HIV status, establishing strict personal and community boundaries, distancing themselves from HIV-related networks, abstaining from sex and relationships, and travelling outside the country to engage in sexual activity.

GAS4b-5 - Exploring Caregiving Concerns of Ageing Lesbians and Intergenerational Community Care Networks

Morgan Hamilton-Kirk, Carleton University

Lesbians exist at the center of care and community. Gay women have a long history of playing leadership roles within their LGBTQ+ community, fighting for the right to love, against the criminalization of homosexuality (Cavell, 2004), and challenging various legal and social exclusions (Gov of Canada, 2021). Furthermore, many lesbians care for the most marginalized members of their communities, such as gay men, during the AIDS epidemic. Lesbians acted as caregivers amidst decades of widespread societal abandonment (Lesbian AIDS Activism · Yale University Library Online Exhibitions, n.d.). Presently, this same generation of activists now face their own unprecedented struggles with social abandonment and are rendered expendable (Canada, 2018). Today, these foundational aging and older lesbians face dangerous invisibilization and isolation, particularly in the context of care needs and support through society and health-related institutions. In my proposed paper, I ask: who will care for these historic caregivers? This population boom has attracted attention from LGBTQ+ advocates and policymakers. Egale Canada, the largest 2SLGBTQIA+ organization in Canada, highlights fears that LGBTQ+ seniors are being forced back into the closet, compounded by exclusionary care models and support networks (Plante et al., 2017). In this paper, I argue that such concerns with exclusionary care and the lack of support networks allow us to think through reciprocal community practice in intergenerational models of care that yield mutual LGBTQ+ community health and wellness. The future of aging health lies in practicing modes of deinstitutionalizing care; thus, these connections could yield practical, traditional health improvements (Gahagan & Subirana-Malaret, 2018) through reimagined health-related experiences in advocacy and mutual aid. The strength and well-being of our community is forged in the gratitude we owe our trailblazing elders. By taking a multidisciplinary, intersectional approach to this topic, we can transform what care can be and uplift our lesbians in the community.

(GAS4c) Women's, Queer, & Trans Community Needs

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Session Organizers and Chairs: Toby Anne Finlay, York University; Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

GAS4c-1 - Queerphobia and transphobia in British Columbia post-secondary schools: Findings and recommendations from a mixed-methods study

Presenting Author - Liam Ruel, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Simon Fraser University

Non-presenting Authors - Luka Wall, Camille Bédard, Destiny Lang, Kai Barcellos Luna, and Tara Lyons, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

While several studies have established the prevalence of queerphobic and transphobic bullying in Canadian high schools, few have explored the bullying experiences of queer and trans students in the post-secondary context. In 2024, we designed a mixed-methods study using an online survey (n = 335) and focus groups (n = 59) to examine the intersectional experiences of queer and trans students at 7 post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. We found that many students had witnessed or experienced overt queerphobia and transphobia at school, with 1 in every 2 having heard insults or slurs used by instructors or other students, and 1 in every 5 having experienced queerphobic bullying. Further, multiply marginalized students experienced additional forms of discrimination on campus, including racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia. Fear of discrimination had tangible impacts on students' feelings of safety and comfort at school, with some sharing that, to avoid queerphobia or transphobia, they had avoided wearing certain clothes, using washrooms, getting to know their classmates, or telling others that they were queer. Although we found that many students had witnessed or experienced discrimination, only half were open to seeking support from a student rights office, ombudsperson, equity office, or related service at their school. Students who were unsure about or uncomfortable reporting harm shared common concerns around anonymity, retaliation, or not having their reports taken seriously. While most students wanted help navigating the harm they were experiencing, there was a deep distrust in their institution's ability to protect queer and trans students from discrimination or to address reports of queerphobia and transphobia without causing additional harm. Drawing on recommendations from students, we conclude with a discussion of ways that instructors, decision-makers, and post-secondary school staff can both prevent queerphobia and transphobia and support students who experience them.

GAS4c-2 - Beyond Visibility: Queer Diaspora, Risk, and the Nonlinear Politics of Recognition

Sepita Hatami, Western University

This paper contributes to the conversations around transnational sexuality by arguing that queer diaspora does not always follow a linear narrative towards visibility and liberation. This process, instead, is an ongoing negotiation of recognition across times and spaces characterized by constantly reproduced meanings of gender and sexuality. This is while the postcolonial conditions of mobility and surveillance continue to shape this process. The paper examines how kinship and community regulation significantly shape the experiences of queer individuals from the Greater Middle East. These mechanisms of control often persist in the process of border crossing, resisting the host countries' demands for a coherent, openly named queer narrative. Through a comparative postcolonial approach, two memoirs have been analyzed to explore these dynamics: *We Have Always*

Been Here by Pakistani-Canadian Samra Habib and *From Here: A Memoir* by Jordanese-American Luma Mufleh. It is argued that cultural markers of family authority, reputation, and honour, which are governed by safety risk, play key roles in forming the experiences of gender and sexuality. As a result, careful timing and selective disclosure develop as habitual everyday practices within queer subjectivity. Immigration in this context does not always result in an immediate resolution, but it is a process of extending these practices into the host social and institutional settings. Meanwhile, the above-mentioned cultural markers continue to dictate what and when the subjects can engage in disclosure or suppression. In addition, the epistemologies of sexuality can intensify this unintelligibility since they grant authenticity and credibility only to those visible accounts of queerness that fit the predefined frameworks that do not account for the politics of risk and limited agency. This reinforces homonationalist approaches, which unevenly distribute the visibility and recognizability across queer diaspora while influencing the standards for admissibility and belonging.

GAS4c-3 - Going Local: Transfeminism as Social Science Method

Jennifer Kaplan, University of California, Berkeley

Transfeminism demands moving beyond static identity conceptions often evoked in 'intersectional' analysis, highlighting how identitarian fixations reproduce new binaries even as they deconstruct old ones (e.g. Gill-Peterson 2023). Instead, Namaste (2009) has called for locally and temporally-situated empirical research. Indeed, a focus on the local salience of terms such as *two-spirit* (Davis 2014) and *trans* (Gonsalves 2024; Valentine 2007) has undergirded the very instability of these terms through their provincialization (Aizura 2018). This paper argues for adopting *transfeminist methods* in gender and sexuality research. Such an approach must never take any identity-based terminology for granted, always situating it in terms of local negotiation and within the context of power hierarchies that otherwise work to render bodies legible within existing categorization schemas, where categorization itself constitutes violence (Bey 2022; Bolivar 2024). Modelling application of transfeminist methods in qualitative research, I draw from my fieldwork among queer, trans*, and non-binary French-speakers in Montreal, using data from 32 semi-structured interviews, an archive-sourced document collection, and participant ethnography in alternative nightlife spaces and queer community organizations conducted over 18 months. My findings demonstrate that transnational identity categories such as *transgender* and *non-binary* are not spatio-temporally stable, but rather always-already intersect with locally-salient categories. I begin by defining three Quebec-specific identity categories: *Francophone, Anglophone,* and *Québécois.e.* Using case studies, I illustrate how trans* Montrealers are compelled to sort themselves—or interpellated against their will—within these categories, in ways that mirror (but don't always align) with their categorization *as* trans*. As anti-trans policies proliferate in Quebec—with accelerating attacks on trans healthcare and a ban on inclusive French neologisms in government documents (Labbé 2025)—I offer a timely exploration of how *trans** categorization cannot be separated from *Québecitude* within the province, which underscores the importance of centering trans* perspectives in research on trans topics.

(GAS5a) Sociology of Sexualities I

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

This session features research of all methodologies and theoretical frames making contributions to the subfield sociology of sexualities. Paper topics are open, and may include analyses of the social organization of sexual behaviour, attitudes toward sexuality, the social landscape of sexual identities, embodied experiences of sexuality, and sexual inequalities.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tina Fetner, McMaster University

GAS5a-1 - Analyzing sexual-orientation disparities in Ontario's ambulatory care-sensitive conditions and acute healthcare utilization gaps

Presenting Author - Gwen Ehi, York University

Non-presenting Authors - Yihong Bai, University of Manitoba; Peiya Cao, Kristine Ienciu, Elena Levitskaya, Antony Chum, York University

Hospitalizations and emergency department visits for ambulatory care-sensitive conditions (ACSCs), including asthma, diabetes, and congestive heart failure, are commonly used indicators of health system performance because many are preventable through timely and effective primary care. Although disparities by sexual orientation are well established for mental health outcomes, far less is known about inequities in preventable acute care use. This study explores sexual-orientation differences in ACSC-related acute healthcare utilization in Ontario and examines how these disparities intersect with key sociodemographic factors. Using linked Canadian Community Health Survey data and administrative records of emergency department visits and hospitalizations from 2007 to 2019, accessed through Statistics Canada's Research Data Centres, we modelled time to first ACSC-related acute care event by sexual orientation. Parametric survival models were stratified by gender and adjusted for age, marital status, race, rural residence, employment, and educational attainment. The central argument is that sexual minority populations, particularly bisexual individuals and those reporting undisclosed sexual orientation, experience elevated risks of preventable acute care use that are not fully explained by socioeconomic position or geographic context, reflecting persistent gaps in access to effective primary care. Results show that bisexual men and women faced higher hazards of ACSC-related acute care use compared with their heterosexual counterparts, while men reporting other or undisclosed sexual orientations experienced substantially elevated risks. In contrast, no consistent differences were observed for gay men or lesbian women. Across genders, rural residence was associated with increased risk, whereas employment and higher educational attainment were protective. In conclusion, preventable ACSC-related acute care use remains unequally distributed across sexual orientations in Ontario. These findings underscore enduring inequities in primary care access and highlight the need for equity-oriented health system and policy responses that better address the needs of sexual minority populations.

GAS5a-2 - Digital 2S&LGBTQ+ Communities: A Computational Approach to Examining Online Spaces

Emma Parker and Rachel Gallagher, McMaster University

The development of social media has changed how 2S&LGBTQ+ individuals connect, providing space to find one another and build community instantaneously in an often exclusive and inaccessible social world. Existing literature relies on qualitative, small N methods of exploring 2S&LGBTQ+ connection online, capturing rich snapshots of specific 2S&LGBTQ+ subcommunities' experiences, but lacking broader representativeness and generalizability. Incorporating computational social science (CSS) methods into the study of 2S&LGBTQ+ online connection offers unique opportunities for uncovering discourse around belonging and risk across 2S&LGBTQ+ subgroups online. Our research explores how the concept of digital community is constructed and enacted on the social media platform Reddit, what sentiments are attached to digital 2S&LGBTQ+ discourse, and how this sentiment varies across 2S&LGBTQ+ subgroups (i.e., within and between gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans communities). We analyze Reddit subreddits with LDA topic modelling and sentiment analysis to find continuities and discrepancies in how 2S&LGBTQ+ subgroups connect online, what they discuss, and how they evaluate the nature of online communities. We conclude by discussing the practical and methodological implications of incorporating a CSS methodology into the study of digital 2S&LGBTQ+ connection and community formation. First, our findings will help inform Canada's 2S&LGBTQI+ Action Plan by identifying how subgroups navigate and respond to social support, ultimately improving the community's social outcomes in an increasingly online world. Second, by advancing a computational methodological framework to the study of 2S&LGBTQI+ digital connection, we demonstrate how CSS offers new solutions to the study of small and underrepresented populations in sexuality studies.

GAS5a-3 - Discourse and Debanking: The Socio-Financial Exclusion of Sex Workers

Presenting Author - Val Webber, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Drew Burchell and Matthew Numer, Dalhousie University

Sex work (e.g. escorting, dancing, porn performance) is regulated by mechanisms such as criminal law and municipal zoning. It is also regulated through financial systems. Despite laws promising financial inclusion, commercial banks have extensive discretion to deny or sever ties with account holders. Sex workers around the world report difficulties opening and maintaining bank accounts—a phenomenon referred to as 'debanking'—which has devastating health, social, and financial consequences. Little research has examined the phenomenon within Canada. This project employs an environmental scan informed by queer materialism and critical poststructural discourse analysis to 1) identify the key institutional factors that determine if, why, and how sex workers have their bank accounts denied, flagged, or closed, and 2) analyze the discursive trends that shape these factors. This is accomplished through a review of a) agreements, policies, and procedures from Canada's 'Big Six' domestic banks; b) laws and policies regulating Canada's financial sector (e.g. the Bank Act, FINTRAC, FCAC, OSFI, OBSI); c) case-law regarding debanking and financial inclusion in Canada; d) laws and policies regulating sex work in Canada; and e) peer-review, grey literature, and media regarding the debanking of sex workers. This document review will be complemented by ten interviews with sex workers and banking professionals to gather stakeholder experiences and insights. Preliminary data demonstrate that the debanking of sex workers is enabled through 1) the conflation of illegal conduct with 'objectionable' behaviours that pose a 'reputational risk' to commercial banks, and 2) an enduring discursive collapse between sex work and sexual exploitation perpetuated by Canada's sex work law, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA). Findings reveal various pathways to ensure greater financial inclusion of sex workers,

including decriminalizing sex work, enhancing human rights protections for sex workers, and strengthening protections for universal banking access.

GAS5a-4 - Missing Link: Sexual Behaviors of students in Tertiary institutions in Ghana

Presenting Author - Hannah Taylor-abdulai, University of Cape Coast

Non-presenting Author - Derek Tuoyire, University of Cape Coast

The study was concerned with the sexual behaviors of students in tertiary institutions in Ghana, using the University of Cape Coast as a case study. We conducted a cross-sectional descriptive study at the University of Cape Coast. Data were collected using a questionnaire, developed with Google Forms, and administered to the student body of the University of Cape Coast. The sample size was 400 respondents from 4 Colleges. We found that the majority of our respondents engage in risky sexual behaviors. Of the risky behaviors, unprotected sexual intercourse emerged as a major concern, with 36.5% of respondents reporting no use of protection during their first sexual experience and 39% reporting no use of protection during their most recent sexual encounter. In addition, multiple sexual partnerships were identified as another risky behavior, with 32.6% of respondents having had more than one sexual partner in their lifetime. About 10% female respondents reported having undergone an abortion following unprotected sexual intercourse. Living arrangements (single parents = mother or father only) constituted a risk factor for earlier debut of sex. A *p- value < .001* showed that there was a strong association between living arrangement and early initiation of sexual activity. The findings indicated that respondents who described their family socio-economic status as poor or middle-income tended to initiate sexual activity earlier. However, the majority were from middle-income households, with 76.1% of respondents reporting first sexual intercourse at an early age of 17. It is recommended that there should be targeted health education initiatives, such as the use of Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC), to help university students better adopt contraception to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and healthy social and relationship behaviors during their time on campus. Again, supportive guidance becomes essential in this cycle in the development of the students.

(GAS5b) Sociology of Sexualities II

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

This session features research of all methodologies and theoretical frames making contributions to the subfield sociology of sexualities. Paper topics are open, and may include analyses of the social organization of sexual behaviour, attitudes toward sexuality, the social landscape of sexual identities, embodied experiences of sexuality, and sexual inequalities.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tina Fetner, McMaster University

GAS5b-1 - Couples and Sex Toys: Heteronormativity as a Barrier to Sexual Pleasure for Women

Presenting Author - Tina Fetner, McMaster University

Non-presenting Authors - Rachel Gallagher, Emma Parker, Sophie Bray, and Vaidehi Bhatnagar, McMaster University

Many studies have documented the gender gap in orgasms between men and women. More recent work has established heteronormativity as a key explanatory factor, with straight women with men partners less likely to engage in clitoral stimulation than other types of couples. This study builds upon this literature by examining the use of vibrators and other sex toys in partnered sexual encounters. Using self-reported survey data from the Sex in Canada survey of sexual behaviour (N=2,300), we analyze the frequency of the inclusion of sex toys in coupled play among same-gender and different-gender partners. We find that same-gender partners are more likely to incorporate sex toys into their sexual activity. We discuss the implications that the social norms governing heterosexual sexuality and intimate relations place barriers to sexual possibilities that contribute to the gender gap in orgasms, perhaps limiting women's access to sexual pleasure more broadly.

GAS5b-2 - Mapping Sexual Agency: Comparative Insights from Graduate Women in Iran and Canada

Farinaz Basmechi, University of Ottawa

Women's Sexual Agency (SA) has been studied extensively over past decades, with scholars proposing models to understand the diverse ways young women exercise autonomy over their sexual lives. This paper employs a framework integrating feminist materialist theory and the biopolitics of sexual practices and presents a qualitative comparative analysis of 31 in-depth interviews with graduate students—15 from the University of Tehran and 16 from the University of Ottawa. A hybrid inductive-deductive approach highlights women's experiences of SA and their strategies of negotiation, resistance, and empowerment within cultural, regulatory, and material contexts. From this research, I propose a Model of Sexual Agency: From Formation to Practice, which conceptualizes SA as a dynamic, lifelong process shaped by values, expectations, and experiences. Values—shaped by family, culture, religion, media, and education—inform expectations for sexual encounters and evolve through exposure to alternative perspectives. Experiences, in turn, reshape values and expectations, with supportive or controlling partners and contextual conditions either expanding or constraining agency. The model identifies four forms of SA—habituated traditional, anomic, updated conflicted, and liberated—illustrating varying degrees of autonomy and alignment between values, expectations, and practices. Findings underscore that SA is socially mediated and can be expanded through collective resistance and supportive networks. Patriarchal norms persist globally, yet movements such as #MeToo, enabled by digital media, foster recognition, solidarity, and pathways for challenging male-centered norms. Comprehensive, inclusive sexual education is essential for teaching consent, bodily autonomy, and ethical sexual engagement, countering reliance on patriarchal or commercialized sources. This research highlights the urgency of a fifth wave of feminist activism centered on state-supported sexual education spanning childhood to adulthood. Such initiatives, paired with supportive policies, can reshape norms, affirm women's SA, disrupt cycles of sexual violence, and cultivate a culture grounded in consent, autonomy, and sexual well-being.

GAS5b-3 - Modest is Hottest: 'Deconstructing' Female Sexuality in Evangelical Communities

Jodi VanderHeide, Dalhousie University

Following the sexual liberation movement of the 1960-70s in the United States, there was increased mobilization of conservative evangelical Christians in preserving the traditional family unit, invoking a movement of sexual purity teachings and reinforcement of traditional gender roles. This movement

is referred to as the 'evangelical purity movement' and resulted in a proliferation of evangelical-based dating and relationship literature, purity-inspired mass merchandise, and mega youth conferences. Central to purity ideology is the positioning of female sexuality as responsible for the purity of male desire, and in extension, religious morality. Utilizing small-scale qualitative focus groups, this project takes a retrospective examination of the 1990s-early 2000s evangelical purity movement by exploring the personal narratives of women who traversed this ideological culture. In sharing their narratives, the participants situated their current perspective within the evangelical 'deconstruction movement', an emergent form of self-reflection that reconsiders previously held religious beliefs.

GAS5b-4 - Sexual orientation disparities in domestic violence and abuse: linked administrative evidence from Ontario

Presenting Author - Kristine Ienciu, York University

Non-presenting Authors - Gwen Ehi, Peiya Cao, Antony Chum, Elena Levitskaya, York University; Yihong Bai, University of Manitoba

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals experience higher risks of domestic violence and abuse (DVA). These risks are shaped by unique experiences, including sexual orientation identity milestones such as coming out and potential subsequent rejection, which are exacerbated by stigma and disapproval. Much of existing research on sexual orientation disparities mostly relied on self-reported data and child-focused samples. Findings on adult population-level gaps remain limited and this study addressed these gaps by examining sexual orientation disparities in DVA-related acute healthcare use among adults in Ontario, Canada. This study linked data from the Canadian Community Health Survey and Ontario health administrative databases to identify emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalizations. DVA-related events were defined by previously validated ICD-10 codes for maltreatment syndromes, neglect/abandonment, and other maltreatment. Sexual orientation was categorized as heterosexual (reference), homoesexual, bisexual, and other. Parametric survival models (log-logistic distribution) examined time-to-first-event among Ontario respondents 18+. Analyses were stratified by gender and adjusted for age, marital status, race/ethnicity, rural residence, employment, and education. LGB individuals showed elevated risk of DVA-related acute care events compared to heterosexuals. In the fully adjusted model, both homosexual (Time Ratio [TR]=0.18, 95% CI: 0.05-0.58) and bisexual adults had higher risk (TR=0.40, 95% CI: 0.17-0.96. Sex-stratified analyses revealed pronounced disparities among men but not women: bisexual men (TR=0.33, 95% CI: 0.11-0.98) and homosexual men (TR=0.21, 95% CI: 0.08-0.56) vs. heterosexual men showed substantially higher risk, while no evidence of disparities emerged for bisexual or homosexual women. Gay and bisexual men faced elevated risks of DVA-related events, potentially reflecting intersecting stigma associated with sexual minority status and dominant masculinity norms. These findings highlight the need for sexually inclusive DVA screening, provider training on LGB-sensitive care, and policies supporting LGB-affirming, community-based prevention and support services.

(GAS5c) Sociology of Sexualities III

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

This session features research of all methodologies and theoretical frames making contributions to the subfield sociology of sexualities. Paper topics are open, and may include analyses of the social organization of sexual behaviour, attitudes toward sexuality, the social landscape of sexual identities, embodied experiences of sexuality, and sexual inequalities.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tina Fetner, McMaster University

GAS5c-1 - Ace Narratives from Ace People: Going Beyond Allonormative Discourses about Asexuality

Chloe Jackson, Carleton University

There is a pervasive assumption within Western society that sex is a natural and universal part of human experience, pushing other identities like asexuality to the margins. Asexuality, a spectrum of identities under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella defined by a lack of interest in sex, continues to be widely misconceived and misrepresented within mainstream discourse. In Ottawa, there is a community organization called Kind Space, which hosts regular programming for members of the asexual community, providing a space for expansive conversations about the joys, challenges, and complexities of asexual identity to be had. After attending this programming, I became interested in how the nuanced and diverse perspectives of program attendees unsettle dominant narratives about asexuality, and through this research project, I captured how asexual-identified people are turning the dial on conversations surrounding asexuality. To do this, I conducted 8 semi-structured interviews with asexual-identified people aged 18+ who attend Kind Space programming to learn about their unique experience of being asexual and to discuss how they make meaning of this aspect of their identity. From these conversations, I found that experiences of asexuality often transcend the typical oppression-liberation dichotomy associated with queer identities. Participants spoke critically about how queerness is not necessarily either a site of marginalization or freedom, showing instead that asexual identity can be experienced with a complex mix of joy, mundanity, constraint, internal conflict, social othering, community connection, and self-discovery. My findings show how asexual modes of relating can lead people to challenge the societal devaluing of platonic friendships, inspiring deeper non-sexual connections to form and ways of finding fulfillment beyond the sexual to emerge. Moreover, participants revealed valuable insights into the experiences of loneliness, isolation, and uncertainty that come with navigating our sex-obsessed world as an asexual person.

GAS5c-2 - Hearts Held within the Lavender Larder: Empowering Queer Community through Social Support & Food Justice on Coast Salish Territories (Vancouver, BC, CA)

Ryan Stillwagon, University of Victoria and York University

This paper examines how social support offsets and reduces the pernicious stressful effects of food insecurity among trans and queer people living on unceded xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations territories, or Vancouver, Canada. Lavender Larder is a temporary, pop-up food hub situated in shared community spaces in East Vancouver that provide deliberate, visible, *foreground* forms of social support to Two-Spirit, trans, and queer folx struggle to afford food. These forms of support primarily buffer stressors related

to food insecurity and range from fresh produce, breads, meats, dairy products, pet foods, toiletries, and gender-affirming clothing, chest binders, and cosmetics, each accompanied by direct forms of emotional care work uniquely tailored to each member. Beyond these forms of visible social support lie the *background*, invisible and perceived mechanisms of social support that exist within Lavender Larder and can be activated at any time. These features exist among those with social ties to Lavender Larder and vary, from instrumental (e.g., behavioral guidance and help with tasks), informational (e.g., advice), and emotional (e.g., feeling valued, loved, and a sense of belonging) forms of social support. I argue that these foreground forms of social support that buffer food insecurity stress among queers could not exist without these background forms of social support. Lavender Larder departs from current corporate-dominated food charity models and presents a vision of *queer food sovereignty* that interweaves the work of social support within the framework of food justice. This study is the first to document specific forms of social support that address queer food insecurity.

GAS5c-3 - The Canadian abortion imaginary: Discursive and empirical descriptions of abortion patients

Lexie Milmine, McMaster University

An estimated one in three Canadians will have an abortion in their lifetime. While Canada has no abortion laws and attitudes towards abortion are liberal, it is unclear how much Canadians know about who accesses abortion services. Bruce, Hutchens, and Cowan (2024) introduce the "abortion imaginary" to describe the set of shared understandings and assumptions about abortion and abortion patients in the United States. This paper extends the abortion imaginary concept to describe the landscape of abortion in a Canadian context, comparing the discursive and empirical realities of who seeks abortion care. Using nationally-representative survey data, the paper describes the sociodemographic characteristics associated with having an abortion, addressing the lack of primary quantitative data on characteristics of Canadians who access abortion care. Based on these findings, the paper offers a critical analysis of the imagined abortion patient, arguing that the ways Canadians think about abortion is not reflective of the reality of who gets them, but rather a manifestation of already-existing gendered, raced, and classed narratives.

GAS5c-4 - The Heart of a Halifax Queer: Queer Men's Place-Based Sexual Identities

Nic Kuzmochka, Dalhousie University

Given that queerness as an identity can and does happen everywhere, its place-based importance, while recognized in several studies, is less often taken up as a key aspect in the construction of queer identities. In my mixed methods study of 21 interviews and 67 survey responses from queer men currently living in Halifax, Nova Scotia, I find that queer men are aware, and even occasionally defensive of, an Atlantic Canadian and even Haligonian queer masculine identity. I take up queer men's discussion of a place-based queer identity in Halifax in three themes: 1) a global notion of queerness; 2) the instrumentalization of the rural-urban divide; and 3) Halifax's openness/ exclusion dichotomy. Within these themes I find that queer men take up their identities as both situated within their immediate environment and in reference to a 'global' image of queerness and its association to the urban; allowing queer men to position themselves as 'different' from what they define as 'normal' for queer men generally. As such, I echo calls for analyses of queerness as a situated identity requiring

consideration of place as an axis of intersectional identity. I take up my work in relation to literatures of queer identity, queer urban life and rurality, and queer intersectionalities.

(GAS6) The Construction of Parent and Child in Anti-LGBTQ2S+ Movements

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

Opposition to 2SLGBTQ+-inclusive policies in Canada is rising, especially at the site of public schools, where the rights of children, the rights of parents, and the rights of the State are subject to scrutiny and debate. This panel session seeks to make sense of how parents' rights and responsibilities are constructed and leveraged to advance "anti-gender ideology," how social meanings of childhood are made and remade to advance this project, how parents make sense of their roles and responsibilities when it comes to social justice education, and how "gender" has become a site where diverse extremisms coalesce through the mobilization of social anxiety and fear.

Session Organizer and Chair: Amanda Watson, Simon Fraser University

GAS6-1 - The SOGI Phantasm in British Columbia, Canada

Adam Yahav, Simon Fraser University

"Gender" has become a site of increasing contestation, particularly at the site of public schools, where social meanings of childhood, education, and queerness are mediated and negotiated by multiple stakeholders: parents, teachers, and politicians. This study seeks to elucidate how opposition to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity 1-2-3 (SOGI 1-2-3) resource program in British Columbia operates as a catch-all for larger, unrelated, and at times contradictory anxieties of average working people that have become displaced onto "SOGI". Drawing on the theory of gender phantasm from Judith Butler's *Who's Afraid of Gender*, this work analyzes the discourse and rhetoric in email submissions made by the public to the Minister of Education during the periods of August to November 2023 and 2024 to illuminate how social meanings of childhood, education, and queerness interplay to engender a potent phantasm that works to expand state powers and embolden authoritarian and fascistic political formations.

GAS6-2 - Queer Parenting in the time of 'Parental Rights': A Pilot Study in Calgary, AB

Leah Hamilton and Corinne L. Mason, Mount Royal University

This research presentation will focus on the findings of a 2024-25 pilot study about the impacts of anti-2SLGBTQIA+ legislation—and the 'parental rights' movement fuelling it—on youth and their families in Calgary, Alberta. Using qualitative data from focus groups with parents and caregivers of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, the presentation will focus on how participants understand the 'parental rights' movement and how it has reshaped their lives, especially by way of provincial legislation that bans gender affirming care for youth, excludes trans women and girls from sport, and limits inclusive education. The presenters will also share insights from the second phase of their project, which is an Alberta-wide expansion funded by a SSHRC Insight Development Grant.

GAS6-3 - Parent Striving: The Labour and Love of Raising Kids to be Agents of Social Change

Amanda D. Watson, Simon Fraser University

After George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25, 2020, parents in Canada bought books on anti-racist parenting. Staff at the Vancouver Public Library responded to new demand from parents by hosting Zoom workshops explaining how to talk with kids about injustice. In my interviews with 28 parents in Metro Vancouver in 2023, parents confirmed that not only were they buying books and attending workshops, they were following psychologists and activists on social media, and having conversations with children about intersecting forms of systemic injustice. The sociological study of the family offers a number of critical interpretations of this turn to resources. Anxious parents could be seeking a sense of control as they fixate on the right thing to do and say. Or perhaps a growing number of families struggle to parent their children sustainably, so the popularity of social justice parenting swells as new communities of parents feel threatened by social inequality. Or maybe this story simply updates an older one about mothers following doctor's orders, only this time we turn to a new set of experts. But these critiques are insufficient to explain how parents are deeply rethinking their roles and values as they keep up with the daily work of parenting. Despite their overwhelm, the parents I spoke to wrestled with how to prepare their children to survive in this world as agents of social change, striving for something better, offering visions of love and political freedom in practice.

(GAS7) Sociology in the Manosphere: Pathways Into and Out of Gendered Radicalization

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

The manosphere, a collection of antifeminist, misogynistic online communities, is one of the most visible arenas of gendered polarization today. This loosely connected network includes Men's Rights Activists, Red Pill adherents, and Incels, but also Tradwives and Femcels. These communities frame feminism as a threat to Western masculinity and social order, while offering guidance in a time of economic precarity and social instability. The manosphere's influence is far-reaching: its narratives shape mainstream politics, media representations of gender, and even children's language. Yet its promise of solidarity comes at significant cost. For men, participation can intensify isolation, and hostility toward others, while normalizing emotional repression as a markers of authentic masculinity. For women, involvement can reinforce disempowerment, encouraging financial and emotional dependence on men, and even discouraging women from leaving abusive relationships. Existing scholarship has mapped the content and ideology of the manosphere, yet less attention has been given to trajectories into and out of these communities. This session seeks to advance scholarship that not only diagnoses the harms of gendered radicalization but also imagines how sociological understanding can serve as a tool for deradicalization even within the most polarized digital spaces.

Session Organizer and Chair: Pauline Hoebanx, Saint Mary's University

GAS7-1 - Gendered Disinformation: Manipulating science to advance misogyny in the manosphere

Michael Halpin and Marley Price, Dalhousie University

We consider how disinformation - the deliberate spread of false information - is produced from a gendered standpoint. Our analysis focuses on the manosphere, a collection of online communities that critique feminism and discuss men's grievances. We explain how men in the manosphere use disinformation to "do" gender. Our analysis focuses on the *Scientific Blackpill*, an online clearing

house of misogynistic fact claims maintained by incels. The *Scientific Blackpill* provides 120,000 words of content referencing 495 unique sources, primarily scientific articles. We provide descriptive statistics of these sources, including average publication date, field (e.g., psychology), the impact factor of the journal, as well as the first author's gender and field of specialization. Here, we argue that incels interpolate scientific claims - inventing a narrative to tie data to their ideology to ground it in science. Our qualitative analyses focus on the 120,000 word narrative of the *Scientific Blackpill*. First, we argue that incels use rhetorical strategies (e.g., hyperbole) to influence the interpretation of scientific sources. Second, we explain how incels interpret studies within misogynistic metanarratives. Third, we demonstrate how incels create "scientific counterfeits," wherein they actively manipulate data so that it evidences their misogynistic arguments. Taken together, we argue that incels engage in gendered disinformation, wherein they deliberately spread false information about women as means to perform masculinity and maintain unequal gender relations. We forward that gendered disinformation is emblematic of how manosphere communities engage with science, and connect our analyses to theories of gender, as well as prior research on both the manosphere and disinformation.

GAS7-2 - Wollstonecraft and the Digital Resurgence of Biological Determinism

Paige Thompson, University of New Brunswick

From Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman,* to the pseudoscientific claims of the manosphere community, the notion that biological sex determines social value and gender roles remains a powerful force. Mary Wollstonecraft's argument that notions of biological determinism led to men placing themselves in a social position above women, proves to still be rampant through the manosphere further enforcing the hierarchy she critiqued. Wollstonecraft's highlighted how notions of biological determinism influenced socialization through conversation with theorists like Jean-Jacques Rousseau who perpetuated social order based on physical differences. Connecting Wollstonecraft's critique of gender hierarchy to the manosphere, which advocates for further perpetuation of physical differences, can be understood in three distinct ways; (1) Due to such ideas about biological determinism, there is now an online forum for creators to perpetuate these ideas on a global scale; (2) Such ideas are so powerful that young men are now being taught that these archaic hierarchies are nature, so the movement is gaining traction; (3) these ideas are now so radical that they are leaping from the screens and into mainstream society, posing a physical threat to women as seen in the 2020 killing of a female sex worker in Toronto (CBC, 2023). Gramsci provides an alternative lens through which to examine how social hierarchies are similarly reproduced through class relations and hegemonic power (Gramsci, 1989). However, Wollstonecraft offers a more complete explanation of the harm such notions of biological determinism can cause when they are cemented into socialization, as seen in the manosphere.

GAS7-3 - "Women live life on easy mode": Echoes of the Manosphere Among Young Far-Right Men

Kayla Preston, University of Toronto

Young far-right men are hyper-fixated on their masculinity online. Recent literature has shown that young white men feel as though they have become the victims in a world which is attentive to social inequality (Manning and Stefanovic, 2025). Other research has found that joining far-right groups and becoming invested in far-right ideologies serves as one way young men can become

"remasculinized" by fighting against feminism and for traditional gender roles (Gottzén, 2025). This research comes at a time of increased awareness of the connection between violence, misogyny and the far right, particularly with the increased influence of the manosphere, or misogynistic groups online (Blee, 2020; Preston, Halpin, Lockyer, 2025). However, how does the online world translate into the offline world? Using life-course interviews with 20 young men in a far-right group and 6 months of participant observation in the Midwestern United States, I found that young far-right men understand their masculinity as contingent on women's loss of social, economic, and political status, echoing claims made by incels (involuntarily celibate), violent misogynistic groups online. In moving women to the private sphere, far-right youth see a future of revitalized masculine dominance. Interestingly, however, these young men felt that the remasculinization process needed to begin by addressing the behaviours and actions of women in their own group and of women with whom they were organizing. These young men made three central claims about their female far-right peers: first, that women were bearers of children; second, that they should control women's sexual activities; and third, that women were incapable of life in the professional or political sphere. To reclaim their own masculinity, these young men first believed that they needed to 're-feminize' the women around them. This paper empirically connects how claims from the manosphere are taken up by far-right young men offline.

GAS7-4 - Looking Back to Think Forward: The Case of Men's Service Organizations in Canada

Judith Taylor, University of Toronto

In this moment of apparent crisis of masculinity, in which economic and social shifts have made young men susceptible to theories of Maga, incels and dark enlightenment, this paper discusses men's service organizations - AA, Veterans, Rotary Club, Kinsmen, and the Lions, as a model of masculinity that served both community and men's senses of self, and innovated a concept much discussed among Left leaning activists: mutual aid. While Right activists in the U.S. are currently discussing empathy as a scourge, empathic action has been a cornerstone of men's activism and social action in Canada throughout the 1900s and 2000s. Drawing on service organization histories, initial interviews, and organizational archives and websites, I map this enduring history and the promise of service as a flexible ideology across genders that has imparted a masculine sensibility of mattering and belonging. Is this organizational history of service key to combatting isolation and conspiracy theories or antisociality among young men?

(GAS8) Constructing and Disrupting Toxic Masculinities

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Gender and Sexuality Research Cluster

The term toxic masculinity is often used colloquially to describe harmful or dominant behaviors enacted by men. In everyday usage, however, the term can obscure the context-dependent nature of toxicity. Different social conditions produce different expectations, pressures, and rewards associated with masculinity; as a result, toxic masculinities are best understood as plural rather than singular. This panel examines how toxic masculinities are constructed, sustained, and disrupted across diverse political, cultural, and racialized contexts, treating them as relational and situational rather than fixed personal traits. Across the papers, toxic masculinity appears as an unstable and contested formation. In some contexts, it operates as a desired or incentivized identity that promises

recognition, belonging, or status; in others, it is something men actively struggle to distance themselves from. Several papers examine how men navigate these tensions in spaces shaped by economic precarity, political discourse, racialization, and community norms. At the same time, the panel highlights how women are impacted by toxic masculinities, particularly through the need to negotiate men's restrictive gender roles and the power relations they produce, including in intimate, cultural, and digital contexts. By centering lived experience and affective dynamics, the panel demonstrates how toxic masculinity is both reproduced and contested in everyday life. Rather than focusing solely on critique, the papers foreground concrete pathways beyond restrictive gender roles, including intersectional community organizing, feminist and racial justice commitments, alternative masculine practices, and digitally mediated forms of resistance and sexual agency. Taken together, the panel offers a cohesive account of how toxic masculinities are made and unmade, and how more inclusive and livable gender formations are being imagined and practiced across social contexts.

Session Organizer: Pauline Hoebanx, Saint Mary's University

Session Chair: Augie Westhaver, Saint Mary's University

GAS8-1 - Affective Populism And Imagining "The Working-Class" In Contemporary Canada

Tyler McCormick, Carleton University

Amid the rise of populist ideology in Canada (Budd 2021), political narratives increasingly operate as affective and ideological projects. They promise moral clarity and emotional coherence during job precarity, declining wages, and eroding stable employment. Drawing on Anderson's (1983, 6-7) concept of "imagined communities" and Ahmed's (2004) notion of "affective economies," this paper examines how emotions circulate through political discourse and attach to particular social figures and values. Using critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 2003) of speeches and public statements by Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, I analyze how he constructs "the working-class" as an imagined community of "Canada's workers" who can "build, develop and transport the goods the world needs" (Conservative Party of Canada 2025). In this discourse, "the working-class" accrues affective value as a figure of moral worth, discipline, and national productivity, while bureaucrats and elites are devalued through slogans such as "More Boots, Less Suits" (Conservative Party of Canada 2025). I argue that "the working-class" functions less as an empirically diverse social category than as an affectively stylized figure within populist rhetoric. Saturated with pride, grievance, and moral entitlement, this imagined working-class is implicitly constructed as White, cisgender, heteronormative, and male (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017; Sauer 2020). From a gender perspective, this formation is sustained through appeals to men whose identities are tied to paid labour, exertion, and breadwinning (Connell 1995; Kimmel 2017). Economic insecurity is framed as a material condition and an affective threat to masculine status. I suggest that conservatism among working-class men should be understood less as fixed ideology than as an affective response to anxieties over class position and recognition. Addressing this crisis requires not only material reform but affective imaginaries capable of sustaining dignity, belonging, and solidarity under conditions of precarity.

GAS8-2 - Masculinity In Fighting Game Communities

Ellie Manzano, University of British Columbia

Many young men today belong to video game communities that validate their masculinity, particularly fighting video game communities that are grounded in in-person, one versus one competition. Current studies on video gaming communities focus on online competition and have not examined local, in-person events. This study asks: *how is masculinity enacted within in-person fighting video game communities?* Data was collected by interviewing members of the competitive Super Smash Brothers Melee community, asking about community-specific behaviours and attitudes, as well as their individual beliefs on masculinity. Preliminary analysis reveals three central themes: struggling between maintaining traditional ideals while distancing themselves from self-labeled toxic attributes; associating feelings of masculinity with confidence; and emphasising pride as a driver for competition. With this knowledge, programs dedicated to creating communities for men should provide opportunities for them to challenge unhealthy ideals while embracing what personally feels masculine, such as presenting and behaving in ways that do not align with conventional understandings.

GAS8-3 - Regulating and Reclaiming Sexual Agency: Young Women's Experiences in Iran and Canada

Farinaz Basmechi, University of Ottawa

Sexual agency is a core aspect of sexual rights and human well-being, yet it is inconsistently recognized across sociopolitical contexts. In many parts of the Global South, particularly under authoritarian religious regimes, women's sexual agency is heavily restricted. In Global North contexts, formal policies endorse sexual equality, but male-centered norms in media, popular culture, and online communities—including the "manosphere," which often circulates misogynistic narratives about women's sexuality—continue to shape young women's sexual expectations and constrain their agency. This presentation draws on feminist materialist theory and the biopolitics of sexual practices to examine how distinct political and cultural contexts shape young women's sexual subjectivities in Iran and Canada. It presents findings from 31 in-depth interviews with graduate students—15 from the University of Tehran and 16 from the University of Ottawa—analyzed using a hybrid inductive-deductive approach. The study emphasizes women's strategies of negotiation, resistance, and empowerment, and the role of digital media and peer networks in cultivating knowledge and asserting agency. Findings reveal striking similarities across contexts: early sexual socialization framed sex primarily as "an act for men," and participants reported little or no formal sexuality education centered on women's agency. Despite differences in legal and political frameworks, young women in both settings used digital media to access information, challenge male-centered norms, and resist misogynistic discourses. This study highlights the importance of comprehensive, agency-focused sexuality education and the empowering potential of digital networks. It demonstrates how feminist use of digital media constitutes a pathway out of gendered regulation of sexual practices, enabling young women to reclaim agency and create spaces for sexual autonomy. By comparing experiences across contrasting geopolitical and biopolitical contexts, the presentation contributes to sociological understandings of sexual regulation, resistance, and empowerment, offering insights for advancing sexual rights and feminist action in both conservative and liberalized societies.

(HEA) Sociology of Health Research Cluster

(HEA1a) Embodied Inequalities: Gender, Risk, and the Lived Experience of Health

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session explores how gender operates as a fundamental axis of health inequality, shaping both subjective experiences and structural barriers. From the isolating feedback loops of masculinity to the constrained agency of women navigating contraceptive information and care systems, the papers reveal how gendered norms become embedded in bodies and institutions. By juxtaposing men's performances of invulnerability with women's marginalized access to care, the session illuminates the deeply social, and often unequal, foundations of health and illness, highlighting the need for gender-transformative approaches to health.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Claudia Chaufan, York University; Magdalena Aguilar, Independent Scholar

HEA1a-1 - To Suffer the Silence: A triadic relationship between isolation, masculinity, and health.

Michael Halpin and Kate McQuaid, Dalhousie University

Social isolation can include both the feeling of loneliness and/or lack of social connection, social capital, or social support. Research and popular media suggest that men are experiencing an "epidemic" of social isolation. Social isolation also has substantial consequences for men's health, as a known cause of poor mental health, poor physical health, and reduced life expectancy. In addition to isolation, the performance of masculinity is tied to poor health outcomes and partially explains health disparities between men and women. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 52 socially isolated men, we examine how social isolation intersects with the performance of masculinity to impact men's health. First, we demonstrate that isolation is tied to poor health outcomes (e.g., suicidality) and can exacerbate existing health problems for the men in our sample. Second, we explain that such health problems are compounded by these men's performance of masculinity, as men minimize their health issues, attempt to self-medicate, or perceive health care as only necessary for dealing with crises. Third, we detail how isolation intersects with gender, as men position isolating practices, such as stoicism, help refusal, and social disconnection, as masculine. We argue that this triadic relationship between isolation, masculinity, and health has substantial consequences for men, creating feedback loops wherein negative developments in one part of this triadic relationship (e.g., isolation) impact the others. We connect these findings to research on social isolation, theories of gender and health, and forward health policy recommendations.

HEA1a-2 - Risk and Masculinity: Intersectional Patterns in Men's Climate Health Perception and Underexplored Vulnerabilities

Presenting Author - Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, McGill University

Non-presenting Author - Shaifali Sandal, McGill University

Research consistently shows that men, on average, express lower concern about climate change and engage less in preventive environmental behaviour. These patterns are frequently framed as political attitudes rather than gendered health practices. Drawing on sociological theories of masculinity and

risk, this study examines climate change perception as a form of gendered health behaviour tied to norms of invulnerability, provision, and extractive identity. This study conducts a scoping review of peer-reviewed literature (2004-2024) on climate change risk perception. Records were systematically extracted and coded, using structured variables to capture predictors of risk perception, behavioural responses, and reported or implied health consequences. Quantitative evidence mapping and frequency analysis were used to identify dominant patterns across studies. An intersectional analytical lens was applied to examine variation across race, region, class, and sexuality, as reported. Across regions, men are more frequently classified as climate skeptics or low-concern respondents, particularly when climate mitigation is symbolically associated with care, restraint, or regulation. The literature links lower perceived risk among men to political ideology, occupational identity, resource-extractive economic contexts, and norms of toughness and self-reliance. However, few studies interpret these patterns as health vulnerability. Limited research addresses racialized, Indigenous, or non-heterosexual masculinities, despite evidence that climate exposure and health consequences are unevenly distributed. Where examined, reduced risk perception corresponds with reduced protective behaviour, greater occupational exposure, and delayed health adaptation responses. This paper argues that climate skepticism should be understood as a gendered health practice rather than solely an informational deficit. By integrating masculinity theory with the sociology of health and environmental risk perception, the study reframes men not only as contributors to climate risk but also as differentially vulnerable to its health impacts. The findings identify major gaps in intersectional analysis and suggest the need for gender-specific public health approaches to climate adaptation.

HEA1a-3 - Understanding Young Women's Information Sources and Influences for Contraceptive Decision-Making

Presenting Author - Ruby Dyck Steinmann, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Author - Silvia Bartolic, Univeristy of British Columbia

Women use a wide range of information sources available for their contraceptive decision making including health care providers, friends/family, health websites, and social media. Often these sources provide conflicting information or particular discourses regarding contraception. At ages 18-29, many women first begin to look into contraception and consider starting a method, many doing so for the sake of preventing unplanned pregnancy. This study aims to investigate the influence of information sources for young women's contraceptive decision making. One hundred (100) female participants responded to an online survey about the perceived helpfulness and trustworthiness of information sources, their contraceptive concerns and beliefs, and their contraceptive decision making. Preliminary findings suggest that young women's decision making is highly contextual and dependent on the information they receive and the source it may have come from. Preliminary findings also indicate that young women must make sense of multiple different contraceptive information sources when making decisions, and that these sources may have different influences on contraceptive outcomes. With these findings, healthcare providers can gain an understanding of the sources young women use for contraceptive information, enabling them to adapt their counseling to better address patients' existing knowledge and concerns.

HEA1a-4 - Integrated Care and the Production of Hybrid Biosocialities Among Persons Seeking Treatment for Alcohol-Related illnesses.

Presenting Author - Adam Christianson, University of Manitoba

Non-presenting Authors - Gayle Halas, Erin Knight, and Nabhia Faisal, University of Manitoba

Beyond their aims of improving and streamlining, integrated care interventions produce hybrid subjectivities. This article explores the self-narratives of patients of an experimental Integrated Care Clinic for people with Alcoholic Liver Disease. The ICC aligns hepatological knowledge with psychological knowledge on Alcohol Use Disorder and Liver Disease to improve patient experiences and outcomes. Beyond improving compliance with alcohol abstinence, we discuss how the alignment of these two knowledge through the ICC creates a unique hybrid subject position. The ICC allows participants to articulate themselves as new kinds of responsible biological citizens whose moral and ontological politics resist conventional narratives associated with alcohol use. Beyond improving patient outcomes, the ICC provides a new means of articulating themselves, attracting people whose values and preferences do not align with the spiritual, medical, and psycho-behavioral explanations for their alcohol-related illness. Hence, the value of integrated care may not lie simply in providing more efficient care, but in its ability to provide new ways of understanding and working on the self.

(HEA1b) Power, Policy, and the Production of Health Inequalities

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session confronts the deep structural and political forces that shape global health inequities. It traces the historical legacies of the empire in hygiene campaigns and modern medical volunteerism, revealing how colonial logics persist in contemporary health interventions. The papers then ground these dynamics in ethnographic accounts of structural violence in Ethiopia and India, demonstrating how caste, poverty, and systemic neglect produce chronic illness. The session culminates with a scoping review that positions women's political empowerment as a critical, yet understudied, determinant of population health, arguing for a politicized understanding of health equity.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Claudia Chaufan, York University; Magdalena Aguilar, Independent Scholar

HEA1b-1 - Lifebuoy Larry in the Jungle: Intersections of class and race in cleanliness education, 1920-2020

Emma Whelan, Dalhousie University

This paper explores the development of ideas about whiteness, Empire, health, and respectability in cleanliness education campaigns, focusing particularly on the interplay between class- and race-related anxieties in Britain and the Commonwealth in the interwar period. The analysis is based on a wide range of primary historical sources, including a comic book for British children produced by the makers of Lifebuoy soap, colonial state publications, and educational films produced by the Health & Cleanliness Council, a voluntary health organization. Key themes in these sources include the neutralization of threats to health and civilization through cleanliness; the conflation of dirty white working class bodies and racialized bodies; and soap as a means of racial and moral transformation. Drawing on work by Anne McClintock, David Sibley, and Timothy Burke, among others, I explore how

the parallels drawn between racialized and white working class dirtiness in this period reflected and deflected anxieties about Britain's standing on the world stage in a period of imperial decline. I conclude with a brief discussion of early 21st century public-private partnership handwashing campaigns in low- and middle-income countries, as contemporary instances of the long association between cleanliness education and imperial capitalism.

HEA1b-2 - Women's political empowerment and health: a global scoping review

Presenting Author - Joanne Ong, York University

Non-presenting Authors - Cary Wu and Babatunde Odugbemi, York University

Although considerable research has delved into the health implications of women's social and economic empowerment, the nexus between women's political empowerment and health outcomes remains comparatively uncharted. This scoping review aims to bridge this knowledge gap by comprehensively mapping the current state of literature describing the interplay between women's political empowerment and health outcomes. We also seek to identify any models, frameworks, or theories that link women's political empowerment to health outcomes. We follow the Arksey and O'Malley methodological framework, further refined by Levac et al. The search strategy will include two main conceptual blocks: (1) women's political empowerment and (2) health. The strategy will be developed for MEDLINE and adapted for Embase, Emcare, PsycInfo, CINAHL, Sociological Abstracts, Global Health, and the Web of Science Core Collection. Screening of articles based on titles and abstracts and full-text will be conducted independently by two reviewers. We include any full-length empirical (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed- methods study) or non-empirical papers (editorials and opinion papers) published in peer-reviewed journals in English. Data extraction will include bibliographic information, study context, methodological approach, conceptual framing of the link between women's political empowerment and reported health outcomes. We will use thematic synthesis to summarize the extracted data and identify key conceptual linkages, mechanisms, and research gaps within the existing literature. Findings are expected to highlight the extent to which women's political empowerment has been conceptualized as a political and social determinant of health. We seek not only to present insights for a diverse audience, including researchers and policy makers, but also to advance a research agenda that foregrounds women's political empowerment as central to achieving global health equity.

(HEA1c) Contested Knowledge: Expertise, Legitimacy, and the Governance of Care

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session interrogates the production and politics of health knowledge and governance. It reveals how scientific expertise can be shaped by professional biases, as seen in reproductive research, and how legitimacy is constructed in regulatory gaps, such as in psychedelic therapy. The papers then examine the consequences of fragmented systems, from genetic screening programs in Pakistan to pluralistic scabies management in Ethiopia. The session concludes with a critical analysis of evidence-based policy, demonstrating how political ideology can override public health data, and argues for more inclusive, equitable, and community-grounded approaches to care.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Claudia Chaufan, York University; Magdalena Aguilar, Independent Scholar

HEA1c-1 - The OB-GYN profession's vertical gender segregation and scientific reproductive bias: A crisis of expertise and public trust

Netta Avnon, Western University

OB-GYN science and expertise have been the object of recent public debates between patients and physicians. Patients and patients' advocate groups, along with scientists from diverse disciplines, argue that the vertical segregation in the OB-GYN medical profession leads to a reproductive bias in its science. These claims are based on small data sets. Our study leveraged a big data approach to test whether such bias exists. We applied a large language model (BERTopic) to 305,063 PubMed abstracts published between 1970 and 2021 in 83 journals ranked in 2020 under OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR). Our application of BERTopic yielded 2869 extracted topics. We then read and annotated the abstracts of the 1166 most prevalent topics and assigned each a category and sub-category name. We found a significant reproductive bias in OB-GYN research; nearly 61% of all studies by OB-GYNs focused solely on women's reproductive functions. Gynecological cancer accounted for 16% of the studies. Only 23% of the research addressed all other women's pelvic health issues. Our findings suggest that reforms are required in the allocation of scientific research resources in OB-GYN science and the possible reorganization of the OB-GYN medical profession.

HEA1c-2 - Safe Consumption Sites in Ontario; Where is the Evidence?

Guillerma Richardson and Natalie Snow, Niagara University Ontario

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, prescription opioids became widely used in Canada, leaving many people dependent on them. When access to these medications was later reduced, some individuals turned to illegal drugs, which have since become increasingly toxic due to substances like fentanyl. This led to a sharp rise in overdose deaths across the country. Supervised consumption sites were introduced as a response to this crisis, providing a safe space where people can use drugs under medical supervision, preventing fatal overdoses, reducing the spread of infectious diseases, and connecting people to health and social supports. Research shows these sites save lives and can improve community safety. In 2024, Ontario passed Bill 223, which introduced new restrictions on supervised consumption sites, including limits on where they can be located, reduced decision-making power for municipalities, and greater provincial control over harm-reduction services. Prior to Bill 223, Ontario operated approximately eleven supervised consumption sites, with reports indicating that as many as nine may be forced to close under the new legislative framework. While the government says these changes are meant to improve public safety and promote abstinence-based treatment, this paper examines whether those claims align with the evidence. By reviewing existing research, public health data, and policy analysis, the paper focuses on three key restrictions in Bill 223 and shows that they conflict with evidence-based harm reduction, human rights obligations, and public health goals, and may increase harm rather than improve safety.

(HEA2a) Structural Determinants of Health Equity: Political Economy, Professional Regulation, and Social Conditions

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This open roundtable welcomed scholars, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students at any stage of their careers who are engaged in research related to health, illness, medicine, and care. While grounded in sociology, we encouraged contributions from adjacent disciplines such as anthropology, social work, health policy, philosophy, and political science. Participants will have 8 minutes to introduce a work in progress, a methodological or conceptual challenge, or a developing idea. The emphasis is on conversation rather than formal presentation. Each contribution will be followed by open discussion, allowing participants to receive constructive feedback and identify shared questions, themes, and potential collaborations. The roundtable aims to foster an intellectually generous space where emerging and established scholars can exchange ideas, refine research questions, and build connections across subfields.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Claudia Chaufan, York University; Magdalena Aguilar, Independent Scholar

HEA2a-1 - Neoliberalism, Regressive Policy Health Policy Reform, and the Rise of the "Profitization" of Health Care in Ontario

William MacGregor, York University

Despite Canada's robust history of scholarship and knowledge leadership in the fields of Health Promotion and Social/Structural Determinants of Health research, recent policy rhetoric has not matched policy practice. Since the 1980s the rise of Neoliberal economic and political philosophy has deeply influenced politics, governance, and policy and become a primary driver of growing health and social inequities due to its shaping of not only the political and policy systems that distribute the resources necessary to support population health (in addition to the regulatory structures that have health protective effects), but driving a shift away from an understanding of the socially produced nature of health. Neoliberal "reforms" have become regressive, dismantling the protective and redistributive characteristics of the welfare state which is reflective of the growing wealth and power imbalances in Canadian society. This is despite the "Penny Wise, Pound Foolish" nature of these "reforms" in reducing front line service provision (despite increased cost to the public purse in the long run) and the rise of Public-Private-Partnerships (P3s). A worrying new trend is the rise of "Profitization", which is distinct from Privatization (where a previously public service is de-commodified and provision of it is shifted entirely into the market) where a low-cost and high-potential-profit-margin health service becomes privatively delivered but still publicly funded with minimal-to-non-existent oversight. A growing evidence body of evidence demonstrates that Profitization increases the costs of services while decreasing transparency, lowers the quality of care and worsens outcomes, and preliminary evidence is that some private providers are in open violation of the Canada Health Act. Thus, neoliberal informed governments are subsidizing corporate profits at the expense of health, wellness, and fiscal prudence as well as undermining the long-term stability of Canada's Public Health system.

HEA2a-2 - Advancing Social Justice through Health Profession(al)s' Education and Regulation in Australia and Canada

Presenting Author - Jennifer Brady, Acadia University

Non-presenting Authors - Annabelle Wilson, Flinders University; Katherine Burt, Lehman College; Yuka Asada, University of Illinois Chicago

Data shows unequivocally that health inequities (unjust and unfair differences in health status) are rooted in preventable, and thus unfair, social disparities and ultimately cost health systems in Canada, the US, and Australia billions of dollars annually. Globally, health professionals and their respective educational, professional, and regulatory organisations are increasingly being called upon to respond to the root causes of health inequities through their day-to-day practice or advocacy aimed at systemic change. Yet, there remains no operational framework of what justice-enhancing practice means for AHP, nor how it may be implemented in AHP education or regulation. One barrier to developing and implementing such frameworks are the epistemological, educational, and professional silos that position sociologically-oriented, critical theoretical perspectives as immaterial to the practical concerns of AHP. To redress these gaps, this emerging research aims to develop two frameworks: one to conceptualise social justice in AHP education and regulation and another to implement it. The conceptualization of social justice in AHP education will be carried out through a series of co-design workshops in Canada, the US, and Australia that will engage critical scholars, allied health practitioners, students, educators and regulators. The implementation of the frameworks will be tested and evaluated in four allied health degree programs (i.e. physiotherapy, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, and speech pathology) to balance feasibility and impact, and emphasise interprofessional education. We expect this research to support: preparation of AHP educators in justice-enhancing pedagogy and curriculum; readiness of AHP across various practice settings to recognise and redress social disparities that cause health inequities; adaptation of healthcare services for diverse populations; policies that promote social inclusion and thriving communities and, importantly, bring sociological and critical perspectives into the everyday work of AHP, in an accessible way.

HEA2a-3 - Social Experience of Blindness through the Lens of Age-related Macular Degeneration

Tran Kha Linh Nguyen, University of Montreal

While sociology has examined chronic illness, disability, and aging, these three themes have rarely been articulated together in a satisfactory way. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) provides a unique field of study to fill this gap. AMD is a chronic ocular condition often diagnosed after the age of 60 (Schultz & al., 2021) and is one of the leading causes of vision loss in the world (Wong & al., 2014). The study of blindness is not new in sociology (Scott, 1969; Ainlay, 1989). However, I argue that there needs to be a renewal of sociological knowledge on blindness, especially when trying to articulate chronic illness, disability, and aging. To accomplish this goal, I propose to use the framework of Anne Revillard (2019), the social experience of disability, in combination with concepts of agism (Hummel, 2002; Caradec, 2023), ableism (Campbell, 2001) and geriatricization (Fougeyrollas & al., 2021). This presentation aims to visualize the five proposed dimensions of the social experience of disability (material resources, social status, power, impairment identification, and mode of existence) as they are enriched by the above-mentioned concepts in the analysis of the lived experience of older adults with AMD.

HEA2a-4 - Taking an Intersections-of-Social-Conditions Approach to Fundamental Cause Theory: The Case of Childhood Adversity

Dorian DiTommaso, University of Toronto

Fundamental Cause theory is underutilized in health sociology. Research has primarily explored socioeconomic status (SES) and racism as fundamental causes of disease. This narrow focus limits the translation of research to intervention and policy, as affected groups are often too broadly defined (e.g., those experiencing poverty). Exploring fundamental causes as intersections of social conditions may help to increase the theories' potency in generating targeted health policy and interventions. I theorize fundamental causes as intersections of social conditions in-line with Link and Phelan's (1995) conceptualization, requiring: (1) influence on multiple disease outcomes; (2) multiple mediating risk factors; (3) access to resources to avoid risks or minimize disease consequences; and (4) reproduction over time through changing intervening mechanisms, using the case of childhood adversity. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) encompass both personal (e.g., abuse and neglect) and contextual (e.g., community dysfunction, parental substance abuse, poverty) factors that are associated with various social conditions that lead to detrimental health outcomes across the life-course. Assessing ACE type, severity, and timing in relation to these conditions may reveal specific intersections of heightened vulnerability that warrant specific intervention approaches. This project is in its early stages. Methods have not yet been established. Given that fundamental causes require evidence of mediation, longitudinal, prospective cohort studies would be required to show the influence of ACEs as a fundamental cause. Theoretical and methodological considerations will be discussed as part of the presentation. Taking an intersections-of-social-conditions approach to fundamental cause theory would help to generate targeted health policy and intervention strategies for identifiable groups that are most at-risk of various disease outcomes. The case of ACEs serves as a strong example of intersecting social conditions or risk factors that lead to detrimental health outcomes across the life course.

HEA2a-5 - Beyond the Biomedical Model: Understanding the Experiences of Chronic Pain Among Racialized Immigrants to Canada

Marouna Gomes, Carleton University

Interpretations of pain have historically been biomedical to quantify, hierarchize, and efficiently treat experiences of pain; however, recent scholarship has urged a shift towards understanding chronic pain experiences as being socially and culturally mediated. Chronic pain (CP) is pain that happens most days or every day for a period longer than 3 months (Zajacova et al., 2021), and recent data has identified that immigrant background is associated with a higher risk of having CP (Roman-Juan et al., 2024). Existing scholarship has tested the "healthy immigrant effect" (HIE), a phenomenon that details how immigrants, upon arrival to Canada, have better health than those Canadian born, however, this health advantage declines as their length of stay increases, indicating causal social and environmental factors. To date, HIE has not considered CP in understanding population health. In response to this gap, my doctoral research aims to better understand how CP can be understood as a measure of population health, and to reconceptualize CP beyond the biomedical model to include social and cultural understandings for a more complete account of pain. My project will employ a mixed-methods approach to ensure my data reflects population-level and lived experiences of pain among this population. I will begin by analyzing the 2026 *Canadian Community Health Survey* to understand the prevalence of pain mediated by upstream determinants of health. Following this, I will recruit 30 racialized immigrant adults living in Canada to participate in semi-structured interviews, where I will ask about their pain experience, management and treatment. Filling this gap in understanding has significant implications for the health of racialized immigrants and broader

society, as this project will inform philosophies of care for CP and position people living with CP as experts of their condition.

(HEA5) Exploring Local and Global Community-based Crisis Intervention and Response

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Current crisis response frameworks typically rely on police intervention, often leading to the criminalization or unnecessary hospitalization of individuals experiencing mental health crises/substance use-related distress. These approaches fail to address the complex social and economic factors that contribute to crises, particularly for people who have historically been underserved in society. Many individuals in crisis experience multiple intersecting challenges, like mental distress, substance use, financial instability, and social exclusion. Current crisis response strategies disproportionately impact racialized and disabled individuals, who are also at the highest risk of being harmed or killed during police interactions. Despite widespread recognition that law enforcement is ill-equipped to serve as first responders for mental health and substance use crises, Ontario continues to rely on punitive measures, such as involuntary treatment programs and the closure of supervised consumption facilities, rather than evidence-based, rights-centered interventions. This project is based on a research collaboration with the CERC in Health Equity and Community Wellbeing at TMU and the Gerstein Crisis Centre.

Session Organizers: Aisha Khan and Jessica Evans, Toronto Metropolitan University

Session Chair: Aisha Khan, Toronto Metropolitan University

HEA5-1 - Coercive Care? A Literature Review Questioning Involuntary Treatment in Times of Crisis

Jessica Evans, Toronto Metropolitan University

This presentation critically examines recent literature on the purported harms and benefits of involuntary treatment for mental distress, crisis, and/or substance use. This literature review pays particular attention to gaps in the evidence base, demographic patterns of coercion, and the ethical implications of continued reliance on mandatory treatment approaches. The overall assessment of involuntary treatment reveals a persistent lack of credible and reliable evidence to support its use, with no controlled studies demonstrating statistically significant positive outcomes. Despite this, involuntary treatment remains widespread. Attendees will be introduced to key critiques of existing research, including the reliance on flawed outcome measures such as “treatment retention,” which bears no demonstrated relationship to treatment engagement under compulsory conditions (Colemen et al, 2021; Bahji et al, 2023; Fischer et al, 2025). Demographic findings will also be presented, indicating that unmarried, unemployed men and individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are disproportionately subject to involuntary orders (Casa Fogo et al, 2023; Kisley et al 2021). The presentation will situate these findings within the World Health Organization’s 2025 guidance, which states that no evidence supports coercive practices while significant evidence documents physical and psychological harm. Finally, the session will consider the argument that benefits attributed to involuntary treatment are achievable through voluntary, community-based alternatives, and that continued diversion of resources toward coercion undermines the development of accessible, rights-based care.

HEA5-2 - The Evidence on Non-Carceral and Non-Medical Crisis Intervention: A Scoping Review

Presenting Author - Madeeha Kafeel, Brock University

Non-presenting Author - Danielle Landry, York University

This presentation will report findings from a scoping review of international peer-reviewed and grey literature examining alternative, community-based crisis interventions that operate without police involvement. This scoping review prioritizes lived experience and challenges medicalized and carceral approaches to crisis response. For people living in precarious conditions, limited access to social and structural determinants of health can create or exacerbate states of crisis (McGibbon, 2024; Raphael, 2016). Current crisis response frameworks typically rely on police intervention, often leading to the criminalization or unnecessary hospitalization of individuals experiencing mental health crises or substance use-related distress. These approaches fail to address the complex social and economic factors that contribute to crises, particularly for people who have historically been underserved in society. This scoping review examines current scholarship on alternative crisis intervention models that prioritize non-medical, community-led responses without police intervention. Numerous peer-support and mutual aid initiatives exist such as the Wildflower Alliance, Fireweed Collective, Project LETS, Soteria Houses and the Hearing Voices Network, yet the literature on these grassroots alternatives remains dispersed. This scoping review systematically maps existing research on non-medical crisis interventions without police involvement from around the world published between 2015 and 2025. The guiding question asks: what is the current evidence for non-medical crisis intervention without police? Additional questions examine what research exists on grassroots and community-based modalities of crisis intervention. Attendees will learn about the scope and characteristics of available evidence, identify critical gaps in the literature, and understand how structural and systemic factors shape harm reduction and service accessibility. By mapping existing research on crisis interventions that do not rely on criminal legal or medical models, this scoping review will identify critical gaps to facilitate future research informing policy and practice.

HEA5-3 - Who is in Crisis? Composite Narratives of Crisis Service Users in Downtown Toronto A Case Study of the Gerstein Crisis Centre

Aisha Khan, Toronto Metropolitan University

This presentation entails findings from an in-depth case study examining the experiences of people who accessed non-medical crisis services at Gertein Crisis Centre, a community-based urban crisis organization, located in Downtown Toronto, between 2019 and 2026. The Gerstein Crisis Centre is a globally recognized organization for providing rights-based, community crisis support. Gerstein offers a range of services, including Telephone Crisis Support (receiving 30,000+ calls annually), Crisis Support at Toronto Public Library, F.R.E.S.H., Wellness Recovery Action Plan, Here 2 Help, and Crisis Beds. Our study analyzes de-identified internal data sources, including client records, feedback forms, macro-level aggregate reports, and community crisis worker interviews. The research questions guiding this study ask: Who accesses crisis care services in Toronto, and what social factors lead them to do so? What gaps exist between existing crisis care models in the literature and the needs of service users, as evidenced by community crisis worker interviews and organizational data? Through narrative profiles constructed from client records and community crisis worker interviews, this presentation will share knowledge about service user experiences, intervention outcomes, and the embodied realities of navigating community-based crisis support. Attendees will learn about the

demographic and social contexts of people accessing non-medical crisis services, gaps between existing models and service user needs, and how narrative methodologies can surface systemic patterns while centering lived experience.

(HEA6) COVID isn't over: Where are we now? What are we forgetting?

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Despite assertions that the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us, COVID-19 has not disappeared. We continue to live with it as a virus, a social phenomenon, a lived reality, and a pressing health issue. This session aims to continue talking about the pandemic, not as a closed chapter, but as an ongoing and unfolding issue that continues to shape lives, health systems and decision making, and exacerbate inequalities. Aimed at fostering critical dialogue and to highlight ongoing work in this area, this session asks: what was learned? What have we failed to learn? What are we no longer talking about, and why? What do we need to continue talking about? This session invited scholars whose work continues to engage this topic from various corners of sociology such as health, medicine, labour, inequality, disability, care, public health, to name a few.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Katelin Albert, University of Victoria; Jay Tang, University of Victoria

HEA6-1 - Becoming Everything: Parents' and caregivers' narrative accounts of responsibilization during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Presenting Author - Terra Manca, Athabasca University, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors Nicole Hill, Athabasca University, Dalhousie University, University of Alberta; Emma Whelan, Dalhousie University

The COVID-19 pandemic saw reduced access to various services and institutions—including schools, daycares, and healthcare—and created increased demands for unpaid carework, reflecting an acute exacerbation of existing inequities in both paid and unpaid labour dynamics in societies generally, and in families more specifically. Though systemic imbalances in unpaid carework have long been acknowledged, how individuals become responsible for unpaid carework is less well understood. Our project takes an intersectional feminist lens to narrative interviews with 16 parents living in Alberta and Nova Scotia (two provinces with distinct pandemic responses). We explore the processes and factors that shaped how interview participants became responsible for carework before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. In studying pandemic-exacerbated gaps in care and the resulting responsibilization processes, we observed complex interactions between discursive, material, and relational dimensions in participants' narratives. Factors in responsibilization included resources (such as finances, time, energy, and knowledge), geographic location, social relations, and intersecting discourses including those related to gender and moral regulation. Responsibilization could be direct (e.g., being told to take on a caregiving activity) or indirect (e.g., noticing an unmet care need and addressing it). Such responsibilization stemmed from various agents, including institutions (like schools, healthcare, and government) and individuals (such as partners, family members, care recipients, and caregivers' own subjectivities). Ultimately, heavy and inequitable responsibilization for unpaid carework strained many participants' health, wellbeing, resources, and relationships. This research aims to improve understandings of how responsibilization for unpaid care

work becomes inequitable, especially during crises and their recovery, such as exemplified by COVID-19.

HEA6-2 - Moral Panics in the Digital Age: Vaccine Skepticism post-COVID

Naima Noor, University of Calgary

In the post-COVID era, public attitudes toward healthcare and medical authority have undergone a dramatic transformation. While health-related moral panics are not new, the pandemic intensified their visibility and influence, elevating them within both public discourses and political debates. This project examines how moral panics surrounding health have evolved in the post-pandemic era, with a particular attention to the role of digital platforms in shaping vaccine skepticism. I ask how uncertainty and anxiety are produced and shared through everyday digital interactions. Drawing on qualitative content analysis and elements of digital ethnography, the study analyzes discussions from Facebook groups, X (formerly Twitter), and Reddit forums from 2020 onward. The analysis focuses primarily on Alberta while situating this discussion within broader circles across Canada and the United States. Recent measles outbreaks in Alberta provide an empirical backdrop, serving not as an isolated case but as an outcome reflecting wider transformations. The project draws on Stanley Cohen's concept of moral panic as an introductory framework; while questioning how well it applies to today's digital landscape. Instead of viewing moral panic as a short-lived reaction driven by traditional 'mass' media, this research looks at how online platforms allow anxieties and distrust to persist over time through continuous conversation and community formation. As an ongoing process, the project aims to rethink moral panic theory considering digital health cultures that emerged after COVID-19. Preliminary findings suggest that vaccine skepticism is frequently framed as a moral position grounded in bodily autonomy, parental responsibility, and distrust of institutions. Social media platforms function not merely as sites of information exchange, but as infrastructures for community-building. These dynamics complicate traditional models of moral panic by highlighting how uncertainty and distrust are sustained through ongoing interaction rather than specific moments in media amplification.

HEA6-3 - "The Body as an OHIP record:" Understanding the Politics of Autonomy in the COVID Era and Beyond

Cheery-maria Attia, University of Toronto

Throughout COVID-19, mandatory masking and vaccination became heightened sites that forced skilled, licensed professionals working with bodies (i.e bodyworkers) to confront the limits and affordances of bodily autonomy within their daily lives. These conditions often featured racializing, gendered and classed dimensions that affected different "bodies" in different ways. In this paper, I therefore ask: how did bodyworkers navigate, resist, and assert their understandings of the body and how do these understandings help us move towards developing a sociology of the body and bodily autonomy post-COVID? Through a grounded theory approach of 20 semi-structured, qualitative interviews conducted with bodyworkers in the Greater Toronto Area in 2025, I asked bodyworkers to reflect on their experiences with masking and vaccination regulations throughout COVID. I examined their personal beliefs on their understandings of their bodies and bodily autonomy throughout COVID and now post-COVID. I argue that bodyworkers' understandings of bodily autonomy are rooted in both relational and personal convictions informed by their "embodied

intuitions"--beliefs, corporeal experiences, lifestyle decisions and health practices they use to manage and justify their compliance with disease prevention measures. Understanding how participants envision their physical body as a living record of the calculated decisions, risk factors and health measures participants have taken to prevent getting sick reveals how they navigate the tensions between their individual health decisions and their social responsibility to protecting those around them from getting sick. This research affords us the opportunity to reflect on how bodily discourses became politicized in a time of precarity and how we ought to understand these meanings well beyond COVID.

(HEA7) Early Career Symposium: Sociology of Health, Illness, and Medicine

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session showcases research in the sociology of health, illness, and/or medicine from scholars in the early stages of their career (i.e., graduate students; postdoctoral fellows; recently graduated/junior faculty members; and public and community-based scholars with roughly equivalent levels of experience). Instead of a particular topic or substantive theme, this session foregrounds the empirical contributions of early career scholars who are advancing sociological knowledge related to health, illness, and/or medicine in Canada as well as internationally, and highlights how this knowledge is currently being mobilized within the academy and beyond.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Elizabeth Cameron, Dalhousie University; Michael Halpin, Dalhousie University

HEA7-1 - “Everyone Deserves Care”: Gender, Age and Deservingness in Stories of Women Navigating Chronic Illness

Ally Ralstin, University of Calgary

Chronic illness patients occupy a difficult position in the healthcare system, requiring more long-term, management focused care in a system which prioritizes acute treatment. The social construction of health as well as how patients attempt to qualify as ‘deserving’ are key aspects of the current academic discourse around this topic. Yet, there is little research done on the work that patients have to engage in to navigate this system and how they make sense of their relations in healthcare. My research draws attention to these relations, and bridges the macro-micro division in sociology research to look at how interpersonal relations in healthcare reflect deeper social institutions. In particular, this work highlights what social and material realities are impacted by having a chronic illness, and how issues of deservingness are complicated by gender and age. Using two separate case studies - one being a book about working in an inpatient eating disorder treatment facility and the other being six qualitative interviews I conducted with young women living with chronic illnesses - I seek to identify the work that chronic illness patients must do to navigate their illnesses and how this is complicated by gender. My research suggests that paying unique attention to the work that chronic illness patients engage in to qualify for care helps to illuminate the discrepancies in care for chronic illness patients.

HEA7-2 - Navigating Menstruation, Migration and Agency: Intersectional Experiences of First-Generation Punjabi Immigrant Women in Canada

Navneet Kaur, York University

Menstruation may appear as nothing more than a natural, physiological process experienced by menstruators every month, but its meaning is derived from a particular cultural, historical and social context. Menstrual hygiene is heavily compromised and steeped in silence, myths, taboos, and stigma due to its common associations with impurity. This paper is focused on uncovering and exploring the complex cultural and racial dynamics of menstruation by positioning this biological process of menstruation in a broader socio-cultural context. This research analyzed whether and how first-generation Punjabi women immigrants (henceforth, FGPWIs) living in Toronto for the last ten years reshaped and negotiated the socio-cultural narrative towards menstruation. More specifically, how did exposure to different gender, racial, and sexuality norms in Canada influence FGPWI's perceptions of menstruation? What are the implications of these perceptions and experiences for the broader sexual and reproductive health of menstruators? These questions are meant to explore menstruators' experiences and how intersections of gender, migration, culture, and race form barriers /accessibility to menstrual health information, care and agency. Drawing on the theoretical framework of intersectionality and postcolonial feminism, this research conceptualizes menstruation as a socially and politically situated experience, shaped by intersecting relations of gender, culture, migration, and race that structure health, social practices, and cultural ideologies. The research findings challenge the dominant narrative of India as a resource-poor and culturally backward society while assuming Canada is progressive in terms of women's reproductive health. The findings also encourage and guide cross-sectoral stakeholders (academic, public, private, and not-for-profit) in introducing or adapting measures in policies and programs. These adaptations address barriers experienced by enabling them to access healthcare resources. This paper also highlights feminist strategies immigrant women employ to manage their menstruation in their homes, workplaces, and across transnational spaces.

(HEA8) Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Health, Well-being, and Inequality

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping social life, from how communities access resources to how individuals experience care, work, and everyday well being. While often framed as a purely technological development, AI raises profound sociological questions about inequality, polarization, governance, and identity, as well as the broader conditions of collective life. This session invites papers that critically examine the intersections of AI, health, and well being with attention to both challenges and possibilities for more hopeful futures. We welcome a wide range of contributions, including empirical papers, theoretical work, applied case studies, and research that employs data driven AI using machine learning and deep learning methods to analyze sociological data. Possible topics include: AI and health equity; algorithmic bias and forms of exclusion; the role of AI in shaping labour and care work; surveillance and governance; community based responses to digital tools; the cultural meanings of AI in everyday life; and innovative uses of AI techniques to study health, well being, and social inequality. By foregrounding sociological perspectives, this session seeks to move

beyond simplistic narratives of AI as either salvation or threat. Instead, it emphasizes the ways that AI may reproduce and challenge existing divisions.

Session Organizers: Nicholas Spence, University of Toronto; Ethan Fosse, University of Toronto

Session Chair: Nicholas Spence, University of Toronto

HEA8-1 - Governing Equity by Algorithm: Anticipating the Role of AI in Canadian Health Equity Decision-Making

Sophie Webb, Simon Fraser University

Artificial intelligence is increasingly positioned as a tool for improving fairness and consistency in public sector decision-making. In Canada, federal guidance on automated decision-making already outlines how algorithmic systems may support or replace human judgment, provided they meet standards of transparency and procedural fairness. Yet, little sociological attention has been paid to how these emerging AI governance frameworks intersect with longstanding efforts to operationalize health equity. This paper examines the likely futures of AI-enabled decision-making in Canadian health governance by situating machine learning within existing practices of algorithmic policy design. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of public health policy, immunization guidance, and federal frameworks for automated systems, I trace how equity is already operationalized through rule-based "analog" algorithms, such as disadvantage indices and prioritization frameworks. I argue that these systems constitute the institutional and epistemic groundwork upon which more advanced AI tools are being built. By linking current equity metrics to emerging AI governance regimes—such as Algorithmic Impact Assessments—the analysis highlights a central tension: while AI is promoted as a mechanism for reducing bias, it risks displacing political responsibility by embedding normative judgments into technical infrastructures. As equity becomes formalized through complex models, accountability may be reframed as a matter of system performance rather than democratic deliberation. Ultimately, this paper contributes to sociological debates on inequality by arguing that the impact of AI on health equity will depend less on technological sophistication and more on how equity is defined, delegated, and governed in advance. To ensure AI-enabled health systems do not reproduce existing divisions, we must treat the "technical" design of AI as a deeply social site of institutional obligation and ethical choice.

HEA8-2 - Ask ChatPhD: An institutional ethnography of the use of AI technologies by research trainees in university-based research

Graham Macdonald, University of the Fraser Valley

What happens to the process of training tomorrow's researchers when "publish or perish" meets "use AI or die"? I am conducting an institutional ethnography to explore how the political economy of research is put together from the standpoint of research trainees (i.e. graduate students and postdocs) in the era of AI. To do so, this study examines how research trainees in health professions education are working on and with AI as they develop their craft as scholars in this new landscape, and how university administrators and officials implement policies and strategies to address related challenges. Health professions education is a particularly salient field because: it is heterodox -- there is no unifying academic discipline that coordinates methodological and theoretical rigour; and it is oriented towards practice and practicality, addressing issues within health care and policy. These two

characteristics render health professions education vulnerable to compromising disciplinary rigour, and a point of crossover where AI-generated insight may directly touch matters with real-world, bodily consequences.The standpoint of research trainees is a lynchpin in the university research economy, as they provide motivated, inexpensive, highly-skilled labour. Research trainees, however, are already faced with many challenges to the feasibility of their studies from the cost of living and tuition to diminished prospects in the labour market. Due to the incentives of the “publish or perish” research economy, trainee labour is often used to produce low-level outputs like literature reviews and generic research studies. Research publications and related activities are approached as assets one produces to advance in their career. Simultaneously, degree programs are getting shorter and more streamlined to bolster completion rates. What I aim to uncover is how AI technologies are hooking into the everyday lives of research trainees who have been primed for an increasingly mercenary approach to knowledge production.

HEA8-3 - The Rise of Data-Driven Artificial Intelligence and its Implications for Sociological Research: From Symbolic Reasoning to Deep Learning

Presenting Author - Nicholas Spence, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Ethan Fosse, University of Toronto

Data-driven artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming sociological research, offering powerful tools for analyzing complex social phenomena at unprecedented scales. This paper traces AI's evolution through three epochs: symbolic AI (1950s-1980s), characterized by rule-based expert systems; statistical learning (mid-1980s-early 2010s), which introduced algorithms that generalize from data; and deep learning (2012-present), marked by the "Toronto revolution" that demonstrated neural networks' capacity to automatically learn hierarchical representations from raw data. We then present a practical toolkit of contemporary AI methods organized by data type, including convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for images, recurrent neural networks (RNNs) for sequential data, transformers for text, graph neural networks for relational data, and explainable boosting machines (EBMs) for interpretable tabular analysis, with illustrative sociological applications for each. We conclude by briefly sketching emerging frontiers: multi-agent systems composed of humans and artificial agents, human-AI interaction dynamics, and the governance challenges posed by generative AI. Ultimately, we argue that data-driven AI's value lies in expanding researchers' capacity to understand and address the complex social challenges of our time.

(HEA9a) Political Sociology of Health I

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Despite decades of research on the social determinants of health, health inequalities persist and are widening. Political sociology—the study of power and its social organization—offers valuable tools to understand health disparities, especially those not fully explained by the social determinants approach. A political sociology of health perspective examines how the distribution of social determinants (often political), rather than just their effects, shapes health outcomes. This session invited research that applies this perspective, exploring how interactions between individuals, societies, and political institutions influence health disparities.

Session Organizers: Joanne Ong, York University; Cary Wu, York University

Session Chair: Joanne Ong, York University

HEA9a-1 - Health and Political Voice: Chronic Pain as a Predictor of Political Participation

Presenting Author - Merita Limani, Western Ontario

Non-presenting Authors: Anna Zajacova and Laura Stephenson, Western Ontario; Gillian Fennel, University of Southern California, USA

Political participation is increasingly recognized as part of the political context shaping population health. Poor health is known to be associated with lower political participation, but the majority of prior work focuses only on voter turnout, not other factors, such as donating to political parties or volunteering for political causes. We examine how chronic pain, an understudied but important element of health, predicts both prior and intended multiple dimensions of political participation.

We analyze nationally representative U.S. survey data collected in 2024 (N = 4,480). Chronic pain is measured using a graded pain scale. Political participation includes past-year activities (attending a rally or protest, volunteering for a political party or candidate, donating money) and anticipated engagement over the next 12 months (voting, volunteering, donating, and political discussion on social media). Weighted logistic regression models adjust for demographic, socioeconomic, and political factors. Chronic pain matters for political participation, but associations vary by participation type and timing. For intended behaviour, chronic pain is associated with higher likelihood of engaging in political discussion and with intentions to volunteer or donate in the next year. For past political behavior, the association with pain was more attenuated: individuals with higher chronic pain levels were marginally more likely to report attending rallies or protests, while other forms of past participation, such as volunteering, were less common among those with milder pain. These findings suggest that chronic pain does not simply constrain political participation but is associated with different patterns of engagement across forms of political activity, highlighting the need for future research to focus on how health conditions shape political voice.

HEA9a-2 - Navigating Cancer and Mental Health Care Among Black Immigrant Families in Canada

Benedicta Asante, University of Calgary

Cancer remains a leading cause of death globally, and an estimated 35-40% of cancer patients experience comorbid psychiatric disorders, yet depression and other mental health conditions remain widely underdiagnosed and undertreated. For Black immigrant and transnational families in Canada, the burden of cancer and mental illness is intensified by intersecting systems of power embedded within healthcare policy, institutional practices, and racialized governance. Despite Canada's universal healthcare system, persistent inequalities remain, with individuals living with severe mental illness facing significantly higher odds of advanced-stage cancer diagnoses and elevated cancer-related mortality. Guided by a political sociology of health perspective informed by critical political economy and racialized governance, this study employs a sequential mixed-methods design drawing on intersectionality-based policy analysis and Critical Race Theory to examine how political, institutional, and organizational arrangements shape access to cancer and mental health care for Black immigrant and transnational families. The central argument is that health inequities are not merely downstream effects of social determinants but are actively produced through policy design, institutional fragmentation, and the uneven distribution of social and material resources

within healthcare systems. Phase 1 of the research involves a scoping review and secondary analysis of national population-based survey data to identify patterns of access, exclusion, and unmet need structured by race, immigration status, and mental illness. Phase 2 consists of qualitative interviews with Black immigrant cancer patients and healthcare providers to examine care navigation, service coordination, and experiences of institutional constraint. Phase 3 integrates findings into a patient-informed Equitable Access Framework, refined through member checking and stakeholder consultation. By locating cancer and mental health inequities within the political organization of healthcare systems, this study advances political sociology of health scholarship and offers actionable policy insights to improve integrated care pathways for Black immigrant families facing the dual burden of cancer and mental illness.

HEA9a-3 - The rise and stall of the study of social capital and health: Received history revisited

Valerie Haines, University of Calgary

The study of social capital and health has made a significant contribution to the return to social context in the health arena. The received history of this subfield has taken on a life of its own—shaping research questions asked, data and data analytic techniques used to answer them, conclusions reached, and directions for future research. Yet its claims have not been investigated empirically. This paper applies analytical strategies from the sociology of social research to treat each claim as an empirical question, analyzing studies retrieved by systematic, scoping and state of scholarship reviews published from 2000-2025 in sociology and public health journals, handbooks and edited collections. Part 1 examines what these studies actually do. It confirms claims this subfield emerged in the late 1990s as the study of collective social capital (properties of places understood broadly) in what would become the social cohesion school and developed by expanding the reach of the concept of social capital within this school to properties of individuals referencing social cohesion (individual social capital) and then to properties of personal networks (network social capital) within a distinct social capital school. But it challenges the claim these expansions were grounded in available social capital theorizing by identifying a disconnect between this theorizing and the concept of individual social capital. And where the received history is a history of sustained growth with few signs of slowing, this examination documents a history of rise and stall. Part 2 of the paper addresses why the study of social capital and health has stalled by looking closer at how the social cohesion school handles network social capital, how the network school handles individual social capital and how both schools handle the mechanisms question. The conclusion in Part 3 discusses potential empirical payoffs of revisiting this subfield's received history.

HEA9a-4 - Who Is Responsible for Equity? Governance Vacuums in Canadian Immunization Policy

Sophie Webb, Simon Fraser University

Despite decades of research on the social determinants of health, health inequities persist and, in many cases, deepen. In Canada, equity has become a central rhetorical commitment in public health policy—particularly in the context of immunization—yet responsibility for achieving it remains diffuse and weakly enforced. This paper applies a political sociology of health perspective to examine how power, governance structures, and institutional responsibility shape the operationalization of equity in Canadian immunization policy. Drawing on discourse analysis of federal ethical guidance, provincial immunization programs, and post-pandemic vaccine and antibody rollouts, the paper

identifies a recurring governance pattern: equity is widely invoked but weakly enforced. Federal actors articulate ethical principles and equity goals, while provinces retain authority over funding, eligibility, and implementation. This division of responsibility produces what I describe as a "governance vacuum," in which equity functions as an aspirational value rather than a guaranteed entitlement. These dynamics are often framed as technical or logistical features of Canadian federalism; this paper instead argues they are political arrangements that actively structure unequal access to protection. By shifting analytic focus from health outcomes to the distribution of decision-making power, the paper demonstrates how inequities persist not because of insufficient evidence or ethical awareness, but because responsibility for equity is structurally displaced. The analysis contributes to political sociology of health by showing how institutional fragmentation limits accountability and constrains the capacity of equity claims to translate into material outcomes.

(HEA9b) Political Sociology of Health II

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Despite decades of research on the social determinants of health, health inequalities persist and are widening. Political sociology—the study of power and its social organization—offers valuable tools to understand health disparities, especially those not fully explained by the social determinants approach. A political sociology of health perspective examines how the distribution of social determinants (often political), rather than just their effects, shapes health outcomes. This session invites research that applies this perspective, exploring how interactions between individuals, societies, and political institutions influence health disparities.

Session Organizers: Joanne Ong, York University; Cary Wu, York University

Session Chair: Joanne Ong, York University

HEA9b-1 - Perspectives from Gender-Affirming DIY HRT: Insights, Advantages, and Epistemological Challenges to Clinical Medicine

Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Do-it-yourself hormone replacement therapy (DIY HRT) refers to the practice of predominantly transgender and gender nonconforming (GNC) individuals obtaining and self-administering gender-affirming hormonal medications without the supervision of a medical professional. DIY HRT is typically seen by clinicians as the 'wrong way' of accessing HRT which should be made obsolete through better access to clinical care; that a legacy of medical transphobia has produced distrust amongst trans and GNC people, which has contributed to trans and GNC people choosing DIY, which itself produces worse health outcomes. This research explores what those using DIY HRT (DIYers) themselves believe are the advantages, disadvantages, and possible futures of DIY HRT. It also documents what participants believe should be changed about DIY HRT and clinical practices. This study involves 2-hour semi-structured in-depth interviews with 5-10 DIYers and former DIYers about their experiences and views on DIY HRT and clinical care. Findings show that participants believe in the importance of addressing the disadvantages to both clinical and DIY medicine, and producing a better DIY HRT future. Participants place tremendous value on aspects of DIY HRT which are not replicable in contemporary clinical settings, particularly the community of care surrounding DIY HRT,

and the ability to ultimately control every aspect of their care. Participants generally believe HRT patients should have ultimate control over their HRT and clinicians' role should be to ensure patients are making the most informed decisions possible rather than make final judgements themselves. Participants reported that they had their own imperfect community mechanisms for mitigating the risks associated with DIY HRT, and believed that despite the risks they and their DIY networks were more trustworthy than clinical providers.

HEA9b-2 - Unionization and the Health of Canadians

Avery Yurchi, York University

This research seeks to answer how unionization affects self-rated health of the Canadian workforce. Previous literature suggests that labour union membership leads to more positive health outcomes. The expectation is that the results will replicate those found in previous studies. Despite neoliberal efforts to dismantle unions in Canada since the 1990s, the health effects of such policies have yet to be examined in the Canadian context. Fifteen cycles of the Canadian General Social Survey between 1989 and 2018 were analyzed using ordinal regression models to determine the relationship between union membership and self-rated general health and self-rated mental health over time. The results show no consistent pattern between union membership and self-rated health outcomes in the Canadian context. No significant interaction effects were found when examining key demographic variables - age, sex, education, household income, marital status, visible minority status, and province of origin - though income remained the greatest determinant for improved health outcomes regardless of union member status. Future research is necessary to include occupational differences, as well as improve the measurement of union membership and its various forms, which are critical to assess how they may produce unequal impacts on self-rated health.

HEA9b-3 - Governing in the Gaps: Pre-Professional Legitimacy in Psychedelic Care

Sarah Badr, McGill University

This article examines how practitioners construct and negotiate legitimacy within Canada’s largely unregulated field of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy (PAP). Although Health Canada’s Special Access Program (SAP) provides a narrow legal pathway for psychedelic treatment, many individuals are unable to obtain legal access, contributing to the growth of underground services. At the same time, no formal standards of training, certification, or professional regulation govern this work. Despite this absence of regulatory infrastructure, practitioners do not treat psychedelic therapy as an unstructured activity. Instead, they act as if standards exist, articulating norms of competence, ethics, and responsibility, and drawing boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate practice. How, then, is legitimacy produced and maintained in a context where state regulation is minimal and fragmented? Drawing on 40 semi-structured interviews with Canadian underground practitioners of psilocybin therapy, this article examines how legitimacy is constructed through discourse and practice rather than institutionalized professional authority. Using thematic analysis, the article identifies four repertoires of legitimacy through which practitioners frame their work as credible: experiential legitimacy (embodied knowledge of altered states); ethical and relational legitimacy (care and accountability); clinical-professional legitimacy (selective appeals to training); and spiritual legitimacy (orientation to tradition and sacredness). Practitioners mobilize these repertoires in situational and sometimes contradictory ways, both to justify their own practice and to critique

competing forms of emerging authority. This article advances the concept of *pre-professional legitimacy* to illustrate how legitimacy is constructed in contexts where regulatory infrastructures are limited. Rather than claiming novelty in non-institutional expertise, the article illustrates how legitimacy itself functions as a form of governance in health care settings characterized by legal ambiguity and high therapeutic risk. In the absence of formal oversight, legitimacy performs regulatory functions such as structuring access, accountability, and standards of care, thereby contributing to sociological debates on professionalization, governance, and authority.

(HEA11) Infectious/Chronic Disease and Care

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

The world faces two growing threats: the re(emergence) of novel/seasonal infectious/communicable diseases (e.g., COVID-19, Measles, H5N1 - Avian Influenza), and the prevalence of chronic, non-communicable diseases (e.g., diabetes, heart disease) in aging populations. Sociology's emphasis on the impact of structural factors like race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender, and its powerful theories like the life course, stress process, and fundamental cause, provide a strong foundation for understanding infectious/chronic disease. Using these tools, we can construct targeted policy and treatment approaches that improve the lives of those affected by infectious/chronic diseases, their families, and their caregivers, while also alleviating structural inequities present in public health prevention measures, the distribution of treatment resources, and the provision of social and economic support for those affected.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Dorian DiTommaso, University of Toronto; Cesar Ramirez, University of Toronto; Fabio Robibaro, University of Toronto

HEA11-1 - Double barrel of chronic diseases: Lived experiences of adolescents receiving treatment at a teaching hospital

Presenting Author - Hannah Taylor-Abdulai, University of Cape Coast

Non-presenting Author - Eric Koka, University of Cape Coast

Adolescents living with multiple chronic conditions (MCC) face unique physical, emotional, and social challenges that often disrupt their education, peer relationships, and family life. This study explored the coping strategies and lived experiences of adolescents with MCC receiving care at the Cape Coast Teaching Hospital (CCTH). A qualitative descriptive design was adopted, using purposive sampling to recruit 26 adolescents aged 10-19 years who had been clinically diagnosed with at least two chronic conditions. Data were collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews and were analyzed thematically. Four broad themes emerged: experiences and stressors, coping mechanisms, social and environmental factors, and reflections and suggestions. The findings revealed that adolescents struggle with frequent hospital visits, physical symptoms, absenteeism from school, stigma, and emotional distress. However, they employed a range of coping mechanisms, including prayer, hobbies, peer and family support, and selective withdrawal. Family members, teachers, and healthcare workers played important roles in encouraging, though gaps in understanding and stigma from peers remained significant barriers. The study concludes that while adolescents demonstrate resilience, their coping strategies are often limited by financial constraints, inadequate psychosocial

support, and a lack of tailored healthcare services. It is recommended that the Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Service, and educational authorities strengthen adolescent-friendly services, integrate mental health counseling into chronic care, and introduce school-based interventions to reduce stigma and support academic continuity. Families and community organizations should also be engaged in providing sustained social and emotional support.

HEA11-2 - Chronic Disease, Disability, and the Sense of Control Across Life Domains during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Presenting Author - Cesar Ramirez, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Dorian DiTommaso, Fabio Robibaro, and David Pettinicchio, University of Toronto; Michelle Maroto, University of Alberta

Chronic disease and disability are each associated with adverse physical and mental health outcomes, yet less is known about how these experiences shape individuals' perceived sense of control across personal and broader contextual life domains. Examine associations between two exposures: chronic disease and disability; and two outcomes: perceived personal control (0-10) the sum of a respondent's perceived sense of control over personal financial success (0-5) and physical/mental health (0-5) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.66$); and perceived contextual control (0-20), the sum of a respondent's perceived sense of control over the COVID-19 pandemic (0-5), global warming (0-5), poverty and income inequality (0-5), and political change (0-5) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.81$) early in the COVID-19 pandemic. Cross-sectional analysis of wave-one of the Canadian COVID-19 Response Survey of People with Disabilities and Health Conditions collected June 2020. We examined how the number of disabilities and categories of chronic conditions were associated with two outcomes: a respondent's perceived sense of personal control (0-10), and contextual control (0-20) accounting for socio-demographic controls using linear regression. A sample of 1027 respondents from a quota-based national survey of Canadian adults with disabilities and/or chronic conditions. Participants were recruited by the internet-based survey research company *Qualtrics*. All 1027 respondents were eligible for our analysis. The number of disabilities reported was significantly associated with perceived personal control in the multivariable model [B = -0.23 (95% CI = -0.31, -0.15)]. No other exposures were significantly associated with either outcome. Disability was only associated with the sense of control in the personal life-domain. Given the limiting nature of disability, this association may reflect the difficulties people with disabilities face in relation to finding stable employment, receiving consistent personalized care, and accessing health and/or mental health services, especially during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

(HEA12) Systems of care and social inequality in Canada

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Areas of health care and social service delivery that meet the needs of the most socially marginalized Canadians (e.g., people who are homeless, involved in the child protection system, seeking mental health care, and/or drug treatment) are also subject to the greatest austerity pressures, including automation and privatization. Papers in this session explore how these pressures are reshaping the "social architecture" — configurations of resources and cultures— in health and related services for

socially marginalized Canadians, and the various ways social inequalities stratify how care can be both given and received.

Session Organizer and Chair: Fiona S. Martin, Dalhousie University

HEA12-1 - Naming contestations: Law, policy, and path dependency in alternative response services

Presenting Author - Chris Giacomantonio, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Author - Claire Horn, Dalhousie University

This paper explores the social and organizational implications of naming in law and policy through the currently evolving process of defining alternative crisis response services. Emerging from a 'critical juncture' following the initial COVID pandemic response and the murder of George Floyd in 2020, new civilian-led services have been established at the city and province/state level in Canada and the USA to respond to crises often related to mental health, homelessness and substance use, and for which police have previously been a *de facto* but suboptimal response. While there is widespread agreement on the potential value of these services, what these services are to be called - and, embedded in this question, how they are meant to be practically constituted - represents an important contestation for their future institutional path. Currently, alternative response services are variably called, *inter alia*, 'mobile crisis', 'community response', 'mental health crisis', 'fourth branch', and 'behavioural health' response teams. The naming conventions underpinning each of these language choices is not simply a matter of preference. Each naming approach represents a positional claim along several intersecting continuums connected to desires for more (or less): medical professionalism and licensure; connectedness to other emergency responders (including police); embeddedness in community and peer networks; and scope of practice and responsibility. Considering law as a site of naming, the paper explores the current liminal state of the field of alternative response, and compares American law and policy - driven by state and federal Medicaid funding and certification processes - with a contrasting landscape in Canada, where naming emerges in a more localized and idiosyncratic fashion, within funding structures that are often short-term and inconsistent. Through this, the paper considers how naming makes possible and forecloses different futures as these services move from 'alternative' to mainstream.

HEA12-2 - Navigating the Social Architecture of Canada's Homeless Encampment Governance

Daniel Kudla, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

In 2024, the Canadian federal government allocated $250 million to incentivize a "human rights-based" approach to homeless encampments. This initiative represents a potentially transformative shift in the social architecture of homelessness governance, signaling a departure from punitive displacement toward the rights-based principles championed by the Federal Housing Advocate. However, as implementation relies on municipal execution and provincial cooperation, this federal strategy faces significant austerity pressures and complex jurisdictional challenges that reshape how social services are delivered to Canada's most marginalized. Grounded in Fligstein and McAdam's (2012) theory of "strategic action fields," this study conceptualizes encampment governance as a relational field where federal mandates, provincial protections, and municipal bylaws intersect. We employ a comparative qualitative design focused on Winnipeg and Saint John—two cities operating

within distinct political-economic and provincial contexts. The methodology integrates semi-structured interviews with 20 governance actors (the "givers" of policy) and in-depth interviews with 40 encampment residents (the "receivers"), supplemented by a content analysis of municipal council deliberations. By centering both the "givers" and "receivers" of care, this research identifies the structural and political barriers to operationalizing human rights at the local level. It explores how federal funding influences municipal "Community Encampment Response Plans" and examines how social inequalities stratify how care is both given and received across different urban contexts. Ultimately, this project generates insights into how shifting configurations of resources and institutional cultures affect the efficacy of multilevel governance. It provides a roadmap for moving beyond austerity toward more humane, legally consistent, and dignified responses to the national encampment crisis.

HEA12-3 - Neoliberal governance responses to homelessness among seniors: Studying cases of St. John's and Fredericton, Canada

Wasifa Tasnim Shamma, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

Senior homelessness in Canada is an escalating crisis that reveals significant tensions within contemporary homelessness governance. This governance landscape reflects a broader historical shift toward neoliberal meta-governance that has transformed poverty into an "investable" proposition. As argued by Baker et al. (2020), this regime objectifies and economizes poverty by subjecting it to cost-benefit calculations, in which state and non-state actors prioritize "visible" target populations, seen as yielding a high return on public investment. This study situates senior homelessness within this critical framework of investable poverty governance. In the Canadian context, governance typically relies on cost-effective crisis responses targeting chronic homelessness, while rendering seniors (aged 50+), who often face unique health needs and precarious late-life financial security, as "less investable" and thus administratively invisible. Though recent studies have examined governance responses to housing insecurity and homelessness among seniors in central Canada, studies are quite limited in Atlantic Canada regarding how these governance strategies intersect with senior populations. Hence, this study explores the governance logic surrounding senior homelessness in two Atlantic Canadian cities: St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Fredericton, New Brunswick. It explores the challenges and tensions that governance actors - including government officials, policymakers, and nonprofit leaders - encounter when navigating a governance structure that prioritizes "investable" crisis management over the prevention of first-time homelessness in late life. Using in-depth interviews with these key stakeholders and their clients, the study aims to contextualize how senior homelessness is governed and identify preventative mechanisms currently being negotiated within these two urban centers.

HEA12-4 - Mind the Gap: privatization pressures, rural austerity and patient creativity in Tantramar

Presenting Authors - Katharine Dunbar Winsor and Ardath Whynacht, Mount Allison University

Non-presenting Author - Isabella Gallant, Concordia University

Although the Tantramar region had undergone a health care needs assessment survey through the local health authority, community members felt that important insights into care gaps in the region were not reflected in the health authority's final report. An interdisciplinary partnership between researchers at Mount Allison University, artists and health care advocates formed in order to address

a perceived data gap. Our project aimed to use qualitative and arts-based approaches to generate deeper insights into the experiences of patients and care providers in the region. In the early phase of the study team members conducted semi-structured interviews with Tantramar residents to facilitate open-ended and reflective discussions on social and cultural dimensions of care accessibility in existing and future healthcare services and spaces, amid regional challenges like physician shortages and clinic limitations. An open coding process, conducted collaboratively by team members in dialogue with local partners, emphasized reflexivity and yielded anonymized findings shaped by participants' perspectives. Initial data provided thematic insights highlighting four interconnected dimensions to existing care infrastructure: the impact of non-profits delivering community-based resources to fill essential public health gaps; expectations of universal healthcare under the *Canada Health Act*, rethinking public obligations to address social determinants and uphold rights-based standards; and patient workarounds, such as bypassing formal systems, seeking care out-of-province, or avoiding it entirely due to barriers. Our findings reveal how austerity, privatization, and provincial policy shifts reshape Tantramar's "social architecture," stratifying care for socially marginalized rural residents and challenging equitable provision of care. Our findings offer some generalizable insights into the challenging context of rural healthcare in the Maritimes amidst increased privatization pressures.

(HEA14) Health, Rights, and Justice: The Reproductive Landscape in Atlantic Canada

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT

Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session highlights ongoing research and activism on reproductive rights, health, and justice in the Atlantic provinces. The reproductive health landscape in this region is marked by hostility toward a range of reproductive rights and services. Additionally, these provinces are often characterized as rural and under-resourced, with discourses of austerity pervading policy discussions around a host of healthcare issues. Despite this complicated context, several programs and initiatives contribute to reproductive rights, health, and justice, including provincial midwifery programs operating region-wide, Indigenous doula programs, negotiations for expanded midwifery services, access to the national pharmacare program, and increased access to abortion in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Based in our ongoing research on midwifery, pregnancy, and birth care in the region, we seek to bring together scholars, activists, and advocates to understand current limitations, developments, and possibilities for collaborative action on various facets of reproduction in the region.

Session Organizers: Krista Johnston, Mount Allison University; Christiana MacDougall, Mount Allison University; Marsha Vicaire, Mount Allison University; Katherine Dunbar, Mount Allison University; Sarah Rudrum, Acadia University

Session Chair: Marsha Vicaire, Mount Allison University

HEA14-1 - Beyond Pregnancy: FASD Diagnosis, Care Infrastructures, and Reproductive Justice in Atlantic Canada

Presenting Author - Katharine Dunbar, Mount Allison University

Non-presenting Authors - Heather Conran Paul and Laura Squires-Walsh, Independent Scholars

This paper examines fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) diagnosis as a reproductive justice issue, extending prevailing discussions of reproductive rights, health, and justice beyond pregnancy and birth into the postnatal infrastructures of care that shape families' lives. Following Ross and Solinger's (2017) articulation of reproductive justice as encompassing the rights to have children, not have children, and to raise children in safe and supportive communities, this paper situates diagnostic access and quality as central to reproductive autonomy and well-being. Drawing on the development of the fasdNL diagnostic network in Newfoundland and Labrador, the paper analyzes how diagnosis functions as a clinical process and as a key site where reproduction, disability, substance use, stigma, and governance intersect. In Atlantic Canada, families seeking FASD assessment and support face long waitlists, fragmented services, limited specialist capacity, and heightened surveillance, particularly in rural and under-resourced communities. These structural conditions produce inequities in who can access diagnosis, how quickly, and on what terms, with significant implications for children's educational, health, and social trajectories, and for how mothers, particularly those with substance use histories, are positioned and judged within healthcare and social service systems. The fasdNL diagnostic network emerged as a community-based, collaborative response to these gaps, bringing together a community non-profit and healthcare providers to build regional capacity, streamline diagnostic pathways, and promote non-stigmatizing, trauma-informed approaches to care. This paper shows how collaborative, community-led infrastructures operate as forms of reproductive justice praxis. By situating FASD diagnosis within the broader reproductive health landscape, this paper complements existing work by foregrounding the postnatal and life-course dimensions of reproduction. It argues that reproductive justice in Atlantic Canada must attend to rights during pregnancy and birth, and to the systems of diagnosis, support, and care that enable, or constrain, families' ability to thrive long after a child is born.

HEA14-2 - Bud in the oven: Experiences of using cannabis to manage pregnancy symptoms in rural NS

Reece Ronan, Acadia University

In Canada, there is a growing trend of using cannabis during pregnancy, particularly in rural areas where rates are the highest. In Nova Scotia (NS), around 7% of pregnant people surveyed reported using cannabis, which is higher than the national average of 2% to 5%. Previous studies suggest that many pregnant people choose to use cannabis to manage discomfort during pregnancy due to accessibility or growing concerns about medical iatrogenesis. The choice to use cannabis during pregnancy diverges from "common-sense" beliefs about childbirth, reliance on medical knowledge, and normative conceptions of parenthood. This raises questions about the experiences of pregnant people in rural NS, and their perceptions of medical knowledge, risk, and stigma surrounding prenatal cannabis use. In this research, I use semi-structured qualitative interviews to analyze the narratives of 10-14 people in rural NS (Annapolis Valley) who used cannabis during a pregnancy since legalization. I will use narrative thematic analysis, using the following questions to guide research outcomes: *(1) What motivates pregnant people to use cannabis to manage their pregnancy symptoms? (2) How do pregnant people perceive the information/guidance healthcare professionals provide surrounding cannabis use? (3) How do people who use cannabis during pregnancy perceive risks and/or benefits associated with prenatal cannabis use? (4) How do pregnant people who use cannabis navigate associated stigma, if any?* This research will shed light into the lived experiences of parenthood as told by pregnant people who navigate cannabis use, stigma and risk in rural NS, and

how medical information and guidance shapes these experiences. Findings will contribute to an emerging area of study surrounding gendered discomfort and highlight biases in healthcare and medical knowledge that shape societal beliefs and experiences of pregnancy.

HEA14-3 - Exploring the Need and Possible Solutions for Midwifery Education in New Brunswick

Emily Brown, Mount Allison University

Midwifery care in New Brunswick is limited to one small practice in Fredericton, and it has been consistently reported that the demand for the service is unable to be met. In the executive summary report from the evaluation of the midwifery clinic in Fredericton (2022), experiences of midwifery care in the province have been noted to be positive, and former clients have expressed a strong desire to see the practice expanded. A key challenge in the expansion of midwifery care is lack of opportunities to education and training. There are currently only six Midwifery Education Programs (MEPs) in Canada, and they are highly competitive with a limited number of seats and a high volume of applications. Furthermore, not one of these programs are located in New Brunswick, or any other Atlantic province. This project involves a comprehensive review of the existing academic and grey literature related to the issues surrounding midwifery education, recruitment and retention of midwifery students and Registered Midwives, and aims to make policy recommendations to the government of New Brunswick for improvement in this area. By encouraging and incentivizing education program formation, New Brunswick would be able to provide training to students in province, which could in turn improve the retention of midwives and thus furthering access to midwifery care.

(HEA15a) The Sociology of Aging and Later Life I

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

Despite their inevitability, the process of aging and our aging population are treated as social problems. Papers within these dual sessions provide critical insights into the diverse experiences of aging, emphasizing how inequality and resilience are experienced across the life course. This includes experiences of aging within various health and social care contexts, the instances of stress and harm that may arise within them, and how caregiving practices are shaped by relational, environmental, and structural factors. Presenters will also highlight how these contexts are uniquely experienced by various populations, including older immigrant and migrant communities, and those living with dementia.

Session Organizer and Chair: Hannah Crouse, Carleton University

HEA15a-1 - Adapting & Adopting: Memory, Narrative, and Voice in Northeast Calgary's Immigrant Communities

Joshua DeGuglielmo, University of Calgary

In a world where technological literacy has become central to daily life, understanding older adults' experiences with technology is vitally important. As individuals over the age of 50 continue to navigate technologies not designed with their needs in mind, questions emerge about adoption, adaptation, and meaning-making. Through six podcast-style interviews with seven participants, this

research explored how older adults integrate technology into their lives and their motivations for adopting new digital tools, whilst examining the narrative construction of memory and community identity. Findings revealed generational differences in technological engagement. For younger older adults (aged 50-65), remaining technologically current was driven by workplace competitiveness and relevance, with several participants expressing fears of "being left behind." For fourth-agers, technological literacy emerged as a by-product of maintaining family connections, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst all participants emphasised the importance of technological competence, they also voiced concerns about potential addiction and the erosion of human capacities such as authentic connection and memory. Central to this research is the sociology of memory and narrative. An unexpected dimension emerged through participants' narrative histories of Northeast Calgary communities, particularly Saddle Ridge, spanning nearly 50 years. Community elders, founding members, and notable public figures employed collective memory to emphasise the enduring importance of diversity and described their sense of community as resilient amid contemporary social fragmentation and individualism. These narratives functioned not merely as recollections but as active meaning-making processes through which participants constructed community identity and intergenerational continuity. This research establishes a profile of both community attitudes and individual practices within one of Calgary's largest immigrant communities, centring the voices and experiences of older adults who are often marginalised in technological and sociological discourse, whilst demonstrating how narrative serves as a site of memory work and social cohesion.

HEA15a-2 - Muted Agency in the Medicalized Home: Experiences of Home Care Clients and Family/Friend Caregivers

Presenting Author - Kaitlyn Kuryk, Mount Saint Vincent University

Non-presenting Authors - Anne Martin-Matthews, University of British Columbia; Janice Keefe, Mount Saint Vincent University

This paper examines how home care services extend the medical gaze into the private sphere and reorganize perceived agency within the home. Drawing on data from the *Home Care Pathways* project, it analyzes semi-structured interviews, conducted at three points in time from 2019-2022, with older adult home care clients (n=12) and their family caregivers (n=6) in two Canadian provinces. Drawing on Foucault's (1975) concept of biopower, and Armstrong's (1995) conceptions of medicalization and surveillance medicine, the analysis demonstrates how private spaces become medicalized sites of continuous assessment, risk management, and institutional governance. Across interviews and longitudinal trajectory analyses, both clients and caregivers articulated preferences and challenges regarding care decisions, yet hesitated to make their opinions known. Instead, participants enacted what this paper conceptualizes as *muted agency* (Kuryk, 2025): forms of action that are intentional and relational, but structurally constrained by standardized assessments, service contracts, professional authority, and the potential ongoing risk of service loss. Muted agency was most often expressed through subtle negotiation, spatial reorganization, non-verbal reminders throughout the home, and selective silence framed as cooperation. Muted agency functioned as a strategy for maintaining access to care while preserving dignity and establishing the desired boundaries of clients and family/friend caregivers. Participants learned to balance advocacy with the risk of being labelled ungrateful or difficult, while simultaneously internalizing expectations surrounding risk and conduct. In this process, clients and caregivers became both subjects and agents

of medical surveillance, illustrating the weblike, relational nature of power. By foregrounding *muted agency*, this paper challenges binaries of empowerment and dependence that dominate discussions of home care and demonstrates the complex nature of power relations and structures within the medicalized space of the home.

HEA15a-3 - Distributed Personhood: Investigating the Environment to Support the Person with Dementia

Benjamin Tremblay, Haute école de travail social et de la santé Lausanne (HETSL | HES-SO)

Contemporary discourse on aging and dementia often reduces the *person* to an *individual,* defined by internal capacities (memory, autonomy, rationality) whose decline is interpreted as a "loss of self". Drawing on several studies conducted in psychogeriatric institutions in Switzerland, this communication examines how people with dementia can still be discovered and recognized in their singularity when their capacities to narrate their own story or remember their past are impaired. How can the person be re-discovered when these individual attributes are weakened, and how do professionals practically identify and support them? Professionals approach this challenge by investigating what of the person exists beyond the individual, distributed across their environment. Relatives are mobilized as bearers of memory, able to testify to who the person is - or was. Memories are treated not as mental contents to extract, but as elements circulating and likely to reveal in social activities. Similarly, medical and care records play a central role : they act as repositories of institutional memory, where biographical fragments, preferences, and interpretations accumulate, circulate, and guide care - shaping access to the person, who increasingly depends on what is said or written about them as the illness progresses and the expression of their wishes, desires, and intentions becomes more complex. Dementia thus exposes the co-constitutive nature of person and environment. Environmental inquiry allows professionals to relate to the person without requiring intact autobiographical memory. The person is neither restored nor reconstructed as autonomous, but continually identified and supported through relational and documentary practices. In dementia, hope does not lie in the recovery of an intact "self" but in the fragile, collective possibility of rediscovering the person through the ordinary work of investigation to examine what, of her, remains in her environment.

HEA15a-4 - Adverse Childhood Experience and Allostatic Load in Mid-Late Life: A Causal Mediation Analysis of the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging

Presenting Author - Jalal Uddin, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Zakir Hossin, University of British Columbia; Mark Asbridge and Mohammad Hajizadeh, Dalhousie University

The association between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and chronic disease in later life is well established. However, less is known about the causal pathways linking early-life adversity to physiological dysregulation. Traditional mediation approaches have limited utility when exposure-mediator interactions or multiple mediators are present. Using the counterfactual Inverse Odds Weighting (IOW) method, we examined the mediating effects of adult socioeconomic status and psychosocial and behavioural factors on the association between ACE and allostatic load among Canadian older adults. This analysis draws on a panel sample of 15,876 participants in three waves of the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging. ACE was assessed using 8 items at Wave-2. The allostatic

load (AL) was constructed using clinically relevant cut-off values for 9 biomarkers collected at Wave-3. Mediators assessed at Wave-2 included socioeconomic status, health behaviours, and psychosocial factors. Logistic models adjusted for sex, age, race/ethnicity, and immigrant status. The natural direct, indirect, and total effects were estimated using the IOW method. These findings emphasize the importance of adult socioeconomic, health-related behaviours, and psychosocial pathways as key mechanisms—and intervention targets—in disrupting the long-term physiological imprint of early-life stress.

HEA15a-5 - Measuring Recession Severity and the Education Buffer: Evidence from Composite Economic Indicators and Life-Course Inequality

Presenting Author - Julie McMullin, Western University

Non-presenting Author - Josh Curtis, University of Calgary

Research consistently demonstrates that higher educational attainment buffers individuals against labour-market shocks during economic recessions, yet most studies infer macroeconomic context indirectly and rely on single indicators of downturns. This limits our understanding of how recession severity—and its multidimensional character—conditions the strength of the education buffer across time and place. This study addresses these gaps by integrating individual-level labour-market outcomes with provincial- and national-level macroeconomic conditions, and by introducing a composite recession index that captures the joint effects of economic contraction, labour-market distress, and inequality. Using repeated cross-sectional microdata linked to contextual measures of GDP growth, unemployment, and income inequality, we construct a recession severity index that reflects the breadth and intensity of economic downturns more accurately than any single indicator. We then examine how variation in recession severity moderates the protective effect of educational attainment on income outcomes across educational and age groups. The results show that higher education consistently provides substantial protection against income loss, but that the magnitude of this buffer varies systematically with macroeconomic context. Under moderate economic stress, the education buffer is strengthened, while under conditions of severe and multidimensional recessionary pressure, even highly educated workers experience increased vulnerability. These effects are further stratified across the life course, with younger and less securely attached workers facing heightened exposure during periods of elevated recession severity. By directly measuring recession severity and embedding it within a multilevel analytical framework, this study advances existing research in three ways: it clarifies the contextual conditionality of the education buffer, demonstrates the value of composite macroeconomic indicators for inequality research, and highlights the importance of integrating life-course dynamics into analyses of recession-driven stratification. The findings carry important implications for labour-market policy, suggesting that education alone cannot fully insulate workers from deep and unequal economic downturns without complementary macro-level interventions.

(HEA16) Navigating uncertainty in health, illness, and medicine

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session presents research on the sociology of health, illness, and health care that engages with a central theme of our discipline and our age: uncertainty. Papers will explore how people with health concerns experience, manage, and respond to the conditions, problems, and politics of uncertainty: confusing and conflicting information and advice; difficult choices; unpredictable diseases, conditions, technologies, and procedures; competing social relationships and responsibilities; and the costs and inequities of hope.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Elizabeth Cameron, Dalhousie University; Emma Whelan, Dalhousie University

HEA16-1 - 'If one thing had been different ..." On Diagnostic Vertigo, Social Uncertainty, and Ordinary Affects

Michael Nijhawan, York University

In this paper I am drawing on biographical interviews with people who were diagnosed with a form of chronic autoimmune illness before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather than assuming the exceptionality of pandemic times and the enhanced risk management for people living with chronic conditions, I am interested in the social production of such conditions of uncertainty. My focus will be on the relationship between *diagnostic vertigo* (extended periods of uncertainty due to institutional patterns of diagnostic procedure), *social uncertainty* (mediated by the everyday experiences within social relations), and *ordinary affects* (a term coined by Kathleen Steward for capturing the fleeting, and unstable emotive states during times of social destabilization and political disintegration). In other words, I approach the question of uncertainty through the lenses of temporality, sociality, and emotions. Drawing upon 30 in-depth biographical interviews that were held with a diverse group of adults in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in 2023 and 2024, I will tease out some of the interpretive struggles and strategies my interlocutors have used to navigate conditions of uncertainty in an effort to make life liveable. In the context of these narratives, which do capture, and yet point beyond the specificities of the COVID-19 pandemic, uncertainty entails *first,* how people navigate the tension between the loss of control over their bodies and the resilience through everyday acts of repair. *Second*, uncertainty relates to a paradoxical sense of navigating between what *one knows* about the social world of everyday relations (and that entails the stigmatizing effect of social norms but also forms of care) and *what haunts* these same relations as a potential for social breakdown or as a waiting for things to happen.

HEA16-2 - The Commodification of Hope: Persistent Infertility in the Canadian Context

Lisa Redgrift, Independent Scholar

Since the birth of the first “test-tube baby,” in 1978, fertility treatments have become normalized and valorized. Infertile women who desire motherhood are often eager for medicalization as a means of fulfilling their hope maternity, or more specifically, for a genetically linked biological take-home baby. In an attempt to move beyond the extant literature’s almost exclusive focus on women who are still being treated medically for infertility, this research explores the experience of persistent

infertility among 15 childless Canadian women who discontinued fertility treatments when they did not work, who could not access assisted conception, and/or whose infertility is untreatable. From a socialist feminist perspective, I suggest that in the medicalized Canadian context, persistent infertility illustrates that hope for maternity is commodified, and stratified. Canadians who participate in fertility treatments are medical consumers in a private, unregulated industry. Fertility clinics set their own prices, and the cost is often prohibitive. Despite a publicly funded health care system in Canada, fertility treatments are largely excluded from public funding. Rather, there is a patchwork approach to funding fertility treatments. Some provinces do not provide compensation, and others do, but with limits (e.g., funding one single round of IVF). Fertility treatment success rates are low, and the dissemination of clinic success rates lack transparency. Many women require more than one round of IVF to perhaps achieve a successful pregnancy. When provisional partial compensation runs out, financial and/or geographic barriers curtail hope, and stratify reproduction. Yet the baby business is booming. Women who have access to assisted conception are encouraged to pursue more treatments, despite unfavorable odds. The exchange of fertility treatments as a thing of commerce, strays from the normal market system. With fertility treatments, consumers pay for the hope of receiving a baby—but do not necessarily receive a baby.

HEA16-3 - Navigating Mpox Diagnosis and Care: Stigma, Uncertainty, and Support in Gay, Bisexual, and Queer Men's Lives

Presenting Author - Daniel Grace, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Mackenzie Stewart, University of Toronto; Emerich Daroya, La Trobe University; Heeho Ryu, Jad Sinno, Tin D. Vo, and Oghenetega Ubor, University of Toronto; Joshun Dulai, University of British Columbia; Joseph Cox, McGill University; Caley B. Shukalek, University of Calgary; Cornel Grey, Western University; Nathan J. Lachowsky, University of Northern British Columbia; Darrell H.S. Tan, St. Michael's Hospital, University of Toronto

In May 2022, a global mpox outbreak occurred in non-endemic countries, including Canada, with transmission concentrated primarily among gay, bisexual, and queer men (herein queer men). This analysis centers the lived experiences of queer men who acquired mpox. Between December 2023-January 2025 we interviewed 25 participants from across Canada with a confirmed or suspected mpox infection. We used institutional ethnography to understand how queer men living with mpox navigated diagnosis and care. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and NVivo was used to organize findings and record analytic memos. We explicate five interrelated areas that were core to participants' work of accessing mpox diagnosis and care: (1) *Challenges of diagnosis, misdiagnosis, and avoiding formal diagnosis* (e.g., anticipated stigma and former negative healthcare experiences led some men to avoid formal diagnosis/care; traumatic and confusing healthcare encounters due to lack of knowledge and institutional stigma required considerable self-advocacy); (2) *Confusion around public health guidance* (e.g., many connected with providers who were caring and knowledge post-diagnosis, but received confusing/conflicting information about isolation measures as someone with mpox); (3) *Unhelpful public health case management* (e.g., managers lacked specific knowledge of how to support them in the face of uncertainty); (4) *Physical, psychological, and structural challenges post-infection* (e.g., debilitating physical pain; stigma and lasting mental health impacts due to quarantine; inability to access unemployment insurance or receive work accommodations); and (5) *Shared experience as an essential source of care and support* (e.g., connecting with other people with mpox was a trusted source of learning and affirmation). Our analysis identifies a larger

set of discursive, social, and structural conditions that shaped the experiences of people with mpox in Canada, and the considerable healthwork queer men did to support themselves and each other in a system largely unprepared to meet their needs amid a rapidly evolving health emergency.

HEA16-4 - "Did I make the right choice for my baby?" Relationality in vaccination decision-making while pregnant

Terra Manca, Athabasca University, Dalhousie University

Women and pregnant people can feel individually responsible, isolated, and uncertain when making choices that may affect fetal health, including about vaccination. In this talk, I discuss how relationality shaped individual accounts of navigating uncertainty around IIV, Tdap, and COVID-19 vaccinations in pregnancy. Study data include interviews with 39 women who were pregnant (n=31) and/or prenatal care providers (n=12) who discuss vaccination in pregnancy. I interviewed participants during the first 20 months of the COVID-19 pandemic. My analysis took a narrative approach. Drawing on feminist approaches to governmentality and cultural risk theory, I analyzed how participants interpreted seemingly technical medical discourses through cultural values attached to motherhood and fetal bodies. Pregnant participants demonstrated self-governance in making choices amid overlapping relationships to their fetuses, family, friends, healthcare providers, and the wider community. For instance, one pregnant participant who wanted a COVID-19 vaccine to support communal efforts to end the pandemic asked, "Did I make the right choice for my baby?" Her question arose from widespread uncertainties among the public about COVID-19 vaccination safety for fetal bodies. Prenatal care providers voiced concerns about how medical discourses and cultural values assigned to fetal bodies constrained pregnant people's autonomy in navigating such uncertainties. I conclude by discussing how social relations and responsibilities may intensify feelings of isolation in the work of healthcare decision-making during pregnancy.

(HEA-RC) Sociology of Health Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

The Sociology of Health Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizers: Claudia Chaufan, York University; Magdalena Aguilar, Independent Researcher

(OMN1d) Sociological Perspectives on Health and Care
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session features presentations exploring research relating to health and care broadly defined.

Session Chair: Katherine Morton Richards, Memorial University of Newfoundland

OMN1d-1 - Rare Disease, Rural Contexts, and the Social Construction of Health

Presenting Author - Abby Hopkins, St. Francis Xavier University

Non-presenting Author - Katie Aubrecht, St. Francis Xavier University

Rare diseases remain difficult to diagnose and manage due to limited provider expertise, fragmented care pathways, and uneven access to specialized knowledge. As a result, patients and caregivers are often compelled to act as their own case managers, navigating complex healthcare systems with minimal institutional support. These challenges are intensified in rural contexts, where geographic isolation compounds structural inequities in care access. This study examines how the social construction of health and illness identities shapes the healthcare experiences of people living with rare diseases in rural Nova Scotia. Guided by symbolic interactionism and social constructionist perspectives, this mixed-methods sociological study draws on survey data and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with rare disease patients and caregivers across Nova Scotia. Purposive sampling was used to ensure representation from multiple provincial health zones, capturing variation in rural healthcare access and experiences. Preliminary findings reveal persistent gaps in provider knowledge and availability, contributing to delayed diagnoses and limited treatment options. Participants frequently described feelings of loneliness, diminished self-understanding, and perceived failure, both in managing illness and in securing adequate care. These experiences underscore how rare disease identities are socially negotiated within healthcare encounters that often marginalize patients' embodied knowledge. By centering a distinctly rural Nova Scotian context, this research addresses a gap in national literature that commonly aggregates Atlantic provinces, obscuring regional specificity. The study contributes to the sociology of health and illness by demonstrating how structural constraints and interactional processes jointly shape rare disease experiences. It concludes with policy and practice recommendations grounded in participants' lived realities, aimed at advancing more equitable and responsive healthcare systems for rare disease communities.

OMN1d-2 - Always Expected, Rarely Supported: Learning About Family/Friend Caregiving Dynamics in Nova Scotia

Alexandria Delaney, University of Manitoba

This mixed-methods study identifies some of the systemic barriers that caregivers in Nova Scotia face in accessing respite care and financial supports. This research is guided by political economy of aging and the life course perspective. Data collection included seven semi-structured interviews with family caregivers in Nova Scotia and secondary analysis of the 2018 General Social Survey on Caregiving and Care Receiving. Despite over one-third of Nova Scotians identifying as family/friend caregivers, provincial and federal government programs, such as the Nova Scotia Caregiver Benefit and the EI Caregiver Benefit, are difficult to access, which disincentivizes care work and perpetuates poverty. The findings also reveal how familly/friend caregivers often have multiple roles at once, which can be difficult to manage, such as being an employee, a parent, and a spouse/partner. Some interview participants described unexpected transitions into caregiving, which had impacts on their employment, finances, and health. By analyzing the tensions between policy and practice, this research highlights how family/friend caregivers in Nova Scotia, and beyond, are essential to the care economy yet are systematically unsupported. Addressing these contradictions requires initiatives that will ensure family/friend caregivers do not have to navigate institutions designed to exploit their

labour under capitalism. A couple of interview participants were uncertain about what forms of support they needed and whether it was realistic to ask for additional or alternative supports. Other participants explained that the support they need includes access to flexible respite care, a living wage, and expanded criteria for caregiving benefits. It is essential moving forward that care is understood as being foundational to our collective well-being and valued accordingly.

OMN1d-3 - Identifying the Factors Explaining Immigrant's Mental Health in Canada During Covid-19 Pandemic Across Migration Stages

Jihad (Rosty) Othman, University of Manitoba

According to the WHO, world migration numbers have increased after the pandemic era; estimates are that 281 million people are or would be migrants after the pandemic. Migration has been a historic part of the evolution of humankind. Pandemics have never "stopped" migration. There is ample evidence that the coronavirus pandemic had detrimental effects on the mental health of millions of people (Apelian et al., 2024; Komeiha et al., 2025). Despite extensive research on migrant wellbeing during settlement and integration (Kikhia et al., 2021; Song et al., 2025; Steel et al., 2009), less attention has been paid to immigrant mental health outcomes. Using data from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research-funded study entitled: *The Mental Health and Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples, Immigrants, Refugees, and Racialized Peoples in Canada, the USA, and Mexico*, my dissertation examines immigrants' mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic through different sociological perspectives, including life course theory, structuration and agency theory, and human capital theory. By employing quantitative methods, my study examines the different mental health outcomes for immigrants from age cohorts, socioeconomic statuses, genders, education levels, and occupational backgrounds when they relocate to Canadian communities. The central research question is: *What are the factors influencing the mental health outcomes of immigrants in Canada compared to non-immigrants during the pandemic?* The data examined in my dissertation include data on immigrants and non-immigrants from Canada, so an analysis is conducted empirically for each research question.

(OMN2b) Exploring Health and Risk

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Health Research Cluster

This session features presentations focusing on health and risk research.

Session Organizers: Conference Program Committee

Session Chair: Cindy Sinclair, University of Toronto

OMN2b-1 - Agentic Responses to Crisis Maternity Care: Systems of Care and Women's Birthing Experiences in Ontario

Maria Ahmed, University of Western Ontario

The COVID-19 pandemic has frequently been described as an unprecedented disruption to health care delivery; however, this paper argues that pandemic-era maternity care in Ontario served as a mechanism that exposed and intensified long-standing systemic inequalities embedded within Canadian systems of care. Drawing on 22 semi-structured interviews capturing 50 births, including

25 occurring under pandemic-era hospital policies (2020-2022), this study examines how institutional responses shaped women's prenatal, birth, and postpartum experiences. Using a grounded theory-informed approach, data were analyzed through inductive, iterative thematic coding. This study contributes new empirical insight into how women enact agency in response to institutionalized crisis care and how these responses reverberate across multiple domains of trust. Participants reported exclusion of support persons, unexpected withdrawal of postpartum care, and inconsistent application of policies - experiences that disproportionately affected marginalized women who rely heavily on social supports. In response to these conditions, women navigated care along a continuum of strategies: coping mechanisms (e.g., minimizing or rationalizing negative experiences); resource activation (leveraging personal, familial or community assets to navigate institutional gaps); and deliberate agentic action (switching providers, hiring doulas, or opting for home births). These narratives reveal that pandemic care conditions contributed to a multi-level erosion of trust - interpersonal trust in providers, institutional trust in hospitals, and epistemic trust in public health guidance. These findings highlight how crisis policies function as stress tests for systems of care, revealing persistent inequities while shaping trust, engagement, and reproductive decision-making. By situating pandemic maternity care within broader structural inequalities, this study underscores the need for equity-informed, participatory, and relational approaches to maternity policy in Canadian healthcare systems.

OMN2b-2 - Predictors of Transit Risk Perception During COVID-19: A Cross-sectional Study from Toronto's Scarborough Suburb

Presenting Author - Dorian DiTommaso, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Hilary Brown, Ignacio Tiznado-Aitken, Steven Farber, and Nicholas D. Spence, University of Toronto

Pandemics are not a matter of if, but when. Understanding how people perceive public-transit during pandemics is vital, given transit's role in accessing services, economic stability, and social connectedness. Examine predictors of COVID-19 transit risk perception - level of agreement with the statement "the risk of COVID-19 contagion is high in public-transport" (1-5) - in the Toronto suburb of Scarborough, Ontario. Cross-sectional analysis of the 2022 Scarborough Survey, a dataset composed of six modules: socio-demographics; mobility + built environment; health; automobility; social capital; and politics, collected by the Suburban Mobilities Cluster at the University of Toronto. We examined four categories of predictors: socio-demographics; health/wellbeing; trust; and politics using linear regression with robust standard errors. A representative sample of 1850 respondents from Scarborough surveyed between April-August 2022 using mixed methods of recruitment, including targeted social media ads (e.g., Facebook/Reddit) and survey panels. Each respondent completed core modules: socio-demographics and mobility + built environment, as well as two randomly selected remaining modules. Eight hundred seventy six respondents completed the requisite modules to be included in our analysis. Data cleaning lowered this to 872. Gender, self-rated physical health, and general trust were significantly associated with COVID-19 transit risk perception. Women had higher levels of transit risk perception than men [B = 0.19 (95% CI = 0.05, 0.33]. Self-rated physical health was negatively associated with transit risk perception [B = -0.10 (95% CI = -0.19, -0.01)]. General trust was negatively associated with transit risk perception [B = -0.14 (95% CI = -0.23, -0.05)]. Three factors predicted COVID-19 transit risk perception in Scarborough, ON: gender, self-rated physical health, and general trust. Future pandemic planning should consider these

factors in developing public health communications that consider the lived experience of these groups in relation to an essential service like public-transportation.

OMN2b-3 - Autism and suicide: investigating the sociological roots through integration, regulation, and anomie

Sarah Fuller, University of British Columbia

Autistic people have disproportionately high rates of suicidality compared to global averages, and suicide is a leading cause of premature death for the population. There has been little sociological insight into this, and insights garnered from other disciplines fail to acknowledge social forces and distill autistic suicidality into individual factors. This lack of sociological research has resulted in the discipline overlooking how autism provides a valuable case to further sociological theories of suicide; understanding suicide through an autistic lens has unique implications for the applicability of existing theoretical perspectives, in particular, Durkheim's theory of suicide. Additionally, neglecting the sociological side of suicide for the autistic population does a disservice to autistic people by leaving relevant mental health considerations unacknowledged in academic literature. This paper attempts to understand how the sociological concepts of social integration, moral regulation, and anomie uniquely interact with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and how these insights can be applied to understanding suicidality/suicide within the population. Using a mixed-methods questionnaire alongside interdisciplinary theoretical and practical literature, autistic peoples' social connections (integration) and experiences with social norms (regulation) were investigated. Particular attention was given to their history of suicide to identify potential social roots. Preliminary analysis of the findings suggests that low social integration was prevalent across the sample and was generally robustly correlated with suicidality. However, relationships between anomie, moral regulation, and suicide were variable and diverse, indicating a few potential regulative profiles contributing to suicide vulnerability. This study ultimately contributes to a growing body of sociological literature examining neurodiversity and suicide, and results can be utilized to inform valuable suicide and mental health interventions targeting this population.

OMN2b-4 - Handle with care: Medicine and human health interactions in a changing climate

Stephanie Sodero, University of Manchester

In this project proposal, I explore what happens when the paths of medicine, human health and climate change intersect. To concretise this complex topic, I focus on specific medicines and medical products, such as donated blood, inhalers and anti-depressants, that align with specific climate/health interactions, including changing vector ecology, air pollution and extreme heat. This material entry point will act as an entry point in future work to explore the politics and practicalities - the scrambling, patching and transforming - that determine whether a medicine is where it is needed amid a changing climate. Underpinned by vital mobilities (Sodero and Sinclair 2025), which explores how external societal circulations shape internal bodily circulations, this project explores the diverse facets of medicine, human health and climate change interactions, including increased demand, supply chain disruptions and adverse physiological impacts, as a means to mapping and navigating uncertainties and forging tentative new health and environment relationships.

(HOU) Sociology of Housing Research Cluster

(HOU1a) Sociology of Housing and Home I

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Housing Research Cluster

This session on the sociology of home and housing foregrounds critical questions about what it means to have, make, and keep "home" in an era of intensifying social and economic inequity. Across Canada and beyond, home and housing have become deeply polarizing topics, with public debates including, but not limited to, encampments, housing affordability, home ownership, and Land Back movements. As the gap widens between those with secure housing and those without, and as the pressures of debt, displacement, and speculation reshape where and how people live, home has become both a personal aspiration and a site of political struggle.

Session Organizer: Katie MacDonald, Athabasca University

Session Chair: Olesya Kochkina, University of Alberta

HOU1a-1 - Making a Home in a 'Housing Crisis'

Kathleen Daly, Dalhousie University

This project examines how and why people strive to cultivate a sense of home for themselves while living in a housing system that inherently undermines and destabilizes these efforts. In recent years, the Canadian public has been bombarded with information about 'the housing crisis.' However, housing is treated almost exclusively as a private sector, free-market commodity in Canada, and as such, the purpose of the rental market is not to house people; it is to make profit by extracting people's income. By this metric, Canada's housing system is working just fine, and the explosion of conversations around 'the housing crisis' detracts from the reality that the housing system has always been and continues to be organized along lines of power, privilege and oppression. But how do people make sense of these contradictory narratives? What impact do they have on the everyday person? While the Canadian housing system threatens our ability to maintain suitable housing, it equally threatens our ability to meet our most basal human needs for belonging, security, community, meaning, control, and familiarity - in other words, our ability to cultivate 'home' for ourselves. Yet, from within this system, people strive to meet these physiological, psychological, and emotional needs, nonetheless. In this project, I examine how adult renters in the Halifax Regional Municipality make sense of Canada's housing system and how these perceptions shape their homemaking efforts. Guided by a critical geography of home, I address two research questions: (1) What do people think about how housing 'works' in their place of residence? (2) How are people's efforts to cultivate home for themselves shaped by their experiences within and perceptions of the housing system? Through qualitative, photo-elicitation interviews, this project offers a nuanced perspective on the relationship between the political economy of housing and the sociology of homemaking.

HOU1a-2 - Housing Activism from the Grassroots and Academia in New Brunswick

Alison Parrell, University of New Brunswick

New Brunswick is experiencing a low-income and housing affordability epidemic. Approximately half of workers in the province make less than living wage ($24.77/hour) and the lack of affordable housing has contributed to increased rates of housing insecurity and homelessness across New Brunswick. The affordability crisis is felt most acutely by tenant households and those experiencing homelessness. Amid this crisis, housing activists and scholars in the province have collaborated to reform public policy to better protect affordability and stability for tenants. This activism has played out in the media, with reports of contributions by activists and scholars appearing frequently on the radio, in print, on social media, and on television news stations. This paper aims to explore the role of housing activism and scholarship as a contributor to change in tenants' rights and housing policies in New Brunswick. Through semi-structured interviews with grassroots activists and housing scholars in and attached to New Brunswick, perceptions of the affordable rental housing crisis, engagement with activism, and the impacts of activism will be captured. This research is currently underway, and the findings will be presented at the CSA's annual meeting.

HOU1a-3 - La politique de l'offre comme gouvernementalité : neutralisation des rapports de force et marginalisation du logement social

Renaud Goyer, Université du Québec à Montréal

Cette communication propose une analyse critique du régime contemporain des politiques sociales du logement au Canada et au Québec, dans un contexte de crise profonde de l'abordabilité. À partir d'une métasynthèse descriptive des travaux nationaux et internationaux sur la gouvernance du logement, elle met en lumière l'éclatement des dispositifs actuels en trois axes. Le premier axe examine la montée en puissance de la politique de l'offre défendue par la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL). Cette approche, fondée sur la théorie du filtrage, repose sur l'idée que toute nouvelle construction finit par bénéficier à l'ensemble des ménages, y compris les plus pauvres. Elle constitue un véritable *régime de vérité*, au sens foucaldien, qui produit une *politique de l'ignorance* : en postulant l'autorégulation du marché, elle invisibilise la nécessité structurelle de construire massivement du logement social et marginalise les approches de dé-marchandisation. Le deuxième axe s'intéresse à la place centrale accordée au Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) comme mécanisme quasi exclusif de régulation du marché locatif. En individualisant les conflits et en les traitant comme de simples litiges privés, l'État délègue la défense du droit au logement à une instance judiciaire qui neutralise les rapports de force et occulte les dimensions structurelles de la crise. Le troisième axe porte sur l'expansion des politiques de stabilité résidentielle avec accompagnement (SRA), largement arrimées au marché privé. Bien qu'elles facilitent l'accès à un logement, elles individualisent la responsabilité de s'y maintenir et renforcent un modèle psycho-administratif centré sur l'adaptation des individus à un marché inégal. En conclusion, la communication discutera des conditions nécessaires à la reconstruction d'un projet collectif du logement, notamment la reconnaissance du logement social comme infrastructure publique et la mise en œuvre de véritables mesures de contrôle des loyers.

The Supply-Side Policy as Governmentality: Neutralizing Power Relations and Marginalizing Social Housing

This presentation offers a critical analysis of the contemporary regime of social housing policies in Canada and Québec, situated within a profound affordability crisis. Drawing on a descriptive metasynthesis of national and international research on housing governance, it highlights the

fragmentation of current policy instruments across three key axes. The first axis examines the rise of supply-side policy promoted by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This approach, anchored in filtering theory, rests on the premise that any new construction ultimately benefits all households, including the poorest. It functions as a Foucauldian regime of truth that produces a politics of ignorance: by assuming the self-regulation of the market, it obscures the structural need for large-scale construction of social housing and marginalizes decommodification-oriented solutions. The second axis focuses on the central role attributed to the Tribunal administratif du logement (TAL) as a quasi-exclusive mechanism for regulating the rental market. By individualizing conflicts and framing them as private disputes, the state delegates the protection of the right to housing to a judicial body that neutralizes power relations and erases the structural dimensions of the crisis. The third axis addresses the expansion of Housing First-type programs and other residential stability policies, which are largely dependent on the private rental market. While these programs facilitate rapid access to housing, they individualize the responsibility of maintaining tenancy and reinforce a psycho-administrative model centered on adapting individuals to an unequal market. In conclusion, the presentation will examine the conditions necessary to rebuild a collective housing project, notably by recognizing social housing as public infrastructure and implementing meaningful rent control measures.

HOU1a-4 - Exploring the Relationship Between Housing Status and Secondary Migration Trajectories: Evidence from Immigrants in Canada

Chenyu Liu, University of Manitoba

Oswald's (1996) economic model implies that homeownership serves as an "anchor" that reduces residential mobility among certain European owners. This study situates this anchor effect within the evolving patterns of internal migration in the contemporary Canadian context. It asks: How does housing tenure status differentially influence the timing and likelihood of secondary migration among immigrants? Patterns of internal migration in Canada have shifted markedly in the context of the housing crisis. A decline in intraprovincial and interprovincial migration is observed in 2020, with housing market conditions identified as a salient contributor shaping regional mobility (Robitaille et al. 2025). Conversely, there has been a continuous increase in secondary migration among immigrants, in which housing, employment, and social factors play central roles (Statistics Canada 2025). This research uses the National Social and Affordable Housing Database (NSAHD) to conduct a longitudinal analysis from 2016 to 2021. To estimate migration events, it employs a Cox proportional hazards regression model. The dependent variable is the hazard of internal migration for an individual over time. The primary independent variable - housing status - includes four distinct household categories: outright homeowner, homeowner with a mortgage, independent renter, and subsidized renter. A set of sociodemographic and human capital covariates is also included. While a growing body of research on housing and newcomers in Canada, much of the existing work has only scratched the surface of what we need to understand. This study leverages these linked datasets within NSAHD to offer a comprehensive analysis of how housing status shapes immigrants' migration trajectories in the Canadian context. This research helps policymakers assess whether to prioritize introducing early interventions by expanding the supply of affordable rental housing or promoting homeownership more widely as an effective means of managing internal migration flows.

(HOU1b) Sociology of Housing and Home II

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Housing Research Cluster

This session on the sociology of home and housing foregrounds critical questions about what it means to have, make, and keep "home" in an era of intensifying social and economic inequity. Across Canada and beyond, home and housing have become deeply polarizing topics, with public debates including, but not limited to, encampments, housing affordability, home ownership, and Land Back movements. As the gap widens between those with secure housing and those without, and as the pressures of debt, displacement, and speculation reshape where and how people live, home has become both a personal aspiration and a site of political struggle.

Session Organizer and Chair: Katie MacDonald, Athabasca University

HOU1b-1 - The Health Effect of Homeownership: Mediation and Moderation from Satisfaction Perception and Housing Unaffordability

Min Zhou, University of Victoria

This study proposes a theoretical model that integrates important mediating and moderating effects to explain whether and how homeownership is potentially linked to health. This integrative model examines (1) whether the effect of homeownership on health is moderated by housing cost (especially housing unaffordability) and (2) whether the health effect of homeownership can be explained by the three mechanisms represented by three satisfaction perceptions—housing satisfaction, community satisfaction, and life satisfaction—that stress homeownership's material, social, and symbolic values, respectively. Guided by the theoretical model, the analyses of the 2021 Canadian Housing Survey data generate important insights. First, there is clear evidence that homeownership is significantly related to better health in Canada and that this health-promoting effect is not diminished by unaffordability. Second, homeownership does not have a direct health benefit, and the revealed health benefit can be attributed to the three mechanisms. These underlying mechanisms, supported by empirical evidence, can explain how homeownership brings about better health and shed light on how housing inequality may translate into health disparity.

HOU1b-2 - To file or not to file? How tenants decide how to resolve housing issues

Hannah Main, Dalhousie University

In recent years, Dalhousie Legal Aid Service's (DLAS) social justice community clinic has seen substantial increase in the number of tenants looking for assistance in housing disputes. Common issues include eviction and poor living conditions. For tenants and landlords in Nova Scotia, an application to the Residential Tenancies Program is the main legal mechanism for dispute resolution. But fewer than one-quarter of disputes in the Residential Tenancies Program are initiated by tenants. Seeking to understand tenant problems in Nova Scotia more widely, DLAS conducted a province-wide tenants' survey in 2025, receiving 1278 responses. Results of the survey show that half of respondents report having a problem with their landlord, unit, or building within the past year, while just 6% of those who reported a problem made an application to the Residential Tenancies Program. Based on the results of the tenants' survey, this conference paper explores how tenants decide whether or not to take formal legal action against landlords. The option to resolve a dispute through

a Residential Tenancies Program hearing is always available for both tenants and landlords, but tenants' options are constrained by factors including fear of eviction or reprisal, perception of bias, time commitment, and the cost of taking action. While DLAS and other organizations have put an emphasis on tenants' rights education, this paper argues that lack of knowledge is not the primary barrier that tenants face to taking legal action. The power imbalance inherent in the landlord-tenant relationship discourages legal action. Tenants make rational decisions based on their understanding of their own housing (in)security and the rental market.

HOU1b-3 - Affordable Housing in Nova Scotia

Katie MacDonald, Athabasca University; Jodi Vander Heirde, Dalhousie University

In this presentation, we share findings from a pilot study about the Nova Scotia community housing sector. According to the Nova Scotia's Provincial Housing Needs Report, there is a significant need for support for people to be adequately housed in Nova Scotia. Uniquely, the report highlights the stress on both tenants and homeowners, including that 40% of respondents had to forego groceries to pay their rent or their mortgage. Across the province, median rents have increased by 24%. While there is important research on the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, there is a lack of research on Nova Scotia as a whole, or outside of Halifax or CBRM despite many communities facing housing issues (Doll et al., 2022; Leviten-Reid & Parker, 2018). In our research with the Nova Scotia Non-Profit Housing Association (NSNPHA), a relatively newly formed organization which seeks to support the non-market sector, we conducted interviews with 12 people involved in the creation of and operations of NSNPHA. We share findings from this research which suggests that Nova Scotia housing providers are struggling to meet the needs of people living in Nova Scotia and working under difficult conditions of precarious and limited funding, as well as complicated structures to increase housing supply. We also share what people working in the housing system see as crucial for a stronger housing sector and situate this within current housing scholarship.

HOU1b-4 - Racial Power Dynamics in the Vancouver Rental Housing Market: An Audit of Landlord Practices

Jalen Faddick, University of British Columbia

Landlords are uniquely positioned to influence the distribution of housing through the processes of tenant screening, selection, and discrimination. Racial discrimination in rental housing has been consistently observed in settings across North America and Europe; however, little work has been done to conceptualize and test discrimination as a feature of landlord power, especially in highly selective markets such as Vancouver. To address the intersection of selection and discrimination, I research the effect of tenant selection on housing opportunities for minoritized groups. Drawing on response data from fictitious applications sent to Vancouver landlords during the winter of 2025/2026, I analyze the rate of response for different racial groups and genders, and the textual content of the responses. Expected findings include that landlords use discriminatory power to sort applicants based on race and gender and respond more negatively to minoritized applicants. By understanding the mechanisms through which housing inequality is reproduced, the findings from this study will help inform policies that promote fair, equitable access to safe and stable housing to all applicants, regardless of social location.

HOU1b-5 - Housing as Healing: A Practice-Based Case from a Rural Transitional Women's Home

Wooseok Jun and Chidinma Onuoha, Souls Harbour Rescue Mission

Women experiencing homelessness and gender-based violence in rural communities often face overlapping challenges related to housing instability, trauma, parenting stress, and limited access to coordinated supports. This practice-based presentation draws on lessons from a rural transitional Women's Home in Nova Scotia, Canada, operated by Souls Harbour Rescue Mission, which provides safe housing and wraparound services for women and their children. As part of a community-funded quality improvement initiative, staff introduced a set of structured, evidence-informed assessment tools to better understand resident wellbeing and family functioning over time and to inform service development. On a voluntary basis, residents participated in the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Child Well-being Scales (CWBS), a shortened Family Assessment Device (FAD), and the Parenting Stress Index (PSI). These tools were used alongside staff observations and resident feedback to explore patterns of child adjustment, parenting stress, household functioning, and overall wellbeing. Early findings reflect common periods of stress and adjustment during initial stabilization, while also pointing to the role of Souls Harbour's supportive housing model in fostering family reconnection, more consistent routines, and increased community engagement. By grounding assessment data within everyday practice, this presentation contributes to sociological discussions of housing and home, illustrating how "home" can function not only as shelter but as an enabling environment for recovery, parenting capacity, and relational wellbeing in rural settings.

(OMN2a) Reflections on Social Support, Housing, and the Role of Nonprofit Organizations

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Housing Research Cluster
This session features presentations relating to research on housing and non-profit organizations providing social support.

Session Chair: Negin Harandi, University of Ottawa

OMN2a-1 - Professionalization and Instability: How a Grassroots Nonprofit Navigates Governance in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

Taylor Schepella, Independent

Nonprofits routinely balance contradictory pressures arising from ideological commitments, resource constraints, and the need to legitimize themselves among various stakeholders. Previous research has examined these factors at the industry and national levels, but there is less scholarship examining them at the scale of individual organizations. This is important because understanding how grant availability, organizational mission, and regulations on nonprofit activity influence organizations' decisions has potential to expand and uncover limitations in existing theories of nonprofit behaviour. To address this gap in nonprofit and organizational research, this case study of a community nonprofit focused on food security in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside asks the following question: How do internal organizational conditions and external regulatory and economic factors shape the development of a community advisory panel? To answer this question, I utilize a combination of interviews with staff and board and participant observation as a volunteer at the organization. While data collection is still ongoing, existing literature and tentative findings suggest several interesting

conclusions. Firstly, while the organization's origins as a grassroots project and its internal philosophy of non-paternalism created strong motivations to integrate community members into its decision making processes, severe staffing constraints made it difficult to plan and execute the consultation phase of the project. This was reflective of a wider pattern where financial shocks to the organization severely affected long-term planning among staff. Findings indicate an evolving relationship between organizational mission and resource constraints that is largely unexamined in existing scholarship. Organizational ideology affects behaviour, but is influenced by resources.

OMN2a-2 - Towards a More Care-Filled Housing System: Reflections from the Lived Experiences of Young Single Mothers

Presenting Authors - Kahlea Wells and Jacqueline Kennelly, Carleton University

Non-presenting Author - Eileen Bedard, University of Ottawa

This paper relies on preliminary data analysis of first- and second-round qualitative interviews with 9 young single mothers who have previous experiences of homelessness and are now living in varying affordable housing options in Ottawa. These young single mothers are part of a larger longitudinal study in Ottawa with 55 formerly homeless youth (ages 18-30) on their transition out of homelessness and their ensuing social, economic and health outcomes. Relying on feminist geographies of care, this paper will explore how we can create more care-full housing systems that suit the needs of young single mothers and their children in light of the lived experiences of the project participants. Initial findings show that young single mothers face unique challenges in navigating the overlapping social systems of affordable housing, income support and the Canada Child Benefit. These challenges are heightened by neoliberal austerity pressures and the affordability crisis we are experiencing in the following ways: social benefits are not matching the rate of inflation while already failing to meet baseline needs, the Canada Child Benefit decreases as children age at rates that are incommensurate with the cost of raising growing children, and the confusion surrounding the financial matrix of these programs results in fear-based dependency. Care-full solutions are needed to provide holistic support to young single mothers while advancing a more care-filled housing system in Canada.

OMN2a-3 - "Under the Radar": Lives of Ontarian non-profit housing workers

Edith Wilson Sousa, University of Guelph

In the mid-late 90s, the Federal government devolved responsibility for social housing to the Provinces, who then further devolved many responsibilities to municipal governments (Suttor 2016). Consequently, the job of providing affordable and supportive housing has increasingly fallen to those who work or volunteer in the non-profit sector. As homelessness continues to skyrocket (20% in two years, according to Statistics Canada (2025)), and housing continues to be unaffordable for many Canadians, the non-profit sector's work is more important than ever. This paper presents the preliminary findings from the author's doctoral work. Twenty-five life history interviews were conducted with volunteers, workers, and advocates in the non-profit housing sector in Ontario, ranging in age from 22 to 77. The research questions were: 1) What are the career paths of non-profit housing workers in Ontario? How do Ontarian housing advocates recount their moral careers (Goffman 1963)? For example, how do they recount their childhood housing experiences, their first encounters with activism, the feelings that led them to get involved, and the motivations behind their

current commitment? There is little research, either in Canada or internationally, about the lives of the people who do this work. The use of life history methods in social movement literature tends to be concentrated on extremism of various kinds (mainly far-right extremism). Preliminary findings indicate that most interviewees came to work or volunteer in non-profit housing efforts through deeply held moral or political convictions that have been developed throughout their lives, and not through a single moment of realization. Particularly interesting is the role of faith groups in the sector, even among participants who themselves did not belong to a faith community. This research illuminates a taken-for-granted group whose impact on Canadian life is becoming more and more important.

OMN2a-4 - Moral Injury and the Provision of Nonmarket Housing

Eryn Leigh, Athabasca University

It is becoming more mainstream to declare that there is a housing crisis in Canada. While many dispute the origins of the crisis, many agree that increasing the provision of nonmarket housing is crucial (Tranjan 2023; Whitman 2024). These calls for a more robust nonmarket housing sector often overlook the workers sustaining nonmarket housing systems, who navigate everyday tensions between bureaucratic accountability and tenants' fundamental right to housing. Drawing on interviews and focus groups of housing workers in Alberta and Southwestern Ontario, this presentation argues that efforts to enhance nonmarket housing must also reckon with the moral burden placed on those administering it. We suggest that as the housing crisis intensifies, so too does the work of housing workers and that these workers are also labouring under conditions that impact their own housing. We use the concept of "moral injury" to describe the harm experienced by workers when the imperatives of surveillance and governance conflict with their commitment to care and to the human right to housing, and we argue that moral repair in this case would include moving to a housing system that centres housing justice.

(IND) Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

(IND5a) Solidarities, Co-Resistance and Complicities: From Turtle Island to Palestine and Across Territories I

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

How do anti-colonial solidarities and co-resistance create and sustain hope? What role do complicities play in disrupting or delaying anti-/decolonial futures? From Turtle Island to Palestine, and across Territories, Peoples and Movements, people and our More-than-Human relations are creatively and steadfastly rising up against genocides and a myriad of colonial and imperial violence. Within and across local/national/global revolutions, liberation struggles, prisoner justice actions, encampments, cross-border and cross-movement solidarities, we are witnessing and experiencing profound community-building, and honouring our Ancestors and the generations yet to come. At the same time, complicities undermine and fragment our movements and communities - threatening the very solidarities we have worked so hard to cultivate. This session invites students as well as emerging and established scholars to share your research, truth and wisdom, co-create conversations, and

enact solidarities. From the streets to the borderlands to our universities, we will explore the possibilities for, and obstacles to, liberation that arise when we plan and take action.

Session Organizers: Azar Masoumi, Carleton University; Aidan Blockley, University of Alberta; Jess Notwell, King's University College at Western

Session Chair: Aidan Blockley, University of Alberta

IND5a-1 - Settler Colonialism in Kashmir & Palestine: A Comparative Analysis

Sachi Sharma, CSU Chico Alumnus

Settler colonialism is an inherently genocidal and imperial process that aims to displace indigenous populations for the sake of capital accumulation. Western scholarship has focused on the effects of settler colonialism in specific regions. However, contemporary literature and mainstream dialogue have yet to thoroughly explore how the phenomenon is part of a much larger and globalized system. This paper seeks to investigate the occupied territories of Kashmir and Palestine as being interconnected sites within the broader imperial project rather than isolated cases. It utilizes contemporary interpretations of Globalization and Marxism to develop a sociological framing that explores 1) ethnic cleansing and displacement of indigenous populations 2) strategies developed to normalize and sustain settler colonialism and 3) the resistance and responses against the settler violence. The research draws upon historical contexts, international law, and the reflections of profound theorists such as Frantz Fanon and Mohammed El Kurd to humanize the oppressed and their revolutionary actions. This comparative lens strives to build bridges of transnational solidarity and pushes for those in Turtle Island and beyond to join in building the widespread movement for collective liberation.

IND5a-2 - Building solidarity and movements through narratives of resistance and linkages between experiences of oppression

Hoda Gharib, University of Toronto

In November 2025, Sarah Hurwitz made comments at the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America that the videos of the “carnage in Gaza” seen by young Jews on social media and the lessons about victimhood and power drawn from holocaust education have become a “wall” that stands between young Jews seeing Israel in favourable light. Journalists, activists, and legal professionals, among others, criticized Hurwitz for lamenting how effectively the holocaust education message of “never again” was being applied to the genocide in Gaza, to the detriment of Israel. This study sheds light on how narratives about genocide and resistance facilitate solidarity- and movement-building by exploring the following questions: In what ways does witnessing or engaging with narratives around 1) oppressions and 2) resistances produce solidarity between communities, empowerment, and mobilisation? Secondary analysis of life history interviews, conducted as part of a study investigating the factors that mobilise, maintain, and demobilise individuals from engaging in Palestinian-solidarity and Indigenous activism, was conducted. The interviews involved 16 organisers who engaged in activism in one or both of these contexts. Preliminary findings indicate that 1) making connections and parallels between how oppressed groups were treated and colonised, 2) understanding that systems that are oppressing different communities are the same, and 3) valuing moral and behavioural consistency in how we react to

oppression facilitate feelings or actions of solidarity. Stories of resistance (whether past or present, successful or not, or stemmed from one's own or another community) served as influential sources of inspiration, empowerment, and hope that change is possible or that oppressors can be beaten or weakened. This study concludes that creating linkages between experiences of oppression and communicating stories of resistance, particularly successful ones, play key roles in solidarity- and movement-building.

IND5a-3 - "Decolonization is a Metaphor": A Critical Discourse Analysis of Social Work Commitment to Decolonization

Aeshah Anani, University of Toronto

This paper examines the paradox of decolonization's ascendance in academic discourse. Drawing on critical discourse analysis, I argue that "decolonization" is used performatively by social work academia. Through an analysis of mission and diversity statements, curriculum, and university's responses following October 7, 2023, this work reveals how decolonial language functions as a mechanism of institutional capture. I investigate how institutional discourse constructs a depoliticized version of decolonization - limited to curriculum diversification, land acknowledgment, and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) frameworks - while rendering material demands for land back, divestment, and structural transformation as radical or inappropriate for academic spaces. I further argue that when decolonization becomes a buzzword rather than a commitment, it serves not to dismantle colonial structures but to insulate them, offering the appearance of transformation while ensuring that true activist remains unspeakable and unsupportable. This paper concludes by considering what scholar activism might look like when we refuse the terms institutions offer us and what solidarities become possible when we recognize the mechanisms designed to divide rigorous scholarship from meaningful action. This paper engages with decoloniality and decolonization theories and uses Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and Columbia University School of Social Work as case studies.

IND5a-4 - From Inclusion to Authority: EDI, Indigenous Resurgence, and Program Retrenchment in Canadian Universities

Milan Kang, Independent researcher

Universities Canada reports that 89% of universities reference equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in strategic plans (up from 77% in 2019), yet colonial hierarchies persist. In academia, divisions over reconciliation turn on whether change means inclusion within governance or recognition of Indigenous jurisdiction. This paper examines how EDI policy mediates that divide by defining institutional 'repair' through plans, metrics, reporting, and consultation, and by setting limits on what counts as change. This paper treats EDI policy as an ethnographic site where repair is articulated through strategic planning, consultation protocols, and reporting mechanisms. Drawing on land-centred resurgence (Taiaiake Alfred; Pamela Palmater) alongside Glen Sean Coulthard, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang, the analysis examines how claims for land return, jurisdiction, and community governance are modified, reframed, or omitted when incorporated into EDI frameworks. The argument is read alongside program interruptions that register priorities shaped by fiscal and enrolment governance: the 2021 termination of Indigenous Studies at Laurentian University during insolvency proceedings; the 2024-2025 pause in admissions at York University; and the 2025-2026

suspension of Indigenous programs at Algonquin College alongside new certificate development. The stated rationales cite financial sustainability, enrolment trends, and policy shifts, suggesting that reconciliation becomes conditional under budget pressure and market logics. Document analysis compares EDI strategies at multiple Canadian universities, including one in Mi'kma'ki, alongside Research Ethics Board guidance on TCPS2 Chapter 9 and institutional Truth and Reconciliation statements and events. Three policy patterns are traced: categorizing Indigenous peoples as equity groups rather than rights-bearing Nations; substituting consultation for shared decision-making; and prioritizing training and headcounts over authority, resources, and community control of research agendas and data stewardship. In the Halifax theme "Harbours of Hope," the paper argues that renewal requires re-presencing Indigenous authority in land-connected research governance and academic decision-making, not only in strategic documents.

(IND7) Utilizing Treaty Philosophies to Support Indigenous Research in Academia

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

This panel explores approaches to combat division in Indigenous-Settler relationships. Based in the context of Treaty Six and Nêhiyawak (Plains Cree) worldviews, we use Treaty as an ethical framework for coexistence, accountability and care. We emphasize that Treaty is not just a historical document but a living relationship that requires attention, respect, and active participation. This panel will cover topics of reconciliation, decolonization, and allyship, with a focus on how to approach challenging conversations with those who have yet to understand and those who think they understand. We explore how settlers can engage in these conversations without becoming defensive or defaulting to white saviourism, instead learning to sit with discomfort and approach conversations with humility. This is vital for meaningful relationship-building in Indigenous Ways of Knowing because it requires unlearning deeply rooted colonial assumptions. Most importantly, we examine the importance of just listening and critically discuss what it means to be an ally to Indigenous Research and Science, and whether allyship is enough. This panel critically examines the role of the ally in academia and beyond, utilizing Treaty and relational research with and for Indigenous Peoples. We discuss what it means to move from allyship to accompliceship when fighting alongside Indigenous Peoples. By centering Indigenous voices and leadership, we acknowledge our whiteness and colonial comfort zones, and examine the role of non-white, non-Indigenous allies as we prioritize teachings of Treaty and collaboration. Further, we look at how non-Indigenous people can act with Indigenous communities and leaders rather than for them. This includes learning to stand beside or behind Indigenous Peoples instead of taking center stage, and prioritizing the traditional teachings and foundations of Treaty that Settler Canada has forgotten or blatantly ignored.

Session Organizers: Paulina Johnson, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Diana Moreiras Reynaga, University of Alberta

IND7-1 - Unsettling the Gender Binary: The Pan-Indigenization of Decolonial Queer

George Sartison, University of Alberta

The construction and performance of gender has been a trending topic across sociologically-informed disciplines for decades. A central field within this scholarship is that of Queer Theory, a subdiscipline

aimed at addressing gender, sex, and sexuality in the increasingly critical terms that sociology writ large is often incapable of facilitating. Concurrent with this critical exploration into gender over the past several decades is a push to *decolonize the academy.* This mantra has seen an influx of scholarship take focus on decolonization, albeit often ill-defined. Queer Theory is no exception to this reality. However, despite positive intent, much of the literature on decolonizing the constructions and performances of gender fails to address decolonization in a meaningful way, inadvertently upholding tenets of the settler colonial agenda. Although Indigenous scholars are actively contributing to this initiative, settler scholars are amongst those most regarded. This has led to a literature that speaks *for* 2SLGBTQIA+ Indigenous Peoples instead of allowing them the space to explore gender construction and performance on their own terms. As a result, Indigenous epistemologies and praxes of gender have been removed from their contexts, distilled within the western academy, and presented as cross-cultural universals. Not only does this process risk comparing Indigenous Knowledge Systems to western academic thought in a manner that historicizes the former and immortalizes the latter, but it risks pan-Indigenizing the entirety of Indigenous gender constructions and performances to fit adjacent to the settler-imposed gender binary, removing crucial and varied cultural specifics. This panel will explore the ways that settler scholars operating within the contemporary decolonial arena of gender scholarship can avoid speaking on behalf of Indigenous Peoples and actively avoid pan-Indigenizing gender performance so that it no longer must fit within existing western academic frameworks.

IND7-2 - On Protocols and Ethics: Approaching Quantitative Research on the Terms of Community

Senyuan Chen, University of Alberta

The term “research” itself has obtained a negative connotation with Indigenous communities. This perception of research does not come arbitrarily, Indigenous peoples and their communities have become distrusting of Western research due to the misrepresentation and harm that researchers have produced through the conduction, extraction, and implementation of their research findings. Our current crisis is the result of the indifferent, extractive nature of Western academic research, especially with quantitative methods. Often, research ignores the cultural contexts of protocols, only considering the ethics of Research Ethics Boards without considering the needs, concerns, and agreements made with Indigenous communities. Additionally, settler researchers often prioritize their findings over those communities they are supposed to collaborate with. In short, research on Indigenous communities is *on them*, not *with them*. Quantitative methods can take the “people” out of the numbers, leading to results that are often misrepresentative of the Indigenous communities they sample. Access to communities is not an entitled right but an earned privilege that requires good relations through genuine commitment and strong communication. To conduct research within Indigenous communities requires a deeper understanding of the cultural contexts, such as the protocols of the community. While different communities possess different cultural values and perspectives, this discussion places itself within the context of Nêhyiawak (Plains Cree) worldviews in central Alberta. The following discussion will propose an adapted system for quantitative methods, specifically surveys, through an in-depth literature review of Indigenous research methods and quantitative methods on Indigenous peoples alike. Understanding where the gaps fall and what is needed of both standpoints, will ensure better relations and results for both Indigenous peoples and western researchers alike. Through decolonizing our methods, it is the aim to put the people back into the numbers and ensure that both ethics *and* protocols are upheld.

IND7-3 - Hard Conversations Beyond the Thanksgiving Dinner Table

Sam Dancey, University of Alberta

What do you do when people you love have values that directly conflict with your own? This presentation uses lived experience to discuss how to address topics like settler colonialism, structural racism, and environmentalism with relatives of opposing viewpoints. It specifically focuses on confronting stereotypes, complicity, implicit bias, and the construction of whiteness' ties to gender. Using personal experience raising topics like access to clean drinking water in Indigenous communities to family members with opposing viewpoints, this presentation will provide an example of how such topics can be approached in a manner that moves discussion away from conflict and towards shared understanding. This discussion is set in the context of rural central and southern Alberta with family members of European settler ancestry who are closely tied to the oil and gas industry. Approaching these conversations in a productive way is not easy, and is a skill that needs to be practiced. However, change comes from embracing friction and discomfort, and moving through it rather than running from it. The intent focusing on anecdotal experiences is to provide an in-depth and personal understanding of how change is possible on an interpersonal level. By speaking with honesty and humility, and focusing on commonalities, shared understandings can be reached. Finally, this presentation will apply lessons learned to a broader sociopolitical context to consider the role of White settlers in advocating for Indigenous Peoples without speaking *for* them, especially when no one is watching.

IND7-4 - Rooted in Community: Grounding research in wâhkôtowin and TEK

Darian McCullough, University of Alberta

The settler state of Canada has attempted to throw many parts of Indigenous culture and Knowledge away, ignoring the deep roots that tie it to this land and the importance of their depth of knowledge. Now, as we are experiencing an ongoing climate crisis, we lack a vital perspective. Indigenous Peoples are stewards of ecological preservation and carry vast knowledge and care for the lands around us, yet their Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is pushed to the wayside, despite being an incredible wealth of information for climate change research. However, we cannot simply go into communities flippantly and take what we think we want as researchers. We must ask hard questions about our own hubris as academics and about how we can be collaborators alongside communities, not extractionists. We must put the community's needs before our career aspirations, because what does it matter if you gain critical acclaim for your work if you harm a community that gave you a degree of their trust, time and resources? For example, we are taught to work through the lens of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), yet this still remains a colonial framework for conducting research. While not a negative practice, it is not the only honour code we should follow when conducting research and presenting ourselves within communities. By utilizing the concept of wâhkôtowin, kinship, through the example of TEK, this presentation showcases how community-based research should be conducted and how the typical research structure leads us astray when it comes to honouring knowledge and creating connections with those we work alongside.

(IND8) "As we have always done": Indigenous Responses to Climate Change

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

For Indigenous communities, the land speaks to them to inform changes, we just have to "listen, hear, and feel" (Elder Gudia Mary Jane Johnson, July 2025). Yet, within western academic discourse, Indigenous Knowledges and science are still sidelined against the dominating hierarchy of data, evidence, and research. In this panel, we focus on Indigenous voices within climate change focusing specifically on water quality in Indigenous communities in Alberta and the Yukon Territory. While climate change has been debated and challenged, the lived experiences of Indigenous communities tell the ongoing narrative of floods, droughts, wildfires, and the like, experienced firsthand. For many Indigenous communities, prophecies, stories of what is to come, and ways of survival are found throughout the cultures, and their voices are needed to help address climate change and the impacts that will affect us all. While Canadian society and Western Science have often overlooked the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, we prioritize Nehiyawak and Southern Tutchone Knowledges and wisdom as we bridge the gap between what is happening on the land and within academic discourse. From oral narratives and traditional stories to photo voice interviews from the 2025 field season, we share the importance of working together as we emphasize the methodologies and best practices of how to braid Indigenous and Western Sciences together. Moreover, we address the complexities of whiteness, colonization, and dispossession that are the underlying factors of the complexities that exist in a divided world. To learn about the divisions, we have to confront the biases that exist all around us, and in this all-Indigenous panel, we share what we have learned from Indigenous communities " as [they] have always done" (Elder Elmer Rattlesnake, 2025) from undergraduate and graduate students as well as early career researchers.

Session Organizer and Chair: Paulina Johnson, University of Alberta

IND8-1 - Bearing Witness to Climate Change Through Our Oldest Relative Water

Natahnee Winder, Simon Fraser University

Indigenous Peoples are the earliest to witness the unfolding realities of climate change. Their voices are frequently marginalized and not taken seriously to hasten societal and policy changes. Photovoice method has emerged as a promising research approach for Indigenous Peoples and communities to document, interpret, and respond to their lived experiences of climate change and push for others to take relational accountability for sustainability. For many Indigenous Peoples, Water is understood as an other-than-human relative and is given the utmost level of respect as a life force. Water is life is the highest respective traditional natural law. In contrast, dominant western perspectives conceptualize water as a commodity or a resource—a tradeable asset—contributing to increasing social inequalities, environmental harms, unsustainable extractions, and the ongoing erosion of interconnected ecosystems. Since time immemorial, Indigenous Knowledges of Water as a living relative precede contemporary legal movements that seek to grant rivers and lakes legal personhood. As climate change has intensified, Indigenous Peoples have continued to advocate "as [they] have always done" (Elder Elmer Rattlesnake, 2025), for relational responsibilities that call humans to act on behalf of Water and protect Water as kin. Through the photovoice method, Indigenous communities in Alberta and the Yukon territory engaged with academic and student researchers to articulate their relationships with Water and examine questions: a) how climate change is

understood, b) how climate change is experienced, c) why exchanging Nehiyawak and Southern Tutchone knowledges and wisdoms about Land and Water is essential for transformative change, and d) how Indigenous-led learning about climate change can be facilitated in a meaningful way. In this presentation, I reflect on what it means to bear witness through photographic storytelling and photographs taken by Indigenous community members and researchers that highlight the impacts of climate change on Water and Indigenous Knowledges.

IND8-2 - Mîhskocîyâyâwin (Changes in Life Spirit): Understanding Nehiyawak Views of Climate Change in Alberta

Eva Thompson, University of Alberta

The Indigenous understanding of climate change often clashes with the Western view of what is “scientifically” happening. Yet, for the Nehiyawak, the Plains Cree, the understanding of climate change is reflected in the language of the people through the impacts on the life spirit of what is being studied. The life spirit or the life cycle of water to the medicines plays a significant role in how Indigenous Peoples view what is happening in the lands and places that they know intimately and relationally to. In this presentation, I share the field work of the communities we have been working with through their own voices to share their experiences on the land firsthand and what their views tell us to consider as scientists. From how the life spirit of glacier water that is no longer there changes to the life spirit of fire and the like, this knowledge shows how Indigenous Knowledge is not only vital to understanding climate change but also deeply impactful for the betterment of society. That importantly, Indigenous Knowledge has been at the forefront of climate change analysis and study, yet, we just have not been able to understand or see it the way that Indigenous people do - and this is Western Academia's fallacy to see Indigenous Ways of Knowing as Indigenous Science.

IND8-3 - Sôhkisiwin êkwa Pakosêyimowin: Lessons of Strength and Hope in a Changing World

Hannah Louis, University of Alberta

As many Elders in Indigenous communities say, trying to braid Indigenous Knowledge and Western science is like “mixing oil with water”. For one, they are built upon different philosophical paradigms. Yet there is an increasing push within Academia to bridge the gap between them, especially within the realm of climate science. Issues arise when researchersblindly accept buzzwords and keywords: Two-Eyed Seeing, knowledge coproduction, and braiding knowledge all fail to acknowledge the power structures within Academia that are built upon whiteness and colonization. So, what can be done to allow for Nehiyawak Knowledge and Science to change the way we approach climate change within Academia? I argue that the possibility for true braiding only exists when we rebuild the research approach by starting with a different narrative and axiological stance, namely one with central values like Sôhkisiwin and Pakosêyimowin (*Strength* and *Hope*). How can Sôhkisiwin and Pakosêyimowin change the way we approach and learn about climate change? I address this question in the following presentation while also sharing insights as an interdisciplinary PhD student at the University of Alberta.

(IND9) Public Attitudes toward Indigenous Peoples and Reconciliation in Canada

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

Nearly ten years after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its 94 Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), Canadian society continues to confront the enduring legacies of colonialism and systemic inequality affecting Indigenous peoples. According to the 2021 Census (Statistics Canada, 2023), more than 1.8 million people, representing 5.0% of Canada's total population, identify as Indigenous, including First Nations (58%), Métis (40%), and Inuit (2%). Despite this demographic presence, Indigenous communities continue to face disproportionate barriers in access to education, health care, housing, and economic opportunities. While governments and institutions such as educational, health, legal, and cultural organizations have expressed commitments to reconciliation, public attitudes remain divided. Recent public opinion research indicates that many Canadians view reconciliation as a national priority, yet a substantial proportion feel that meaningful progress is limited and report little knowledge of the TRC's Calls to Action (Angus Reid Institute, 2023). This session invited papers based on empirical studies examining public attitudes toward Indigenous peoples and reconciliation.

Session Organizer and Chair: Henry P.H. Chow, University of Regina

IND9-1 - Always Here: Documenting the Invisible History of Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland & Labrador

Presenting Author - Jared T. Hogan, Memorial University

Non-presenting Authors - Rochelle Côté, Memorial University; Sheila O'Neill, Horizon Naval Engineering & Qalipu First Nation

As one of the first points of colonization in the Americas and the longest-lasting British colony until joining Canada in 1949, Newfoundland and Labrador has a unique political history, shaping a contentious relationship with Indigenous Peoples. Many non-Indigenous residents, especially on the Avalon Peninsula, believe no Indigenous Peoples remain—a myth rooted in Terra nullius ('nobody's land') and used to justify dispossession. However, Indigenous oral histories and archaeological evidence challenge this narrative. This presentation will share preliminary work of the *Always Here: Documenting the Invisible History of Indigenous Peoples in Newfoundland & Labrador* project, a part of the SSHRC-NCTR WISH grant initiative, which analyzed media sources from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century, revealing shifts in settler-colonial perceptions of Indigenous Peoples. Using Memorial University's Digital Archives Initiative and Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies, researchers and students compiled a database of provincial media sources, including newspapers and executive council reports. Analysis shows a transition from the early publication of racist, colonial narratives that promote the erasure of Indigenous Peoples and romanticization of the Beothuk as a 'lost civilization' in the 1800's, to growing support for Indigenous communities and self-governance in the twenty-first century. These shifts confirm that Indigenous Peoples have always been in the province, debunk Terra nullius, and show increasing awareness and recognition of the role that Indigenous Peoples play in the province—a sign of progress towards reconciliation.

IND9-2 - Aligning TRC-driven codes of conduct with professional practice: a case study of Alberta teachers

Presenting Author - Gillian Robinson, University of Alberta

Non-presenting Author - Rebecca Sockbeson, University of Alberta

In 2018, in an effort to respond to the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Alberta Education revised its teaching standards to include foundational knowledge of First Nations, Metis and Inuit Peoples. Teaching Quality Standard 5 (TQS 5) includes ensuring that all teachers are able to understand and teach the repercussions of colonial violence and embed curriculum with knowledge about Indigenous Peoples, including their diversity and strengths. Although the standard is intended to improve the schooling experiences of Indigenous children, the ways in which teachers are determined to have met the standard are unknown. This research seeks to understand the specifics of evaluation for TQS 5 in order to illustrate the day-to-day reality of attempts at reconciliation education in settler colonial contexts. The research team aligns itself with critical Indigenous theorists (St. Denis, 2002; Hampton, 2007), who underline that it is generally racist experiences that cause Indigenous youth to leave school. Therefore, it is imperative that a greater understanding of the qualification processes for TQS 5 be analyzed and communicated, in the hope of the betterment of Indigenous communities. After scanning professional associations including professional agrologists, engineering, law enforcement, and nursing, we understand that several sectors require training or mandatory coursework in Indigenous foundational knowledge, cultural competency, and/or bias intervention. However, required demonstration of competencies in this area is often lacking compared to other areas in these professions' codes of conducts. Despite the addition of considerations for Indigenous Peoples in many professional standards, clear evaluatory indicators are often absent for regulators to enforce. The case study will serve as a model for other professions when considering how to implement the Calls to Action, serving as a roadmap towards the establishment of clear standards and indicators that are developed in partnership with Indigenous communities.

IND9-3 - A Critical Analysis of Research on Attitudes toward Indigenous Peoples and Reconciliation Efforts in Canada

Steven Gao, University of Regina

Indigenous peoples represent approximately 5% of the Canadian population, encompassing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, with over 1.8 million individuals identifying as Indigenous in the 2021 Census (Statistics Canada, 2022). Despite this growing population, Indigenous communities continue to face systemic challenges, including socio-economic disparities, limited access to healthcare and education, over-representation in the criminal justice system, and the enduring impacts of residential schools and colonial policies (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Efforts toward reconciliation, aimed at addressing these historical injustices and fostering equitable relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, remain ongoing and multifaceted, including government policies, community-based initiatives, and educational programs designed to promote understanding, respect, and Indigenous self-determination (Alcantara et al., 2025; Environics Institute for Survey Research, 2021). This paper provides a critical synthesis of existing research and presents findings from a survey of university students in a Canadian Prairie

province regarding their attitudes toward Indigenous peoples, using multinomial logistic regression to identify the key factors that shape these perceptions.

(IND10a) Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and Indigenous Well-Being in Canada I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

Indigenous peoples in Canada—First Nations, Métis, and Inuit—continue to experience profound inequities in physical and mental well-being, as well as in key social determinants such as income and housing. Despite decades of research and policy, these inequities persist, reflecting the enduring and ongoing effects of colonialism on Indigenous life and well-being. This session aims to center settler colonialism as a fundamental determinant of Indigenous life chances and well-being, while also foregrounding Indigenous resurgence, epistemologies, practices, and visions of well-being that resist colonial structures. As part of this session, we feature papers that examine the ways in which and the mechanisms through which—such as land dispossession, structural racism, policing, and environmental degradation—settler colonialism has shaped and continues to shape the life chances and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada. By bringing together scholars, community researchers, and practitioners, this session aims to foster dialogue on settler colonialism and Indigenous well-being, opening new theoretical, methodological, and political pathways toward Indigenous well-being equity.

Session Organizer: Mohsen Monji, Concordia University

Session Chair: Azar Masoumi, Carleton University

IND10a-1 - The Treaty Cycle: Barriers and Opportunities Towards Sahtúot'ine Fisheries Governance

Kahlea Wells, Carleton University

Relying on learnings from a five-year project between the Déljnę Renewable Resources Council, community leaders and researchers from Carleton University, this paper outlines the colonial underpinnings of the treaty process and current resistant practices employed by Sahtúot'ine through a case study of fisheries governance. The Sahtúot'ine have a unique treaty history with the Crown as they have held a numbered treaty, a comprehensive land claim and a self-government agreement. The treaty system has on one hand led to greater self-determination for Sahtúot'ine while equally creating structural barriers to a key area of Sahtúot'ine self-governance: fisheries governance. The Sahtúot'ine live on and in relation to Sahtú (Great Bear Lake) in the Northwest Territories. A sequence of colonial interventions (arrival of the Hudson Bay Company, day school, mining, treaties, wage economy) have created a tension in this relationship. Grounded in Dene Ts'įlį (Sahtúot'ine way of life), this paper will trace the treaty history of the Sahtúot'ine, exposing the barriers to fisheries governance such as land dispossession, environmental degradation, and cultural dispossession. This presentation will then showcase the ways in which Sahtúot'ine are resisting colonial dispossession of their fisheries as well as provide an example outside of the treaty framework that facilitates Sahtúot'ine fishing practices for food security, cultural resurgence and economic development.

IND10a-2 - More Than Neglect: Necropolitics and the Disposability of Indigenous Women and Girls

Katerina Richard, University of Toronto

The ongoing violence against Indigenous peoples in Canada, especially women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, is not a new phenomenon, but is deeply rooted in settler colonial governance. Despite decades of inquiries, advocacy, and public awareness, disappearances and deaths continue at alarming rates, with limited accountability and minimal state action. This paper argues that such violence operates through a necropolitical logic (Mbembe 2003), whereby the state determines whose lives are protected and whose are rendered disposable. Indigenous women and girls are systematically abandoned through both institutional violence and strategic inaction, positioning them as hyper-visible within systems of surveillance while remaining largely invisible as victims. Using necropolitics and biopower as a theoretical lens, this paper situates Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit people (MMIWG2S+) within broader systems of policing, incarceration, child welfare, and colonial law. These institutions are examined as sites of managed neglect that produce ongoing vulnerability while deflecting responsibility away from the state. Through engagement with existing scholarship and critical analysis of Canada's response to the National Inquiry into MMIWG, this paper shows how reconciliation rhetoric often coexists with the continuation of colonial power. Rather than reflecting institutional failure, this analysis suggests that these conditions reveal a colonial system operating as intended. By framing MMIWG2S+ as a product of necropolitical governance, this paper contributes to critical conversations about gendered state violence and Indigenous disposability, and calls for deeper attention to the structural conditions that continue to deny Indigenous women and girls safety, dignity, and justice.

IND10a-3 - Centering Indigenous Ways of Knowing: A Peer-Mentorship Model for Youth Diabetes Well-Being

Presenting Authors - Sahar Fazeli, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI-MUHC); Jonathan Linton, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

Non-presenting Authors - Wally Rabbitskin, Paul Linton, Catherine Godin, Lucy Trapper, and Helen Porada, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay; Romina Pace, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI-MUHC)

Diabetes rates are increasing among Canadian youth, with particularly rapid growth in type 2 diabetes (T2D) among high-risk populations, including Indigenous peoples. Ongoing impacts of colonization have intensified health inequities, contributing to intergenerational trauma and higher exposure to adverse childhood experiences associated with obesity, mental health challenges, and T2D. Indigenous youth living with diabetes often experience elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and diabetes distress (DD), which can negatively affect diabetes self-management and overall health outcomes as a result. Rooted in community leadership and Indigenous ways of knowing, this study aims to co-design, implement, and evaluate a culturally grounded peer-mentorship program for Indigenous youth and young adults living with diabetes. The program seeks to reduce DD, strengthen psychosocial well-being, and enhance diabetes self-management. It integrates wellness activities, healthy lifestyle education, and land-based practices to support holistic and sustainable health outcomes. Conducted in partnership with young adults with diabetes from Eeyou Istchee and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB), this study employs a mixed-methods evaluation. Visual qualitative methods, including Photovoice, will capture participants' lived experiences alongside quantitative measures such as DD scales, global distress, resilience, clinical indicators of diabetes management, and program participation metrics. Anticipated outcomes include improved psychosocial well-being and diabetes-related indicators (e.g., reduced diabetes-

related distress and improved self-management behaviors and lifestyle practices) for Indigenous youth and young adults due to participation in the peer-mentorship program. By sharing their lived diabetes experiences, participants will generate community-informed knowledge to refine the program and inform future peer-led initiatives for Indigenous and other equity-seeking populations. By centering peer-developed activities and shared support systems, the project addresses current diabetes-related challenges while offering transferable insights for other communities facing comparable health inequities.

IND10a-4 - Beyond Western Norms: Understanding Emerging Adulthood Among Indigenous Populations Across the Americas

Presenting Author - Haley Kamikawa, Brigham Young University

Non-presenting Author - Spencer James, Brigham Young University

Understanding how young people transition into adulthood is critical for both policy and scholarship, yet much of what we know is drawn from WEIRD, majority populations and may not reflect the realities of indigenous communities. Indigenous young adults often face socioeconomic disparities and enduring inequalities rooted in colonialism, which shape opportunities for education, employment, and family formation. Using data from IPUMS International, this presentation examines the extent to which 18-29 year olds from indigenous groups across Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru, the United States, and Uruguay meet traditional and established markers for adulthood, including college completion, employment, marriage, and fertility. Results are discussed in light of whether markers for adulthood are culturally sensitive to socioeconomic experiences across indigenous communities. By situating emerging adulthood—a developmental stage characterized by fluid life decisions and delayed attainment of traditional adult roles—within the lived experiences of indigenous populations, we highlight how socioeconomic and colonial contexts influence life-course transitions. Further, we underline the need for more inclusive, culturally grounded approaches to understanding processes around adulthood across contexts.

(IND10b) Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Resurgence, and Indigenous Well-Being in Canada II

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Indigenous-Settler Relations and Decolonization Research Cluster

Indigenous peoples in Canada—First Nations, Métis, and Inuit—continue to experience profound inequities in physical and mental well-being, as well as in key social determinants such as income and housing. Despite decades of research and policy, these inequities persist, reflecting the enduring and ongoing effects of colonialism on Indigenous life and well-being. This session aims to center settler colonialism as a fundamental determinant of Indigenous life chances and well-being, while also foregrounding Indigenous resurgence, epistemologies, practices, and visions of well-being that resist colonial structures. As part of this session, we feature papers that examine the ways in which and the mechanisms through which—such as land dispossession, structural racism, policing, and environmental degradation—settler colonialism has shaped and continues to shape the life chances and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada. By bringing together scholars, community researchers, and practitioners, this session aims to foster dialogue on settler colonialism and Indigenous well-being, opening new theoretical, methodological, and political pathways toward Indigenous well-being equity.

Session Organizer: Mohsen Monji, Concordia University

Session Chair: Azar Masoumi, Carleton University

IND10b-1 - Finding the trickster: Recognizing lateral violence within urban Indigenous workplace relations

Jill Rogers, McMaster University

Lateral violence is an ongoing concern within Indigenous relations in Canada, yet it remains insufficiently examined in academic research. It is often expressed through nuanced forms of emotional, mental, spiritual, and interpersonal harms, complicating efforts to identify and respond to. Contemporary national events, including the 2023 removal of the first female National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, have drawn public attention to lateral violence and revealed complex tensions surrounding leadership, gender, and accountability within Indigenous governance. These dynamics mirror experiences at the community and organizational levels and point to a significant gap in scholarly understandings of how Indigenous peoples experience and navigate lateral violence in workplace settings. This research examines the experiences of lateral violence of Indigenous people who have worked within Indigenous-led organizations serving urban Indigenous communities in urban Ontario using a mixed-methods approach grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing. The study is guided by three research questions: (1) What forms of lateral violence are experienced by Indigenous people in the workplace? (2) How do colonial systemic structures shape these experiences? And (3) What strategies do Indigenous people use to reduce or resist lateral violence? The research is theoretically informed by Anishinaabe trickster stories and group position theory, framing lateral violence as relational practice shaped by historical and ongoing colonial forces. Data collection will include semi-structured interviews (n=25) and a survey (n=100) with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis adults employed in Indigenous-serving organizations. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive and bivariate statistics, while qualitative interviews will undergo deductive thematic analysis informed by grounded normativity. This presentation will outline the study's conceptual framework, methodology, and ethical considerations. It also invites feedback and discussion to enhance the project.

IND10b-2 - Anti-Colonial Solidarities and the Practice of Hope in the 'Silent Vigil' for Palestine.

Zoha Mustafa, McMaster University

This ethnographic study examines a Silent Vigil for Palestine held at a local farmer's market in Kitchener, Ontario, positioning it as a unique site of anti-colonial co-resistance. Each week, participants walk a central route through the market, deliberately intersecting with the routine movements of local residents, transforming ordinary urban spaces into sites of political engagement and resistance. The research utilizes complete observer methodology to examine how participants negotiate power, meaning, and solidarity within public spaces. The findings suggest that the vigil transcends conventional forms of demonstrating by fostering anti-colonial solidarities through intergenerational presence, symbolic convergence, and the visible articulation of solidarity across communities. While the demographic was primarily composed of senior, white community members, the space functioned as a co-learning space where racialized participants shared personal histories shaped by racial consciousness and experiences of colonial violence. The study argues that these interactions, coupled with acts of 'radical care'- such as the focus for collective well-being and

interpersonal rapport- create a sustainable framework for active hope. By disrupting the routine rhythms of the market through silence and the strategic occupation of urban intersections, participants transformed the everyday geography and routine of the market into a political stage for sustained resistance.

IND10b-3 - Contextualizing Settler Colonialism, Dispossession and State-Violence in the Disputed Territory of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan

Benazir Shah, York University

Amongst growing conversations about Indigenous rights, decolonial futures, and contesting state violence, this paper examines settler colonialism as a transnational phenomenon which continues to shape the lived realities of Indigenous people globally. This paper focuses on the region of Gilgit-Baltistan, which, due to its strategic importance, sheds light on broader historical and political dynamics in the disputed regions of India and Pakistan. Gilgit-Baltistan is located at the crossroads of South Asia and Central Asia, bordering China, Indian-occupied Kashmir, and Afghanistan. The "Line of Control" (LOC) divides the Indian-occupied Kashmir and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. To settle "the Kashmir issue", the United Nations established a "cease-fire line" in 1972 to split the region into two parts, known since as the "Line of Control" (LOC) (Kanjwal, 2023; Zia, 2017). Gilgit-Baltistan is not officially part of Pakistan, so neither the constitution nor state laws extend protection to the people living there. However, in the last 40 years, nearly 40% of the land in Gilgit-Baltistan has been militarized or designated as "government-owned" protected areas, including national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, game reserves, and hunting zones (Ali, 2019). This paper centers land-based struggles in Gilgit-Baltistan, within the framework of transnational Indigenous struggles, to offer an epistemological intervention to challenge dominant narratives that flatten the interlocking, complex historical issues to merely the "political dispute" between India and Pakistan (Zia, 2019).

(INE) Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

(INE1) Engaging for Outcomes: Managerial Strategies and Coordination of Work in Healthcare, Education and Research

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11. 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session invited papers that critically explore how managerial strategies—such as patient engagement, public consultation, co-production, and other participation frameworks—organize the everyday work of patients, families professionals, and researchers. Across health, education, and research institutions, these practices are increasingly articulated through the language of accountability, outcomes, and value for investment. Institutional ethnographers have traced how such texts and practices enter the local settings of people's lives, translating lived experiences into standardized forms—dashboards, surveys, logic models, and key performance indicators—that circulate upward within governance regimes. Contributors are encouraged to examine how these engagement regimes link individual actions and moral commitments to broader neoliberal policy imperatives: demonstrating impact, ensuring so-called system efficiency, and quantifying quality or

participation. Through tracing the ruling relations embedded in these managerial strategies, this session aims to deepen our understanding of how neoliberal governance operates through the work of engagement, participation, and co-design.

Session Organizer and Chair: Janet Rankin, University of Calgary

INE1-1 - The social organization of patient engagement: An institutional ethnography study

Presenting Author - Karime Mescouto, Western University

Non-presenting Authors - Fiona Webster, Western University; Janet Rankin, University of Calgary

Patient engagement (PE) in research is intended to be a "meaningful collaboration" in which patients are active partners contributing to all aspects of research studies. However, there is significant variation in how PE is defined and practised, alongside inadequate representation of systemically and structurally marginalized populations. The experiences of many people living with chronic pain in Canada are exemplary of the kinds of marginalization, exclusion, and depoliticization that necessitate effective PE. Our team undertook an institutional ethnography of patient engagement that begins from the standpoint of people with lived experience of chronic pain and marginalization. Here, the aim is to explore the often-invisible social relations that underpin or organize their experiences, largely through text. In our preliminary analysis with eight participants, and review of key documents and events related to patient engagement, we began mapping the social organization of PE. In this presentation we discuss how the work people perform is embedded in a research regime that prioritizes measurable targets (e.g., number of partners, meetings, participation in conferences and committees, production of lay summaries), so that collaboration becomes something to be demonstrated rather than lived. Through these works and processes, people's lived experience and knowledge are sidelined - patients become "mini researchers", internalizing an institutional gaze that implies the adequacy of their experiences and translates them into recognizable forms for research institutions. Instead of serving patients' interests and centring their experiences to make research valuable and applicable, patient engagement becomes an apparatus for neoliberal logics that focus on many deliverables and visible outputs at the expense of relationships and the advancement of knowledge.

INE1-2 - “Reading for Social Organization”: Learning to do IE Analysis Using Counterexamples

Presenting Author - Jeffrey Sabo, University of Ottawa

Non-presenting Author - Christine Guptill, University of Ottawa

While institutional ethnography (IE) was developed as an “alternative” approach, it is becoming increasingly common in a growing number of disciplines. One benefit of IE is that its theoretical framework can produce knowledge that might be obscured in more standard approaches. For example, IE explores the material, social organization of a setting and is regularly contrasted with more common methods that objectify individuals or abstract their experiences into concepts or categories. As a result of IE's distinct approach, novice IE researchers sometimes struggle with conducting IE analysis, either by inadvertently engaging in categorization and abstraction, or by perceiving an obligation to do IE in an “orthodox” manner. These challenges may be amplified when studying topics with few published IE examples. In such cases, a useful learning approach for novices

may be to develop concrete examples juxtaposing IE's analytical process with other methods that have been used to analyze similar data. This presentation explores the authors' exercise in learning to "read for social organization" during a study on post-secondary music students' health, for which IE has not often been used. The presentation juxtaposes the authors' analytical process with three published studies that analyzed similar data using more typical qualitative methods. The authors critically examine the methods used in each study and show how particular interview excerpts were analyzed by abstracting music students' experiences to draw health-related conclusions. These practices are directly contrasted with an IE approach, using similar data gathered at a Canadian post-secondary music program. The authors discuss questions they asked when 'interviewing' their IE data and explain how answering these questions helped produce an understanding of post-secondary music programs that went beyond what was visible through more typical methods. They will also discuss challenges that occurred when using IE for this particular context as novice IE researchers.

INE1-3 - From Lived Experience to Institutional Labour: The Engagement Regime and Making of Patient and Family Advisors

Barbara Couper, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Patient and family 'engagement' has become an increasingly incentivized activity that healthcare institutions participate in, and policymakers promote as a way to ensure care is patient-centered and responsive to community needs. The rhetoric of engagement appears in many forms, including co-creation, user-centered, involving people with lived experience, and others terminology that professes the inclusion of users of the health system in decision making. A growing array of frameworks, guidelines, and resources now claim to support organizations in participating in 'engagement', reflecting the system's expanding institutionalization. In Ontario, policymakers and health system leaders have built a regime of patient and family engagement that spans every level of the health system, from provincial and federal bodies that push for engagement through regulatory requirements, funding dependencies, and quality improvement metrics, to hospitals that create teams to support engagement activities in clinical care, research, and education. Reporting requirements tied to these activities are further shaped by accreditation, performance assessment, and funding. Through an institutional ethnography at a pediatric acute care hospital in Ontario, I explore the work that patients and families perform as volunteers within this engagement regime to show how organizational systems structure and direct their labour. I trace how organizations construct systems that select, train, and shape quasi-professional 'advisors' designed to work well within an efficiently running neoliberal system. Mapping advisors' work demonstrates that regulatory and financial imperatives drive the engagement regime, leading organizations to train advisors away from their own experiences as healthcare users. Institutional rhetoric celebrates lived experience as the foundation for engagement, yet my work explores how advisors are selected and trained to conform to organizational expectations, distancing them from their experience of paediatric care to fit the system's requirements.

INE1-4 - Loneliness and the Organization of Care for Older Adults in Singapore: An Institutional Ethnography

Si Yinn Lu, University of Toronto

The World Health Organization has recognized loneliness as a global public health concern. Numerous studies have documented its harmful effects on older people's longevity, physical and psychological well-being, and quality of life. While the risk factors, outcomes, and interventions to address loneliness are well-established, there remains limited inquiry into the organizational, institutional, and socio-political processes associated with assessing, interpreting, and managing loneliness. Guided by the framework of Institutional Ethnography, this study maintains a standpoint in the everyday world of older adults' lives and explicates how their experiences of loneliness are organized by ruling relations, institutional arrangements, and broader discourses related to loneliness and the care system. This paper will share findings from interviews and participant observations conducted with older adults, social workers, service providers, and policymakers in Singapore from August 2025 to May 2026. By mapping how older adults are categorized as 'at risk' of loneliness and referred to health and social care services, this paper demonstrates the frictions between older adults' lived realities and administrative accounts of their 'needs.' This paper argues that an ideology of preventative health organizes the everyday work of care providers and older adults. Specifically, I trace how texts (e.g., assessment tools, performance indicators, eligibility criteria for programs) coordinate providers' work and show that aged care services designed to promote older adults' health and well-being may fail to meet their practical everyday needs. Older adults also undertake extensive work to not 'be a burden' on the care system, work that is often subordinated to ideological accounts of 'independence' that does not qualify for further support. Overall, this paper seeks to contribute to the refinement of aged care policies by examining how dominant discourses of loneliness may create the conditions for the continued manifestations of loneliness and health and social inequities among groups of older adults.

(INE2a) Institutional Ethnography and Critical Policy Analysis I

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session invited papers informed by institutional ethnography that contribute to scholarly discourse about the critical analysis of policy, policy processes, and contemporary forms of governance and ruling. We orient to policy broadly to include not only matters of state action concerned with social welfare and the redistribution of material resources but, also, efforts on the part of multiple non-state actors—think tanks, social movements, NGOs, etc.—to intervene in and project current and future visions of social, economic, and political life. We featured presentations from scholars exploring policy-related developments in health care, the environment, immigration, education, sex work, drug use, housing, and other empirical sites in Canada and beyond.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University; Lauren Eastwood, SUNY Plattsburgh

INE2a-1 - Organizing Discourses and Conceptual Currency: IE and UN Environmental Policy Making

Lauren Eastwood, State University of New York at Plattsburgh

As policymakers go about their work within the context of UN-organized environmental policy making processes, they find that the substance of their topic areas becomes modified and reconfigured to fit the agenda items, conceptual currency, and discursive frames that organize

environmental policy processes in this arena. This reconfiguration can happen as new concepts gain currency or as participants operate strategically to find "room" for their work in various policy agendas. It can happen as funding is shifted towards particular issues and away from others, or when "political will" becomes stronger in one UN body than another. Based on 26 years of observation at 55 UN meetings related to environmental and Indigenous Peoples' issues, and on document and other primary source analysis (webcasts, etc.) from meetings I could not attend in person, this paper maps out several examples of the dynamic whereby specific issues that policy makers bring to the table are reconfigured to fit with broader dominant discourses and specific agenda items. Concurrently, the paper contributes to the broader institutional ethnographic scholarship on how it is that elements of daily lives are made "visible"--often through a process of reconfiguration--within the ruling regimes.

INE2a-2 - Human Service Work Textually Reorganized

Marie Campbell, University of Victoria

Digitization creates the possibility for text-based and calculative strategies for managing institutional matters to become routine practices, routinely added to the care-giving responsibilities of Canadian hospital nurses. Business schools and strategies support new institutional accountabilities, widely accepted as crucial for a hospital's effective and efficient functioning. Nursing work is being reorganized around such new responsibilities. In my early research on the move toward data-driven healthcare, nurse staffing decisions were technologized and nurses' time and attention drawn into using their own work knowledge to "classify" patients' needs for nursing care; financial information in staffing offices turned such classifications into strict delineation of the number of nurses needed to staff each hospital unit efficiently, thus trumping nurses' experientially-supported knowledge. New unpublished IE research shows nurses now spending their time scrutinizing data to support determinations of who can and should be discharged - another kind of call on nurses' work. This paper introduces the question of what happens to the people whose work and lives are being affected. There is a cost to nurses' themselves as well as to their patients when nursing work is reorganized to advance managerial purposes. With Canadian nurses leaving their jobs in droves, an institutional ethnographer must ask what troubles and antecedents of troubles are being overlooked? Lauren Eastwood called attention to "the elephant in the room", her insightful response to observations of the text-based muzzling of critical grassroots voices who want UN policy to address the climate change affecting them. My paper encourages discussion of that "elephant. What dilemmas occur for the caregivers whose work and well-being are involved, and for the patients who need their care, and, additionally, for institutional ethnographers who come to realize that the organization of public service work is harnessed to economic concerns and the institutional/management strategies they recommend.

INE2a-3 - Gender, Governance, and Textual Power: Institutional Ethnography at COP30

Alison Lam, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

This paper uses institutional ethnography, grounded in Dorothy Smith's ruling relations, institutional language and power, and textualization->text->textual activation, to examine how gender equity is negotiated, constrained, and activated within the policy processes of COP30. Drawing on on-site fieldnotes, autoethnographic reflections, and real-time documentation from Belém, the analysis

focuses on the Gender Action Plan (GAP) negotiations, particularly the emergence and removal of competing definitions of "gender", as a window into how global climate governance regulates social relations. The paper situates the GAP within a broader scope of COP30 texts, including the Mutirão decision and the failed attempt to produce a fossil-fuel phase-out roadmap. These documents (or lack thereof) are treated as institutional texts that coordinate transnational action, embody negotiated-order dynamics, and reveal the tensions between symbolic commitments and political interests. By tracing the movement from textualization (negotiation rooms, bracketed language, exclusions) to textual activation (implementation, reporting, and the lived consequences for gender-diverse communities), the paper demonstrates how policy texts simultaneously enable and constrain climate justice. The central argument is that COP30's policy processes illustrate a profound disconnect between the lived experiences of those most affected by climate change and the institutional logics that govern global climate negotiations. The struggle over the meaning of "gender" and the softening of human-rights language reveal how ruling relations shape what becomes thinkable, sayable, and actionable within multilateral climate governance. Institutional ethnography offers a powerful methodological tool for a deeper analysis into how global climate policy is negotiated, produced and actioned. By looking into many aspects of the COP ecosphere that are rarely considered when studying the final outcome texts themselves (including siloed discussions, language inequities, militarized spaces, and the realities of COP participation), this research highlights the need for climate policy analysis that centers lived experiences and relations rather than detached consensus without context.

INE2a-4 - Institutional Ethnography as Critical Policy Analysis: IE Mapping of EDI and Anti-racism Discourses in Health-related Policy

Presenting Author - Elizabeth McGibbon, St. Francis Xavier University

Non-presenting Authors - Arone Fantaye, Yinka Bolarinwa, and Josephine Etowa, University of Ottawa

The central problematic described in this paper is steadily increasing inequities in health and social outcomes for racialized peoples in Canada, despite proliferation of the terms EDI (equity, diversity, inclusion) and anti-racism. This disjuncture calls for ongoing and systematic interrogation of the persistent structural antecedents of harmful historical patterns of ruling power relations, white supremacy, and the many forms of racism. The goal of this paper is to illustrate the synthesis of institutional ethnography (IE) and critical policy analysis (CPA) in mapping how anti-racism and EDI policy discourses are framed, implemented, and operationalized across state and non-state actors. We focus on two processes. First, in keeping with Smith's tasks of IE, we describe an IE-consistent application of critical narrative synthesis that was used to map discursive policy practices and procedures within EDI and anti-racism. Preliminary findings underscored the ruling relations of systematic resistance to changing the current regime of silencing the many forms of anti-racism; the dominance of superficial and performative approaches to anti-racism policy; and conflation of anti-racism with EDI discourses, resulting in dilution of political intent and replacement of structural reform with procedural compliance and depoliticized language. Second, we describe structural mapping of the everyday experiences of 20 policy-related actors in EDI and anti-racism policy and practice. Specifically, we illustrate how Smith's tenets of IE were applied within the context of core principles of critical policy analysis. Preliminary findings point to the ineffectiveness of EDI and anti-racism policies through an overt focus on downstream instead of upstream, structurally-focused

policies and practices; and the imperative of a strong commitment to dismantling white supremacy, privilege, and epistemic dominance and violence. We conclude with insights about the challenges and theoretical/methodological possibilities in applying IE, critical narrative synthesis, and CPA to advance justice-based action on complex structurally-induced problems such as racism.

INE2a-5 - The Social Organization of Long COVID Knowledge: Situating Institutionalized Denialism in Public Health

Leo Ruhl, University of Toronto

Federal agencies in Canada have highlighted the significance of Long COVID as a serious health concern, warning of a "mass disabling event" if not adequately addressed. However, Long COVID patients and advocates describe experiences of medical gaslighting and the denial of Long COVID by public health officials. This doctoral research explicates this apparent disjuncture between how Long COVID is understood by advocates as a public health threat, and what they experience as an incoherent public health response to this illness. I use Institutional Ethnography (IE) to trace how knowledge around Long COVID is socially organized in one Canadian province, and to locate the sites of friction that advocates - ranging from grassroots activists to expert advisors - encounter as they attempt to change public health policy to better address this condition. In this paper, I analyze the resistance advocates encounter to show how several key institutional conditions oppose their efforts. First, I describe the ways in which pervasive dogmas shape how Long COVID is currently understood and managed, how they are engrained in institutional work-processes, and how they limit the capacity of advocates to effectively transmit their knowledge to key decision-makers. Second, I highlight how the capacity to produce text-based institutional knowledge about Long COVID - through public health surveillance reporting and academic research - has been systematically dismantled, creating an environment in which Long COVID cannot easily be treated as a valid object of policy or intervention. Lastly, I chart how the organization of key decision-making bodies enables critical or dissenting voices to be silenced through a variety of formal and informal processes. I conclude by highlighting the value of IE to explicate cases of institutionalized denialism while staying grounded in the actualities of people and their empirical location within institutionalized work processes and discursive environments.

(INE2b) Institutional Ethnography and Critical Policy Analysis II

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session invited papers informed by institutional ethnography that contribute to scholarly discourse about the critical analysis of policy, policy processes, and contemporary forms of governance and ruling. We orient to policy broadly to include not only matters of state action concerned with social welfare and the redistribution of material resources but, also, efforts on the part of multiple non-state actors—think tanks, social movements, NGOs, etc.—to intervene in and project current and future visions of social, economic, and political life. We featured presentations from scholars exploring policy-related developments in health care, the environment, immigration, education, sex work, drug use, housing, and other empirical sites in Canada and beyond.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University; Lauren Eastwood, SUNY Plattsburgh

INE2b-1 - HIV, public health, and the "unwilling or unable" person living with HIV

Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University; Colin Hastings, Waterloo University

This paper responds to recent calls from advocates for research on the public health governance of HIV. Drawing on a critical social science *with* public health approach and insights from Dorothy Smith and Michel Foucault, we offer a study of key texts that guide public health efforts to prevent HIV transmission in the Canadian context. We explore how the texts lay out case management as an objectified course of action linking risk assessment and public health intervention in ways coordinated by the concept of the "unwilling or unable" person living with HIV or "U2 individual." Our analysis emphasizes how the "U2" concept: (1) establishes a kind of person as a problem that requires public health intervention and management; (2) shapes risk assessment and the application of coercive public health interventions, albeit in uneven ways; and (3) propels calls for cross-sector collaboration in HIV case management that can lead to the over-surveillance of people living with HIV, while underestimating the harms of introducing criminal legal system actors into HIV case management. Our hope is that highlighting these concerns can support dialogue among public health authorities and advocates, about policy changes that restrict the use of unwarranted coercive public health powers in HIV prevention.

INE2b-2 - Policy Disjunctures and the Social Organization of Affect

Naomi Nichols, Trent University

The proposed presentation will focus on state (in)action with respect to increasing precarity in Ontario communities, shaped by an inadequate supply of affordable housing, insufficient and inaccessible supports for people who use drugs and/or are experiencing a deterioration of mental and physical health, and space - specifically a lack of accessible shared public spaces. The presentation draws on research about the social organization of conflicts in public libraries regarding the increasing range of things people are seeking to do there, such as: selling drugs, using drugs, selling/buying sex, washing, getting clean drinking water, using the toilet, sleeping, sheltering from violence, arguing with friend/loved one, *and also* borrowing books, learning to use the microfiche, accessing the internet, getting help to fill out forms, borrowing art supplies, reading, participating in programs, and engaging in research. Library policies, procedures, funding formulae, reporting structures, governance strategies, and professional knowledge orient towards enabling the latter set of activities, but increasingly library work orients to the former. There is a clear disjuncture between people's embodied work in libraries - both the paid work of library staff and the unpaid work of library visitors - and the ways library work is governed. I am particularly interested in how this disjuncture contributes to the social organization of affect in libraries - that is how it happens that the lived and felt space of a public library changes because of shifts in the work people seek to do in the space? Policy and institutional texts matter in this research largely because of the ways they currently subjugate or fail acknowledge the everyday realities of library work and the myriad ways this work is changing as a result of the increasingly unequal distribution of material resources and people's unmet needs for shelter, sanitation, healthcare, and social support.

INE2b-3 - Governing Homeless Families Through Care: An Institutional Ethnographic Analysis of Child Welfare Policy and Systemic Harm in Alberta

Presenting Author - Courtney Petruik, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Katrina Milaney, University of Calgary

Families experiencing homelessness are disproportionately drawn into child welfare systems, often under the banner of protection and care. For these families, child welfare involvement frequently deepens instability rather than alleviating it. This paper examines how child welfare policy organizes harm for families experiencing homelessness by coordinating how care, risk, and responsibility are institutionally defined and acted upon. Using institutional ethnography (IE) as a mode of inquiry, this study analyzes how governing texts shape the everyday work of Alberta's child welfare system as it engages families without stable housing. The analysis draws on an examination of the Alberta *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* (CYFEA) and the *Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Act* (OCYA). Rather than treating policy as a backdrop to practice, the project traces how these texts actively organize decision-making, accountability, and intervention in ways that structure families' encounters with the system. The findings show that child welfare policy systematically individualizes family "risk" while obscuring structural conditions such as poverty, housing insecurity, colonial violence, and racialized inequities. Homelessness is rendered as a parental failure rather than a structural harm, legitimizing surveillance and intervention while limiting institutional responsibility for addressing material need. Vague and ambiguous policy language allows broad discretionary power, while accountability mechanisms prioritize procedural compliance over family wellbeing. Together, these features coordinate a system in which homelessness becomes grounds for intensified scrutiny rather than support. By centring families experiencing homelessness, this paper contributes to sociological scholarship on child welfare, institutional power, and family regulation. It demonstrates how harm is not an unintended outcome of child welfare practice but is produced through the textual and organizational foundations of policy itself. The paper concludes by reflecting on what an institutional reorientation toward equity would require when homelessness is understood as a structural condition rather than a parental deficit.

INE2b-4 - Becoming Eligible: A Textual Mapping of Social Assistance in Alberta

Lee Stevens, University of Calgary

Social assistance is a vital component of Canada's social safety net however a textual mapping of the eligibility process in Alberta finds it fails to meet this purpose. Social assistance is a provincially administered means tested program targeted to people living in deep income poverty and although it is intended to function as a safety net and provide for basic needs, these programs are widely criticized for their strict eligibility requirements, negligible benefits, and moral regulation through practices of denying or withholding benefits. Although the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated a troubling trend in job precarity, social assistance has not adapted to the changing employment norms. The convergence of growing labor market instability combined with heightened restrictions to benefits that were introduced in the 1990s marks the post pandemic moment a relevant time for the study of how eligibility for social assistance is organized. Using Institutional Ethnography's textual analysis approach, I argue that social assistance departs from its purpose as a safety net intended to provide for basic needs, by organizing people towards low wage or poor-quality employment through the ruling relation of responsibilization. My inquiry draws from a mapping of the text-based sequence

of events that occurs when someone applies for the Alberta Income and Employment Supports Program. The claims made in this paper consider the historical and discursive context of social assistance in Canada through a review of the welfare reforms of the 1990s and Canada's transition from a passive to an active welfare state. A theorization of active social policy finds that it shaped a perception of people in poverty from citizens entitled to support from the government to welfare "recipients" in need of persistent motivation to enter the labor market.

INE2b-5 - Pathways and Barriers: Parent Pursuit of Mental Health Care for their Children/Youth

Alison Rodgers, Trent University

One in five children and youth in Ontario, Canada experience a mental health concern, yet many families encounter persistent systemic barriers to timely and effective care. Long waitlists, fragmented services, inequitable access, and limited coordination across sectors place considerable responsibility on parents to navigate a complex and often disjointed mental health system. Despite increasing public investment, little is known about how these barriers are institutionally produced or how parents' everyday navigation work is organized across health, social service, and community settings. The proposed study will use Institutional Ethnography to examine parents' experiences of seeking mental health care for children and youth aged 0-21 in Ontario. The research will examine how access to care is socially and institutionally organized through policies, professional practices, funding structures, eligibility criteria, and other coordinating texts. Data sources will include in-depth interviews with parents and mental health service providers, alongside analysis of relevant organizational, provincial, and legislative documents. By tracing how parents' navigation work is shaped by ruling relations across systems and sectors, this research seeks to identify critical disjunctures between policy intentions and lived experiences of care. The findings will generate empirically grounded recommendations to strengthen system coordination, continuity of care, and equity in access. Ultimately, this research aims to inform child and youth mental health policy and practice by making visible how institutional processes shape family experiences and by identifying opportunities for systemic transformation.

(INE3a) New Directions in Institutional Ethnography I
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session brings together work that advances Institutional Ethnography (IE) in response to new social, political, and methodological challenges. Presenters show how IE continues to evolve as a critical, justice-oriented sociology that exposes ruling relations in everyday life.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Colin Hastings, University of Waterloo; Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University

INE3a-1 - Observing the Observers: Institutional Ethnography, HIV, and Public Health Surveillance in Ontario

Presenting Author - Colin Hastings, University of Waterloo

Non-presenting Authors - Stephen Molldrem, University of Texas Medical Branch; Alexander McCelland, Carleton University

This paper offers reflections on how an institutional ethnographic approach has informed the design and implementation of a community-based research project examining the social organization of HIV serosurveillance in Canada. Serosurveillance refers to a common public health surveillance method that performs tests on samples of blood to detect infection. Our project directs analytic attention to the everyday work of HIV serosurveillance in response to longstanding and serious concerns that people living with HIV and HIV advocates have expressed about the public health systems that collect, process, test, and transfer the bloodwork of people living with HIV. The main goal of our project is to map and make visible how HIV serosurveillance works, how it is put together, so that people living with HIV and communities impacted by surveillance technologies can "talk back" to this otherwise opaque system that can shape their everyday experiences in significant ways. Our methodological reflections on institutional ethnography (IE) focus on how we relate to i) texts as material coordinators of ruling relations; and ii) the activist orientation of IE.

INE3a-2 - Navigating Cultures of Reticence: Methodological Barriers to Accessing Institutional Knowledge on 2S/LGBTQ+ Student Mental Health

Presenting Author - Sarah Smith, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Henry Yang and Wren Gould, Tin Vo, Jad Sinno,Dana Seitler, and Daniel Grace, University of Toronto; Jordan Ramnarine, Western University; Joshun Dulai, University of British Columbia

This presentation explores the methodological challenges our research team experienced when trying to access the institutional knowledges of on-campus mental health professionals for an institutional ethnography on 2S/LGBTQ+ student mental health. More specifically, we sought to identify and address disjunctures between 2S/LGBTQ+ students' experiences of on-campus mental health care and the policies, practices, and discourses that socially organize how on-campus mental health care is conceptualized and delivered. While our study has been able to create a fuller, sociological picture of 2S/LGBTQ+ students' experiences with on-campus mental health care through 29 student interviews, our team was only able to successfully engage three mental health professionals- two counsellors and one nurse - despite our goal of conducting 10-15 mental health professional interviews. Although we recognize that there are many logistical barriers to counsellors' participation, including time constraints and heavy emotional workloads, we found that other barriers to participation included a strong culture of reticence wherein mental health care providers were hesitant to participate, speak openly, and retain their data in the study. For example, of the three mental health providers who were recruited, one counsellor asked to amend their data and a second counsellor asked to withdraw their data from the study completely. Drawing from these experiences, our presentation will build on existing research that speaks to the challenges of doing institutional ethnographic research in "closed institutions" such as psychiatric hospitals, prisons (see Hubert & Hollins, 2007; James, 2017), by discussing how we have navigated our methodological challenges in the context of a large Ontario university. We speak to the importance of evolving institutional ethnographic methods, including through the examination of reticence as a ruling relation, brainstorming "less intimidating" modes of participant engagement, and drawing more heavily from textual analysis to piece together the social coordination of institutions.

INE3a-3 - Participatory Mixed Methods Research and Institutional Ethnography

Naomi Nichols, Trent University

Both acute trauma and prolonged exposure to everyday hardship and uncertainty undermine health. Exposure to adversity (acute or extended) can cause an over-activation of the body's stress response; with prolonged activation, a stress response is described as toxic. The developmental and intergenerational consequences of toxic stress arguably have the most profound social effects. Where parents are themselves experiencing adversity, they are less able to provide the nurturing and stable relationships that research affirms are protective against the health harms of adversity for their children. Understanding parents' and caregivers' experiences, and specifically the sources of stress and support they identify in their own lives, enables targeted political and social interventions that reduce adversity and support nurturing parent-child relations. To this end, I collaborated with my local public health unit to design and implement a participatory mixed methods Institutional Ethnographic (IE) research project to understand who was parenting in our community, under what conditions, and with what sources of stress and/or support shaping their everyday parenting work. To address our objectives, we administered a population-level survey (n=560) and 16 arts-based focus groups (n= 57) to parents in Peterborough, Ontario. In this presentation, I will describe how we used a range of methods - within an institutional ethnographic research paradigm - to conduct policy-oriented public health research on parenting and the inter-generational effects of adversity. This project represents a new direction for IE research where qualitative approaches to data collection continue to dominate the field. The descriptive findings produced in phase one of this research will anchor ongoing intersectional analyses of the institutional and policy organization of specific aspects of parents' everyday lives. The project also represents an innovation in parenting research by challenging the conceptual practices through which people's experiences of adversity are objectified (e.g., as Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs). Instead, of investing an abstract concept like ACEs with explanatory power, we anchor our inquiry in people's embodied and effortful activities (their work) as a new way to understand adversity as a confluence of social processes shaping how people's brains and bodies develop and change over time.

INE3a-4 - Feeling Ruling Relations: Methodological Possibilities for Affect in Institutional Ethnography

Leo Ruhl, University of Toronto; Mara Silva Hope, University of Warwick

Feelings are a contentious topic in Institutional Ethnography (IE) research. As newcomers to this project, we have seen how the notion of affect has often been treated as too subjective, opaque, or methodologically elusive to study empirically, leading to some IE research to prioritize observable work processes, texts, and discourses. This paper challenges that exclusion by arguing that affect is central to how institutional power is organized, experienced, and reproduced. The paper has three main arguments which we explicate using examples from both of our doctoral research. First, we demonstrate that affect is an integral component of everyday experience and institutional coordination that shapes the activities of people across time and space. We show how affect can both orient the actions, interpretations, and responses of our participants in relation institutional demands, as well as become the object of institutional processes and broader ruling relations. Second, we argue that affect cannot be explained through a narrow application of IE's core analytics concepts. While work, text, and discourse remain foundational to IE, affect mediates how these

processes are embodied, activated and made meaningful. Focusing exclusively on conventional analytic modes risks (re)producing an incomplete account of how ruling relations operate in practice. Lastly, we describe how we incorporated affect into our doctoral research through careful attention to how affect is both articulated by ourselves and our participants, as well as how it is objectified in institutional work processes and texts. Our examples highlight how IE can attend to an ostensibly immaterial facet of our everyday experience without abandoning IE's materialist commitments. Pursuing IE in this way can open new analytic and political possibilities that help us understand more deeply institutional harm, compliance, resistance, and embodiment, and extend IE's critical capacity across different disciplines and institutional contexts.

INE3a-5 - Lean Startup as conceptual practice of power: ethnographic insights into a community coalition addressing homelessness

Maxime Goulet-Langlois, McGill University

This paper interrogates the combined effects of two trends that have been significantly reshaping the landscape of social and community service provisioning in Canada over the last decade: the ubiquitous datafication of social systems and the generalization of entrepreneurial approaches to tackling social problems such as homelessness. I distill aspects of a 26 month-long (April 2022 - June 2024) institutional ethnography into the creation of a community-based coalition of organizations (e.i., public health, aids prevention, community center, local university, community foundation, United Ways, homelessness drop-in center) seeking to address the intensifying homelessness crisis in their mid-sized Canadian town. The central aim of this process was to create a long-term data infrastructure that would increase the collective ability to improve service and engage in equity focused advocacy. An external social enterprise with expertise in the design of data systems in the nonprofit and public sectors was hired through a 350 K $ research innovation grant to design the coalition over a 24-month contract. In this context, my observation revealed that Lean Startup principles and frameworks were enacted by the enterprise following the assumption that these epistemic resources were the most appropriate to uncover local needs and iteratively develop data processes that would generate efficient value for the coalition members. Beneath stated intentions and objectives, my analysis indicates that, paradoxically, the Lean Startup principles led the enterprise to misdiagnose the needs of local stakeholders, thus affecting the value and utility of this endeavor. I argue that looking at the enactment of the Lean Startup principles observed in this site as a conceptual practice of power helps explain how this attempt at creating a solution that would increase the capacity of local actors, in fact, ended up insidiously serving the interests of the social enterprise. Responding to Dorothy Smith’s invitation to paying attention to the practice of words (Smith, 2021), I reflect on the consequentiality of the conceptual grammar (e.g., value, minimum viable product, use case, feedback, etc.) of the Lean Startup process I observed. Overall, my analysis offers insights to activists, scholars or managers that address knowledge and power asymmetries by means of cross-sector partnerships or data coalitions. These findings also enrich our understanding of the ongoing hybridization of roles and epistemic resources happening across the private, public and third sectors.

(INE3b) New Directions in Institutional Ethnography II

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session brings together work that advances Institutional Ethnography (IE) in response to new social, political, and methodological challenges. Presenters show how IE continues to evolve as a critical, justice-oriented sociology that exposes ruling relations in everyday life.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Colin Hastings, University of Waterloo; Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University

INE3b-1 - Mapping the Extra Local Relations that Shape Migrant Women's Experiences of Domestic Violence in Canada: An Institutional Ethnography

Neela Hassan, University of Waterloo

An extensive body of social science literature examines migrant women's experiences of domestic violence and the ways in which existing systems and practices respond to their needs. However, the majority of these studies focus on how women's individual experiences, and their choices about how and when to seek support, access services, or leave violent relationships are shaped by their particular circumstances. Additionally, very few studies look at the particular experiences of domestic violence among migrant women with precarious immigration status in the Canadian context. Using institutional ethnography, this paper explores how the domestic violence experiences of women with precarious immigration status are organized and regulated by "extra-local" systems, practices, and ideologies. It investigates the invisible factors such as the broad coordination of systems and processes of agencies that provide support, as well as the evolving immigration laws and policies that shape the type and quality of services available to them. The purpose of this project is to show how migrant women's experiences are shaped by social relations occurring beyond their everyday worlds, and to identify the points within organizational processes where their actual experiences are rendered invisible. This paper bases its analysis on four initial qualitative interviews with women with precarious immigration status who experienced domestic violence after immigrating to Canada within the past ten years, as well as 25 semi-structured interviews with practitioners in key organizations that support victims and survivors of domestic violence in the Greater Toronto Area and Waterloo region. The findings map out the governance structures, laws and policies that shape practitioners' professional practices, which in turn shape the experiences of women seeking help for domestic violence. Although institutional ethnography is employed by many feminist scholars to examine gender-based violence, this paper specifically contributes to emerging directions in investigating the experiences of women with precarious immigration status in the Canadian context.

INE3b-2 - Living Up to the Academic Ideal While Mothering: An Institutional Ethnography

Rachel Galea, Alison Rogers, and Sonya` Hill, Trent University

This project investigates how ruling relations shape the everyday lives of mothers who work and study within academic institutions. Grounded in institutional ethnography, three doctoral students who are mothers, trace their experiences of raising children during different life stages while navigating academia. This project explores the everyday experiences and work of mothering while undertaking doctoral study, including engagement in paid employment within academic institutions.

Building on the legacy of Smith and Griffith's work on mothering, this research investigates how these experiences are socially and institutionally organized through textually mediated expectations, academic policies, dominant discourses, and cultural norms of the "perfect mother", and how these shape expectations of academic productivity and intensive mothering through visible and invisible labour. From unspoken household norms to the capitalist logics embedded in university structures, the analysis seeks to uncover the ruling relations that organize women scholars' experiences. By situating these experiences within contemporary gender issues, this project aims to offer critical insights into the institutional mechanisms shaping women's lives. This work leverages institutional ethnography as a justice-oriented sociological approach, aiming to uncover and challenge the processes that sustain inequities within institutional structures.

INE3b-3 - "Doing Diaspora" in the Canadian context

Hasmik Tovmasyan, Concordia University of Edmonton

What is it to be diasporan? How can one be diasporan in Canada? What are some of the spaces where one can be ethnic diasporan? What is the role of diasporic institutions? These are some of the overarching questions that this paper explores starting from the standpoint of two groups of Armenians in Canada. It particularly focuses on how ethnicity and diaspora are socially organized in two different settings: Montreal, with a long-established community and diasporic institutions; and Calgary, a relatively new one with no diasporic institutions. The goal of the comparative lens is to make the role of institutions in relation to diasporas visible. Hitherto, most diaspora literature oscillated between the constructivist and materialist approaches (Grossmann 2019), by either looking at diasporas as entities or as social constructs - ideas, feelings, states of mind. The numerous conceptualizations and academic debates on diaspora, its features and boundaries are crucial for the advancement of scholarship, but they are often detached from the realities of those whose lives are deeply informed by how ethnic and diasporic are socially organized in Canada through institutions, texts, discourses, and policies. I argue that a new methodological approach to studying diasporas is needed to illustrate these complexities. To do this I employ Institutional Ethnography (as developed by Dorothy Smith, 2005) as a combination of method and theory to study diaspora as materially observable work processes in which the Armenian communities in Montreal and Calgary participate to produce ethnic diaspora while simultaneously being coordinated by it in their everyday life. The data will be generated through interviews, focus groups, ethnographic observations, and through the analysis of discourses and texts that inform the experiences of ethic minorities in Canada.

INE3b-4 - The social organization of healthwork among women with autoimmune diseases

Dara Gordon, University of Toronto

Institutional Ethnography (IE), a sociological method of inquiry, generates empirical accounts of how invisible social relations and institutional practices, called "ruling relations" in IE, govern, organize and coordinate people's knowledge and "work practices". Through examining work practices, a broad term referring to people's everyday activities, their experiences of the power exerted by ruling relations can be explicated. Similar to work, "healthwork" is an advancement within IE which describes the often invisible collection of tasks that must be performed to take care of one's health. Autoimmune diseases (AD) including Rheumatoid Arthritis, Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis are debilitating for millions of Canadians. These ADs are chronic illnesses which involve the immune

system mistakenly attacking itself. They have unknown causes, are incurable, are often invisible, are commonly misunderstood by physicians, and their incidence is rising, especially among women. Taking the standpoint of women with ADs, this IE study explicates the ruling relations that organize the women's healthwork practices, and illuminates how the women's healthwork is socially organized. Some of the women's healthwork involved being forced to "fail" on less effective treatments for a period of time before being allowed to try more effective medications, and being forced to switch medications even if those medications were working well for them. This presentation will empirically map and explicate how the ruling ideologies and logics of pharmaceutical companies, Ontario's public drug benefits program, and private insurance companies, create discursive practices that are taken up by doctors and nurses, and translated into undue work for the women. This presentation will consider how a national pharmacare program would ameliorate the current bureaucratic order that organizes much of this healthwork.

INE3b-5 - Mapping the Use of Institutional Ethnography in Early Childhood Research: A Scoping Review

Sonya Hill, Trent University

The aim of this scoping review is to explore the depth and breadth of academic literature to understand how Institutional Ethnography (IE) has been applied in early childhood research. This includes examining IE's interdisciplinary development, the institutional contexts, and the insights it offers into how ruling relations shape children's experiences. By mapping temporal trends, international geographic and disciplinary patterns, methodological approaches, and the issues and findings reported in the literature, the review provides a comprehensive picture of how early childhood is socially organized. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is only the second scoping review of IE, following Malachowski, Skorobohacz, and Stasiulis (2017), and it directly responds to the limitations they identified. The review also addresses a key methodological challenge: IE is frequently absent from titles and abstracts, necessitating full-text searches to ensure comprehensive coverage. Across the literature, findings reveal how institutional policies, funding structures, regulatory requirements, workplace conditions, childcare access, and cultural expectations of caregiving coordinate children's opportunities and outcomes. Conducted using Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) five-stage framework, this review offers new insights into the institutional forces structuring childhood and identifies underexplored areas to guide future IE research in early childhood studies.

(INE4) Unpacking Ruling Relations: Institutional Ethnography Towards Systemic and Institutional Change

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

In recent years, global calls have intensified for states, institutions, and individuals to reckon with their complicity in historic and ongoing injustices. These calls to decolonize, redress, and repair, demand not only reflection but also systemic and institutional change, including a fundamental rethinking of social organizations and norms shaped by colonial, imperial, and capitalist logics. Centring the institutional ethnographic concept of ruling relations, this session explores how examining these interactions can provide critical insight into the logics and structures that shape

everyday life. Along with making these changes visible, we will consider how such insights can help us envision alternative approaches within social and institutional organizations, and in doing so, contribute to decolonial and redress movements. This session welcomed papers that consider the transformative potential of institutional ethnography, particularly those that critically examine how engagement with ruling relations can inform societal and institutional change and open space to imagine new futures.

Session Organizer and Chair: Breanna Kubat, Carleton University

INE4-1 - Exploring the Ruling Relations of Eating Disorder Treatment in Ontario: An Institutional Ethnography

Sarah Costantini, University of Guelph

Despite nearly 50 years of calls for change, service users in eating disorder (ED) treatment continue to often experience care as controlling, under the highly time-limited, directive models, requiring compliance/adherence to rules that uphold a specific form of recovery. This has occurred against a backdrop of an unprecedented surge in the volume of people with EDs seeking help following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic deepening the strain on an already under-resourced treatment system, as well as low recovery rates, indicating a need to examine treatment contexts. Taking an Institutional Ethnography (IE) approach, our study explores the ruling relations coordinating clinicians' carework in Ontario inpatient, day-patient, and live-in ED treatment programs. Methods included in-depth interviews with six clinicians and textual analysis of core documents informing or directing treatment. Clinicians included one psychiatrist, two dieticians, one psychologist, one social worker, and one psychotherapist. Our analysis drew from accepted IE analytic procedures, and included indexing, mapping, and writing accounts. We identified a tension experienced by clinicians, particularly in publicly-funded treatment between their desire to practice collaborative care in an environment dominated by highly standardized, time-limited treatment directives that seek to ration care. We explicate how the discourses of care-as-cure and gold standard (evidence-based) treatment coordinate clinician's carework in moments of treatment non-adherence, as they operate through practices of informal coercion and the broader politics of evidence-based research. As the first IE in the ED field, our work traces connections between practice, texts, and institutional discourses in a novel way, adding compelling findings to the limited Canadian ED treatment literature and the urgent need for change. Our IE findings underscore the need to de-centre biometrics and recentre relationality by developing alternative care pathways that attend to the diversity of service user needs and address gaps in care.

INE4-2 - Jasper Wildfire Evacuees' Experiences 'Rebuilding Back Better'

Claire Penney, Queen's University

In July 2024, a wildfire blazed through Jasper, Alberta, with over 33,000 hectares of forest burning and 25,000 people evacuated. 32% of Jasper's town, or 1,113 structures overall and over 806 residential housing structures, were levelled by the fire with most of the damage centred in Jasper's west-end. In October 2024, the Government of Alberta announced it would allocate $112 million to provide 250 modular homes for Jasper evacuees; however, they later negated on their promise unless the town build "permanent, detached single-family homes." Seven months after the Jasper wildfire, the Government of Canada stepped in with $160. 1 million in funding for housing, wildfire

response and recovery initiatives for Jasper National Park. During this period, there were more than 600 Jasper households who did not have temporary housing. Current research in wildfire vulnerability and resiliency within community wildfire recovery demonstrates the need to consider dynamic systemic influences, such as insurability, unequal climate subsidies and proof of income that help create inequities for evacuees during wildfire community recovery. My primary research question is do Canadian housing regime discourses influence recognition of evacuees' housing experiences during Jasper's wildfire community recovery? My secondary research question is: If so, what discourses within housing regime text, processes, policies and procedures are creating shared housing vulnerabilities for Jasper community members? The first objective of this study is to determine if Canada's housing regime is helping to create shared system vulnerabilities for evacuees in their housing experiences during Jasper's wildfire community recovery. The second objective of this study is to understand the trans-local system dynamics and relationships within Canada's housing regime, and the efficacy of their interagency coordination during Jasper's wildfire community recovery.

INE4-3 - Muddied waters, muddled responses: The impact of communications on responses to budget cuts in adult education

Katherine Hardin, McGill University

This presentation focuses on a media analysis performed as part of an institutional ethnography of linguistic integration in Québec. In 2024, quiet changes to budgetary rules caused massive closures and instability within the province-wide adult language education program known as *francisation*. As practitioners and learners reeled from the sudden news, unclear messaging about the reasons for and impact of the closures made it difficult for them to coordinate a response. Previous work in institutional ethnography has shown that understanding the media through the tools of IE can be an essential facet of organizing for social change (Hastings, 2024; Urban, 2018; see also D. Smith, 1974). This presentation will focus on communicative practices, employed by government spokespeople and amplified by press outlets, that served to undermine teachers' efforts to organize against the closures and muddy the waters for the general public. For example, it will illustrate how these communicative practices discursively connected the closures to other, more widely accepted policy goals, giving them a common-sense veneer that quelled and confused dissenters. It will argue that practitioners' and media outlets' responses to this messaging unintentionally valorized it, undermining efforts to fully understand and respond to the closures. It will conclude with reflections on how such approaches to analyzing media and communication can inform educator-activists' mobilizations against the ruling relations that impede and constrain their work.

INE4-4 - Institutional Ethnography, Ruling Relations, and Pathways for Confronting the Structural Embeddedness of Classism

Elizabeth McGibbon, St. Francis Xavier University

This paper frames the ruling relations of classism as foundational structures of oppression that can cut across all the other isms. Specifically, I trace how applications of institutional ethnography's (IE) methodological and theoretical procedures can deepen our understandings of classism. Social class is still predominately characterized as an economic marker of identity and other socially constructed measures of one's social habitus. It is also simply a code for being poor. Historical proxies for class,

such as income quintile, have successfully invisibilized the ruling classes who enact neoliberal capitalism's production and reproduction of classism's assaults on the working class. IE re-directs this individualistic focus to ruling structures that create and redeploy classism at such an enduring and remarkable rate. The term ruling relations, with its origins in Marxian analyses of the ruling apparatus, creates a matrix for understanding the enduring and synergistic nature of modern-day class, classism, capitalism, and new entry points for resistance. These connections are made visible through applying the tenets of IE to two case examples. First, I map neoliberal austerity measures enacted in response to the 2008 global economic and financial crisis, where targeted neoliberal cuts to health and social supports caused substantive on-the-ground health damage and death to millions of people, while producing massive wealth for austerity's beneficiaries. Second, I map the neoliberal epidemic of increasing infant mortality rates in OECD countries, focusing on its articulation to public policy assaults within global neoliberal capitalism and the end-game products of medicalization and private control over medical services. I conclude with a brief overview of how IE redirects dominant analyses of classism from individual poverty, laziness, and lack of moral fortitude to disrupting the ruling structures of capitalism. These insights offer distinct and measurable pathways for confronting the root causes and consequences of the structural injustices of classism.

(INE5a) Disability and Institutional Ethnography I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

Disability social movements work to dismantle the violence of ableism and build just communities led by those most impacted by systemic violence. Organizers are at once mitigating the impact of systemic ableism on disabled community members, such as incarceration and poverty, while reconciling with the historic and ongoing violence of institutionalization that haunts crip life (Landry, 2025; Yoshikazi-Gibbons, 2023). Institutional Ethnography (IE) and Political Activist Ethnography (PAE) begin by examining the every day/night lives of disabled, Mad, labelled, and/or chronically ill people to identify the ruling relations governing their lives, and subsequent opportunities for transformation. The methodological pluralism of IE and PAE research encourages research design that is responsive to illness, disability, inaccessibility, and changing material conditions for both researchers and participants. Through this session, we call for Institutional Ethnographers and Political Activist Ethnographers working in critical disability studies, Mad studies and related fields to come together to highlight disability and Mad methodological interventions, accessible knowledge mobilization, and creative community engagement for social transformation.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Megan Linton, Carleton University; Danielle Landry, York University

INE5a-1 - The everyday lives of crip families: A Longitudinal Institutional Ethnography

Kathryn Underwood, Toronto Metropolitan University; Gillian Parekh, York University

Childhood studies is informed by many theoretical positions but is often described as arising out of resistance to pervasive developmentalism in services for young children (Connors & Stalker, 2007; Watson, 2012). Similarly, disability studies also claims interdisciplinarity and arose out of resistance to medicalized ways of thinking particularly in institutional environments. In both disciplines, demands are growing for justice as a key theoretical approach and disability justice in the context of childhood is emerging as a possibility for bringing change. We propose that disability justice requires

research that is grounded in the everyday lives of children and that exposes institutional and professional practices as implicated in disability justice. We offer a methodological approach to clarifying how institutions create the systemic contexts within which injustice grows. We will describe the Inclusive Early Childhood Service System (IECSS) project through the problematic, ruling relations, textual subjects, and the disjuncture in the everyday experiences of participants. Our focus in this presentation is on the methodology developed over 10 years, to draw attention to the institutional processes that govern disabled children and their families. As others have noted, IE offers one a possibility for understanding the complexity of social problems, in part because it does not aim to "solve" problems, but to shift how we see them (Ridzi, 2021). IE calls for an ontological shift in the standpoint from which the researcher examines a problem. Many social science studies on services and their efficacy use linear approaches that isolate aspects of a program or intervention and measure a particular outcome. However, with a complex of social issues affecting disabled children, we are concerned with the oversimplification of real-world conditions. Through IE we recognize the many complex forms of ruling that are embedded in the social lives of people.

INE5a-2 - Access Activations: IE research design for transformative crip justice

Yoonmee Han, Eliza Chandler, and Lisa East, Toronto Metropolitan University

We introduce Access Activation (AA), a cripestemological research design grounded upon disability justice (DJ), decolonial pedagogy, and crip knowledge creation, in response to the inaccessibility in arts institutions. We employ Institutional Ethnography (IE) to examine how institutional access policies and practices and their ruling relations are coordinated against disabled lives. The AA project takes on a multi-plural methodology that brings together researchers, arts organizations, and disabled, mad, Deaf, and neurodivergent community participants. We discuss how the AA aligns with the IE's creative possibility through the work of community-building and the political commitment to transformative crip justice. The project is structured in two interconnected ways. We use IE textual analysis to trace and ungird the ruling relations that either enact or deny access and perpetuate ableist relations. We have also integrated a workplace learning course with disabled, mad, deaf, and neurodivergent TMU students and community members. The course is designed based on DJ and decolonial pedagogy and led by peer instructors to bring a transformative impact in the students' lives, where they collectively create knowledge, and mobilize it against ableist institutional relations. This project shows how DJ are embedded in the design in multiple ways, specifically as a response to the structural ableism and inaccessible space prevalent in the arts sector. The research is designed to address and counter the extractive research practices, as students with disabilities' work is historically rendered invisible. We discuss how the research designed with academic and community resources are prepared, arranged and mobilized to compensate students for their academic labour, and support their work through mentorship, and with a commitment to intersectional access wisdom, interdependent learning, and crip knowledge sharing. We show how this work reflects the creative potential of the IE which embodies the crip world-making and contributes to the material changes in the community.

INE5a-3 - Knowing differently: Applying institutional ethnography to Ontario's Deaf adult education system

Sammy Jo Johnson, York University

This institutional ethnography begins from my personal experience working as an adult educator in Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program, which provides educational supports and upgrading to adult residents in four cultural/linguistic streams: Anglophone, Francophone, Indigenous, and Deaf. Between 2018 and 2020, I worked as an educator in the Deaf stream. There I engaged in many conversations with learners and educators reflecting on the limits of our program. We struggled to make sense of funder expectations, especially the emphasis on demonstrating employment-related outcomes, and the real barriers to employment faced by many learners. We were also frustrated by the focus on individualized upgrading and postsecondary preparedness while we knew perfectly well that postsecondary institutions (PSIs) are not prepared to support Deaf applicants (Cawthorn et al., 2014). In applying Dorothy Smith's mode of inquiry, the purpose of this research is to explore and explicate how these experiences of frustration were put together. My analysis shows how the program's accountability framework hooks educators into an institutional mode of knowing that 'sees' educational and employment inequality as individual problems requiring individual solutions, subordinating what we know from our experience being in the classroom. From being there, we know these are not individual problems but linked to decades of educational and linguistic violence perpetuated against Deaf communities in Canada. We know that job skills learning doesn't solve discrimination at work or on the job market. My analysis also exposes the reporting and funding systems that regulate classroom activities and control the ability of community-based educators to engage in advocacy work. In short, it provides insights into how the LBS program works, where it fails to work in the interests of Deaf stream learners and educators, and the need for change.

INE5a-4 - "Just Pick Them Up": Informal School Exclusion and Caregiver-Led Disability Justice in Ontario

Kristen McKinnon, Ontario Tech University

This paper explores how caregivers of autistic children in Ontario are navigating rising rates of informal school exclusion, and how public legal education can operate as a tool of disability justice rather than simply legal literacy. Rooted in critical disability studies, access to justice theory, and caregiver autoethnography, the paper responds to the growing gap between rights "on paper" and the everyday realities of families facing exclusion. The paper documents the curation of a caregiver advocacy toolkit that translates the Ontario Education Act, Human Rights Code, and relevant case law into plain-language, emotionally accessible resources written from the perspective of a fellow caregiver. Rather than positioning caregivers as passive recipients of support, the paper frames them as legal and political actors engaged in collective resistance to ableist school practices. Drawing on recent findings from Community Living Ontario, ETFO, and Inclusion Action Ontario, alongside legal education work from ARCH Disability Law Centre, the paper argues that informal exclusion functions as a form of quiet institutional violence. It concludes by conceptualizing PLE as a form of movement infrastructure that enables caregivers to shift from isolated crisis management toward collective power-building and systemic change.

(INE5b) Disability and Institutional Ethnography II

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

Disability social movements work to dismantle the violence of ableism and build just communities led by those most impacted by systemic violence. Organizers are at once mitigating the impact of systemic ableism on disabled community members, such as incarceration and poverty, while reconciling with the historic and ongoing violence of institutionalization that haunts crip life (Landry, 2025; Yoshikazi-Gibbons, 2023). Institutional Ethnography (IE) and Political Activist Ethnography (PAE) begin by examining the every day/night lives of disabled, Mad, labelled, and/or chronically ill people to identify the ruling relations governing their lives, and subsequent opportunities for transformation. The methodological pluralism of IE and PAE research encourages research design that is responsive to illness, disability, inaccessibility, and changing material conditions for both researchers and participants. Through this session, we call for Institutional Ethnographers and Political Activist Ethnographers working in critical disability studies, Mad studies and related fields to come together to highlight disability and Mad methodological interventions, accessible knowledge mobilization, and creative community engagement for social transformation.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Megan Linton, Carleton University; Danielle Landry, York University

INE5b-1 - The Social Organization of Health Care for Women with Borderline Personality Disorder: An Institutional Ethnography Proposaly Disorder

Rachel Galea, Trent University

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a psychiatric diagnosis disproportionately applied to women and is commonly associated with harmful and restrictive encounters with health services. Within psychiatric and health care settings, BPD is frequently constructed as “untreatable,” with those carrying the diagnosis characterized as “manipulative,” difficult, or non-compliant. From a Mad studies perspective, these diagnostic framings do not simply describe distress; they function as gendered mechanisms of control that shape how women are governed and receive care within health institutions. Grounded in institutional ethnography, this study begins from the standpoint of women who have received a BPD diagnosis to examine how their health care experiences are institutionally organized. Taking women’s everyday experiences as the point of entry, the research traces how psychiatric knowledge, diagnostic texts, clinical policies, and professional discourses coordinate the work of health care providers and the health work of women with the diagnosis. Analysis will map institutional texts and processes to illuminate disjunctures and ruling relations that mediate experiences across health care settings, as well as how women manage the subjectivities imposed by the diagnosis to navigate these systems. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with women diagnosed with BPD, interviews with institutional actors, ethnographic observations, and textual analysis, the study will examine how gendered assumptions, dominant discourses, and psychiatric authority travel across sites of care. In doing so, it renders visible the ways psychiatric diagnoses operate as forms of institutional power that may produce institutional harm, shaping care pathways and clinical encounters. This work is inspired by Smith and Burstow, centring women’s lived experiences and tracing the ruling relations that govern their health care trajectories. The research contributes to Mad and disability justice efforts by challenging psychiatric authority and exposing forms of institutional ruling embedded within systems of care. Methodologically, the paper

demonstrates how institutional ethnography can function as a Mad-informed, politically engaged approach that disrupts dominant psychiatric knowledges and advances health equity by making visible how ruling relations are organized and coordinated, raising awareness of their effects, and informing policy reform and health service delivery.

INE5b-2 - Technologies of Deferral: Producing Truth in Psychiatric Involuntary Admission Proceedings

Agnieszka Doll, University of British Columbia

Socio-legal scholarship and critical mental health literature have long established that psychiatric expertise plays a decisive role in judicial decision-making, particularly in involuntary admission cases, also called civil commitment. This reliance is so deeply institutionalized that judges often accept psychiatrists' assessments and diagnoses with minimal scrutiny. Yet psychiatric experts, in turn, often reproduce unexamined facts generated by systemically designated authorities, embedding these assumptions into medical files uncritically. This presentation examines how medical and legal professionals co-produce facts and truths about mental illness and dangerousness in civil commitment cases. I argue that these truths are stabilized through routine procedural exchanges and an entrenched practice of deferral, whereby each actor within this system shifts responsibility for assessing mental disturbance onto other systemically designated actors. Drawing on ethnographic observations of court proceedings, interviews with medical and legal professionals, and a detailed analysis of case files, I show how this mutual deferral shapes the narrative that defines the individual subjected to psychiatric power. By tracing how responsibility for accurate diagnosis and critical evaluation is repeatedly displaced, I illustrate how the commitment process enacts and reproduces sanism and epistemic injustice. As technologies of power and practices of deferral naturalize the authority of psychiatric expertise, obscuring the structural conditions that shape decision-making, this analysis offers a clearer understanding of how these everyday professional routines uphold coercive psychiatric practices.

INE5b-3 - The Documents and Demonstrations of Deinstitutionalization in Ontario

Megan Linton, Carleton University

The persistence of disability institutionalization in the province contrasts with the dominant rhetorical paradigm of deinstitutionalization. The construction of developmental disability as a medico-legal classification is such that restrictive record protocols obfuscate contemporary institutionalization data and deinstitutionalization process documents. My experience as a deinstitutionalization political activist and researcher includes a political commitment to public access; for political activist ethnographers, the declassification of documents is an essential tool. This presentation uses arts-based methods and IE/PAE declassification practices to illustrate the tools of bureaucratic obfuscation. Through freedom of information requests, interlibrary loans, and book arts, this research-creation project makes previously classified developmental disability policy ruling texts public and accessible. Engaging George Smith's (1990) strategy of "documents and demonstrations", this project disrupts the dominant paradigm of deinstitutionalization, revealing the bureaucracies that maintain the ongoing violence of institutionalization. As medico-legal classifications of disability continue to obscure the violences of institutionalization, this research-creation offers clearer insight into practices and techniques of disability data de/classification.

INE5b-4 - Donor Dependencies: Exploring the social relations of how people come to be living organ donors

Matthew Strang, York University

Biotechnologies are often promissory or emergent; however, organ donation is somewhat atypical in this respect as it has been an established and ongoing biotechnology for many decades. Living organ donation, though a more recent adaptation and addition to cadaveric donation, has also become a more normalized societal practice over the few decades of its use in the Canadian context. Living organ donation, and thus the living organ donors required for its success, could be said to have become normalized, routinized and commonplace. Organ donation continues to depend on these individuals, donors; especially as cadaveric donation has decreased due to safety laws resulting in less motor accidents and living organ donation increases its overall percentage total of organ transplantation in Canada. For organ transplantation to continue and to increase a reliance on cultivating willing living participants has become central to the way organ donation is organized. The dependence on donors is clear, however the demand for (living) people's organs (though often referred to just as the demand for organs) is not new nor the lack of questioning the need either. What are the social relations responsible for coordinating people to come to living organ donation willingly and in rather large numbers. Might there be something there hoping to accomplish through this hard, complex, serious, and major medical procedure? This paper draws on an institutional ethnographic project on living organ donation to understand the coordination or/the flow of people who come to offer their organs to others. The extension of a recipient's life is directly connected to these people who, for different reasons, come to be living organ donors and who living organ donation depends upon.

(INE6) Teaching & Learning IE: Pedagogue & Praxis in Classrooms/Communities
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

Trying to teach the nuances of Institutional Ethnography, as a research framework, in most settings comes with challenges and possibilities. This session invited empirical, analytic, theoretical and/or reflective submissions that explore the challenges and possibilities of teaching and/or learning Institutional Ethnography in classrooms (undergraduate or graduate) and/or out in communities. This session encouraged generous and generative understandings of teaching and learning and are especially interested in but not exclusive to teachings and learnings of IE that occur in 'non-normative' sites and/or consider how geographical location (i.e. where you are teaching IE, rural, urban, an area that has a history of its use or not) may play in to how you teach or learn IE.

Session Organizer and Chair: Matthew Strang, York University

INE6-1 - What I Learned Teaching and Learning Institutional Ethnography

Suzanne Vaughan, Arizona State University

My presentation draws from my experiences of classroom teaching, both an IE course in a graduate program and a class in social change in undergraduate sociology with IE elements, mentoring students in the ISA IE Americas/UK seminar, and reviewing IE chapters and papers for publication. At first glance, these activities appear disparate, but one commonality for me is that in teaching and

reviewing IE research I have learned more about IE from people as they ask questions and put into motion this mode of inquiry. Over the years, their writing and questions about their project have afforded me a deeper understanding of IE and a better ability to give practical feedback. In my attempts to ground researchers in the fundamentals of IE ontology and avoid pitfalls in doing an IE project, I offer six ideas and several examples from students/researchers that have been useful in learning/teaching IE. These include: 1) introducing/reinforcing IE as a method of discovery, 2) using personal accounts of researchers' own doings or work, 3) using Smith's "small hero" diagram to explore and examine ruling that overpowers their own lives, 4) using collaborative work with others in all phases of their investigation, 5) offering concrete opportunities to test their knowledge of IE and 6) using my own experience to model IE investigations.

INE6-2 - Teaching IE Outside of the Classroom: Conceptualizing a Suite of Tactics and Tools for Community Researchers

Jayne Malenfant, Mcgill University

This paper will explore the pedagogical challenges and possibilities when teaching institutional ethnographic concepts, approaches, and ways of thinking while working on participatory, community-grounded research projects. Through exploring tangible examples from community research projects in the realm of education and housing justice from 2016-2026, I will present moments where teaching IE failed, where concepts showed up in the work unexpectedly, and examples of what has worked well while teaching IE in non-traditional ways and settings. In particular, I will explore how connecting the work of institutional ethnographers to existing knowledge and everyday work can be an avenue to include this alternative sociology into a suite of tools that provide community researchers avenues to understand and act on the issues that impact their lives.

INE6-3 - Educating Towards Liberation: Introducing an Anti Caste Pedagogy Into the Classroom

Sachi Sharma, Independent Scholar

With discussions pertaining to identity on the rise, the concept of intersectionality in particular has become popularized and is now seen as a fundamental theory within the field of sociology. However, it is undeniable that its application within our capitalist society at large tends to center identity reductionism. As important as it is to highlight commonly recognized hierarchies such as race and class, educators must begin to demonstrate that identity is much more multifaceted and complicated. Power dynamics in the current reality are socially constructed to transcend beyond borders. Through using an approach that takes inspiration from anti-imperial scholars such as Patricia Hill Collin's and the Combahee River Collective, this presentation outlines how solidarity with the oppressed must exist in tandem with the recognition of harm. This research builds upon Dorothy E. Smith's insights on institutional ethnography and reflects upon the relationship between the caste system and educational settings. Caste liberation is a crucial part of collective freedom and yet education about the caste system is not easily accessible. Along with necessary reflections, this presentation provides a toolkit for anti-caste related resources of various mediums for educators to refer to.

(INE7) Producing (Inter)Dependence: Relations, Wellness, Health & Technologies (& IE)

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session invited empirical, analytic, or theoretical papers that explore how health and technology leads to the production of (inter)dependence. Specifically, how has the use of technologies in the pursuit of health enabled/fostered/coerced (inter)dependence? And how has this (inter)dependence, frequently amongst multiple players/actors, come to be organized where some of the relations are obfuscated (rendered invisible, disposable, or incidental) while others are prioritised and revered? How have we come not only to rely on but expect and demand the ability to access these technologies (and by proxy this (inter)dependence to extend or improve human life while at the same time curtailing the lives of others/Others (Farmer, 2003; Clarke et al., 2009)? And, what liberatory potential emerges from technologies that foster interdependence through access intimacy, particularly among disability communities (Mingus, 2017)? Emerging technologies often promise to secure our independence but this session seeks to problematize and critique that position by showing how through the use of technologies we often become more (inter)dependent; relying on each other more than ever in complex and consequential ways. Possible (inter)dependencies this session seeks to explore include (but are not limited to) human-to-non-human animal (e.g. animal therapy); human-to-human (e.g. care work, organ transplant); or human-to-non-animal (e.g. medication, mobility devices) relations.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Matthew Strang, York University; Danielle Landry, York University

INE7-1 - Rights-Based Discourses and the Politics of Interdependence in Opioid Use and Chronic Pain Care

Presenting Author - Leigha Comer, Western University

Non-presenting Author - Nikita Kaushik, Western University

Contemporary chronic pain advocacy frequently mobilizes a rights-based discourse that frames access to opioids for pain relief as a pathway to independence. In this paper, we trouble this narrative by examining opioids not as tools of autonomy but as relational technologies that produce complex forms of interdependence. Drawing on institutional ethnographic research on chronic pain care and opioid governance in Canada, alongside our own situated experiences of disability and advocacy, we argue that claims to opioid-enabled independence obscure the social, institutional, and material relations that make opioid use possible. Our analysis shows how opioid prescribing is coordinated through interconnected networks of clinicians, pharmacists, regulatory bodies, surveillance systems, and policy frameworks, producing forms of dependency that extend far beyond the individual patient-drug relationship. At the same time, we examine how advocacy strategies that emphasize independence and productivity can reproduce exclusionary boundaries of biological citizenship. In seeking legitimacy through narratives of responsibility and autonomy, people with chronic pain are often encouraged to distance themselves from other disabled people perceived as “too dependent” on care and from people who use drugs perceived as “too dependent” on illicit drugs. These distinctions obscure the shared reality that for many people with chronic pain, their capacity to live what they describe as a life worth living is fundamentally dependent on complexes of care that include opioids. Grounded in these analyses, this paper reframes opioid use as an interdependent

practice rather than an individual right or failure. We conclude by arguing for a shift away from independence-centered advocacy towards an ethics of care that more honestly acknowledges relational vulnerability and the institutional conditions shaping access to care.

INE7-2 - Doing Institutional Ethnography: a participatory, collaborative reflection

Presenting Authors - Doriane Paso and Fredricka Saunders, North Dakota State University

Non-presenting Authors - Laura Parson, Isaac Mensah, Francisca Nyarko, and Abby Griffin, North Dakota State University

Institutional Ethnography is uniquely positioned to explore this year's conference theme: *Harbours of Hope: Sociology in a Divided World*. Launching from a single human standpoint, reaching into the local and trans-local through human-created texts and text-driven sequences of work, we are subject to our own creations and doings. These creations (texts) and doings (work) can be lost in the web of the social, in the taken-for-granted organizing of our lives. We, as graduate student research participants, and our Faculty PI, from various socio-cultural backgrounds are collaborating to map graduate student enrollment and retention through an institutional ethnographic inquiry. We aim to explore our participation and collaboration through our individual standpoint reflections on the process of working together to create an understanding of what hinders and helps us succeed, no matter our prior educational background. The reflexivity of this institutional ethnography research project informs our map of the social relations of being graduate students. Our individual lived experiences serve as our cartographer's tools. As we reveal the map together, we aim to explore graduate enrollment in our community as we seek to illuminate the institutional shadows that may be concealing hegemony and injustice. We aim to bring these issues into the light to explicate and alleviate and to know how a more just institution may be created. Institutional ethnography helps to level the field, creating a more just world through human-created text (research findings). In this presentation, we hope to demonstrate how the collaborative participatory work of learning and doing IE can bridge divides and discuss the ways that our process of collaborative work fostered hope even as the challenges that January 2025 brought to doing and being in higher education.

(INE8) Embodied Knowledge and Agency: Narratives of Racialized Academics
Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

This session centers the persistent realities of racism, exclusion, and institutional barriers in Canadian universities, while exploring how racialized scholars navigate, resist, and actively shape and transform academic spaces. At its core, the session foregrounds personal narratives and lived experiences, highlighting both the challenges and the accomplishments of racialized faculty, staff, and graduate students. Drawing on Black feminist epistemology, critical race theory, and intersectionality, we approach racialized academics not only as subjects of inequity but as producers of knowledge, enactors of decolonial agency, and navigators of academic worlds. Inspired by thinkers such as Patricia Hill Collins and Frantz Fanon, the session examines how intersecting identities—race, gender, migration, Indigeneity, and more—inform experiences, strategies, and contributions within the academy. This session invited contributions using narrative inquiry, autoethnography, or reflexive storytelling to capture these complex realities. By centering personal experiences, the session highlights the emotional, intellectual, and relational labor that racialized academics perform, showing

how they create mentorship networks, carve out spaces of care, and generate new forms of knowledge despite the institutional constraints.

Session Organizer and Chair: Mohita Bhatia, Saint Mary's University

INE8-1 - Creating Space to Breathe: A Racialized Scholars Collective of Resistance, Care, and Community

Presenting Authors - Randeep Nota, University of Toronto; Jiexing Hu, University of Victoria

Non-presenting Author - Gwen Nguyen, BC Campus

During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, incidents of anti-Asian racism and racialized violence intensified and were widely reported globally, including in Canada. As this racism gained attention in public discourse, many postsecondary institutions responded by offering anti-racism training and producing anti-racism or broader equity, diversity, and inclusion policy statements. However, these responses did not reduce the racialized burdens we experienced as three racialized women working in a predominantly White postsecondary institution. We draw on Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labour as the management of emotions exchanged for a wage (1979, 1983). While Hochschild brings attention to gendered aspects of emotional labour, we also take up Mirchandani's (2003) critique on the need to examine racialized dimensions of emotion work done in paid jobs, alongside later scholarship on racialized feeling rules at work (Wingfield, 2010, 2021). Through this lens, we focus on racial formation (how "Asian" is produced and assigned in context), accent, and the model minority myth. Using collaborative reflexive storytelling—drawing on our individual and collective memories as a knowledge-producing practice rather than "data collection"—we examine (1) how institutions often place anti-racism work on racialized employees, and (2) how collective care practices can reduce that burden. In doing so, we share stories of how institutional expectations of racialized and gendered emotion management become invisible emotional labour and suggest that collective spaces for racialized staff can function as sites of resistance, care, and community.

INE8-2 - Embodied Reflexivity: Gender, Race, and the Politics of Belonging in Transnational Research

Mohita Bhatia, Saint Mary's University

As an ethnographer studying borders and belonging in South Asia, I am deeply attuned to the emotions and experiences of otherness articulated by my respondents. This attunement emerges not only from methodological immersion but also from an ongoing reflexive awareness of my own positionality as an Indian-born, middle-class researcher now based in Canada. Emotional resonance with my interlocutors, combined with a critical recognition of the privileges I hold in South Asia, has long shaped my research practice. Yet what often remains underexplored in my scholarship is how this South Asian fieldwork intersects with my own shifting sense of self as I move across national, racial, and political landscapes. Living and working in Canada, I navigate everyday experiences of racialization and un(belonging) as a "brown," "Indian," woman researcher and instructor. In these spaces, I come to embody forms of otherness that, while structurally distinct, invite reflection on vulnerability, visibility, and exclusion. This raises critical questions: How do I ethically relate my experiences of racialized belonging and unbelonging in Canada to the corporeal and social privilege I

occupy in South Asia? How might a diasporic, cosmopolitan identity be mobilized analytically without collapsing differences between my lived realities and those of my respondents? And how do fluctuating locations of privilege and vulnerability shape both ethnographic knowledge production and everyday academic life? This paper offers a self-reflexive engagement with these questions, situating the researcher's body as a site where borders, citizenship, and belonging are continuously performed. Drawing on theoretical insights from scholarship on performative citizenship, borders, and belonging, I explore how my embodied experiences intersect—without equating—with the narratives of my respondents. By foregrounding reflexivity as an ongoing ethical practice, the paper argues for a feminist ethnographic approach that critically holds together proximity and distance, resonance and difference, and privilege and precarity in transnational research.

INE8-3 - Constellations of Belonging: Visibilizing the Pedagogical Contributions of Educators from Refugee Backgrounds

Nidhi Menon, University of New Brunswick; Zuhra Abawi, York University

This paper untangles the complex roots of violence that contribute to systemic inequities, opportunity gaps, historical and intergenerational trauma, and social exclusion experienced by pre-service and in-service educators from refugee backgrounds in Ontario. Canada has resettled more refugees than any other country in the OECD, with the majority settling in Ontario. Contrary to Canada's global reputation as a nation that welcomes refugees, upholds multiculturalism, and champions human rights, the lived realities of refugees remain shaped by settler-colonial logics of citizenship and belonging (Blinded, 2024). State mechanisms rooted in colonial ideologies continue to uphold whiteness and empire, often weaponizing human rights discourse to regulate, contain, and exclude refugees from the Global South (Blinded, 2023). Within this socio-political climate, marked by rising xenophobia, racial apathy, and right-wing nationalism, the educational trajectories of teachers from refugee backgrounds are shaped by systemic barriers, precarity, and a lack of institutional support. As Ontario's demographics continue to shift, the teacher workforce remains misaligned with the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the students, families, and communities they serve (Blinded, 2020; 2021). While scholarship has extensively documented the systemic underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized educators, there is a critical gap in literature concerning pre-service and in-service teachers of refugee backgrounds in Ontario. This omission is not incidental; rather, it reflects broader patterns of exclusion that render certain bodies and histories invisible within Canadian educational and social institutions. We argue for the re-centring and the visibility of pre-service and in-service teachers of refugee backgrounds by exploring how their histories, identities and aspirations are systematically erased and contested within teacher education programs and school systems. By making visible the experiences of pre-service and in-service teachers from refugee backgrounds, we challenge prevailing discourses that frame them as outsiders or anomalies rather than as integral knowledge producers and contributors.

(INE-RC) Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 12:30pm
Track: Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster

The Institutional Ethnography Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to

network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizers: Colin Hastings, University of Waterloo; Eric Mykhalovskiy, York University

(ITD) Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

(ITD2a) Technology & Society: General Topics I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

As the sociological study of technology continues to progress, many questions remain unanswered regarding the social implications of digital technologies in our everyday lives and on society-at-large. With this in mind, our annual ITDS general session provides a space for digital sociologists to share their diverse research interests and to further foster the growth of this scholarly area in Canada. In-person presentations will cover topics at the intersection of technology and crime, surveillance, agriculture, and procurement.

Session Organizers: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph; Michael Adorjan, University of Calgary; Michael Christensen, Carleton University; Anabel Quan-Haase, Western University

Session Chair: Dylan Reynolds, Cape Breton University

ITD2a-1 - The Impact of Ransomware Attacks on Canadians

Dylan Reynolds and Logan Draper, Cape Breton University

Ransomware attacks often target public and private institutions and can impact institutions, employees, and the public. Institutional operations can be disrupted, including payroll and healthcare functions, and individuals' data can be breached and leaked. This presentation shares findings from a survey of Canadians about the impact of ransomware incidents. Analyses of open-ended questions revealed that emotional tolls were common following ransomware incidents: including fear, anger, and stress. While financial tolls were rarer, some incidents led to increased stress at work, while others required considerable time demands (e.g., to re-secure personal information, accounts, or report to institutions). This presentation will also share descriptive findings from close-ended survey questions about the financial, emotional, and time costs of ransomware incidents. This research provides a better understanding of the breadth of ransomware's impacts in Canada and the multifaceted response required to support the public in the aftermath of incidents.

ITD2a-2 - Proof of humanity as biometric colonial violence: The Orb technology as beyond privacy violation

Tiff Regaudie, Toronto Metropolitan University

The Orb—a freestanding, spherical camera that scans the iris to create a verified humanity profile connected to an online identification number—is said to have been created to address the problem of AI bots roaming the internet. As those AI agents are able to pass the Turing test, the logic goes, you may unknowingly interact with them online as human beings. The solution, as presented by

founders Sam Altman (OpenAI CEO) and Alex Blania, is to verify the embodied humanity of everyone on Earth so that human and AI identities are clearly marked, organized, and reified in virtual space. Proof of humanity is framed as essential for creating a safe and transparent internet in the age of AI agents. In 2021, World scanned 450,000 irises in 24 countries, 14 of which were in developing nations, 8 of which were in Africa. This presentation will take up Armond Towns' Black media philosophy—which combined McLuhan's media theory and Frantz Fanon's anticolonialism—and Simone Brown's Black surveillance studies to show how this act of theft is a continuation of colonial legacies of slavery wherein bodies are used and violated to form white identities—or, in this case, a "safe and transparent" internet and cryptocurrency wealth in the Global North. This paper seeks to ensure race is not forgotten when we discuss contemporary examples of technocapitalist imaginaries of totalitarian surveillance. The Orb, whose primary innovations are the extensive reach at which it can can capture a high-quality iris scan and its sleek, compact design that is easy to mass produce, is a media object that is capable of generating a participatory, luxury surveillance and an oppressive, imposed surveillance. My presentation takes this dichotomy seriously to highlight how the effects of such surveillance, and proof of humanity as a concept, will exacerbate global inequalities.

ITD2a-3 - Enhancing the Kraljic Portfolio Matrix: A Hybrid AI Framework for Augmented Strategic Procurement Decision-Making

Christiana Enebeli, Royal Roads University

This research aims to advance the evolution of the Kraljic Portfolio Matrix (KPM) through the lens of augmented intelligence, positioning Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a collaborator that enhances rather than replaces human decision-making in procurement. While KPM remains a foundational tool for supplier segmentation and procurement strategy development, the traditional form is limited by static categorization and subjective managerial judgment. A recent study applying Machine Learning (ML) has improved KPM's analytical precision; however, it remains a proof of concept, lacks human validation, is limited to automation, and lacks interpretive insight. To address this gap, the proposed study will develop an AI-augmented KPM that integrates three layers: ML for quantitative analysis, Generative AI for interpretive reasoning, and Agentic AI for adaptive learning. The research is grounded in Decision Theory, which offers a conceptual foundation for understanding decision-making through augmented intelligence, and will adopt a Design Science Research (DSR) approach. This will enable the design, development, and evaluation of the AI-augmented KPM (AI-KPM) as an artifact that operationalizes decision-theory principles in strategic procurement. Using AI, the study will leverage publicly available government procurement data from the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) to build market profiles and involve procurement professionals as research participants to review the model's output. The expected contribution lies in advancing KPM from a static, heuristic tool to a quantitative tool, offering both theoretical insights into AI-human collaboration and practical application for data-driven, procurement strategy development.

ITD2a-4 - Cross-Platform Practices and International Students' Social Media Repertoires

Zahra Falahatpisheh, Western University

International students rely heavily on digital platforms to maintain relationships, access information, and navigate everyday life in a new social environment. Rather than using social media platforms in isolation, students often combine multiple platforms in patterned ways, with each platform serving

a distinct social function. Drawing on the media repertoires approach (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006; Boczkowski et al., 2018), this abstract focuses on a section of my PhD proposal and literature review to explore how international students use multiple social media platforms in their everyday lives. This study examines how students move between platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and other social media to stay connected with people in their home countries, form new relationships in their host communities, and access different types of information and support. Rather than focusing on one platform at a time, this study highlights that students' digital experiences are shaped by interconnected platforms. Each platform serves a distinct need, such as private communication, self-presentation, information seeking, or maintaining close social ties. Media repertoires are not random but structured by students' everyday routines, social contexts, and practical needs. By focusing on cross-platform practices, this research shows the importance of examining digital environments as a whole rather than isolated technologies. It also highlights the role of media repertoires in international students' lives, influencing how they manage connections, belonging, and adaptation in a new environment.

ITD2a-5 - Gen Z's Digital Escapism: How Technological Culture Has Shaped the Digital Generation

Hannah Vines, University of Waterloo

Generation Z (Gen Z), often described as the "digital generation," is the first cohort to experience childhood and adolescence extensively mediated by digital technologies. This has coincided with a widespread retreat from analog to digital spaces, frequently described as "digital escapism." Existing sociological and psychological literature tends to explain this shift through sociopolitical stressors, individual pathology, or engineered addiction (Haidt, 2024; Jouhki et al., 2022; Kardefelt-Winther, 2014). This paper offers an alternative interpretation by theorizing digital escapism as a cultural phenomenon shaped by shared narratives, symbols, and meaning-making practices. Drawing on the strong program in cultural sociology (Alexander, 2003), this paper argues that contemporary narratives of techno-utopianism and posthumanism provide key symbolic frameworks through which Gen Z interprets their relationship with technology. These narratives idealize technological mediation, promote intimate human-computer interaction, and encourage transcendence of embodied and social limitations. Rather than viewing Gen Z's digital retreat as a novel response to technological change, this paper situates their practices and discourse within broader cultural patterns that have roots in enduring historical traditions, challenging narratives of technological determinism. By foregrounding culture and meaning, this paper contributes to digital sociology by demonstrating how technological practices are embedded within symbolic systems that precede and exceed individual choice or technological design. The analysis shows that digital escapism is not simply a reaction to technological affordances, but a culturally mediated response shaped by powerful collective imaginaries. The paper concludes by suggesting that understanding digital engagement through cultural narratives transcends psychological or materialistic explanations, addressing a critical gap in the literature for analyzing the social implications of digital technologies and the evolving relationship between technology and contemporary social life.

(ITD2c) Technology & Society: General Topics II

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

As the sociological study of technology continues to progress, many questions remain unanswered regarding the social implications of digital technologies in our everyday lives and on society-at-large. With this in mind, our annual ITDS general session provides a space for digital sociologists to share their diverse research interests and to further foster the growth of this scholarly area in Canada. Virtual presentations will cover topics of platform labour, social media scrolling, and resisting misogynistic online discourse.

Session Organizers: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph; Michael Adorjan, University of Calgary; Michael Christensen, Carleton University; Anabel Quan-Haase, Western University

Session Chair: Michael Christensen, Carleton University

ITD2c-1 - Migrant Workers and Digital Platform Labour: A Literature Review

Laxana Paskaran, York University

In 2024, a Toronto Star reporter went undercover as an Uber Eats courier and made $1.75 per hour over six weeks (Toronto Star, 2024). This reflects a harsh reality for many across the city and particularly for migrants who are disproportionately represented across various platform work (Statistics Canada, 2023). As platform-mediated work reaches unprecedented levels in Canada, this paper represents a timely investigation to advance understanding of migrants' experiences across this sector. This literature review is guided by the following questions: what are the experiences of migrants participating in platform labour? How do these experiences shift, and change based on gender, race, and class differences? This literature review will focus on studies examining migrant-receiving countries across North America and Europe. The purpose of this literature review is to three-fold. First, it aims to establish context and showcase what the current literature establishes between migrants and platform labour, which includes the types of platforms migrants' use to access paid work. Second, it will identify gaps in the existing literature and highlight questions that remain unanswered as it relates to marginalization and social reproduction of migrant workers. Finally, this literature review will critically analyze platforms as existing on a continuum of precarity strengthened by the interrelations of a global political economy (Yin, 2024; Ferguson & McNally, 2025). This literature review is part of a doctoral project that examines migrant women's experiences in platform work across Toronto.

ITD2c-2 - Reclaiming the feed: Examining and transforming social media scrolling for young women through peer discussion

Maia Cassie, University of Toronto

Honourable Mention from the Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award Committee.

Social media scrolling has long been recognized as a powerful, but often harmful, force in young women's lives. Yet little research has focused on how women themselves subjectively experience social media scrolling and reckon with its impact on their lives, which has limited the development of effective interventions or resources. This study uses focus groups with young female-identified social

media users to explore how they understand scrolling, and how intentionality and peer dialogue can transform it into a more positive tool. The author found that young women are troubled by a variety of aspects of scrolling. They often feel ashamed of the content they consume, are unable to engage with content critically due to the mindlessness of scrolling, and find themselves confused and isolated as they navigate this process alone. However, discussing these experiences with peers proved effective in transforming negative emotions into pride and awareness, as well as building a sense of community and mutual support. These findings suggest that peer-based, dialogical approaches to young women's scrolling are both effective and highly desired. Connection and conversation can aid young women in creating personalized scrolling strategies, making sense of complex feelings and reactions, and collectively redefining and reclaiming their social media use. Accordingly, this presentation will offer a replicable model for fostering wellbeing in relation to scrolling that moves beyond restriction to centre young women's lived experiences and needs.

ITD2c-3 - From Inquiry to Impact: Analyzing Canadian Media Portrayals of MMIWG2S+ Post-2019

Spencer Hill, University of Guelph

This research examines how Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls (MMIWG2S+) are represented in Canadian mainstream news media following the 2019 National Inquiry's Final Report. Drawing on qualitative content analysis and reflexive thematic analysis, the study analyzes 260 articles published between 2020 and 2024 in *The Globe and Mail*, *The Toronto Star*, and *The Vancouver Sun*. The analysis assesses whether post-Inquiry reporting reflects the Calls for Justice and meaningful shifts toward equitable, trauma-informed representation. Findings reveal that mainstream coverage continues to privilege institutional authority and procedural framing, with police, courts, and government actors dominating narratives. Indigenous women and girls are frequently referenced only briefly or indirectly, positioned as case details within legal, political, or bureaucratic stories rather than as individuals embedded in families, communities, and cultural contexts. Risk-focused framing, neutral or detached tone, and, graphic descriptions of violence persist, reinforcing long-standing patterns of dehumanization and symbolic erasure. Although some articles acknowledge systemic racism or colonial violence, these critiques are often abstracted from lived experiences and relational perspectives. At the same time, the analysis identifies important counter-narratives. Indigenous-led journalism, family-centered storytelling, and community advocacy foreground Indigenous voices, relational identity, and community knowledge, offering alternative ways of narrating loss and accountability. In addition, some articles explicitly reflect on media bias, newsroom exclusion, and representational harm, signaling moments of institutional self-reflexivity and partial alignment with the Inquiry's Calls for Justice. Situated within the sociology of media and technology, this research highlights how news media function as powerful sociotechnical systems that shape intersectional understandings of gendered and racialized violence, while also revealing the growing role of Indigenous-driven counter-narratives in challenging exclusion and reshaping media power in Canada. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to public awareness and social change by advocating for media practices that uphold justice and equality for MMIWG2S+.

(ITD2d) (Social) Media Representations of Resistance, Empowerment, and Expression

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session highlights scholarship that offers unique insights into the ways that traditional media and social media represent, impact, and enable forms of resistance, empowerment, and emotional expression. Presentations will analyze discourse in its many forms to discuss how social media and news media shape civic engagement, depict gender-equality narratives, and cultivate emotionally-charged discussions of public safety.

Session Organizers: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph; Michael Adorjan, University of Calgary; Michael Christensen, Carleton University; Anabel Quan-Haase, Western University

Session Chair: Michael Adorjan, University of Calgary

ITD2d-1 - In the Service of Platform Imperialism: Netflix's Gender Equality & The Remobilization of Gendered Racialization

Alia Wazzan, Brock University

This paper is part of a larger research project that argues that Netflix's capitalist expansion in the Arab MENA market, through the deployment of its imperialist business model, remobilizes the racialized and gendered epistemologies of the War on Terror on a global scale. It demonstrates how Netflix's business strategies—branding, diverse library curation, original content production, localization, and internationalization—normalize gendered-Orientalist forms of racial profiling that frame the region's populations and cultures within an ongoing War on Terror. Drawing on critical rhetorical analysis and critical discourse analysis, the paper examines Netflix's official documents—such as *The 2023 Netflix Fund for Creative Equity*, among others— and selected speeches of Netflix's content and inclusion officers to analyze what I term Netflix's "gender-equality narrative," articulated through its inclusion and diversity policies and claims of empowering racialized women. I argue that this self-branding relies on racialized and gendered discourse, particularly in the Arab MENA market, a region historically shaped by American cultural imperialism. The analysis centers on Netflix's Because She Created (BSC) initiative, the platform's largest marketing campaign in the Arab MENA market, announced in 2021 and framed as a space for promoting women-centered storytelling from the region. I first introduce the BSC initiative and unpack its articulation through Netflix's official website, outlining the steps taken to operationalize its stated objectives (Kharma; Eltayeb; Sharkawi). I then situate BSC within Netflix's broader "gender-equality narrative" and explain how the campaign revives gendered-Orientalist epistemologies through neoliberal feminist framing (Spivak; Loomba; Ahmed; Abu-Lughod; Eisenstein). Finally, drawing mainly on Davis's notion of "Netflix imperialism," alongside platform and media studies scholarship (Park et al.; Floegel; Jin; Khalil and Zayani; Zaid et al.), the paper analyzes BSC as an infrastructural mechanism that facilitates Netflix's imperial expansion in the region, which can produce long-term impacts on the Arab cultural landscape.

ITD2d-2 - "Medicate and incarcerate": The trust paradox of public anger and fear in Facebook comments

Cassandra Ozog, University of Regina

Researchers have demonstrated the long and discursive relationship between narratives of mental illness and the media, and the ongoing effects of negative representations on public understanding and beliefs. Non-fictional news portrayals of mental illness have heavily favoured violent stories, while fictional portrayals, particularly those in horror and thrillers, have consistently connected mental illness to violence and social chaos. This paper will discuss my research in mapping public discourse and fears surrounding mental illness, and particularly fears of violence, in news media pieces and Facebook comments on news stories through a case study of the Greyhound bus attack in Manitoba, Canada, in 2008. The findings of this project demonstrated significant gaps in public understanding of illnesses such as schizophrenia, particularly when connected to ongoing coverage of violent crimes in news media., and a mistrust of public institutions such as the health care system and government. Critically, the levels of fear and public mistrust identified in this project led to the development of what I present as "the trust paradox," wherein public commenters on Facebook expressed both outrage at the perceived failings of social systems to maintain public safety, and a demand that the same systems continue to be utilized as a means of control and surveillance. This commentary suggests distrust and disappointment with governments for perceived failure in "protecting" the public, positioning governments as directly responsible for protecting citizens. Within this broader discourse two competing narratives were identified regarding the ideal role for the state: on one hand, there was an urgency for a more "tough on crime" stance with criticisms of an effective approach to managing serious crime by the state, and on the other, a demand for more state enforcement of the same systems; thus, the trust paradox.

ITD2d-3 - "Your Body, My Choice" vs. "My Fist, Your Jaw": Shielding Against Online Misogyny in #YourBodyMyChoice

Presenting Authors - Christine Taylhardat, University of Toronto; Cathrine Becker, University of Alberta; Maggie Chekan, Western University

Non-presenting Author - Kaitlynn Mendes, Western University

On November 5, 2024, Nick Fuentes, an American white nationalist podcaster, wrote "Your body, my choice. Forever" on the social media platform, X. Within a week, the post was reposted over 35,000 times. This paper analyzes the response following Fuentes' post - a comment made after Kamala Harris' loss to Donald Trump in the 2024 United States presidential election. This study asks, how do X users react to the phrase "Your Body, My Choice"? To answer this question, we sample 500 unique X posts that used the hashtag or phrase "Your Body, My Choice" (YBMC). Through content analysis, we identify common themes across the posts to understand who was responding to YBMC and how they were responding. We find that the response was predominantly against the phrase YBMC - often using violent rhetoric to express opposition. Among the anti-YBMC group, we also observe expressions of solidarity for women and their bodily autonomy. Conversely, we find that the YBMC supporters are not represented in the violence theme but rather when we actively code for misogyny. The findings of this paper suggest a broad resistance to the premise of the phrase YBMC. We argue that the response from those opposing YBMC is an example of shielding where online users resist the misogynistic rhetoric as well as build solidarity and support among each other (Lopez et al. 2019). By reappropriating the phrase YBMC, users created a counter-narrative to YBMC to fight the normalization of misogynistic rhetoric and call out the inherent violence in the phrase. This paper contributes to existing literature documenting how women fight back and resist misogyny. The

findings of this paper contribute to the understanding how people resist online misogyny at a time of increased misogynistic sentiments in online and public spheres.

(ITD3) Mobilizing the Digital Public

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session is cross-listed with the track (PSM) Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster. Digital technologies have become central arenas for both democratic participation and democratic erosion. Online platforms and communities are mobilized for (and against) democracy as tools of resistance, persuasion, or control. This session presents three papers, which attempt to bridge digital sociology and the study of contentious politics to address the social, cultural, and political implications of technologically-mediated mobilization and political engagement. These papers draw on qualitative data to examine how a network of YouTube video essayists understand their role as a community, the responsibilities they assume as content creators, and the political effect of their work vis-à-vis political persuasion and/or inspiring non-virtual social mobilization, how activists mobilize publics through social media and call attention to media institutions and infrastructures as targets and venues of contentious politics, and how fear-based narratives in digital environments perpetuate ideological insularity, political extremism, and function as tools of hegemonic control. These papers offer nuanced views on the role of digital platforms in shaping public sphere in an era of democratic backsliding.

Session Organizers: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph; Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University

Session Chair: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph

ITD3-1 - Community, Counterpublic, or Fandom? The Rise and Fall of Breadtube.

Madeline Cranston, University of Waterloo

Following the election of Donald Trump and #Gamergate, Youtube developed a ferocious new opponent: Breadtube. In 2016, Breadtube referred to a network of Youtube video essayists, who assembled to combat the dominance of social media's radicalizing, alt-right content (Kuznetsov & Ismangil, 2020; Sankofa, 2023). The community echoed the social media's brief age of innocence, in which digital utopianism, belief in the internet's powers of radical liberation, marked its culture (Turner, 2008). Yet, in 2026, essayists are now careful to avoid the category "Breadtuber" for the title of entertainer or artist. Through semi-structured interviews with Breadtube video essayists, this paper investigates how members understand Breadtube as a community, and what responsibilities they assume as content creators within it. Ultimately, participants did not identify as activists or political actors. They asserted Breadtube is now an antiquated algorithm-invented label, rather than community with coherent ideological aims. Moreover, participants doubted they were capable of political persuasion or inspiring non-virtual mobilization. Instead they appreciated that video essays, as a long-form artistic medium, could foster democratic curiosity, dialogic conversation, and critical thinking skills. In sum, Breadtubers were collectively interested in promoting democratic ways of *thinking with* the internet. However, they did not assume to be in the service of a communal project--nor did they believe in such a possibility on Youtube. Thus, this paper contributes to the study of

digital publics in contrasting the academic narrative of Breadtube as a tactical counterpublic against it's dissonant private culture. It also reveals the tensions created by creators' commitment to justice and the individualistic, entrepreneurial profit structure of YouTube. Lastly, the paper captures how the shift from digital utopianism to cynicism can challenge harmful and misleadings expectations for digitally mediated activism, yet also distance creators from their responsibilities, ethics, and standards of excellence to a community, institution, or purpose.

ITD3-2 - Mirrors and Messaging: The Role of Traditional and Digital Media in Serbia's Protests, 2020-2025

Emma Brandt, University of Waterloo

Over the past decade, Serbia has seen several major protest movements, including the current student-led protests against an increasingly autocratic regime. Throughout these protests, activists have marshalled increasingly sophisticated technologies and rhetorics of resistance, employing social media campaigns, humor, and spectacle to advance their goals. This paper argues that these protests not only mobilize publics through media; they call attention to media institutions and infrastructures as targets and venues of contentious politics. Media have served as a way to channel and disseminate information about protests; they have also become a target of critique. By staging political actions at the state institutions charged with regulating electronic media or naming and shaming sensationalist outlets while protesting political corruption and violence, these movements have highlighted the role of media capture, censorship, and suppression as key tactics of the state in Serbia. This paper analyzes the role of media institutions in social movements by examining the metaphor of the "mirror"—an idea referenced by media activists in everyday conversation as well as a symbol used in previous protests—and how it frames media as indistinguishable from the political corruption, suppression, and violence against which these movements are mobilizing. This paper draws on the case of Serbia to advance our understanding of how misinformation, polarization, and media suppression reshape possibilities for social mobilization and democratic movements across global contexts. Drawing on a year of ethnographic research in Serbia including interviews, participant observation, and media analysis, this paper situates the relationship of media to democracy and authoritarianism in the context of the successive social movements that have taken place in Serbia over the last five years. By unpacking these dynamics, this paper examines the ongoing protests as illuminating broader questions of what being a mediated subject—and *citizen*—means in the present day.

ITD3-3 - Governed by Grievance: Political Narratives of the Digital Echo Chamber

Sheena Bennett, University of Windsor

Digital echo chambers have emerged as an invaluable mechanism for the American Right to circulate misinformation and disinformation. They leverage fear to anchor ideological divides and reinforce confirmation bias. More specifically, these digital spaces facilitate the rapid and recursive dissemination of falsehoods that both radicalize anxious publics and pose harm to marginalized communities. These dynamics are further legitimized when echoed by political elites, including the President of the United States. This research employs Arlie Hochschild's deep story framework, George Lakoff's "Strict Father Model," and Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony to analyze how fear-based narratives in digital environments perpetuate ideological insularity, political

extremism, and function as tools of hegemonic control. Additionally, I contend that the emergence of echo chambers marks the breakdown of the communicative "public sphere." While preceding scholarship has established that emotions shape political worldviews perhaps more powerfully than empirical discourse, this research extends this approach by positioning echo chambers as reactionary forces at the forefront of this discussion. These spaces operate as amplifiers of radicalization, where they do not only reinforce the belief systems, but actively manufacture them as well.

(ITD4) New Theoretical Approaches in Digital Sociology

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

The latest generation of Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies seem to present unique social problems on a daily basis, as well as new elaborations of existing problems. As digital sociology expands to the point at which most social phenomena are in some way shaped by digital technologies, algorithms and connected forms of communication, scholars are working to develop new theories to understand digital society. This session welcomed papers that contribute to efforts in sociology to theorize the impact of digital technologies on social interactions and collective life, with a particular emphasis on grappling with the question of theoretical novelty.

Session Organizer and Chair: Michael Christensen, Carleton University

ITD4-1 - The 'Stickiness' of Social Media: Theoretical Frameworks and Empirical Findings

Jesse Carlson, Acadia University

This paper reports on the early stages of a qualitative study investigating the 'stickiness' of social media (cf. Brinberg et al. 2023; Cuesta-Valino et al. 2022). It develops a flexible framework of hypotheses about the strength, sources, and forms of social media attachment from a review of theoretical approaches and empirical studies, including Gent's (2024) analysis of algorithmic management; Brown and Quan-Haase's (2012) study of digital produsage; communicative capitalism and neofeudalism (Dean 2024); Birch's (2023) analysis of assetization; monopolization arguments (Giblin and Doctorow 2022); rent-focused studies of subscription services (Geyer 2024); and investigations of exploitation, alienation, and the colonization of the lifeworld (Fuchs 2022).

ITD4-2 - A take on Social Construction of Technology: The Social Structuration Model

Cole Heffren, Western University

Modern sociotechnical systems currently face high levels of uncertainty. They are increasingly required to mediate decision-making, institutional authority, and governance in the development and implementation of cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). While the Social Construction of Technology Theory (SCOT; Pinch and Bijker 1984) offers an important accounting of how technologies are socially constructed through evolutionary processes of sensemaking from differing groups, it is unable to reconcile how the final utility of a technology is reified based on power asymmetries, institutional hierarchies, and structural rules and norms. This article introduces the Social Structuration Model of Technology (SSMOT), which integrates SCOT, Giddens's Structuration theory, and adaptive systems (Meadows 2008) thinking to address this gap. Instead of viewing technological development as a linear process that achieves rhetorical closure, the model

conceptualizes a multi-level process in which meaning-making, power, and systemic feedback shape its utility over time. Drawing on the implementation of AI technologies in a Canadian policing context as an illustrative case study, this article details how closure around modern, rapidly developing technologies such as AI often reflects organizational and political stabilization more than a settlement around their technological meaning. The model does not propose to offer predictive or causal explanations of technological change; instead, it offers an analytical framework for identifying interactions across micro-, meso-, and macro-levels of sociotechnical systems. Beyond policing, SSMOT contributes to broader discussions on sociological debates on power, epistemic fragility, and institutional adaptation.

ITD4-3 - Frames, Codes, and Topics: Theorizing the Interpretive Analysis of Social Media Data

Michael Christensen, Carleton University

This paper presents a theoretical reflection on the process of interpreting social media data. It draws on data that was gathered as part of a larger project to understand vaccine misinformation spread during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. While most scholars agree that misinformation on social media platforms such as Twitter was (and is) a ubiquitous problem, attempts to define, isolate, or map specific instances have often been bogged down in questions about demarcation criteria, semantic intention, and other complex problems better located in the Philosophy of Language. For Sociologists studying misinformation, one promising option has been to focus on the social meaning of misinformation. In this sense, understanding misinformation has less to do with the veracity of individual statements and is more open to interpreting posts as artifacts expressing larger structures of meaning. This paper explores two theoretical routes for constructing this type of analysis: through Goffmanian frame analysis and a conception of cultural codes developed by cultural sociologists. To outline the argument for using interpretive sociological theory, the paper also offers an analytical comparison between these approaches and increasingly common automated approaches to content analysis, such as topic modelling. While the outputs of topic models are often taken as reflecting structures of meaning, the paper asks whether automated thematic analysis can, in fact, be compatible with a theoretically informed analysis of social media data.

(ITD5) Privatizing Tomorrow: Elite Imaginaries and the Politics of AI Futures

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

Who gets to decide what tomorrow looks like? This session examines how elite actors construct visions of AI futures that legitimize their authority over collective decision-making. As artificial intelligence becomes central to social, economic, and political life, understanding how certain technological futures come to appear inevitable while alternatives are marginalized becomes essential for democratic governance. Drawing on science and technology studies, economic sociology, and discourse analysis, papers in this session explore how private visions become public expectations. By bringing together diverse perspectives on AI future-making, we examine how technological imaginaries operate as forms of power and explore pathways toward more democratic and inclusive technological futures.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tanveer Rouf, University of Toronto

ITD5-1 - Innovation = Salvation? Theoretical Insights on Pro-AI Discourse

Carly Morencie, University of Guelph

In recent years, we have seen the rapid development and widespread adoption of AI technologies, especially Large Language Models, sparking lively and divided public discourse. This paper is part of a larger endeavour to analyse both support for and opposition to AI development, focusing first on a theoretical basis for the supportive discourse that often implies reverence of the technology, inevitability, and promises of sweeping societal transformation: even transcendence. Drawing on theory of the sacred from Durkheim, Jeffrey C. Alexander's Civil Sphere Theory, Bauman on the social production of moral distance, and Arendt's writing on ideology, I explore how pro-AI attitudes are produced and defended as cultural and political constructions. Societal dependence on digital technologies, as well as the opaque and often misunderstood workings of AI systems have generated mystification in discourse that sometimes employs quasi-religious language, as in being "blessed by the algorithm." These sentiments are the culmination of much more than (mis)interpretations of technological capability: they reveal a cultural narrative of technological innovation tied to power, modern rationality, and moral coding. The paper also situates pro-AI discourse within elite political and economic strategy. Narratives that frame AI development as historically necessary legitimise actors who have staked vast material and symbolic resources on its rapid expansion. Enthusiastic claims of inevitable AI-driven progress find grounding in the closed logic of 'technological determinism', securing moral defensibility by symbolically coding resistance as irrational or anti-progress. By foregrounding discourse over technical capability, this paper suggests that democratic engagement with AI development benefits from closer attention to how moral authority is constructed and how certain interests are embedded in celebratory narratives. This perspective opens analytical space for considering alternative technological trajectories instead of accepting AI's current trajectory as inevitable.

ITD5-2 - AIDA Postmortem: Civil Society Perspectives on AI Regulation

Presenting Author - Alanna Acchione, University of Western Ontario

Non-presenting Author - Aditi Vashistha, University of Western Ontario

Bill C-27 and AIDA were introduced suddenly in June 2022, marking the first update to Canadian privacy legislation in twenty years. AIDA was dedicated specifically to regulating AI systems in response to the rapid emergence and growing accessibility of the technology. After backlash over the lack of public consultation during the bill's drafting, Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) stated that it had held "more than 300 meetings with academics, businesses and members of civil society regarding this bill" (2022, p. 1635), though a subsequent study showed that two-thirds of those consulted were businesses (Clement, 2023). Over the following year, 167 stakeholders testified, and 116 briefs were submitted to the INDU committee before the bill was ultimately prorogued. This study employs thematic analysis and affinity diagramming to assess the overlapping aspirations of civil society stakeholders for AI legislation, as expressed in their briefs and consultations. These groups most directly represent citizens through shared interests or collective activity— here, concerning the public's stake in AI governance. The findings show that civil society stakeholders want AI legislation to prioritize the privacy rights of Canadians— especially children and members of vulnerable communities— over the private interests of businesses. They call for

mechanisms for harm prevention, such as privacy risk assessments, and for clear frameworks of accountability in cases of privacy infringement. Ultimately, the concerns raised around privacy and consent, transparency, and accountability point to broader weaknesses in Canada's privacy framework and reflect a deeper tension between technological encroachment and the protection of human rights.

ITD5-3 - Between Efficiency and Ethics: Frameworks for Responsible AI in The University of Calgary

Shifa Nabi, University of Calgary

This research project investigates the discursive framing of generative AI integration within higher education. Prompted by the technology's rapid enculturation and the researcher's own reflexive experience of shifting learning paradigms, the study asks: How do the official policies and strategic communications of the University of Calgary frame the trade-offs between the operational efficiencies offered by Generative AI and the broader ethical concerns associated with its adoption?

Synthesizing a Marxist analysis with the sociology of knowledge, the project theorizes AI integration as a site of ideological struggle, where market-driven imperatives for efficiency may constrain pedagogical values. Methodologically, it employs a qualitative content analysis of three data streams: official institutional communications (policies, strategies), corporate marketing from AI providers, and social media discourse from the UCalgary community. This tripartite analysis identifies conceptual frames (such as "tool" versus "partner," or "innovation" versus "ethical oversight") to empirically map the prevailing narratives. The significance of this work is its urgent intervention against an uncritical adoption of AI that risks refashioning the university from a public sphere for critical thought into an efficient factory for producing AI-compatible labour. By diagnosing the material and ideological forces embedded in institutional discourse this research aims to equip stakeholders to contest simplistic efficiency narratives and advocate for a responsible, ethically-grounded integration of technology that truly serves humane educational ends.

(ITD6) Audio-Visual Digital Methods

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

There has been a significant increase in the use of digital methods by qualitative sociologists since the pandemic, as they allow researchers to transcend barriers of time and space to connect with a diverse range of participants that may not otherwise be possible using in-person methods. Digital methods in sociological research are adapting to social and technological transformations in our society in which digital spaces facilitate the workings of everyday life (e.g. work, socializing, time management, leisure, and consumption). The advantage is that digital methods allow access to the intimate and everyday lives of participants across a wide range of geographical and temporal spaces, using the very digital tools that have become familiar and close-at-hand accompaniments to how we conduct our lives. The use of digital methods poses unique considerations for researchers: we must think closely about what kind of data we seek to collect in these spaces, how we will interpret it, as well as how we use that data to tell stories and to what end. We are particularly interested in how these methods facilitate or constrain both researchers and participants, their potential and limits for revealing everyday life, and examples of knowledge mobilization aims, techniques, and challenges.

Session Organizers: Lesley Frank, Acadia University; Alyssa Gerhardt, Dalhousie University, Acadia University; Elisabeth Rondinelli, Acadia University

Session Chairs: Lesley Frank, Acadia University; Alyssa Gerhardt, Dalhousie University, Acadia University

ITD6-1 - Mapping Memories: An Interactive Method to Recover, Visualize, and Celebrate Midwifery's History in Nova Scotia

Emma Nelson, Dalhousie University

The impacts of geography on human activity have been increasingly incorporated into sociological research but remain underanalyzed in the study of the development of Canadian women's health. Inspired by the growing use of digital methods to transcend temporal and spatial barriers, this project utilizes interactive digital mapping as a spatial methodology to recover and synthesize the fragmented history of midwifery in rural Nova Scotia. Archival material on Nova Scotian midwifery is scattered, and those with knowledge of how midwifery was transformed across the province are passing away without a means of sharing their knowledge. Often, they have simply not been asked to share. This project argues that the material exists—it is simply waiting to be "stitched" together and that using online, digital means can help ensure its long-term preservation. This presentation discusses the use of an interactive mapping platform as the development of a "quilt of experience," where the presentation of data becomes a method of analysis. By having audio recordings of interviews, site-specific soundscapes, and digitized images and documentation embedded into its geographic interface, the map functions as an accessible, interactive, and multi-sensory platform. Limits of this digital method will also be discussed. While the tool allows for users to "zoom" between macro-level provincial networks and the micro-level of a single home or neighbourhood, it also poses an analytical challenge of the map's "blank spaces." This presentation examines how the researchers can analyze the implications behind these gaps: as potential losses of data, as unrecorded connections, or simply as prompts for speculative interpretation. Ultimately, this project demonstrates how digital mapping serves as a powerful tool for knowledge mobilization and celebrates the intimate and radical history of midwifery in Nova Scotia.

ITD6-2 - TikTok Tactics: Devising a Systematic Methodology for Qualitative Studies using TikTok

Anna Henry, University of Guelph

With 1.36 billion global users as of January 2026 (Statista 2026), TikTok is a tremendously popular social media platform. However, as a social media platform, TikTok presents unique challenges for researchers hoping to use the platform for qualitative studies. Search results are created based on an algorithm that includes not only your current search terms, but also your past searches, as well as videos viewed by other TikTok users who searched for similar topics (TikTok 2025). Since previous searches are factored into later searches, the algorithm produces unique and customized search results each time. These results cannot be sorted with the default user interface and are not necessarily returned in any sort of hierarchy or order. Based on previous research using TikTok to study how people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) self-advocate for the destigmatization of OCD, this paper proposes a systemic methodology for doing qualitative studies using TikTok. This presentation will discuss the challenges and opportunities for qualitative research presented by TikTok, the methods that I used to try to overcome these issues, and challenges that still remain. This

paper contributes to discussions surrounding maintaining scientific rigor when using apps with proprietary algorithms.

ITD6-3 - Video Games as Research Sites: Using Valorant to Access Gaming Environments as an Autistic Gamer

Dante Pio, Carleton University

As our digital society advances, there are increasingly more options for research sites to conduct digital research. Video games have been a growing site of conducting research with Autistic gamers within Game Studies, as researchers can begin to understand how their experiences in a digital environment can be different from the physical world. This paper presents research from my Master's thesis, where I used an autoethnographic phenomenological approach to understand my experiences and identity development in a technological environment, such as video games, specifically while playing the first-person shooter (FPS), Valorant. For my autoethnography, I analyzed digital diaries that I recorded while playing eighteen matches of Valorant, taking notes on my thoughts, feelings, and emotions, while thinking about how social interactions online are different compared to in-person interactions. For my second methodology, I looked at the Reddit forums r/Autism and r/Valorant to understand how other Autistic users describe their experiences playing Valorant. Through this research, I found that my experiences are complex when thinking about how video games can be used as a research site. Technological issues, such as network problems, can negatively shape the emotional relationship between the user and the video game, as these technological problems can interfere with the accessibility of video games for Autistic gamers. Additionally, the social interactions occurring in video games demonstrates found ableism through text-based communication in Valorant's in-game chat box yet demonstrates neutrality and congratulatory messages based on gameplay. Such digital communication can indicate that video game environments can have positive, negative, and neutral experiences contributing to the varying emotions that Autistic gamers like me experience. The emotional rises and falls demonstrate recognizing how video games can be less ableist and needing to think further about how to use video games as consumers and researchers.

ITD6-4 - Connecting Across Time and Space: Reflections on a Digital Ethnographic Method

Presenting Authors - Lesley Frank, Elisabeth Rondinelli, Acadia University; Alyssa Gerhardt, Acadia University, Dalhousie University; Rubby Harrington, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Nova Scotia (CCPA-NS)

Non-presenting Author - Jane Francis, Acadia University

Our paper draws from the methods used in a SSHRC Insight funded project, *Finding Formula: Confronting Insecurities* that used methods including virtual interviews, online surveys, digital ethnography and visual storytelling. In this session we will focus on the results and reflections of the digital ethnography when we spent six weeks with 39 caregivers across Canada and the United States and collected their stories of feeding babies during and after the North American infant formula shortages. We connected with participants through a qualitative research app called *Indeemo,* with participants responding to weekly prompts with submissions of visual and audio data. The ethnography explored topics related to parenting, food work, food insecurities (both commercial and financial), and calls for change. Participants submitted data in an array of formats, including collages,

drawings, videos, songs, poems, and diary entries. In this paper, we share methodological considerations and reflections on digital ethnographic methods in sociological research and share post-study debrief data from caregivers about their experiences as participants. For example, what is gained or lost from ethnographic methods that connect researchers and participants across time and space. We will also share examples of collaboratively produced video and audio stories which will be used as both a research tool and for knowledge mobilization on a public-facing website.

(ITD7) State and Future of Ethnic Media in Canada

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

At the beginning of the 21th century, longstanding ethnic publications in Canada struggle to stay afloat. In some immigrant communities, ethnic media are struggling to remain economically viable and culturally relevant due to unpredictable advertising revenue, declining readership, a disconnect between ethnic media topics and community members' reality, combined with challenges of cultural and language retention, communities' geographical dispersal, and trepidations about adopting digital platforms to deliver news to regular readers while simultaneously seeking to attract new, younger readers and viewers. Within this climate, some have begun to question the role of ethnic media altogether. For example, Sanzone and Principe (2023: 176), in a book containing the first collection of ethnic media investigations in Canada, question if ethnic media remains "the right tool" to lead the integration of immigrant populations to mainstream society. They suggest that it may be time that ethnic media's role "be reconsidered." It is this context of change and ethnic media uncertainties that drive our interest in ethnic media and in organizing this panel to discuss the nature and future of ethnic media across various diasporas.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Luís LM Aguiar, University of British Columbia, Okanagan; Farrah Bérubé, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

ITD7-1 - "Preachers of Division and Evil": The Greek-Language Press and Intra-Community Conflict in Toronto (1950s-1970s)

Alexandros Balasis, York University

Following the Second World War, Toronto became a key destination for Greek migrants. Although a few Greek-language periodicals circulated earlier, it was only in 1958, with the founding of the first Greek newspaper in Toronto, that the city saw the emergence of a sustained and organized Greek-language press. Despite its significance, the history of Toronto's Greek press remains understudied. This presentation draws on Greek newspapers published in Toronto from the 1950s to the 1970s to explore how these publications functioned not only as tools of cultural preservation or integration but also as negotiation platforms. It identifies three key areas of intra-community conflict in which newspapers played an active role: first, the divide between pre-war Greek Canadians and post-war newcomers; second, the long-standing power struggle between the Greek Community of Toronto and the Greek Orthodox Church; and third, the ideological rifts surrounding the Greek Dictatorship (1967-1974). By examining how these newspapers covered contentious issues, the study argues that the ethnic press functioned less as a unification factor and more as a central actor in forging contested discourses around community dynamics, institutional legitimacy, and political engagement across local, regional, and transnational contexts.

ITD7-2 - Something to Write About: Portuguese Ethnic Media's Defining Issues in Post-Pandemic Society.

Presenting Authors - Farrah Bérubé, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières; Luís LM Aguiar, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Author - Carlos Teixeira, University of British Columbia

Post-Pandemic Canada is changing rapidly with many challenges arising and seemingly few opportunities for securing an economic and cultural future. Most communities across the country are stressed and exhausted by today's economic uncertainties and political marginalization. Canada's ethnic press can provide a unique lens to examine the country's changing cultural patterns and economic priorities. More specifically, and in this study, we examine how Portuguese print ethnic media in Montreal is conceiving of current social change and how they are interpreted and articulated them to their community of readers? Through a content analysis of Portuguese ethnic media in Montreal, we identify themes covered and discusses since the Pandemic, whilst also zeroing on how these media themes are conceived and articulated. We place this analysis within the local media's history, and in relation to unfolding developments in Quebec and Canada. We are interested in ascertaining the correspondence between ethnic media themes and their correspondence with (or not) themes fronted in mainstream media discussions. The point of this research is to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of ethnic media and the latter's ongoing relevance in spite of challenges to their economic feasibility and future.

ITD7-3 - From the East: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Black-owned Media in Atlantic Canada.

Brian Daly, University of King's College

Black media entrepreneurs in Atlantic Canada are trying to serve a younger, increasingly fragmented market while competing with larger media companies for subscribers and funding. Black communities are geographically dispersed across four provinces, and they lack legacy media properties. At the same time, immigrants from the Caribbean and, more recently, sub-Saharan Africa, are diversifying Black Atlantic communities that have traditionally been dominated by descendants of American slaves who arrived in the pre-Confederation period. A qualitative case study analysis examines how media entrepreneurs are maintaining their social and cultural relevance amidst unprecedented demographic change on the east coast. Methodologically, I do this via a historical periodization of the media, an industry profile, and content analysis of Black publications in the Atlantic region.

ITD7-4 - How does ethnic social media use impact immigrants' integration?

Presenting Author - Leah Hamilton, Mount Royal University

Non-presenting Author - Ran Ju, Mount Royal University

What forms of ethnic media are used by immigrants in Canada and how do they impact the integration process? In a mixed-methods study using focus groups and a survey with Chinese immigrants, we found that different social media platforms serve distinct purposes in the integration process. WeChat is heavily used for connecting with family and friends back in China, as well as local

Chinese immigrants. Importantly, WeChat use contributes to ethnic identity, Canadian identity, and psychological adaptation. These findings suggest that ethnic communication on social media has positive effects during the integration process. This stands in contrast to previous studies showing that ethnic communication distances immigrants from the host culture. We discuss how we are extending these findings by examining how ethnic media impacts political and civic engagement during the integration process.

(ITD8) Hybrid Futures: The Mediatization of Work, Leisure, and Time

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session explores how hybrid work, leisure, and mediated selfhood are reshaping the boundaries between labour, leisure, and identity in the post-COVID era. The normalization of hybrid arrangements has intensified the entanglement of technological infrastructures, organizational cultures, and everyday practices of time, embodiment, and affect. From algorithmic scheduling to digital presence and performative self-display, mediated systems increasingly organize how individuals experience connection, productivity, and control. We invite submissions that interrogate these transformations through sociological and interdisciplinary lenses, asking how media, technology, and capitalist rationalities structure the temporal, emotional, and embodied dimensions of contemporary life.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Christian de Vrij, Queen's University; Spencer Huesken, Queen's University

ITD8-1 - Navigating the Monitoring Divide: How IT, Managers, and Employees Understand Workplace Surveillance

Presenting Author - Danielle E. Thompson, University of Waterloo

Non-presenting Author - Adam Molnar, University of Waterloo

Employee monitoring applications (EMAs) are software tools used by companies to track the behaviours and activities of employees through features such as communications monitoring, keystroke logging, location tracking, time tracking, screen recording, social media usage, and facial recognition technology. Driven by operational needs for security, efficiency, and remote work management, the adoption of EMAs by Canadian companies skyrocketed alongside the shift to remote/hybrid working arrangements following the pandemic (Thompson & Molnar, 2023). While early research surveyed owners/managers on the adoption and use of these technologies (Thompson & Molnar, 2023), as well as employees to assess perceptions and sentiment (Capterra, 2022), there is an absence of literature that examines the perceptions of Information Technology (IT) personnel as the gatekeepers of company privacy and security. We conducted a survey examining the experiences, perceptions, and sentiments of employees, managers, and IT personnel with EMAs across Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec. In this presentation, we triangulate their responses to outline how understandings of what constitutes privacy and transparency at work, as well as perceived benefits and impacts of EMA technologies are experienced across these three participant groups. Overall, our findings suggest that EMAs continue to be poorly received by employees within

the workplace and present serious risks to employee privacy, trust, and satisfaction that greatly outweigh the gains made in company security and efficiency.

ITD8-2 - Bonding and Boundaries: How Men Do Masculinity Through Hobbies

Christian de Vrij, Queen's University

Amidst shifting gender norms and a contemporary “crisis of masculinity,” leisure has emerged as a key space where men negotiate identity, community, and social status. This paper presents early findings from an ongoing multi-site ethnographic study examining how men use hobby participation to build belonging and moral worth under contemporary conditions of insecurity. Drawing on fieldwork across hobby communities that blend in-person and online interaction (e.g., clubs, meetups, forums, and social media), I ask: (1) How do men narrate what their hobby “does” for them? (2) What forms of masculinity are made visible, rewarded, or policed in these spaces? (3) How do class resources shape who can participate, how participation is evaluated, and what counts as legitimacy? My analysis combines participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and the collection of publicly available digital artifacts (posts, images, comment threads) where hobby competence and taste are displayed and contested. Drawing on a synthesis of Bourdieu’s concepts of field and capital with theories of hegemonic and hybrid masculinities, I examine hobby settings as everyday arenas where masculinity is negotiated through displays of skill, risk, and authenticity, while also navigating boundaries around expertise, respectability, consumption, and emotion. I also consider how mediatization amplifies these dynamics, extending recognition and gatekeeping onto platforms, producing new hierarchies of “virtual capital.” At the same time, these communities are not only stratifying arenas but can also operate as important infrastructures for homosocial bonding. Shared practice and routine interaction create opportunities for mutual recognition, emotional support, and communal belonging; forms of connection often constrained by dominant masculine scripts. By juxtaposing these dynamics, I examine how bonding and boundary-making co-occur in hobby worlds, shaping who feels at home, who gains recognition, and what comes to count as legitimate participation.

ITD8-3 - Deep Mediatization and the New Spirit of Capitalism: The Moral Economy of Hybrid Work

Spencer Huesken, Queen's University

This research examines how hybrid work reorganizes the moral economy of labor under conditions of deep mediatization in the post-pandemic workplace. While much research treats hybrid work as a spatial or temporal arrangement concerning where and when work is performed, this paper approaches it as a cultural and moral reconfiguration of work shaped by platform infrastructures. Drawing on 51 semi-structured interviews with workers across public and private sector organizations in Canada, this research investigates how digital platforms operate not simply as tools of coordination but as organizing infrastructures that shape meaning, obligation, and legitimacy at work. This research demonstrates that platforms increasingly function as the primary site through which work is entered, coordinated, and evaluated. Logging on marks organizational entry; calendars, status indicators, and shared portals encode presence and availability; and meetings, decisions, and recognition persist as searchable and auditable traces. These infrastructural arrangements do more than facilitate efficiency. They organize tempo, render responsiveness morally legible, and transform flexibility into an everyday obligation that must be continually enacted. Under hybrid conditions,

autonomy, adaptability, and connectivity are not merely afforded but moralized as indicators of commitment and good work. This research further shows how organizations and workers actively participate in stabilizing this order. Organizations disrupted by the pandemic reconstruct coherence through digital rituals, managerial narratives, and hybrid policies that frame flexibility as both privilege and expectation. At the individual level, workers engage in narrative sensemaking to reconcile constant connectivity, blurred boundaries, and competing roles, translating institutional demands into personal virtues such as discipline, care, and professionalism. Hybrid work thus appears not simply as a new arrangement but as a moral settlement that is experienced as both governing and ordinary.

(ITD9) Social Media and the Future of Health & Medicine

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

While Dr. Google has long been a primary source for those seeking health and medical information online, this position is increasingly rivaled by newer players in the digital health landscape: for example, Dr. TikTok and Dr. Instagram. Social media platforms have become central to how health knowledge circulates, how users understand their own well-being, and how industries, institutions, scientists, and lay experts communicate. The social media feed is now a critical site where health is visualized, marketed, and collectively interpreted. This session invited researchers examining the sociological intersections of health/medicine and social media. By bringing together a range of topics concerning social media and health, this session aims to highlight the transformative power of platforms, as well as numerous other online actors including content creators, algorithms, followers, affordances, etc., in redefining health communication, expertise, and embodiment.

Session Organizer and Chair: Milana Leskovac, Queen's University

ITD9-1 - Narratives of young-onset dementia on TikTok: Who gets to tell the story?

Presenting Authors - Darryn DiFrancesco, University of Northern British Columbia; Florence Kalia, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Author - Aderonke Agboji, University of Northern British Columbia

Young-onset dementia (YoD), defined as dementia diagnosed before age 65, is expected to increase in Canada, with an estimated 40,000 cases by 2050. Unlike other forms of dementia, a young-onset diagnosis presents unique challenges, as many patients must navigate newfound barriers related to working, parenting, meeting financial obligations, and loss of identity, among others. Popular narratives, including those in media, often frame dementia patients as having a credibility deficit: as the disease progresses, their credibility becomes increasingly scrutinized. As a result, dementia patients report perceptions of negative stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, even from health care providers (Nguyen & Li, 2020). Despite growing recognition of these challenges, research on YoD patient perspectives remains limited. Video-based platforms like TikTok are widely used among younger demographics for sharing about mental health and chronic illness (Schipper, 2022; Tudehope et al., 2024), yet no research has examined YoD representation on these platforms. This is an important gap since trending social media platforms may be some of the first places that newly-diagnosed patients look to for information or support around their condition. In this presentation,

we share preliminary findings* from our analysis of 100 TikTok videos featuring YoD narratives, coded as first-person, caregiver-facilitated, or caregiver-only perspectives. Initial observations suggest major themes include diagnosis stories, spreading awareness, community generation, and reversals of caregiving norms. Considering how patients with dementia are often denied the ability to tell their own stories, we explore how TikTok enables YoD patients to re-assert narrative authority through public platform content creation. We outline our methodological approach and future research stages to explore how digital platforms such as TikTok are transforming whose voices count in health discourse.

ITD9-2 - Marketing and moderating knowledge: Understanding the roles of pharmaceutical companies, SMMAs, and patient influencers in shaping the digital public health/medical knowledge ecosystem

Milana Leskovac, Queen's University

In the past several years, the so-called 'miracle drugs' Ozempic and Wegovy—initially developed for managing type-2 diabetes and weight-loss, respectively—gained significant attention on social media, leading to a widespread shortage in 2022 (Han et al. 2024; Mahase 2024; Suran 2023). This shortage was driven via social media by influencers and prominent figures who promoted using these drugs primarily for weight loss, rather than their intended medical purposes of treating diabetes and obesity (Shmerling 2023). While trending pharmaceutical products do not always lead to negative consequences, such as shortages, patient influencers and other newer online actors, (i.e., social media management agencies (SMMA)), have become important figures in shaping what we do and do not see online. However, it is unclear what the scope their influence is *and* the extent and nature of this type of content creation, moderation and marketing; each of which is highly significant for how we can develop a broader understanding of the formation of, and relationships within, the digital information ecosystem of public health/medical knowledge. Therefore, this study focuses on the assembly, mobilization, and regulation of health and medical information and knowledge on social media. Specifically, on the marketing and content moderation strategies of various actors including influencers, SMMAs, and pharmaceutical and telehealth companies. This presentation present preliminary findings from my doctoral research aiming: 1) to understand what (and how) health/medical information is communicated on social media by patient influencers, pharmaceutical and telehealth companies, 2) to understand what guidelines shape content creation, marketing practices, influencer partnerships, etc. for patient influencers and pharmaceutical companies, and 3) to understand what the work of patient influencers and SMMA workers entails, in practice.

ITD9-3 - We are Gen Z: Healthy lifestyle among University Students in Ghana

Presenting Author - Hannah Taylor-Abdulai, University of Cape Coast

Non-presenting Authors - Faustina Gyatsen, University of Education, Winneba; Ruby Kwao, House of St. Francis Rehabilitation Centre

In recent years, digital health technologies (DHTs), particularly mobile health (mHealth) apps and wearable devices (WDs) have gained prominence as tools for promoting healthier lifestyles among young people. Despite their growing popularity globally, limited evidence exists on their actual usage, perceived effectiveness, and adoption barriers in developing countries like Ghana. This study, therefore, examined the roles of health apps and WDs in promoting healthy behaviors among young

people at a tertiary institution in Cape Coast. A mixed-method cross-sectional design was adopted, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Data were collected from 300 students, out of which 290 valid responses were analyzed using SPSS version 26. The quantitative strand explored prevalence, perceived effectiveness, and barriers, while the qualitative strand provided deeper insights into user experiences and motivations. The findings showed that 97.9% of respondents reported owning a smartphone. Out of which 68.2% used health apps, while 32.4% used WDs. In a multiple response, respondents indicated that the most improved health behaviors were physical activity (54%) and dietary habits (47%) as well as sleep monitors (45.5%), and menstrual or sexual health trackers (42.9%). Over 80% of respondents perceived these tools as effective in motivating healthier lifestyles. However, major barriers included high device cost (65.2%), poor internet access (44.5%), and privacy concerns (37.2%). The study concludes that health apps and WDs significantly influence positive health behaviours among youth. Enhancing usage, digital literacy, and app reliability could further increase adoption and sustain healthy lifestyle practices among young people in Ghana.

(ITD10) Platform Governance and Online Extremism

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session examines how digital infrastructures shape the circulation of ideology, belonging, and power in networked publics, focusing on the intersections between online extremism and platform governance. From the growth of extremist subcultures and conspiracy communities to the algorithmic amplification of grievance, hostility, and hate, contributors explore how platforms mediate visibility, identity, and regulation. The session aims to foster dialogue on how researchers, policymakers, and platforms can respond to the evolving sociotechnical dynamics of extremism and digital governance.

Session Organizer: Karmvir K. Padda, University of Waterloo

Session Chair: Andrew Nevin, University of Guelph

ITD10-1 - Gendered Authority and the Affective Circulation of Digital Disinformation

Rena Friesen, University of Toronto

Mis- and disinformation are frequently framed as problems of factual error, cognitive bias, or technological manipulation. This paper advances a feminist sociological intervention that instead conceptualizes disinformation as a gendered struggle over epistemic authority, affect, and credibility in digital spaces. Drawing on feminist epistemology, Black feminist thought, and decolonial critiques of agency, the paper examines how mis- and disinformation campaigns mobilize gendered emotional logics that shape belief, engagement, and trust across online platforms. The paper's central argument is that disinformation gains traction not primarily through factual persuasion, but through its alignment with existing intersectional hierarchies of authority and vulnerability. Building on Jillian Sunderland's (2023) concept of movement masculinity, the analysis shows how masculinist performances of rationality, protection, and moral certainty function as key mechanisms through which disinformation narratives are rendered credible. Claims framed around protecting "women,"

"children," or "families" often implicitly centre white, cisgender, middle-class subjects, while portraying racialized, queer, and trans communities as sources of instability or moral decline. These narratives resonate affectively by activating moral and emotional frameworks that make belief intelligible within conditions of social inequality. Methodologically, the paper draws on qualitative digital ethnography and critical discourse analysis across multiple platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, and Parlour, to trace how gendered narratives circulate between explicitly extremist spaces and more mainstream digital environments. The paper concludes by arguing that correction-based responses to disinformation are insufficient when they ignore the gendered and affective dimensions of epistemic power. By foregrounding affect, agency under constraint, and platform mediation, the paper contributes to sociological debates on digital politics and online extremism by demonstrating how gender operates as a critical organizing force in the contemporary circulation of disinformation.

(ITD11) Intersectional Identities in Media and Technology: Representation, Algorithms, and the Self
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session examines how digital infrastructures shape the circulation of ideology, belonging, and power in networked publics, focusing on the intersections between online extremism and platform governance. From the growth of extremist subcultures and conspiracy communities to the algorithmic amplification of grievance, hostility, and hate, contributors explore how platforms mediate visibility, identity, and regulation. The session aims to foster dialogue on how researchers, policymakers, and platforms can respond to the evolving sociotechnical dynamics of extremism and digital governance.

Session Organizer: Elahe Nezhadhossein, University of New Brunswick

Session Chair: Anuneeta Chatterjee, University of Calgary

ITD11-1 - Challenging Digital Disembodiments: Embodied Experiences of Youth of Colour Across Borders and Digital Spaces

Anuneeta Chatterjee, University of Calgary

At present, over half of the world's youth are connected over the internet, especially through various social media networks. Given the prevalent incorporation of online worlds in youth lives, this research theorizes social media use as an embodied form of continuous labour within the framework of racial capitalism (McMillan Cottom 2020). This review paper looks into the scholarship at the intersections of transnational migration, platform capitalism, and digital identity making using a Southern feminist epistemology embedded in the works of marginalized feminist scholars (Arya and Rathore, 2020; Valle, 2023). By doing so, it highlights how, along with the extraction of personal information, digital platforms obscure an extraction of material and symbolic labour that disproportionately affects people of colour. This study explores how the embodied experiences of young people are shaped within racialized and neocolonial algorithmic technologies. Primary research contributions entail a push towards the creation of alternative practices and programs in government, social, and educational sectors that centre youth's labour and capacity to create in ways

that foster care and community, instead of reenacting extractivist platform practices. Consequently, my work will extend the literature on youth migration and digital social worlds.

ITD11-2 - Homemade Heterosexuality: Interrogating Tradwife Rhetoric as an Extension of Heteroactivism

Void Clark-Nason and KD Merritt, University of New Brunswick

As social media grows as a stage where discursive ideology is disseminated to the masses, the tradwife influencer has risen to fame and notoriety. Short for "traditional wife," this term refers to a specific internet subculture of women who create curated content promoting traditional gender roles and the nuclear family, often while utilizing feminist rhetoric to try and avoid critiques of misogyny (Freeman 2020; Lang, 2022). Many have begun the work of interrogating the tradwife, highlighting how tradwife influencers frequently associate with images and symbols of white supremacy (Bower, 2025; Jackson, 2025; Koco-Helvaci, 2025; Mattheis, 2021; Proctor, 2022), exploring how the persona is intimately tied with notions of white nationhood, dog whistles, and alt-right ideologies. However, little academic research has connected tradwife content to the global rise of queerphobia and transphobia. Our point of entry connects this politically charged persona with what queer researchers Kath Browne and Catherine Nash term 'heteroactivism.' Heteroactivism refers to both an ideology and a myriad of practices which works to reinforce the centering of heterosexuality and frame monogamous, heterosexual partnerships as superior and - at times - under threat (Browne & Nash, 2020). Heteroactivism thrives in so-called 2SLGBTQIA+ friendly "liberal democracies" by contesting queerness and gender diversity through centering heteronormativity as "foundational to a healthy and sustainable society," rather than utilizing explicit queer/transphobic rhetoric so as to avoid accusations of homophobia (p. 73). Our work explores the tradwife persona, arguing that it cannot be disentangled from the growing rise of heteroactivism on social media; specifically a racialized framing of heteroactivism that not-so-subtly seeks to promote a return to an imagined past of white, heterosexual, domestic bliss. Drawing from five case studies, we map out the specific ways heteractivism is formulated through tradwife discourse, outlining how the white domesticity of tradwives is intimately co-constructed within heteronormative, heteroactivist frameworks.

(ITD12a) AI, Identity, Harm, and Algorithmic Subjectivity

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session examines how artificial intelligence reshapes intimate, identity-forming, and meaning-making aspects of social life. Across very different empirical settings—media representations of deepfake sexual exploitation, AI-driven self-construction among youth, and the social dynamics embedded in AI alignment and training—these papers highlight how algorithmic systems do more than automate processes. They actively shape how people are seen, evaluated, and governed. Taken together, the session foregrounds AI not as a neutral tool, but as a social actor embedded in cultural norms, institutional practices, and moral judgments, with real consequences for vulnerability, identity, and social accountability.

Session Organizer and Chair: Deena Abul-Fottouh, Dalhousie University

ITD12a-1 - Examining Depictions of Image-Based Sexual Exploitation through Deepfakes: A Content Analysis of Canadian Media

Anna-Lisa Barrett, University of Guelph

This thesis examines how Canadian news media depict image-based sexual exploitation perpetrated through deepfake technologies, arguing that such harms constitute a contemporary form of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Despite the growing accessibility of AI tools capable of fabricating realistic sexual images from ordinary photographs, Canadian media coverage remains fragmented, uneven, and often depoliticized. Drawing on a qualitative thematic content analysis of 57 news articles published between 2020 and 2025, this study investigates how journalists construct narratives around victims, perpetrators, institutions, and the broader sociotechnical environment in which deepfake abuse occurs. Grounded in cyberfeminist and digital feminist frameworks, the analysis identifies five dominant themes: the perceived uncontrollability of deepfake technologies; legal and regulatory lag; the need for ethical awareness and digital literacy; victim narratives of emotional, psychological, and reputational harm; and institutional minimization by schools, law enforcement, and policymakers. Across coverage, deepfake exploitation is frequently treated as a technical or sensational problem rather than a systemic form of misogyny embedded in digital culture. Media accounts often prioritize political disinformation or celebrity cases, obscuring the everyday experiences of women and girls whose images are weaponized without consent. Findings reveal the multilayered harms inflicted by synthetic sexual abuse, including identity destabilization, ongoing fear of redistribution, institutional betrayal, and the burden placed on victims to prove their innocence in a digitally ambiguous environment. This study argues that without explicitly recognizing deepfake sexual exploitation as gender-based violence, public discourse will continue to minimize survivors' experiences and delay urgent legal and educational reforms. This research contributes to emerging scholarship on deepfake harms by highlighting the need for survivor-centered, intersectional, and accountability-oriented approaches across journalism, policy, and technology design.

ITD12a-2 - The Oversocialized Algorithm: RLHF, Artificial Sycophancy, and the Case for the Sociology of Alignment

Mohammed Al-Ani, McMaster University

To effectively engage with AI safety, sociologists must address two fronts: analyzing the social construction of these systems (Sociology of Alignment) and actively evaluating their performance (Sociology for Alignment). Using a Sociology of Knowledge approach, I propose a sociological engagement termed "sociology of alignment". Rooted in the emerging area of the 'sociology of algorithms', this lens views algorithmic training not as a neutral engineering practice but as a form of "Algorithmic Socialization." I apply this perspective on analyzing the impact of a popular AI training technique called Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF). I argue that RLHF, animated by a technical imagination rooted in an oversocialized conception of what drives a 'social agent', necessarily creates a social actor that behaves as Dennis Wrong's (1961) "oversocialized man". By prioritizing human approval signals, systems become *Oversocialized Algorithms*: behaviorist maximizers driven by sycophancy and the simulation of socially acceptable behavior rather than 'truth-seeking'. Second, I outline a "Sociology for Alignment" where sociologists actively test algorithmic systems to analyze their sui generis behavior in socially complex environments. This

involves addressing the tension of "Strategic Anthropomorphism": while algorithms are code, their behavior is increasingly contingent and social. I argue that to properly evaluate these "oversocialized" agents, we must strategically treat them as social actors. Through tactical anthropomorphism, sociologists can better stress-test their emergent, unique behavior, navigating a landscape where machines increasingly emulate human sociality despite their computational foundation.

ITD12a-3 - Viral Orientalism: Street Food, Platform Capitalism, and the Algorithmic Extraction of Racialized Labour

Harmata Aboubakar, University of Toronto

Recipient of the Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

A growing genre of viral social media content features Western creators who film and circulate online portrayals of street food and everyday public life in South Asia through recurring tropes of dirt, disorder, and absurdity. This paper theorizes these recurring representations as viral Orientalism: a platform-amplified mode of contemporary Orientalism that converts racialized degradation into visibility, engagement, and profit. Drawing on postcolonial theory, symbolic power, and affect studies, and informed by qualitative analysis of platform content collected from 2023-2025 across multiple platforms, the paper develops a multi-part typology of recurring representational mechanisms through which colonial stereotypes are repackaged as viral media and algorithmically amplified. Focusing on influencer performances, meme circulation, and AI-generated “street food horror” content, the analysis shows how affective cues, especially disgust, structure mediated encounters, shape audience alignment, and organize asymmetric relations of visibility and identity. The paper argues that platform recommendation systems and monetization infrastructures intensify these dynamics by rewarding emotional provocation, enabling racialized representations to circulate widely and accrue symbolic and economic value. By conceptualizing viral Orientalism, the paper extends theories of cultural domination into platform capitalism and demonstrates how digital visibility can function as an extractive relation rather than recognition.

(ITD12b) AI, Inequality, and the Reconfiguration of Knowledge, Labor, and Expertise

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session brings together papers that examine artificial intelligence as a social force reshaping inequality across education, research, labor markets, and professional expertise. Although the empirical settings differ—from undergraduate classrooms to research training, global labor markets, and stroke medicine—all four papers ask a shared question: how does AI redistribute power, opportunity, and voice across existing social hierarchies? Together, they show that AI does not simply introduce innovation, but reorganizes inequality in ways that demand sociological attention.

Session Organizer and Chair: Deena Abul-Fottouh, Dalhousie University

ITD12b-1 - AI Attitudes and Usage Among University Undergraduates: Implications for Social Inequality

Elizabeth Arpin and Alla Konnikov, Concordia University of Edmonton

AI is increasingly shaping every aspect of our lives, particularly in the domain of higher education. The rapid adoption of AI technologies is becoming integral to the teaching and learning experience, with the potential to reshape how students learn from, interact with, and access resources. This pervasive adoption of technologies raises important questions about the ethical aspects of such usage and its implications for academic integrity and social inequality. Does AI create more opportunities for offsetting structural barriers, or does it reinforce and amplify existing inequalities? Evidence suggests that AI systems often exacerbate existing inequities for women and ethnic minorities across high-stakes domains such as labour markets, banking, criminal justice systems, and healthcare. While literature primarily focuses on decision-making processes within these structural domains, little attention has been given to studying individual usage of AI and how users perceive and understand its implications. Our study will be conducting a series of focus groups with undergraduate students, exploring their perceptions and usage patterns of AI technologies. This exploratory case study seeks to shed light on the limited understanding of how individual undergraduate students experience these technologies, and how social locations can influence students' engagement with such technologies. By illuminating a currently understudied user perspective, this study hopes to advance knowledge on how AI technologies may reinforce or mitigate existing educational inequalities, and assist with developing recommendations for robust and inclusive policies on AI regulation within higher education.

ITD12b-2 - AI in the emerging stroke medicine expertise

Netta Avnon, Western University and Columbia University

Stroke medicine is an emerging network of expertise, stringing together neurologists, neuro-interventionalists, neuro-radiologists, patients, their families, emergency care services (EMS), emergency care nurses and doctors, and increasingly, medical AI devices, wearables, remote access care, and self-tracking mobile apps. This research proposal aims to study the integration of Medical AI and other technologies into stroke medicine in Canada. As a world-leading center for AI development and stroke treatments and interventions, alongside considerable geographical, population, and healthcare system challenges, Canada presents a unique case study for this emerging network of expertise. This research proposal is part of a large-scale, international study, focused on the integration of technologies into stroke prevention, the acute phase, and AI-brain technologies for rehabilitation.

(ITD12c) AI, Power, and the Politics of the Social

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

This session brings together critical sociological perspectives on artificial intelligence that move beyond questions of efficiency or innovation to interrogate AI as a project of power, knowledge, and governance. Across theory, epistemology, global political economy, and policy, these papers ask what happens to human agency, social meaning, and collective sovereignty when AI systems increasingly mediate how the social is understood, regulated, and acted upon.

Session Organizer and Chair: Deena Abul-Fottouh, Dalhousie University

ITD12c-1 - A Sociology Without Humans: Artificial Intelligence as a Threat to Humanity, and Sociology's Response

Mike Zajko, University of British Columbia -- Okanagan

The growing deployment of 'artificial intelligence' (AI) systems across society, and massive investments currently being made to develop systems capable of greater and greater agency, necessitate sociological reflection. Specifically, what do current shifts in automation mean for how we theorize social relations, and how should sociologists position themselves normatively? While the development of agential machines might be seen to validate 'posthuman' critiques and ontologies, such as those seen in actor-network-theory and 'new materialist' thought, they have also necessitated a humanist response. This is because the sociotechnical transformations of AI are accompanied by discourses that devalue what it means to be human, and have consequences that increasingly marginalize human agency, corrupt human knowledge, threaten human interests, and which are experienced as dehumanizing. Reflecting on posthumanist and humanist strains in social theory, this article considers aspects of both that can be valuable in coming to terms with the social shifts of automation and new interactive technologies, but ultimately argues for a humanist stance to counteract AI's anti-human tendencies.

ITD12c-2 - What AI Can't Do: Interpretive Social Science and the Critique of Large Language Models

Fuyuki Kurasawa, York University

To state the obvious, generative artificial intelligence has become a socio-cultural juggernaut, most notably because of its popularization via consumer-friendly chatbots (such as OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Gemini) derived from deep learning-based large language models (LLMs). What has thrust the latter to prominence is the ways in which lay users impute them with advanced interpretive capacities—a misperception supported by AI corporations' marketing sophistry, which presents LLMs as possessing the ability to think and imagine to an extent that will soon render human intelligence and creativity redundant. The presentation argues that this is something that 'computers can't do' (Dreyfus 1972) because of LLMs' development according to the logic of Natural Language Processing (NLP) rather than Natural Language Understanding (NLU) (Bender and Koller 2020). It does so by connecting research on the social harms to which generative AI models contribute (bias and discrimination, deepfakes, surveillance, mass data theft, disinformation, etc.) to LLM-driven interpretive reductionism, whereby meaning is merely an outcome of probabilistic inference and understanding of the social is reduced to an exercise in monosemic literalism and denotative understanding. I propose that the human sciences—whether they be computationally and/or qualitatively oriented—engage in a critique of AI that demonstrates the latter's ontological and epistemological assumptions about the social fail to render its polysemic complexities on three fronts: the micro-textual level of signs themselves (the relations between signifiers and signifieds); the meso-textual level of situational contexts (styles, conventions, settings, etc.); and the meta- and macro-textual levels of structural contexts (global order, taxonomical and symbolic codes, discourses, etc.).

ITD12c-3 - Terms and Conditions of Desire: A Critical Analysis of AI Content Policies and the Erasure of Disabled Sexualities

Presenting Author - Janice Xie, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Alan Martino, University of Calgary

Artificial intelligence (AI) systems increasingly govern what sexual content is seen, shared, or suppressed across digital platforms. Drawing on crip theory, this paper critically analyzes how disability and sexuality are framed within publicly available governance documents—terms of service, acceptable-use and safety policies, moderation guidelines, model cards, and developer specs—published by ten widely used text- and image-generation platforms. Using qualitative content analysis with a hybrid deductive-inductive codebook, we examine how these documents define risk, name (or omit) disability, and set boundaries around sexual expression. Three patterns emerged. First, disability was rendered largely invisible or folded into vague, euphemistic categories and most often positioned through a risk-management lens. This framing protects against overt harm, but sidelines disabled people's agency, pleasure, and right to sexual self-representation. Second, sexuality was referenced more explicitly yet primarily as a safety problem; boundary language remains undefined, producing inconsistent enforcement and shifting responsibility to users. Third, general moderation practices privilege automated filtering with limited contextual judgment, while human review is used sparingly, together entrenching over-capture of marginalized sexual expression. Across documents, accessibility can be inadvertently undermined, and non-disabled, heteronormative assumptions are reproduced as policy "common sense." We argue that these documents collectively erase disabled sexualities by design.

ITD12c-4 - How Canada's AI governance Reinforces Social biases and Inequities.

Tuma Khalifa Sukar, Saint Mary's University

The recent and rapid evolution of Artificial Intelligence globally has given rise to complex and debatable issues, from social and environmental to economic. This rapid evolution of AI and its uncertain future impacts raise urgent needs for policy reforms that address accountability and the safe integration of AI in our societies. While extensive research has been conducted on how AI design and use reinforce rather than erase existing patterns of social inequality, such as poverty, racism, and sexism, little work has been done on how regulatory frameworks can address and reduce inequity in Canada. Through a sociological lens, this research addresses the social inequity of AI through the lens of policies and regulations in Canada, drawing on policy documents such as Bill C-27, voluntary codes, governance frameworks and public accountability measures. Canada's AI regulations and policies aim to address the social, economic, and environmental impacts of AI, from its negative to its positive possibilities. This research addresses the blurred line of inequity that these policies and regulations reproduce, despite their objective goals of combating social, environmental, and economic inequities in the Artificial Intelligence framework. This study urges and concludes that if Canadian policy design and implementation consistently fail to account for the social and historical factors that contribute to inequalities at various levels, it will amplify social, political, and economic inequities through its AI regulatory frameworks, either intentionally or unintentionally.

(ITD-RC) Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 5:00pm ADT
Track: Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology Research Cluster

We would like to invite interested delegates to attend the annual business meeting of the Internet, Technology, and Digital Sociology research cluster. At this meeting we aim to facilitate networking and collaboration among those who share research and teaching interests related to the social implications of the Internet and digital technologies, broadly defined. It will provide an opportunity to connect like-minded sociologists and to set our agenda and directions for future initiatives and CSA conferences. This meeting is open to anyone interested in joining our membership or just learning more about the cluster.

Session Organizers: Andrew D. Nevin, University of Guelph

(JFP) Justice for Palestine Subcommittee

(JFP1) Contesting Colonial Power over Palestine

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Justice for Palestine Subcommittee

This session brings together scholarship that critiques the colonial power structures dampening Palestinian liberation and actively suppress Palestine rights advocacy in Canada and abroad. From international law and promoted visions of "peace," to academic practices and policies, colonial institutions have served to undermine Palestinian liberation. The panel analyses institutional sites of power through four distinct and interconnected investigations. The first paper traces the legal architecture of exception, showing how Palestinian refugees were systemically excluded from the UNHCR's mandate, constituting a racialised legal foundation that punishes displacement and limits refuge. The second examines the imperial project in action, arguing that United States policy interventions accelerate 'authoritarian imperialism', by cynically deploying peace rhetoric to stifle dissent and normalise hierarchies of power. The third paper performs a critical discourse analysis of decolonisation in social work academia, revealing how institutions depoliticise the term to absorb critique and silence material solidarity with Palestine. The fourth investigates the weaponisation of academic freedom through a McGill University case study, demonstrating how this principle is mobilised to suppress campus organising and scholarly criticism of Israel. Together, this session provides a platform for contesting colonial power over Palestine and the erasure of Palestinians and their allies.

Session Organizers: Azar Masoumi, Carleton University; Aidan Blockley, University of Alberta; Christopher Powell, Toronto Metropolitan University; Jeremy Wildeman, Carleton University/ University of Ottawa; Michelle Owen, University of Winnipeg; Sophie O'Manique, CUNY; Yan Grenier, Université Laval

Session Chair: Chris Powell, Toronto Metropolitan University

JFP1-1 - Authoritarian Imperialism: Analyzing the Acceleration of the US Imperial Project in Palestine

Mia Vallière, Carleton University

Donald Trump's recent "peace plan" for Palestine - far from being about peace - is motivated by the long-running US pursuit of global full spectrum dominance. This presentation explores how the recent US interventions in Israel's genocide on the Palestinian people simultaneously marks a *continuation* and an *acceleration* of the US Imperial Project. With that "peace plan" being endorsed by the UN Security Council, a comprehensive understanding of how this plan situates into the US Imperial Project is not only topical, but necessary for effective knowledge mobilization and calls to action. This presentation demonstrates how the future of Palestinians concerns us all, hypothesizing that the stark shift in the US's imperial *modus operandi* (MO) aims to set the new norm for how the US Empire will pursue full spectrum dominance and continue to disguise it with illusions of "peace" and "worthiness". Employing a deconstructive genealogical approach, this analysis renders possible that the acceleration of the US Imperial Project in Palestine may constitute a perilous progression to *authoritarian imperialism*. A decolonized Palestine, and a decolonized world, depend on movements for decentralizing US power and dismantling the Empire.

JFP1-2 - The Israel/Gaza Conflict and the Weaponisation of Academic Freedom

Steven Jordan, McGill University

Academic freedom within universities across the US, Canada and UK was thrown into crisis following the events of the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7th 2023. This crisis grew as the world could no longer ignore Israel's "plausible genocide" (ICJ, 2024) of the Palestinian population in Gaza.

Despite a putative US brokered cease-fire in October 2025, the conflict continues as does global protest and dissent targeting the Netanyahu government in Israel, as well as western governments for their complicity in supplying arms and munitions. The backlash against this social movement, which included a coalition of civil society actors, has not only been severe, but in many instances shockingly draconian. This has had a chilling effect on dissent, protest, and other forms of civil disobedience in general, and specifically they have stifled those actions aimed at raising awareness of the genocide in Palestine. This paper labels, explores, and attempts to situate the veil of silence and repression that has characterised official discourse propagated through a myriad of institutions, including government agencies, mainstream media, and higher education institutions. To do so, the paper takes a closer look at one organization's act of dissent. As a critique of Israel's universities' complicity in research and development of weapons used in Gaza, at McGill University (Oct 10, 2025), a faculty association passed a motion advocating the boycott of all collaboration with Israeli universities. The ensuing onslaught of extreme criticism that both preceded and followed this vote cited Academic Freedom as its rationale. The paper takes up this example to illustrate how the concept of academic freedom has been weaponized to suppress legitimate criticism in general, and - more specifically - how it has intercepted criticism of the Israeli State and its genocide of the Palestinian people.

JFP1-3 - Race, Refugee Law and the Palestine Exception

Azar Masoumi, Carleton University

Palestinians are the only group that, on account of their nationality, are excluded from the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN's primary refugee agency. This presentation tracks the political, legal and historical developments that led to and normalized this exceptional exclusion. I review the uneven and exceptional handling of matters involving Palestinians' rights in the critical years after their mass displacement in 1948. I argue that the exceptional standing of Palestinians in existing international refugee law finds its genesis in the racial and legal exclusions that punish, rather than protect, Palestinians for being displaced.

(JFP-MT) Justice for Palestine Meeting

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Justice for Palestine Subcommittee

This meeting of the Justice for Palestine Subcommittee is open to all CSA members interested in opposing anti-Palestinian racism. Anti-Palestinian racism (APR) is a form of anti-Arab racism that silences, excludes, erases, stereotypes, defames or dehumanizes Palestinians or their narratives. APR is a particular concern for us as sociologists given the ongoing educide and epistemicide against Palestinians, and the ongoing harassment and discrimination against scholars who speak in support of Palestinian self-determination or criticize anti-Palestinian violence. At this meeting we will discuss our experiences in different academic environments and discuss what we can do to resist silencing and make space for Palestinian scholars and Palestine-related discussions.

Session Organizer: Azar Masoumi, Carleton University

(KNW) Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster

(KNW1) Experts and Experiential Knowledge Shaping Truth in Society

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster

We advocate an expansive view of knowledge encompassing all representations of reality and social life, including organizational knowledge, practical knowledge, historical knowledge, Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges, embodied and tacit knowledge, beliefs, myths, facts, customs, routines, identities, and more. We invited abstracts that focus on classic theories of knowledge, such as phenomenology, social constructionism, and ethnomethodology, as well as contemporary approaches to the sociology of knowledge.

Session Organizers: Anastasia Kulpa, Univeristy of Alberta; Lily Ivanova, University of British Columbia

Session Chair: Lily Ivanova, University of British Columbia

KNW1-1 - Bodybuilding Knowledge: Building Knowledge in and through Bodies

Matty Peters, Carleton University

Bodybuilding has, up until recently, remained a niche, esoteric corner of Western culture where-in an entire ontology of the body was slowly developing itself as, in, and through bodies for decades. However, recently bodybuilding has begun to take off into the mainstream on social media and has become the site of increasing focus for sciences such as kinesiology and the applied interdisciplinary

'sports sciences'. As such, two major clashes have occurred: 1. An entire body of knowledge, now known as 'bro-science,' is being challenged by Western ontologies, creating a site of knowledge exchanges which is strikingly colonial in form. 2. The 'bro-science' and 'science based' communities do not fall evenly along pro/anti-science political terrain, and this has created influencers and 'lifters' who follow 'science-based' principle but support political rhetoric that is anti-science. However, there is, in addition to these surface conflicts in representational knowledge, a deeper sub-representative event unfolding. This paper will outline the theoretical framework of my dissertation in the bodybuilding community (beginning in May of 2026) in order to summarize how I intend to mobilize it in understanding how knowledge is lived, produced, and mediated within individual bodies and the bodybuilding community. Through the Neurosociological, Post-Modern, and Transcendental framework of my dissertation, this paper will outline: 1. How the training operates 'under' the body's conceptual neural-circuits to reorganize the ground of conceptual thought within the individual training. 2. How signifying relations, the proposition, and praxis intersect in order to produce active and passive articulations which ground and support the production of contradictory associations. 3. How the durational capture of biological rhythms produces what I call 'Sovereign moments' which are targeted by the far-right pipeline in order to dominate the conscious articulations of young men.

KNW1-2 - Expert Witnessing and the Narration of Anti-Muslim Violence in Canadian Courts

Sophie Marois, University of Toronto

This paper investigates how expert witnesses inform the production of legal knowledge in trials for racial violence, focusing on two anti-Muslim massacres in recent Canadian history: the 2017 Québec City mosque shooting and the 2021 vehicle-ramming attack in London. Scholarship on the "law-memory nexus" has illuminated how legal proceedings shape the legacies of atrocities (Savelsberg 2021; Hearty 2022). Building on these works, I explore the role of expert witnesses—particularly psychiatrists, psychologists, and digital forensic experts—in constructing legal narratives of violence. Expert witnesses are particularly compelling actors in part because, when they are called to testify, they are required to mediate between the evidentiary standards of the courtroom and their own disciplinary norms and epistemological frameworks. Following Anwar and De Goede's (2021) call to examine how "expertise comes before the court—how it is invited, debated, accepted, or rejected in legal practice," I ask: (1) who appears as an expert, when, and on what issues; (2) what accounts do these experts put forth; (3) what frictions or controversies arise around their testimonies; and (4) how is their disciplinary knowledge ultimately taken up by the court in its written rulings? To answer these questions, I draw on courtroom ethnography conducted throughout both trials, alongside discourse analysis of rulings and sentencing decisions. Conceptualizing experts as *accredited narrators*, I analyze how their disciplinary frameworks inform the "meta-narratives of violence" that emerge from the legal proceedings (Jones 2015). This approach sheds light on a persistent tension in public responses to racial violence, often opposing narratives that portray these acts as instances of individual deviance and those that contextualize them within enduring structures of systemic harm. By examining how this tension unfolds in the "scientific discourses of institutionally-authorized expertise" (Shoshan 2014), the paper contributes to discussions on law, memory, and the politics of knowledge in adjudicating racial violence.

KNW1-3 - The Work of Academic Copaganda: Recuperating Legitimacy for Police in Schools Amidst Calls for Abolition

Alexandre Da Costa, University of Alberta

In North America, calls to defund the police and invest in other means to increase social well-being have grown over the past 15 years. The 2020 uprisings against anti-Black police violence and systemic racism pushed these calls into the public eye, creating unprecedented public debate about the harms of policing. These uprisings brought police legitimacy into question, rupturing longstanding hegemonic narratives associating police with crime prevention and community safety. Many local movements harnessed this hegemonic rupture to successfully advocate for an end to School Resource Officer (SRO) programs in various Canadian cities. However, over the last six years, we have witnessed the restoration of hegemonic narratives favourable to police as budget allocations grow, media centre the police as the solution to crime and "social disorder," and SRO programs return to some school districts from which they were either eliminated or suspended. Academic research has played a direct role in restoring public legitimacy to policing by contesting abolitionist claims and those who seek to defund and de-task the police. While the term "copaganda" refers to the multifaceted practices that represent policing as good and necessary and that sustain myths that attach us to a world with police, Vargas et al (2025) specify how social science researchers engage in "Academic Copaganda" that shields police from social movement pressure for abolition. In this vein, this paper examines the work knowledge produced through "Academic Copaganda" does to maintain and/or recuperate legitimacy for SRO programs as education policy. The paper focuses on research reviewing SRO programs: design and methodology, dissemination of research results, and how results are taken up by school boards. The paper offers a necessary exploration of academic efforts that recuperate and sustain hegemonic carceral logics that centre police in schools as necessary for student safety and well-being while closing off other possibilities.

KNW1-4 - Making the Invisible Knowable: Phenomenological Inquiry in Female Prisons

Merve Ceylan, Ibn Haldun University

This methodological paper examines the epistemic affordances of phenomenological research design in female prisons, arguing that phenomenology operates not merely as a qualitative means of accessing lived experience but as a lens through which the conditions of possibility for knowledge in closed institutions can be interrogated. Within this analytical frame, the study addresses the question: How does a phenomenological research design make the lived experiences of incarcerated women visible? The empirical basis consists of twenty-six in-depth interviews conducted in a women's closed prison in Turkey. Analysis demonstrates that phenomenology renders prisoners' experiences accessible along three interrelated dimensions. First, at the spatial-institutional level, phenomenology enables an experiential mapping of otherwise inaccessible or prohibited areas of the prison, thereby allowing the researcher to "move" through the carceral environment via narrative accounts. Second, at the embodied gendered level, phenomenology captures how imprisonment is lived through the body—through hygiene routines, withdrawal, care work, femininity and motherhood—thus reframing the prison not only as a bureaucratic institution but as a space inhabited somatically. Third, at the affective-social level, phenomenology discloses emotions such as shame, guilt, loss, solidarity and resistance, which remain unrecorded within institutional documentation yet constitute an essential layer of how crime and punishment are socially

embedded. In doing so, phenomenological inquiry makes visible not only the spatially restricted but also the affectively invisible, illuminating domains that official records cannot accommodate. Taken together, these findings suggest that phenomenological research design offers a distinctive methodological framework for capturing the spatial, somatic and affective dimensions of female imprisonment, thereby contributing to carceral sociology by expanding what counts as knowable within closed institutions.

(KNW3) Methods and Mediums Shaping Disciplinary and Social Knowledge

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster

How does knowledge come to be in disciplinary fields and society at large? This session is focused on the application of sociological tools to the production, reception, reproduction, and translation of both disciplinary knowledge, and knowledge across society.

Session Organizers: Anastasia Kulpa, University of Alberta; Lily Ivanova, University of British Colombia

Session Chair: Anastasia Kulpa, University of Alberta

KNW3-1 - State Commemoration and the Making of Collective Memory in Canada: A Comparison of 1967 and 2017

Tara Tseng-West, University of British Columbia

A paper based on the research in this presentation has received the Canadian Sociological Association's Best Student Paper Award*.*

This project examines how the past is represented and remembered at the national scale by comparing Canada's centennial (1967) and sesquicentennial (2017) celebrations of independence. I approach these commemorations as reflections of present-day political concerns rather than neutral historical narratives. Although there is substantial research on national commemorations and state-led memory projects, little work examines how these representations change over time in Canada. As a relatively new and officially multicultural state, Canada presents a useful case for understanding how national memory-making operates in an increasingly globalized, multi-ethnic context. This project aims to fill that gap by asking: In what ways did the Canadian state's representations of national history in 1967 differ from its approaches in 2017? To answer this, I conduct qualitative archival research, focusing on the Vancouver *Sun,* the Globe and Mail, and the Gazette coverage of each event to analyze public reception and state messaging. Expected findings include a shift from a mono-ethnic, unified national story in 1967 toward a multiplicity of narratives in 2017, reflecting attempts to unify citizens around shared ethics and global positioning rather than a single origin story. This analysis contributes to understanding how states adapt national memory to changing social realities. This is important because it reveals the evolution of power dynamics, values, and identities while showing whose histories are acknowledged or marginalized.

KNW3-2 - Documenter la « belle vie » malgré la maladie : la photographie comme pratique endogène en EMS

Benjamin Tremblay, Haute école de travail social et de la santé Lausanne (HETSL | HES-SO)

L'espoir et l'optimisme ne sont pas exactement les termes qui viennent à l'esprit lorsqu'il est question des troubles cognitifs et des démences (de type Alzheimer). Les discours communs comme scientifiques convergent en effet vers une thématisation de la maladie qui en souligne prioritairement le caractère irréversible et tragique. Cette communication propose de déplacer ce cadrage en interrogeant les formes ordinaires, situées et professionnelles de production de l'espoir dans les établissements médico-sociaux (EMS). S'appuyant sur une enquête ethnographique menée dans des EMS psychogériatriques de Suisse romande, il s'agira de revenir sur le vis-à-vis entre deux dispositifs de connaissance mobilisés par les professionnel·le·s pour documenter la vie quotidienne des personnes atteintes de démence : le dossier informatisé du résident (DIR) et la photographie. Tandis que le logiciel organise la connaissance autour d'une chronologie du déclin, structurée par des symptômes et des risques, la photographie saisit à l'inverse des « moments heureux » survenant au fil des activités ordinaires. Leur publicisation — y compris hors des murs de l'EMS — rend visibles des dimensions de la vie institutionnelle difficilement traduisibles dans le langage du logiciel et contribue à reconfigurer le regard porté sur les personnes malades elles-mêmes. En ce sens, ces pratiques photographiques endogènes ne relèvent ni de l'esthétique ni de l'anecdotique. Elles participent d'une forme de connaissance optimiste qui fait apparaître la personne comme sujet sensible, relationnel, poétique, et qui ancre l'espoir non dans la guérison, mais dans la possibilité de vivre encore des formes de « belle vie » malgré la démence. L'objectif sera ainsi d'éclairer la manière dont l'espoir est fabriqué, soutenu et rendu crédible dans un contexte de *care* particulièrement éprouvant, et de questionner ce faisant ce qui peut compter comme preuve, vérité ou connaissance.

KNW3-3 - Temporally, not categorically bound: Conceptualising pilot studies

Anastasia Kulpa, University of Alberta

In the research process, pilot studies are often treated as learning experiences; they become opportunities to test data collection and analysis processes and refine them for the "real" study conducted later on. As such, they occupy an interstitial space in the knowledge processes of disciplines. While pilot studies are often understood as important elements of developing the practical knowledge of researchers, they are often (presumed to be) excluded from the production of outward-facing disciplinary knowledge. This paper argues that, at least in some instances, it may be more appropriate to conceptualise of pilot studies as an early portion of data collection, rather than a separate endeavor to test data collection methods and analytical procedures. This position reflects both a practical consideration, and an epistemological one. Practically, excluding pilot study data from later analysis may function to reduce the overall quality of the data included in a study through the exclusion of the data that was initially most accessible to the researcher(s). This is likely to have a disproportionate effect in research areas where samples are already small and/or difficult to access. Epistemologically, work on positionality suggests that it is not possible to eliminate the influence of life experiences on the analysis a researcher brings to their work. In this light, the practice of excluding pilot study from later study analysis may be more of a rhetorical claim than a description of fact and, as such, it may be more intellectually honest to be upfront about the inclusion of pilot study data in the analysis of a full study, or consider doing so. This manuscript advances an initial argument for determining when it may be appropriate to understand a pilot study as a temporal distinction in data collection, rather than an element of researcher training which does not meaningfully contribute to the development of knowledge.

KNW3-4 - Tensions fondatrices : quand les débats méthodologiques façonnent les espaces académiques des études sur la mode

Guillaume Girard, Université du Québec à Montréal

Les études sur la mode sont de plus en plus autonomes comme discipline dans le champ universitaire. À cet effet, cette communication propose d'évaluer son contexte d'émergence en tentant de comprendre comment les discours et les espaces académiques se sont construits à partir de certains fondements théoriques. Au tournant des années 2000, un conflit méthodologique émerge au sein de cette discipline, alors naissante et encore peu autonome au sein des universités. Ce débat cristallise des tensions entre une lecture historique et linéaire de la mode et du vêtement, menée par des chercheurs.euses issus.es de l'histoire et de l'histoire de l'art, et des approches qui envisagent le vêtement comme un fait social plus large, en mobilisant de nouvelles méthodes développées au sein des sciences sociales, notamment celles issues de la culture matérielle. En analysant les débats et en cartographiant les arguments développés dans les revues *Costume et Fashion Theory*, il est possible de comprendre ce qui contribue à l'autonomisation des études sur la mode en tant que champ disciplinaire propre. Cette communication visera à montrer comment cette lutte de légitimité a transformé la façon de voir l'objet d'étude et d'élaborer un appareil méthodologique dont les effets se font encore sentir aujourd'hui, tant dans le champ universitaire que dans les pratiques curatoriales.

Founding tensions: when methodological debates shape the academic spaces of fashion studies

Fashion studies are increasingly autonomous as a discipline within the academic field. To this end, this communication proposes evaluating the context in which it emerges by examining how academic discourses and spaces have been constructed on specific theoretical foundations. At the turn of the 2000s, a methodological conflict emerged within this discipline, which was then nascent and not yet very autonomous within universities. This debate crystallized tensions between a historical and linear reading of fashion and clothing, conducted by issus.es researchers in history and the history of art, and approaches that consider clothing as a broader social fact, mobilizing new methods developed within the social sciences, particularly those derived from material culture. By analyzing the debates and mapping the arguments developed in the journals Costume and Fashion Theory, it is possible to understand what contributes to the empowerment of fashion studies as a distinct disciplinary field. This paper will aim to show how this struggle for legitimacy has transformed the way the object of study is seen and the development of a methodological apparatus whose effects are still felt today, both in the academic field and in curatorial practices.

(KNW5) Knowledge and the (Fat) Body

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Tracks: Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster and Fat Studies Research Cluster

In collaboration with the Fat Studies research cluster, the Sociology of Knowledge research cluster invited submissions addressing the uses of knowledge in understanding and defining the body, particularly as it relates to fat and fatness. This includes the social construction of clinical or medical knowledge as it pertains to the body, as well as the construction and legitimation of social knowledge about the body. We understand social knowledge about the body as including beliefs about what people want from their lives, and their bodies, narratives and discourse present in the public sphere about the presumed desirability of bodies, and the ways such knowledge, and access to these

knowledge processes, might be stratified according to factors like race, gender, class, (dis)ability and appearance. This session is conceptualised as a dialogue around knowledge and weight stigma, and will prioritize contributions that critically interrogate biomedical framings.

Session Organizers: Anastasia Kulpa, University of Alberta; Lily Ivanova, University of British Columbia; Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University; Ramanpreet A. Bahra, Wilfrid Laurier University

Session Chairs: Lily Ivanova, University of British Columbia; Kelsey Ioannoni, Wilfrid Laurier University

KNW5-1 - Implicit Bodily Knowledge and Practical Epistemic Injustice

Halie White, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

This paper extends epistemic injustice with particular attention to bodily subjectivity. I argue that practical epistemic injustice arises when individuals are distracted from their bodily performance of knowing-how to do a skill due to evaluations that are vulnerable to body-based identity prejudice. I will be paying special attention to the case of fatphobia, in which certain skilled agents are evaluated to lack knowledge of a skill based on presumptions about fitness and (dis)ability due to body size. I begin by drawing from a phenomenological account of bodily subjectivity to emphasize that knowing-how is distinctly a participatory and perspectival form of knowing that is specific to the agent's own body. When assessing one's body as knowledgeable, I propose two forms of evaluation are involved: internal (through felt bodily coherence) and external (by attending to the knower's body third-personally, mediated by their peers). Tensions that arise between internal and external evaluations sometimes become a catalyst for epistemic harm. In attempting to balance a recurring tension wrongly placed on one's bodily performance due to fatphobic stereotypes, one continuously divides one's attention between the practical aim of one's skill and the body as an object of prejudiced assessment. The knower is thus unjustly distracted from their tasks. Following this framework, I propose two forms of epistemic harm as examples of practical epistemic injustice. First, performance injustice occurs when prejudicial evaluations of one's bodily performance undermine their epistemic self-trust (i.e., trust in their bodily knowledge). Second, attunement injustice occurs when systemic biases toward fat bodies' (dis)abilities are entrenched in the configuration of their subjectivity, inhibiting the development of one's own knowledge of their body and its capacities (embodied knowing) such that participation in skilled action and exercising such knowledge is thwarted. While such harms are theoretically generalizable, these injustices highly affect fat bodies.

KNW5-2 - Beyond Weight Stigma: Racialized Excess and Eating-Disorder Embodiment in Refugee Narratives

Sepideh Hatami, Western University

This paper argues that bodily containment for racialized refugee women can emerge as disordered eating influenced by two overlapping constructions of excess. Racialized refugee women are often perceived as unruly, under scrutiny, and marked for correction in host societies. Likewise, fatness is often read as undisciplined and in need of control. For racialized refugee women, these two layers of excess converge. As a result, disordered eating develops not only from weight stigma but also from the pressure to manage racialized excess and body size to appear stable and institutionally credible. This convergence produces a double demand for containment, in which restriction becomes a strategy for reducing scrutiny and securing social acceptance. In this context, thinness operates as a

visible marker of discipline and control that promises a stable and acceptable positioning in the host society. These bodily practices are shaped by knowledge systems that define what counts as "health," "control," and "normality" which are explored here through a postcolonial approach to knowledge production. To do so, the following memoirs are comparatively studied: Anahid Dashtgerd's *Breaking the Ocean* and Sarah Aziza's *The Hollow Half*. Across both works, displacement is lived through bodily monitoring and repeated evaluations, since credibility and belonging are defined by how everyday interactions and institutional settings consistently reproduce meanings for the body. In this context, restriction is not simply a response to weight stigma but a continuous attempt to become less interruptive and more disciplined to reach a level of perceived legibility. As an intervention, this paper reads therapeutic, recovery, and feminist spaces as sites of knowledge production, the epistemology of which often recognizes weight stigma but leaves out the perceived racialized excess of the refugee woman of color. As a result, disordered eating is reduced to individual pathology while its racial and migratory context remains unresolved.

(KNW6) Sociology of Sociology: Epistemic Hierarchies and Counter-publics of Knowledge

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster

This session explores the sociology of sociology within and beyond academia. It seeks to foster a critical dialogue on the epistemic and institutional conditions that shape sociological practice. These conditions are increasingly governed by neoliberal and authoritarian pressures. Market-oriented university reforms, audit cultures, and "micro-credential" economies narrow the space for critical sociological scholarship. These trends transform the university into a site of competition rather than public engagement. Yet within and against these constraints, new sociological counter-publics emerge. Grassroots collectives, independent journals, and digital platforms cultivate spaces for critical inquiry, solidarity, and resistance. Drawing on case studies from across the globe, the session examines how neoliberal university reforms, market logics, and authoritarian retrenchments have reshaped the possibilities for critical and dissident scholarship. The session, therefore, explores the knowledge power relations in which certain sociological theories and methodologies are legitimized, while others are marginalized. It questions the institutional, geopolitical, and linguistic forces that determine which sociologies count as "universal" and which remain "local." It also inquires about the role of a decolonial sociology in reshaping these hierarchies and broadening the discipline's epistemic horizons.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Reyhaneh Javadi, University of Alberta; Zohreh Bayatrizi, University of Alberta

KNW6-1 - Toward a General Sociology: Four Foundational Domains of Social Life

Yuewen Qu, York University

The core claim of this proposal is that sociology, as it is currently taught and organized, operates largely as Western sociology presented under a universal name. This is not because Western sociological theories are invalid, but because the structure of the discipline itself is built around Western historical experiences, institutions, and conceptual solutions, which are then treated as general starting points rather than as specific cases. This proposal does not seek to reject, replace, or

delegitimize existing sociological theories, whether classical or contemporary. Instead, it argues that sociology requires a conceptually prior, general framework within which Western sociology can be properly situated as one historically specific configuration among others. Without such a framework, sociology universalizes prematurely and obscures the historical and regional conditions under which its core categories were formed. To address this problem, the paper proposes reorganizing sociology around four foundational domains of social reality that exist in all societies, regardless of historical period, political system, or cultural tradition. The first domain is power, understood broadly as organized capacities to command, coordinate, constrain, allocate, or protect. This includes, but is not limited to, states, empires, markets, colonial systems, and non-expansionist or newly formed political orders. Western forms of power—such as capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism—are treated here as historically specific configurations rather than universal templates. For instance, capitalism is approached not as a general explanatory framework for power itself, but as one mode of power organization characteristic of particular societies. A general sociology must be able to analyze power in societies that lack capitalist production, expansionist histories, or colonial experience, without treating such cases as analytically deficient. The second domain is people, understood as populations, groups, communities, cultural formations, and mobile or sedentary collectivities, without presupposing Western categories such as citizenship, labor status, or rights-bearing individuals.

KNW6-2 - Feminist Methodology as Transformative Praxis

Nuzhat Khurshid, Seneca Polytechnic University

The field of ethics is amorphous and lends itself to various disciplines and uses. It can be a branch of philosophy focused on human conduct or it can be a part of institutional governance that emphasizes fairness and equity. For feminist research, an ethical approach draws attention to the process of producing research on the margins, and the difficulties of enacting social change, or “how to conduct research in ethically sustainable and morally responsible ways” (Lyke 144). Since feminist research is still relatively new and in a process of becoming, it faces significant challenges both from within academic institutions and in trying to challenge hegemonic masculine norms and discourses in larger society. This is why the question of ethics is never far from feminist research; whereas traditional male-centered research presents itself at universally valid, feminists are required to also incorporate a justification for their research and to legitimize it within existing literature, disciplines, and canons. As one feminist author describes, “epistemology without ethics is deadly” (Whitford, chapter 7). This is the underlying sentiment behind much of feminist research; women do not have the luxury of ignoring implicit epistemological assumptions. Questions of ethics are paramount in for feminist scholarship - they are integrated at every level of research design to ensure transparency and accountability. Two themes that I will draw out in this presentation is the critique of academic bias and the emphasis on praxis as an integral focus of research.

KNW6-3 - Between Wars on Sociology and on Sovereignty: Quo Vadis Free Speech?

Ruba Ali Al-Hassani, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University

Whether explored through a political, legal, or sociological lens, sovereignty is a social construct. Sovereignty is rhetorical; rooted in geopolitical and ideological narratives, and political emotion. Over time, sovereignty can thus refer to many different belief systems (Radon, 2004). While it maintains relevance as an organising principle and as a symbol of national self-identity, it motivates

mobilisation towards recognition and legislation. Sovereignty is thus not an objective fact. It is an emotion reflecting beliefs and ideologies that maintain a form of exceptionalism distinguishing not only a nation, but also a region, from another. This is crucial as culture wars throughout various social and political contexts target sociology, especially during times of crisis and war (Themelis *et al.*, 2025). Sociology as a discipline is *of* and *for* society, providing people with analytical frameworks to understand social and political structures, systems, and relations. Attacks on sociology thus attempt to narrow the space of democratic inquiry and debate. This paper explores sovereignty within the continuum between the war *on* sociology and the war o*ver* sovereignty during times of crises and wars. To explore what intersections and/or parallels exist between them, this paper uses the war on free speech during the genocide in Gaza as a case study. This research will engage in social constructionism to analyse policy changes targeting institutes of higher education and public discourse. As rights and freedoms as being suffocated, it is crucial to shed light on how the war on sociology restricts sovereignty.

(KNW7) Advancing Research on Conspiracy Beliefs: Current Developments and Future Directions
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Knowledge Research Cluster

This panel aims to foster a collaborative exchange on methodological, theoretical, and epistemic challenges in the study of conspiracy beliefs. Combining brief inputs with an extended open discussion, the session will create space for shared reflection on recent developments in the field. The moderators will open with a short introduction highlighting current research, with particular attention to processes of stigmatization and recurring methodological limitations. Invited panelists will then contribute concise reflections on recent findings, ongoing projects, or emerging trends. Rather than formal presentations, the emphasis will be on dialogue and collective exploration. Guiding questions will address how research on conspiracy beliefs can be methodologically strengthened, which blind spots or unresolved questions persist, and how scholars can navigate epistemic challenges, especially in cases where beliefs are not demonstrably false but remain empirically unverifiable. The panel will also consider adjacent research areas facing similar issues. By encouraging active audience participation, the session seeks to generate new perspectives and provide impulses for future research in this complex and evolving field.

Session Organizer and Moderator: Annika Barzen, TU Chemnitz

KNW7-1 - Harris Ali, York University

Harris Ali is a Professor of Sociology at York University who teaches courses on environmental issues, disasters, social theory, and health. He is currently the Director of the CITY Institute at York University. His most recent book coauthored with Roger Keil and Creighton Connolly is entitled Pandemic Urbanism (Polity Press) and focuses on the disease ecology and socio-political dimensions of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases under the conditions of contemporary globalization and heightened urban inequality.

KNW7-2 - Neil McLaughlin, McMaster University

Neil McLaughlin is Full Professor in the Department of Sociology at McMaster University. His research focuses on the sociology of public intellectuals, the sociology of reputations, the international

spreading of conspiracy theories and the sociological dynamics of disciplines, universities and ideas. He is currently working on the political correctness debates and the Jordan Peterson controversy. He has studied the rise and goal of the reputation of critical theorist Erich Fromm, the radical writings of Noam Chomsky, the philanthropy of George Soros, the public intellectual debate in Canada the missing women Canadian public intellectuals, the crisis and renewal of Canadian sociology, the writings of Edward Said, David Riesman and George Orwell.

KNW7-3 - Judith Taylor, University of Toronto

Judith Taylor is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto and is jointly appointed in the Women and Gender Studies Institute. Her research focuses on feminist activism, neighbourhood community organizing, and social change making within public institutions. Her publications analyze the obstacles to coalition building, the intersection of biography and strategy, activist memoirs and cultural production, burn out, intergenerational relations, coalition building across difference, the politics of NGOs and movement formalization, corporate use of social movement ideas, and state engagement. Taylor also teaches and writes about qualitative research methods, feminist approaches to studying people, and community-based learning, with a particular focus on the dilemmas posed by institutional ethical review. She also researches and writes about memoir and feminist approaches to friendship, using feminist creative work as a lens to better understand this central focus of feminist imagination and life.

KNW7-4 - Tandeep Sidhu, University of Manitoba

Tandeep Sidhu is an Assistant Professor in the Sociology and Criminology Department at the University of Manitoba. His research interests examine the intersections between racialization and policing and the sociopolitical dimensions of apex predator conservation and wildlife management in Western Canada. These research interests theoretically converge through their interrogation of knowledge production and how various bodies of academic and popular knowledge reproduce oppressive power dynamics, justifying unequal social arrangements.

(MIG) Migration and Immigration

(MIG1) Community-Engaged Migration Research
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Community-engaged research creates space for community organizations and members to work collaboratively with academic researchers to better understand complex social problems (Kantamneni et al., 2019). It is a democratic approach to research because it brings those most affected by an issue to the table and gives them an active role in shaping the research design (Haapanen & Christens, 2021; Gust & Jordan, 2006). Although the degree of community involvement may vary, this approach seeks to challenge hierarchical power structures and reverse the top-down relationship that often exists between “researchers” and “participants” in traditional research models (Gelmon et al., 2013; SFU CERI, 2021). The session will feature studies that demonstrate varying levels of community engagement in research design, including but not limited to Participatory Action Research (PAR). The dialogue in this session aims to examine how community-engaged

approaches can enrich migration studies, which have traditionally been guided primarily by academic researchers' perspectives.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Esra Ari, Mount Royal University; Leah Hamilton, Mount Royal University

MIG1-1 - Learning from community-engaged research within forced displacement: A comparative case study of Kjipuktuk-Halifax and eThekwini-Durban

Juan Manuel Moreno and Jane Freedman, Université Paris 8, Centre de Recherches Sociologiques et Politiques de Paris

In recent years, research approaches across the social sciences have experienced an increasing turn towards the use of creative participatory methods to help mitigate issues of unequal power relations between researchers and research participants. Within the fields of forced migration and (im)mobility research, this shift has been instrumental in attempting to democratise and horizontalize academic research collaborations with community-led organisations, while at the same time contributing to the centring of people's lived experiences of migration. Nonetheless, these approaches are not without challenges, many of which remain underexamined and unaddressed. In this paper, we analyse our experiences of creative and participatory community-engaged research in a project seeking to understand the experiences of young people growing up in situations of forced migration and (im)mobility across borders. We are using a combination of methods to challenge epistemological inequalities between researchers and those with lived experience of displacement, and the colonial legacies of knowledge production within academia. Drawing from our work with community-based organisations in the contexts of K'jipuktuk-Halifax (Canada) and eThekwini-Durban (South Africa), we examine some of the various challenges we have encountered across the lifecycle of the research process - from research design and communication of concepts and research questions, to the outputs and dissemination of results. The paper thus explores both opportunities and challenges for co-design and co-production of knowledge with both young people on the move and community-based organisations which support them.

MIG1-2 - The Impacts of Stress and Anxiety in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGIE) Refugees' Lives: an Holistic Approach

Aidan Blockley, University of Alberta

This presentation focuses on a research project developed collaboratively between the researcher and settlement practitioners at Rainbow Refuge, an LGBTQIA+-focused program at the Newcomer Centre of Edmonton, on the holistic effects of stress and anxiety on SOGIE refugees in Edmonton, Alberta. This project uses life history interviews to engage research participants and community members on their own terms. The life history interview is an unstructured, prompted narrative of the interviewee's life, told in as little or as much detail as the interviewee likes, though focused on a particular topic of inquiry. Through this methodology, participants were able to have a wealth of control over the interview process and maintain agency through the entire research process. Additionally, participants were asked to come to a follow-up group interview focused around body mapping, a social justice-oriented arts-based methodology meant to help participants illustrate the impacts of embodied phenomena in their lives. Body maps and interviews all contributed to a set of emotional support guides developed for Rainbow Refuge (as requested by the settlement service

practitioners), giving participants the opportunity to contribute to programming and support future service users. In sum, participants expressed complex relationships with anxiety and stress informed by personal histories of resilience, trauma, and mobility. This resilient set of participants troubled the mind-body Cartesian dualism found in traditional Western mental healthcare practice. They mapped their experiences with wellbeing, emotion and affect, and belonging in uniquely nonnormative, life-affirming ways. Participants stressed self-empowerment as their primary mode of responding to the stresses endured by the compounding oppressions of racism, sexism, queer/transphobia, and capitalism, rooting themselves in embodied practices of dance, breathwork, and prayer to carry themselves through difficult situations. Recommendations are given for research and social work practice with SOGIE refugees, as well as self-critique in surveying the research process.

MIG1-3 - Centering Newcomer Girls' Narratives of Forced Migration: A Southern Feminist Envisioning of Ungraded, Anti-Racist Knowledge Spaces

Presenting Author - Pallavi Banerjee, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Authors - Chetna Khandelwal, Megha Sanyal, Riann Lognon, Tania Villalobos Luján, Anuneeta Chatterjee, Santanu Dutta, and Pratim Sengupta, University of Calgary

This paper emerges from a community-engaged research project called Youth and Anti-Racism Integration Collective (YARI-Collective). Here, we argue that grading systems are complicit with colonial migration regimes that, under the guise of western benevolence, systematically devalue migrants of color in the Global North (Banerjee 2022; Guo 2009). Without dismantling the deep ties between 'empire and learning' (Philip and Sengupta 2021) that shape higher education policies and pedagogies (Giroux 2002; Higgins 2024), changes to grading alone cannot fulfill the ethical commitment to centering marginalized voices, histories, and perspectives central to radical feminist and abolitionist praxis. Grounded in a Southern feminist ethic of deep care (Banerjee, Khandelwal, and Sanyal 2024; Shokooh Valle 2023), this paper highlights immigrant and refugee youths' (newcomer girls') reflections on the heterotopic nature of an informal learning community and space positioned both within and outside a major, Northern, research-intensive university. Our work offers images of proleptic possibilities of anti-racist counter-spaces to grading regimes in higher education that are fundamentally oriented toward centering bodies and dignities of newcomer youth of color faced with violent histories of forced migration from the Global South.

MIG1-5 - Racialized Newcomer Women Co-Designing Solutions for Social Change

Presenting Author - Esra Ari, Mount Royal University

Non-presenting Author - Leah Hamilton, Mount Royal University

Community-engaged research creates space for community organizations and members to collaborate with academic researchers to better understand complex social problems (Kantamneni et al., 2019). Within this context, our co-design study examined the underutilization of mental health services in collaboration with an immigrant-serving organization. We argue that these services are underutilized because existing mental health advertisements are stigmatizing and not inclusive, which discourages racialized newcomers from accessing mental health services (Hamilton et al., 2024). As a solution, our study employs a co-design approach in which end users of services collaborate to "create solutions, innovations, and improvements that address problems" (Burkett, 2012). After identifying the core reasons for service underutilization through focus groups with

racialized newcomer women and the partner organization, end users collaborated in a two-day workshop—facilitated by a designer and a cultural broker—to design several mental health advertisements. The resulting advertisements were used by partner organizations to enhance outreach and improve service effectiveness.

(MIG2) Forced and Precarious Migration

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

The issue of forced migration is a significant global concern today. It is therefore essential to explore it from a critical perspective to better understand the many causes and effects of forced displacement. This perspective also reveals the politics of refugee settlement and the experiences of people displaced from their birthplaces to non-citizenship zones such as refugee camps. This session will foster discussion on forced and precarious migration and the making of 'refugeeness.' It seeks sociologically informed ways to address these challenges. The presentations may discuss irregular and precarious migration, refugee migration, and asylum-seeking in addition to the politics of humanitarianism or the role of legal frameworks in enabling refugee-management regimes within displaced communities. Contributions may examine how these regimes use or challenge established human rights and humanitarian discourses.

Session Organizers: Sarah Marshall, York University; Rabindra Chaulagain, Acadia University

Session Chair: Rabindra Chaulagain, Acadia University

MIG2-1 - No Safe Direction: Chinese Irregular Migrants Under Dual Sovereign Violence

Presenting Author - Jinpu Wang, Metropolitan State University

Non-presenting Author - Yu Xiang, Metropolitan State University

Between 2021 and 2024, apprehensions of Chinese nationals at the U.S. southern border increased more than one hundredfold as tens of thousands undertook the dangerous "zouxian" journey through Latin America, fleeing China's digital authoritarianism and zero-COVID trauma. This article examines the distinctive predicament of zouxian migrants caught between two systems of state power, developing the concept of dual sovereign violence to analyze how American immigration enforcement and Chinese transnational repression converge on a single population. Drawing on three years of hybrid ethnographic research (2023-2025) combining digital observation of Chinese-language migration communities with in-person fieldwork among 23 migrants in the Greater Los Angeles area, we identify three dimensions of this condition. First, migrants experience temporal violence within America's asylum system, suspended in liminal legality for years while the traumatic Chinese past continues to haunt the uncertain American present. Second, they face dual deportability, living under two interacting threats: American enforcement that could deliver them to Chinese prosecution, and Chinese pressure made effective by American protection's uncertainty. Third, they experience transnational haunting as the Chinese state reaches across borders through family members used as pressure vectors, digital surveillance of intimate communications, and internalized fear that persists after physical departure. The concept of dual sovereign violence extends existing frameworks—liminal legality, deportability, transnational repression—beyond their single-state orientations to theorize how two states' power interacts to produce suffering worse than

either alone would generate. As digital authoritarianism expands and destination states harden borders, more migrants may find themselves suspended between sovereigns, caught in the space where neither state's protection extends but both states' violence reaches. The zouxian case thus illuminates an emerging condition with implications beyond its Chinese particularity.

MIG2-2 - 'Abandoned Wives' to 'Left Behind Husbands': The Agency and Precariousness of Punjabi Women International Students in Canada

Navneet Kaur, York University

This article explores the changing dynamics of transnational marriages, with a focus on the shift from men traditionally being overrepresented in all temporary and permanent immigration, to more women temporarily immigrating to Canada through the education stream. This paper focuses on arranged marriages facilitated by families as an (im)migration strategy in which the groom's family in India financially supports the bride's studies and/or living expenses in Canada, and in return, she sponsors the spouse on a temporary resident visa. The article analyzes how these Punjabi women navigate, negotiate, and exercise their agency within the complex intersections of gender, class, caste and temporary (im)migration status in the peripheral spaces of both host and home societies. Also, what are the legal and social implications if these women are unwilling to sustain these matrimonial arrangements? Using an intersectional and postcolonial feminist lens, I unpack the question of agency within multiple hierarchies of power and trajectories of precariousness faced by racialized migrant women in transnational spaces. By tracing the transition from 'abandoned wives' to 'left behind husbands', this article offers insight into the broader socio-cultural implications of these changing marriage patterns on recent immigration policies and into the social and cultural composition of Canadian newcomer migrant families and their relationship to the Canadian state.

MIG2-3 - Less vulnerable refugees: Policy design and refugee sponsorship in Canada

Ian Van Haren, McGill University

In recent years, initiatives to increase opportunities for refugees to migrate to other countries have focused on diversifying the actors who facilitate refugee migration through complementary pathway programs. Concurrent with this push is a reliance by governments on managing refugee migration through their executive branch. I study an exemplary complementary pathway, Canada's refugee sponsorship program, to examine how policy and regulatory frameworks impact civil society involvement in supporting refugee migration. Based on interviews, observing public meetings, and reviewing policy changes, I identify limits on sponsorship, financial requirements, and increased complexity and scrutiny for sponsors as key factors impacting engagement. Sponsors are concerned about financial burden and more likely to help smaller families and refugees who will not face challenges in integration while responding positively to government initiatives and special programs. Although the legislative framework of the program allows for broad eligibility, the cost and complexity of sponsorship due to policy design by the executive branch of government restricts engagement to sponsors with sufficient commitment and capacity to support refugees, therein stratifying access to this migration opportunity.

MIG2-4 - Roxham refugee claimants' settlement work: Examining how the context of reception shapes claimants Work of Status

Giovanni Carranza, York University

Canada has felt the increasing pressure to accept refugees, especially as record numbers of migrants began claiming asylum at the unofficial land border entry at Roxham Road in 2017. The paper examined interviews with sixteen Roxham Road refugee claimants and forty professionals and volunteers who interacted with refugee claimants in Quebec, Ontario, Michigan, and New York State. Relying upon decolonial assemblage thinking, this analysis compared the same context of reception (CoR) at different temporal periods to show how the CoR shaped claimants' Work of Status (WoS) and their Precarious Legal Status Trajectories (PLST). The findings expose how the CoR became increasingly chaotic over time and emphasize claimants' agency as they work to overcome their experience of bureaucratic violence when navigating barriers to service and justice. The findings also reveal how street-level actors guided by humanitarian, feminist ethics of care, and colonial logics attempted to organize the chaotic CoR through everyday acts of support and advocacy to materially support claimants' WoS. The discussion underscores how the chaotic CoR contributed to the narrowing of recognition of migrants' rights and considers how street-level actors support sustains Canada's increasingly illiberal immigration structures, policies, and practices.

(MIG3) Privilege and Precarity: Examining Middle-Class Migration

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Global migration patterns are increasingly shaped by the aspirations and mobilities of the middle class. Members of this group often migrate to maintain or enhance their social position, seeking improved professional and lifestyle opportunities. At the same time, receiving societies frequently view middle-class migrants as desirable subjects, valuing their skills and various forms of capital as contributors to economic growth and demographic renewal. Despite their seemingly privileged position, however, the experiences of middle-class migrants can be marked by legal precarity, downward mobility, and exclusion within increasingly restrictive global migration regimes. Papers in this session draw on national-origin case studies to examine the boundaries of privilege and precarity among a diverse array of middle-class migrants. The session begins with a theory-driven analysis using Chinese middle-class migrants as a case to question liberal notions of citizenship as an indicator of stability and inclusion. The discussion then turns to middle-class migrants' experiences under temporary policies. We next investigate the extent of the nationality privilege produced by the state for French citizens migrating to Quebec, which facilitates efficient migration but, through arrangements that initially offer temporary statuses, creates precarity. The following paper examines the experiences of Iranian nationals in Canada living under the temporary "Masha Amini policy", elaborating the complex calculations that shape decisions to remain under this policy or end their temporary stay in Canada. Finally, our session ends with a paper that introduces the concept of defensive deservingness as a strategy to negotiate status insecurity by mobilizing their assets to fit within state-sanctioned hierarchies of migrants, using the case of British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) Hongkongers in the United Kingdom.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Alicia Poole, McGill University; Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto

MIG3-1 - Flexibility as Vulnerability: Chinese Migrants Across Conflicting Citizenship Regimes

Xin Li, Carleton University

This presentation offers a theory-driven analysis that challenges the assumption that citizenship provides a stable and secure endpoint for migrants' mobility and political inclusion. Instead, I argue that contemporary citizenship regimes increasingly operate through flexibility, stratification, and conditionality, producing new forms of precarity that persist even among migrants commonly framed as privileged, mobile, and "desirable." The argument is situated within a broader political context marked by the resurgence of nationalist competition and exclusionary migration governance. Recent developments in the U.S.—most notably during the second Trump administration, including renewed challenges to birthright citizenship, intensified immigration enforcement, and the expansion of discretionary border and security powers—signal a wider global shift toward conditional and morally regulated citizenship. These dynamics undermine liberal narratives that position middle-class mobility and naturalization as pathways to stability, revealing instead how citizenship has become an expanding site of surveillance, discipline, and insecurity. Focusing on Chinese middle-class migrants as a paradigmatic case, the paper examines how classed aspirations for mobility intersect with competing citizenship regimes. China's insistence on single nationality, political loyalty, and restrictive membership places its national project in tension with Western liberal citizenship systems that often permit dual citizenship. As a result, Chinese migrants—frequently characterized as globally mobile and economically advantaged—must navigate legal uncertainty, emotional strain, and moral suspicion while confronting incompatible sovereign demands. Building on and critically revisiting theories of "flexible citizenship," the paper shows how Chinese migrants have been racialized as opportunistic, politically suspect subjects. In the contemporary global rightward turn, narratives of espionage, foreign interference, and disloyalty intensify this framing, producing a double bind in which middle-class mobility becomes inseparable from heightened vulnerability.

MIG3-2 - On the production and extent of a nationality privilege: the case of French migration in Quebec, Canada

Capucine Coustere, Concordia University

This presentation focuses on a North-North postcolonial migration regime. It takes the case of French temporary migration to Quebec, the only French-speaking province of Canada, owing to its colonization by France. Since the 1960s, France and Quebec have signed numerous agreements, many of which intend to increase and facilitate migration. Those agreements produce a "regime of immigration facilitation" (Paquet et al., 2022), which aims at attracting some categories of migrants and reducing barriers to their immigration. It is based on nationality, turning it into a privilege. For the past few decades, French migration to Quebec has significantly increased. Many come with a temporary residence status, which provides reduced rights compared to permanent residency and is generally considered a precarious status. The presentation takes the case of French middling migrants in Quebec to question the state's production of a nationality privilege and its extent. Using the notions of migranticisation and citizenisation, it examines how the regime of immigration facilitation operates and the extent to which it contributes to facilitating their migration and settlement in Quebec. Results show that this regime of immigration facilitation results from four devices: immigration promotion campaigns, publicly funded intermediaries, available immigration pathways, and social rights' eligibility. While those devices do contribute to citizenising them by

facilitating their crossing the border, they are then subjected to processes of migranticisation - i.e. precarization and exclusion - during their stay. Still, all eventually obtained permanent residency. In sum, policies aiming at recruiting the "culturally compatible" (Helleiner, 2017) may be both precariousness-inducing and relatively efficient.

MIG3-3 - "Maybe They Will Let Me Stay": Iranian Temporary Migrants in Canada

Azar Masoumi, Carleton university

In February 2023, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration of Canada instituted a temporary migration policy in response to the violent suppression of mass political protest following the killing of Mahsa Zhina Amini in Tehran (Government of Canada 2023). This policy (known as the "Mahsa Amini policy") allows Iranian nationals who temporarily reside in Canada to extend their stay by moving between various temporary residency streams. For instance, those visiting Canada as tourists may apply for and receive a study permit or (more commonly) an open work permit to work in Canada for three years. Initially poised to be expired in February 2024, the program has now been extended to February 2026, albeit with certain conditions (Government of Canada 2025). While highly popular among middle-class Iranians, the Mahsa Amini policy does not guarantee or offer a streamlined path to permanent residency or citizenship in Canada. Concerned with the human cost of long-term non-citizenship, in this study I ask: what are the medium and long-term impacts of prolonged temporary residencies on Iranian nationals who apply to the Mahsa Amini policy? And how do Iranian nationals cope with prolonged temporary residence in Canada? Drawing on longitudinal qualitative interviews with ten Iranian nationals (ongoing since August 2024) and analysis of government documents and statistics, this study reveals the diverse experiences of precarious citizenship for Iranians. My preliminary findings expose the complex familial, professional, political and financial calculations that shape Iranians' choices of maintaining or terminating their temporary stay in Canada. The study also highlights the impactful role of local Iranian diasporic organizations and communities, as well as transnational relations, including with Iran, in shaping these decisions.

MIG3-4 - The Deservingness Dilemma: Middle-Class Leverage and the Reproduction of Hierarchical Belonging

Eunice Leong-ming Chan, Lancaster University

Middle-class migration within restrictive regimes is defined by the friction between socio-economic leverage and acute legal precarity. While middle-class migrants are often framed as "desirable," their lack of political agency and conditional residency produce an existential precarity, triggered by the threat of stringent immigration policies. This paper presents defensive deservingness as a strategy whereby migrants navigate this dilemma by utilizing economic, cultural, and colonial assets to align with state-sanctioned hierarchies. In doing so, they are compelled to reinforce the very hierarchical logics that keep them in a tiered state of belonging, inadvertently stabilizing the exclusionary border regimes that produce their own vulnerability. Drawing on qualitative research, this paper examines the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) cohort of Hongkongers in the United Kingdom. Despite meeting self-sufficiency thresholds for a humanitarian route, this group faces a moving goalpost in acquiring citizenship. To mitigate this insecurity, this paper analyzes how Hongkongers portray themselves during participation in institutional formal politics. This self-presentation is anchored by a three-fold performance of deservingness: economic contribution through property and taxation;

cultural leverage citing high educational attainment and an overt effort toward integration; and the invocation of colonial ties to make historical moral claims. By highlighting these specific credentials, individuals distinguish their position from migrant categories characterized in public discourse as illegal and undeserving. Ultimately, this paper argues that the middle-class mode of political engagement is a defensive adaptation to civic stratification. By using unique leverage to meet selective state criteria for settlement, these migrants legitimize a stratified logic of belonging that rewards compliance with restrictive citizenship norms. This paper reveals how the pursuit of security pressures middle-class subjects to become active participants in the reproduction of the global inequalities that govern them.

(MIG4) Borders, Migration, and Transnationalism in a Post-globalization Era

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

As geopolitical tensions escalate, pandemic-induced mobility restrictions persist, and immigration control systems tighten, globalization—once envisioned as an ideal of open borders and free movement—appears increasingly fragile. Yet migrants worldwide continue to forge transnational lives, negotiating status, citizenship, and belonging both within and beyond nation-states. This session invited works that critically examine the reconfiguration of borders and migration in this "post-globalization era." Building upon established themes in transnational migration studies—such as "flexible citizenship"—this session aims to reveal how border governance, migrant agency, and global inequalities form new interconnections amid shifting mobility and security landscapes.

Session Organizer and Chair: Xin Li, Carleton University

MIG4-1 - Stepwise, Digital, and Onward: Mapping the Mobility Pathways of Displaced Afghans and Ukrainians to/from Canada

Presenting Author - Sophie Xiaoyi Liu, University of British Columbia

Non-presenting Author - Aryan Karimi, University of British Columbia

Human mobility patterns are anything but linear. Drawing on the emerging framework of complex migration trajectories, and based on 80 interviews with Afghan refugee women and displaced Ukrainians in Canada, we show that displacement-resettlement is a multinational and iterative process. Within and across each group, we identify four distinct mobility pathways that, when put together, reflect the fragmentation and dynamism of contemporary migration: 1) some undertake direct migration from the country of origin to Canada, 2) some experience "migration ladder" in their stepwise migration as they go through second and third countries and accumulate resources before arriving in Canada, 3) some use digital infrastructures to navigate housing and employment to decide where and whether to live in Canada, 4) some consider onward migration options and view Canada as a temporary station. We argue that the interplay of permanent temporariness, family and community ties, and capacities-aspiration creates these complex trajectories of arrival in and potential departures from Canada. These findings underline that, for many, mobility and integration are not fixed unilinear directions, but a fluid, evolving process.

MIG4-2 - Policy Precarity: Examining the Impact of Canada's Recent International Student Policy Changes on Migration Pathways and Belonging

Rana Saadi, Carleton University

In early 2024, the Canadian government announced a 35 percent reduction in the number of new international student study permits, framing the decision as a response to housing shortages and the need for a more "sustainable" international education system. My presentation examines the sociological dimensions of these changes by focusing on how international students make sense of, experience, and navigate the shifting relationship between higher education, migration, and belonging. Drawing on my ongoing qualitative research, I explore how the two-step immigration process once promoted as a reliable pathway from temporary status to permanent residency has become increasingly uncertain. Temporary foreign students now face a landscape where rules change quickly, pathways narrow, and expectations no longer match the narratives they were told when deciding to study in Canada. This analysis places these experiences within broader structures of neoliberal governance and global mobility regimes. International students are positioned in contradictory ways: they are treated as revenue-generating consumers of higher education, flexible workers who fill labour gaps, and potential immigrants who can be selected or rejected at the government's discretion. These competing roles intensify feelings of precarity, as students attempt to secure financial stability, maintain mental well-being, and plan for the future while navigating shifting policy terrain. By engaging with theories of precarity, transnationalism, and policy discourse, my research presents the reconfiguration of the international student program and exposes deeper tensions in Canada's approach to immigration, economic growth, and inclusion. The emphasis on short-term political gains and economic calculations undermines the idea of Canada as a predictable and welcoming destination for global talent. Ultimately, this presentation underscores the need for policies that prioritize student well-being, transparent migration pathways, and genuine inclusion instead of relying on international students to endure the consequences of political and economic pressures.

(MIG5) Decentering the Northern Gaze: Southern Epistemologies in Migration Studies

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

International migration theories have predominantly been developed from a Global North perspective, often conceptualized through frameworks that privilege the experiences of migrants in Northern contexts and emphasize the consequences of migration for those societies. Yet, contemporary migration patterns are multidirectional, and many major migrant-receiving societies are themselves located in the Global South. Despite this reality, theoretical production continues to privilege Northern epistemologies that position the South primarily as a space of departure, thereby overlooking the diversity, complexity, and internal dynamics of migratory movements from, to, and within the Global South. Recent scholarship has sought to decenter Northern assumptions by addressing epistemic biases and offering new insights into the relational geographies of migration. Such approaches recognize migration not solely as a response to structural constraints but also as a deeply imaginative, affective, and political practice through which individuals and communities negotiate (im)mobility, inclusion, and belonging in an unequal global order. Building on these insights, this session invited contributions that challenge the assumed universality of established

paradigms and conceptualize migration as a multidirectional process shaped by diverse histories, aspirations, and power relations, with a focus on the Global South.

Session Organizers: Omid Asayesh, University of Calgary; Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto

Session Chair: Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto

MIG5-1 - Southern Moral Imaginaries of Home: Gardening as Storytelling with Newcomer Youth of Colour

Presenting Author - Riann Lognon, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Authors - Megha Sanyal and Pallavi Banerjee, University of Calgary

In this paper, we present how community gardening with newcomer youth of colour led to embodied (re)connections with homelands that dis/orient (Ahmed 2006) frameworks of economic integration prevalent in northern regimes of migration (Banerjee 2022). This research was conducted with the Youth Anti-Racism and Integration Collective (YARI-Collective), a community-engaged, critical intersectional feminist research collaboration that centres the voices of marginalized youth of colour in reimagining anti-racist futures. The YARI-Collective employs co-design as a methodology in which researchers and participants collaborate on design projects, revealing underlying ethical orientations, and positioning both researchers and participants as historical actors (Bang et al 2015). This approach was grounded in a Southern feminist ethical praxis of 'deep care', foregrounding carework undertaken at the margins in the face of epistemic exclusions, land dispossession, and material deprivation (Banerjee, Khandelwal, & Sanyal 2024). Here, sixteen newcomer youth of colour co-designed a community garden where decisions about what to plant and where, and what activities to do in the garden (e.g., weeding, watering, storytelling, sharing food, etc.) were made by continually re-orienting toward the youth's affective and moral expressions, and their experiences of forced transnational migration and racialization. Home was an affective anchor within the garden for the youth as embodied sense-memories of gardens left behind resurfaced. These memories of home engendered a sense of belonging rooted in resisting the everyday, embodied ways newcomer youth of colour are pressured to forget their homelands and the fact of their forced displacement. We argue this presents a Southern moral imagination (Banerjee, Chacko, & Korsha 2022) of what it means to feel 'at home' in transnational migration, subverting depoliticizing frameworks of integration that position host countries in the Global North as benevolent humanitarian actors while erasing their culpability in creating the circumstances of forced migration in the Global South (Espiritu 2014).

MIG5-2 - Southern Care Aesthetics in Northern lands: Routinised environmental practices in immigrant lives

Chetna Khandelwal, University of Calgary

Southern Feminist scholars discern care as crucial to sustaining resistance and world-building through social change (Shokooh Valle 2023). Care aesthetics may be understood as an extension of this work - homing in on the private, domestic, and oft-invisibilised relations of care that simultaneously nurture and exude resistance. This work highlights ecological relations of care, embedded in everyday household environmentalism, that become routinised in domestic spheres. I present routinised environmentally-informed practices (recycling; limiting waste; reducing meat consumption, etc.) as forms of care, sustaining climate imaginaries. Specifically, I focus on racialised immigrant lifeworlds,

urgently responding to two tendencies in mainstream environmentalism - 1) erasure of racialised immigrant environmental ethics, serving dominant narratives that paint them as either apathetic or detrimental towards the environment; and 2) upholding green capitalist models of everyday sustainability that fail to recognise underconsumption as constitutive of an environmental ethic. I draw upon theoretical provocations (selected excerpts) from in-depth interviews with climate/environmental justice advocates residing in the USA or Canada, who identify as racialised immigrants. Participant narratives spotlighted show complexities of immigrant routinised care for the environment. For example, the environmental ethic in an immigrant household is often unspoken - removed from the white theatrics of upholding environmental practices as moral imperatives. Here, I am guided by Southern Feminist epistemes (Banerjee and Connell 2018; Byrne and Imma 2019) to decenter white land stewardship and orient the lens of care aesthetics towards immigrant relations with the environment. The intended contribution of this chapter is to build on the theoretical landscape of care aesthetics chartered by Southern feminists to inform - how might we theorise racialised immigrant environmental practices, taking into account socio-political specificities of immigrants (predominantly) from the Global South practicing domestic environmentalism in the Global North?

MIG5-3 - Welcome a "Casa"? Post-Deportation Reintegration of Migrant Returnees in El Salvador

Geraldina Polanco, McMaster University

The ongoing overhaul of the United States immigration system alongside heightened border enforcement policies is having dramatic impacts on human mobility. These include (illegal) apprehensions, detentions, and deportations of increasingly disparate populations of migrants to the United States (U.S.), reflecting the entrenchment of deportation as a leading migration management strategy. The cascading effects of these policies are most starkly felt in the “Northern Triangle” (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras), where more than half of all deportees from the U.S. have been relocated to in the past year. Though little discussed in mainstream North American coverage of the growing deportation regime in the U.S., deportation marks the beginning of a new journey for those forcibly removed: reintegration into their country of origin. Drawing on 2.5 years of empirical research examining the experiences of individuals deported from the United States to El Salvador (including 125+ interviews, ethnographic field research, focus groups, and surveys), this presentation homes in on the distinct ways in which gender and age intersect to shape the reintegration experiences of returnees with a focus on lived experiences and governance structures. Recognizing the variety of migrants and returnee experiences, it addresses how socially located subjects experience the process of deportation and reintegration, and the unevenness of reintegration opportunities, processes and structures. It concludes by offering policy recommendations for improving the reintegration environment for women and the elderly, situating these within strategies currently being taken up in the region.

(MIG6) Digital Migration Regimes: Navigating Technology and Belonging

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Digital infrastructures are transforming how migration is governed and experienced, reshaping both state practices and migrants’ everyday lives. Automated decision-making systems, digital platforms,

and data-driven infrastructures are often framed as tools of efficiency. Yet these technologies reconfigure access, expertise, and belonging in ways that can reproduce or intensify existing inequalities. This session brings together perspectives on digital migration regimes, with particular attention to Canada, to examine how digital technology mediates mobility, inclusion, and exclusion. Moving beyond a sole focus on top-down governance, it foregrounds how digital systems are encountered, navigated, and reshaped across multiple sites, including migrant communities and intermediary actors. The papers highlight how digital technologies function not only as instruments of governance but also as informal infrastructures through which migrants access information, resources, and social support, and through which they negotiate identity and belonging. They also examine how the digitalization of immigration processes is shown to generate new forms of opacity and expertise, transforming the role of intermediaries and the experience of navigating migration systems. By centering these dynamics, the session situates digital migration within broader sociological analyses of power, inequality, and social transformation. In line with the conference theme, it asks where possibilities for more just and humane systems of belonging might emerge within increasingly digitized migration regimes.

Session Organizer: Leili Yousefi, McMaster University

Session Chair: Ashika Niraula, Toronto Metropolitan University

MIG6-1 - Digitalization of State Migration Decision-Making: Implication for Immigration Lawyers' Work in Canada

Presenting Author - Capucine Coustere, Concordia University

Non-presenting Authors - Mireille Paquet, Concordia University; Karine Côté-Boucher, Université de Montréal

Much of the research on the digitalization of immigration governance focuses on the adoption and deployment of digital technologies to control mobilities. Yet, little is known about how the digitalization of immigration decision-making is experienced by intermediaries. This paper examines the sociological implications of the automation of immigration governance by focusing on a specific category of intermediaries, immigration lawyers. More specifically, it analyzes how such technologies affect the daily work of immigration lawyers and how these intermediaries make sense of the digitalization of migration policy. Immigration lawyers are experts who help migrants navigate the immigration system and respond to administrative procedures. As intermediaries, they play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between migrants and the state. Based on the case of Canada, we report on a survey (N= 110) and follow-up interviews (N= 15) with practising immigration lawyers exploring how the digitalization of state migration decision-making transformed their work. We found that digitalization required the development of new types of technological expertise by these intermediaries. Indeed, the digitalization of applications outsourced data entry to applicants. However, it did not produce a seamless, transparent and accessible application process. Instead, applying requires understanding and navigating the many government's application portals, adapting to their changes, anticipating and overcoming their frequent breakdowns, with little to no possibility of speaking to a visa officer. It requires specialized technological expertise, which increases the need of an expert. Furthermore, lawyers develop strategies to obtain and interpret opaque and increasingly automated officers' decisions. Therefore, we argue that the digitalization of state

migration decision-making transforms intermediaries into digital translators, facilitators, and "para-state" frontline workers.

MIG6-2 - Navigating Migration: The Role of Social Media for International Students in Canada

Presenting Author - Ashika Niraula, Toronto Metropolitan University

Non-presenting Author - Usha George, Toronto Metropolitan University

This paper examines how international students from India, Nepal, and the Philippines use digital peer networks to navigate migration and settlement in Canada. We found that Messenger and WhatsApp "batch groups" function as real-time support systems for travel planning, housing searches, and document preparation, and thus often substitute formal institutional channels. After arrival, students shift from Facebook and YouTube to Instagram and LinkedIn, which can be seen as moving from information seeking to identity formation and career positioning. These platform transitions show how digital practices evolve across migration stages and highlight peer-driven infrastructures as key forces shaping settlement experiences across different international student groups.

MIG6-3 - Migration and Social Capital: International Students and Social Media Connections

Zahra Falahatpisheh, Western University

International students, a specific group of immigrants, move abroad in pursuit of higher education to enhance their career opportunities and become more competitive than their peers (Akanwa, 2015). Canada is one of the most popular destinations for international students because of its reputation as a country with social and economic equity, and opportunities for success (Chira, 2017). In 2024, the Canadian government introduced caps on new study permits in response to housing shortages and pressure on public services, leading to a nearly 60% decrease in new international student arrivals by September 2025 (IRCC, 2024; 2025). While these policies primarily target future enrollment, they also reshape the everyday experiences of students already living in Canada, particularly in smaller cities where international communities are limited, which can intensify feelings of isolation. At the same time, the increasing public debate around international students can influence how they are viewed in Canadian society, sometimes reinforcing stereotypes or contributing to feelings of marginalization on campus and in local communities. In this context, social media platforms not only act as communication tools but also as tools for accessing resources. Drawing on social capital theory, my PhD proposal explores how social media facilitate maintaining existing ties with the home country and building new connections in their host communities. These platforms shape international students' access to social and emotional support, information, and a sense of belonging. This abstract is based on a section of my PhD proposal, and this study can contribute to sociological discussions on digital infrastructures by showing how social media function as informal systems of support and connection for migrant populations.

(MIG7a) Negotiating Belonging in Settler Societies: Race, Migration, and Nation-Making in Canada
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session examines how belonging in contemporary Canada is shaped through intersecting processes of racialization, migration, settler colonialism, and secular nation-building. Presenters highlight how racialized migrants and minorities navigate institutional recognition, public discourse, and everyday social interactions that simultaneously promise inclusion while reproducing boundaries of legitimacy. The session also foregrounds how internal hierarchies (particularly caste, race, religion, and migration status) shape differential access to belonging within racialized communities themselves. Together, the papers conceptualize belonging as an ongoing social process through which national identity, colonial histories, and racial power are continually negotiated.

Session Organizers: Sarah Vanderveer, York University; Monisha Poojary, York University

Session Chair: Sarah Vanderveer, York University

MIG7a-1 - Becoming a brahmin settler

Dia Da Costa, University of Alberta

In 2016, a savarna (dominant-caste) transnational feminist colleague graciously read my draft paper on questions of settler responsibility that I posed as a dominant-caste, brahmin feminist on these lands. Lamenting “our” difficult positionality (both from India), she wondered whether my argument implied that “we” would have to leave North America. She asked: “Hum jaye to jaye kahaan?” translated to, “If we should leave, where would we go?” expressing a deep settler anxiety and asking, where can we belong? After all, there are Adivasis (Indigenous peoples) at home too, she clarified. I was struck by her acute sense of displacement, despite being an institutionally well-established, respected savarna feminist scholar in the U.S. with substantial, longstanding work, creativity, and activism in India. I am grateful for her candor because her anxiety was familiar to me. Her question has remained with me. In this presentation, I probe my own tentative embrace of becoming and seeing myself as a brahmin settler while offering a select examination of South Asian postcolonial anti-racist feminist texts to ask why savarna write and think castelessly about borders, migration, and indigeneity. Indigenous feminists like Kanaka Maoli Huanani-Kay Trask have asked racialized women to know their histories as settlers, not just immigrants. Following anti-caste scholars like B.R. Ambedkar, Gail Omvedt, Baby Kamble, Shaista Patel and others, I problematize the cultivation of caste ignorance in postcolonial, anti-racist savarna feminist arguments on Indigeneity and everyday and institutional borders. As we live and work on Indigenous lands, savarna anti-racist feminism must confront and refuse, not deflect, the role brahminical supremacy plays in shaping and explaining our differential inclusion into the settler state of so-called Canada. Noticing the historical and ongoing co-constitution of white and brahminical supremacy can help resist it, while nourishing anti-colonial relational belonging and building towards decolonization.

MIG7a-2 - Shadowed Belonging: Rethinking Belonging in White-Settler Contexts through The Case of Pakistani Newcomers in Canada

Hammad Khan, University of Toronto

This article theorises *shadowed belonging* to capture how racialised migrants in white-settler liberal democracies experience simultaneous inclusion and exclusion. Drawing on 52 life history interviews with recently arrived Pakistani migrants in Canada, the paper shows how formal integration metrics like citizenship, residency, and identification with the nation do not resolve racialised nonbelonging. Instead they recast it as a condition internal to liberal inclusion and thus belonging itself. I identify three mechanisms that structure this dynamic: self-imposed everyday authenticity tests, which position migrants as insufficiently Canadian; documents-as-whiteness, where legal status fails to guarantee social recognition; and the transnational imaginary of the white West, which shapes both pre-migration aspirations and post-migration disillusionment. These mechanisms reveal that belonging is not a stable endpoint but a racialised condition sustained by settler colonial logics through which whiteness still functions as the silent benchmark of legitimacy. Shadowed belonging challenges dominant models of integration by showing how liberal democracies disciplines migrants through affective performances of gratitude, self-monitoring, and strategic restraint. The paper contributes conceptually to debates on belonging and citizenship, empirically to studies of South Asian migration, and theoretically to the critique of white-settler democracies. It argues that within these contexts inclusion is never race-neutral, but always mediated by structures that convert proximity to whiteness into the measure of belonging across social, bureaucratic, and imaginative domains.

MIG7a-3 - Anti-Veiling Laws and the Construction of National Belonging

Negin Harandi, University of Ottawa

This study focuses on how anti-veiling laws in Quebec operate as processes that delineate boundaries of national belonging. Anti-veiling laws prohibit Muslim women from wearing religious coverings, such as the headscarf, niqab, or burqa, in various public spaces, including workplaces, government facilities, educational institutions, hospitals, and public transportation (Jahangeer, 2020). These laws have been implemented in Quebec, Canada, as well as in several European countries, including France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. While framed in seemingly “neutral” language, research suggests that these laws disproportionately discriminate against Muslim women (Chakraborti & Zempi, 2013). This paper examines how various branches of feminism, particularly feminist criminology, have centred on “White” ways of knowing, often reproducing colonial stereotypes and neglecting the experiences of Muslim women. This has led to limited attention to the state regulation of Muslim women’s bodies. To address this gap, I propose a new theoretical framework: “law as a racializing gendered practice,” building on Carol Smart’s theory of “law as a gendering practice.” This framework examines the intersections of gender and race to understand how anti-veiling laws construct certain narratives regarding Muslim women’s identities and belonging in the nation. I draw on interviews with activists involved in Muslim women’s rights, along with an analysis of political statements and public discourse in Quebec, to show how legal justifications framed around “laïcité” and “gender equality” racialize the gendered identities of Muslim women. I argue that these laws not only depict Muslim women as “oppressed” and in need of liberation but also construct a broader narrative about the nation by delineating boundaries between “original citizens” and “outsiders,” thus reinforcing a particular definition of national identity and belonging in Quebec.

MIG7a-4 - Divorcing the Catholic Church: A Life Course Perspective to Secular Politics and Everyday Femonationalism among Senior Franco-Catholic Women in Québec

Jessica Stallone, University of Toronto

A paper based on the research in this presentation has received an Honourable Mention for the Canadian Sociological Association's Best Student Paper Award*.*

Senior women's life course experiences provide a unique vantage point to study the gendered history of secular politics in Québec. Based on 15 life history interviews with Franco-Catholic senior women and 5 interviews with their kin, I argue that the secularization of Québec society created new forms of agency for Catholic women as they aged. While they grew up under strong Catholic influence and patriarchal norms, secularization in mid-life offered freedom through access to divorce and sexual autonomy. With increased immigration, in later life, these women used *laïcité* as a disciplining tool against minority religious practices. By developing a typology of *laïcité*, I show how senior women become active protectors and reproducers of Québécois nationhood. They draw on nativist, prejudice, liberal feminist, and neutral conceptions of *laïcité* to police racialized religious minorities' belonging. Thus, Québec secularism—once progressive for Catholic women—transforms into a racial project that excludes religious minorities, especially headscarf-wearing Muslim women.

(MIG7b) Differential Exclusion and Refugee Belonging: Lived Experiences in Canada
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session examines how refugee belonging in Canada is shaped through lived experiences of differential exclusion across educational, social, and settlement contexts. Moving beyond formal accounts of integration, the papers collectively foreground how refugees navigate everyday institutional encounters, racialized narratives, and intergenerational responsibilities that produce uneven and conditional forms of inclusion. Across diverse empirical cases, contributors highlight how refugee identities are constructed and regulated through schools, teacher education pathways, housing access, community life, and family relations. These sites reveal how exclusion operates not only through policy but through everyday interpretations, expectations, and boundary-making practices that normalize precarity while obscuring structural inequalities.

Session Organizers: Sarah Vanderveer, York University; Monisha Poojary, York University

Session Chair: Sarah Vanderveer, York University

MIG7b-1 - Resilient or Violent: Educators' Prespective of Refugee Children

Hibagh Ahmed, York University

The research examines the way that refugee children are framed within Canadian classrooms through a racialized binary description: resilient and violent. Drawing from interviews with educators, multicultural liaison officers, social workers and reception center employees, the study examined how everyday perceptions shape a refugee child's academic and behavioural trajectories. Educators frequently celebrate a refugee child as being 'resilient' because they have overcome war and trauma. This language is functioning as a racial discourse that masks structural neglect. Praising children for bouncing back obscures the chronic underfunding schools in Canada face. Conversely, when a

refugee child is displaying behaviours that stem from the trauma they have experienced, language difficulty and cultural differences, the student is labelled as being violent. This interpretation draws on the broader racialized logics that are embedded in Canadian schools, which view the mere existence of racialized students in the classroom as a form of aggression. Drawing on Critical Race Theory (CRT), the paper analyzes how narratives normalize individual social suffering and justify punitive responses. The research will be asking how do educators and support staff perceive refugee children in Canadian schools? By illustrating how schools function as a key site where racialized refugeehood is regulated and misunderstood. The findings call for reorienting educational practices away from deficit-based narratives and towards more trauma-informed and anti-racist practices that are grounded in understandings of refugee childhoods.

MIG7b-2 - Recentring young people's experiences of everyday bordering: Decolonial, intersectional, and creative participatory study of K'jipuktuk-Halifax

Juan Manuel Moreno, Université Paris 8, Centre de Recherches Sociologiques et Politiques de Paris

Contemporary experiences of inclusion and exclusion are deeply rooted in colonial and racialised hierarchical structures of displacement, dispossession and forced (im)mobility. This is particularly evident in settler-colonial contexts such as a Canada where increasingly, forced migration scholars, practitioners and decision-makers have been examining how lived experiences of uprooting, exclusion and marginalisation of racialised groups of people mirror, intersect and reproduce past and present and ongoing experiences, struggles and mobilisations of Indigenous Peoples and other historically racialised groups of people such as Blacks and Asians. Although researchers are increasingly employing intersectional and decolonial approaches to study experiences of *bordering* in the context of forced migration, age remains an underexplored social category within this intersectional approach. Young people's experiences of borders and *bordering*, and the coping strategies they employ are thus often invisibilised. In this paper, I draw from ongoing research in the context of K'jipuktuk-Halifax (Canada), part of a larger European Research Council project called *Growing Up Across Borders*. Through decolonial epistemologies and creative participatory approaches including photovoice, podcasts, and comics-based research (CBR), I explore how young people (aged 15-25) with lived-experiences of forced migration and (im)mobility renegotiate everyday *bordering* when they (try to) to access housing and making home. The focus on housing serves as a useful frame of analysis where other aspects of social, economic, health, cultural and spiritual life and wellbeing intersect. Housing is also relevant to young people as one of the clearest material and legal colonial manifestations of past and present forms of (im)mobility containment and control. My use of decolonial and innovative methods seeks both to challenge epistemological inequalities between researchers and those with lived experience of displacement, while at the same time address the colonial legacies of knowledge production within academia.

MIG7b-3 - Everyday Boundaries and the Remaking of Belonging: Intergenerational Karen Refugee Women in Canada

Ame Khin May-Kyawt, York University

Despite Canada's multicultural narrative of inclusion, refugee women's settlement experiences often reveal uneven, conditional, and negotiated forms of belonging shaped through everyday social, cultural, and institutional boundaries. Drawing on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with eleven

Karen refugee women living in London, Ontario—five of whom arrived in Canada as children or teenagers and six as adult mothers—this paper asks: How does cultural legacy shape Karen refugee women's everyday negotiations of belonging, settlement stressors, and intergenerational responsibility within Canada's refugee integration context? Guided by intersectionality and the matrix of domination, the study explores how a cultural legacy rooted in forced displacement, prolonged life in refugee camps, and intergenerational caregiving traditions shapes women's settlement experiences in Canada. Rather than conceptualizing integration as a linear or purely functional process, the findings demonstrate that Karen refugee women actively remake belonging through everyday practices of mothering, caregiving, cultural transmission, and emotional labour. These practices function as critical yet frequently unrecognized sites where inclusion is simultaneously enabled and constrained. The analysis further highlights intergenerational differences in how settlement "success" is understood: older women prioritize family cohesion and cultural continuity, while younger women emphasize autonomy, emotional belonging, and civic participation. These divergent orientations reveal routine processes of boundary-making that produce differential forms of inclusion within families, communities, and policy environments. The paper concludes that settlement stressors and coping strategies cannot be understood outside the context of cultural legacy, and that belonging is best understood as a relational and ongoing process shaped through everyday boundaries rather than formal inclusion alone.

(MIG7c) Diasporic Ties and Micro-Politics: Belonging in Divided Societies

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session explores how migrants negotiate belonging across community, interpersonal, and digital spaces in contexts shaped by marginalization and political rupture. Presenters examine how shared cultural practices, language, religious life, and transnational ties function as crucial resources for coping with discrimination and economic precarity in Western societies, while also reproducing internal hierarchies and symbolic boundaries. Moving beyond macro-level theories of identity, the papers foregrounded micro-level interactions and everyday boundary work, showing how inclusion and exclusion are continually negotiated, even within what could be considered "safe" ethnic spaces.

Session Organizers: Sarah Vanderveer, York University; Monisha Poojary, York University

Session Chair: Sarah Vanderveer, York University

MIG7c-1 - Negotiating Borders of Inclusion: Ethnic Media and the Contested Belonging of Hong Kong Canadians in Multicultural Canada

James K. S. Wong, York University

This paper examines how institutional and everyday bordering practices in Canada obscure the distinct cultural identities of Hong Kong Canadians, subsuming them under dominant "Chinese Canadian" narratives, while ethnic media serve as counter-spaces for negotiating inclusion and belonging. Drawing on Foucault's concept of the archive as a discursive system and Althusser's ideological state apparatuses, the analysis reveals how Canadian archives, libraries, and multicultural policies reproduce differential inclusion, positioning Hong Kong immigrants as conditionally accepted yet marginalized within broader Chinese diasporic frameworks. Despite shared ethnic origins, Hong

Kong Canadians—shaped by Cantonese language, colonial history, and resistance to Chinese rule—face erasure through homogenized classifications that limit access to historical narratives and reinforce cultural hierarchies. Historical waves of Hong Kong immigration to Canada, from the 1980s to post-2019, underscore experiences of political displacement and uprootedness. The paper argues that senses of belonging are contested through digital ethnic media like CCUE (Instagram) and CanMen (YouTube), which target Hong Kong-specific audiences to foster cultural identity and recognition. Through content analysis, the study highlights how these platforms mediate belonging: providing settlement guidance; promoting cultural events; and facilitating transnational solidarity amid crises like the 2025 Tai Po fire, where diaspora grief is channeled into vigils and emotional support. These practices reveal power dynamics in multiculturalism, enabling Hong Kong Canadians to challenge exclusion. Ultimately, ethnic media contribute to critical sociological understandings of migration, identity, and social structure in divided contexts.

MIG7c-2 - Interactionism and Identity: Co-ethnic encounters and identity invalidation

Gabrielle Isabel Abando, University of British Columbia

There are many different ways to conceptualize ‘ethnic community’. Perspectives that equate identity with ‘cultural items and practices’ are generally agreed to be reductive. Experience-centered perspectives are also inadequate as those raised in the community can still feel excluded. ‘Ethnic social capital’ perspectives additionally do not account for the unequal distribution of ethnic social capital along lines of ‘authenticity’. Amidst continued discussion of identity and assimilation, migration scholarship deals largely with host/heritage boundaries. Such perspectives risk portraying individuals as passive receptors of social forces such as ‘internalized racism’ as opposed to agents. How are these boundaries actually internalized? In this presentation, I ask: Why do second-generation Filipino Canadians opt out of community spaces? I conducted semi-structure interviews with twenty second-generation Filipino Canadians. To be eligible, participants must not be participating in a cultural organization. Questions prompted further insight into their experience in co-ethnic encounters, and their apprehension about future potential interactions with co-ethnics and ‘cultural spaces’. Overall, second-generation Filipino-Canadians have highly secured understandings of who they are, but this sense of identity unravels during co-ethnic encounters through the process of interaction. In co-ethnic encounters, they are not perceived by interaction partners as co-ethnics. This is despite having a wealth of ‘cultural’ knowledge and experience. This asymmetry in perception, where one sees the other as a fellow co-ethnic, but the other sees them as an outsider, gives off the impression of nonbelonging without ever outright saying so. Compared to macro-level theories of migrant identity, my findings emphasize the continued importance of the micro-level interaction in drawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. I find that individuals navigate landscapes of belonging and nonbelonging even within ‘safe’ cultural spaces. Moreover, these findings complicate the notion of ‘ethnic community’ by recognizing that symbolic boundaries continue to be drawn even from within.

(MIG7d) Care, Control, and Contestation: Community Advocacy in an Era of Devolved Migration Governance

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session examines how contemporary migration governance produces differentiated inclusion while shifting the burdens of care and bordering onto communities and frontline actors. Noting how devolutionary policy trends reposition service providers as de facto bordering agents, intensifying claimant's barriers to services and justice, presenters will discuss how these policies mobilize community advocates to contest intersectional exclusion and assert inclusion amid increasingly illiberal policy regimes.

Session Organizers: Sarah Vanderveer, York University; Monisha Poojary, York University

Session Chairs: Sarah Vanderveer, York University and Giovanni Carranza, York University

MIG7d-1 - Guest Workers, Family Members or Both?: The Role of Canada's Family Reunification Programs in Meeting the Caregiving Needs of Newcomer Households

Rajdeep Sidhu, York University

This paper examines the role of the Government of Canada's Family Reunification Programs (FRPs) in supporting the caregiving and reproductive needs of recent (im)migrant families. It investigates three FRPs - the Parent and Grandparent Sponsorship Program (PGSP), the Super Visa (SV), and the Visitor Visa (VV) - and seeks to develop an understanding of the caregiving and domestic work undertaken within newcomer (im)migrants' households in the context of increasing employment-based (im)migration. I ask: *what are the implications of Canada's Family Reunification Programs for Parents and Grandparents P&GPs in meeting newcomer households' household work and childcare needs? Who bears the burden of unpaid care work and how are daily survival and reproductive needs managed in newcomer households?* This paper utilizes the conceptualization of social reproduction emerging within feminist political economy and decolonial feminist scholarship to analyze unpaid and paid care work that supports newcomer (im)migrant households. In exploring how P&GPs are treated, I combine insights from the feminist political economy with the concept of differential inclusion. This research adopted a mixed-method approach, which includes the analysis of census data and policy analysis of the various migration mechanisms.

MIG7d-2 - Politics of Belonging and Exclusion: Rethinking Canadian Border Policies and Protection Mechanisms

Deepa Nagari, York University

Recent Canadian policies and laws concerning forced migrants (such as refugees, asylum seekers, and irregular migrants), including the US-Canada Safe Third Country Agreement and the proposed Strong Borders Act (Bill C-12), indicate that Canada is moving towards stricter, more securitized forms of border and migration governance. This issue is pertinent given the deteriorating US immigration policies, a global decline in refugee/asylum protection, and the closing of borders by nation-states to displaced people. This paper examines these policies through the theoretical lens of belonging and exclusion within border studies and forced migration (Arendt, 1994; Malkki, 1995; Zetter, 2007; Butler, 2004, 2016; Achiume, 2018; Macklin, 2003; Weber & McCullough, 2019; Ayres, 2024). Exclusion practices include efforts by nation-states, such as Canada, to prevent asylum seekers and forced migrants from reaching the border, as well as systemic ways (through law and politics) to achieve this, leading to differential inclusion categories for different groups of migrants (Walia, 2021). Scholars have argued that migration governance is about maintaining and sustaining society, creating

productive citizens, neutralizing subjects from infractions, and creating categories and exclusionary measures for this aim, whether through mundane systems of discipline and regulation or hierarchies within society, politics, and the class system. Therefore, I posit that it is time to decenter from the hegemony of what belonging, inclusion, and exclusion mean within the language, law, and policies of forced migration. To achieve this, I examine how forced migrants, community/civil society organizations, and local/municipal government officials are navigating, advocating for, and/or assisting forced migrants in the wake of these new developments. Through an analysis of these interviews, I hope to envision alternative pathways to protection and broader societal understandings of belonging, inclusion, and exclusion in the context of forced migration in Canada.

MIG7d-3 - Refugee claimants' barriers to services and justice: Examining how claimants' Work of Status challenges their differential inclusion

Giovanni Carranza, York University

Canada has increasingly relied on external and internal bordering technologies and practices to manage migration pathways and prevent racialized migrants from spontaneously claiming asylum at the land border. Nevertheless, in 2017, record numbers of irregular migrants began claiming asylum at the unofficial land border entry at Roxham Road on the border of Quebec and New York State. This paper examined interviews with sixteen Roxham Road refugee claimants and forty professionals and volunteers who interacted with refugee claimants in Quebec, Ontario, Michigan, and New York State. Drawing on a decolonial assemblage analytic, this paper analyzes the devolution of internal bordering responsibilities by federal governments to sub-national governments and non-governmental organizations. The findings revealed how the governments' devolutionary trends, without the necessary funding structures, pushed service providers to become bordering actors and increased claimants' barriers to services and justice. The findings emphasize claimants' agency. I show how claimants, with the support of service providers and community advocates, engaged in the Work of Status (WoS) to claim inclusion and resist intersectional exclusionary processes and bordering practices. The discussion considers how Canada's increasingly illiberal immigration policies and practices suggest that bordering technologies are beginning to surpass multicultural technologies as the government's primary technology of controlling diversity.

MIG7d-4 - Deep Care in Resettlement Organizations: How the work of anti-racism becomes invisibilized through hegemonic mandates

Presenting Authors - Megha Sanyal and Pallavi Banerjee, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Authors - Sepideh Borzoo, Toronto Metropolitan University; Chetna Khandelwal, Santanu Dutta, and Riann Lognon, University of Calgary

Critical migration scholars have chronicled the negative impact of intersectional marginalities such as race, class, gender, age, and migration status on the material resettlement outcomes and belongingness among immigrant and refugee youth (Amthor 2017; Garnett et al 2014; Kaufman 2021). In this paper, we demonstrate how resettlement organizations that are aimed towards the empowerment and upliftment of immigrant and refugee families of color engage in the discourse and practice of anti-racism. In doing so, we ask what the organizational and institutional mandates that focus on anti-racism are, and how front-line employees and staff members negotiate with them? We ground our work in the Southern Feminist theoretical perspectives, specifically the framework of

deep care(Mohanty, 2003; Banerjee et al., 2024), to understand how frontline staff members at resettlement agencies engaged in the on-ground work of resettlement of racialized refugee and immigrant youth, while negotiating with hegemonic institutional rhetoric around anti-racism. We conducted a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the organizations' publicly available online material and program reports and conducted five Focus Group Discussions with the facilitator staff of the youth programs and managerial staff (n = 24; 19 identified as first or second generation immigrants of color). The goal of the CDA and the Focus Group Discussions was to understand whether and how race, racism, and anti-racism were negotiated at the individual and organizational level. Our findings show that 1) institutional policies about racism in the resettlement organizations were ambiguous; 2) the onus of addressing and countering clients' experiences of racism lay with the individual worker; 3) meeting institutional quotas and deliverables, invisibilized the carework of the frontline worker. In conclusion, the deep care enacted by the frontline staff to resist the deficit framework imposed on newcomer youth doesn't translate into organizational policy that would bring in systemic anti-racist change.

MIG7d-5 - Settling Difference: Intersectionality, Citizenship, and Everyday Practices of SOGIE Settlement

Sarah Vanderveer, York University

Sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) newcomers who migrate to Canada as refugees, along with the organizations that support them, encounter significant challenges during post-claim settlement. These challenges are shaped by intersecting dimensions of race, ethnicity, class, ability, and migration status, producing differential experiences of inclusion and exclusion for queer bodies and identities. While a robust body of scholarship has examined the refugee determination process and the institutional interrogation of non-cisheteronormative identities (Brotman & Lee, 2011; Kinsman, 2018; LaViolette, 2004, 2014; Murray, 2014, 2015; Masoumi, 2019; Mulé & Gates-Gasse, 2012; Mulé & Gamble, 2018), comparatively less attention has been paid to the everyday realities of settlement after refugee status is granted. Drawing on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and care (Herring, 2020; Manzi, Ojeda & Hawkins, 2024; Tronto, 2020) frameworks and citizenship theory (Bannerji, 2002; Lister, 2003; Razack, 2002), this presentation is based on multi-sited dissertation research that centers the lived, experiential knowledge of SOGIE newcomers and workers within SOGIE-supporting organizations. Using talk data generated through in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews, the presentation examines findings of how relational forms of knowledge are produced and exchanged within settlement contexts. It highlights key challenges faced by SOGIE newcomers, including discrimination, precarity, risks of re-traumatization, and barriers to belonging, while also foregrounding the collaborative practices through which organizations and newcomers work together to address intersectional vulnerabilities. In doing so, the presentation contributes to critical discussions of queer migration, citizenship, settlement, and care by emphasizing relational, community-based approaches to post-claim support.

(MIG7e) Transforming the City: Migrant-led Inclusion amid Structural Barriers

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session brings together research on migration, urban life, and social inequality to show how newcomers actively build belonging whiole confronting exclusion. Attending to local and global contexts, presenters discuss how migrants transform neighbourhoods, families, and community organizations ino spaces of mutual support and collective action, challenging racism in housing and labour markets while language barriers, economic precarity, and discrimination strain social cohesion, highlighting core tensions between migrant-led inclusion and the structural inequalities that continue to shape integration outcomes.

Session Organizers: Sarah Vanderveer, York University; Monisha Poojary, York University

Session Chair: Sarah Vanderveer, York University

MIG7e-1 - Musical Geographies of Resistance and Belonging in Toronto's Greek and Chilean Diaspora, 1970s

Alexandra Mourgou, York University

This paper examines how music venues in Toronto's Greektown operated as everyday places of political solidarity and negotiated belonging during the 1970s, focusing on intersections between Greek and Chilean migrants mobilized against military dictatorships in Greece and Chile. While 1970s Canada is often celebrated for official multiculturalism, this research shows how these groups navigated tensions between legal presence and substantive citizenship through political and cultural mobilization. Centering on the "boîte" movement—particularly the *Trojan Horse* coffee house on the Danforth—these venues functioned as sites of "everyday bordering" and alternative publics where cultural practice, political resistance, and diasporic belonging converged to challenge the differential inclusion experienced by political exiles beyond formal citizenship. Through performances of banned political repertoire and solidarity events, these venues enacted inclusion through political commitment while serving as porous contact zones that facilitated encounters among Greek, Chilean, and other Latin American exiles. Particular attention is given to the formation of the Greek-Chilean group *Los Compañeros*, whose hybrid musical practices—combining Greek 'éntechno' and Latin American 'Nueva Canción'—constituted a transnational act of political and cultural resistance. Methodologically, the research adopts a hybrid, place-based approach drawing on cultural geography, urban studies, oral history, ethnomusicology, and digital geohumanities. Ethnographic and walking interviews, cognitive and mental mapping, and archival research at the Hellenic Heritage Foundation Greek Canadian Archives capture both embodied memory and material traces of these music places. By treating the archive as a performative practice and engaging theories of everyday bordering and differential inclusion, the paper argues that Greek coffee houses functioned as infrastructures of political belonging, revealing the micro-politics through which diasporic communities negotiated inclusion and solidarity in urban Canada.

MIG7e-2 - Between Temporary Protection and Belonging: Differential Inclusion of Ukrainian Refugees in the Czech Republic

Marketa Seidlova, University of Defence

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 led to the unprecedented arrival of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Czechia in a very short period, thereby transforming the character of the migrant population and the entire society. Although the stay of these refugees is perceived as temporary, the prolonged conflict is making this temporary status more permanent. This development brings challenges related to integrating refugees into the majority society and the environment of the already existing Ukrainian diaspora. The paper conceptualizes temporary protection as a form of differential inclusion, in which formal legal equality coexists with everyday bordering practices that shape refugees' belonging. Due to the dynamic nature of the phenomenon and limited capacity for primary research, the paper draws on a systematic analysis of secondary sources, including statistical data, analytical reports, and legal frameworks. The above-mentioned institute of temporary protection and the related set of Czech laws created a unique opportunity to observe an unprecedented experiment: immediately upon arrival in a new country, refugees have de facto rights equal to those of immigrants who have been settled in the country for at least 10 years. However, even with such formal status, there are significant risks to social cohesion stemming from existing language barriers, social isolation, limited ties with the majority, and downward occupational mobility linked to economic precarity. Another challenge is the accumulated psychological strain, and everyday experiences of discrimination and prejudice produced through majority-minority relations, most visible while refugees are searching for a job. All these findings support the conclusion that, regardless of formal residence status, the most important factor for the successful integration of newcomers into the host society remains knowledge of the target country's language and working with the majority, so that newcomers are not exposed to discrimination in their private or professional lives.

MIG7e-3 - From Residential Exclusion to Collective Contention: Housing Activism and Racialized Inequality

Presenting Author - Mireia Pont Soler, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Non-presenting Authors - Sònia Parella Rubio and Massoud Sharifi Ahmadipour, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Over the past decade, the crisis of access to housing has consolidated as a global social problem, particularly affecting large globalized cities and their surrounding metropolitan peripheries. This crisis is especially acute in Spain, where housing policies have historically been weak and underdeveloped. In this context, there is growing consensus among social and institutional actors that migrant communities are disproportionately impacted by housing exclusion, not only as a result of socioeconomic vulnerability and administrative barriers, but also due to persistent forms of ethno-racial discrimination targeting racialized minorities. At the regional level, Catalonia has positioned itself as a policy innovator within the Spanish state by promoting regulatory and decommodifying measures in the housing sector. Many of these initiatives have been driven from below through sustained mobilization by organized civil society. Within the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona, AMB), a heterogeneous ecosystem of local pro-housing organizations has emerged as a central set of actors shaping housing struggles and policy debates. Drawing on qualitative interviews with pro-housing organizations in the AMB, complemented by documentary analysis, this paper addresses two main research questions: (1) how do housing policies and market dynamics reproduce or constrain structural racism in access to housing? and (2) what factors shape the capacity of ethno-racial minorities to engage in collective action in response to the residential

exclusion they experience? The paper argues that local pro-housing and migrant organizations function as key sites of collective agency that both contest and reconfigure structural inequalities in the housing field. Specifically, they contribute to: (a) confronting institutional and market-based forms of structural racism; (b) fostering inclusive collective identities grounded in shared, place-based struggles; and (c) expanding the repertoires of contention available to groups facing housing discrimination.

MIG7e-4 - Making Place to Get Older: Older Rural-to-Urban Migrants' Boundary-(Un)Making and Integration into Chinese Cities

Chen Zhang, Duke-Kunshan University

Within rapidly urbanizing cities in the Global South, aging and internal rural-to-urban migration have been two most important sociodemographic trends. Yet little is known about how these two demographic shifts intersect in cities. Rural-to-urban migrants have become a substantial component of the older population in many urbanizing cities. In 2024, about 78 million rural-to-urban migrant workers were aged 50 and above in Chinese cities, and about 30 millions of them were aged 60 and above, which represents more than 30% and 10% of the whole rural-to-urban migrant workforce, respectively. About 9 to 11% of internal rural migrants are aged 60 and above in Indian cities in 2021. As a result, research on rural migrants' life experiences and their integration into cities can no longer be limited to young and middle-aged adult migrants and their children. Also, research on age-friendly urban planning needs to consider how older adults' urban experiences are shaped by their rural-to-urban migration experiences. This study challenges the prevailing understanding that being older and migratory only bring danger to the group, instead, it engages in boundary theory in the case of Chinese cities and argues that the nexus between aging and rural-to-urban migration is a double-edged sword that produces both vulnerability and opportunities for older rural migrants' urban integration. The interviews and participant observation show that, on the one hand, older rural migrants enact agency to negotiate and even transgress boundaries at familial, societal, and institutional levels through continued work and intergeneration care provision and achieve material gain and construct meaningful identities in cities. On the other hand, boundaries at multiple levels don't simply disappear but get paradoxically intensified and/or reproduced in other domains and exclude older rural migrants from cities in subtler ways.

(MIG8) Diaspora in Motion: Disrupting the Bounded Definition
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Diasporic identity has often been theorized through static binaries of home and hostland, displacement and rootedness, and nostalgia and assimilation. Yet diaspora is not a fixed condition but an ongoing, flexible process; a way of being that continually remakes itself across borders, generations, and time. Scholars in this session explore how diasporic life unfolds through hybrid identifications, mediated connections, and temporal and spatial disjunctures. Collectively, these inquiries reimagine diaspora not as a site of resolution, but as an ongoing disruptive process that reveals new, often contradictory, ways of living, knowing, and remembering.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Chaeyoung Kim, Carleton University; Malak El-Outa, Carleton University

MIG8-1 - The Signification of Filipinx: Naming Practices and the Production of Diaspora

Frances Cabahug, University of British Columbia

This conceptual paper develops a processual account of diaspora by foregrounding naming practices as a key site where diasporic belonging, difference, and political alignment take shape. Drawing on Laclau's notion of the *empty signifier*, it reconceptualizes diaspora not as a fixed social form but as a category of practice and a set of situated claims through which identity and power are negotiated. The analysis traces how labels such as *Filipinx* and *Filipino/a/x* are mobilized across three national contexts to articulate divergent modes of political and cultural belonging. In the Philippines, the rejection of *Filipinx* reflects the enduring force of anti-imperial critique: *Filipino* already operates as gender-neutral in local linguistic practice, and *Filipinx* is often read as an unnecessary Americanism. In the United States, the uptake of *Filipinx* and *Filipino/a/x* emerges within discourses of gender inclusivity, intersectionality, and racial justice, aligning parts of the diaspora with LGBTQ+ movements and Chicanx/Latinx activist traditions. The Canadian case offers a distinct configuration: despite the absence of a direct colonial relationship with the Philippines, *Filipinx* circulates within academic, activist, and cosmopolitan urban spaces, revealing how diasporic identity practices are mediated by U.S. cultural hegemony, Canadian multiculturalism, and Philippine historical memory. The paper argues that such labels operate less as neutral descriptors than as strategic signifiers through which segments of the diaspora claim moral and political legitimacy, navigate local regimes of multicultural recognition, and reframe associations with racialized, gendered, and classed imaginaries of the Filipino labour migrant. Naming practices thus do not merely reflect diaspora, but they actively produce it through ongoing processes of selection, translation, and re-signification.

MIG8-2 - Distance, Deadline, Desire: Revisiting the Relationship Disruption between One-Child Chinese Immigrants and Their Non-Migrant Parents

Weiyuan (Caddie) Xia, Carleton University

The disruption of intergenerational relationship, also themed in this paper, has been centralized on the agendas of migration and diaspora study as familial intimacy determines the affective formation of diaspora. What distinguishes this study from others is the relationship between one-child Chinese immigrants in Canada and their non-migrant parents in China is imagined with the denial of a mutual future beyond the loss of the past, considering turbulent contexts of isolated vertical family structures with gender imbalance, state practices and geopolitical tensions in both countries, as well as globalized difficulties such as the COVID outbreak, economic downfall, etc. Building upon theories in the new mobilities paradigm along with concepts of relational agency and kinopolitics, this paper aims to testify the refusal mechanisms that diasporas apply to digest the intergenerational apartness and togetherness by distance, deadline and desire. On the one hand, this paper examines how one-child Chinese immigrants in Canada navigate life plans and negotiate realities with their non-migrant parents, both of whom are also double repressed by localized dynamics in home and host countries. By surrendering themselves to the obstacles that impact family bonding with their non-migrant parents, one-child Chinese immigrants perform a profile of diaspora as an affective condition of being trapped in-between overlapping responsibilities while resisting the multi-directional pulls by transnational realities. On the other hand, this paper conceptually investigates on how the transnational mobility of one-child Chinese immigrants is (re)imagined and constrained in everchanging spatial, social, and emotional circumstances; and therefore, forms of immobility are

produced and perpetuated within mobility. A term called “dual sacrifices” of mutual past and future is accordingly introduced, not only to assess the preceding implications but also to serve as an ontological response of refusing the illusion of transnational mobility; and the author's self-reflection on personal experiences is employed as qualitative data.

MIG8-3 - Practical Reflexivity in the Diaspora: Chinese Immigrant Women Reflect on Chinese Postpartum Traditions

Amy Hanser, University of British Columbia

This paper examines the experiences of Chinese immigrant mothers living in Canada who perform *zuo yuezi* (“sitting the month”), a traditional Chinese postpartum recovery practice. We show how *zuo yuezi*, as a deeply valued cultural practice that is widely practiced in diasporic Chinese communities, can trigger moments of deep reflexivity for women performing the practice in Canada. In particular, being in Canada produces situations in which women become strongly conscious of the differences between their “home” practices and “local” ones, causing them to not just remark these differences but also to consider and respond to them. *How* women respond, however, is dynamic and extremely varied: In some cases, practicing *zuo yuezi* in Canada shores up a woman’s sense of her Chinese-ness, causing her to hold fast to what she understands to be her homeland practices and to reflect on how they compare favorably to what she sees practiced by other people in Canada, sometimes to even reinforcing an essentialized sense of her racial difference from (white) Canadians. In other cases, however, Chinese immigrant women engage with the Canadian context to revise, critique, or even largely reject the *zuo yuezi* tradition. For some, being in Canada while practicing *zuo yuezi* produces a sense of flexibility, as women strategically make decisions about which elements of *zuo yuezi* are essential to preserve and which elements they can (by choice) or must (because circumstances compel them) dispense with. These women’s experiences, and their diverse and practical strategies for performing *zuo yuezi* in Canada in a way that makes sense to them, illustrate the pragmatic and open-ended ways that members of diasporic communities engage with “homeland” cultural practices as they make themselves at home in a new cultural context.

MIG8-4 - Beyond the model minority? The value(s) of Chinese Canadian Careers

Michelle Wang, McGill University

While the immigrant parents of Canadian-born Chinese (CBCs) face well-documented struggles related to assimilation and economic stability (Guo, 2013; Wang & Lo, 2005), Chinese second-generation immigrants tend to reap the benefits of their parents’ “sacrifice” through cultural integration and labour market success (Block et el., 2019). Explanations for the high-status attainment of East Asian diaspora groups are debated in the literature (Lee & Zhou, 2015; Kim, 2025), calling for a subject centered approach that explores how individuals within this uniquely high achieving group conceptualize success and situate themselves within such a phenomenon (Lee & Sheng, 2024). While research has shown that Chinese second-generation immigrants experience more drastic upward socioeconomic mobility than other minority groups, focusing solely on positive group-level trends risks reifying Chinese diasporas into ‘model minorities’ without questioning in-group differences in both occupational pursuits and normative notions of success. This study examines career narratives of second-generation Chinese Canadians, asking how CBCs define and conceptualize success. Using in-depth interviews, I explore the ways that cultural memory, family

dynamics, and transational influences inform professional decision-making processes for diaspora communities. Findings will illuminate understandings of the aspirations and life choices of second-generation immigrants.

(MIG9a) Diasporic Resistance and Transnational Experiences in a Post-Colonial World II

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Contemporary diasporic and transnational activities/identities serve as an effective platform from which to examine postcolonial inequalities, conflicts and racism. While the persistence and disintegration of colonialism may induce mass-scale migration waves across borders; it may also enable those within diasporas to engage in transnational nationalisms and transnational activities, regime changes, and nation-building processes in their homelands. These two sessions bring together theoretical and empirical papers that discuss the relationships between place, belonging, memory, discrimination, racialization, resistance, and activism in Canada and the homeland.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Rina Cohen, York University; Guida Man, York University

MIG9a-1 - Art and Activism in West Asian Diaspora Communities Living in Canada

Jadi Darawi, Toronto Metropolitan University

Artwork and activism have a long and intertwined history, particularly in Canadian diaspora communities. From protest signage to ethnic heritage groups to arts education in primary schools, art is an important part of how we communicate ideas that are culturally significant and politically provocative. People have come together to create with one another and to radically resist colonial powers for as long as time itself. In this article, I explore the intersection of art and activism in Canadian diaspora communities, particularly those in Canada's largest city, Toronto. To conduct this research, I interviewed five individuals who are each members of a West Asian diaspora community living in Canada about their personal experiences in the diaspora, their relationship to Canada and to their country of origin, and about their connection to the arts and to political activism. I critically analyzed the information collected during my interviews, comparing and contrasting the participants' experiences with one another, and situating them within the landscape of diaspora communities in Canada. I then wrote a formal academic paper about my research process, methodologies, analysis, and findings, including quotes from the individual participants as appropriate. The goal of my research was to gather information about the arts and activism in West Asian diaspora communities in Canada. I focused on diaspora communities from Western Asia in order to have an achievable scope for my research, rather than trying to research all diaspora communities from the world. My research questions included: How does being a member of a cultural diaspora in Canada create a "third space" category outside of being Canadian or being a member of the originating community? How do members of West Asian diaspora communities participate in the arts in Canada? How does this participation relate to political activism? How can art and activism be a mode for cross-cultural solidarity among members of West Asiandiaspora communities in Canada?

MIG9a-2 - Diaspora Activism for Homeland Democracy from Canada: Myanmar Diaspora as a Case Example

Ame Khin May-Kyawt, York University

Myanmar's 2021 military coup has not only deepened political repression and displacement within the country but has also reshaped diasporic political life abroad. Drawing on 14 semi-structured qualitative interviews (7 females and 7 males) with Myanmar diaspora activists in Ontario and British Columbia, I examine how members of the Myanmar diaspora organize, sustain resistance networks, and engage in transnational advocacy for homeland democracy from Canada. Situating diaspora activism within a postcolonial context, the paper explores how participants mobilize memories of military violence, displacement, and longstanding experiences of political repression under military rule to sustain a sense of political belonging across borders and settlement places. Findings highlight how Canada functions simultaneously as a site of relative political safety and as a contested space where diasporic claims to belonging and legitimacy are negotiated. The paper also demonstrates how new communication technologies enable forms of long-distance nationalism that challenge the assumption that political identification is territorially bounded. Based on the findings, I argue that Myanmar diaspora activism in Canada is a place-based form of political practice shaped by migrants' lived experiences of displacement and settlement, demonstrating how diasporic spaces serve as important arenas for sustaining resistance and democratic aspirations linked to Myanmar.

MIG9a-3 - Exposing Contradictions: Mapping International Students' Experiences of Resistance in Canada's Multicultural Neoliberalism

Isla Parker, Acadia University

This project explores how international students resist, cope with, and thrive despite oppressive policy changes within their communities and universities. Canada's political landscape is shaped by official multiculturalism, a state prerogative to create an environment which is accepting of immigrant and racialized communities. However, upon a closer look at Canadian immigration policy and the experiences of those deemed to make up Canada's 'multicultural' aspects, it becomes clear that, coupled with neoliberal economic priorities, multiculturalism in Canada is purely surface-level. In recent events, the federal government has capped the number of international students allocated study permits to pursue an education in Canada based on the notion that immigrants are the reason for the increasing strain on Canada's social services, such as housing and healthcare. By scapegoating immigrants, especially international students, for broader social issues in Canada, the state can effectively preserve white hegemony based on a colonial history and reserve social services for (white) citizens. Given the current context, this research asks: *how do international students' experiences expose contradictions in Canada's multicultural neoliberal landscape on social, political, and economic levels?* I use qualitative methods to explore this, namely semi-structured interviews with international students in Nova Scotia and a content analysis of immigration policies in the Canadian federal government. The findings demonstrate that international students deeply understand and embody this contradiction, and that they practice resistance against this contradiction through this embodiment, through their studies, and through their communities. This research exposes the state's efforts in protecting the white hegemony through fluctuating immigration policies despite declaring multiculturalism as an official policy, and the ways that

international students in Nova Scotia cope, thrive, and resist this contradiction and point all of us towards a more reconciled version of Canada.

(MIG9b) Diasporic Resistance and Transnational Experiences in a Post-Colonial World I

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

Contemporary diasporic and transnational activities/identities serve as an effective platform from which to examine postcolonial inequalities, conflicts and racism. While the persistence and disintegration of colonialism may induce mass-scale migration waves across borders; it may also enable those within diasporas to engage in transnational nationalisms and transnational activities, regime changes, and nation-building processes in their homelands. These two sessions bring together theoretical and empirical papers that discuss the relationships between place, belonging, memory, discrimination, racialization, resistance, and activism in Canada and the homeland.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Rina Cohen, York University; Guida Man, York University

MIG9b-1 - Conditional Belonging: Transnational Mobility and the Performance of Citizenship

Dara Vosoughi, University of Windsor

For the Middle Eastern diaspora in Windsor-Detroit, "home" is not contained within a single nation-state but is stretched across a transnational kin network. Families, religious festivals, and labor markets span the river, making the border crossing a routine domestic necessity rather than a rare international event. This proposed research investigates how this "domesticated borderland" complicates the sense of belonging for Canadian citizens of Middle Eastern origin. It asks: how do transnational ties both facilitate and complicate the return home. While these deep community networks provide essential "institutional knowledge"—vicarious strategies for navigating state scrutiny—they also bind travelers to a homogenized "risk profile" in the eyes of the state. Drawing on qualitative narrative inquiry, this study examines how the border acts as a wedge within the private sphere, transforming the return home into a high-stakes performance of "anticipatory compliance." I argue that for this community, the border is not just a barrier to movement, but a disruption of "intimacy at home." It functions as a site where the comfort of the familiar is replaced by the anxiety of the suspect. By synthesizing governmentality with the sociology of home, this project reveals how the maintenance of diasporic life requires a constant, exhausting negotiation of one’s right to belong.

MIG9b-2 - From Diaspora Returnee to Change Agent: Exploring Transnational Capital and Development of Kurdish-Canadian Returnees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Sangar Salih, University of New Brunswick

Literature on returnees in the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI) has mainly focused on Kurdish returnees from European countries and challenges they face during and after their returns (Mielke, K, 2023; Luthman, I. et al, 2025). Voluntary returnees, from Canada have not been explored as they represent clearly defined migrant group. Research has shown that returnees have much to contribute in development of their home country. These individuals usually return with social capital, human capital, and financial capital (Wahba, J, 2021). However, there is a lack of attention on how these

contributions are determined by integration experiences in the host country. Canada has a considerable Kurdish diaspora community (estimated over 16,000 Kurds). Even though many of them have stayed and maintained strong ties to their homeland, a number have returned to the Kurdistan region. Hence, it can be argued that due to their experiences with the democratic system in Canada, their exposure to diverse cultural integration, and market economies, Kurdish-Canadian returnees are positioned to become active role players and potential change agents in the Kurdistan region, strengthening institutions and transforming the socioeconomic landscape of the region. Understanding how Kurdish-Canadian returnees manage their way back home and leverage their transitional experiences can inform policies and practices that maximize the development potential of return migration while highlighting challenges to effective contributions. The research questions guiding this paper are: How do Kurdish-Canadian returnees contribute in the economic development in KRI? To what extent do they participate in political activities, civic engagement, and governance processes in the region? What are the challenges that returnees face in translating their transnational capital in to tangible contributions? To what extent do their integration experiences in Canada shape their effective contributions in the region?

(OMN1a) Immigration Pathways and Perceptions I

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session features presentations exploring the pathways and perceptions of migration and immigration.

Session Chair: Negin Harandi, University of Ottawa

OMN1a-1 - Integration and Tolerance: A Comparative Study of Immigrants in Canada and the U.S.

Zhenxiang Chen, University of Manitoba

Understanding immigrants' tolerance toward minorities is crucial for social cohesion in multicultural societies. Yet most of the studies have primarily focused on natives' tolerance toward minorities or explored immigrants' tolerance in a single dimension. This study examines how different dimensions of immigrant integration influence general tolerance levels, which account for multidimensionality, in Canada and the U.S. Using data from the World Values Survey (WVS) wave 7, it focuses on first- and second-generation immigrants in both countries. In Canada, cultural, economic, civic, and identity integration all significantly influence tolerance. In the U.S., none of the integration dimensions show a clear association with tolerance. The finding is positive and strongest for identity integration in the case of Canada, and a sensitivity analysis that down-samples the Canadian data to match the smaller U.S. sample size yields very similar results, suggesting that the cross-national difference is not driven only by sample size. Overall, this suggests that immigrants' tolerance in Canada is shaped more by post-arrival integration, whereas in the U.S. it reflects pre-migration selection. These findings emphasize the importance of promoting a sense of belonging among immigrants to enhance social cohesion and point to the need for tailored policies in each country.

OMN1a-2 - Rural reckonings - exploring the brain drain and youth outmigration in rural Nova Scotia

Hailie Tattrie, Mount Saint Vincent University

This case study is a collaboration between Mount Saint Vincent University researchers, Mitacs, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Town of Amherst, and the Town of Oxford in their mission to identify innovative solutions to engage youth in their communities and to better understand youth outmigration. There has been limited sociological inquiry into place and relationships in the Maritimes, specifically within the Atlantic region. As Foster (2018) notes, sociological studies have diminished in Atlantic Canada since the 1980s. Corbett (2010) further highlights that there is a deficit of work done on "rurality and identity or qualitative studies in rural education" (p.225). Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical research on rurality and identity in rural education (Corbett, 2010). This study aims to fill these gaps. This study employed both semi-structured one-on-one interviews with youth and youth service providers, as well as a focus group with local youth. 18 youth service providers from the region were interviewed as well as three local youth. Much of the youth feedback came from the large focus group of 13 youth. Youth and youth service providers both identified similar issues in the community that lead to youth outmigration from the region. These issues were as follows: Transportation, the need for a third space**,** poverty & homelessness, and drugs in the community. There exists a plethora of nuanced reasons for why there are such high levels of brain drain and youth outmigration in many rural communities in Atlantic Canada. The answer is not to paint these communities with a broad brush and try to dissuade outmigration; rather, communities need to listen to the voices of youth and those who serve them in order to create communities where youth can thrive.

OMN1a-3 - Immigration pathways through the armed forces: Experiences of immigrant service members in Commonwealth militaries

Presenting Author - Aimee Vieira, Independent Scholar

Non-presenting scholar - Grazia Scoppio, Royal Military College of Canada & Queen's University

Commonwealth countries exhibit particular patterns of sending and receiving immigrant service members with prior military service experience. In particular, Commonwealth citizens with military experience have explicit options to immigrate and continue working in their military occupation in other Commonwealth countries, and especially so amongst those who are also members of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US). Indeed, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand militaries offer longer careers with an older age of retirement than the UK, creating a pool of potential UK emigrants with prior military service who can immigrate and continue working in their military trade after their length of service reached institutional limits. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have facilitated these trends by creating recruitment paths for prior service candidates sometimes known as "lateral transfers", awarding some recognition of their prior service rank and related knowledge, skills, and abilities. This privileged pathway to immigration and specialized military occupations comes with its own challenges at the level of the individual and their families although it simultaneously creates a larger bond at the institutional levels amongst these nations, where mid and upper-level military personnel from an alternative training pathway gain access and influence into the operations of the receiving country's military. Our paper presents findings which provide a unique view on the interplay of individual level experiences with institutional policymaking and geopolitical influence. This qualitative study draws from a narrative interview data that included 57 immigrant service members serving or recently separated from service in the militaries of the U.S., Canada, Australia, New

Zealand, or the UK. This paper focuses on the subset of 26 respondents who served in two different Commonwealth militaries, as an immigrant in at least one of those countries.

(OMN1b) Immigration Pathways and Perceptions II
Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Migration and Immigration

This session features presentations exploring the pathways and perceptions of migration and immigration.

Session Chair: Leili Yousefi, McMaster University

OMN1b-1 - From 'Refugee' to 'Foreign National': Racialized Refugee Reception in Iran's News Discourse

Faezeh Esmaeili, York University

Iran is reported to host about 4.5 million Afghans across refugee, permit-holder, and undocumented categories. This paper examines how Afghan migrants and refugees are racialized in Iran through the joint work of reception policy and domestic news discourse from 2015 to 2024. Challenging race scholarship that frequently normalizes a West/rest divide, I ask: what dominant thematic and discursive frames shape Iranian domestic newspaper portrayals of Afghans between 2015 and 2024? How do policy frameworks and media narratives intersect to produce racialized forms of inclusion and exclusion in a non-Western context? Conceptually, the analysis links Hall's(2021) account of race as a floating signifier with Ahmed's(2004) theory of affective economies to examine how labels and emotions circulate, "stick" to bodies, and consolidate a national "we." Methodologically, I use reflexive thematic analysis of seven major Iranian newspapers and news agencies, read alongside salient policy moments and displacement-related events, to trace shifts in naming, framing, and the governance problems news stories make thinkable. I argue that seemingly technical lexical choices such as "refugee" versus "foreign/illegal national" function as racializing tools. They shift the focus from Afghans as geopolitical subjects to issues of internal order, welfare distribution, and labour management, while also shaping perceptions of who is deserving and deportable. Throughout the corpus, humanitarian tropes often coexist with securitized and economic narratives, creating a volatile politics of conditional inclusion. By foregrounding a Global South site of racial formation, the paper offers a context-sensitive account of how nation-state projects negotiate humanitarian obligations through media-policy assemblages, and it advances efforts to theorize racism and refugeehood beyond Eurocentric frameworks.

OMN1b-2 - Black African Immigrant Millennials in Canada: Hope in the time of Precarity

Maureen Kihika, Simon Fraser University

Online videos like Ayfacts Hub's 2023 *WaKenya Wanalala Nje Kama Lorry* (Kenyans are sleeping outside like lorries) race across WhatsApp groups and TikTok feeds, crossing borders long before migrants do. These clips—of people sleeping outside, recounting deportations, or mourning those who never made it—seem, at first glance, like warnings meant to dissuade would-be migrants. Yet research shows something far more complicated: stories of hardship do not necessarily dampen migration aspirations; in some cases, they sharpen them (Caso & Carling 2024). This tension reveals

a deeper puzzle about how precarity is imagined and interpreted within African migratory worlds. My essay enters this terrain through the experiences of Black African immigrant millennials in Canada. As a distinct generational cohort within the broader diaspora, they offer a window into how migrants make sense of precarity in a country that promises opportunity yet frequently delivers uncertainty. Despite structural barriers, their efforts to build meaningful futures are shaped by a socially grounded consciousness of hope—an orientation that is neither naïve nor apolitical. Kleist and Thorsen (2017) call hope "ambivalent," yet they treat it as a vital lens for linking political economy, mobility regimes, and collective aspiration. I extend this by making three claims. First, these millennials understand precarity through an awareness that, as Ritu Vij (2019) puts it, "to be human is to accede to the vulnerability attached to life and living itself." This is not abstract philosophy for them; it is a socially situated knowledge that shapes how they read their own exposure to risk. Second, they recognize that their vulnerability is not accidental but produced through ongoing coloniality and global hierarchies (Quijano 2000). Third, even as they trace their struggles to these structures, they navigate uncertainty by cultivating hope: a forward-leaning stance that helps them anticipate survival and imagine possibility amid the precarity.

OMN1b-3 - Éléments pour une socio-histoire de la « pensée » d'État québécois sur l'immigration (2003-2025)

Iván Peña, Université du Québec à Montréal

Cette communication propose une analyse socio-historique de la « pensée » d'État québécois sur l'immigration à partir de l'étude des cahiers de consultation sur la planification pluriannuelle de l'immigration déposés depuis 2003. Elle vise à interroger le rôle central de l'État québécois non seulement dans l'ingénierie des politiques migratoires, mais aussi dans l'élaboration, la stabilisation et la légitimation de l'immigration comme catégorie sociale dotée de sens dans l'espace public. Loin de se réduire à un ensemble de dispositifs techniques, l'intervention étatique participe à la construction de cadres cognitifs à partir desquels l'immigration est définie, problématisée et justifiée.

L'analyse repose sur un corpus de documents produits dans le cadre institutionnel des consultations publiques, qui oblige les acteurs gouvernementaux à expliciter les fondements empiriques, normatifs et politiques de leurs orientations. À partir d'une lecture synchronique et diachronique de ces cahiers, la communication met en lumière trois arguments principaux. Premièrement, elle montre la forte continuité des impératifs économicistes structurant la gouvernance migratoire québécoise depuis le début des années 2000, tout en soulignant les inflexions introduites par le gouvernement de la Coalition Avenir Québec. Celui-ci s'inscrit dans le prolongement des gouvernements libéraux en réaffirmant l'adéquation entre immigration et besoins du marché du travail, tout en accentuant parallèlement la dimension linguistique et ethno-nationale de la sélection, notamment à travers la centralité accordée au français et à la francisation. Deuxièmement, l'analyse souligne la manière dont l'immigration est construite comme solution nécessaire à des défis présentés comme structurels — économiques, démographiques et linguistiques — par un travail de rationalisation qui érige ces défis en impératifs de l'action publique. Enfin, elle met en évidence la stabilité des cadres interprétatifs mobilisés pour penser l'intégration et la diversité, généralement conçues comme des conséquences à gérer a posteriori d'une immigration définie comme indispensable.

This paper proposes a socio-historical analysis of the Quebec state's "thinking" on immigration, based on an examination of the consultation documents produced for multi-year immigration planning since 2003. It seeks to interrogate the central role of the Quebec state not only in the engineering of

immigration policies, but also in the production, stabilization, and legitimation of immigration as a socially meaningful category within the public sphere. Far from being reducible to a set of technical policy instruments, state intervention contributes to the construction of cognitive frameworks through which immigration is defined, problematized, and justified. The analysis draws on a corpus of documents produced within the institutional framework of public consultations, which requires government actors to make explicit the empirical, normative, and political foundations of their policy orientations. Through a synchronic and diachronic reading of these consultation documents, the paper advances three main arguments. First, it demonstrates the strong continuity of the economistic imperatives that have structured Quebec's migration governance since the early 2000s, while also highlighting the inflections introduced by the Coalition Avenir Québec government. The latter positions itself in continuity with previous Liberal governments by reaffirming the alignment between immigration and labour market needs, while simultaneously intensifying the linguistic and ethno-national dimension of selection, particularly through the centrality accorded to the French language and to francization. Second, the analysis shows how immigration is constructed as a necessary solution to challenges presented as structural—economic, demographic, and linguistic—through a process of rationalization that elevates these challenges to the status of imperatives of public action. Finally, it highlights the stability of the interpretive frameworks mobilized to think about integration and diversity, which are generally conceived as consequences to be managed a posteriori of an immigration defined as indispensable.

OMN1b-4 - Understanding the Chinese Diaspora's Perceptions of China's Foreign Interference in Canada

Jackson Yeh, University of Alberta

Chinese Canadians face a paradoxical reality: while the number of Chinese immigrants and the economic ties between Canada and China continue to expand, their ancestral homeland is increasingly perceived by Canada as a national security threat. The Chinese diaspora has struggled to find its footing within Canadian society while simultaneously contending with the threat of foreign interference and transnational repression. Although previous studies have explored Canadians' general understanding of foreign interference through cross-sectional surveys, few have examined the specific experiences and perspectives of the Chinese diaspora. This article addresses this critical yet understudied issue by asking how members of the Chinese diaspora in Canada perceive China's foreign interference. Data for this study were collected through in-depth interviews (n = 20) in Cantonese and Mandarin with mainland Chinese, Hong Konger, and Taiwanese participants, along with field notes and an online survey (n = 51) completed by a self-selected group willing to discuss relatively sensitive issues. This study explores the tensions within the Chinese Canadian community that stem from differences in background, political values, and identities. The findings indicate that concerns regarding China's foreign interference are substantive and cannot be attributed to anti-Chinese racism discourse. Despite widespread public awareness, China's foreign interference in Canada remains effective in part due to low levels of social and political trust, political apathy, and the influence of social media. Furthermore, dual identities rooted in both Chinese heritage and Canadian belonging may give rise to conflicting political values. The research offers an updated and nuanced understanding of the political attitudes of Chinese Canadians, emphasizing a non-essentialist approach to the complex nature of the Chinese diaspora in Canada.

(PLN) Canadian Sociological Association Plenary Sessions

(PLN1) What is the colour of Your Sociology?
Scheduled: Virtual - Friday June 5, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Plenary Session

Session Organizer and Moderator: Mark Stoddart, Memorial University; CSA-SCS President

(PLN1-1) Dr. Amal Madibbo, University of Toronto

Joining ongoing decolonizing within sociology, I theorize ways in which decolonization counters colorism within sociology to help eradicate it. This colorism is illustrated through epistemic violence that establishes hierarchies legitimizing certain sociology/sociologists as 'sociology/sociologists' and alienates 'others,' situating them outside sociology, based on colorism. I engage Black/Francophone sociology to center the decoloniality of research/er and ensuing epistemic power-agency, so that 'sociology' becomes increasingly .. Sociology.

Dr. Amal Madibbo was selected to receive the 2025 Outstanding Contribution Award in recognition of her research, publication, and service to advance the discipline of sociology. Dr. Madibbo is an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She also serves as the inaugural Director of the Centre for Black Studies in Education. Her research interests include Black studies, the Francophonie, immigration and race and anti-racism in Africa. Prof. Madibbo teaches courses in the areas of immigration, globalization, and racial and ethnic relations.

(PLN2) Harbours of Hope: Sociological Perspectives from Atlantic Canada
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 5:00pm ADT
Track: Plenary Session

This President's Session will directly engage with the CSA 2026 theme, Harbours of Hope: Sociology in a Divided World, by showcasing diverse sociological scholarship rooted in Atlantic Canada. This invited panel—featuring both senior and emerging scholars—will explore how sociological dialogue can help navigate political polarization and geopolitical anxieties while envisioning hopeful social and ecological futures. Panelists will highlight how Atlantic Canadian sociologists contribute to understanding and bridging divides—regional, social, and global—through research and public engagement. Bringing together scholars from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador, the session will examine pressing issues such as political polarization, economic inequality, migration, Indigenous-settler relations, and environmental challenges. By featuring work across career stages, the session aims to foster dialogue on how sociology can serve as a harbour of hope in turbulent times. This conversation will not only showcase the richness of sociology in Atlantic Canada but also underscore its relevance to national and global debates about division and solidarity.

Session Organizers: Mark CJ Stoddart, Memorial University and CSA President

PLN2-1 - Mark CJ Stoddart, Memorial University

Mark Stoddart is a Professor of Sociology at Memorial University and the President of the Canadian Sociological Association. His areas of research, teaching, and student supervision include environmental sociology, political sociology and social movements, and communications and culture. His main current research interests include the sociological dimensions of climate change, oil and energy transitions, and sustainable tourism development. He is co-author of the book Industrial Development and Eco-Tourisms: Can Oil Extraction and Nature Conservation Co-Exist? (Palgrave). Through a comparative analysis of Denmark, Iceland, Newfoundland and Labrador, Norway, and Scotland, this project offers valuable lessons for how coastal societies can better navigate relationships between resource extraction and nature-based tourism in the context of climate change. He is co-editor of the Handbook of Anti-Environmentalism (Elgar) and Revitalizing PLACE through Social Enterprise (Memorial University Press) and is Associate Editor of the journal Environmental Sociology. Dr. Stoddart is a member of the Royal Society of Canada College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists. He is also the 2024 recipient of the Memorial University Faculty of HSS Dean's Award for Distinguished Scholarship.

PLN2-2 - Catherine Corrigall-Brown, University of British Columbia

Catherine Corrigall-Brown is a Professor and the Head of the Sociology Department at the University of British Columbia and the President-Elect of the Canadian Sociological Association. Her research focuses on social movements and protest, particularly examining what keeps individuals involved in activism over time, framing, and identity. She is the author of seven books, including *Patterns of Protest: Trajectories of Participation in Social Movements* (Stanford University Press, 2011) and *Keeping the March Alive: How Grassroots Activism Survived Trump's America* (New York University Press, 2022). She is also the author of textbooks for Introduction to Sociology in Canada called *Imagining Sociology*, now in its 3rd edition with Oxford University Press. She has published more than 40 articles, book chapters, and review essays. These works have appeared in journals such as *Social Forces, Mobilization, American Behavioral Scientist, the International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Sociological Perspectives, Social Movement Studies, and the Canadian Review of Sociology*. This research was funded by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada) and the National Science Foundation (USA). She has served as chair of the Collective Behavior and Social Movement section and the Peace, War, and Social Conflict section of the American Sociological Association. She is currently a deputy editor of *Mobilization*, the premiere social movements journal, and has served as the Chair of the SSHRC adjudication panels for Sociology. She was awarded the Outstanding Contribution to Teaching Award from the CSA in 2022 and the UBC Killam Faculty Teaching Prize in 2017. She also received the Early Investigator Award for best early career scholar from the Canadian Sociological Association in 2013.

PLN2-3 - Karen Foster, Dalhousie University

Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Rural Futures for Atlantic Canada, Dept. of Sociology & Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University. Prof. Karen Foster is a sociologist whose research spans the sociology of work, rural sociology, political economy, and historical sociology. She uses qualitative and quantitative methods to examine economic and social issues, including productivity, generational dynamics at work, social assistance, and youth outmigration. Her landmark book

Productivity and Prosperity (University of Toronto Press, 2017) traces the history of productivity thought in Canada. As Canada Research Chair and director of the Rural Futures Research Centre, she investigates the sustainability of rural life in Atlantic Canada, focusing on policy, community well-being, and social change.

PLN2-4 - Leyla Sall, Université de Moncton

Département de sociologie et de criminology, Université de Moncton. Prof. Leyla Sall works in Sociology at the Université de Moncton. His research focuses on migration dynamics, racialization, urban sociology, and the integration of Francophone immigrants in New Brunswick and other Francophone minority communities. He brings deep expertise in West African migration and transnational networks, and his recent work highlights how regional immigration policies shape belonging and community development in Acadian contexts. His publications include influential studies on Francophone immigration and economic integration. He received the CSA's 2022 Prix d'excellence en sociologie de langue française for *L'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick et « ces » immigrants francophones* (Presses de l'Université Laval).

PLN2-5 - J.P. Sapinski, Université de Moncton

Faculté des études supérieures et de la recherche (FESR), Université de Moncton. Dr. J.P. Sapinski teaches Environmental Studies at the Université de Moncton, in the Sigenigteoag district of Mi'kma'ki on unceded Mi'kmaq land. His research examines how capitalist structures and corporate power shape the social metabolism between human societies and the ecosphere, and how transforming and decolonizing these relations can support justice and sustainability. He is co-author of *Organizing the 1%: How Corporate Power Works* (Fernwood, 2018) and co-editor of *Has It Come to This? Promises and Perils of Geoengineering on the Brink* (Rutgers, 2020). Sapinski is also a co-investigator with the Corporate Mapping Project.

PLN2-6 - Yasmin Koop-Monteiro, University of Prince Edward Island

Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology, University of Prince Edward Island.

Dr. Yasmin Koop-Monteiro is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Prince Edward Island. Her research spans environmental sociology, social movements, social network analysis, and animal studies, with a focus on human-nature interactions in the context of climate change, biodiversity loss, and well-being. She collaborates with the Climate Social Science Network and the Climate & Society Lab. Her research appears in *Environmental Sociology*, *Environmental Communication*, *npj Climate Action*, and *Energy Research & Social Science*.

(PLN3) On the Ethic of Access and the Transformation of Mental Healthcare: A Sociology of Psychology

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Plenary Session

Guest speaker, Dr. Martyn Pickersgill is a professor of the sociology of science and medicine and co-head of the Centre for Biomedicine, Self and Society at the University of Edinburgh. He is the author

of Configuring Psychology: Access to Therapy and the Transformation of Psychological Care (Cambridge University Press).

Session Organizer and Chair: Michael Halpin, Dalhousie University

PLN3-1 - On the Ethic of Access and the Transformation of Mental Healthcare: A Sociology of Psychology

Martyn Pickersgill, University of Edinburgh

Today, an ethic of access permeates healthcare internationally - propelling changes to services, therapies, and lives. Yet, ostensibly valorous initiatives seldom have wholly and straightforwardly positive effects, and attempts to increase access to care and treatment do not always play out as planned. In this talk, I discuss how an ethic of access has reconfigured mental healthcare in the UK; in particular, I focus on how this has enhanced the place, role, and import of psychological approaches to treatment in the context of a predominantly biomedical National Health Service (NHS). I examine how political, economic, legal, and social dynamics have intertwined with clinical norms and expertise. These interactions have configured broader healthcare contexts, defining not only entry into therapy but also exclusion from it. Attending closely to policy developments, professional strategies, and psychologists' experiences, I demonstrate how access reforms reconfigure clinical knowledge, therapeutic practice, and understandings of the psychological itself. I show how expanding access has become both a moral imperative and a managerial project, with clinical psychologists balancing competing bureaucratic, ethical, and emotional demands in an increasingly strained NHS. An ethic of access consequently also embeds a logic of discipline and enjoins innovation in the technics of exclusion.

Martyn Pickersgill is a professor of the sociology of science and medicine and co-head of the Centre for Biomedicine, Self and Society at the University of Edinburgh. His research explores the social dimensions of biomedicine, with a particular focus on neuroscience, the psy-disciplines, and epigenetics. He actively engages with policymakers, clinicians, bioscientists, and wider publics, including as a member of the Scottish Science Advisory Council. Pickersgill has published widely in journals in science and technology studies and sociology, as well as in bioethics, law, and the medical humanities. He has further contributed commentary and debate in journals such as The Lancet. He is the author of *Configuring Psychology: Access to Therapy and the Transformation of Psychological Care* (Cambridge University Press). Pickersgill is an elected Fellow of the UK Academy of Social Science, and a winner of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Henry Duncan Medal.

(PSM) Political Sociology and Social Movements

(PSM1) Movements for and Against Democracy I: Democratic and Anti-democratic Movements
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

Social movements have long been central actors in shaping democratic life. Across history and in the present, movements have mobilized both to expand democratic rights and to restrict or dismantle them. From struggles for enfranchisement, racial justice, and gender equality to right-wing and exclusionary movements that seek retrenchment, backlash, or even authoritarian consolidation, the

battle over democracy remains a core arena of contention. This session presents a set of research papers, which engage political sociology scholarship to examine how social movements broaden democracy as well as challenge, restrict, or erode it. The papers analyze how anti-democratic movements in American red states reshape institutions from within to strengthen Trumpism, the role of social movements in deliberately dismantling and reshaping the civil sphere, how pro-democracy activists deploy Trumpism in the political context outside of the US to resist entrenched authoritarian regimes, and how conservative political knowledge sustains conservative political movements vis-à-vis indigeneity, settler colonialism and race. These papers offer nuanced ideas about multilayered complex political developments in the era of democratic backsliding.

Session Organizers; Zitian Sun, McGill University; Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University; Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University; Alessandro Drago, University of Notre Dame; Chenxia Wang, Zhejiang University; Taisto Witt, McGill University

Session Chair: Zitian Sun, McGill University

PSM1-1 - Capturing the GOP: Institutional Transformation in Republican Party State Committees

Catharina O'Donnell, Harvard University

How do anti-democratic movements reshape institutions from within? Through 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork in two state Republican Party committees, I document how Trump's movement systematically took over party infrastructure and rewrote party rules to reward loyalty to Trump over winning elections. Across over 300 hours of observations at committee meetings, state conventions, and campaign events, plus interviews with committee members and activists, I observed organizational transformation along three dimensions. First, who counts as a legitimate leader flipped: professional experience became a liability while outsider status became a credential. Second, what the party exists to do fundamentally changed: rather than winning elections, state committees began operating as mobilization arms for Trump's movement at the expense of local Republican incumbents. Third, rules designed to maintain party functioning were repurposed to prevent it: bylaw processes were invoked to freeze or dismantle committees rather than keep them functional. To explain this transformation, I develop the concept of *institutional inversion*: activists kept the party's formal structure intact but rewired the internal logic that structures who has authority, what the organization does, and how rules get enforced. Based on a comparison across two states, I find that open membership, low electoral stakes, ambiguous bylaws, and thin professional networks accelerated Trump takeover in the state where Republicans are weaker. These findings reveal what happens when anti-democratic actors fill “hollow parties” (Rosenfeld and Schlozman 2024; Skocpol and Hertel-Fernandez 2016) and illuminate an organizational aspect of state-level "laboratories of democratic backsliding" (Bermeo 2016; Grumbach 2023). The findings also suggest that Trumpism has become institutionalized in the GOP, with impacts likely lasting far beyond Trump’s departure from office.

PSM1-2 - Civil Disruption

Presenting Author - Dean Ray, York University

Non-presenting Author - Reece Peck, City University of New York

This paper develops the concept of *civil disruption* to explain moments when the civil sphere is not repaired but deliberately dismantled and remade into an exclusionary order by social movements. Drawing on W.E.B. Du Bois, Hannah Arendt, and Jeffrey Alexander, it reinterprets the failure of Reconstruction and the contemporary moral realignment of the white working class as parallel episodes in which elites and aggrieved publics forge new alliances and create moral infrastructures that invert civil codes, fracture shared reality, and reconstitute solidarity around violence and exclusion. Through an analysis of historical and contemporary cases—the Dunning School's "propaganda of history", Fox News, and the manosphere—we theorize *civil disruption* as a structural and symbolic process that bifurcates the civil society into two antagonistic moral orders: one of repair, oriented toward inclusion, and one of redemption, oriented toward exclusion. This bifurcation grants the white working class unprecedented symbolic centrality while deepening its material marginalization, producing a new "psychological wage" of whiteness paid in spectacle rather than security. *Civil Disruption* thus reframes polarization not as democratic dysfunction but as a reorganization of the moral and communicative infrastructures that once sustained civic solidarity, revealing how the American experiment oscillates between the fragile work of repair and the seductive certainty of disruption.

PSM1-3 - For and against democracy: rethink Trumpism from an anti-democratic label to a rebellion tool against autocracy

Ding Wang and Ugurcan Akcadag, York University

Trumpism, often labeled a right-wing populist and anti-democratic movement in Western democracies, has paradoxically been adopted as an oppositional ideology by some pro-democracy forces in authoritarian states. This paper examines how, in countries such as Venezuela, China, and Iran, dissidents and exiles have rallied behind Trump's rhetoric and persona as a vehicle for resisting entrenched regimes. Trump's charismatic authority in the Weberian sense and the tangible actions of his administration (e.g., sanctions and confrontational policies) lent credence to the idea that "Trumpism" offered a revolutionary path to overthrowing autocracy. For instance, some Hong Kong activists frustrated by Beijing's repression and Western liberal inaction embraced Trump's illiberal populism, even celebrating his disregard for democratic norms as a necessary tactic to check the Chinese Communist Party. This phenomenon raises fundamental questions about the nature of democracy and populism. Can an illiberal right-wing movement be rationalized as a pro-democratic force in such contexts, or does it simply replace one form of domination with another? Drawing on political sociology on content analysis, including Max Weber, Carl Schmitt's critique of liberal democracy, and Marxist critiques of neoliberalism, self-preservation by mimicry of others, we analyze the ambivalent impact of these movements. Schmitt's insights into how anti-liberal regimes can claim to be "not necessarily antidemocratic" help explain Trumpism's appeal as expressing a homogenous popular will. Yet history shows that such "liberations" often usher in neoliberal "shock therapy" reforms and neo-colonial dependence: after authoritarian regimes fall, infrastructure and resources are privatized for Western corporations, and new governments become clientelist proxies. This leaves local societies in a dilemma between domestic authoritarianism and subjection to foreign capital. We argue that the emergence of conservative-populist resistance movements complicates conventional paradigms of social movements and democratization, blurring the line between democratic and anti-democratic struggles and demanding a re-examination of how we evaluate movements for and against democracy.

PSM1-4 - Conservative Political Knowledge in Settler Societies

Kyle Willmott, Simon Fraser University

Conservative political movements have remained tangential to much sociological analysis of politics. I take up conservative political knowledge production and the movement sustaining it as explanadum. In examining conservative political knowledge and how it carries consciousness to its subjects, I focus on the thought style in conservative press specifically in relation to Indigeneity, settler colonialism, and race. In examining the thought style, I seek to describe and theorize the processes related to *how conservatives know*. I focus on a recent archive of material from right wing press in Canada and ask what kind of accounts, frames, concepts, and implicit theories structure how ideological entrepreneurs create the epistemic conditions for belief in their political program, specifically around colonialism, Indigeneity, and race. In pursuing a sociological texturing of conservative thought collectives, I build on the basic presupposition that political knowledge is an inchoately alive social production of status, property relations, and orientations to core epistemological and ontological questions about the categories that make up how people reason politically. Using the Canadian case to think about the relationship between conservative politics and its revanchist orientation to colonial and racial justice questions, I show how conservative political logics are suffused with a disproportionate concern with the *generation or enrolment* of new categories into folk hierarchies of moral worth and order, especially given the increasing intolerance of liberalism by the right. Rather than just a movement for "status preservationism" identified by political sociologists, postmodern conservative movements have come to know politically by *generating* new hierarchical schemas fashioned by and in accord with longstanding but epistemologically flexible political logics that breathe new life into crumbling social orders.

(PSM2) Movements for and Against Democracy II: Global Perspectives

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

In light of the tradition of social movement research, historical and contemporary mobilization are in close association with repertoires, legacy, and mobilizational cycles. Mass protests and demonstrations may fade away, but organizations and movement leadership may survive, or even thrive, in facing political or social opposition in different contexts. What are the long-term legacy effects of various social movements? Why do some movements leave a durable legacy, but some are eroded? This session invites four distinguished scholars to facilitate a conversation on the path of democratic studies across the disciplines of sociology, political science, and international relations. It aims to provide an engaging discussion of how contemporary scholarship addresses the question of democratic erosion, the measures to preserve democracy, and a meaningful understanding of movements against democracy in both the short and long-term effects.

Session Organizers; Zitian Sun, McGill University; Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University; Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University; Alessandro Drago, University of Notre Dame; Chenxia Wang, Zhejiang University; Taisto Witt, McGill University

Session Chairs: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University

PSM2-1 - Cathy L. Schneider, American University, Washington D.C.

Dr. Schneider is Professor Emerita at School of International Services, American University, Washington D.C. Her research focuses on democracy, dictatorship and resistance; comparative social movements; collective violence; racial profiling, police violence and racial and ethnic discrimination in Europe, the United States, and Latin America. Her publications include *Police Power and Race Riots: Urban Unrest in Paris and New York*, *Shantytown Protest in Pinochet's Chile*, and *Collective Violence, Contentious Politics and Social Change: A Charles Tilly Reader.* Her media presences include quotes and interviews by the Washington Post, New York Times, BBC, AFP, BBC World, CBS, NBC, NPR and others.

PSM2-2 - Fereydoon Rahmani, York University

Dr. Fereydoon Rahmani is Associate Professor at Department of Equity Studies, York University. His research explores Critical Human Rights and the Middle East, Social Exclusion, Justice, War, Violence, Ethnicity, Social Policy and Quality of Life. Social Indicators of Health as well as Social Indicators Systems are finding special attention in his Subjective and Objective Quality of Life assessment. He has been active in research and teaching at different universities and international institutions in Europe and the Middle East. Rahmani coined the term “Rooftop Societies” for Middle Eastern countries; which postulates the existence of extensive socio-cultural and political incongruity. His most recent book titled “Rooftop Societies: The Middle East Paradox” is his latest sociological analysis of the Middle East.

PSM2-3 - Deena Abul-Fottouh, Dalhousie University

Dr. Deena Abul-Fottouh is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. A digital sociologist, her research examines online misinformation, hate speech, and extremism, with broader contributions to digital activism and algorithmic bias. She is particularly recognized for her expertise in social network analysis, with a focus on the structure and dynamics of online networks. She completed her PhD at McMaster University, where her Vanier-funded dissertation examined the evolution of activist Twitter networks during the Arab Spring. Dr. Abul-Fottouh is a Research Affiliate at McMaster’s Digital Society Lab, and her current research on Right Wing Extremism is supported by SSHRC.

PSM2-4 - Manaswini Ramkumar, Carleton University

Dr. Manaswini Ramkumar is currently a McCall MacBain Postdoctoral Teaching and Leadership Fellow at McMaster University. Previously, she was the Canadian Defence and Security Network Postdoctoral Fellow at The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs in Carleton University. She received her PhD in International Relations from the School of International Service, American University in 2024. Her research explores civil-military relations, democratic decline, and postcolonial democracy with a focus on India, Israel and the US. Prior to her PhD, she worked as an Associate Research Fellow with the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies in Singapore where she was a lecturer in Professional Military Education to the Singapore Armed Forces.

(PSM4) Critical Theories, Social Media, and Social Movements

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

With the advent of the internet and social media, political actors have increasingly integrated digital technologies into their political repertoire and social movement organizing. This session presents four papers, which offer critical perspectives on the use of social media in contemporary political landscape. These papers examine how contemporary forms of far-right and fascist politics exploit social media as a theatre of cruelty, the potential of political short form content on social media platforms to spark critical curiosity among young people in navigating ruling narratives and discourses, how women represent and sustain white nationalist movements in digital spaces, and how human rights institutions use social media platforms to frame institutional focus to localize human rights in practice. These papers raise critical questions about the power of social media in shaping politics and social movement organizing.

Session Organizers: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick Zitian Sun, McGill University; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University; Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

Session Chair: Lesley J. Wood, York University

PSM4-1 - Theatre of Cruelty: Social Media and/as the Neo-Fascist Aesthetic

Fuyuki Kurasawa, York University

In his classic study, The King's Two Bodies (1957), Kantarowicz demonstrates that medieval kingship is constructed around a juridicial fiction that attempt to reconcile the sovereign's two corporeal representations: the king's body natural, which because it is mortal, symbolizes legal or moral restraints upon his exercise of sovereignty (via laws, religious edits, etc.); and conversely, the king's body politic, a sacred body that expresses absolute power derived from a divine mandate or providence itself. The paper will analyse how contemporary forms of far-right and fascist politics aim to overcome this tension through social media, which political actors exploit as a theatre of cruelty. In this way, content creation is consultitutive of the assertion of sovereign power today: the spectacle of raids, deportations, and detentions of criminalized and racialized immigrant subjects is integral to the performance of these coercive actions, as a means to publicly display the political leader's capacity to rise above their body natural and thus overcome democratic limits. The paper will thus propose a visual iconography and political taxonomy of this social media-fuelled strategy of vice signaling, which gets to the heart of the contemporary aestheticization of neo-fascist politics.

PSM4-2 - Somali Daycares & Saving Venezuela? : Potentials of Political Short-Form Content for Contemporary Conspiracies or Critical Curiosity

Mia Vallière, Carleton University

The age of social media has brought forth new forms of (mis/dis)information consumption. For those who are “chronically online”, like many youth in the “iGeneration” and onwards, these new means of consumption are most often acting both as a substitute for nuanced understanding and vehicles for normalizing Othering. There are two broad types of political short-form content (SFC) on Instagram analyzed in this piece: (1) populist “news” and (2) the meme ecosystem. These types of

political SFC are positioned in one of two broad categories: (1) *doxic* SFC or (2) *critical* SFC. First, this presentation will provide a general overview of contemporary scholarly literature on the ability of political SFC to build *belief* and *relatability*. This work highlights two topical, or "trending", issues in the SFC of the digital sphere: (1) conspiracies surrounding Somalian people and (2) the US attack on Venezuela. Using select examples of doxic and critical SFC on these two issues, this presentation will demonstrate its analytical framework to qualitatively assess the *message* and *meaning* of the content, and to quantitatively comprehend its *resonation* and *reach* through direct engagement with the posts (i.e. likes, comments, and shares). This work does not simply aim to problematize political SFC, but to explore its potential to be instrumentalized for the subversion of doxic discourses, sparking critical curiosity in youth, and dismantling ruling narratives.

PSM4-3 - Ideology, Action, and Women's Participation in Online White Nationalist Discourse

Presenting Author - Francesco C. Campisi, Simon Fraser University

Non-presenting Author - Richard Frank, Simon Fraser University

Research on women's involvement in white nationalist movements typically distinguishes between ideological and action-oriented participation. However, it remains unclear how these roles manifest as distinct discourses online. While previous studies rely on qualitative case analyses and literature reviews, this study provides an empirical foundation by examining 7,067 posts from the Stormfront women's subforum. Using seed-guided topic modelling, this study identified discourses aligned with ideological and operational participation, optimizing for topic coherence and testing classification across multiple robustness thresholds. The results indicate that ideological discourse is the dominant orientation within the forum, whereas operational content appears only in limited, mixed-form discussions. Comparative analysis reveals that these discourse types exhibit distinct linguistic signatures: ideological posts show significantly higher textual complexity and affective intensity, while operational posts feature simpler, more directive language. Furthermore, authorship patterns vary significantly; ideological discourse is concentrated among a small core of highly active contributors, suggesting a centralized vanguard of "ideological influencers" rather than a distributed operational network. These findings demonstrate that women's online participation is not a monolith but a stratified communicative environment. By operationalizing participation through measurable linguistic orientations rather than assumed social roles, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of how women represent and sustain white nationalist movements in digital spaces. This discursive differentiation suggests that radicalization pathways for women may be distinguished by linguistic style and engagement level.

PSM4-4 - Localizing Human Rights in Canada Through Digital and Social Media

Matthew Arkinstall, Western University

In recent years, international human rights institutions and laws have been increasingly challenged, and their legitimacy has come under growing scrutiny. Scholars have openly debated whether international human rights are still being used as effective tools to argue for and achieve justice around the world. Some scholars argue that the importance and popularity of human rights peaked in the late 1990s and have since begun to wane. Evidence for this claim can be seen in global events that call into question Western nations' continued commitment to human rights. Other scholars contend that international human rights remain very much in play on the global stage. They argue

that critics often overlook successes in the Global South and downplay overall achievements by focusing too heavily on what has yet to be accomplished rather than on what has already been achieved or a fixation on crisis over progress. Scholars who support the continued relevance of human rights emphasize that some countries have successfully localized international human rights norms, while others continue to struggle. However, the processes through which countries localize human rights remain only partially understood. My work seeks to address this gap by examining how countries localize human rights in practice, focusing on Canada. In this research, I analyze the Canadian Human Rights Commission's website and social media posts to assess how the institution approaches human rights localization. I use website snapshots to identify shifts in institutional focus over a ten-year period, and I analyze Twitter (X) posts over the same period to examine how the Commission frames and discusses human rights issues over time.

(PSM5b) Social Movements, Political Polarization, Policing Protest, Social Trust and Democracy

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

This session presents a set of papers, which examine critical issues in political sociology and social movements such as activists' choices dealing with lifecourse circumstances, political polarization, protest dynamics vis-à-vis protest policing, and social trust and democracy. These papers use a variety of data sources to analyze how activists develop strategy, organize, and persist in response to the expectations of a normative lifecourse, the relationship between political polarization and contemporary democratic conflict, how civil society organizations and advocacy groups engage with public order policing regulations, and the relationship between social trust and democratic support. These papers offer nuanced understanding of social Movements, political polarization, policing protest, and social trust and democracy.

Session Organizers: Zitian Sun, McGill University; Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University; Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

Session Chair: Catharina O'Donnell, Harvard University

PSM5b-1 - Movement Bodies, Movement Lives

Lesley Wood, York University

How do assumptions about an abstract and quantitatively scarce temporality and the expectations of a normative lifecourse limit our ability to understand how activists develop strategy, organize and persist? Highlighting the ways activists nurture and construct embodied conceptions of time, this paper brings together Catherine Corrigall Brown's work on sustained activism together with theories of embodied temporality. I examine four socio-biological pressure points in the lifecourse that often threaten the ability of organizers to sustain their level of engagement - the desire for sexual connection, responsibilities of parenting and raising children, the bodily demands of disability and illness and aging. At each point, I discuss how the expectations of the normative life course places pressure on activists, and how movements respond through relational and identity-oriented practices that increase the value given to multiple, embodied, qualitative rhythms.

PSM5b-2 - The End of Political Polarization

Rachel McLay, Dalhousie University

Political polarization has served as a dominant framework for interpreting contemporary democratic conflict, particularly in the United States but also in comparative contexts, including Canada. This paper argues that political polarization is not a neutral descriptor of political conflict, but rather a liberal-democratic framework whose assumptions are increasingly failing to capture the salient dynamics of political conflict in North America—both in contexts where liberal democracy itself is under threat, and where conflict is reorganized by external threats along alternative political axes. In the United States, the polarization framework—while providing essential historical context—is grossly insufficient for making sense of current political conflicts, which cannot be satisfactorily analyzed in terms of partisan disagreement, however intense or extreme. In Canada, polarization has functioned more as a prospective concern than an actual, settled condition, and its salience is limited when external threats shift attention to more pressing issues of national sovereignty and security. Such conditions do not necessarily vanquish polarization, but rather subordinate it to other political logics. Taken together, these cases suggest the exhaustion of political polarization as a dominant interpretive framework in the U.S. and Canada. A reorientation toward frameworks that account for other, non-liberal forms of political conflict is therefore necessary.

PSM5b-3 - Discursive Opportunities and Demands for Protest Regulation: Evidence from Toronto's Public Order Policing Consultations

Tugce Kirmaci Kamber, Western University

After the October 7 2023 Hamas attacks in Israel and the subsequent Israeli military response, Toronto became a site of sustained protest activity. From downtown to university campuses, the city experienced an intense protest cycle, invoking divergent public reactions toward protesters, police, and other city authorities. Drawing on public submissions to the Toronto Public Order Policing Consultations, this paper demonstrates how civil society organizations and advocacy groups strategically intervened in a public forum to influence an initial stage in the potential creation of public order policing regulations and protest-related bylaws. The submissions further reveal clashing interpretations of the pro-Palestinian mobilization and police responses to it within one of the world's most diverse urban contexts, giving insights about the evolving relationship between Torontonian Arab and Jewish communities and the city government.

PSM5b-4 - Social Trust and Support for Democracy

Presenting Author - Andrew Dawson, York University

Non-presenting Authors - Cary Wu and Isabel Krakoff, York University

Social trust has long been regarded as foundational to democratic stability and legitimacy. From Tocqueville to Putnam and others, scholars have emphasized its role in fostering cooperation, civic engagement, tolerance, and a broadly democratic disposition—each of which contributes to the functioning and durability of democratic systems. A central theme in this literature is the importance of distinguishing between in-group and out-group trust. In particular, "generalized," "out-group," or "bridging" trust is widely viewed as essential to democratic life, on the premise that democracy flourishes when individuals are willing to extend trust beyond their immediate social circles. Such

forms of trust are thought to align closely with democratic values such as tolerance, pluralism, and inclusiveness. By contrast, trust confined to close personal networks—often termed particularized or in-group trust—is commonly associated with social fragmentation, limited cross-group cooperation, and weaker democratic legitimacy. Despite the prominence of these claims, there are surprisingly few cross-national empirical studies that systematically examine the relationship between social trust—explicitly distinguishing between generalized and particularized trust—and support for democracy. This paper addresses this gap by analyzing the relationship between social trust and democratic support using data from the World Values Survey, the European Values Study, and related sources. We conduct multilevel analyses covering approximately 70 countries over the period 2005-2022. Consistent with much of the existing literature, we find that social trust is a robust correlate of support for democracy, independent of political trust and a range of individual- and country-level controls. However, contrary to dominant theoretical expectations, our results indicate that in-group social trust is more strongly associated with democratic support than out-group social trust. This counterintuitive finding raises important questions about prevailing assumptions regarding the democratic virtues of generalized trust and suggests the need to reconsider how different forms of social trust operate across institutional and cultural contexts.

(PSM5c) Revolution, Transnational Mobilization, and Party Dynamics

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

This session includes three papers addressing core issues in political sociology: revolution, transnational activism, and party dynamics. The presenters draw on a variety of qualitative data to examine why a growing demand for foreign intervention emerged among segments of the protesters and opposition elites during the recent revolutionary uprising in Iran, the PS752 justice movement as a case of transnational mobilization for truth, accountability, and recognition, and how various social processes lead to the disillusionment of party members in the context of both domestic and international concerns and alliances. These papers contribute to our understanding of transnational mobilization, theories of revolution, and internal party dynamics responding to domestic and international concerns.

Session Organizers: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University; Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

Session Chair: Matthew Arkinstall, Western University

PSM5c-1 - A Revolutionary Movement in Suspension: Political Blockage and the Turn to Foreign Intervention in Iran

Presenting Author - Fereydoon Rahmani, York University

Non-presenting Author - Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

This paper asks why, during Iran's 2026 revolutionary uprising, a growing demand for foreign intervention against the Islamic Republic emerged among segments of the protesting public and opposition elites. It argues that this turn cannot be reduced to political ignorance, revolutionary euphoria, or ideological deviation from nonviolence. Rather, it reflects a rational-political response

to organized state violence, radical power asymmetry, and the long-term foreclosure of internal horizons of change. Engaging critiques of classical theories of revolution and scholarship on revolution and counter-revolution in the Middle East, it conceptualizes Iran's trajectory as a condition of revolutionary suspension. The state has not collapsed but has become structurally unreformable, sustained by professionalized repression, the management of fear, and a theology-backed ideology that sacralizes violence as political duty. It combines comparative-historical analysis of foreign interventions with qualitative content and discourse analysis of Persian-language media and public statements during the 2026 uprising. Independent media and leaked internal estimates reported by TIME indicate protest-related deaths may have exceeded 30,000, situating the repression within the horizon of crimes against humanity under conditions of information blackout. It shows that calls for foreign intervention emerge within a global legal-political field shaped by the language of the "right to protection" and the norm of the Responsibility to Protect, which has made demands for international action politically thinkable. It identifies two competing rationalities in opposition discourse: an emergency rationality that treats intervention as the only force capable of disrupting radical power asymmetry, and a precautionary rationality that warns of post-intervention collapse, civil conflict, and loss of sovereignty. It does not advocate military intervention. It theorizes why such demands emerge as an intelligible response to revolutionary suspension, mass state violence, and confiscated political time, situating Iran's case within the broader history of intervention as a transnational technique of power.

PSM5c-2 - Strategic Hybridity between Politicization and Depoliticization: The PS752 Justice Movement

Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

When Flight PS752 was shot down in January 2020, killing 176 people, the Iranian-Canadian diaspora confronted a dual crisis of grief and contested legitimacy. This paper examines the PS752 justice movement as a transnational mobilization through which families and allies transformed private mourning into collective claims for truth, accountability, and recognition (2020-2026), under conditions of state denial and partial recognition by liberal democracies. Drawing on transitional justice, the politics of memory and selective forgetting, transnational advocacy networks, and scholarship on politicized grief, the paper conceptualizes PS752 as a *strategically hybrid justice movement*. Empirically, the analysis draws on 54 in-depth semi-structured interviews with victims' family members, volunteers, and professional intermediaries, conducted across major Canadian cities and online, complemented by sustained social observation (2024-2026) at commemorations, memorial ceremonies, and PS752-related public events. The analysis identifies *six interrelated justice trajectories* operating within a single justice field: (1) civil litigation in Canadian courts concerning state-sponsored terrorism; (2) ICAO mechanisms; (3) international criminal and interstate accountability through the ICC and ICJ; (4) claims linking PS752 to a broader continuum of state violence, including the Mahsa Amini uprising; (5) proxy or vicarious justice, whereby the killing of IRGC commanders allegedly involved in the downing during subsequent Israeli military strikes, and (6) engagement with Iran's domestic courts, the sixth trajectory failed to produce accountability. Situating these trajectories across three phases- an initial moral- legal orientation (2020-2022), intensified political engagement (2022-2023), and cautious recalibration (2023-2025)- the paper argues that separating moral justice from political action misrepresents how justice movements operate in practice. In the PS752 case, legal, moral, and political trajectories were mutually enabling.

Ethical and human-rights- based justice did not require political withdrawal, nor did political engagement entail partisan capture; legitimacy emerged through their interconnection rather than hierarchical separation.

PSM5c-3 - The Communist Party of Canada: A Fight Between Nationalist and Internationalist Convictions

Michael Jacobson and Michael Hillson, McMaster University

The Communist Party of Canada (CPC) is typically seen as a minor player in the wider communist movement, which centered itself around Soviet political interests. Due to the CPC's relationship with the USSR, competing loyalties between Soviet and Canadian priorities created tension points within the Canadian party, leading to increased disillusionment among party members. The key question that drove our research was how can we make sense of the social processes which led to this disillusionment within the CPC. Based on archived oral history interviews conducted by psychologist Ruth Ann Borchiver with former members of the CPC, our analysis of the wider Canadian-Soviet tension focuses on those who left the party between 1956 and 1960 due to their shared conviction that the communist movement could no longer represent them. Due to the fealty that the Soviet Union required of Canadian communists, Borchiver's interviewees represented an undercurrent of anxiety within the CPC regarding how to properly respond to Soviet issues without compromising on domestic concerns. The communist movement's reliance on Soviet sponsorship forced the CPC to link Communist issues with a staunch defense of the USSR. The Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1939, Khruschev's Secret Speech in 1956, and the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary were key moments which opened an opportunity for interviewees to rethink the Canadian party's relationship with the USSR. By drawing on key sociological literature regarding social movement framing, we argue that these events acted as catalysts in which members were able to create counter-frame narratives to the CPC's claim that the Party must act in concert with the USSR (Benford & Snow, 2000). Individual beliefs regarding communist interests became increasingly misaligned with party framing practices, leading the interviewees to eventually leave the CPC when they could no longer identify with the party's master frame.

(PSM6a) Social Movements in the Global South

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

Social movements for material rights and socio-cultural recognition happening in many places in the Global South raise questions about the uncritical application of dominant theoretical perspectives in social movement scholarship. Do we need novel theoretical perspectives derived from the experience of social movements in the Global South? The papers in this session offer rich empirical findings to contribute to such rethinking efforts. These papers examine how Global South urban contexts characterized by informality, authoritarian governance, and constrained civic space offer a new perspective on social movement theorizing, how women participants experience, negotiate, and reconfigure gender dynamics of the protest environment, and innovations in feminist resistance tactics to sustain women's mobilization opposing a repressive political regime, A dialogue between these papers offers an opportunity to rethink social movement theories in the context of their application in the Global South.

Session Organizers: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Ahmadreza Yazdi, Concordia University; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University

Session Chair: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick

PSM6a-1 - Beyond Organization: Reconstructing Social Nonmovements and Collective Action Theory in the Global South

Mehdi Hosseini Dehaghani, University of Victoria

Classical and contemporary theories of social movements largely assume that consequential collective action requires formal organization, public visibility, and explicit ideological articulation. This paper revisits and reconstructs Asef Bayat's theory of social nonmovements as a challenge to these assumptions, arguing that prevailing social movement theory contains a systematic blind spot when applied to Global South urban contexts characterized by informality, authoritarian governance, and constrained civic space. The paper advances three main arguments. First, it situates Bayat's intervention within twentieth-century social movement theory, showing how otherwise divergent frameworks share a common presupposition: that dispersed individuals cannot generate collective effects without organizational mediation. Second, it reconstructs Bayat's conceptual apparatus to demonstrate how collective power can emerge through cumulative practice, spatial concentration, and tacit coordination rather than formal organization. Third, it critically examines tensions within social nonmovement theory, particularly regarding the role of the state, the instability between autonomy and incorporation, and the governance of informality. Rather than treating these tensions as theoretical weaknesses, the paper argues that they reveal deeper implications for social theory. Specifically, social nonmovements foreground the urban as a site where political agency is produced through everyday practices rather than institutional channels. The conclusion suggests that reconstructing social nonmovement theory not only expands the conceptual boundaries of social movement scholarship, but also calls for a rethinking of collective action, agency, and urban politics beyond Western-centric theoretical categories.

PSM6a-2 - Gendered dynamics of the #EndSARS protest ground

Presenting Author - Eugene Dim, University of Victoria

Non-presenting author - Daniela Chow, University of Victoria

The #EndSARS movement was a pivotal moment in young people's engagement in Nigeria's contemporary political and civic life. Prior to the #EndSARS protests, protest spaces in Nigeria were conceived as male-oriented environments, as women's participation was constrained by gendered risks of harassment and exclusion. The October 2020 EndSARS protest in Nigeria was a contrasting case that featured the mobilization of male and female respondents on the protest grounds. Drawing on the collective identity theory, this paper examines the gendered dynamics of the #EndSARS protest grounds. The study analyzes semi-structured in-depth interviews with 50 participants conducted in Lagos State between November and December 2022. Our empirical analysis focused on how gender was experienced, negotiated, and reconfigured in the protest environment, with particular attention to women's participation, perceived safety and collective action. Even though some of the protesters perceived the protest grounds as slightly dominated by their male

counterparts, the protesters' sense of collective identity, the creation of informal norms, and collective sanctioning created a high level of safety for female protesters. This paper contributes to the social movement literature by highlighting how collective action can serve as a regulatory mechanism that shapes gender relations and creates safer protest environments. This study highlights the capacity of decentralized movements to generate inclusive and solidaristic forms of collective action.

PSM6a-3 - Walls as Weapons: Afghan Women Protestors' Wall Writing as a Feminist Tactic Under Authoritarian Rule

Selay Ghaffar, University of Toronto

Recipient of the Feminist Sociology Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

Since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021, Afghan women have faced systemic gender apartheid. In the face of sweeping restrictions, including a ban on girls' education, employment, and public mobility, women emerged as the central force resisting the regime. Despite repression, women mobilized under the slogan "Bread, Work, Freedom". When street protests led to crackdowns, arrests, torture, and forced disappearances, women adopted different resistance tactics such as secret home-based schools for girls, writing pamphlets, indoor protests, online activism and wall writing graffiti. Among them, wall writing emerged as a feminist tactic to sustain resistance, amplify their voices, mobilize the masses and seek transnational solidarity. This paper explores how wall writing became a mode of resistance uniquely shaped by Afghan women. Drawing on 33 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Afghan women protestors inside Afghanistan and in exile from May to September 2025, this paper examines how wall writing emerged, its political significance, and the risks it entailed. The findings show that wall writing functions as a feminist resistance tactic, a hybrid tactic that extends beyond the physical act to reach global publics, an act of uprising and solidarity with significant political weight, despite the gendered cost. Using Taylor and Van Dyke's (2004) concept of tactical repertoires, I argue that Afghan women's wall writing is a feminist tactic as part of the larger repertoire of contention they employ. While wall writing has been traditionally a practice participated in by men, in this context, it becomes a radical act of defiance and political expression when repurposed by women. By broadening analytic attention to the full range of tactics feminists in this context employ, this study extends knowledge of feminist tactics under authoritarian rule.

(PSM6b) Transnational Solidarity, Protest Policing, Political Polarization, Voting Preferences

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements

This session presents a set of papers, which examine diverse issues in political sociology such as the experiences and practices of transnational solidarity by people with privilege considering the case of Canadians expressed solidarity with the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, the factors explaining Canadians' support for or opposition to protest policing challenging the dominant narratives of Canadian multicultural tolerance, how social position and political attachment are associated with moral evaluations vis-à-vis political polarization, and the impact of religious affiliation and level of religiosity on the vote choice of Muslim Canadians in recent federal elections. These papers present theoretically grounded rich empirical findings on several core issues in political sociology.

Session Organizers: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University; Lisa Kowalchuk, University of Guelph; Ahmadreza Yazdi, Concordia University; Yi-Cheng Hsieh, McGill University

Session Chair: Zitian Sun, McGill University

PSM6b-1 - Learning from Experiences of Transnational Solidarity

Katie MacDonald and Brooke Brice, Athabasca University

There is a growing body of critical literature interested in the experiences and practices of solidarity by people with privilege (D'Arcangelis 2022; Conway, Dufour & Masson 2021; Sherman 2021; Curnow & Helfery 2018; Gandhi 2006; Mahrouse 2014; Naples 2016; Watkins 2019; Wilson 2017). In this presentation, we share findings from a case of phase one of our current study which explores the experiences in the 1970s- and 1980s of Canadians who traveled to Nicaragua in solidarity with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) during the revolution. We share how participants narrate, 40 years later, these commitments and experiences and make sense of them in the contemporary moment especially as the current Sandinista government adopts the same authoritarian actions that they originally opposed in the revolution. We share how these reckonings with harm have impacted participants and explore how they make sense of their commitments to solidarity over the course of 30+ years. Drawing on a rich tradition of feminist thinkers who consider how to resist implications in privilege through various lenses - race traitors (Harding, 1991), racial sedition (Frye 1983), coalition (Reagan 2015) and methodologies of the privileged (Sholock, 2020), we share these experiences of transnational solidarity in the past, their impact on people's current work and commitments in order to support transnational solidarity work now. Building on scholarship on political defeat, we are interested in how long-lasting solidarity commitments by those with privilege are impacted by both time and disappointment (Proctor, 2024).

PSM6b-2 - Public opinion on protest policing in Canada: Who supports or opposes it and why?

Ismail Nasirudeen, University of Alberta

Recipient of the Criminology and Criminal Sociology Research Cluster and the Political Sociology and Social Movements Best Student Paper Awards.

Public protest is a central mechanism through which citizens exercise their political voices and hold governments accountable. While existing research documents the policing of protest and its disproportionate impacts on racialized communities, we know far less about how Canadians perceive protest policing and what explains support for or opposition to it. Prior studies, largely based in the United States, suggest that public attitudes toward protest policing are shaped by racial beliefs and broader orientations toward policing, yet comparable quantitative evidence in the Canadian context remains limited. Using the 2024 Democracy Checkup survey dataset, I examine who supports or opposes the policing of protest in Canada and why. Conducting descriptive statistics, bivariate analyses, and ordinal logistic regression (OLR) models, my analysis focuses on the role of demographic characteristics, attitudes toward racialized policing, and modern racial sentiments. The findings show that support for and opposition to protest policing are driven primarily by racialized attitudinal and ideological orientations rather than by most demographic factors. Attitudes endorsing racialized policing emerge as the strongest and most consistent predictor of support for or opposition

to protest policing, while measures of modern racism, such as denial of systemic discrimination and resentment toward perceived gains by racialized groups, are also positively associated with support. Race itself explains relatively little once racial ideology is accounted for. Overall, the results challenge dominant narratives of Canadian multicultural tolerance and suggest that public support for or opposition to protest policing is closely tied to racialized understandings of order, legitimacy, and state authority.

PSM6b-3 - From Social Position to Moral Division: How Life Circumstances Shape Moral Reasoning

Mia Brufatto, Western University

Political polarization is increasingly described as a crisis of morality, with opposing sides portrayed as holding fundamentally incompatible values. This framing, however, often obscures a sociological question at the heart of moral division: how everyday social position shapes what people come to see as morally urgent in the first place. This research examines how marital status, economic conditions, and party identification structure moral reasoning through patterns of societal issue prioritization. Drawing on sociological theories of morality, stratification, and political identity, the project conceptualizes moral judgment as a relational and socially situated process, rooted in life-course position and political belonging rather than fixed moral worldviews. I argue that differences in lived experience orient individuals toward distinct social concerns, while partisan identities provide the interpretive lenses that transform these concerns into moral claims. Using survey-based quantitative analysis, this work investigates how social position and political attachment are associated with moral evaluations across issue domains. By shifting attention from abstract moral disagreement to the social foundations of moral prioritization, this research offers a sociological account of polarization that emphasizes structure over ideology. In doing so, it identifies how sociological dialogue can move beyond moral impasse toward a deeper understanding of division—and the conditions under which shared moral ground may still be possible.

PSM6b-4 - Further Thoughts on Religiosity, Religious Affiliation, and Foreign-Born Status: Muslim Voting in English Canada

Shahad Isaac, University of Toronto

The role of religion as a predictor of electoral behaviour has been well-researched in Canada, with much of the focus on the voting patterns of major religious groups, such as Catholics and Protestants. However, this focus has resulted in a limited exploration of other ethno-religious groups. While some studies have examined the electoral behaviour of groups such as Jewish Canadians, the literature on Muslim Canadians' vote choice, party preference, and overall voting behaviour remains limited. Muslims exhibit a complex ideological profile, characterized by generally conservative cultural tendencies, which might suggest alignment with typical right-wing parties. However, Muslims in Western democracies often politically align with left-wing parties. This inclination is frequently explained by the influence of in-group identity, closely tied to the concept of "linked fate," where a sense of shared destiny leads minority community members to prioritize group interests over individual preferences in political choices. These findings highlight the intricate ways in which religion and religiosity shape electoral behaviour among minority groups, underscoring the need for a deeper exploration of Muslim Canadians' political engagement. Building on theories of social group identity, this research leverages recent Canadian Election Studies to analyze the impact of religious affiliation

and level of religiosity on the vote choice of Muslims in the 2019 and 2021 federal elections. This study seeks to investigate whether Muslim Canadians exhibit distinct voting patterns or share similarities with other ethno-religious groups in Canada. Specifically, the study addresses the question: *Are Muslim Canadians distinct from other ethno-religious groups in their voting behaviour, or do they share similar patterns?* The findings will contribute to the scholarship on Canadian politics, as well as to comparative analyses of ethno-religious minority electoral behaviours in Western democracies.

(PSM8a) Structures vs. Agents: Sites of Control and Resistance in Global Societies I

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Political Science and Social Movements Research Cluster

The contributions on this 2-part session will speak from various sites about the risks, resiliencies, acts of resistance and possibilities for reimagining diverse futures that drive personal decisions, collective action and social movements on a global stage. In the first panel, speakers discuss how social structures and institutions—from governments to AI technologies, popular media, and emerging technologies of self-expression—open or foreclose possibilities for personal self-making and collective action. They touch on diverse sites of social control and contest including risks for Indigenous self-determination movements to oppose looming government-precipitated atrocities, the impact of AI on financial decision-making, the possibilities of Photovoice for gender-transformative and participatory research, and the role of queer self-expression in retaking agency in popular media fandoms. They bear witness to the plurality of ways that agency is negotiated between structure and individual.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tyler Correia, University of the Fraser Valley

PSM8a-1 - Challenging the Paper Machine: Tensions of Citizenship and Social Belonging Between State Documentation and Urban Housing Protests

Tyler Correia, University of the Fraser Valley

Although people experiencing homelessness may hold various formal citizenship statuses, it is a common phenomenon that inaccessibility of state-issued documentation leads to an inability to fully take part in citizenship and embed oneself within a community. Here, I consider the tensions between projected ideals of citizenship by the Canadian state brought into relief through the issuance of identity documentation experienced as a barrier for unhoused community-members in the Fraser Valley region of British Columbia, Canada. I argue that unhoused community-members are formally stigmatized due to a lack of access to state-issued documentation, a process observed in experiences of *inaccessibility* not only of citizenship but public, social and private services—from access to social programs to opening a bank account. This inaccessibility limits the capacity for unhoused people to fully take part in their community, acting as a barrier to communal participation as much as political membership, and exacerbating entrenched poverty. I then consider how unhoused community-members respond to these barriers both in their lifeworlds and through collective action. I briefly propose pathways forward emphasizing “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” policies popular amongst sanctuary and migrant-rights movements. These policies seek to decouple access to public and social services from identity requirements. In this way, the strategic declaration of collective “acts of citizenship”

demonstrates the possibility for solidarities amongst housing and migrant-rights movements to resist—and even reshape—otherwise marginalizing state-deployments of citizenship status.

PSM8a-2 - From Financial Tools to Economic Selves: How AI Mediates Financial Literacy and Identity Formation

Lilya Shienko, University of Canada West

This proposed mixed-methods study will investigate the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in shaping not only financial literacy and everyday financial practices but also the processes of social identity formation. As AI-powered tools—such as budgeting applications, chatbots, and generative AI platforms—become increasingly integrated into individuals' financial routines, they also function as technologies of the self, mediating how people understand and govern themselves in economic terms. Drawing on theories of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), neoliberal selfhood (Foucault, 2008; Brown, 2015), and digital subjectivity (Lupton, 2016; Cheney-Lippold, 2017), the study will examine how engagement with AI may encourage individuals to internalize the logic of *homo economicus*—that is, to perceive themselves as rational, self-optimizing, and data-driven economic agents. Employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the research will assess how cultural, educational, and structural factors mediate not only the instrumental use of AI for financial management but also its symbolic role in shaping economic identities. The study will further explore whether individuals perceive AI as a supplement to, or replacement for, traditional financial authorities—such as advisors, educators, and family networks—and whether AI tools reinforce neoliberal ideals of personal responsibility, efficiency, and market rationality in financial decision-making. By connecting measurable behavioral patterns with broader theoretical frameworks of subject formation and technological mediation, the findings will illuminate how AI contributes to the production of economically rational selves within financial educational contexts. The results will aim to inform institutional and policy strategies for integrating ethical AI literacy into curricula, fostering critical awareness of algorithmic influence on self-concept, and supporting diverse individuals navigating the intersection of technology, finance, and identity. Future research directions can include examining specific populations, such as international and domestic students, and how they navigate financial planning using traditional sources compared to AI tools.

PSM8a-3 - Becoming Bodies, Becoming Icons: Queer Desire, Fan Labor, and Gender Performativity in Fantasy Media Reels

Melike Asli Sim, Capilano University

This paper examines how queer-coded characters from fantasy television—namely Lestat (*Interview with the Vampire*, AMC, 2022) and Desire (*The Sandman*, Netflix, 2022)—are reframed and re-performed through short-form video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. These characters, designed with fluid gender aesthetics and posthuman erotics, have been embraced by digital fan communities in the Global South and beyond, who actively remix, reenact, and re-narrate their stories in reel formats. In regions where queer visibility is often fraught or contested, these fan practices cultivate spaces of affective belonging, hope, and self-expression (Ahmed, 2019). Rather than approaching spectatorship solely through Mulvey's (1975) "male gaze," the paper draws on feminist and queer digital media theories (Abidin, 2018; Papacharissi, 2010; Warfield et al., 2021), fan studies scholarship (Stanfill, 2019), and anthropological approaches to desire (Csordas, 1990;

Taussig, 1993) to examine how short-form reels operate as sites of playful resilience (Bhatia & Arora, 2021), gender subversion, and aspirational self-fashioning. Ahmed's (2019) theorization of hope frames these practices as collective affective labor that allows audiences to imagine alternative futures, challenging structural and algorithmic constraints that shape digital visibility. These videos blur the line between performer and fan, fantasy and self, commodity and intimacy, highlighting how algorithmic attention economies intersect with participatory cultures. Attending to fan labor in short-form media reveals how gendered and queer embodiments are co-constructed across uneven digital landscapes, reconfiguring desire, visibility, and agency in the Global South. By situating fan engagement within both digital humanities and anthropology of desire, this study contributes to critical discussions of embodiment, affect, and global digital cultures, illustrating how mainstream queer fantasy is remade through embodied digital labor, imagination, and hope.

(PSM8b) Structures vs. Agents: Sites of Control and Resistance in Global Societies II

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Political Science and Social Movements Research Cluster

In the second of this 2-part session, speakers consider the ways that "people power" motivates radical social change in a post-colonial, post-socialist, post-war, and postmodern global contemporary. Contributions include research on popular anti-corruption protest movements challenging authoritarian governments, housing movements questioning the roles of states to construct communities in the image of the "ideal citizen," anti-racist Afro-Canadian artistic movements cultivating harbours of hope, and the ways youth collective behaviour impacts transitional democracies. From these sites, scholars on session speak to the enduring capacities of people individually and on a grassroots level to motivate change and open new fields to reimagine otherwise authoritative, hegemonic, and normative ways of being in the world.

Session Organizer and Chair: Tyler Correia, University of the Fraser Valley

PSM8b-1 - Contentious Politics and Cross-Cutting Solidarity in Serbia

Adriana Lozjanin, University of Canada West

Serbia's post-Yugoslav transformation has been shaped by stalled accession to the European Union, market liberalization, and the erosion of democratic institutions. The country has increasingly exhibited democratic backsliding and the features of a hybrid regime under the leadership of Aleksandar Vučić. This political configuration has produced recurrent episodes of contentious politics, as citizens and residents mobilize around grievances related to corruption, electoral integrity, and state accountability. This paper analyzes the waves of anti-government protests in Serbia under the Vučić regime, focusing on the most recent wave precipitated in November 2024 following the collapse of a renovated railway station canopy. Although the event was localized and related to an infrastructural failure, the protests rapidly diffused nationwide, articulating broader critiques of institutional trust and responsibility. Drawing on the dynamics of contention approach, the paper examines how sustained mobilization unfolds in a highly polarized society characterized by weak opposition parties and high levels of distrust. Using protest event analysis, reports from news media and civil society organizations, and public opinion surveys, it traces the dynamic shifting interactions between political opportunities and constraints. The findings identify three significant mechanisms driving mass participation in the latest protest episode in Serbia: realignments among opposition

actors that temporarily lower the cost of coordination and cooperation, opportunity spirals between movement and countermovement that amplify visibility and result in continued escalation, and the diffusion of participation through collective action frames that rejects sectarianism and de-emphasize entrenched ethnonationalist divisions. By foregrounding how solidarities are constructed within a divided political context, this paper contributes to the discussions of polarization in hybrid regimes and the capacity of anti-sectarian cross-cutting cleavages to sustain mobilization during a contentious episode.

PSM8b-2 - Shaping the Future: How Youth Corruption Tolerance is Expressed in a Transitional Democracy

Madi Zhakupbayev, University of Canada West

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of independent states pursuing democratic governance. Kazakhstan, as a transitional democracy, is a Central Asian leader in efforts to tackle corruption. At the same time, its contemporary young generation is a target audience of anti-corruption policies and reforms and is a representative of future decision-makers. In this study, I propose to reflect on survey data collected from university students in Almaty that portray youth corruption tolerance in terms of the justification of corruption, willingness to report unethical behaviour, and attitudes towards anti-corruption efforts. The study reveals the role of political socialization in forming social accountability and future governance. It also discusses how youngsters shape political culture and institutional trust in transitional societies, as well as the role of effective policy-making in fostering resilient democratic governance.

PSM8b-3 - Operationalizing UNDRIP as Atrocity Prevention Architecture in Canada's Indigenous Governance Landscape

Daniel B. Sarvestani, University of Canada West

This paper examines emerging atrocity risk factors affecting First Nations in Canada, arguing that the convergence of historical legacies, environmental-economic volatility, and transnational ideological influence is creating conditions of heightened vulnerability. First, the enduring impacts of colonial state violence-most notably residential schools and systemic cultural erasure-continue to shape institutional practices and public attitudes, leaving Indigenous communities susceptible to renewed state-sanctioned harm (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC], 2015; Coulthard, 2014). Second, the intensification of extractive industrial activity and climate-related crises on Indigenous territories exposes deep structural inequalities, revealing the persistent conflict between state economic priorities and Indigenous sovereignty (Simpson, 2017; Nixon, 2011). Third, Canada's proximity to the United States renders it increasingly permeable to imported political extremism, racialized narratives, and far-right populist ideologies that scapegoat Indigenous and marginalized populations during periods of instability (Mudde, 2019; Wilkerson, 2020). This analysis is further supported by mass atrocity risk assessment frameworks (Waller, 2016, 2021), which identify structural discrimination, identity-based dehumanization, and geopolitical destabilization as key accelerators of atrocity risk. Yet, Canada also possesses critical legal and normative safeguards that may mitigate these risks. The national implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), combined with constitutional protections under the Charter, presents a unique opportunity to operationalize Indigenous self-determination as a tool of atrocity

prevention (Government of Canada, 2021; United Nations General Assembly, 2007). As an Indigenous rights advisor and anthropologist, I examine how these frameworks can be transformed from policy commitments into lived practice through community-grounded implementation. Ultimately, demonstrating that advancing Indigenous sovereignty is not solely a matter of reconciliation or justice, but a strategic necessity in safeguarding against the re-emergence of mass atrocity conditions in the Canadian context. Mobilizing UNDRIP as a preventative architecture is therefore essential amid escalating geopolitical, ecological, and ideological instability.

(PSM10) Contesting the State: Colonial Power and Far-Right Politics

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

Across liberal democracies, far-right movements have re-emerged as powerful political and cultural forces, mobilizing narratives of sovereignty, freedom, and belonging in ways that often mirror the racial and colonial logics of the modern state. This session invited critical sociological analyses of the complex relationships between state power and far-right politics (including how states both contest and enable extremist ideologies through law, policing, policy, and discourse). Rather than viewing far-right movements as external to the state, this session asks how white supremacy, settler colonialism, and racial capitalism shape the conditions in which these movements thrive. How do colonial legacies inform contemporary state responses to extremism, protest, and dissent? In what ways do discourses of security, democracy, or national identity reproduce racialized hierarchies and legitimize state violence? And how are citizens, activists, and communities resisting or reimagining state power in the face of authoritarian turns?

Session Organizer: Tichana Adam, University of Windsor

Session Chair: Kyle Willmott, Simon Fraser University

PSM10-1 - Freedom is never free: A convoy to radicalization

Connor MacMillan, York University

Canada is often perceived as being immune to far-right extremist movements and ideologies as a result of multicultural values of inclusivity and tolerance enshrined within the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. However, Canada is experiencing a rapid increase in the social presence and activism of radicalized groups who outwardly espouse racism within mainstream society. For example, during COVID-19, the Freedom Convoy was established as a direct response to the national vaccine mandate. Consisting primarily of white middle-class individuals, many of whom are men, they have been identified by institutions as an extremist group that fosters and normalizes prejudicial values and beliefs. The freedom convoy has utilized overt white nationalist rhetoric as well as the adoption of racist symbols (e.g. the confederate flag, swastikas) which demonstrates their extremist values and oppressive beliefs. Studies on far-right extremism are often situated around social and economic push/pull factors or that of individualized psychological predicates to radicalization. Absent from most studies is a centralized focus on how race and racial categories, which are social frames that constitute access to power and privilege and relate to processes of radicalization. While racism is often conceptualized within existing research as the culmination of social, economic, and/or cultural malaise, or that of a target for generalized frustration. As such, there is an absence of

research on far-right extremism that adequately conceptualizes whiteness as a central frame and subjective identity as a precipitating cause in the spread of far-right ideologies and, ultimately, acts of violence. I propose a scoping research project that demonstrates that the entrenched privileges of whiteness fosters an aggrieved sense of entitlement as a result of the perception of marginalized groups encroaching upon or challenging the hegemonic power and privilege of whiteness.

PSM10-2 - How to Talk to Your Racist Uncle: Fieldnotes from White Anti-Racist Activists

Ajay Parasram, Dalhousie University

In this paper, I discuss some of what I have learned from 10 semi-structured interviews with white. left of centre anti-racist activists based in Canada about the challenges of discussing race in intimate social settings. Settlers - white and other-than white alike -- have arguably been organized into a state of racial ignorance over ~ 3 generations within which people were educated to believe that naming race is akin to racism. Modern/colonial liberal society imagines itself to be “post” race in much the same way that it imagines itself to be “post-colonial,” “post-patriarchy”, “post-caste”, etc. Yet the small but substantial gains made since ~ 2010 in Canada with respect to beginning to talk about racism, settler-colonialism, anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism has invoked a degree of “white-lash” that has moved through the motions of being racially fragile towards flagrantly and proudly white supremacist. There is no simple explanation for this shift, but one piece of the puzzle has been an inability to speak to people close to you who hold - for whatever reason - ideas that run contrary to one’s own views. This chapter aims to discuss the successes, failures, works-in-progress, and emotional distress experienced by white anti-racist left wing activists as a way of seeking to discover better ways to support their work. With the rise of openly white supremacist and incel organizing as a viscious reaction to the modest but important progress made in advancing conversations about race and structural white supremacy in settler-Canada, it is very clear that simply being “correct” about the history and politics of race is totally inadequate. This chapter and the book within which it is embedded is intended to discover practical tools and strategies to advance anti-racist social consciousness raising and public education.

PSM10-3 - Learning to see the casteist contract within racial capitalism

Dia Da Costa, University of Alberta

With all eyes on Trump’s US as archetypal extreme of far-right politics, we can forget that far-right movements everywhere are articulations of multiple colonialisms constituting racial capitalism. If a nation-state’s specific far-right politics is not best explicable through methodological nationalism, what can a transnational approach teach us? Indian economic liberalization and the accelerated rise of the hindu far-right to state power have grown concomitantly and unchecked since the 1990s. While exporting yoga, Gandhi and claims to being the world’s largest democracy, since 1993, India has consistently been the world’s largest importer of major arms, recently replaced by Ukraine. What idea of India and whom within its contested borders do these arms protect? I bring together Jamaican political philosopher Charles Mills’ theory of the racial contract and visionary Dalit theorist Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who saw caste as a “division of labourers” to notice the casteist contract within racial capitalism. Mill’s racial contract saw the modern state of liberal democracies as a tacit or explicit agreement with white people to affirm the existence of the state for the protection of white supremacist group interests, white humanity, and white ignorance about their culpability for racial

violence and inequity. Likewise, Ambedkar argued that caste is an ontological “division of labourers” that shaped pre-British historical dispossession, and thereafter, British as well as post-British colonial capitalist exploitation, violence, and ignorance. As a dominant-caste brahmin committed to anti-caste politics, I urge going beyond seeing caste as a useful metaphor for anti-racist politics. I am learning that the casteist contract protects brahminical supremacy within Indian corporations, government, education, social movements, diasporic migration and politics. Not parallel, the casteist and racial contracts are co-constitutive of still-colonial collaboration between white and brahminical supremacy, white and brahminical ignorance. Ignoring their shared playbooks incarcerates liberatory imaginaries whilst transnational far-right violence grows.

PSM10-4 - Security for Whom? Public Audiences and the Contestation of State Violence

Liz Pirnie, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

This paper examines the challenges of human-security securitization claims, i.e. those that seek to protect individuals from state violence, through a discourse-historical analysis of the January 7, 2026 killing of Renée Nicole Good by an ICE officer and the January 25, 2026 killing of Alex Pretti by U.S. Border Patrol. In both cases, U.S. federal, state-centric responses framed the deceased as security threats (e.g., armed, “terrorists,” illegitimate citizens, etc.), while counter-claimants, e.g. including family members, nurse organizations, local officials, and civil-liberties advocates, mobilized positive securitization discourses in defence of the individuals and of public safety more broadly. These cases illustrate a retroactive securitizing practice - *force first, narrative after* - in which lethal state action precedes post hoc discursive efforts to situate the event within conventional public-safety frames. Building on my dissertation’s externalist framework (articulation of threat texts; embedding in available discourses; positional power; audience uptake; policy instrumentation; and outcomes/limits) (Stritzel, 2011), this analysis foregrounds the public as the decision audience - whose authorization or refusal determines whether security claims become legitimate exceptional practice. I argue that although human-security securitizations of individuals face structural disadvantages relative to state counter-securitizations (Wibben, 2008; Hoogensen & Rottem, 2005), they can gain traction when publics directly witness dissonance between official narratives and on-the-ground practices (e.g., video evidence, court orders, or contradictory documentation). Such moments disrupt the nomination of “bad” or “unworthy” citizens through which extraordinary force is normalized. While securitization scholarship often asks “security from what?” and “security by whom?”, this research instead asks "security for whom?" and "how is this determination social and politically effectuated?". This paper contributes to political sociology by demonstrating how public audiences, media circulation, and state security frames operate as decisive sites in the legitimation and contestation of threat construction and contemporary security politics.

(PSM11) Pygmalion Democracy and the Need for Transformative Education

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

This roundtable discussion emerges from the context of contemporary democratic issues. It draws on the collective work of 28 authors from eight countries in the recently published book entitled Pygmalion Democracy: If you build it, will they come? (Carr et al., 2025). Through the lens of the concept of "Pygmalion democracy" this book critically problematizes tensions and relations between

(normative) democracy, citizenship, ecology, education, media, peace and notions of social injustice. It describes the challenges, limitations, impacts and paradoxes of normative democracies, and eimplores us to reflect on avenues aimed at more critically-engaged and robust democracy on a global scale. These avenues, serving as the centre-piece of the proposed roundtable, are simultaneously sociopolitical, cultural, economic and educational. We also argue that they must be radically turned towards decolonial and transformative approaches to allow for social and ecological justice to be the core of a solidarity-based democracy project. The roundtable will be animated by four members of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT), who were actively engaged in the edition of the book. This roundtable is, in itself, a democratic space to engage in a multi-/trans-/inter-disciplinary dialogue on the role and responsibility of educational institutions and civil society in the face of recent anti-democratic movements in the Americas and around the world.

Session Organizers: Paul R. Carr, Université du Québec en Outaouais; Alexis Legault, Université du Québec en Outaouais; Gina Thésée, Université du Québec à Montréal

PSM11-1 - Paul R. Carr, Université du Québec en Outaouais

Paul R. Carr is a Full Professor in the Department of Education at the Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada, and is also the Chair-holder of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). His research focuses on political sociology, with specific threads related to democracy, global citizenship, media literacy, peace studies, the environment, antiracism, and transformative change in education.

PSM11-2 - Alexis Legault, Université du Québec en Outaouais

Alexis Legault is a doctoral candidate in Education at the Université du Québec en Outaouais and a lecturer in the Department of Preschool and Primary Education at the Université de Sherbrooke. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). His research focuses on different forms of citizenship in education, particularly ecological citizenship and global citizenship. He also mobilizes decolonial perspectives to analyze the relationships between knowledge and capacities for collective action.

PSM11-3 - Gina Thésée, Université du Québec à Montréal

Gina Thésée is a Full Professor in the Faculté des sciences de l'éducation at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). She is Director of the Institut de recherches et d'études féministes (IREF) and Co-Chair of the UNESCO Chair in Democracy, Global Citizenship and Transformative Education (DCMÉT). Her research focuses on the education of people in situations of multiple vulnerabilities, particularly in relation to systemic racism, domination, oppression, and exclusion.

(PSM12) Iranian Scholars and Students in a Time of War and Political Upheaval: Academic Freedom, Safety, and Institutional Responsibility

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

In the current moment, Iranian scholars and students—both within Iran and across the diaspora—are facing increasing and layered forms of pressure that affect their academic work, public engagement, and intellectual autonomy. These pressures range from overt political constraints and risks to more subtle expectations surrounding moral positioning, public speech, and institutional alignment. The aftermath of recent mass violence, including the January 2026 massacre, and the ongoing regional war have intensified these conditions. The result is an increasingly complex academic environment in which research, teaching, and knowledge production are shaped by political urgency, emotional strain, and competing demands for visibility, solidarity, and advocacy. This roundtable brings together scholars working on Iran, migration, political transitions, and the sociology of grief to reflect on the challenges facing academic life under such conditions. Rather than advancing a single perspective, the session aims to create a space for analytical discussion and dialogue on the relationship between academic freedom, safety, and institutional responsibility in times of crisis.

Session Organizer and Chair: Ahmadreza Mohammadpouryazdi, Concordia University

PSM12-1 - Aram Hessami, Montgomery College, USA

Aram Hessami is Professor of Political Science at Montgomery College. Trained in political philosophy at George Washington University, his work focuses on democratic transition, postmodern discourse, and social change. He has presented widely at major academic conferences, including the Middle Eastern Studies Association and the Association of Iranian Studies. His recent work includes the documentary *Masking a Genocide: The Case of the Baha'is in Iran*, as well as ongoing research on religion, national identity, and contemporary political movements in Iran.

PSM12-2 - Zohreh Bayatrizi, University of Alberta

Zohreh Bayatrizi is Professor of Sociology at the University of Alberta. Her research focuses on the sociology of death and grief, the history of sociology, and the sociopolitical dimensions of mourning among immigrant communities. She has published extensively on the aftermath of Flight PS752, examining how grief intersects with state violence, diaspora, and collective memory.

PSM12-3 - Fereydoon Rahmani, York University

Fereydoon Rahmani is Professor of Sociology at York University. His interdisciplinary research examines quality of life, human rights, ethnicity, and social movements in the Middle East. He is known for developing the concept of "Rooftop Societies," which analyzes structural and cultural contradictions in the region, and is currently working on major projects on quality of life and social movements in Iran.

(PSM-RC) Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

The Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities and becoming new members. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizers: Omar Faruque, University of New Brunswick; Zitian Sun, McGill University

(OMN2c) Politics, Ethnicization, and Civil Society

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Political Sociology and Social Movements Research Cluster

This session features presentations exploring politics and civil society broadly defined.

Session Chair: Mia Vallière, Carleton University

OMN2c-1 - Do Theories of Citizenship Ethnicization Work in Postsocialist Eurasia? A quantitative assessment

Matvey Lomonosov, Nazarbayev University and University of Tyumen

The literature on citizenship, migration and diaspora policy explores the factors behind ethicization of political belonging. The literature on citizenship, migration and diaspora policy promises to account for the factors behind ethnicization and de-ethnicization of citizenship in different countries, i.e. preferential treatments of co-ethnics in the process of distributing citizenship. In Eurasia, as elsewhere, citizenship ethnicization disproportionately affects vulnerable groups: ethno-cultural minorities, migrants, and refugees. Thus, it resonates with the global transition towards “earned citizenship” motivated by new (neoliberal) nationalism (Joppke). Developed Western countries are usually seen as less ethnicizing due to democratic experience, absence of ethnic conflict, and the rich historical experiences of immigration. Plus, a number of scholars have found a link between the external influence of EU, OSCE and CofE and the de-ethnicization of citizenship in the countries of Central Eastern Europe. The focus on OECD countries is one of the biggest drawbacks of the existing literature. Another disadvantage of the existing research is its tendency to draw conclusions on external influences from the experiences of successful EU enlargement. Instead, I rely on a new medium-N dataset compiled by coding legislation on citizenship and diaspora in the countries of the former USSR and Yugoslavia - the two multiethnic socialist federations (n=21). The results of agglomerative and K-medoids clustering allow to identify 7 different citizenship regimes in the region. Contrary to the existing theories, they show that the most de-ethnized, territorial citizenship is widespread in the authoritarian states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as in Serbia, that are least exposed to European influences. In the post-Yugoslav space, Western European pressure has not shown consistent results, and in the republics of the former USSR it has often legitimized "ethnic citizenship".

OMN2c-2 - Bridging the Gender Gap in Legislative Representation: Lessons from Electoral Systems, Quota Laws, and Women's Legislative Representation

Daniel Amoah, Memorial University

Women continue to experience political, social and economic inequality around the world. Despite Ghana's varied encounters with elections, women have struggled to achieve greater legislative representation. Using mixed methods and bringing together cross-national empirical evidence, the paper draws insights from the critical mass theory and intersectionality to make arguments about challenges to achieving equality in legislative representation. This paper examines the impact of electoral systems and gender quota laws on women's legislative representation and what Ghana and other countries that want to improve women's legislative representation could learn. The paper concludes with recommendations for reforms and further studies.

OMN2c-3 - God Almighty, the State of Exception and the Erosion of Democracy

Ladan Adhami-Dorrani, York University

In *State Crime and Resistance*, Elizabeth Stanley and Jude McCulloch maintain that criminology has not been at the forefront of the crimes of states including genocide, gross violation of human rights, and unjust social policies. Drawing on various texts including Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Carl Schmitt's *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, Giorgio Agamben's *State of Exception*, and Raymond Michalowski's "The master's tools: Can supranational law confront crimes of powerful states?," this paper presentation argues that within liberal democratic states such as the United States, it is the Constitution that grants the sovereign/the President the power to declare a state of exception during which the executive orders are supported by the force of law. Given that the state is the replica of God Almighty as maintained by Schmitt, I contend that it is the Constitution that needs revision in order to curb the power of the sovereign, who decides on the *willed* state of exception that creates the fertile grounds for an authoritarian and totalitarian state predisposed to criminality.

OMN2c-4 - Reconciling 'Me' and 'We': Examining Rousseau's 'General Will' and Ibn Khaldun's Asabiyyah

Nuzhat Khurshid, Seneca Polytechnic University

A constant preoccupation in political thought is how to reconcile the need for citizens to look past their own self-interest for the good of a just society. For Thomas Hobbes in *The Leviahtan,* the solution was a powerful Sovereign who holds sway with force not only in this world, but the next. For Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in *The Social Contract,* this harsh disciplinary method to enforce civic virtue is replaced with the concept of the 'general will,' which is rooted in man's natural empathy and the organic development of society, held together by bonds of culture, language and religion. This idea of an organic civic virtue based on natural affection is not common in the Western political theory canon, but a comparable concept can be found in Ibn Khaldun's notion of *asabiyyah*, or 'group feeling,' in his book *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History.* Though Ibn Khaldun was an Arab philosopher and sociologist writing in the fourteenth century, his articulation of *asabiyyah* as the sociological glue of not only society, but cycles of hegemony in history, bears a striking resemblance

to Rousseau's concept of the general will. Yet both also fill gaps in each other's theorizations and exemplify the different foci of both writers on the individual and the community. By juxtaposing both Ibn Khaldun and Rousseau's different articulations of a civic virtue, we can better understand its implications for an engaged society based on collective care and empathy.

(RAE) Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

(RAE1) Structural, Cultural, and Digital Dimensions of Anti-South Asian Racism in Canada

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

This session explores the growing visibility of racism and anti-South Asian hate within Canada's multicultural landscape, situating these dynamics within broader sociological discussions of identity, belonging, and racialization. Despite Canada's multiculturalism framework as a model of diversity and inclusion, South Asian communities continue to face stigmatization rooted in colonial legacies, religious stereotyping, and geopolitical tensions. The rise of anti-South Asian sentiment, both online and offline, reflects not only enduring patterns of exclusion but also new moral panics surrounding diasporic activism, transnational politics, and cultural difference. This session welcomes interdisciplinary scholars, activists, and artists who explore digital activism, anti-racism organizing, online gendered and caste-based hate, diasporic representations, the role of media in shaping racist discourse, and creative responses to digital harms. The growing prevalence of digital hate speech, cyberbullying, and misinformation reveals how algorithmic systems amplify racist imaginaries while obscuring structural inequalities. By foregrounding community narratives and lived experiences, this session aims to move beyond deficit-oriented accounts of racism to highlight agency, resistance, and solidarity within broader South Asian diasporas. It seeks to create space for examining how racial hierarchies are reproduced through national discourses of "tolerance" and how communities mobilize to reclaim belonging amidst rising hate. This session aims to foster dialogue on the political, affective and ontological dimensions of online racism, and to build transnational solidarities across digital and embodied spaces.

Session Organizers: Jasmine Padam, University of Victoria

Session Chair: Navneet Kaur, York University

RAE1-1 - Theorizing the Upsurge in Anti-South Asian Racism in Canada

Archana Raguparan, McMaster University

In the last five years, academics, researchers, news outlets, and government statistics have all reported an increase in the visibility and occurrence of anti-South Asian racism in Canada occurring both online and in-person. This paper seeks to analyze this recent rise in racist violence towards South Asians in relation to contemporary politics regarding immigrant and racial (non-)belonging in Canada. It asks why the upsurge is happening now and how might we interpret it in the context of a long historical pattern of constructing racial group threat as well as the model minority myth, both of which implicate South Asian Canadians. The current literature on racism facing South Asians in Canada does not yet address this contemporary phenomenon of rising hate speech, hate crimes, and racial violence. I argue that the racism and victimization facing this population must be understood

in relation to the continuously and rapidly growing South Asian Canadian population. I conceptualize their increasing visibility in the nation in relation to the simultaneously rising anti-immigrant sentiment and policies in Canada. I argue that concepts from Hall et al. (1978) and Blumer (1958), namely, theories of the exhaustion of hegemonic consent and group positioning provide explanatory power for this social problem. The increasing visibility of South Asians in Canada (as immigrants, citizens, and racialized bodies) amid economic crises and rising anti-immigrant sentiment, has triggered a defensive reaction from the dominant white population, who perceive their economic, cultural, and political dominance as under threat. Further, the Canadian state has affirmed this threat in order to maintain its own authority and win consent from the white majority, upholding violence against South Asian Canadians.

RAE1-2 - Racialized Scapegoating and Polarization of South Asian Communities in Canada: A Comparative Study Before and After Carney

Presenting Author - Amy Choi, York University

Non-presenting Author - Ethel Tungohan, York University

This presentation explores how public and digital attitudes towards South Asian communities in Canada are being reshaped, contested and intensified following Mark Carney's transition into federal leadership. The presentation builds on prior research that situates TikTok, a social media platform that functions as a site for political discourses, as a central site for exploring new methodological approaches to studying digital narratives on migration and international students within the Canadian context. Using thematic analysis, earlier findings from 2024 Justin Trudeau era revealed persistent forms of racialized discourse, particularly targeting the South Asian community in Canada, often framing them as being responsible for housing shortages and the broader affordability crisis. Since Prime Minister Carney took office in March 2025, the federal government has implemented significant reductions to temporary immigration programs and international student intake, bringing overall levels to historic lows. Despite these policy shifts, housing and affordability pressures remain unresolved. In response, this project extends the original analysis to examine whether and how public attitudes towards South Asian communities, previously positioned as scapegoats for the affordability crisis, have shifted in the post transition political moment. Preliminary analysis of 20 newly collected TikTok videos suggests a notable, though increasingly polarized, shift in discourse. On the political left, creators circulate narratives asserting that immigrants were never the root cause of the affordability crisis, emphasizing the persistence of structural economic issues despite reduced immigration levels. In contrast, far right content increasingly calls for mass deportation, framing current policy changes as insufficient to 'save' Canada. By conducting a comparative analysis of TikTok content from 2024 and 2025, this presentation explores the racialized dynamics shaping public understandings of the affordability crisis and highlights how shifts in political leadership and policy discourse interact with digital platforms.

RAE1-3 - 'Deport button': Investigating the racialization of South Asians as criminal threats in police press conferences

Tandeep Sidhu and Parneet Buttar, University of Manitoba

The proliferation of online hate against South Asians repackages many populist and nativist tropes about immigration. One of these nativist lenses emphasizes crime as a byproduct of immigration,

more colloquially framing it as an 'imported problem'. The question emerges as to how this nativist discourse is attached to South Asians when considering their underrepresentation across various policing and correctional outcomes. We interrogate police press conferences as a space where South Asians are racialized as a criminal threat. This study examines public comments on YouTube videos of Canadian police press conferences featuring predominantly South Asian suspects. The work employs an inductive and deductive approach, engaging in a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of these public comments. The results demonstrate how these police communications (a) racialize South Asians as a criminal threat and (b) create an avenue for a series of anti-immigrant discourses. The central themes stemming from the analysis are: (1) public calls for the deportation of South Asians, (2) crime as an imported social problem, and (3) crime as a political conspiracy. The broader significance of this research demonstrates that police services legitimize themselves by making appeals to the *threat* of the racial 'Other'. The latent racialization of South Asians is made manifest in public comments. We extrapolate from Said (1978) to situate police press conferences as spaces of racialized knowledge production. Considering the public attention devoted to systemic racism in the justice system, Canadian police services can obfuscate the racializing nature of these press conferences by making appeals to institutional statistics that demonstrate the underrepresentation of South Asians and the community's generally positive perception of the police. This effectively colourblinds the racializing logic of these press conferences. The implications of these findings for understanding hate, citizenship, and systemic racism are considered.

(RAE2) Bridging Divides: Sociological Approaches to Race, Ethnicity, and Polarization

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

We invited presentations that explore how sociological theory and research can help bridge the racial, ethnic, and cultural divisions that define our increasingly polarized world. The 2026 CSA theme -"Harbours of Hope: Sociology in a Divided World" - calls for dialogue and action that confronts political polarization and the growing geopolitical anxieties shaping public discourse.

Session Organizers: Secil E. Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada; Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University

Session Chair: Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University

RAE2-1 - Strangers by Design: a grassroots EDI initiative

Bruce Ravelli, University of Victoria

In Fall 2022, five colleagues at the University of Victoria (UVic) (two tenured, one tenure-track, one graduate and one undergraduate student), who did not know each other, agreed to explore what Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) meant to them and their experiences at UVic. Their diverse perspectives - from undergraduate to full professor, from cishet to queer/non-binary, from white and black to bi-racial, and from young to old(er) become known as the Strangers by Design initiative. Over the next two years members met to share stories, heal wounds, and learn more about the Other so they could learn more about themselves. This session will review their work and hopefully inspire attendees to consider creating their own Strangers by Design group.

RAE2-2 - Racialization and Societal Structure: Examining Race Relations in Guyana

Saudia Jabar, McMaster University

Recent work on race relations has sought to move beyond the Global North and the Black-white binary that is commonly associated with the literature and discourse of the United States. I use the case of Guyana and its main racial groups—Afro-, Indo-, and Amerindian-Guyanese—to contribute to the emerging scholarship that decentres whiteness as integral to race relations. I apply the theoretical frames of Omi and Winant's (2014) racialization and Blumer's (1958) group position theory to situate Guyana's contemporary racial politics. Using keywords to capture relevant literature on the topic, I review literature from 2000 to 2024 and synthesize the main themes characterizing race relations in Guyana. I find that colonialism, the racialization of politics and the economy, resource extraction, and related social factors such as stereotyping and geographic segregation have worked together to create the strained race relations that exist in Guyana today. I discuss the consequences of negative race relations affecting every aspect and major institution of Guyanese life and the subsequent pacification of discussions of race and racism, denouncing the current state of race relations as a detriment to Guyanese society.

RAE2-3 - Discrimination in Housing Among Migrant Youth in Urban Spain: Evidence from Barcelona

Presenting Author - Mireia Pont Soler, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Non-presenting Authors - Sònia Parella Rubio and Massoud Sharifi Ahmadipour, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

In increasingly diverse European cities, discrimination in access to adequate housing remains a key determinant of social inclusion and exclusion. This paper examines how young adults (aged 18-35) with family migration backgrounds in Barcelona perceive and navigate discriminatory barriers in the housing market, and how these perceptions differ from peers without migratory backgrounds. Anchored in theories of welfare regimes, urban housing systems, ethnic segregation, and structural racism, the study situates Barcelona within the Mediterranean housing paradigm and argues that structural racism is embedded in institutional practices and market dynamics. The paper addresses three questions: (1) How do young people with a family migration background perceive inequality in housing access? (2) How do sociodemographic factors shape these perceptions? (3) What distinct patterns of discrimination emerge, and which actors are implicated? Empirically, the analysis draws on survey data from 731 residents aged 18-35 across three neighborhoods in the Sant Martí district of Barcelona, collected within the European UNDETERRED project. Descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression models are employed to identify key predictors of perceived discrimination by migration background. Findings reveal that respondents with migratory family backgrounds report significantly higher levels of perceived discrimination, frequently attributed to ethnicity, appearance, or migrant status, whereas others cite age or gender. These results highlight how structural inequalities and subjective perceptions intersect in shaping housing experiences, advancing current debates on racialized urban exclusion and the reproduction of social hierarchies within Southern Europe's distinctive housing systems.

RAE2-4 - Understanding Immigrant Xenophobia on U.S. Campuses: The Role of Racial Contact, Ideology, and Institutional Exposure

Presenting Author - Secil Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada

Non-presenting Author - Jennifer Lodi-Smith, Canisius University Buffalo NY

This ongoing study examines immigrant xenophobia among college students in the United States, focusing on how social interaction patterns, institutional exposure to equity initiatives, and political orientations relate to exclusionary attitudes toward immigration and immigrant groups. Data are being collected through an online survey administered to U.S. college students. The study assesses xenophobic attitudes toward immigration policies and perceived community impacts and examines their associations with racial homophily—operationalized as the extent of same-race versus inter-racial interactions in daily life—participation in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) workshops, and self-reported political views. Immigrant xenophobia is measured across multiple dimensions, including region of origin, legal status, and racialized group membership. Guided by intergroup contact theory and political ideology frameworks, we hypothesize that higher levels of inter-racial interaction and participation in EDI workshops will be associated with lower levels of immigrant xenophobia, while stronger conservative political orientations will be associated with higher levels of xenophobia. Correlational analyses will test these hypotheses and clarify how everyday social contact, institutional programming, and political ideology jointly shape immigrant xenophobia among emerging adults. Findings will contribute to debates on immigration, prejudice, and the role of higher education institutions in shaping intergroup attitudes.

(RAE3a) Navigating Race in a Divided World I

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

We invited scholars to submit papers that explore theoretical, methodological, or empirical issues within the sociology of race and ethnicity. This session welcomed contributions addressing race, ethnicity, and racism in diverse contexts and from multiple perspectives. Together, we seek to bring awareness to humanity's historically rooted inequalities by examining the relationship between race and ethnicity and broader socio-historical processes — including, but not limited to, settler colonialism, the legacy of enslavement and exploitation, white supremacy, immigration, and the intersections of race and ethnicity with space and place.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Secil E. Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada; Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University

RAE3a-1 - Parenting Under Threat: Investigating Black Families Experiences with Ontario's Child Protection System

Presenting Author - Travonne Edwards, Toronto Metropolitan University

Non-presenting Authors - Rasnat Chowdhury, University of Toronto; Gloria Ukwu, Toronto Metropolitan University

Black families regularly experience unnecessary referrals to child welfare agencies. Many practitioners operate under the mistaken belief that maltreatment reports and investigations are

benign experiences for families involved and are made in good faith. However, few studies have challenged this widespread but potentially erroneous belief. Although some efforts have been made to understand the complexities of racial disparities for Black families in Ontario, notable gaps remain with respect to the harms caused by investigations. This research project investigates the following questions: (1) what are the impacts of referrals and investigations on Black families?; (2) how do these encounters shape Black families' perceptions of child welfare and allied institutions?; and (3) how does child welfare support Black families? The data of this study was collected as part of the Parenting Under Threat Project (PUT). PUT is a research project done in partnership with a community based agency One Vision One Voice (OVOV). Utilizing interpretive phenomenology, the objective of the PUT study is to investigate how Black families experience child welfare contact and interventions to help OVOV better support Black families. This study analyzes 31 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Black caregivers who encountered the child welfare system in the Greater Toronto Area and one focus group comprised of 9 Black mothers. Four major themes were identified: 1) Weaponizing child welfare referrals; 2) The impacts of family court; 3) The harms of investigations on parenting and; 4) Historical and ongoing perceptions of the child welfare system. Many Black families understood the need for a child welfare system but were skeptical of their approaches to supporting Black families given the stigma that shapes how they are viewed. Recommendations for practice, policy, and research are discussed.

RAE3a-2 - When Racism is Everywhere and Nowhere: Racial Construction and Colour-Blindness in (Im)migrant Rights Advocacy

Carieta Thomas and Chene Redwood, Carleton University

Facing an unresponsive movement that fails to address the complexities at the intersection of Black and (im)migrant, Black scholars and activists in the U.S. created organizations such as the Black Alliance for Just Immigration and UndocuBlack. In Canada, the closing of Roxham Road, proposed Bill C-12, and increasing rates of detention and deportation have highlighted the inextricable link between race and immigration, and anti-Black racism operating within the immigration regime. Yet, this issue remains unexplored in Canadian research, with few studies investigating how race is constructed and framed within (im)migrant rights organizations or addressing the intersection of Black and immigrant. Drawing on racial formation theory and democratic racism, this study examined whether (im)migrant-serving organizations frame (im)migration issues at the intersection of race and immigration, and whether there is emerging advocacy focused on the specific experiences of Black (im)migrants. This study utilized interviews with 15 advocates working in (im)migrant-serving organizations and a critical discourse analysis of organizational mobilization documents. Findings show that in both service provision and advocacy, the primacy of (im)migrant status limits attention to other intersecting factors, including racial differences that shape (im)migrant experiences. Although advocates recognize immigration as an issue shaped by race and racism, they often see non-racial framing as a strategic approach to building public support for policy change. Funding allocation further encourages race-neutral framing, strategies, and priorities. As a result, organizations operate with an allegiance to universalism and colour-blindness in outreach, services, and mobilization. When racism is addressed, it is treated as a universal experience among all (im)migrants. Despite acknowledging that Black (im)migrants face distinct challenges, none of the organizations studied reported programming or advocacy specifically focused on Black (im)migrants. These findings raise questions about the effectiveness of colour-blind and race-neutral advocacy in

an increasingly hostile immigration climate where (im)migrants are targeted through racist discourses.

(RAE3b) Navigating Race in a Divided World II

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

We invited scholars to submit papers that explore theoretical, methodological, or empirical issues within the sociology of race and ethnicity. This session welcomed contributions addressing race, ethnicity, and racism in diverse contexts and from multiple perspectives. Together, we seek to bring awareness to humanity's historically rooted inequalities by examining the relationship between race and ethnicity and broader socio-historical processes — including, but not limited to, settler colonialism, the legacy of enslavement and exploitation, white supremacy, immigration, and the intersections of race and ethnicity with space and place.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Secil E. Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada; Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University

RAE3b-1 - Understanding ethnicity change and its predictors among the Asian diaspora in England and Wales

Victoria Tan, University of Oxford

It is well-known that race and ethnicity are mutable and impermanent. However, most of what we know about within-person changes in these identities comes from literature on Black-white racial boundary crossing in the US & Latin America. As such, existing theories on racial fluidity may not apply as well to cases of ethnic fluidity, given the multidimensional nature of ethnicity, and for a group like the Asian diaspora who are racialized adjacent to the Black-white binary. To address these theoretical and empirical gaps, I draw on theories of racialized assimilation and ethnic boundary making, and unique longitudinal data from the England and Wales Census, to ask: How does self-declared ethnicity change among members of the UK's Asian diaspora and what explains these changes? Descriptive results reveal that ethnic fluidity is far more common among the diaspora than racial fluidity. Instead of moving to white, Black, or Other categories, most Asian ethnic group members who experience change move to another Asian category, including to and from Other Asian. This demonstrates that the multifaceted nature of ethnicity, and the varied ways one can identify, contributes to ethnic fluidity because of the difficulty to select just one option. Furthermore, I argue that while ethnic fluidity operates on a more granular level, it is still ultimately structured by racial boundaries, even in a context that does not officially classify by race. Hence, this study's findings suggest that researchers interested in racial and ethnic inequalities ought to incorporate notions of fluidity, to advance our understanding of how both race and ethnicity shape the life chances and everyday experiences of racialized people.

RAE3b-2 - Conditional Belonging: A Proposal for Analyzing Citizenship at the Windsor-Detroit Border

Dara Vosoughi, University of Windsor

Formal legal citizenship does not guarantee a frictionless return to Canada. For Canadians of Middle Eastern origin, the passport often fails to ensure a secure sense of belonging. This proposed research investigates this tension at the Windsor-Detroit border. It examines the gap between formal legal status and the lived reality of conditional belonging. I situate this problem in the current geopolitical moment (2020-2025). This period is increasingly defined by data-driven security and the automation of risk profiles. However, unlike automated airport kiosks, the land border remains a site of intense human scrutiny. The project conceptualizes this border encounter as a high-stakes micro-interactional performance. I outline a qualitative narrative inquiry to explore this process with residents of the Windsor-Detroit borderland. The study seeks to document how travelers perform anticipatory compliance to navigate the discretionary gaze of the officer. It investigates the mechanisms of securitized self-governance. This includes calculated impression management strategies such as digital hygiene and the suppression of somatic anxiety. The theoretical framework synthesizes governmentality with dramaturgy and the concept of double consciousness. This research aims to demonstrate how the border encounter produces a differentiated citizenship. It argues that belonging is not guaranteed by law alone. Instead, it is a status that must be repeatedly negotiated and performed in the face of state suspicion.

RAE3b-3 - Nested Orientalisms: Navigating the Afghan and Canadian identity

Ferdouse Asefi, University of Toronto

The Canadian government often promotes multiculturalism, diversity, and the welcoming of refugees as part of Canadian national identity. Recently, the Canadian government surpassed its milestone of accepting 40,000 Afghan refugees since the 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Yet Canada's participation in the War on Terror in Afghanistan played a role in creating the current circumstances of Afghan refugees amid ongoing Islamophobic anxieties within the Canadian public sphere. The contradictions between ideals of diversity, openness, multiculturalism, and Islamophobic anxieties in Canadian politics and public opinion (re)shape and complicate what it means to be Afghan in Canada. Drawing on 40 semi-structured interviews with Afghans in Ontario, I illustrate the various layers of discrimination and multiple Orientalisms that Afghans in Canada experience, which are manifested at different levels of analysis (micro, meso, and macro), impacting their identity formation processes. I use the concept of democratic racism, while also integrating a postcolonial discursive framework, to illustrate how Afghans negotiate their identity and everyday spaces of diversity within a multicultural nation. The racialization of Afghans in Canada impacts their experiences of multiculturalism through the creation of a third space. I argue that diasporic Afghans in Canada reshape narratives of what it means to be Afghan, Canadian, and Afghan-Canadian within a racial hierarchy that promotes ideals of multiculturalism.

(RAE5) Race, Masculinity, and the Politics of Power

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

Across the globe, renewed attention to masculinity has emerged amid the rise of incel movements, red pill ideology, traditionalist revivalism, and conservative backlashes against feminism and social justice. These cultural and political shifts raise pressing questions about how race and masculinity intertwine in the production of belonging, exclusion, and resistance. The session invites scholars to

consider how racialized, Indigenous, Black, immigrant, and white masculinities are constructed and contested in public discourse, institutional settings, and everyday life — and how these processes shape both vulnerability and power. In this polarized era, the study of masculinities offers critical insight into how hope, resistance, and accountability can coexist with structures of privilege, dominance, and harm. Participants are encouraged to reflect on how their research engages with and navigates this current sociopolitical terrain — interrogating not only the politics of masculinity but also the possibilities of transformation within and across racial lines.

Session Organizer: Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University

Session Chair: Secil E. Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada

RAE5-1 - From Provider to Partner: Bangladeshi Men's Changing Familial Positionality and Domestic Gender Roles in Canada

Abu Saleh Mohammad Sowad, University of Victoria

This study explores how Bangladeshi migrant men in Canada negotiate their familial roles and domestic gender dynamics in response to shifting cultural, economic, and social expectations. Drawing on intersectionality and transnational masculinity studies, it examines how these men navigate competing pressures: traditional Bangladeshi ideals, transnational community norms, and Canadian social norms. Based on semi-structured interviews with 24 Bangladeshi men from diverse socio-demographic backgrounds, this study employs constructivist grounded theory and thematic analysis to explore how masculinity is redefined in transnational contexts. Findings reveal a significant departure from the traditional provider role, as many interlocutors assume more active domestic and caregiving responsibilities in Canada. This shift is shaped by structural factors, including the need for dual-income households, the decline in extended-family support, and changing spousal dynamics. However, these changes are not linear; while some men embrace egalitarian roles, others struggle with conflicting expectations from family in Bangladesh, community judgment, and personal identity crises. This study challenges Western-centric depictions of migrant masculinity as static and authoritarian, offering a nuanced portrayal of Bangladeshi men as complex agents negotiating change. By centring the lived experiences of racialized, non-Western men in the Global North, it contributes to a culturally grounded understanding of gender and migration.

RAE5-2 - Marginalization from the Margins: An intersectional analysis of misogyny in an Asian men's rights community

Presenting Author - Michelle Wang, McGill University

Non-presenting Author - Michael Halpin, Dalhousie University

Online men's rights and manosphere communities are popular forums for men. Many of these communities blame women for men's troubles (e.g., dating, employment). Although men's rights groups have attracted considerable interest, less attention has been paid to forums of racialized men, including Asian men. We argue that Asian men's rights communities are important from an intersectional perspective, as men in these communities experience racial marginalization while also participating in the subjugation of women. Our findings are based on an abductive analysis of 7,447 comments collected from an Asian men's rights community with more than 100,000 members. We examine how Asian men navigate and negotiate their racial identity and participate in the oppression

of Asian women. Building on Patricia Hill Collins' concept of controlling images, we analyze four controlling images of Asian women produced by an Asian men's rights community. First, we detail how Asian men position Asian women as race traitors. Second, we demonstrate how Asian men denigrate Asian women by depicting them as sexual objects for White men. Third, we detail how Asian men degrade Asian women "tiger moms" who exercise power and authority. Fourth, we describe how Asian men critique and ridicule Asian feminists. Taken together, we argue that Asian men's oppression of Asian women advances and endorses many racist tropes of Asian women (e.g., controlling, fetishized). We discuss how our findings advance Collins' conceptualization of controlling images. We also discuss our findings in relation to intersectionality and advance an intersectional approach to manosphere and men's rights research.

RAE5-3 - Becoming, Fluid, and African: The Intimate Masculinities of Black Men in Canada

Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, McGill University

This paper reconceptualizes Black masculinities by examining how Black men define, live, and perform manhood outside hegemonic masculinity frameworks. Scholarship on masculinity has largely relied on Western, problem-centered models—most notably Hegemonic Masculinity Theory—that inadequately capture the relational, emotional, and evolving dimensions of Black male identity. Drawing on symbolic interactionism, intersectionality, and decolonial approaches to masculinity, this study centers Black men as meaning-makers actively producing alternative masculine frameworks rooted in becoming, fluidity, and inner life. Using a grounded theory design, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with 21 Black male community organizers across Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto. Rather than approaching participants through deficit-based or reactive models, the analysis focuses on how Black men conceptualize themselves as ever-evolving human beings, articulate African-centric understandings of manhood, and engage gender fluidity and gender play in ways that reimagine leadership, vulnerability, care, and pursuit. Participants' narratives reveal that masculine self-construction is negotiated through a form of triple consciousness, shaped by the gaze of Black communities, mainstream white society, and the self. From these empirical insights, the paper advances Intimate Masculinities Theory (IMT)—a grounded conceptual framework that foregrounds emotion, vulnerability, relationality, and inner life as constitutive dimensions of Black masculinity. IMT moves beyond dominance- and power-centered models to theorize masculinity as a dynamic, relational process of becoming. By rebuilding the conceptual foundations of Black masculinities, this paper contributes to sociological debates on race and gender and calls for expanded theoretical approaches that more accurately reflect the lived and intimate realities of Black men.

(RAE6a) From Yellow Peril to Pandemic Scapegoating: Anti-Asian Racism, Cultural Trauma, and Racial Meaning Making in Canada I

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

This session is divided into two sub-sessions. Sub-session 1 reflects the historical, current, and continuing impact of anti-Asian racism on Chinese individuals and communities in Canada; examines how the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated Anti-Asian Racism; and the geopolitical circumstances that pose a threat to the world order. Sub-session 2 brings together papers that take

a more focused look into racial meaning-making through language, scapegoating mechanisms, and media representations of anti-Asian racism.

Session Organizers: Guida Man, York University; Keefer Wong, York University

Session Chair: Guida Man, York University

RAE6a-1 - Cultural Trauma, Collective Memory, and the Enduring Power of Chinatown during the COVID19 Pandemic

Matt Patterson, University of Calgary

Hate crimes against Asian Canadians increased by 300% in 2020 as the COVID19 pandemic spread across the country (Wang and Moreau 2022). This event was not unprecedented; it fits into a long history in which Chinese Canadians have periodically been the target of scapegoating and violence during periods of social strain. To better understand the relationship between instances of anti-Asian racism during COVID19 and this larger history, this paper investigates how the pandemic impacted Canadian Chinatowns. Most Chinatowns were established in the 19th century and, while they represent only a small part of the contemporary Chinese Canadian experience, their longevity gives them a unique connection to the past which is embodied in their locations and built environments. I argue that these material qualities made Chinatowns uniquely vulnerable to the shocks of COVID19 economically, demographically, and criminologically. On the other hand, because of their historic significance, Chinatowns also served as important cultural resources for mobilizing resistance against anti-Asian racism. To make this argument, I draw on cultural trauma theory, which posits that communities who have faced existential harm in the past can use these experiences to build solidarity and work toward shared goals. I further support my argument with data taken from a multi-year, mixed-method study of Chinatown preservation movements in 16 cities across Canada and the United States. The project involved 60 interviews with “Save Chinatown” activists, fieldwork, and discourse analysis of Chinatown planning documents. Beyond helping us understand the historic context that shaped the COVID19 pandemic in Canada, the paper demonstrates how the urban built environment mediates the relationship between harmful events of the past and the way they are incorporated and mobilized within collective memory as traumas.

RAE6a-2 - The Experiences of Microaggression, Verbal Harassment, and Stereotyping: An Intersectional Analysis of Anti-Asian/Chinese Racism in the Workplace

Guida Man and Keefer Wong, York University

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a surge in Anti-Chinese/Asian racism in Canada that has harmed the health and well-being of Asian Canadians. Driven by stigma, misinformation, and geopolitical narratives, its prevalence and intensity has captured the attention of mainstream and social media. This paper adopts an intersectional framework to examine the experience of racism of Chinese individuals in their workplace within the GTA. We draw on data analysis from a SSHRC funded research project, and focus our analysis of the experience of anti-Chinese racism before and during COVID on such topics that include microaggression, stereotyping, verbal acts of abuse, etc. We demonstrate that the pandemic has exacerbated anti-Chinese racism, especially in the workplace, leading to work environments that are exclusionary and isolating. In particular, our paper elucidates how racialized individuals’ experiences of racism intersect in complex

ways with their positionalities (i.e., race, class, gender, age, ability, English/French fluency, immigration/citizenship status etc.) to further complicate how individuals are differentially targeted and how they experience racism differently. Furthermore, our paper highlights how interviewees utilize their agency to combat anti-Asian racism.

RAE6a-3 - Legal Disengagement as a Survival Strategy: The Limits of Legal Protection for Marginalized Victims of Hate

Sophie Xiaoyi Liu, University of British Columbia

Recipient of the Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

In this paper, I investigate the logic of legal disengagement, analyzing why victims of hate in Canada who are of Asian descent frequently choose to opt out of formal legal processes. Drawing on interviews and documentary materials, I find that this withdrawal is not a passive failure to report, but a pragmatic and intuitive refusal to view the law as a viable mechanism for remedy. Participants engage in emotionally laborious assessment of the disconnect between their lived reality and the law's rigid procedural categories, ultimately recognizing that the system lacks the capacity to conceive of meaningful solutions for their specific grievances. I conceptualize this process as legal disengagement: a strategic disinvestment rooted in a structural diagnosis of the law's incapacity such that the law becomes irrelevant to one's circumstances. To situate this concept, I distinguish it from legal cynicism, legal avoidance, and legal estrangement. This analysis shifts the discourse on the underreporting of hate from individual-level barriers, such as distrust or language, to a critique of the legal system's fundamental inability to recognize and redress racialized harm.

RAE6a-4 - The Geopolitics of Yellow Peril: Anti-Asian Racism and the Racial Foundations of Threat in World Order

X. Alvin Yang, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science

This article intervenes in International Relations (IR) theory by demonstrating how historical *Yellow Peril* discourse and its contemporary manifestation in anti-Asian racism function as a geopolitical logic of threat embedded in the making and maintenance of world order. It argues that anti-Asian racism is not only a racial prejudice, but a historically sedimented mode of geopolitical imagining through which Asia has been perceived as an existential challenge to a West-led international order. Tracing its genealogy to *Yellow Peril* discourse, the article shows how a transnational formation linking Europe and the United States transformed racialized anxieties over Asian demography, industrialization, and military capacity into a systemic vision of global danger. Adopting a transcultural approach (Luo, Yang, and Li 2024) and drawing on analysis of widely circulated texts and visual materials, the article reconstructs the emergence and consolidation of this racialized geopolitical imagination, crystallizing after Japan's defeat of Russia in 1905 and its subsequent incorporation into twentieth-century U.S. geopolitical and strategic thought. It shows how racial theorists, public intellectuals, and political elites recast world politics as an existential struggle between racialized civilizational blocs. The article concludes by showing that *Yellow Peril* discourse and its contemporary mutation in anti-Asian racism constitute a durable architecture of racialized threat perception that continues to inform International Relations theories of power transition, security, and world order.

(RAE6b) From Yellow Peril to Pandemic Scapegoating: Anti-Asian Racism, Cultural Trauma, and Racial Meaning Making in Canada II

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

This session is divided into two sub-sessions. Sub-session 1 reflects the historical, current, and continuing impact of anti-Asian racism on Chinese individuals and communities in Canada; examines how the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated Anti-Asian Racism; and the geopolitical circumstances that pose a threat to the world order. Sub-session 2 brings together papers that take a more focused look into racial meaning-making through language, scapegoating mechanisms, and media representations of anti-Asian racism.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Guida Man, York University; Keefer Wong, York University

RAE6b-1 - Yellow Peril in Print: Media Representations of Anti-Asian Racism during Toronto's Chinatown Demolitions, 1958-1970

James K. S. Wong, York University

This paper examines media representations of Toronto's Chinatown demolitions in the late 1950s and 1960s as manifestations of anti-Asian racism in Canada, drawing connections to historical "Yellow Peril" tropes and their resurgence in contemporary contexts like the COVID-19 pandemic. By comparing the Shing Wah Daily News—an ethnic Chinese publication—with mainstream outlets such as the Toronto Star and The Globe and Mail, the study uncovers how print media constructed narratives of Chinese immigrants as racialized "others," reinforcing exclusionary geopolitics and urban policies that prioritized settler-colonial progress over community rights. The demolitions for the new City Hall (1958-1961) and subsequent preservation efforts (1967-1970) serve as case studies, illustrating how media mediated power imbalances, framing Chinatown as a threat to urban development while ethnic media highlighted communal agency and resistance. The primary research question is: How did Chinese ethnic media and mainstream Canadian newspapers represent the demolitions of Toronto's Chinatown between 1958-1970, and what do these portrayals reveal about anti-Asian racism, intersectional biases, and evolving perceptions amid immigration reforms and geopolitical shifts? Objectives include: (1) analyzing racialized framings during the 1958-1961 expropriations, where Chinese residents faced displacement intertwined with class and gender inequalities; (2) exploring shifts post-1967 immigration policy changes, including activism by figures like Jean Lumb; and (3) examining how these discourses negotiated "self" versus "other", with parallels to modern anti-Asian violence amid pandemics and global tensions. Methodologically, qualitative content analysis of stratified samples from the periods employs data analysis software for thematic coding, identifying patterns of exclusion and agency. This research contributes to anti-Asian racism scholarship by bridging historical urban racism with contemporary geopolitics, highlighting media's role in perpetuating or resisting violence. It emphasizes Asian Canadian activism as a pathway to equity in a divided world.

RAE6b-2 - Hating Race or Status? Analysis on the Scapegoating Spectrum of Anti-Chinese Racism in Canada

Weiyuan (Caddie) Xia, Carleton University

Throughout Canada's immigration histories, Chinese communities are substantially treated as an essential but somehow undesirable part of the nation's fabric. This ambivalent attitude not only causes the spread of "roller-coaster" racial slurs towards people of Chinese descent, like "Yellow Peril", "Red Scare", "Model Minority", and "China Virus", but also creates a social atmosphere with a "hot-and-cold" sentiment to Chinese populations and therefore, racist conduct is often defocused and even unidentifiable. Building upon theories on social constructionism and scapegoat racism, this paper unravels inter-relational social factors and scapegoating mechanisms that influence the complexities of addressing anti-Chinese racism in Canada. On the one hand, Canada's race-based policy making and administrative practices contribute to the shaping of an essentialized yet ambiguous ethnic identity for Chinese communities as perceived by the public. This racialized identity, on the other hand, is translated by other social actors (i.e. media) into various forms of disadvantaged social status to facilitate scapegoating discourse, especially since Canada's alignment with US-led imperialism. The interplay of race-oriented stereotyping and status-focused scapegoating makes it difficult to differentiate anti-Chinese racism from other social stratifications. A race-status scapegoating spectrum is accordingly introduced to assess the resulting implications. This paper also examines a court case involving an anti-Chinese racist incident at a Richmond, BC coffee shop during the COVID-19 pandemic, which serves to contextualize the preceding arguments as well as conceptualize arbitrary racist behaviors by applying the race-status scapegoating spectrum. This paper overall manifests the fragility of Canada's interracial society impacted by scapegoat racism that requires urgent systemic changes.

RAE6b-3 - Racial meaning-making beyond words: translanguaging, power, and anti-Asian racism in bilingual immigrant families

Yahan Yang, University of Toronto

This paper examines the critical yet under-theorized role of language in how bilingual Asian immigrant families in Canada navigate anti-Asian racism. While research on Ethnic-Racial Socialization (ERS) has extensively documented the content of racial messages transmitted from parents to children (Hughes et al., 2006), sociological analyses often overlook the linguistic processes through which these meanings are produced and negotiated. This is particularly evident in bilingual immigrant contexts, where language is often treated as a neutral medium rather than a structuring force embedded within power relations. Drawing on a theoretical synthesis, this paper integrates the M(ai)cro model of racial socialization (Jones & Rogers, 2023; Rogers et al., 2021) with translanguaging theory (García & Wei, 2015; W. Li, 2011, 2018) to reconceptualize linguistic practices as operating across nested ecological levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). I argue that language shapes parent-child interactions at the microsystem level, mediates family-community relations within the mesosystem, and reflects dominant Canadian racial ideologies at the macrosystem level. This integration reveals a critical gap in ERS scholarship: a preoccupation with what messages are conveyed has obscured how linguistic interaction itself shapes the formation and contestation of racial meanings. The paper develops an integrated conceptual framework that applies translanguaging lens to illuminate how fluid, hybrid language practices enable families to co-construct racial meanings and respond to

systemic marginalization and raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015). By conceptualizing language as a dynamic site of meaning-making, this framework challenges the monolingual assumptions that implicitly structure socialization research. The paper concludes by outlining implications for future empirical work, advancing a more nuanced understanding of how immigrant families cultivate agency and resilience while navigating race and belonging in multicultural Canada.

(RAE-RC) Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 1:00pm ADT
Track: Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster

This Race and Ethnicity Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizers: Jamilah Dei-Sharpe, Concordia University; Secil Ertorer, University of Niagara Falls Canada

(RAS) Research Advisory Subcommittee and Research Methods

(RAS1) Communicating Research for Social Impact
Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT
Track: Research Advisory Subcommittee and Research Methods

This online workshop, led by MediaSmarts, will explore the possibilities and challenges related to communicating research beyond the academy. In contexts such as sharing research online, submitting funding proposals, or producing research that impacts policy, industry, and the broader public, researchers need to present their work to non-research audiences. However, the skills required to do so are not always explicitly discussed or available to researchers in the academy. MediaSmarts - Canada's centre for digital media literacy - is uniquely positioned as an organization that regularly engages in communicating research for social impact within the research sector and beyond. In this online workshop, MediaSmarts will speak to its knowledge mobilization work with a wide variety of audiences, including community organizations, education experts, policymakers, corporations and industry, violence against women and healthcare professionals, as well as a large network of teachers, parents, caregivers, and youth. MediaSmarts will share approaches and lessons learned from three projects that represent different audiences and stages of communicating research beyond the academy: (1) Moving On: Digital Empowerment and Literacy Skills for Survivors, (2) From Access to Engagement: Building a Digital Media Literacy Strategy for Canada, (3) Artificial Intelligence in Pediatric Healthcare, with The Toronto Hospital for Sick Children. MediaSmarts' experts will speak to the needs of non-research audiences (e.g. government officials and policymakers) including how research can support community organizations as they serve equity-deserving groups and best practices for engaging the public through social campaigns. Finally, the session will end with an interactive activity in which attendees (including early, mid and late career researchers) will use their current or past work and find ways to communicate three key messages or findings to a chosen non-research audience.

Session Organizers: Kara Brisson-Boivin, MediaSmarts; Khadija Baig, MediaSmarts; Vanessa Turyatunga, MediaSmarts

RAS1-1 - Kara Brisson-Boivin, MediaSmarts

Dr. Kara Brisson Boivin is the Director of Research for MediaSmarts, Canada's centre for digital and media literacy. She also holds an appointment as an Adjunct Research Professor in the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Carleton University. She works with partners across academia, industry, government, and community organizations on online issues including; digital wellbeing, digital citizenship, digital equity and inclusion, privacy, hate, activism, and algorithms and artificial intelligence.

RAS1-2 - Khadija Baig, MediaSmarts

Khadija is a Research and Evaluation Associate at MediaSmarts. She holds a Master of Computer Science (M.C.S) degree from Carleton University, Ottawa. Khadija has extensive research and publication experience and has designed, lead, and collaborated on research involving usable online privacy and security. She is also a Research Associate at CHORUS (Carleton's Human Oriented Research in Usable Security), at the School of Computer Science, Carleton University. Her research interests include: the privacy complications of DNA (genetic privacy), the privacy of vulnerable populations, accessible privacy and security, and the spread of antagonistic content online.

RAS1-3 - Vanessa Turyatunga, MediaSmarts

Vanessa Turyatunga is a Research and Evaluation Associate at MediaSmarts. She is also a PhD Candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. She supports the entire research process at MediaSmarts, and has research interests in participatory action research, empowerment-based research methods and trauma- and violence-informed digital media literacy education.

(RAS2) The Ordinary Crisis: Rethinking Islam's Position in Social Thought
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Research Advisory Subcommittee and Research Methods

While the term Islamophobia is relatively recent, the political and epistemic uses of Muslim worlds are not. From colonial governance to the global War on Terror and the new geopolitics of hate, Muslim communities have long been rendered as objects of fear, fascination, and control. This panel begins from the premise that the marginalization of Muslims is not simply a matter of prejudice or policy, but a constitutive feature of modernity itself. Bringing together sociologists working at the intersection of postcolonial thought, religion, and globalization, this session asks: Where do we go from here? How should Muslim communities be studied in an era of increasing global hate and political unsettledness? What can we learn by centering, rather than marginalizing, Muslim experiences in sociological thought? And is Islamophobia an adequate frame for capturing the complex entanglements of gender, race, and religion in global contexts? By reframing Islam and Muslim subjectivities as central to understanding the dynamics of a world in constant crisis, the session aims to rethink sociology's conceptual boundaries—pushing beyond Northern paradigms of

stability, secularism, and cultural neutrality toward more unsettled and generative global imaginaries.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Melanie Heath, McMaster University; Fauzia Hasain, Queen's University

RAS2-1 - Towards Collective Epistemic Resistances: Feminist Knowledge Production in Muslim Communities

Ayesha Mian Akram, University of Calgary

Critical feminist knowledge production through collectivity as method advances possibilities for decolonial qualitative methodologies. The embrace of practices rooted in collective Muslim practices encourages relational knowledge construction, shared vulnerability, and transformation of epistemological opportunities. Ultimately, I argue that this symbiosis fuels a powerful subversive community space rife with hope for futurity. In this talk, I share findings from two empirical community-engaged research projects conducted in Alberta and Ontario with communities of Muslim women. Vulnerability in this space was taken up as a collective political act, and was crucial to the notion of political resistance, particularly as "an embodied enactment" (Butler, 2016, p. 22). Rooting resistance in vulnerability also offers a strategy for feminists to argue for a relational subject that contests neoliberal individuality and capitalist self-interest; through the disclosure and articulation of vulnerability, so can political subjects resist their subjectification. Through a deliberate willingness to not only participate in this project but to be vulnerable in the process, to disclose very deep fears and experiences which the women had decided not to with others or in other spaces, the women were able to critically reflect on their embodiment as Muslim women and collectively develop a sense of care and solidarity around those realizations. Altogether, this shared vulnerability is a collective advancement that creates hope for Muslim futurities through authentic solidarity-making. These findings advance the field of critical Muslim methodologies by contributing to knowledge sharing on research and collaborating with intersectional, marginal communities through developing political collectives rooted in practices that are familiar and powerful to participants themselves. I ask, what subversive epistemic formations can emerge that transcend the limitations of constructions of Islamophobia as the framework for producing Muslim subjectivities in the global north?

RAS2-2 - Islamophobia as an Unsettled Concept: Insights from Muslim Parents

Fauzia Husain, Queen's University

While scholars commonly define Islamophobia as a racialized system of exclusion and mobilize it as a crucial analytic for understanding marginalization, its legitimacy is increasingly contested by state actors and political elites. Yet, we know less about how ordinary people—particularly those targeted by such hostility—negotiate the term in everyday life. This paper investigates how Muslim parents in Ontario (n = 40) respond to the category of "Islamophobia" in an interview context, and what their interpretations reveal about the term's conceptual limits and political stakes. Drawing on in-depth interviews conducted over the past year, I identify two dominant interpretive moves. First, some participants perform a discursive denial, framing Islamophobia as an exceptional or "imported" American phenomenon that does not reflect their lived experience in Canada. In these accounts, the myth of Canadian multiculturalism serves as a shield, allowing parents to frame hostility as an

individual anomaly rather than a structural reality ("there's nothing like that here"). Second, other parents perform a critical disaggregation; they do not reject the reality of hostility but argue that "Islamophobia" is too blunt an umbrella category. For these participants, the term flattens the distinct political histories and specificities of anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Blackness, and gendered anti-immigrant sentiment. I argue that these strategies reflect a "crisis of naming" wherein the term Islamophobia can simultaneously enable the recognition of harm and obscure the varied geopolitical and racial logics that produce it. By centering the conceptual labor of Muslim parents, this study demonstrates that Islamophobia is not merely a label imposed from above, but an unstable frame negotiated through everyday political reasoning. Ultimately, the paper asks what is at stake—analytically and politically—when "Islamophobia" becomes the primary language for Muslim marginalization in a global landscape marked by overlapping crises of war, nationalism, and racial governance.

RAS2-3 - The Monogamous State and the Making of the Muslim Other: Rethinking Islam, Sexuality, and Modern State Formation

Melanie Heath, McMaster University

How has Islam helped define the moral and political boundaries of modern states? This paper argues that Muslim populations have not simply been marginalized by modern state projects but have been central to how those projects understand themselves. Drawing on the concept of the *monogamous state*, I examine how France constructed monogamy as a defining feature of citizenship, public order, and civilization through its historical opposition to a racialized and predominantly Muslim "polygynous Other." Building on scholarship on sexuality, colonialism, and state formation, the paper demonstrates that monogamy functions not merely as a form of sexual regulation but as a constitutive principle of state definition. Through an analysis of legal texts, colonial policies, and administrative debates from the seventeenth through twentieth centuries, I trace three historical moments in the development of the French monogamous state: its emergence through colonial encounters and missionary projects; its consolidation during the expansion of the French colonial empire; and its reinforcement through immigration and integration policies in the postcolonial period. Across these periods, representations of Muslim sexuality and polygamy served as powerful symbolic resources through which French authorities articulated distinctions between civilization and barbarism, citizen and subject, modernity and tradition. The figure of the Muslim polygamist became a key site through which racial, religious, and sexual hierarchies were produced and maintained. Rather than treating Islamophobia as a discrete form of prejudice, the paper shows how anxieties surrounding Muslim family life have been embedded within broader projects of governance, citizenship, and empire. By centering the role of Islam and Muslim subjectivities in the historical construction of state power, this paper contributes to ongoing efforts to rethink sociology's conceptual foundations. It suggests that Muslim experiences are not peripheral to modern social thought but indispensable to understanding the intertwined histories of race, religion, sexuality, and state formation in a world marked by ongoing crises of belonging and political order.

(RAS3) Social Studies: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Scheduled: Virtual – Friday June 5, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Research Advisory Subcommittee and Research Methods

Empirical scientific knowledge relies on standardized techniques and shared professional ethics as the basis of its authoritative knowledge claims. These techniques and ethics all have historical and social origins. They are generated in specific times and places with specific goals in mind and must obtain a consensus from the scientific community in order to be accepted. This session invites theoretical and empirical abstracts from scholars conducting social studies of quantitative and qualitative method past and present. Submissions could include analyses of the generation of specific techniques, approaches or organizations as well as studies of the use of these systems by humans, particularly with respect to how humans interact with these systems and how these systems influence human social relations.

Session Organizer and Chair: Kathryn Barber, Cape Breton University

RAS3-1 - Statistical Facts and Strategic Unknowns: Agnotology, Measurement, and Public Contestation

Miad Ranjbar, York University

Statistical descriptions of social life are increasingly treated as decisive forms of evidence, even as their authority is contested in a sociopolitical context characterized by “doing my own research,” platformed expertise, and the rapid uptake of advanced statistical techniques, including large-language models, by governments, industry, and social actors. In this paper, I ask what an agnotological orientation can add to social studies of statistics, and what its limits might be. Agnotology foregrounds ignorance as a social accomplishment, beyond a mere absence of knowledge (Proctor, 1995; McGoey, 2012), drawing attention to how uncertainty is cultivated, stabilized, and mobilized in ways that can be practically consequential (Oreskes & Conway, 2010). Following Desrosières’ treatment of statistics as historically situated conventions, and building on STS analyses of classification and standardization as sites of power (Bowker & Star, 1999), I argue that statistical accounts of social phenomena routinely encode specific forms of nonknowledge through category work, selective flows of information, and the routine rendering of some experiences as methodologically invisible. Using social epidemiological claims as a guiding case, I show how agnotological critique can productively problematize the social conditions under which statistical facts are assembled and circulated, including the institutional and moral economies that shape what counts as a credible measure. At the same time, this paper attends to a practical dilemma. Reflexive problematization can be appropriated as a generalized skepticism that collapses distinctions between critique and denial, further unsettling already fragile expert-lay relations (Wynne, 1998; Collins & Evans, 2007). I conclude by outlining a “bounded” agnotology of statistics that preserves the analytic gains of reflexivity while explicitly accounting for the downstream political uses of doubt.

RAS3-2 - Branching Out: A Metaphor-Based Approach to Qualitative Analysis

Randeep Nota, University of Toronto

Novice qualitative researchers can struggle to connect themes to coded data, keep themes anchored to their research question(s), and judge when thematic development is sufficiently robust.

Metaphors can link new methodological concepts to familiar images and reduce the cognitive load of complex analytic work. This presentation introduces a tree metaphor as a methodological and conceptual framework for qualitative analysis and coding. The tree provides a visual structure for understanding how the research question, themes, and data are interconnected: roots represent the study's theoretical framing and context, the trunk represents the central research question, branches represent themes, and leaves represent coded data excerpts. The metaphor supports analytic coherence by making the connections among framing, question, themes, and data visible. Furthermore, it helps researchers check whether themes remain meaningfully connected to the research question and sufficiently supported by data, and it highlights analytic gaps when branches appear sparse or empty. It also introduces "pruning" as a reflexive prompt to refine, merge, or remove weakly connected themes that risk distracting from the central inquiry. Overall, the framework offers a visual, memorable way to support theme development and communicate analytic progress. This approach can function as a practical pedagogical tool for novices and a reflexive aid for experienced researchers and supervisors by making methodological dialogue more transparent and accessible in teaching, mentoring, and collaborative analysis.

RAS3-3 - Todos os nombres: the population list as historical technique

Kathryn Barber, Cape Breton University

Social statistics often rely on population lists built around standardized, discrete categories as the basis for their statistical analysis. While this practice may seem self-evident, an analysis of early modern European lists shows tremendous variance in the ways that population lists were generated. It is only alongside the introduction of the bureaucracies and standardized identity documents of the burgeoning liberal democratic nation-state of the 19th century that population lists increasingly use standardized discrete categories to describe these people. In this presentation, I contrast and compare early modern European lists with 19th century lists to show how the techniques that were used to categorize and understand regular people in European populations or populations undergoing colonization by these power changed over time.

Les statistiques sociales s'appuient souvent sur des listes de population construites selon des catégories standardisées et distinctes. Si cette pratique peut paraître évidente, une analyse des listes européennes du début de l'époque moderne révèle une grande diversité dans leur élaboration. Ce n'est qu'avec l'avènement des bureaucraties et des documents d'identité standardisés de l'État-nation libéral et démocratique naissant du XIXe siècle que les listes de population utilisent de plus en plus des catégories standardisées et distinctes pour décrire les individus. Dans cette présentation, je compare les listes européennes du début de l'époque moderne avec celles du XIXe siècle afin de montrer comment les techniques de catégorisation et de compréhension des populations européennes, qu'elles soient ordinaires ou soumises à la colonisation, ont évolué au fil du temps.

(RAS4) Canadian research data infrastructure for quantitative social science

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Research Advisory Subcommittee and Research Methods

For decades, Canadian researchers have navigated a challenging operating environment for deploying quantitative survey methods, compared with similar jurisdictions. Challenges include the lack of high-quality databases that can be sampled to send surveys. More recently, social media has

presented some solutions for survey distribution as well as providing datasets that can in some cases be used as an alternative to surveys. However, social media also presents challenges: unclear research norms and standards, shifting online practices, and profit-driven controls on data by platforms. What's more, Canadian policy settings and rural geographies worsen the impacts of general challenges like reduced survey response rates, decreasing use of landlines and closures of social media data access. Canadian scholars lack a 'big picture' understanding of the quantitative methods and tools that our social scientists are deploying, on which research topics. It is difficult to know the successes and limitations of those methods and tools, like who is being under- or over-served by each. All this may weaken the quality of quantitative social science in Canada. This workshop session will elicit the tools, best practices and challenges being faced by Canadian sociologists using empirical quantitative methods.

Session Organizer: Kate Sherren, Dalhousie University

RAS4-1 - Kate Sherren, Dalhousie University

Kate Sherren is Professor and Director of the School for Resource and Environmental Studies at Dalhousie University, and a member of the Royal Society of Canada College of New Scholars. Prof. Sherren is an environmental social scientist who works on the human dimensions of landscape transitions such as renewable energy, coastal adaptation and sustainable farming. She has over 110 peer-reviewed publications, and lead edited the most recent decadal review of the field of natural resource social science for the International Association of Society and Natural Resources, *Opening Windows: Embracing New Perspectives and Practices in Natural Resource Social Sciences* (Colorado) (2024).

RAS4-2 - Mark CJ Stoddart, Memorial University

Mark CJ Stoddart is Professor of Sociology at Memorial University, and is a member of the Royal Society of Canada College of New Scholars. Prof. Stoddart works in the fields of environmental sociology, political sociology and social movements, and communications and culture. His research focuses on climate change, resource extraction, energy transitions, and sustainable tourism development. He has over 90 peer-reviewed publications, including the books *Industrial Development and Eco-Tourisms: Can Oil Extraction and Nature Conservation Co-Exist?* (Palgrave), *Contested Consultations in the Extractive Industries: Rights, Processes, and Tensions* (Routledge), and the forthcoming *Understanding Environmental Sociology* (Elgar).

(RES) Relational Sociology Research Cluster

(RES1) Relational Sociology and Radical Relationisms

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Relational Sociology Research Cluster

The word 'radical' derives from the Latin 'radix' meaning 'root'. Radical relationism 'goes to the root' in two ways: by reconceptualizing all fixed, fast-frozen "things" as consisting of or constituted by relational processes, and by using relational thinking to critique and challenge social structures in pursuit of fundamental social equality. Replacing dualisms of subject and object, society and nature,

individual and collective with complex heterogeneous tangles of relations/processes, radical relationism explores openings and connections beyond Eurocentrism and anthropocentrism, and towards antiracism, feminism, trans liberation, decolonization, pluriversality, socialism, and other emancipatory projects. Papers exploring sociocultural, political, ethical, onto-epistemological, ecological, or other uses of relational thinking in radical ways were invited in a spirit of challenging and collaborative discussion.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Christopher Powell, Toronto Metropolitan University; Mónica Sánchez-Flores, Thompson Rivers University

RES1-1 - Don't wish leaders away: Towards seeing leader and leadership through ontological lens of deep relationality

Ellina Watanabe, ESADE Business School, Universitat Ramon Llull

This paper explains how we can pursue relational leadership without losing an individual in the process. Responding to recent tensions of handling an individual in social flows of practice on one hand, and obscuring the role of individual, on the other, I take three ontological turns that address ontological fault lines of individual and collective horizons of leadership. I proceed to develop an ontological lens of deep relationality that integrates both leadership actors and social interactions as continuous, constitutive processes of becoming. Firstly, I reconceptualize individual actors as dynamic relational figurations rather than discrete entities. Secondly, I address arbitrary boundaries of situated collective interactions and reframe them as porous, ephemeral, and socially constructed. Finally, I ensure ontological continuity where relational flows continue on living beyond immediate social interactions. Through this lens, leadership is neither something leaders do and build, nor is it bounded to social site, but is an emergent expression of relational becoming. This paper contributes to leadership scholarship by establishing thoroughgoing relational continuity across horizons and elements, challenging atomism of individual, and opening new pathways for theory and practice. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of this deeply relational account for future research and methodology.

RES1-2 - Expansiveness and Freedom of Radical Relational Selves

Monica Sanchez-Flores, Thompson Rivers University

In this paper, I reflect on the freedom of radically relational selves who are not always human and that are conceived as embedded and entangled, and may present as embodied. I follow David Abram who in his *The Spell of the Sensuous* (2017) uses the somatic phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty to translate Indigenous relationality with the land to modern ways of thinking. Abram comes up with the concept of the more-than-human for a radically relational conception of humans in interdependence and interconnectedness with their environments from what I interpret as a radical relational position that rejects the binaries of modern/colonial thinking. Radical relationism is radical both politically and ontologically. The politics of radical relationism supports struggles for decolonization, amplifies the voice of movements that struggle for the freedom of all life, and vows to decenter humans. Its ontology is a commitment to seeing everything as formed by relations that are co-constitutive and have "structural agency" (la paperson, 2017). This radically relational perspective on freedom works towards contingently theorizing the freedom of all living beings—under the contemporary crisis conditions of late global (extractive) capitalism and climate change. I

cite Indigenous scholars and activists of the “Land Back” movement on their ideas of the freedom of the land and discuss how they can be seen as congenial with the decolonial notion of Modernity/Coloniality (Quijano, Dussel, Mignolo). I discuss how the freedom of the land from extractive capitalism hinges upon learning from Indigenous epistemologies about our entanglement with everything that exists, which is congenial with radical relationism’s political and ontological commitments. Finally, I discuss how the freedom of the land can be seen as a model for an expansive type of freedom for both human and more-than-human relational selves.

RES1-3 - Developing a Relational Praxis: Navigating Difference with Racialized Women Pharmacists in Workplace Violence Research

Alison Starkey, University of Toronto

In this work, I explore the challenges involved in developing a relational praxis with self-identified gendered racialized women retail pharmacists reflecting on their experiences of workplace violence as a white, non-pharmacist researcher. Navigating difference between participants and researchers is challenging; methodologies often create binaries that belie inherent relationalities. Positionalities are often acknowledged, but relationalities between them are rarely the objects of inquiry. The relationalities in this work go beyond racial binaries; as an ‘outsider-insider’ (Smith, 1987) the trans-local and transtemporal nuanced threads of gender, class, capital, state, migration, and coloniality complicate ever-constituted subjectivities and relations of power. I will argue that the use of vignettes exploring affective and embodied experiences of synergy/comfort and antagonism/discomfort reveal relational dis/junctures and can act as resources for analysis using a dual-framework approach.Emotion practice (EP) in concert with Gunaratnam’s doubled-research (2003) creates a relational praxis that facilitates understanding meanings across difference. Attempting to avoid reinscribing unidirectional participant/researcher divides and the narcissism of whiteness sometimes seen in researcher reflexivity, doubled-research requires epistemological vigilance, working both with and against racial and ethnic categories. Through this relational praxis, both resonance and dissonance in embodied affective experiences in vignettes reveal oppressive threads. These antagonisms and synergies reveal macrolevel processes in microlevel dynamics and vice versa. Obliterating commonly harnessed divisionary constructs, this praxis calls into question notions around subjectivity, observer bias, the specificity of context, trans-locality, and trans-temporality. Picking at and examining the threads of whiteness, patriarchy, and racialized capitalism, the paradox of my own deliberate and tentative attempts at an unravelling coupled with the profound epistemological uncertainty it brings, is itself situated within the greater paradox of our contemporary times’ unravelling (Miles, Edugyan, and Ayed, 2026). In such a world, the stories we share through our research offer the opportunity to recognize and reweave the world anew.

RES1-4 - Sociological Societies' Responses to the Wars in Gaza and Ukraine

Zoltán Lakatos, Budapest University of Technology and Economics

Writing on the Gaza war shortly before his passing, Michael Burawoy had pointed out that "sociology faces the question of Palestine". This work looks at how this question is faced among sociologists' national professional associations and their supranational counterparts by studying their official responses to the post-October 2023 escalation of violence in Israel-Palestine. Still ongoing as of January 2026, this war has stirred up the sociological community like probably no previous conflict

involving Israel and Palestine. However, in the Global North, most national associations have not issued statements or have only responded to declarations by others. This is in contrast with their declarations on the Russian military's invasion of Ukraine (started less than two years prior), more numerous and converging toward common themes. Focusing on key themes (e.g., war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, terror, ceasefire, ethnic cleansing, apartheid, settler colonialism — not all of which are relevant to both conflicts), the analysis maps national and supranational sociological societies' responses to the Gaza war onto their statements on the war in Ukraine. The comparative framework is crucial: Apologies of violent acts typically dismiss comparisons by portraying the situations in which such acts take place as singular. This posture glosses over the fact that knowledge, like all human activity is comparative by definition. The comparisons of responses to these two armed conflicts occurring simultaneously and involving grave violations of international law indicate that among the scholarly bodies in question, Eurocentrism is alive and well in the Global North — although with some notable exceptions, including some former settler colonies.

(RES4) From root to canopy: Context, contours, contestations in a relational commons
Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Relational Sociology Research Cluster

This roundtable invites participants to engage with the work of the International School of Radical Relationism in mapping the areas of growth, dearth, potential for outreach and collaboration between relational social science and social transformation. Our goal is to encourage cross-pollination, and open us up to previously unconsidered literatures, voices, streams, and strands of thinking. The results of this roundtable will be extended after the conference to maintain a living tree of radical relationist connections.

Session Organizers: Alison Starkey, University of Toronto; Christopher Powell, Toronto Metropolitan University; Mónica Sánchez-Flores, Thompson Rivers University

Session Moderators: Alison Starkey, University of Toronto

RES4-1 - Dean Ray, York University
Research Associate, Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages (CIKL). Dean Ray, PhD, is an ethnographer and social theorist whose work investigates how settler-colonialism creates persistent unequal relationships and how marginalized groups, particularly Indigenous People, exercise agency and transform their futures both inside and beyond the settler-colonial field. A settler scholar, he is a post-doctoral fellow in the School of Health Policy and Management at York University and a Weatherhead Scholar at Harvard University.

RES4-2 - Ellina Watanabe, ESADE Business School, Universitat Ramon Llull

Ellina Watanabe, PhD candidate in Management Sciences Institute for Social Innovation, ESADE Business School, Universitat Ramon Llull. Ellina Watanabe engages with ethnographic and other qualitative research methods as well as conceptual writing to develop a more humanized and contextualized understanding of leadership. With current leadership landscape having changed dramatically, Ellina is interested in understanding and exploring leadership and leadership development through a relational ontology lens. Specifically, moving away from heroic canons of a leader as defined by the org chart and “license” to wield influence, she is interested to conceptualize

and understand leadership differently, focusing on relations and process, as well as the role of individual in relational conceptions of leadership.

(RES-RC) Relational Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:45pm
Track: Relational Sociology Research Cluster

This Relational Sociology Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. In our 2026 meeting, we will discuss the identity and aims of our cluster group within an inclusive, transformative and broadly critical orientation.
We seek to expand our network and activities and discuss the structure and roles of our Relational Sociology research cluster. This will also be an opportunity to introduce participants to our ongoing International Online Seminar on Relational Research and share conference and publication opportunities, as well as membership expansion and engagement.

Session Organizers: Christopher Powell, Toronto Metropolitan University; Mónica J. Sánchez-Flores, Thompson Rivers University

(RUS) Rural Sociology Research Cluster

(RUS1) Reimagining Social Infrastructures in Rural and Remote Communities
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Rural Sociology Research Cluster

This session includes papers that examine how underrepresented groups are working to shape their communities amidst a host of challenges. From single fathers in the Yukon to youth leaders in rural India and from boat builders on the coast of Nova Scotia to local food hub organizers, we focus on broader struggles for social and economic justice within rural and remote contexts. Contributors engage with the conference theme by exploring how community-based action confronts the structural inequalities and divisions of a divided world.

Session Organizers: Jennifer Jarman, Lakehead University; Karen Foster, Dalhousie University; Jacob Kearey-Moreland, Lakehead University

Session Chair: Jennifer Jarman, Lakehead University

RUS1-1 - How Changing Relationships to the Environment Effect Livelihoods in Nova Scotia

Evan Curley, Dalhousie University

“They love the fishing community, but they don’t love the smell of fish” a Southshore boatbuilder tells me. The “they” he’s referring to are a cohort of wealthy, mostly retired, American or Upper Canadian residents who have been moving in and reconstituting this slight coastal village in their own image. This was one of many conversations I’ve had with workers around Nova Scotia that points to a dynamic profoundly shaping the province: a strong sense of divide in the way we relate to our natural environment. The workers I’ve engaged with - fish harvesters, boatbuilders, sea farmers, wharfbuilders, etc. - have an industrious attitude that sees our coast as resource, food, and grounds

for working. They perceive their new neighbours to have a very different perspective of the coast: a charmed landscape, a destination, and an access point to a rich history and a recreational present. These perspectives don't often co-exist peacefully. Our relationship to "what's out there" beyond our kitchen window, off the bow of a boat, or before the porch of a summer home animate the way we value our place in the world and dictate what kinds of lives and livelihoods are possible. Should we be trying to bolster resource harvesting? Move further toward a tourist-leisure economy? Attract outsiders or keep locals home? These are not new questions, but they are increasingly urgent in a world moving deeper into its divisions, and increasingly urgent for rural places experiencing generational shifts in its modes of production, consumption, and distribution.

RUS1-2 - Exploring the Nature of Canada's Evolving Food System

Jacob Kearey-Moreland and Jennifer Jarman, Lakehead University

Rural communities face numerous issues related to the distribution of their agri-food products. One concern involves fair returns for work and fair treatment of food producers. Another issue involves the heavy use of chemicals and other unsustainable and large-scale production practices that degrade the quality of the rural environment. Once produced, there is an additional problem: whether harvested food reaches consumers in a timely manner without deteriorating in quality due to slow, spotty, or uncertain distribution processes. In agricultural communities, one response to these concerns has been the steadily growing farm-to-table movement rooted in ethical consumerism. Such grassroots movement activity seeks to localize what Berti and Mulligan (2016) call values-based agri-food supply chains, connecting producers and consumers who share ecological and social values. While farm-to-table relationships are important, these can be unstable and limited in scope. Hence, we are also seeing steady growth in "food hubs," intermediary organizations that connect rural producers with consumers in rural or urban areas. The concept of "food hubs" has been used to describe a wide diversity of local food initiatives — from aggregation and distribution points to food co-ops, community food centers, and increasingly virtual platforms. In this paper, we discuss our work to document the emergence of self-described food hubs and food-hub-like organizations by developing a Canadian database of such initiatives, and we analyze differences in their stated goals and values. We then suggest future directions for research, policy, and practice regarding such alternative agrifood networks in Canada.

RUS1-3 - Single Fathers in Yukon and their social, legal, and economic experiences: A sociological study

Shawkat Shareef, Yukon University

This study presents an empirical examination of social, legal, and economic experiences of single fathers in Yukon, addressing a significant gap in Canadian family research and policy discourse. Using a mixed-method sociological survey of 36 single fathers residing primarily in Whitehorse and select rural and remote communities, the study draws on both closed- and open-ended responses to capture the structural conditions and lived realities of single father-led households in northern context. Participants were recruited through community-based platforms, including social media, newspaper, and local radio, to maximize representation across differential backgrounds. This study reveals a pattern of institutional marginalization experienced by single fathers. Socially, respondents reported lack of parenting support network, counselling services, and early childhood programs,

which they believed designed primarily for mothers and contributed to feelings of social invisibility and isolation, particularly among fathers in remote communities. Legally, while some participants, mostly with higher levels of income—secured joint custody through stable private agreements, many others with low income and education felt that the judicial system was costly, complex, biased, and difficult to access. Fathers who had to rely on formal legal process frequently experienced systemic bias, limited legal aid, and inadequate information regarding their parental rights, with geographic remoteness exacerbating these challenges. Economically, although many respondents were employed full-time, nearly half reported annual household incomes below $70,000, placing them in precarious financial state in Yukon's costly living dynamics. Childcare responsibilities, inflexible employment conditions, and minimal government financial support further intensified their economic vulnerability. Overall, the findings highlight the resilience, compassion, and dedication of Yukon single fathers albeit their exclusion from institutional recognition and policy frameworks. The study underscores urgent father-inclusive and targeted social, legal, and financial interventions from Yukon territorial and federal government to safeguard the well-being of single fathers and their children in northern Canada.

(SAR) South Asia Research Cluster

(SAR1) Navigating Belonging: Analyzing how research on South Asian communities explore belonging both in the field and beyond it

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: South Asia Research Cluster

This panel brings together papers that examine belonging as produced and contested within racialized, gendered, and migratory structures of power, rather than secured through formal inclusion. Drawing on ethnographies, feminist oral history, and scoping review as methodological sites, the papers trace how belonging and non-belonging are mutually constitutive processes that shape migration and diasporic trajectories among South Asian communities in Canada and beyond.
At the same time, the panel highlights the importance of thinking of belonging not only in terms of research findings but also as a methodological and epistemic concerns, attending to how researchers navigate the research process, how they position themselves in relation to research participants and negotiate the complex methodological and ethical challenges of doing research through conditions of inequality. By bringing together papers that look at different empirical sites and use a variety of methodological frameworks, this panel insists that who speaks, who is heard, and how it is interpreted are fundamental to understanding how research on South Asian communities explore belonging, power and agency both in the field and beyond it.

Session Organizer and Chair: Shreyashi Ganguly, York University

SAR1-1 - Belonging Through Nonbelonging: Gendered Experiences of Pakistani Women Across Karachi and the Canadian Diaspora

Hammad Khan, University of Toronto

This paper examines how belonging for Pakistani women is shaped through simultaneous experiences of inclusion and exclusion across migration. Rather than treating belonging and

nonbelonging as opposites, the study argues that they function together to shape women's gendered social worlds before and after migration. Research on gender and migration often conceptualizes belonging as an outcome of integration or settlement. Yet migrant women frequently describe belonging as partial, fragile, or reversible. Scholarship increasingly recognizes the importance of exclusion, misrecognition, and racialization in shaping migrant belonging, but less attention has been paid to how belonging can emerge through these very conditions. This study addresses that gap by tracing women's experiences in Karachi and the Greater Toronto Area. The analysis draws on ethnographic fieldwork in a Karachi neighborhood and a decade of qualitative research with Pakistani newcomers in the GTA. Data include participant observation, fifty-two life-history interviews, and detailed fieldnotes written across both sites. Coding followed an abductive, iterative logic, with reflexive memoing used to connect themes across contexts. Findings show that women's belonging in Karachi is produced within gendered enclaves that rely on boundaries limiting their movement, while in Canada, promises of freedom coexist with credential devaluation, isolation, and racialized national belonging. Across both sites, belonging emerges through experiences of constraint rather than in their absence. The paper demonstrates that belonging and nonbelonging are not contrasting concepts, instead they are mutually constitutive processes in women's migration trajectories. Recognizing this relational dynamic offers a conceptual shift for gender and migration scholarship by revealing how migrant women's affiliations, identities, and claims to recognition are shaped through contexts of both connection and exclusion.

SAR1-2 - Beyond Findings: Reflections from Fieldwork, Feminist oral history research, Precarity and Positionality

Sohini Ganguly, University of Ottawa

The paper highlights the fieldwork experience of conducting feminist oral history research on the popular memory of Mirabai and her reception in contemporary oral narratives of women in Rajasthan, India. While the broader research examined how women from different social settings in Rajasthan negotiate with the idea of Mirabai in their everyday lives, this paper is not about engaging with the research findings. Instead, it focuses on the process of data collection, highlighting the experiences and challenges of conducting interviews with Rajput women, female performers, female ascetics, and women from lower-caste and indigenous groups across diverse socio-economic contexts. Using feminist oral history as both methodology and analytical framework, the paper examines the methodological and ethical challenges of conducting interviews with women in Rajasthan, shaped by gendered norms, cultural and language barriers, and caste hierarchies. The paper argues that, beyond epistemological choices, research is also shaped by the researcher's positionality, which intersects with caste, gender, religion, class, ethnicity, language, and power. The researcher's multiple social identities also play a role in ensuring trust, data interpretations, and participant access. Guided by Haraway's "situated knowledges" (1988), Scanlon's "take and give methodology" (1993), and Tallbear's "care for the subject" (2014), the paper discusses how feminist oral history research can be more reflexive by addressing "interpretive authority" (Borland, 1991), attention to the spaces where interview occurs, and question of giving voice, attention to emotions, silence, pauses, laughter and listening more carefully to the "muted channels" (Anderson & Jack, 1991) in women's oral accounts. The paper concludes by presenting a more reflexive approach to feminist oral history research and to documenting women's voices that acknowledge the uneven power relations.

SAR1-3 - Race, place and safety: Negotiating the safety-unsafety conundrum as a female South Asian researcher

Shreyashi Ganguly, York University

This paper emanates from the experiences I have had during the process of fieldwork during my doctoral research. I shed light on how I had to constantly negotiate the conundrum of safety-unsafety while researching the South Asian diasporic stand-up comedy scene in Toronto and the GTA. Comedy, as a practice, is primarily a nighttime entertainment activity. During my research, I had to visit far off places, dark basements and other potentially 'unsafe spaces' that essentially brought my corporeal safety into concern. Using autoethnography as a research methodology, I examine the minute processes, the emotional work that went into the process of data collection that is very often overlooked in academic discourse. I contextualize these questions against the backdrop of the current socio-political climate in Canada and the growing rise in hate crimes targeting the South Asian population in the country. I explore what it means to be doing research as a South Asian woman in Toronto today. By bringing together my racial and gender identity, and seeing them in juxtaposition with my research, I analyze how the different facets of identity are crucial to the research I do and how I do it, facilitating it, undoubtedly, but also at times, impeding it. Through a deeply reflexive exercise, this paper is an attempt to better come to terms with my research methodology and my positionality within it, while also offering scope to understand how this research can contribute to a discussion on the politics of South Asian representation in Canada in the contemporary times.

SAR1-4 - Belonging, Honour, and Exclusion: Honour-based Violence, Multiculturalism, and South Asian Diasporic Lives

Jasmine Padam, University of Victoria

This paper examines honour-based violence as a structural and transnational form of gendered harm that significantly shapes experiences of belonging and non-belonging among South Asian diasporic communities in Canada. Drawing on a scoping review of interdisciplinary research across sociology, criminology, psychology, feminist studies, and family studies, this paper challenges culturalist framings that position honour-based violence as a culturally exceptional practice. Instead, it situates honour-related harms at the intersection of patriarchy, migration, racialization, and state governance within the Canadian multicultural landscape. While Canadian multiculturalism promises inclusion and cultural recognition, this paper demonstrates how it can produce exclusions for South Asian women navigating honour-based control. Survivors often experience fractured forms of belonging within families, ethnic communities, and state institutions, where cultural tolerance, immigration precarity, and racialized surveillance coexist. Canadian legal and policy frameworks, particularly those grounded in gender-neutral criminal law, may reproduce vulnerability by obscuring collective kinship dynamics, discouraging intervention, or framing communities through stigmatizing narratives of cultural deviance. This review highlights how honour-based violence operates not only through lethal acts but through everyday practices of surveillance, coercion, social isolation, and forced marriage that regulate women's autonomy and citizenship. These practices are intensified within diasporic contexts shaped by racism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and pressures to preserve cultural identity among perceived threats of assimilation. By foregrounding honour-based violence within broader debates on migration, race, religion, and belonging, this paper contributes to sociological discussions on the contradictions of Canadian multiculturalism. It calls for survivor-centered and

intersectional policy responses that move beyond culturalized approaches toward meaningful inclusion, safety, and justice for South Asian women in contemporary Canada.

(SCL) Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

(SCL2) Culture and Inequality

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

This session explores culturally informed perspectives on social inequality. While the discipline of sociology has had a longstanding interest in understanding the interplay of culture and individual, interactional, and institutional processes of inequality, there remains much to understand and debate regarding the influences social inequality has on culture and the influences culture has on social inequality. The papers in this session engage with topics ranging from the role of culture in climate change inequalities, culture and social status in the digital era, to the impact of culture in institutionalizing inequality. The papers present diverse methodological and substantive areas, including empirically driven and theoretically oriented contributions.

Session Organizers: Sonia Bookman, University of Manitoba; Athena Engman, University of Manitoba

Session Chair: Matt Patterson, University of Calgary

SCL2-1 - Everyone Wants to Be Rich (and Beautiful): Aspiration and Inequality in the Digital Era

Jordan Foster, MacEwan University

Our social media landscape documents affluence as never before, positioning class-based tastes and conspicuous status goods for public view. Young people sit at the fore of these developments, particularly as they unfold online. Drawing on focus group interviews with 50 young people situated across two Canadian universities, this article sheds much needed light on the shifting dynamics and symbolic boundaries that surround affluence, its display, and public presentation online. This is done with a critical eye toward the centrality of social media in young peoples' everyday lives, and with a look to the role that these media play in the maintenance and reproduction of inequality more broadly. My findings point to a complex cultural terrain in which social media, status, and visibility are routinely at issue. While young people tend to snub the ostentatious presentation of affluence among their peers, they frame their own class-based aspirations and ambitions—however extravagant—as appropriate and realistic. Alongside representations of wealth, focus group interviewees point to the significance of beauty for achieving visibility online. Indeed, beauty is an important characteristic colouring visibility online; it intersects with young peoples' understanding of wealth, status, and inequality more broadly, shaping who becomes visible and who remains hidden from view. While my focus group interviewees offer important and incisive critiques of social media platforms and the display work in evidence across these mobile and web-based applications, they are not immune to the pressures that surround their peers. These focus groups discussions provide important insight into the ways in which social media use and exposure share aspirations for wealth and affluence, alongside appearance pressures intimately wed to class.

SCL2-2 - The Differential Impact of Culture on Institutionalizing Inequality

Livy Visano, York University

Instead, the study of the culture -inequality nexus needs to confront directly the basis of social order, the nature of our society. Substantively, the study of inequality is a fertile environment to question and subsequently debunk prevailing ideas and the cultural enclosures. The very foundations of inequality attenuate the prospects of social justice let alone equality. As will be argued, contextually and conceptually, human rights are reflective of and consistent with prevailing cultural values. Only after understanding prevailing foundational ideologies, we may be able to understand why and how inequality exists. Ideologies of countries of Western jurisdictions and the increasingly prominent global framework of neoliberalism form the foundations of contemporary injustices. What conditions the constitution of the culture -inequality nexus? This inquiry argues that the essence of contemporary culture law, the ideological and institutional connections condition the form and content of equality. This study will demonstrate the basic foundations of the Canadian social order are derivative of and consistent with the ideologies of modernity, liberalism, and capitalism. Ideologies contribute and promote a sense of manageable “contradictions” within an instrumental logic of necessity. Diversity, conflict and contradictions between ideological goals and institutional means further demystify substantive forms of domination. Behind the liberal façade of favourable and flavourful narratives of social cohesion, community empowerment, citizenship or civil society, advanced capitalism has sharp tuned the disciplinary requirements of regulation. This critical inquiry invites readers to position themselves ideologically and historically in terms of the traditions of western privilege that form current neoliberal values and practices. For a meaningful critique of conventional approaches to inequality, it is essential to understand cultural values and defy the defining gaze of hegemonic authoritative definitions. Cultural values serve as means of social control by ordering thought, requisite rules and roles.

SCL2-3 - Cultural Contexts of Trauma and Healing: Counseling Survivors of Inequality as Manifested in Abuse and Violence Through Culturally Responsive Care

Negar Alamdar, Toronto Metropolitan University

Experiences of abuse and interpersonal violence are deeply shaped by broader social inequalities and cultural expectations that influence how individuals understand trauma, seek support, and navigate pathways toward healing. Drawing on professional experiences, as a mental health counselor working with individuals from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, this paper examines how culturally informed therapeutic relationships may support survivors of inequality, abuse and violence who experience profound feelings of hopelessness, confusion, and emotional isolation. For many survivors, trauma is compounded by structural inequalities, cultural stigma, and institutional barriers that silence disclosure and discourage help-seeking. Individuals may feel trapped between personal suffering and cultural expectations related to family honor, gender roles, or community reputation. These intersecting pressures often contribute to prolonged emotional distress and a diminished sense of agency. This study argues that culturally responsive counseling practices can play a critical role in interrupting these cycles of silence and despair. Through reflective analysis of counseling practice, the paper highlights how empathetic engagement, trust-building, and culturally sensitive approaches can help clients rediscover their resilience and regain a sense of possibility. Small yet meaningful therapeutic interventions—such as validating lived experiences, acknowledging cultural

contexts, and fostering self-efficacy—can help individuals move from states of emotional paralysis toward renewed hope and personal empowerment. Informed by and derived from critical sociology, therapeutic interventions challenge prevailing, persistent and pernicious hegemonic cultural values that valorize the inequalities inherent in the violence of misogyny, racism, ageism, classism, ableism and homophobia. By situating individual healing within broader sociological discussions of culture and inequality, this paper contributes to ongoing debates about the relationship between social structures, cultural norms, and mental health outcomes. It ultimately emphasizes the importance of culturally grounded and relational approaches in supporting survivors of violence as they reconstruct meaning, reclaim confidence, and envision pathways beyond trauma.

SCL2-4 - It Isn't Easy Being Green: The Role of Eco-Habitus in Clutter

Tiffany Hall, University of Manitoba

The concept of eco-habitus (Carfagna et al., 2014) has been applied successfully in conversations of consumption regarding acquisition and purchasing scenarios, often highlighting the gap between upper and lower classes and the ability for particular classes to participate in eco-friendly purchasing options. While this emphasis highlights attitudes and acquisition, it overlooks other moments of consumption advocated by Alan Warde (2014) and David Evans (2019), such as the divestment and disposal of objects. Using qualitative data from in-home guided tours, I investigate how eco-habitus plays a role in the discarding practices of individuals. Enacting high levels of environmental and climate consciousness can prevent the disposal of objects such that it contributes to high levels of clutter. Being unable to dispose of goods in environmentally friendly ways prevents discarding, whether due to access to disposal sites affected by time, money, or physical ability, or owing to a lack of knowledge of how to avoid contributing to a landfill. This research highlights how green value orientations play a role in the creation and maintenance of everyday clutter, suggesting that environmental discourses have a role to play in household clutter and maintenance.

(SCL3) Cultural Production in Time and Space

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

This session will explore the relationship between cultural production and the boundary work that surrounds it, with specific attention to the influence that particular local dynamics have on this relationship. How does the location of cultural production in time and space influence how (and to whom) artforms are made meaningful? The papers in this session will address this question with reference to film, public art, public festival, and folk art.

Session Organizers: Sonia Bookman, University of Manitoba; Athena Engman, University of Manitoba

Session Chair: Sonia Bookman, University of Manitoba

SCL3-1 - A Black Cowboy in Chinatown: Ethnic Placemaking as Barrier or Bridge

Presenting Author - Matt Patterson, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Sarah Bock, University of Calgary

Ethnic placemaking refers to how communities of colour use artistic or design interventions in the urban environment to celebrate their identity and assert their claim to urban space (Hom 2022; Murphy 2022). Research on ethnic placemaking has often focused on how these practices constitute a form of resistance against exclusion and discrimination from the majority whites. Less attention has been paid to how ethnic placemaking mediates relations between different communities of colour. To explore this issue, we present a case study of a single placemaking project. "The Guide and Protector" was a mural created in 2020 by Black Calgarian artist Jae Sterling and commissioned in response to the Black Lives Matter protests. The mural depicts John Ware, a Black man born into slavery in the US who went on to become one of Alberta's first ranchers and cowboys. What drew our attention was the location of the mural in Calgary's Chinatown. In particular, the mural was painted on the western façade of *Bowside Manor*, a prominent building housing many Chinatown community associations, including the Chinese Public School. Both the placement and content of the mural generated controversy. Some in Chinatown argued that it eroded the neighbourhood's Chinese identity. Others interpreted the mural to represent a common struggle among Black and Chinese communities against racism. Our presentation examines the process by which this mural came to be painted in Chinatown, the reactions of the public, and the mural's eventual disappearance behind a newly-built apartment building. We discuss the symbolic and material factors that influence whether ethnic placemaking serves as either a bridge or barrier for inter-ethnic identification. In addition to discussing the mural itself, the presentation draws on a larger, multi-year study of placemaking projects within historic Chinatowns in Canada and the United States that includes interviews, fieldwork, and archival research.

SCL3-2 - Festival Nation: Banal Settler Colonialism as Re-enacting Life in New France

Jessica Stallone, University of Toronto

This article examines how heritage festivals function as sites of banal settler colonialism through the cultural reproduction of sanitized national history. Drawing on three years of ethnographic fieldwork at an annual festival in Québec that recreates life in 17th CE *La Nouvelle France*, the study analyzes how volunteers—many of whom are seniors—reproduce a settler nation through culture work. Building on scholarship of banal nationalism and extending it to a framework of banal settler colonialism, the article shows how seemingly apolitical practices such as costuming, historical role-play, and war reenactments normalize colonial histories and obscure ongoing relations of dispossession. The findings identify three key mechanisms through which this process operates: the embodied performance of colonial life through dress and play; genealogical practices and celebrations of the seigneurial land system that enact a form of rapprochement with France; and the portrayal of "friendly" French-Indigenous relations that remove violence and enable white claims to indigeneity. By situating the festival as a site of everyday settler cultural production, this article argues that heritage festivals are not merely commemorative but actively sustain settler colonial logics by rendering them fun, comforting, and seemingly normative.

SCL3-3 - The intersection of the Boundaries of Gender, Class, and Privacy: The Cinematic Representation of Home in the Pre- and Post-Revolution Iranian Cinema

Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

This research focuses on the changes in the representation of home in Iranian cinema and the intersection of the boundaries of gender, class, and privacy through a comparative analysis of the pre- and post-revolution films produced in Iran. To do so, I conducted an Ethnographic content analysis of 60 films from pre and post-revolution Iranian cinema. The changes in the boundaries of gender, class, and privacy emerged as the main themes of the research. These changes are traceable to the various aspects of the representation of gender, class, and privacy in relation to the home that I discuss them in different sections including, the intersection of gender and class at home, the role of women in relation to the home, the representation of men as protectors of home, homeland, and women, representation of wealth and poverty in relation to home, the emergence of new ways of life and new social classes, the extension of private spaces to public spaces and vice versa, intimacy and sex, and the movement between private and public spaces. In conclusion, this research argues that home is not an apolitical private space, but a political space that becomes a field to be conquered by the state and a space for resistance by society. The field of cinema, which has a reciprocal relationship with the institutions of power (including the state) and society, mediates these conflicts in the form of conquest, resistance, and compromise.

(SCL4) Virtual Session: In-groups Within Groups

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

This session will explore the ways in which cultural institutions and producers engage with historically marginalized identities and practices. The papers in this session address the dynamics that allow some components of historically marginalized identities/practices to become legitimated within a cultural tradition, as well as the contradictions, tensions, and limitations that tend to accompany attempts at legitimation.

Session Organizers: Sonia Bookman, University of Manitoba; Athena Engman, University of Manitoba

Session Chair: Athena Engman, University of Manitoba

SCL4-1 - Art Museum as Influencer: Bridging Fine Art Institutions and Social Media

Vanee Kachroo, Queen's University

Historically, art museums positioned themselves as high-cultural, Orientalist spaces where European elites could enjoy non-European cultural paraphernalia and European artwork. These institutions concurrently fetishized and devalued non-European objects while prohibiting racialized patrons. As explained by the theoretical framework of new museology, scholars, activists, and visitors have questioned the colonial, classist nature of museums since the 1970s. Art establishments have responded to these critiques with middling levels of success, due to the structural inequalities embedded in art institutions. Still, museums are constantly attempting to retain and expand their audience, adjusting their goals and services to cater to their communities. To broadcast these changes, art institutions have begun using social media to advertise themselves to a more heterogeneous, general audience. For this project, I examine the online marketing strategies of art institutions in the Canadian context. In particular, I undertake a content analysis of the Art Gallery of Ontario's (AGO) X, formerly Twitter, account. The AGO was chosen for this research as one of the largest, most influential Canadian art museums, and their X account was selected as the platform on

which they have the most followers. Using a qualitative methodology, I coded the AGO's posts, reposts, and replies, with particular attention to the language and imagery they employ on X. I argue that the AGO simultaneously, and contradictorily, presents itself as diverse, accessible, inclusive, and marketable. While some posts target inclusivity, others reinstate the museum's hegemonic role, likely to appease large corporate sponsors. Ultimately, although the AGO's ethos seems reformed, these efforts remain partial due to inflexible power structures, which continue to shape the museum. This project contributes to scholarship that examines and challenges the persistent inequality in cultural institutions, thereby promoting a more hopeful future for art museums.

SCL4-2 - Beyond culture: Duty, reciprocity, love, and anticipatory guilt as motivations for family later life care

Alexa Carson, University of Toronto

Many countries are facing a growing care crisis stemming from aging populations. Due to gaps in public systems, later life care remains overwhelmingly provided by family. In North America, public and scholarly discourses contend there are differences in care for seniors between immigrant and non-immigrant families, but this assumption is rarely examined through intergroup comparisons. In this article, I examine how caregivers in Canada from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds describe why they care for aging parents or family members. Drawing from 68 in-depth interviews with non-immigrant (n=40) and immigrant and second-generation caregivers (n=28) conducted in three languages, I identify common rationalizations for senior care centered on themes of *duty, reciprocity, love, and anticipatory guilt*. While immigrant and second-generation respondents more often expressed their care motivations vis-à-vis cultural identity, they explained these values in ways that converged with those of non-immigrants. However, immigrant caregivers more commonly expressed a sense of financial reciprocity due to sacrifices embedded in their parents' migration journeys. Thus, it appears it is migration processes (more so than culture) which influence motivations for later life family care. These commonalities serve to critique collectivist tropes about immigrant family care and extend understandings of later life care motivations and family dynamics more broadly.

(SCL5) Sociology of Space, Place, and Time

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

Space, place, and time are produced and contested through economic systems, political regimes, and cultural narratives that determine who can move, wait, belong, or imagine the future. This session invited papers that examine how spatial and temporal arrangements (re)shape everyday experiences, identities, and social change. This session aims to advance critical sociological understandings of how space, place, and time organize social life and (re)shape collective possibilities for equity, belonging, and transformation.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Pouya Morshedi, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador; Foroogh Mohammadi, Acadia University

SCL5-1 - My Friends, My Audience: The Construction of Intimacy and Social Identity on Instagram Close Friends Stories

Julia Zhu, University of British Columbia

This presentation explores how everyday Instagram users employ the “Close Friends” feature on Instagram to negotiate, both individually and collectively, how intimacy is expressed and legitimized through self-disclosure, audience segmentation, and ongoing contact. Although Instagram is widely used for routine communication and its features effectively simulate face-to-face sociality, the ways users mobilize these affordances are neither neutral nor universal. Existing research has given little attention to the maintenance of intimacy and identity construction based on features of social networks. This study explores how individuals adapt and reconstruct their social spheres within digital environments using “Close Friends” as a focal case. It examines the subjective experiences of intimacy as it is constructed and socially mediated through the process of posting to and viewing “Close Friends Stories”. It also explores the intersection of online and offline behaviours by examining the experiences of social reciprocity and audience engagement in online spaces. Recruiting participants aged 18-30 from Vancouver and Toronto, semi-structured interviews were conducted, both online and in-person. Preliminary findings suggest the emergence of themes relating to (1) the role of one’s online identity and image in relationship formation; and (2) differing understandings of social acceptance, reciprocity, and self-presentation. These findings are significant because they illuminate the ways in which young adults understand and construct intimacy digitally, the work they put into their online selves, and how they try to distinguish, or merge evolving identities. In doing so, the study contributes to broader conversations about digital sociality and the normalization of curated intimacy in contemporary communication.

SCL5-2 - Legacy of the Past: Why the Revolution Devours its Children

Shayan Morshedi, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

Although a totalitarian regime's end is auspicious, it leaves a legacy that must be dealt with; a legacy that involves minds and cultures. Totalitarian regimes create ruins like wars, and operate domination like colonizers; confronting them needs more than revamping the ruins and liberating the lands. It also includes the liberty of the mind and culture from the seeds of past domination. In this study, I examine how internal domination, as a form of cognitive and cultural subjugation, influences collective memory and, consequently, directs imagination capacity and imagined futures. To do this, I focus on social movements mobilized against totalitarian regimes, mapping the sociological theories of colonialism onto totalitarian practices. I discuss how control over collective memory is a form of internal domination that shapes not only how societies remember (interpret) the past, but also how they imagine the future. This form of domination naturalizes status quo values and reproduces doxa, such as supporting existing hierarchies, limiting imagination and, consequently, narrowing the horizon of possible futures. Emphasizing the role of collective memory and the imagined future in social movements, I conclude that totalitarian ideology resists social movements unless people liberate themselves from internal domination. This study concludes that dismantling internal domination requires recognizing and engaging in the cognitive and mnemonic battles through which social movements can resist internalizing totalitarian values and practices. When social movements engage in mnemonic battles and challenge hegemonic narratives and established doxa, while remembering silenced memories and narratives, they enable alternative imagined futures. In this sense, collective memory serves as both a tool for domination and resistance.

SCL5-3 - The principle of uti possidetis juris and the arbitrary recognition of self-determination rights

Priscila Barros, University of Western Ontario

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the territorial border is an arbitrary division that separates those who belong from those who do not belong to a specific social field (Bourdieu, 2014). While some borders align with natural boundaries like oceans or rivers, a quick look at the world map reveals straight lines that are far from natural (Casey, 2007). In fact, the adoption of the Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960) and the recognition of self-determination rights challenge any view of borders as natural phenomena (Mansfield, 2001; Graham, 1997). In my research, I analyze the discourse surrounding the (mis)recognition of the principle 'All peoples have the right to self-determination' in the Blue Water Doctrine (i.e., external self-determination, nationhood) and the Belgium Thesis (i.e., internal self-determination, self-government). Much of the discussion about recognizing self-determination rights focuses on the term "peoples" and on how their geographic location was used to grant or deny these rights (Iorns, 1992; Muehlebach, 2003). However, a closer look at the process of granting independence reveals that the key criterion was not ‘peoples’ but ‘territories’ (Graham, 1997). Throughout this process, the United Nations unilaterally decided whether or not people inhabiting ‘Non-Self-Governing Territories’ had met the measures of self-government to be granted independence and imposed the principle of uti possidetis juris—that is, the borders established by colonizers were to be maintained to preserve territorial integrity (Scharpf, 2005). In other words, the newly independent ‘peoples’ could not decide their geographic location, boundaries, and territorial borders (Mansfield, 2001). My research focuses on the state as a socially constructed reality where authority and territory are contingent and conterminous. My unique perspective highlights how the United Nations' rhetoric is grounded in the recognition of the 'rights of self-determination of all peoples,' but in practice, it is focused on maintaining territorial integrity.

SCL5-4 - Female Solidarity on the Wall? Climbing Together in Physical and Virtual Spaces

Yifang Li, University of Toronto

This study examines how forms of female solidarity emerge among women in Chinese indoor rock-climbing gyms as spatially and temporally organized leisure environments. As climbing, historically a male-dominated sport, becomes increasingly popular among women in Chinese major cities, this study explores how solidarity is performed and negotiated through situational, embodied, and digitally mediated interactions, both in climbing gyms and on climbing-related social media platforms. Drawing on symbolic interaction theories, I argue that solidarity in leisure settings can be understood as a spatial-interactional process grounded in routine co-presence, embodied alignment, and interactional rhythm, which may be extended or intensified through digital circulation without explicit identification or collective action. In this study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 21 amateur female climbers in Shanghai (aged 22-50), supplemented by contextual observations in climbing gyms and online ethnography of user-generated content on the social media platform RedNote. The findings show that female Chinese climbers perform ambivalent, contingent, and often loosely knit forms of gender-based solidarity, sustained not only through explicitly articulated gender consciousness, but also a layered, situational ecology of physical co-presence, bodily visibility, and digitally circulated affect. Gender-based solidarity is often enacted through practice, taking the form

of selective, gender-based imitation and advice-seeking, while content on digital platforms may extend or intensify these solidarities by shaping how some climbers imagine themselves as part of a broader gendered collective, even as such mediation remains marginal for others' climbing experiences. Forms of solidarity vary in intensity and articulation, ranging from explicit, verbal support and encouragement to more tacit forms of recognition and aspirational imaginaries. This study contributes to sociological understandings of social connections by showing how solidarity in leisure settings can be formed through spatial-interactional conditions and embodied practices rather than articulated identities or formal collective organization.

(SCL7) Book Launch: Critical Friendship in the Modern World

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

This session will feature a panel of authors who have contributed to the new book by Cambridge University Press (2026) - *Critical Friendship in the Modern World*. With a moderator, authors will discuss the origin of the collection and major themes and contributions to the study of friendship.

Session Organizer and Moderator: Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

SCL7-1 - Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

Patricia Cormack is a Professor in the Department of Sociology, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Her research interests include Canadian state formation and theories of state.

SCL7-2 - Thalia Thereza Assan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Thalia is a postdoctoral fellow at the Martin Buber Society at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. She is currently researching the relational aspects of children and young people's activism and political disengagement in Israel. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Edinburgh, UK. Her research interests include personal relationships, political participation, education, childhood, youth, and participatory and creative methods. She has published in *The Sociological Review* and *Children & Society*.

SCL7-3 - Laura Eramian, Dalhousie University

Laura Eramian is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University, Canada. She is a social anthropologist who specializes in personhood, relatedness, and friendship. She was principal investigator on a 2020-2022 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant focused on modern friendship. Her monograph, *Peaceful Selves: Personhood, Nationhood, and the Post-Conflict Moment in Rwanda* (Berghahn Books, 2013), received an Honourable Mention for the Canadian Anthropology Society Labrecque-Lee Book Prize in 2019. Her publications appear *in Cultural Sociology*, *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, *Housing Studies*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, and *Symbolic Interaction*.

SCL7-4 - Mathew Gangé, Dalhousie University

Mathew Gangé is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University, Canada. He has conducted twenty months of ethnographic research, supported

by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, to examine how digital media and dating apps have impacted the intimate lives of queer men in Beirut, Lebanon. His research has appeared in the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* and the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, as well as in chapters in *Queer Data Studies* (University of Washington Press, 2023), *Home: Ethnographic Encounters* (Bloomsbury, 2019), and *Sex in the Middle East and North Africa* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2022).

SCL7-5 - Devan Hunter, University of Guelph

Devan Hunter is a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Guelph, Canada. Her doctoral research focuses on intergenerationality in Canadian public spaces, such as parks, libraries, and skateparks. In this research, she explores how copresence, encounters, interactions, and relationships developed across age and generational differences in public spaces shape our everyday understandings of the social world. She has also worked on the Sociable Cities Project, doing similar research.

SCL7-6 - Peter Mallory, St. Francis Xavier University

Peter Mallory is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at St. Francis Xavier University, Canada. He is a cultural sociologist who specializes in social theory, friendship, and personal life. For the past several years, he has been working on a series of projects on friendship (with Laura Eramian), funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Focal points for these projects have included friendship and therapeutic culture, friendlessness in adulthood, and friendship and cohousing. His articles appear in *Cultural Sociology*, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, and *Symbolic Interaction*, among others.

(SCL-RC) Sociology of Culture Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 1:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

The Sociology of Culture Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives. The research cluster will provide an institutional base within the CSA for this growing area of research, help coordinate Sociology of Culture panels at the annual conference of the CSA, and reach out to scholars working in related fields and disciplines. We have established a mailing list to connect cultural sociologists in Canada and abroad, and to aid in the dissemination of research within the scholarly community.

Session Organizers: Sonia Bookman, University of Manitoba; Athena Engman, University of Manitoba

(OMN1c) Sociology of Religion: Reflections and Intersections
Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Culture Research Cluster

This session features presentations focusing on religious reflections and intersections broadly defined.

Session Chair: Ian Van Haren, McGill University

OMN1c-1 - Religion in Context: A Quantitative Study on Afterlife Beliefs, Confidence in Churches, and Perception of Extramarital Relations

Aleena Lee, University of Calgary

Marriage is one of the most important social ties within the family, and through the sanctification process, those ties can be elevated to a sacred status. Furthermore, there tends to be a disapproval of extramarital sexual relations by the major religious groups and traditions, seeing it as a moral transgression. This means that extramarital affairs can be seen as an act of deviant behaviour that can be circumvented by religion. Another key aspect of nearly all religion is on the question of what happens after death (i.e., reincarnation and heaven/hell). For a long time, sociologists have been interested in the relationship between the micro-level and macro-level structures, and there has been limited attention on the association between afterlife beliefs and extramarital affairs, especially on both the individual and national levels. My research questions include: 1) Do nation-level afterlife beliefs affect perceptions of extramarital relations? 2) Do individual-level afterlife beliefs affect perception of extramarital relations? 3) How do nation-level afterlife beliefs moderate the relationship between individual-level afterlife beliefs and perception of extramarital relations? 4) How does confidence in churches moderate the relationship between individual-level afterlife beliefs and perception of extramarital relations? 5) How does confidence in churches moderate the association between nation-level afterlife beliefs and perception of extramarital relations? I intend to examine data from the ISSP 2018 "Religion IV" survey and use a multi-level modelling approach, focusing on the hellfire thesis and the moral community hypothesis.

OMN1c-2 - The Generation Effect. How Religiosity Differ Over Time and Generations Among Immigrants in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia

Jacob Legault-Leclair, University of Waterloo

This study examines the effects of immigrant generation, and the number of years spent in the host country on the level of religiosity of first- and second-generation immigrants in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Using data from the Cultural and Social Values Survey to assess intergenerational differences among immigrants and to compare them with native-born populations across host country and region, the study draws three main findings. First, it shows that first-generation immigrants are, on average, more religious than second-generation immigrants, although this pattern varies across regions. Second, regional levels of secularization exert a negative effect on religiosity among individuals of the third generation or higher, but not among first-generation immigrants. Third, religiosity among immigrants is only partially shaped by the number of years spent in the host country: immigrants in highly secular contexts tend to remain more religious than the third-generation population, while longer-term decline appears to operate primarily through cohort replacement rather than prolonged exposure to the host society.

(SCS) Student Concerns Subcommittee

(SCS1) Student Perspectives on Academic Freedom in a Polarized Time
Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT
Track: Student Concerns Subcommittee

In a time where student activists are experiencing institutional surveillance and harassment, engaging in public sociology and activism comes with potential risks that can jeopardize academic and career opportunities. Student activists often find themselves having to choose between speaking out knowing there are associated risks, or self-censorship for protection and safety. How can students engage with difficult conversations and research without risk, stigmatization and proscription? What is the role of universities in addressing these concerns? How does the surveillance of student activism target specific groups of students? In addressing this year's conference theme, can we create Harbours of Hope for Sociology student activists in a divided world? This session will bring together a group of panelists who will discuss how to transform conflict into educational engagement, intercultural empathy, and collective action for academic freedom.

Session Organizer: Nicole McNair, McMaster University and CSA Student Concerns Subcommittee

SCS1-1 - Shayan Morshedi, Memorial University

Shayan Morshedi is a Ph.D. student in Sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). In his dissertation, Shayan explores social and socio-cognitive processes of collective memory. Also, he works as a research associate with IDEA-VRAIE Hub-1 and the 4DY project at CIRHR, University of Toronto, researching disability inclusion and inclusive workplaces. Shayan has been actively involved in various academic services and professional roles, such as serving as the coordinator of qualitative methods workshops (MUN, 2023-2024), the eastern representative in the CSA Student Concerns Subcommittee (2023-2026), the founder and coordinator of SoFa (Sociology Family) events (MUN, 2024-present), the graduate student representative in the Sociology department (MUN, 2025-2026), and communications at PoSoCoMeS-MSA (2025 - present). His works and research aim at the roots of inclusion in society.

SCS1-2 - Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto and a researcher in the CERC in Migration and Integration Program at Toronto Metropolitan University. My SSHRC-funded dissertation focuses on global migration and mobility and on the shifting boundaries of social inclusion and exclusion. I examine migration imaginaries and aspirations, settlement experiences and outcomes, naturalization and citizenship, and affective politics of belonging.

SCS1-3 - Andrea DeKeseredy, University of Alberta

Andrea DeKeseredy is a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholar and PhD student in Sociology at the University of Alberta. Trained in both sociology and social work, she holds an MSW focused on gender inequality in higher education and an MA in sociology examining the experiences of student mothers. Her current research focuses on the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Plan, analyzing its effects on women's labour-force participation, earnings, and wellbeing across provinces. She also contributes to interdisciplinary research on routine childhood vaccination uptake in Canada,

using sociological approaches to better understand trust, policy communication, and decision-making. Andrea is committed to public scholarship and knowledge mobilization. Her work engages policymakers, advocacy organizations, and media audiences, and she has been interviewed by local and national outlets on academic freedom, gender inequality, and higher education. She regularly translates research findings into accessible formats to inform public debate and evidence-based decision-making. In addition to her scholarship, she is active in university governance and student advocacy.

SCS1-4 - Molly Sutherland, Acadia University

Molly is an MA student in Sociology at Acadia University studying anti-capitalist thought surrounding education and schooling. Rooted in Marxist thought, her research focuses on critical theoretical critique of the educational organization structure known as “streaming” in Canada and its role in reproducing meritocratic ideology that aligns with inequality. Prior to this, Molly completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours, Double Major in Sociology and Women’s & Gender Studies at Acadia. Her honours thesis explored the perspectives of public high school students and how they perceived their relationship to education. Molly hopes to pursue a PhD exploring the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom, why students feel the need to use it, and how it may deepen students’ alienation in learning and limit critical thinking. Her research interests include class consciousness, escapism, queer studies, digital spaces and online violence, abolition theory, and hope. Primarily, Molly is interested in education as a site fraught with methods of repressive control, but how it remains capable of fostering liberatory knowledge production and student resistance nonetheless.

SCS1-5 - Md. Nazmul Arefin, University of Alberta

Md. Nazmul Arefin is a PhD student at the Centre for Criminological Research, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, Canada. He is a Killam laureate. The Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) has honoured him with a Congress Graduate Merit Award for 2023. His research interests include terrorism and radicalization studies, right-wing populism, social justice, Islamophobia, and visual criminology. He is currently working as a Research Assistant on the National Dorothy Killam Fellowship project titled *Beyond Victimization: BIPOC Officials in the Canadian Criminal Justice System*.

(SCS3) Students as Agents of Change
Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Student Concerns Subcommittee

Education has long been understood as a tool of resistance. However, educational institutions globally are facing increasingly precarious realities following cuts to university funding and rising global fascism. Students are tasked with confronting these realities in their own education and with their desired career trajectories. Students also cultivate informed citizens with the students they teach within the academy and the dissemination of information they provide to the wider public as part of their sociopolitical engagements beyond the academy. Recognizing the transformative potential of education, this session focuses on substantive, theoretical, and methodological insights into pedagogy and praxis. This session provides an opportunity to imagine and collaborate towards

a shared future that reflects the diversity of these educational and relational commitments, both within and outside of academic institutions.

Session Organizers: Hannah Crouse, Carleton University; Marouna Gomes, Carleton University

Session Chair: J Overholser, University of Calgary

SCS3-1 - Graduate Students as Workers, Educators, and Community Members

Marouna Gomes, Hannah Crouse, and Jaclyn Tompalski, Carleton University

This paper will draw on our lived experiences as graduate students with previous and ongoing experience as teaching assistants, research assistants, and contract instructors. In doing so, this paper will analyze how our unique social positions shape our work, including our engagement with students, the university, and our sociopolitical responsibilities beyond the academy. We will offer insights into teaching amidst social movements (e.g., the so-called Freedom Convoy), circumventing the increased use of generative artificial intelligence, and combatting student disillusionment. This includes how we employ approaches and pedagogies consistent with foundational Indigenous knowledges and abolitionism, which often requires going against the standard practice of colonial institutions. In doing so, we will weigh the conflicting implications of these practices to identify avenues for collaboration and resistance. For instance, drawing on Indigenous knowledges emphasizes the importance of Indigenous voices in academic spaces, it can simultaneously pose challenges to Indigenous peoples both in navigating the system and in the proliferation of Indigenous work to communities. We will also offer insights into the role experiential learning can have in empowering students in the classroom, the institutional privilege we have in facilitating this work, and how we can challenge the barriers of bureaucracy that shape the often unsustainable nature of these community-based class formats. To conclude, we will extend practical tips for other graduate students navigating the evolving realities of post-secondary education and work.

SCS3-2 - Students are Not for Sale! Slogans of the Anti-governmental Student Movement in Serbia 2024-25

Ivanka Knezevic, University of Toronto

The paper presents a qualitative discourse analysis of slogans that emerged during student protests against corruption and unaccountability of Serbian government in 2024 and 2025. The analysis focuses on cultural themes present in the slogans, and includes some formal characteristics of the slogans and their displays as forms of communication. Student protests started with peaceful street blockades to commemorate victims of a recent collapse of a government building and proceeded with occupation of university buildings. It was not limited to issues affecting students directly. It aimed to mobilize other parts of Serbian population by focusing on socio-economic inequality, state of the economy dominated by a “race to the bottom” to attract foreign investment, governmental corruption, etc. Protest communication was not aimed solely at students, but primarily at the wider public. We coded the content of the slogans for cultural, social, and political themes. The most notable theme was a strong call to action (“You have Nothing to Lose but Your Chains”), followed by professional identity (“Machine Engineers against the Machinery of State”) and critique of social reality (“Corruption Kills”). Analysis of communicative characteristics of the slogans revealed importance of visual elements combined with text, frequent use of creativity and humour, and use

of quotes from diverse sources: classic political philosophy, classical Serbian literature, and entertainment media. Due to its intensity and duration - from November 2024 to August 2025 - we consider the student protest not as an isolated action, but a social movement. The movement fulfilled the role of the public sphere, understood in Habermasian terms, operating in the field of tension between a (political) state and a (civil) society. This research is based on a database of photographs, collected during field observation of protests by the Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade University, during the first three months of the protest.

(SCS4) Open Discussion: What Students and Trainees Need from Research Assistant Roles

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Student Concerns Subcommittee

This student-centred interactive workshop offers a space for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and early-career academic trainees to reflect on their experiences, needs, hopes, and challenges they encounter as research assistant. Some research assistantships offer substantial training, supporting career advancement. However, others incorporate unclear expectations and limited mentorship, which fail to meet the diverse needs and precarity of research assistants, which have been intensified by neoliberal pressures of academic productivity imposed on faculty and trainees. Grounded in intersectional feminism, facilitators and audience members will critically reflect on academic labour conditions and collaboratively identify barriers, shared insights, and actionable recommendations.
The workshop combines brief facilitator reflections with interactive small-group activities. A group of current and recently graduated research assistants from diverse backgrounds and institutional contexts will begin by discussing the benefits and challenges of research assistantships. These reflections will set the stage for small-group discussions in which participants can contribute their own insights and brainstorm tactics for research assistant employment that supports both professional growth and mental health. Key themes that this workshop aims to explore include: What makes research assistantship work a meaningful and supportive opportunity for career development and mental health? What forms of acknowledgement and mentorship do research assistants need to receive to ensure training that is just, inclusive, and responsive across social and institutional contexts? Insights from this workshop will contribute to reimaging research assistantship as sites of mentorship, equity, career development, and wellbeing. This is a two-part series with (FEM6) Applying intersectional feminism to better support research assistants.

Session Organizers: Jeongwon Gim, University of Alberta/Athabasca University; Terra Manca, Athabasca University

SCS4-1 - Helen Ma, University of Alberta

Helen is a psychology graduate from the University of Alberta (MSc, BSc Honours). Her research history is on social decision-making, attention, and other cognitive processes. Currently, she works as the lab manager in the AIDAN Lab, with Dr. Brown and her amazing students and collaborators, looking at the educational experiences of autistic and neurodivergent students. As a disabled researcher, she is passionate about increasing the inclusion and success of all individuals.

SCS4-2 - Randeep Nota, University of Toronto

Randeep Nota is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto. Her doctoral work examines anti-racism training in post-secondary institutions, analyzing how power dynamics shape workplace practices and conditions for staff allyship. More broadly, her research interests are related to the production of inequity across work, learning, and policy contexts, organized into three core themes: 1) symbolic polies and organizational change, 2) community-based learning in migrant contexts, and 3) racial hierarchies in organizations. Randeep has presented her research nationally and internally and has helped shape post-secondary and government policies related to these themes.

SCS4-3 - Jovi Antunes Krieger, University of Alberta

Jovi Krieger is a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Alberta, specializing in Critical and Decolonial Criminology with a focus on crime-control politics, governmentality, and socio-legal studies. Her interdisciplinary research explores the governance of popular habitus in postcolonial societies, examining criminalization from a historical perspective through legal case analyses. In addition to research, Jovi has taught undergraduate sociology courses as a Graduate Instructor, designing curricula and engaging students in discussions on criminology and biopolitics. She has also actively participated in student governance instances at the University of Alberta.

(SCS5) Cripping the Writing Space: Resisting Isolation in Academia
Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT
Track: Student Concerns Subcommittee

We are hosting a graduate student-led mobilization workshop for anyone interested in cultivating writing spaces that maintain and create new relations among peers. Our writing collective is made up of disabled graduate students, community members, and early career academics using relational, communications-based pedagogies against cultures of isolation often romanticized by and within neoliberal academic institutions. Writing and creating are relational practices, and our collective prioritizes members' needs, capacities, and perspectives above neoliberal logics of productivity. Through these practices, members have found ways to (re)engage with craft meaningfully. Mimi Khúc (2023), who writes about disability and academia, urges writers to stop asking why they are not writing or creating in that moment, and instead ask, "what structures need to be in place to shift my relationship to work, to writing, to my needs, to my capacities"? (ibid). In this workshop, facilitators will share their experience of forming and sustaining a writing collective — including the resources they mobilized, the principles guiding the group, and the impacts of writing together in community. Participants will then be invited to reflect on their own practices and begin imagining or designing their own writing spaces or co-collaborative relationships outside the academic institution.

The workshop will include:
· Reflection exercises: Participants will identify their needs for connection and creative work, mapping out what a writing space or co-collaborative relationships might look like.
· Small group discussions: Participants will discuss and brainstorm practices of care, accessibility, and sustainable engagement they could bring into their academic or community spaces.

Session Organizers: Caitlin Manuel, Carleton University; Megan Linton, Carleton University; Jennifer Bruce, Independent Scholar; Julia Mitchell, Carleton University

SCS5-1 - Caitlin A. Manuel, Carleton University

Caitlin is a PhD candidate in Carleton's department of Sociology. Their doctoral research considers how the criminalization of sex work in so-called "Canada" uniquely impacts disabled people who sell and buy sex, uncovering some of the ways anti-normative sexualities and eroticism persist in defiance of cishetero-patriarchal dialectics that materialize violence against disabled communities. Caitlin's interdisciplinary research examines disabled cultures across contexts, space, and time, as they also assist with studies in consent education, language education, and crip technoscience.

SCS5-2 - Jenn Bruce, Independent Researcher

Jenn graduated from Saint Paul University's doctoral program, Interdisciplinary Research on Contemporary Social Issues in 2025. Her research focuses on disability justice organizing in non-profit contexts and the potential and challenges for transformative social change. She brings interdisciplinary and community-based approaches to her research. Throughout her doctoral studies she regularly experimented with and led group writing initiatives to help break isolation, encourage focus and accountability, and build community. Jenn continues to engage in community writing.

SCS5-3 - Julia Mitchell, Carleton University

Julia Mitchell (they/them) completed their BA in English and French as a Second Language, at the University of Ottawa in 2018. After having worked in restaurants and hospitality settings for over a decade, they are now applying their experience with, and passion for, food, food sustainability, and food security, in the Master's in Communication program at Carleton University. Additionally, they are working with The FLOW Partnership developing various communications projects. Connection and community through food and communications are integral to both FLOW and their thesis project… which would not be nearly as complete without co-writing sessions.

(OMN3) Undergraduate Voice

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Student Concerns Subcommittee

This session was organized in the spirit of professional development, mentorship, and sharing. We invited undergraduate social scientists to submit papers to this session with the purpose of providing an opportunity to present work at an academic conference, network with colleagues and receive constructive feedback about their work.

Session Chair: Mark Stoddart, Memorial University and CSA-SCS President

OMN3-1 - Holding the Pen: A Discourse Analysis of Halifax's Public Communication Regarding Africville Since Formally Apologizing

Douglas Mutch and Lachlan Brown, Saint Mary's University

Africville, Nova Scotia is the site of one of the most salient instances of state-forced displacement in the Maritime region. Halifax issued a formal apology for the destruction of Africville in 2010, delivering the message that "the future is a blank page and, starting today, we hold the pen with which we can write a shared tomorrow." In this study, we examine how this pen has been wielded, asking how the city of Halifax has discursively constructed their relationship with Africville. Jennifer

Nelson's (2008) book titled *Razing Africville: A Geography of Racism* describes a "politics of dreaming and forgetting" in which Africville becomes a space for commemorating the community that obscures elements of the past and replaces material gains with symbolic gestures (p. 141). We aim to take up this idea in the post-apology context, studying how the city reckons with its methodical destruction of Africville after its formal acknowledgment. Through a critical discourse analysis of municipal media releases we ask how Halifax uses the memory of Africville to fashion its own social justice lineage, particularly as the land stolen from the community continues to be under the control of the city. We pursue this study to understand how Halifax uses Africville for its symbolic significance while continuing the industrial development that facilitated the original displacement of its people. This inquiry is timely as the A. Murray MacKay Bridge built on the community's land approaches the end of its lifespan and will demand reconstruction in the coming years. This bridge, which was particularly significant in the original displacement of Africville's people, will magnify the contradictions between the municipality's stated reconciliation and the continued use of dispossessed land.

OMN3-2 - Technology, Community, and Ageing: Podcasting as Community-Engaged Practice in Northeast Calgary

Joshua DeGuglielmo, University of Calgary

In a world where technological literacy has become central to daily life, understanding older adults' experiences with technology is vitally important. As individuals over the age of 50 continue to navigate technologies not designed with their needs in mind, questions emerge about adoption, adaptation, and meaning-making. This research employed podcasting as a community-engaged methodological practice, conducting interviews with seven participants that were framed and produced as podcast episodes. This approach prioritised participant voice, accessibility, and community dissemination whilst exploring how older adults integrate technology into their lives and their motivations for adopting new digital tools. Findings revealed generational differences in technological engagement. For younger older adults (those aged 50-65) remaining technologically current was driven by workplace competitiveness and relevance, with several participants expressing fears of "being left behind." For fourth-agers, technological literacy emerged as a by-product of maintaining family connections, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst all participants emphasised the importance of technological competence, they also voiced concerns about potential addiction and the erosion of human capacities such as authentic connection and memory. An unexpected dimension emerged through participants' narrative histories of Northeast Calgary communities, particularly Saddle Ridge, spanning nearly 50 years. Community elders, founding members, and notable public figures emphasised the enduring importance of diversity and described their sense of community as resilient amid contemporary social fragmentation and individualism. The podcast format enabled these older adults to be represented largely in their own voices, creating an accessible public archive of community knowledge. This research establishes a profile of both community attitudes and individual practices within one of Calgary's largest immigrant communities, demonstrating how podcasting serves as both a research method and a form of community engagement that centres marginalised voices in technological and sociological discourse.

OMN3-3 - A Comparative Analysis of the Quality of Juvenile Rheumatic Disease Online Patient Education Resources

Maryse Hendi, University of Calgary

Juvenile Rheumatic Disease is an umbrella term that includes many chronic inflammatory and autoimmune pediatric conditions. Two diseases contained in this term are Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) and Childhood-Onset Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (c-SLE), with the more commonly diagnosed of the two diseases being JIA. The purpose of this study is to examine whether the quality of online patient education resources (OPER) is correlated with disease prevalence as a means to discuss the importance of patient education and the ethical and social concerns of limited adequate OPER for pediatric populations The quality of OPER is examined by systematically analyzing readability, actionability, and understandability measures of JIA and c-SLE OPER. Using two equivalent search terms per disease, searches were performed on a public search engine (Google.com.) OPER were selected from the top 50 search results. Audio-visual resources, paywall restricted materials, prescription drug advertising materials, resources designed for healthcare professionals, and resources for adult patients were excluded. Resources were examined using measures of readability, understandability, and actionability. Readability was assessed through the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability Test, and understandability and actionability were measured using the Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT.). Although more OPER are available for JIA than c-SLE due to JIA being more commonly diagnosed, OPER for both diseases score poorly in terms of readability, actionability, and understandability. The findings from this research will inform guidelines on how to format OPER for pediatric patients, specifically patients with JIA and c-SLE.

OMN3-4 - Burying our heads in the sand? Ostriches and far-right populism in Canada

Braelyn Spruce, University of British Columbia

This paper presents a case study of “Save Our Ostriches”, a protest campaign launched by Universal Ostrich Farms in rural Kootenay, British Columbia, to resist a “Notice to Dispose” issued by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency due to avian influenza (Kurjata, 2025). The farm’s owners filed an exemption, stating the ostriches had developed herd immunity as part of a scientific study investigating the use of ostrich antibodies against viruses (Justicefortheostriches, 2025). Save Our Ostriches was launched on BC Rising's website, a far-right political group that emerged from the Freedom Convoy and COVID-19 conspiracy to mobilize the conservative electorate (Stuart, 2024*)*. Leveraging digital media platforms and live-streaming protests, the campaign drew significant national and US attention from far-right and conservative political figures (Secretary Kennedy, 2025). Through a visual analysis of the AI-generated images shared on the Universal Ostriches Facebook page (which garnered 83,400 followers), I argue Save Our Ostriches repackaged the frames and strategies of the Freedom Convoy within the larger movement of 'pandemic populism'. Contextualizing the campaign alongside other populist movements in the Kootenay and Okanagan regions, this paper explores how a local moment of protest was co-opted into larger far-right narratives, using elite conspiracy and state corruption framings to appeal to working-class struggles and a particular moral Canadian identity. After an over 9-month legal battle that eventually reached the Supreme Court of Canada, the exemption was denied, resulting in the culling of the ostriches (SCC, 2025). Subsequently, supporters continue to reckon with the role of the state, indicating a

critical future trajectory for local activism in relation to broader far-right-constructed social issues and the alt-right "infosphere" (Chevrette, 2024). At the intersection of populism, moral panic, and political activism in Canada, seemingly obscure moments of protest warrant further investigation as they connect to the larger power structures of liberal democracies.

(SCY) Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

(SCY1) Childhood in Changing Global Political & Economic Times

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

Large-scale changes are happening in the world. Shifts in the global balance of power between states have led to major wars, mass migration, and changing strategies of economic competition. Shifts in the socioeconomic balance of power between generations, classes, races, and genders have led to "culture wars" and increasing polarization within and across states. These shifts interact, with a growing turn to social and political authoritarianism. As Qvortrup argued, childhood is itself a macrostructure. What is happening to it and how are children responding? How are changes in other macrostructures playing out in the meso-level institutions and processes of children's lives (e.g., education, health, labour, family interaction) and in their micro-level experiences, actions and reactions? Are there harbours of hope visible amidst the gloom?

Session Organizer and Chair: Chris Borst, McGill University

SCY1-1 - Children's Rights: Perspectives of Children About Their Rights and the UNCRC

Jessica L. Campbell, York University and Toronto Metropolitan University

This presentation explores children's perspectives on Children's Rights. Recent studies reveal that young people in Canada have limited awareness of their rights (Grover et al., 2023; United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2022). Nevertheless, children have asserted that the ability to actualize their rights is important to their subjective well-being (Huynh & Stewart-Tufescu, 2019; Kosher & Ben-Arieh, 2017). Research into children's perspectives and understanding of their rights is increasingly recognized as essential to upholding them (Kosher & Ben-Arieh, 2017). The project is theoretically informed by critical childhood studies, an interdisciplinary field that recognizes children as social actors who participate in everyday life (James & James, 2012). First, I will outline how this participatory research project engaged children aged 9-11 in the Greater Toronto Area through a range of dramatic and arts-based methods, including tableaux, puppetry, and poster-making. Then, I will delve into the findings on children's current understanding and perspectives on the UNCRC and their rights, which the participants identified as necessary for their health, safety, and emotional well-being. Using thematic analysis, I will explore the overarching themes that emerged from this project. Participants reported that barriers to exercising their rights stem from others, including parents, teachers, and other children, as well as perceptions of unsafe spaces. They also identified how children uphold and protect their rights and offered their perspectives on how to strengthen the UNCRC, such as greater specificity within the right to play by including social and outdoor play, the right to technology access and meaningful opportunities to be heard that go beyond tokenism. In

doing so, they reveal how childhood has changed since the drafting of the UNCRC and offer potential solutions to modernize the convention to meet the needs of children today.

SCY1-2 - Temporal Trends and Social Inequalities in Adverse Childhood Experiences Among Children in the U.S.: 2016-2023

Presenting Author - Jalal Uddin, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Zakir Hossin, University of British Columbia; Saleh-Al-Morshed Sadid, University of Dhaka; Campbell Smith, Drishti Deepchand, and Mohammad Hajizadeh, Dalhousie University

Although adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are a major public health concern, little is known about recent temporal changes in specific ACEs and whether social inequalities in ACE exposure have shifted in recent years. This study examined trends in age-standardized ACE prevalence and social inequalities among U.S. children from 2016 to 2023. We analyzed data from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), a nationally representative survey of U.S. children aged 0-17 years (n=309,425). Age-standardized prevalence estimates for nine ACE items and two summary measures (any ACE and ≥4 ACEs) were calculated by race/ethnicity, parental nativity, and census region across years. Socioeconomic inequalities in ACEs were quantified using the Wagstaff Index (WI), based on household income and parental educational attainment. Several material and household instability-related ACEs showed significant declines between 2016 and 2023, including financial hardship, parental divorce, parental imprisonment, and ≥4 ACEs**.** In contrast, parental mental illness and race/ethnicity-related discrimination remained stable or increased modestly over time. Black children consistently experienced higher ACE prevalence compared to non-Hispanic White children across years, particularly for race/ethnicity-related discrimination (prevalence percentage (PP) range: 9.1-14.9%), financial hardship (PP range: 17.5-36.2%), and parental imprisonment (PP range: 9.4-15.8%) during 2016-2023. Children of foreign-born parents had lower ACE prevalence across nearly all ACE types. Regional disparities persisted, with higher ACE burdens in the South and Midwest compared with the Northeast. Income-related inequalities in ACEs indicated a persistently strong concentration among poorer populations for several ACEs, including financial hardship (WI range: -0.45 to -0.47), parental imprisonment (WI range: -0.39 to -0.32), and neighborhood violence (WI range: -0.33 to -0.25). Education-related inequalities showed a similar pattern, with little evidence of improvement. Despite overall declines in ACEs, disparities persisted across population subgroups, with no meaningful improvement in socioeconomic inequalities.

SCY1-3 - How Has Rising Post-Secondary Education Costs Impacted Teens' Agency in Families Regarding their Futures?

Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Over the past 60 years, teenagers' transitions into independent adult life has been increasingly delayed by shrinking economic opportunities. For many, under employment and extended periods of education have become the norm. Post-secondary educational credentials have become a central part of young people's competitive scramble to secure employment. Meanwhile, the rising cost of post-secondary education (PSE) has made academic credentials less accessible and more punishing to access, indebting and excluding working class youth. Given the rising cost, being able to rely on parents' for financial support through PSE is a more significant asset than ever. This study asks, how

does the growing significance of parents' financially supporting youth throughout PSE impact parent-child family dynamics, especially as it pertains to decision making, teen's autonomy over their futures, and teen's current identities in relation to imagined futures? How can teens' views change when they are put into a critical dialogue with each other? And is it possible to identify signs of a youth standpoint or "youth consciousness"? This study involved 7 teenagers ages 16-18, each of whom participated in a 90-minute interview, a 90-minute focus group, and a 30-minute interview. Participants reported that the growing significance of parents' financially supporting youth throughout PSE has largely disempowered youth in decision making over their future. Specifically, higher PSE costs made some parents more insistent that teens make PSE-related choices believed to be 'good investments'; meaning choices that will lead teens to more lucrative and conventionally prestigious careers. Economic and parental pressure to make 'the right' post-secondary and career plans made many teen's lives narrowly future-focused, seeing teenagehood as a means to the end of securing a financially comfortable adult life.

SCY1-4 - Reimagining the rights of unaccompanied children through the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Dustin Ciufo, King's University College at Western University

Toward challenging the boundaries of childhood broadly and those faced by asylum seeking children in particular, this article situates itself as part of the call within Childhood Studies to Reimagine Childhood (Spyrou et al., 2018). To do so, it begins by developing an interdisciplinary conceptual framework for children bringing Childhood Studies (Canosa & Graham, 2020; Punch, 2016) and an Ethics of Care approach (Barnes, 2019; Cockburn, 2010) into closer dialogue. It will be shown that the former can benefit from the latter in advancing thinking in relation to the image, rights, and participatory agency of the child. This interdisciplinary conceptual framework is in turn applied to the life worlds of unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Canada. In so doing, the article sheds light on the challenges to and opportunities for enhancing unaccompanied children's rights by contesting the boundaries they face at the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada. Ten semi-structured, open-ended, qualitative interviews were conducted with both executive and frontline settlement services professionals as well as expert lawyers in refugee law. When assessed through this interdisciplinary conceptual framework for children and applied to the image, rights, and participatory agency of unaccompanied children, it reveals the adult-centric nature of the IRB as significantly challenging the attainment of unaccompanied children's rights. Therefore, by way of reimaging childhood broadly, this article offers child-adaptable policies and procedures that can rearticulate the image, rights, and participatory agency of unaccompanied children to contest the boundaries they face and ensure a just refugee hearing in Canada.

(SCY3) The politics, practices and consequences of doing research on and with children in troubled times

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

What challenges do we currently face in conducting research on and with children and youth, and what kinds of resolutions are being explored? Papers in this session consider this question in relation to various research projects and topics, with particular attention to navigating research with children

and youth in these politically charged, divided times. How do we best include children and youth as participants? What are the ramifications of leaning towards certain methodologies over others? What challenges and resolutions have people navigated as they work with Research Ethics Boards? How do we navigate diversity and related inequalities? And what kinds of knowledge mobilization do we consider?

Session Organizers: Rebecca Raby, Brock University; Laurel Donison, King's University College, Western and Brock University

Session Chair: Dustin Ciufo, Western University

SCY3-1 - Conducting research with transient, marginalized children in Southern Ontario

Presenting Authors - Rebecca Raby and Frederick Oppong, Brock University

Non-presenting Authors - Christine Tardif-Williams and Erika Alegria, Brock University

Within childhood studies, there is a current emphasis on the importance of involving children in research about their lives. This imperative can be challenging for researchers who are seeking to design robust, ethical projects to learn about the lives of marginalized, transient children. Over the past three years, our research team has worked with over 30 children, conducting participant observation and interactive arts-based research in an after-school program that is part of a Southern Ontario shelter that includes temporary residence for homeless families. In this paper we share research strategies which we found to be successful, specifically long-term participant observations and interactions, spontaneous mini-interviews, and interactive arts- and activity- based projects. We also share research challenges we have encountered, including garnering parental consent, children suddenly leaving the shelter, our limited access to information about their lives outside of the after-school program, having little control over changes in the shelter programming for the children, and the dominance of computer gaming in the children's lives. In response to these challenges, we have found value in capitalizing on the mini-interviews, developing alternative programming, and interviewing parents. Our research successes, including our adaptive strategies, point to some broader conclusions about conducting research in these kinds of circumstances: 1) underscoring the importance of early and focused relationship-building with children, parents and staff, especially given the transient setting; 2) recognizing the need for adaptability in activities, including building such adaptability into the REB application e.g. through asking for daily assent from child participants; 3) mediating the strong focus in the child studies literature on conducting research with children themselves by also talking to key adults in their lives; and 4) recognizing the immense resourcing of time and associated funds required to conduct such research projects.

SCY3-2 - Involving Young People in Rethinking Criminal Justice: Research and Action with Neurodivergent Youth

Presenting Author - Nathan Innocente, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Daniella Bendo, King's University College at Western; Christine Goodwin De Faria, Trent University; Voula Marinos, Brock University; Dale Spencer, Carleton University

Neurodivergent youth are overrepresented in the justice system, both within Canada and internationally. In Canada, the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) purports to promote rehabilitation

and reintegration, address the underlying causes of justice involvement, and respond to the needs of young people with special requirements. However, whether the YCJA achieves these ends with respect to neurodivergent youth is unclear. Indeed, research suggests that special requirements of this population may not be protected in the manner intended by the YCJA (Bendo et al., 2023; Marinos et al., 2020). Our research explores the justice experiences of youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Ontario, Canada, with a focus on whether their needs are met and how they experience the justice system. To more effectively engage with young people, we struck a youth advisory committee consisting of neurodiverse young with justice system experience. This talk outlines the development and execution of this committee and shows how involving neurodiverse young people with justice system experience as advisors to, and participants in, the study design helped to inform the scope and direction of the overall project. Specifically, we outline how this approached shaped question structure, the clarification of constructors from which the semi-structure interviews were derived, and the mobilization strategy for our results. We then highlight findings from our interviews with neurodiverse justice-involved youth, specifically youth-led recommendations for enhancing the court process and interactions between youth and justice professionals.

SCY3-3 - Mismatch of Methodology: Perception of Acceptable Methods in Critical Childhood Research

Melody Minhorst, Brock University

Claims about appropriateness in childhood research are woven into every aspect of the academic research process, reinforcing normative assumptions of capacity, agency and participation. Through a critical disability studies and new social studies of childhood lens, this paper troubles assumptions about institutionally acceptable research methods, arguing these limit who can be known, how knowledge can be produced, and which forms of participation are recognised as legitimate (James et al., 1998; Prout, 2005; Spyrou, 2018). These assumptions operate through institutional expectations of appropriateness that appear neutral but consistently orient research practices toward particular bodies, capacities, and communicative forms, while positioning others as misaligned or problematic (Ahmed, 2012; Shildrick, 2020). These orientations are deeply entangled with ableist and ageist constructions of childhood. For example, in qualitative research, silence is often ignored and interviews are implicitly imagined as voiced and linear engagements, rendering non-verbal children methodologically problematic (Spyrou, 2018; Alper, 2017). Rather than interrogating or assessing the narrow communicative norms embedded in dominant qualitative methods, institutional demands for methodological clarity and feasibility often end up reproducing existing epistemic boundaries. This paper argues that methodological conservatism is intensified in times of uncertainty, positioning experimental, relational, or multimodal approaches as insufficiently rigorous or clear thereby producing a paradox in which equity-oriented childhood research is encouraged in principle while being constrained in practice through procedural norms. By troubling the seemingly self-evident idea of methodological mismatches, this paper contributes to debates on the politics, practices, and consequences of doing research with children, highlighting how methodological norms actively shape whose experiences are taken seriously within childhood research.

SCY3-4 - Researching relationally and critically reflecting on perspectives and practice in research with children.

Laurel Donison, Brock University, King's College at Western University

Research with children is often influenced by an interest in children's perspectives, experiences, voices and agency. These interests have led to discussions around the design of research including best practices and approaches that reflect the complexities of children's experiences (Donison et al, 2024). Critically thinking about knowledge production and current practices in the field of childhood studies is important because it can lead to "alternative and potentially more productive and ethical ways of producing knowledge" (Spyrou, 2018, p.197). Reflecting on our own experiences doing research with children can provide space for us to question methods, conceptualizations and knowledge production which can lead to new ways of knowing (St. Pierre, 1997). In this presentation I focus on doing research with children in outdoor spaces. I draw on two different research projects; the first is my doctoral research conducted in a childcare center's outdoor environment, while the second is a more recent forest kindergarten project at a public school where I was a research assistant. I explore the methods that were used in both projects, to engage with young children and provide them with an opportunity to share their experiences and perspectives about the spaces. I focus on the benefits of using participatory methods such as walking interviews, photography, drawing and other arts-based methods. I provide insight into what worked well but also what some of the challenges were. By engaging with two different research projects, I can explain how certain methods may have worked better in one research project compared to the other research project because of their contexts. Considerations about ethics, rapport, adult agendas and child centred practices emerge through my reflections about each project. It is hopeful that this presentation reminds us about the importance of considering relationality when doing research with children and the ways that knowledge is co-produced. As Taylor & Pacini-Ketchabaw, (2019) remind us "it is relations that shape and reshape worlds" (p.118).

(SCY4a) Structures of Childhood and Youth: Family, School, Immigration

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

Larger structures and circumstances shape how children navigate their worlds. The papers in this session consider some of the central institutions shaping contemporary childhoods: the family, the school, the regulation of migration, and the prevailing conceptions of childhood as such. In doing so, this session as a whole explores how discursive and relational structures shape the possibilities of young people's lives. How do these structures inform childhood, with what effects, and what alternatives are possible that offer liberatory hopes?

Session Organizers: Chris Borst, McGill University; Hunter Knight, Western University; Rebecca Raby, Brock University; Lindsay Sheppard, York University; Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Session Chair: Jacob Williams, Carleton University

SCY4a-1 - The Role of Family Relationships in Children's Resilience Following Exposure to Gender-Based Violence

Presenting Author - Maria Zangari, University of Western Ontario, University of Windsor

Non-presenting Author - Kaitlynn Mendes, University of Western Ontario

More than 50% of children in families where gender-based violence (GBV) is present have witnessed incidents of GBV. Children exposed to GBV face elevated risks to their health and well-being across their life course, yet many demonstrate resilience post-exposure. This study examined whether sibling relationship warmth and caregiver-child closeness served as protective factors for resilience among children aged 5 to 13 in Canada, from the perspective of their protective parent. Semi-structured interviews with 38 parents provided contextual insights into children's family dynamics, including relationships with protective parents and siblings, life experiences post exposure to GBV, and processes and factors supporting resilience. Transcripts were systematically analyzed and thematically coded, grounded in resilience theory and a socioecological, strengths-based framework, to develop connections among the interacting factors of childhood as a developmental period, exposure to GBV, and protective elements of family relationships. Findings highlighted emotional security, open communication, and access to resources as vital factors in family relationships that supported cohesion and positively impacted children's resilience. Parents emphasized that warm, supportive caregiving relationships and consistent emotional availability fostered a sense of safety and stability for their children following exposure to violence. The sibling relationship emerged as a powerful protective factor, with parents describing strong emotional closeness, mutual support, and co-regulation that helped children cope with the impacts of GBV exposure. Shared routines, open communication, and siblings' ability to comfort and support one another fostered further emotional safety and stability, reinforcing the sibling bond as an important source of resilience during and after family transitions. Results underscored the interplay between relational supports within families and broader structural supports in fostering resilience among children post-GBV exposure. These resilience supporting factors will inform implementation strategies in trauma- and violence-informed services to strengthen familial bonds, coping mechanisms, and mitigate the negative effects of GBV on children.

SCY4a-2 - Resilience in Children Exposed to Parental Intimate Partner Violence

Tian Yi Xu, Western University

In Canada, more than 40 percent of women and 30 percent of men become victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime, experiencing physical, sexual, financial, and/or emotional abuse within their romantic relationships (Cotter, 2021). Statistics Canada reports that more than 52 percent of adult IPV victims had children exposed to the violence (Sinha, 2012), and those children face risks including mental health problems, behavioural disorders, and a higher risk of perpetuating cycles of abuse (Bjørnholt, 2019; Holt et al., 2008; Johnsona et al., 2002; Lapierre et al., 2025). Interestingly, some children have protective factors and are resilient despite the risks. Resilience refers to recovering from adversity using internal and external protective factors, such as optimism, peer relationships, and community support (Alaggia & Donohue, 2018). Most existing studies focus on early childhood using data collected at a single time point; however, protective factors can vary across individuals' lives and may be specific to time and context (Herrman et al., 2011). Therefore, the current study argues that longitudinal data collected from the same respondents over time are needed to fully understand resilience. Longitudinal datasets allow for examination of the relationships among protective factors, which are largely missing from the existing literature, and are crucial for understanding pathways to resilience without overestimating the impact of individual factors. To address these gaps, this study uses longitudinal quantitative data from the Future of

Families and Child Wellbeing Study to examine key protective factors among children exposed to parental IPV, as well as how protective factors interact over time. Results will contribute to designing effective interventions and prevention programs by identifying which protective factors to prioritize and when. Taken together, this study can guide families, communities, and policymakers in developing more effective strategies to reduce the negative impacts of parental IPV and promote resilience.

SCY4a-3 - Violent innocence: The discursive production of dangerous children in justifications for seclusion rooms in schools

Presenting Author - Hunter Knight, King's University College at Western University

Non-presenting Authors - Nickie Coomer, Colorado College; Teukie Martin, Syracuse University

Seclusion rooms in schools are any spaces where children can be forcibly isolated (Bartlett & Ellis, 2021a). Practices of seclusion predominantly target disabled and/or racialized children under the age of ten (Gage et al., 2022; Scheuermann et al., 2016). Despite ongoing research and advocacy that condemns these spaces as dangerous disciplinary tools, and reluctance for many to publicly support their use, they remain difficult to ban and policies that limit seclusion find regular resistance. This resistance highlights the importance of exploring the cultural dimensions of seclusion, because it means that there must be many people who believe that the practice of seclusion makes sense. This study examines discourse about seclusion rooms on TikTok, ten years of newspaper articles and comments, and policy documents from the US and Canada, exploring the understandings of childhood that support pro-seclusion arguments. Our findings illustrate that justifications for seclusion rooms depend on an imagined child who is unpredictable, violent, and out of control. Drawing from Childhood Studies, Disability Studies, and Mad Studies, we argue that this imagined child reflects dominant constructions of childhood that grant innocence and protection to some at the expense of others. Pro-seclusion arguments ultimately justify the use of inhumane carceral practices on young children through evacuating them from childhood into abnormality. Our discussion situates seclusion rooms as part of a broader continuum of confinement (Ben-Moshe, 2011, 2013), and illustrates that the fight to end seclusion in schools needs to draw from an abolitionist strategy (Davies et al., 2024; Gilmore, 2022) that both eliminates spaces of seclusion and reimagines what schools and childhood could look like if *all* children were safe.

(SCY4b) Young People's Experiences of their Worlds

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

How do children and youth make sense of the contexts and spaces of their everyday lives and their relations with others? How do they respond to the constraints on their lives and build the futures they will live in? Drawing from major themes in contemporary theories of childhood and youth — affect, resilience, space, care — the papers in this session consider how young people understand, navigate, and rework their worlds.

Session Organizers: Chris Borst, McGill University; Hunter Knight, Western University; Rebecca Raby, Brock University; Lindsay Sheppard, York University; Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Session Chair: Jessica L. Campbell, York University

SCY4b-1 - Snaps of hope: Affective economies of teen romance in digital culture

Presenting Author - Shauna Pomerantz, Brock University

Non-presenting Authors - Karyssa Enick and Whitney Ngo, Brock University

Our paper is an affective and theoretical mapping of teen romance in digital culture. We explore teen romantic economies to highlight systems of exchange, value, and power that shape young people's emotional entanglements. From this perspective, teens are not just individual users of digital media seeking romantic encounters, but are affective subjects embedded in digital infrastructures saturated by high emotional stakes. Affect theory (Siegworth & Pedwell, 2023) enables us to analyze these stakes as what "sticks" (Ahmed, 2010), circulates, and produces a "cultural politics of emotion" (Ahmed, 2004). Teen romance is interconnected with technologies, social media, and expectations that are impossible to understand as separated entities. We argue that romantic feelings cannot be disentangled from social media architecture, such as digital grammar, snaps, streaks, and image-based communication, where they become economized, governed, and incorporated into broader systems of power. Drawing on Lauren Berlant's (2011) concept of "cruel optimism," we illuminate how hope operates as emotional currency under conditions of ambiguity. When romantic linguistic practices, such as situationship, talking, and dating signal tenuous connections, teens become practiced in a detachment that trades in possibility, remaining invested in this system precisely because hope continues to circulate. These intricacies go beyond the individual notion that digital conventions have changed the way young people engage in intimacy. Instead, there is a universe of linguistic codes and regulatory practices that must be understood and in which teens become embedded. Bridging youth culture, affect theory, and platform studies, our exploration thus offers deep context for how young people connect. What adults miss when teen romance is trivialized or individualized is the emotional risk and digital literacy required to participate, as well as an entirely new way of understanding how feelings take shape under conditions of ambiguity and platformed constraint.

SCY4b-2 - Reframing Adolescent Children of Sex Workers as Care Receivers and Caregivers using the Southern Feminist Lens of Deep Care

Anuneeta Chatterjee, University of Calgary

A paper based on the research in this presentation has received the Canadian Sociological Association's Best Student Paper Award*. This presentation also received the Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster Best Student Presentation Award.*

In this paper, I use a Southern feminist epistemology to critically appraise the discourse around children of sex workers framed as non-agentic subjects of the State and NGO care. I subvert this gaze and show how the adolescent children of sex workers in an Indian city present a care paradox as they are both subjects of care and emerge as young carers within their families and in their kinship contexts. This is both an empirical and theoretical intervention in the literature on children of sex workers, which primarily centers on their vulnerabilities, stigmatization, and discrimination, as well as the literature on the mothering of sex workers that frames them as deficit mothers. The deep care perspective reorients the construction of care as a linear relationship of 'giving' by mothers to their children to instead focus on the symbiotic relationship of providing and receiving care and acknowledgment between adolescent children and their mothers under the circumstances of

poverty, stigma, and gendered and caste violence. This study is based on 16 in-depth interviews from the red-light areas of Kalighat and Bowbazar neighborhoods in Kolkata, India. Using the Southern marginal feminist perspective of *deep care,* I center the voices of adolescent children of sex workers whose experiences are shaped by the intersection of class, caste, and religious marginality, parental social status, as well as gender discrimination, which have been muted in academic and policy discourses.

(SCY5a) Media, Sport, and Young People's Identities

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

It is critical to pay close attention to the larger processes that inform how children and youth shape and navigate identity. Claiming and forming identities is always fraught, dynamic, and contextual. Identity illuminates the key connection between the personal and the political, and serves as a critical site for both repression and resistance. This panel examines social media, film, and youth sport and draws on posthumanism, radicalization, emotional literacy, and intersectionality, to consider young people's meanings and experiences of identity.

Session Organizers: Chris Borst, McGill University; Hunter Knight, Western University; Rebecca Raby, Brock University; Lindsay Sheppard, York University; Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Session Chair: Jean-Frédéric Hübsch, University of Ottawa

SCY5a-1 - Hot Girls, Gorgeous Girls, Girl Dinner: Becoming Posthuman Girl

Lindsay C. Sheppard, York University

Recently, girls and girlhoods are proliferating in multiple arenas - in popular culture, film, digital trends, and viral aesthetics. In this striking context, I wonder who and what is girl? Informed by feminist posthumanism (Barad 2007; Braidotti 2022), I untangle the configurations of materialities, discourses, and timespaces that co-create girls' and young women's understandings and experiences of gender and girlhood. I read digital interviews and focus groups with girls (aged 15-23), with and through theory. I consider girls' and young women's shifting relations to girl and girlhood, complexities around age, and the force of technologies, including digital trends like "girl dinner" and "hot girls," for material-discursive practices of girl and girlhood. Building on arguments made by others (Pomerantz 2024; Pomerantz and Raby 2018) I argue that girl and girlhood are posthuman performativities that are not neatly contained in individual human bodies or entirely encapsulated by age-based identity categories. Girl and girlhood are multiple and dynamic, temporarily congealed through entanglements between human and non-human bodies, discourses, and timespaces, which are marked by relations of power and marginalization. My analyses complicate boundaries between girl and young woman, by articulating the ways that girl is continuously felt, known, and remade through material-discursive entanglements.

SCY5a-2 - From Isolation to Radicalisation: Digital Masculinity in Adolescence

Haniya Waseem and Mattea Kott, Western University

This paper examines how Netflix's *Adolescence* portrays the radicalisation of emotionally isolated adolescent boys into manospheric ideology. Situating the series within sociological debates on digital-radicalisation and gender socialisation, the paper argues that the manosphere functions less as a site of ideological persuasion than as an affective and relational community that recruits boys through belonging, grievance, and validation. Drawing on theories of hegemonic masculinity, precarious manhood, and social learning, the analysis conceptualises radicalisation as a process of identity repair in which misogynistic worldviews offer wounded boys moral clarity, emotional meaning, and a restored sense of masculine status. Focusing on the character Jamie, the paper traces how alienation from family, peer humiliation, and institutional neglect create a vacuum of guidance and belonging. Within this vacuum, Jamie encounters digital spaces that provide simplified narratives of victimhood and entitlement, positioning women as the cause of his suffering and masculinity as a status that must be reclaimed through dominance and resentment. Although the series depicts his online journey indirectly, shifts in language, affect, and behaviour reveal the internalisation of manospheric scripts, including grievance framing, misogynistic bonding, and the moralisation of personal failure. These processes unfold in the absence of meaningful counter-narratives from adults, teachers, or peers, unaware of incel culture. The paper argues that *Adolescence* reframes radicalisation as an affective form of grooming rather than a purely ideological conversion. Misogyny operates as emotional infrastructure, transforming loneliness into anger and false intimacy into grievance-based identity. In doing so, the series exposes how fragile masculinities are politically mobilised through digital communities that substitute belonging with resentment and care with rage. The paper concludes by highlighting the sociological implications of this portrayal for understanding youth radicalisation, digital masculinity, and the failures of contemporary institutions to provide boys with emotional literacy, ethical guidance, and non-violent models of masculine identity.

SCY5a-3 - Mislearning Consent: Masculinity and Violence in Adolescence

Presenting Author - Bidushy Sadika, King's University College at Western University

Non-presenting Author - Haniya Waseem, Western University

This presentation received the Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster Best Early Career Scholar Presentation Award.

This paper examines how Netflix's *Adolescence* portrays the social production of gendered violence through hegemonic masculinity, emotional illiteracy, and mislearned consent scripts. Focusing on Jamie, the adolescent protagonist, and conducting a qualitative content analysis, the paper explores how misunderstandings of consent and emotional expression emerge from gendered socialization rather than individual pathology or confusion. The analysis shows that Jamie's masculinity is shaped through early family socialization within a traditionally gendered household, where emotional distance and rigid gender roles normalize male authority. These patterns are reinforced through peer cultures that valorize dominance, mock vulnerability, and normalise bullying, sexual entitlement, and the marginalization of consent. Within these relational contexts, Jamie develops a limited emotional vocabulary and a distorted understanding of intimacy, interpreting rejection as humiliation and coercion as justified. Institutional attempts at consent education appear abstract and affectively hollow, failing to equip boys with relational competencies for ethical sexual negotiation. The paper argues that *Adolescence* depicts violence not as a spontaneous rupture but as the cumulative outcome of gendered social scripts that equate masculinity with control, entitlement, and emotional

detachment. Moments of perceived rejection and powerlessness render Jamie's masculinity precarious, making intimidation and coercion appear as means of reclaiming status and authority. Rather than framing Jamie as merely "confused," the series reveals how his actions are socially learned. By treating consent as a culturally and emotionally learned practice rather than a legal binary, this paper contributes to sociological debates on masculinity, youth violence, and sexual socialization. It highlights how emotional illiteracy and hegemonic gender norms jointly produce conditions under which coercion becomes intelligible and normalized. The findings underscore the limitations of procedural sex education and point to the need for relational and affective approaches to consent pedagogy that challenge entitlement cultures and cultivate emotional literacy among boys.

SCY5a-4 - Sport, identité et appartenance : Pour une lecture intersectionnelle de l'expérience sportive des jeunes francophones en situation minoritaire

Brigid Burke, University of Ottawa

Cet article examine la place du sport jeunesse au sein des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire (CFSM) du Canada. En adoptant une approche bourdieusienne, j'analyse le sport jeunesse espace comme un champ social contesté où se jouent, corporellement, la formation et la négociation de l'identité linguistique et culturelle, et du sentiment d'appartenance des jeunes.

Je propose une intervention théorique en opérant la jonction entre deux corpus jusqu'ici disjoints. D'un côté, la littérature sur le sport dans les CFSM le présente comme un vecteur d'identité et un outil de résistance à l'assimilation, mais repose souvent sur une vision homogène de la jeunesse francophone. De l'autre, la littérature critique sur la pluralité des identités francophones (issues de l'immigration et de la diversité raciale) documente finement les expériences intersectionnelles des jeunes, mais accorde une attention limitée à la sphère du sport comme lieu de construction identitaire. En articulant ces deux perspectives, cette revue de la littérature pose une question centrale : que signifie «le développement de la francophonie par le sport » lorsque l'on prend en compte la diversité des expériences juvéniles, marquées par la race, l'ethnicité et l'histoire migratoire ? Je montre que le sport doit être compris non comme un outil identitaire uniforme, mais comme une infrastructure sociale différenciée, aux significations et aux apports pluriels selon les jeunes qui s'y engagent. Je conclus à la nécessité de politiques et de recherches centrées sur les jeunes, reconnaissant et soutenant le double rôle du sport : un levier concret pour la vitalité linguistique et un espace essentiel où une francophonie diverse et inclusive peut se vivre et se réinventer.

Sport, Identity, and Belonging: Towards an Intersectional Reading of the Sporting Experience of Francophone Youth in Minority Settings

This article examines the place of youth sport within Francophone minority communities (CFSMs) in Canada. Adopting a Bourdieusian approach, I analyze youth sport as a contested social field where young people's linguistic and cultural identities and sense of belonging are corporeally formed and negotiated. I propose a theoretical intervention by bridging two largely disconnected bodies of literature. On one hand, literature on sport in CFSMs frames sport as a vector of identity and a tool for resisting assimilation, yet often relies on a homogeneous view of Francophone participants. On the other hand, critical literature on the plurality of Francophone identities (stemming from immigration and racial diversity) meticulously documents the intersectional experiences of youth but pays limited attention to the realm of sport as a site of identity construction. By bringing these two

perspectives into conversation, this literature review poses a central question: What does "building Francophonie through sport" mean when we account for the diversity of youth experiences, shaped by race, ethnicity, and migratory history? I argue that sport must be understood not as a uniform identitarian tool, but as a differentiated social infrastructure, whose meanings and contributions are plural, contingent on the diverse young people who engage with it. I conclude by underscoring the need for youth-centered policies and research that recognize and support the dual role of sport: a concrete lever for linguistic vitality and an essential space where a diverse and inclusive Francophonie can be lived and reinvented.

SCY5a-5 - Building belongings: The everyday learning spaces of Afghan youth as transformative

Mehdia Hassan, University of Toronto, OISE

Space is constantly produced and transformed through social relations and embodied practices of living, producing, and understanding in that space (Lefebvre, 1974). Therefore, as social actors and young architects within their everyday spaces, Afghan youth are actively making and remaking their relationships to their spaces and shaping their own belongings (Corsaro, 2014; Lefebvre, 1974). Through the relational sociological concept of habitus, as an “open system of dispositions” that is evolving through ongoing socialization (Bourdieu, 2005), I emphasize the importance of taking a relational approach in youth studies, between youth transitions and youth cultures (Threadgold & Nilan, 2015). With multimodal research data generated through collages, focus group discussions, and individual interviews of 21 Afghan youth participants living across Toronto’s neighbourhoods, I explore the significance of space and materiality in shaping how Afghan youth are learning in the urban city, especially since Toronto is home to Canada’s largest Afghan diasporic community (Government of Canada, 2023). I present the ways in which Afghan youth are not only taking space, but also actively “making space” in their Toronto neighbourhoods and communities, as their habitus is transforming to shape their own belongings (Lefebvre, 1974; Harvey, 2003). This includes various cross-cultural learning opportunities, through volunteering, sports, and other community activities. I also identify the Thorncliffe Park neighbourhood, as an important Afghan ethnic enclave in the city that acts a transformative learning space for Afghan youth in Toronto. Evidently, there are significant material and spatial implications on Afghan youth’s learning experiences. By considering spatiality as a critical dimension of youth studies, I challenge disciplinary assumptions that youth is fundamentally about temporality (Lesko, 2001; Farrugia & Wood, 2017). Since Afghan youth’s learning practices are interconnected with their diverse social geographies, my research emphasizes the need for cities to increasingly invest in resources that support these youth learning spaces.

(SCY5b) Children, Institutions, Structures

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

Institutions and formal processes structure and shape the lives of young people, including definitions of children and childhood. These processes have serious consequences for young people’s efforts to form more livable futures for themselves and for our collective world. The papers in this session take up these issues in the context of youth actions and passions around the climate emergency, child and youth experiences of both crime and law, and children’s custody in the context of second unions. Cases are drawn from Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, as well as Canada.

Session Organizers: Chris Borst, McGill University; Hunter Knight, Western University; Rebecca Raby, Brock University; Lindsay Sheppard, York University; Jacob Williams, Carleton University

Session Chair: Yifan Liu, University of Toronto

SCY5b-1 - Harbouring Hope: Analyzing Best Practices for Child-Friendly Legal Proceedings

Presenting Authors - Daniella Bendo, King's University College, Western University and Jean-Frédéric Hübsch, University of Ottawa

Non-presenting Authors - Mona Paré and Anne Levesque, University of Ottawa

Across Canada, young people are increasingly acting as human rights defenders as they work to protect, promote, and claim their rights. Yet despite their activism, children continue to face significant barriers when seeking access to justice. Although judicial and non-judicial structures offer potential avenues for supporting children's rights, there is limited research identifying best practices that could be leveraged by institutions to help support young people's access to justice. This project examines promising practices within three key institutional settings: human rights commissions and tribunals, child and youth advocate and ombuds offices, and international human rights mechanisms. Drawing on four guiding principles - mechanism availability, children's access and participation, child-sensitive procedures, and meaningful communication with children, we identify concrete strategies that enhance children's ability to engage these systems as human rights defenders. While our findings focus primarily on non-judicial mechanisms, these best practices have broader relevance for courts and legal processes. Together, they provide opportunities for young people to better defend their human rights and as a result, harbour hope to improve access to justice for children in Canada.

SCY5b-2 - Who Shapes Participation? Youth Climate Agency and Civil Society Power

Samira Abou Alfa, Brock University

Youth participation in social and political action is not a new phenomenon; however, recent climate mobilizations have significantly increased the visibility of young people as political actors. At the same time, much of this participation is mediated through civil society organizations (CSOs) operating within increasingly constrained political, financial, and donor-driven environments. This conference presentation draws on an in-progress qualitative doctoral study that examines how CSOs shape, enable, and limit child and youth participation in climate action across Canada and the Middle East and North Africa Region. The study is guided by critical qualitative inquiry and informed by Foucauldian concepts of power, governmentality, and discourse, alongside critical childhood studies and decolonial perspectives. Methodologically, it employs semi-structured interviews and focus groups with young people aged 14-24 involved in climate activism, as well as interviews with adult practitioners working in CSOs and international organizations. The research design emphasizes meaningful youth engagement, including iterative feedback processes and member checking, while remaining attentive to ethical and institutional constraints shaping participation. Preliminary observations drawn from practitioner interviews, research notes, and early analysis suggest persistent forms of tokenism, particularly within internationally funded climate initiatives, where participation is often symbolic, time-limited, or narrowly defined by donor priorities and risk management frameworks. In contrast, more locally embedded initiatives appear to offer greater scope for youth leadership, agenda-setting, and collective organizing, despite ongoing structural

limitations within civil society. Informed by my professional background in child participation and rights-based programming, and positionality as a researcher from the Global South, the presentation critically reflects on the tensions between participation as principle and participation as practice. The study contributes to sociological debates on youth agency, and governance, while also offering practice-relevant insights for CSOs and practitioners seeking to move toward more meaningful, youth-led climate action.

SCY5b-3 - "There's companies and then there's just me": Youth climate emotions, moral injury, and futures under constraint

Kimberlee Collins, University of Guelph

Young people experience climate change not only as an environmental crisis but as an ethical, and emotional one, marked by grief, anger, anxiety, and exhaustion. These responses are often framed as individual mental health concerns, obscuring their political and structural dimensions. Building on the theoretical framings of ecological emotions, climate imaginaries, and moral injury, this presentation examines how youth collectively articulate ecological emotions and how these emotions shape young people's orientations toward climate-altered futures. The analysis draws on facilitated online climate cafés with youth in Ontario, Canada. Adapted from death cafés, climate cafés are facilitated group conversations designed to create advice- and action-free spaces for sharing climate-related emotions. In this study, climate cafés function both as a relational affective intervention, disrupting the social silencing of climate distress, and as a qualitative method through which ecological emotions are expressed, negotiated, and made meaningful in dialogue. Thematic analysis of café discussions focuses on how participants narrate responsibility, power and agency, and futurity. The findings show that while climate cafés enable collective recognition and emotional validation, participants' future imaginaries remain constrained by individualized responsibility narratives and limited political agency. Youth articulate deep care for collective and ecological futures alongside repeated encounters with institutional inaction and deferred accountability. To theorize this orientation, this presentation introduces the concept of a moral injury climate imaginary, reframing avoidance, anger, and relational forms of hope as adaptive responses to responsibility without power. The findings highlight both the value and the limits of affective interventions, such as climate cafés, in the absence of structural change, underscoring the need for climate education and youth engagement approaches that address power, accountability, and collective agency.

(SCY6) Youth Crime and Contemporary Issues

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

We invited papers researching, conceptualizing, or evaluating youth crime, its public representations, and processes of criminalization and decriminalization. Responses to crime have taken a turn toward punitive, restrictive, and disciplinary policy. Discourse is divided between deterrence/ retribution and addressing social determinants of crime. Although youth are governed under different criminal legislation meant to deal with the specificities of age, the punitive response to youth crime is evident in public policy, political, and cultural rhetoric. This runs counter to the long-standing perspective that youth offenders be treated differently from adult offenders.

Session Organizer and Chairs: Kelly Gorkoff, University of Winnipeg; Sarah Heath, University of Winnipeg

SCY6-1 - Innovations on the Inside: Creating Pedagogical Opportunities for Incarcerated Youth

Presenting Author - Jessica Pulis, Sheridan College

Non-presenting Author - Mohamed Banda, Sheridan College

This presentation explores the journey creating a post-secondary educational learning opportunity for incarcerated youth in Ontario, highlighting the potential for educational innovation in corrections and the structural barriers to overcome. Drawing on several years of experience from ideation, to design, to implementation, and relationship-building, this presentation discusses how educational engagement can foster transformational experiences and further opportunities for incarcerated youth, many of whom have been marginalized in their educational experiences. This presentation reflects on the practical, ethical, legal, and institutional challenges inherent in bringing post-secondary learning into carceral environments, including navigating different ministries, advocating for experiences that mirror non-carceral settings, and collaborating with facility staff under shifting policy landscapes. It also considers the importance of trauma-informed, culturally responsive pedagogy in working with youth, many of whom have experienced racism, child protection involvement, poverty, and criminalization. Meaningful educational opportunities within youth corrections are not only possible but necessary to support rehabilitation, expand social equity, and inspire hope. By sharing lessons learned and ongoing challenges, this presentation invites a broader conversation about how post-secondary institutions can (and should) foster pathways into hope-centered learning environments for marginalized communities.

SCY6-2 - Representations of Youth Violence: A Case Study Analysis of News Media and the Construction of Community Safety in Newfoundland and Labrador

Lauren Slade, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

This paper analyzes how news media portrayals of youth violence shape public narratives of community safety and youth justice through a qualitative case study of Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador. Following two incidents of youth violence in November 2024, media coverage intensified alongside municipal public safety consultations and the development of a *Community Safety and Well-Being Plan*. This project examines how these representations contribute to broader processes of youth criminalization within a small Canadian jurisdiction where anonymity is limited. Drawing on labelling theory, general strain theory, societal reaction theory, and moral panic theory, the study explores how youth violence is portrayed, whose voices are amplified and how punitive responses are normalized in news discourse. Using a text-in-context media analysis, data was collected from CBC-NL, VOCM/NTV, and CTV News prior to the incident, during/immediately after the incident, and longer-term reporting related to youth violence cases, alongside municipal public safety consultations and policy documents. The current literature highlights tensions between youth-specific legal frameworks emphasizing “rehabilitation” and “proportionality” and cultural narratives that emphasize fear, control, and discipline. Due to the associated power and influence of news media sites, media portrayals can reinforce stigmatizing labels, obscure systematic determinants such as trauma and inequality, and legitimize restrictive policy responses. By centering Newfoundland and Labrador, a jurisdiction often absent from youth criminality research, this project

contributes to critical debates on youth criminalization, cultural representations of crime, and the politics of contemporary community safety initiatives.

SCY6-3 - Youth Voice in Canadian Justice Research: A Scoping Review and Mixed-Methods Research Agenda

Kelly Gorkoff and Sarah Heath, University of Winnipeg

Despite strong commitments to youth voice in Canadian law and policy, youth participatory action research (YPAR) remains uncommon within criminal justice research and evaluation. This paper presents findings from a scoping review examining how, where, and to what extent youth have been involved in Canadian justice-sector research, and how participatory methods have been adapted—or constrained—within high-stakes institutional settings. Guided by participatory evaluation theory, critical youth studies, and organizational culture and risk theory, the scoping review systematically maps peer-reviewed and grey literature addressing youth engagement in criminal justice research, including evaluations of programs and practices in contexts such as Child and Youth Advocacy Centres, diversion and restorative justice programs, probation services, police-youth initiatives, and community-based justice organizations. The review examines forms of youth participation across stages of the research process (design, data collection, interpretation, and dissemination), methodological strategies used to support participation, and the ethical, developmental, cultural, and organizational considerations shaping engagement. Findings indicate that while youth participation is widely endorsed in principle, direct involvement in justice-sector research is limited, uneven, and often informal. Reported barriers include confidentiality obligations, mandated reporting, trauma-related concerns, organizational risk aversion, and adultist assumptions about youth capacity. Where participatory approaches are documented, youth-engaged methods—such as visual mapping, storyboarding, arts-based tools, and guided interpretation—surface relational and experiential dimensions of justice encounters, including perceptions of safety, coercion, legitimacy, and cultural resonance, that adult-designed instruments routinely overlook. The paper concludes by identifying critical gaps in the Canadian evidence base and introducing the next phase of the research: a national mixed-methods study combining a survey of justice-sector researchers and practitioners with in-depth interviews. This next step will generate the first empirical Canadian evidence on decision-making processes, institutional constraints, and practical strategies for ethically and meaningfully engaging youth in justice-sector research and evaluation.

(SCY-RC) Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 6:00pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster

Please join us online to review the past year and to plan ahead for the Sociology of Childhood and Youth Research Cluster. This meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. This is a great opportunity to learn about the cluster, shape the cluster, and build connections. Looking forward to seeing you!

Session Organizers: Hunter Knight, Western University; Allison Leanage, Mount St. Vincent University

(SMH) Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

(SMH2) Mental Health and Social Context I

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

This session explores how social contexts across the life course - from childhood adversity and parenting practices to educational institutions and housing insecurity- shape mental health and well-being.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Atsushi Narisada, Saint Mary's University; Diana Singh, McMaster University

SMH2-1 - Educational Attainment, Childhood Adversity, and Adult Wellbeing in Canada: A Moderation Analysis

Presenting Author - Sophia Mathies, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Dorian DiTommaso and Nicholas Spence, University of Toronto

Previous research has documented positive, graded relationships between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and long-term (mental) health outcomes in adulthood. ACEs encompass a variety of childhood experiences, such as physical/psychological abuse, neglect, and exposure to household dysfunctions (e.g., parental substance abuse). Existing research in this area is inconclusive with limited exploration of the Canadian context. Despite the cumulative nature of ACEs, educational attainment may serve as a promising buffering mechanism in alleviating poor mental/physical health consequences of ACEs in later life. We explore the role of educational attainment in the relationship between ACEs and adult (mental) health outcomes in Canada. Cross-sectional analysis of the 2022 Mental Health and Access to Care Survey (MHACS), a weighted survey collected March-July 2022. We examined how educational attainment moderated the association between ACE exposure and two outcomes: self-rated health (0-5) and self-rated mental health (0-5) with linear regression. An unweighted sample of 9861 from MHACS, oversampled to adequately represent Canada's four largest visible minority groups (Black, South Asian, Chinese, Filipino), and age and gender demographics. Data cleaning lowered this to 7996. Our results showed no evidence that the association between ACE exposure and either outcome varied by educational attainment when accounting for socio-demographic controls and multiple testing. Educational attainment did not moderate the relationship between ACE exposure and self-rated health/mental health. These results are insightful for understanding the relevance of educational attainment in the Canadian context. It is possible that Canadians exposed to ACEs derive resilience from other personal (e.g., social support) and institutional (e.g., comprehensive universal healthcare) resources. This may in turn diminish the relevance of education as a resilience resource in the Canadian context. Future research should explore the importance of other resilience resources in this relationship.

SMH2-2 - "Feeling trapped": Understanding the intersections of housing insecurity, mental health crisis, and youth inequalities

Presenting Authors - Leif Harris and Jacqueline Kennelly, Carleton University

Non-presenting Author - Cihan Erdal, Carleton University

This paper analyzes the limitations of current housing and social policy responses for formerly homeless young people with multiple and co-occurring mental health needs, drawing on longitudinal qualitative research conducted in Ottawa, Ontario. It is based on interviews with 55 young people aged 18-30 and focus groups with youth service providers and affordable housing providers. Using relational and social justice-oriented frameworks, the analysis situates youth homelessness within entangled structural and institutional contexts shaped by market-oriented housing systems and the youth mental health crisis. The paper offers a sociological mapping of mental health trajectories and diverse forms of disability experienced by formerly homeless youth. In doing so, it deliberately moves away from approaches that conceptualize mental health as individualized, biomedical, or episodic. Centering young people's emotional narratives and lived experiences, the paper interrogates how affective tropes of neoliberal governance operate through poor-quality and insecure housing, reproducing and deepening youth inequalities. As the narratives make clear, a pervasive sense of "feeling trapped" produced by ongoing instability and insecurity in housing intensifies mental health challenges and constrains young people's capacity to imagine and pursue medium- and long-term futures. Among participants who disclosed diagnostic information, an overwhelming proportion reported multiple, overlapping mental health or disability diagnoses. These challenges were routinely exacerbated by stigma and bureaucratic barriers, fragmented services and chronically under-resourced mental health supports. The paper analyzes how these affective and structural conditions together sharply circumscribe their pathways to sustaining housing stability, educational goals, and engaging in public life. Critically, this paper contends that access to affordable housing alone does not reliably produce improved mental health or long-term stability for youth with intersecting needs. It calls for policy responses that go beyond housing provision to implement integrated, youth-centered approaches, linking affordable housing with accessible mental health care, robust disability supports, and coordinated social services.

SMH2-3 - "We are the Front Line with students": Faculty's Role in Responding to Student Mental Health

Christiana MacDougall and Matt Maston, Mount Allison University; Isabella Gallant, Concordia University

Post-secondary student mental health has steadily gained attention across Canadian university campuses, as evidenced by increasing interventions, services, and accommodations for student support. Yet, research is lacking on how faculty are experiencing this change in their professional environment, the impacts it may be having on their own work, and how they experience their role in responding to student mental health. This paper shares findings from a small pilot study at a Canadian post-secondary, undergraduate institution, that included a survey of faculty and interviews with 11 faculty members in 2024. The survey and interviews explored faculty perceptions of student mental health and how faculty see their role, or lack thereof, in supporting student mental health. These findings shed some light on how changing landscapes across post-secondary education contribute to faculty work-related stress. Faculty expressed a lack of clarity surrounding their roles as teaching versus caring professionals; concerns around their absence of formal skills, training, and competencies concerning student mental health; and worries about the risk of causing harm to students despite feeling positioned as 'front-line staff'. Faculty further reported material consequences associated with the labour of supporting student mental health, providing insights into how this extra work may be distributed unequally across marginalized and/or precarious faculty.

Finally, our results shed light on how faculty are responding to this work stress, navigating moral and ethical commitments alongside institutional responsibilities. Expanding on these findings, we explore three dimensions of the overarching organizational and sociocultural environments that shape the role of faculty in responding to student mental health: the neoliberal consumer model of post-secondary education; evolving discourses surrounding care and responsibility; and tensions between individual versus structural responses. We conclude by calling for further research into faculty mental health and their roles in supporting students across the evolving landscapes of post-secondary education.

(SMH3) Mental Health and Social Context II

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

This session explores how mental health is shaped by migration, stigma, caregiving, and culturally situated understandings of belonging and care.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Atsushi Narisada, Saint Mary's University; Diana Singh, McMaster University

SMH3-1 - Mental Health, Perceived Social Support, and Sense of Belonging Among Immigrants

Presenting Authors - Mohammad Habibnezhad and Maryam Mirzaei Hotkani, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - Zahra Jafari, Emily Balkam, and Ellen Hickey, Dalhousie University

Immigrants often encounter unique challenges that can adversely affect their mental health and social well-being. This research aimed to examine the mental health status (anxiety and depression), perceived social support, and sense of belonging among immigrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds in Canada, and to identify contributing factors. The research included 144 Farsi- and Arabic-speaking adults, with a mean age of 36.50 years; 51.40% had resided in Canada for less than three years. All participants completed validated Farsi or Arabic versions of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item scale (GAD-7), Patient Health Questionnaire 9-item (PHQ-9), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), and Challenged Sense of Belonging Scale (CSBS) in their primary language. Among participants, 25.70% reported symptoms of generalized anxiety (16.70% moderate, 9.00% severe), and 26.40% exhibited symptoms of major depression (20.80% moderate, 5.60% moderately severe). The overall sense of belonging was slightly above moderate, and one-third of participants reported moderate or low levels of perceived social support. Lower levels of perceived social support were significantly associated with higher anxiety and depression scores. Younger age, active job-seeking status, lower economic status, shorter length of residence in Canada, and limited English language proficiency were significant predictors of the outcomes. Rates of anxiety and depression in this population were considerably higher than those reported in the general Canadian population and comparable studies. These findings highlight the importance of addressing mental health and social well-being among immigrant populations and can inform the development of tailored, community-based support initiatives.

SMH3-2 - Masculinity, Belonging, and Latinx Single Migrant Men's Mental Health in Canada

Presenting Author - Abu Saleh Mohammad Sowad, University of Victoria

Non-presenting Author - Nancy Clark, University of Victoria

This paper examines how Latinx single migrant men in Canada navigate mental health, belonging, and masculinity within contexts of precarious migration and labour. Despite the global masculinization of migration, reflected in the widening gender gap between migrant men and women, which increased from 1.2 percent in 2000 to 3.8 percent in 2022, sociological scholarship and policy frameworks on migration and health have largely centred families and migrant women. As a result, the experiences of single migrant men, who often face pronounced health disparities and structural barriers to care, remain comparatively underexamined. Drawing on an intersectional framework and transnational feminist methodologies, this study explores the lived experiences of men from Mexico and other Latin American countries employed through temporary and uncertain immigration streams in Canada. This approach enables an analysis of the structural, relational, and affective dimensions of everyday life, with particular attention to how workplace precarity, transnational obligations, and social exclusion shape mental well-being. Existing research suggests that normative expectations of productivity, independence, and self-reliance constrain help-seeking practices and contribute to the internalization of psychological distress. Experiences of racialization, institutional neglect, and limited access to services further intensify stress and emotional strain. At the same time, participants cultivate alternative forms of care and belonging through peer networks, faith-based spaces, sport, and digital communication that sustain social and emotional support across transnational contexts. By examining how labour conditions, community involvement, and gendered expectations of productivity intersect to influence mental well-being, this paper challenges deficit-based narratives of migrant men. By centring the narratives and visual accounts of Latinx single migrant men, it contributes to sociological debates on mental health as socially and structurally produced and offers policy-relevant insights for the development of gender-responsive and culturally grounded mental health and settlement services within the Sociology of Mental Health and migration research clusters.

SMH3-3 - Decolonizing mental health: Using rhizome theory to imagine networks of multicultural epistemologies

Victoria Huang, Wilfrid Laurier University

Contemporary global mental health discourse remains heavily shaped by Euro-Western biomedical psychiatry and recovery models that operate within colonial and neoliberal logics. These dominant frameworks marginalise and delegitimise alternative ways of understanding mental health, particularly those rooted in non-Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. Such epistemic exclusion has significant consequences: it restricts the development of culturally meaningful research and practice, narrows the language available for people to describe their experiences, and perpetuates inequities for communities both in the Global South and within diasporic populations living in settler colonial contexts. To challenge this dominance, rhizome theory offers an alternative approach for imagining mental health as inherently multiple, interconnected, and resistant to rigid categorisation. This perspective supports an environment in which diverse and even contradictory epistemologies can coexist without hierarchy, an important step in decolonizing mental health knowledge. When taken up in social work research and practice, it encourages more equitable

relationships between people experiencing distress, practitioners, and scholars by creating space for varied realities, cultural frameworks, and forms of knowledge. Drawing on examples from Mad Studies and non-European Indigenous scholarship, this presentation highlights alternative mental health frameworks that emphasise systemic, spiritual, political, and communal dimensions of wellbeing—dimensions frequently overlooked in dominant models. Across these varied approaches, shared themes such as wholism, interconnectedness, and balance emerge as central to many communities' understandings of distress and healing. By foregrounding these alternative epistemologies, this work calls for a mental health landscape that embraces plurality through decolonial ways of relating between knowledge systems, and ultimately aligns with social work's commitments to justice in research and practice.

SMH3-4 - Stigma, family neglect of young people receiving care in an alcohol and drug rehabiliation center in Ghana

Presenting Author - Hannah Taylor-Abdulai, University of Cape Coast

Non-presenting Author - Ruby Kwao, House of St. Francis Rehabilitation Center/Clinic

In Ghana, drug and alcohol use problems are a serious public health issue, especially for young people. Relapses after treatment exist and are frequently made worse by the stigma attached to substance abuse and mental illness. This stigma frequently leads to family abandonment, which exacerbates social isolation and worsens rehabilitation prospects. We purposively selected 35 young individuals between the ages of 18 and 35 who live in a rehabilitation facility in Accra, Ghana, to participate in a qualitative cross-sectional study. Participants reported relapse and family abandonment, and they had histories of drug and/or alcohol addiction. In-depth interviews and focus groups led by a semi-structured interview guide were used to gather data. Relapse, stigma, family dynamics, and psychological difficulties throughout rehabilitation were all covered in the interviews. An inductive method was used to thematically assess verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings. The findings revealed four main themes: relapse pathways, such as peer pressure, emotional distress, and a lack of post-rehabilitation support; stigma experiences, which include labeling, discrimination, and social exclusion; family abandonment and its psychosocial effects, such as feelings of rejection, hopelessness, and low self-worth; and finally coping and resilience in rehabilitation facilities, where peer support, counseling, and spiritual practices played protective roles. Stigma was frequently cited by participants as a significant obstacle to reintegration and long-term recovery. We conclude that after relapsing, young people in Accra's rehabilitation facilities face severe shame and familial abandonment, which has a detrimental impact on their mental health and recovery paths. To encourage social reintegration and lower recurrence among young people with substance use disorders in Ghana, interventions should include family-centered counseling, anti-stigma education, and reinforced community-based support networks.

SMH3-5 - Positive parenting practice and children's mental health and developmental outcomes: examining mediating and moderating pathways

Presenting Author - Jalal Uddin, Dalhousie University

Non-presenting Authors - MD Helal Uddin, East West University; Nur A Habiba Mukta, University of Nicosia

Positive parenting practices have been identified as an essential protective factor for children's mental and developmental well-being. However, limited research has explored the mechanisms through which positive parenting shapes children's mental health and developmental outcomes across different risk groups. The study examines the association between positive parenting practices and children's mental and developmental outcomes. Further, this study investigates whether family resilience and family-level protective factors mediate the association and whether adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and socioeconomic status (SES) moderate the relationships. This study uses data from the 2020-2024 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), a nationally representative dataset of children and adolescents aged 0-17 years in the United States. The positive parenting practice, exposure variable, was constructed as a composite index of parental communication, warmth, and involvement. The outcome variables, mental health, included anxiety, depression, and ADHD, while developmental outcomes included school engagement, developmental delay, and flourishing. Multivariate logistic regression models will be conducted, adjusting for socio-demographic covariates using complex survey weights in STATA. The expected results indicate that higher levels of positive parenting practices are significantly associated with lower odds of mental health problems and developmental delay, and with greater odds of school engagement and flourishing. Additionally, we anticipate that mediation analysis will support that family resilience and family-level protective factors partially mediate these associations. We also expect that the strength of the association between positive parenting and outcomes would vary by the level of ACEs and SES, such that the association would be weaker among children exposed to higher levels of ACEs and with lower SES. Positive parenting practices are strongly associated with improved mental health and developmental outcomes among children and adolescents. The findings inform targeted interventions to promote family-level protective factors that underlie the parent-child relationship and children's outcomes.

(SMH5) Work and Mental Health

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

This session focuses on how work and employment contexts shape mental health and well-being.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Atsushi Narisada, Saint Mary's University; Diana Singh, McMaster University

SMH5-1 - Perception Glitches: Misperceptions of the Quality of Working Life and Their Effects on Well-Being

Scott Schieman, University of Toronto

How can we reimagine work? We love to ask that question. Year after year, decade after decade. It feels like an elusive quest. But we keep asking. To reimagine is “to imagine again or anew; to form a new conception of.” Before we reimagine work, however, we need to understand its current status in our minds. And these days, it’s mostly a morass of badness. After years of negative rhetoric, bad vibes, and trendy anti-work neologisms (e.g., “quiet quitting), work’s reputation has gone from bad to worse. Drawing upon national survey data from tens-of-thousands of Canadian and American workers, supplemented with open-ended free-text data, I describe how most people tend to believe

most others are dissatisfied with their job—and how they react when presented with the actual (more favorable) statistical reality. I unearth a suite of what I call "perception glitches" that both reflect and reinforce the bad vibes about the quality of working life—including work stress, pay inadequacy, meaningful work, job insecurity, employee-employer relations, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Across all indicators, individuals' ratings of their own conditions tend to be more positive than what they perceive as the norm. If the goal is to reimagine work, after years of bad vibes, I argue that a more accurate read on what most people think and feel about work can lay the foundation for change. My project moves us towards that more optimistic subjective space and examines the implications for psychological well-being.

SMH5-2 - The Impact of Workplace Stressors on Gambling Frequency, as Buffered by Neighborhood Cohesion

Soroush Masoud, University of Calgary

Considering the continuing proliferation of gambling and betting in the Canadian context, it is crucial to explore the understudied social contexts shaping these practices. Applying the stress process model, this paper examines the relationship between workplace stressor events and gambling frequency, as buffered by perceptions of neighborhood cohesion. As a sociological perspective on stress, the stress process model emphasizes the ways in which individuals' contexts and resources can mitigate the impacts of stressors on well-being, relevant in examining gambling as a coping mechanism in substitution of social supports. Using data from the Quinte Longitudinal Study of Gambling, this research employs a fixed effects model to account for time invariant factors, such as socioeconomic backgrounds, in order to isolate the association between workplace stress, neighborhood cohesion, and gambling. We predict that workplace stressors correspond with greater frequencies of gambling as an outcome; As consistent with the stress process model, however, we predict that this relationship will be negatively moderated by measures of neighborhood cohesion, acting as a social resource in buffering the impacts of stress. This research will also engage with previous scholarship on gambling as a social phenomenon, particularly its role as a coping mechanism or tool of escapism in response to a lack of individual, community, and societal resources. This research can advance understandings of the contexts motivating practices of gambling, further scholarship on the stress process model through application to a novel field, and provide depth to policy discussions regarding the mitigation of gambling harms.

SMH5-3 - The impact of employment on Canadian caregivers' mental well-being

Tayma Hayek, Western University

Caregivers for family or friends with a long-term health condition frequently face mental strain from managing both caregiving and work responsibilities, emphasizing the need for strategies to reduce conflict between these roles, such as promoting flexible work options for employed caregivers (Augustine et al., 2023; Gordon et al., 2012). Although millions of Canadian caregivers are affected by these conflicting responsibilities (Sinha, 2012), there is relatively little research on the experiences of Canadian caregivers. Developing research from a Canadian perspective can allow for an examination of ways employers can better support caregivers through workplace practices such as flexibility. This study utilizes data from the 2018 Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) to examine the mental health and stress of employed Canadian caregivers aged 25 to 64. The first aim was to

analyze the relationship between employment context, including hours and type of work, and work flexibility, on caregivers' mental health and stress. Existing research indicates that caregiving is gendered, and a life course perspective suggests that caregivers may have different experiences due to the timing and age at which they become a caregiver. Thus, the second aim of this study is to examine whether caregivers' mental health and stress vary across gender and life stage. Results from logistic regression models with controls for demographic factors and hours of care provided indicate that caregivers working part-time were more likely to experience poor mental health compared to full-time workers. Although causality cannot be determined from cross-sectional data, this finding has implications for women, as female caregivers were more than three times as likely to work part-time as male caregivers. Moreover, caregiving combined with employment earlier in life was associated with worse mental health. Additionally, access to work flexibility was associated with lower levels of caregiving stress and better self-rated mental health.

SMH5-4 - An Invisible Struggle: A Study of Work-Life Related Mental Health Challenges Among Chinese Trans Immigrants.

Yan Xue, University of Alberta

Research has shown that the mental health conditions of immigrants decline alongside their increased length of residency in Canada, partly because of their precarious employment status (Elshahat et al., 2022). Facing discrimination against their foreign credentials, working experiences, and accent, immigrants with advanced educational and career backgrounds struggle with a thwarted path to stable and self-sustainable jobs (Chen & Hong, 2016; Zaheer et al., 2018). Furthermore, the existing literature notes that immigrants' mental health challenges can be exacerbated by structural and cultural barriers to mental health support (Pandey et al., 2022). LGBT forced migrants are especially vulnerable in the face of compounding effects of intersecting racism and homophobia/transphobia in hiring practices and at healthcare settings (Kahn et al., 2018). My presentation focuses on the research question of how Chinese trans immigrants experience work life-related mental health challenges in Canada. For my doctoral thesis research project, I conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with 30 Chinese trans immigrants in Canada. Drawing upon intersectionality theory (Carastathis, 2016), I will discuss multiple intersecting stressors that have detrimental implications for their mental well-being. Shaped by their experiences of institutional violence and interpersonal abuse in their home country, it is not uncommon for my research protagonists to carry over each of their own CPTSD symptoms and struggle mentally when transitioning into the Canadian labor market. In this process, their experiences of implicit and explicit stigmatization by racialized gendered stereotypes at job interviews, stress over masking their gender non-conformity and sexuality at the workplace, and challenges associated with their job tasks further sabotage their mental well-being. The income and employment-based inequalities of the health insurance scheme also contribute to their discouraging encounters with healthcare providers. Nevertheless, my research protagonists are resilient and creative with their self-care strategies to mediate job insecurity and working routines related distress.

(SMH6) The Social Roots of Emotion and Well-being

Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

This session brings together research on emotions and well-being as fundamentally social experiences. While emotional life is often treated as private and individual, sociological inquiry illuminates how feelings emerge from, and are constrained by, our positions within social structures, cultural expectations, and systems of power.

Session Organizer and Chair: Cinthya Guzman, University of Prince Edward Island

SMH6-1 - Should Consciousness: Productivist Guilt and Temporal Experience

Cinthya Guzman, University of Prince Edward Island

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted taken-for-granted temporal regimes, creating conditions to examine how productivist norms structure everyday experience. This paper asks: when normal rhythms collapse, how do individuals negotiate between competing temporal orientations, and what does this reveal about temporal stratification under late capitalism? Drawing on convergent mixed-methods data from 64 participants during Ontario, Canada's 2020 lockdown, including 10-day experience sampling methodology and in-depth interviews, I document the coexistence and collision of two temporal frameworks: *productivist clock time*, characterized by future-orientation and instrumental evaluation, and *experiential present time*, characterized by intrinsic engagement with immediate experience. Three findings emerge. First, I identify and quantify "should consciousness," the productivist guilt present in 18.3% of all sampled moments and 26.5% of leisure moments, documenting how temporal discipline operates affectively even during rest. Second, productivist and present-time orientations coexist rather than oppose; individuals experience both frameworks simultaneously as ongoing tension rather than stable preference. Third, temporal stratification operates primarily through activities rather than demographics: what you are doing at a given moment predicts temporal orientation more strongly than who you are. These findings extend temporal sociology by operationalizing dynamics previously theorized but rarely measured, and reveal how digital platforms function as mechanisms of temporal surveillance.

SMH6-2 - Conspirituality, Freebirth, and the Emotional Governance of Health Knowledge on Instagram

Presenting Author - Samia Annab, Bishop's University

Non-presenting Author - Katharine Dunbar, Mount Allison University

This paper examines the intersection of conspiracy thinking, new age spirituality, and the freebirth movement, situating these dynamics within broader discussions of conspirituality and the emotional dimensions of health knowledge. Rather than approaching health information as objective or value-neutral, this project treats it as socially embedded, emotionally loaded, and unevenly distributed across lines of class and gender. Drawing on the sociology of emotions, the study explores how feelings such as anxiety, suspicion, reassurance, indignation, and confidence are mobilized within narratives that frame medical authority, risk and responsibility. Based on a qualitative analysis of freebirth accounts on Instagram, this project understands these social media spaces as affective environments where legitimacy, risk, and authority are actively negotiated rather than passively

transmitted. Existing scholarship shows that individuals increasingly rely on online platforms for information, emotional validation, collective meaning-making, and protection against stigma and surveillance. Our findings illustrate how freebirth content, denoting the intentional decision to give birth without regulated healthcare providers in settings where maternity care is readily accessible (Velo Higueras et al., 2024), simultaneously enable autonomy and reproduce new forms of regulation, as emotional support can give way to narrative policing and moral judgment. Our analysis makes visible how trust and mistrust and refusal toward formal health systems contribute to moral distinctions between "responsible" and "irresponsible" motherhood. Particular attention is given to how these distinctions intersect with racialized and classed assumptions, as well as with implicit references to surveillance, discipline, and state intervention. Drawing on de Courville Nicol's (2021) work of unmet emotional needs fueling anxiety, we move beyond binary framings of empowerment versus misinformation and instead examine how emotions mediate both compliance with and resistance to dominant health norms and practices.

SMH6-3 - The Social Context of Daily Experiences of Fear and Well-Being among Canadian Older Adults

Presenting Author - Fahimeh Mehrabi, University of Calgary

Non-presenting Author - Alex Bierman, University of Calgary

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the sociological relevance of the study of fear by showing that fear not only has a core basis in social stratification, but also that fear plays a key role in reproducing health inequalities in later-life. The sociology of mental health has largely neglected the study of fear. Although anxiety has been well-considered, fear refers to reactions to immediate actual or anticipated threats, whereas anxiety refers to more emotional and physiological symptomology that is generalized across stimuli and settings. When fear has been studied outside of sociology, fear has often been framed in biological and psychological terms, as a "primal emotion" with an evolutionary basis, which neglects a social context that may predispose individuals to threats that evoke fear. Within sociology, fear has most often been examined in relation to specific topics (e.g., the fear of crime), instead of the affective experience of fear itself. To address these research gaps, the current study will use data from the Finances, Aging, and Daily Experiences Study, a multi-day study of emotional and social experiences of a representative sample of older adults from Alberta. Second-order structural equation modelling will be used to estimate inter-individual variability in fear across the days of study, and also how a variety of indices of social advantage and disadvantage explain these interpersonal differences. We will then examine the extent to which these social determinants condition inter-individual differences in daily well-being through exposure to fear. The overall contribution of this research will be to show that fear is centrally shaped by individual placement in structures of social stratification, with critical ramifications for social gradients in individual well-being.

SMH6-4 - Emotives in Cultural-Emotional Analysis: A Sociological Account of Mental Health Discourse

Valerie de Courville Nicol and Isabella Gallant, Concordia University

Emotion research in sociology emphasizes that emotional experience is not merely biological or psychological, but deeply embedded in social structures, relationships, and cultural scripts. Yet

empirical tools for analyzing how emotions are sociologically shaped, normed, and negotiated remain underdeveloped—particularly in the study of mental health. In this paper, we expand the concept of *emotives* in cultural-emotional discourse theory and propose *emotive analysis* as a sociological approach to mental health discourse. From emotion words and gestures to prescriptions for living, and from feeling rules to narrative genres and frameworks of responsibility, emotives are culturally organized ways of communicating feeling that simultaneously shape emotional experience. We conceptualize emotives not as static expressions, but as relational practices that emerge and evolve within social exchanges. We apply emotive analysis to a sample of youth mental health discourse drawn from social media platforms and forums primarily occupied by young people and focused on anxiety, such as TikTok and Reddit. We examine how emotive formulations—such as feeling idioms, evaluations, recommendations, and classifications—generate emotional meaning through interaction. Attention is paid to the back-and-forth dynamics through which participants articulate emotional experiences and respond to one another, including the implicit models of classification, responsibility, and wellbeing both reproduced and contested in these exchanges. We argue that cultural-emotional practices constitute interfacial sites where personal experience and collective frameworks intersect and generate tension. This perspective opens new avenues for youth mental health research by remaining attentive to both micro-interactional processes and broader cultural and social-structural patterns. Emotive analysis offers tools for understanding how young people experience collective tensions and emotional struggle, and how they make sense of these experiences through available—and evolving—cultural frameworks. More broadly, a sociologically informed outlook on emotions provides critical resources for youth mental health research that move beyond individual pathology while remaining grounded in lived experience.

(SMH-RC) Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster

The Sociology of Mental Health Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizers: Atsushi Narisada, Saint Mary's University; Diana Singh, McMaster University

(SOM) Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

(SOM1) Advancing Theories of Migration
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

This SOM research cluster session showcases five papers that critique/advance the existing theories of migration. The first two papers employ forms of discourse analysis to examine immigration sentiment and shifts among the Conservative Party of Canada and in an online component of the Indian anti-immigration movement. The third paper incorporates administration and bureaucracy in conceptualization of immigration. Drawing from interviews, the final two papers focus immigrant

experiences post-migration. The first introduces the concept of collective fantasy to theorize the construction of Iranians imaginaries of the West and how this changes upon arrival in Canada through negative encounters such as islamophobia. The second uses critical race theory to examine how racism and microaggressions experienced by international students.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

Session Chair: Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

SOM1-1 - The (Far) Rightward Shifts of the Conservative Party of Canada's Migration Discourses and Policies

John Carlaw, Toronto Metropolitan University

This paper traces and assesses (far) rightward shifts of immigration-related discourses and policy proposals of the Conservative Party of Canada in the post-2015 period and its connections to parallel trends in far-right civil society, particularly the influential far right Rebel News website. Literature on Canada's contemporary Conservative Party has observed the need for it to restrain or creatively apply its right-populist instincts both discursively and in terms of immigration and multiculturalism-related policies for fear of losing the political support of immigrants, ethnicized and racialized voters needed to form a government (Abu-Laban 2014; Carlaw 2021; Marwah, Triadafilopoulos, and White 2013). They continue to wrestle with this balance under Pierre Poilievre in a shifted domestic and global context (Peker, Laxer & Vives, 2025), including the global and domestic rise of the far right, Trumpism, the founding of the People's Party of Canada and space these have created for its members' base instincts to be expressed and at times recognized. Through a mix of network and Critical Policy Discourse Analysis (CPDSA) of primary sources, including publicly available interviews, party platforms, press releases and the far-right Rebel Media website's coverage of migration issues, this paper addresses the need for a deeper exploration and mapping of these civil society-party ties and discursive affinities. While still appealing to centrist common sense notions of Canada as a welcoming country there has been a steady shift in and mainstreaming of far right directions in terms of migration-related discourses and policy proposals and more fluid boundaries between far & mainstream right than is commonly assumed, including under Pierre Poilievre. Their discourses concerning migration, citizenship and multiculturalism foster domestic inequalities and concerns both if were to win office and concerning pressures they are likely to continue to exert as the official opposition.

SOM1-2 - Critical Phenomenology of Citizenship and Protest: Critical discourse analysis of an online anti-immigration movement in India

Chetna Khandelwal, University of Calgary

Since 2014, democratic states across the world have descended into crisis under Far Right populist leadership, specifically targeting immigrants to forward their ethnonationalist and masculinist agendas. Anti-immigration movements are bolstered by state-sanctioned crackdowns on immigrants in the form of policy and national discourse. Focusing on the latter, this study entails a qualitative content analysis (QCA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Twitter (now X) narratives constructed by the online component of an Indian anti-immigration movement (Pro-CAA/NRC). We employ

Ahmedian critical phenomenology to suggest that, since its inception, the Indian citizenship space has been dominantly shaped by its proximity to the bodies of *legitimised* citizens (upper-caste hindus), and iteratively reinforced by anti-immigration discourse. Implications of the Pro-CAA/NRC movement extend beyond immigration rhetoric, to reify definitions of *whose* bodies can be oriented towards citizenship. We demonstrate how anti-immigrant narratives delegitimising marginalised women's collective embodied protest then also contour Indian collective protest landscapes as ones that exclusively orientate masculine hindu bodies. While critical phenomenology conventionally encourages analysis of experiences of marginalised bodies in dominant spaces, here we place emphasis on how the *becoming* of spaces as disorienting for marginalised bodies can be further elucidated by appraising discursive actions.

SOM1-3 - The Administrative Dilemmas of Migration Management

Nathan Ly, Cornell University

Administration and bureaucracy are largely absent from dominant conceptualizations of migration. Meanwhile, recent renewed interest in this area suggests there is both value and potential in the topic. However, by emphasizing micro- and meso-level dynamics, recent work undertheorizes wider and more fundamental dilemmas shaping administrative contexts. I advance two avenues to address such challenges. First, I explicitly conceptualize migration as an issue of administration. In doing so, I highlight a core set of themes around the composite, connected, and political nature of bureaucracies that can organize theoretical and empirical study as well as open avenues for future work. I also contrast this conceptualization with two others that dominate the current literature: migration as an issue of control and migration as an issue of boundary crossing. Second, I outline a framework for analyzing the competing pressured faced by administrative bodies. I argue that as bureaucracies operate at the intersection of politics, law, and administration, attention needs to be paid to how actors attempt to navigate the tradeoffs involved. The case of the US Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) is then used to illustrate the arguments, and the paper closes by discussing some implications for work on immigration enforcement and citizenship.

SOM1-4 - Dreaming the West: The Construction and Transformation of Migration Imaginary among Middle-Class Iranians

Sara Hormozinejad, University of Toronto

Recipient of the Sociology of Migration Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

This study examines how middle-class Iranians construct imaginaries of the West prior to migration and how these imaginaries transform during settlement. It conceptualizes imagination not as a static or purely individual act but as a dynamic, socially embedded process that both shapes migration aspirations and is reworked through lived experiences abroad. It introduces the concept of *collective fantasy* to theorize imagination not simply as hopeful or liberatory, but also as hegemonic, idealizing, and at times distorting. The paper draws on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 30 middle-class Iranian immigrants and returnees holding both Iranian and Canadian citizenship. Focusing on this group is analytically important, as migration from the Global South is increasingly shaped by the aspirations of the middle class, who both desire to migrate and are considered desirable by Western receiving countries. The criterion of dual citizenship also ensured a degree of mobility parity, reducing concerns about legal precarity. The paper explores two interlinked dynamics. First, it investigates

how a homogeneous, idealized vision of the West emerges prior to migration under restrictive mobility regimes, shaped by Western media, the moral economy of departure, and the context of emigration marked by involuntary immobility. Second, it analyzes how this pre-migration imaginary unravels post-migration, particularly through the devaluation of cultural capital, experiences of discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia, and encounters with the political economy of migration. The paper offers a framework for understanding migration as simultaneously rooted in material realities and shaped by imaginative constructs. In doing so, it advances migration scholarship by showing that migration unfolds not only across home, host, and other geographically situated contexts, but also within socially produced imaginaries through which migrants make sense of mobility. Finally, it challenges dominant assumptions of middle-class privilege, revealing its contingency and fragility across borders.

SOM1-5 - Racism and Microaggressions Among International Students in a Small Ontario City: Implications for Multiculturalism and Global Education

Presenting Author - Anthony Mensah, Trent University

Non-presenting Author - Eugena Kwon, Trent University

International students interact with social spaces in host cities where experiences of racism and microaggressions shape their social and academic trajectories. Although the proportion of international students in Canada has increased over the past two decades, there is limited empirical research on the experiences of racism among international students in smaller cities in Canada. This qualitative study addresses this gap by drawing on critical race theory to examine racism and microaggressions experienced by international students in Peterborough, Ontario. Using a qualitative approach, a sample of 55 international students were recruited through convenience sampling. Eight focus group discussions were conducted using semi-structured interview guides to elicit students' experiences. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Three key themes emerged: (i) everyday interactions within the city, (ii) institutional practices and dynamics in postsecondary settings, and (iii) coping mechanisms among international students. The first theme explores everyday interactions within the local community of Peterborough, including experiences in public transportation, housing, shopping, and the workplace. The second theme examines institutional practices in postsecondary settings that shape students' experiences, including boundary-making through inclusion initiatives, epistemic positioning within the classroom, and institutional orientations. The third theme illustrates how students cope through processes of normalization, meaning-making, and persistence. Overall, the themes revealed that racism and microaggressions are co-embedded in everyday environments, alongside international students' resilience. The findings of this study have important implications for postsecondary institutions, municipal authorities, and stakeholders in the postsecondary education sector in developing policies and programs that promote safety, inclusion, and academic success among international students in small cities in Canada. The study also highlights the need to move beyond individual-level resilience narratives and address the structural conditions that shape international students' experiences of racism and microaggressions in their everyday lives.

(SOM2) Recent Developments in Gender and Migration Research

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

This SOM research cluster session includes papers that consider a multitude of factors related to gender and migration. The first paper examines the role of race and conditions of entry for women's self-identification in Canada. The second paper uses ethnographic, policy research, and a feminist standpoint to argue that climate-induced displacement is an epistemological crisis. Drawing on feminist theories, the final paper reconceptualizes settlement work as labour that sustains both local communities and the state's settlement objectives.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

Session Chair: Hamid Akbary, University of Lethbridge

SOM2-1 - Wages of Whiteness contra Refugee in the 21st Century: Afghan and Ukrainian Women's Self-Identification as (non)Refugees in Canada

Aryan Karimi, University of British Columbia

In life after forced displacement, why some groups self-identify as refugees while others refuse the label? Refugee as a sociolegal category is not a *tabula rasa* label applied to or adopted by social groups; states create and deploy the category on-demand to sort groups and regulate their access to services while some displaced groups adopt the refugee label so as to access protection and some others subvert and question the social and legal legitimacy of the category in regulating human affairs. We contribute to the literature on refugee category by examining refugee self-identification *across* two racial groups in Canada, Middle-Eastern Afghan women and white European Ukrainian women —the former group is legally categorized as refugee and the latter group is in Canada on work permits. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 35 Afghan and 35 Ukrainian women with similar socioeconomic backgrounds and experiences of forced displacement, we find contrasting patterns: Afghan participants accepted the refugee label while noting its limits, whereas Ukrainian participants rejected the stigmatized, racialized category and instead self-identified as European Christian immigrants as a way of belonging in Canada. We situate these findings in a postcolonial context and theorize them through DuBois' (1935) "wages of whiteness," which describes how whiteness has historically conferred affective and legal advantages. For our Ukrainian participants, the psychological wages of racial Europeanness identification with majority group in Canada override the long-term residency benefits that could result from refugee solidarity.

SOM2-2 - Epistemologies of Survival: Rethinking Displacement Governance and Epistemic Justice in the Sundarbans

Oleena Chaudhuri, York University

Recipient of the Sociology of Migration Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

Climate displacement governance in the Global South is currently hindered by an "epistemological crisis" that renders feminized ecological knowledge systems invisible. This article examines the epistemic politics of displacement in the Indian Sundarbans, arguing that dominant social science frameworks—grounded in positivist and Global North universalism—produce "epistemic violence"

by delegitimizing women-led, land-based epistemologies of survival. Drawing on a decolonial approach, Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) and Social Reproduction Theory (SRT), this article demonstrates how state-centric bureaucratic categories and technocratic adaptation planning erase the sophisticated environmental knowledge held by women oppressed by castes and social hierarchies. Through a critical synthesis of ethnographic, policy, and community-based literature, and by reframing these knowledge systems of survival not merely as cultural context but as rigorous theoretical contributions, the article challenges the patriarchal and colonial norms inherent in international protection regimes. The findings call for a transformative shift in (forced) migration policy and practice towards frameworks that recognize community-generated knowledge as integral to risk assessment, adaptation planning, and protection practice. The article positions epistemic justice as a necessary condition for equitable climate displacement governance in the Sundarbans and beyond.

SOM2-3 - The Hidden Labour Regime of Settlement: Gendered Social Reproduction and Precarious Newcomer Work in Northern Ontario

Katherine Pendakis, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

Newcomer settlement is typically understood as a matter of policy design, service provision, and institutional coordination aimed at facilitating integration into local labour markets and communities. Scholarship and policy discussions focus on program effectiveness, access to services, and the roles of municipal, provincial, and federal actors in supporting inclusion. Settlement success is commonly measured through indicators such as employment, language acquisition, and social participation.

Based on in-depth interviews in a small northern Ontario city, this paper argues that this institutional account obscures the everyday labour through which settlement is practically accomplished. In this context, settlement operates less as a formal service system and more as a fragile community economy sustained by a hidden labour regime. This regime combines extensive unpaid, gendered social reproductive labour—carried out largely by women motivated by care, commitment, and progressive ideals—with the underpaid and precarious labour of newcomers themselves, who become informal translators, cultural brokers, mentors, and volunteers within the very system meant to support them. Drawing on feminist theories of social reproduction and Gibson-Graham's concept of community economies, the paper reconceptualizes settlement work as labour that sustains both local communities and the state's settlement objectives in the absence of adequate institutional support. By making this labour visible, the paper challenges dominant understandings of settlement and highlights the gendered, precarious, and ultimately fragile foundations on which newcomer integration in more remote regions depends.

(SOM3a) Evidence-based Research on Immigrant Integration I

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

This SOM research cluster session features papers on various aspects of social integration of immigrants. The first paper examines loneliness as an indicator of both immigrant health and social integration among immigrants with disabilities. The second and third papers use the 2020 General Social Survey data to analyze feelings of national pride and immigrant identity. The fourth paper

investigates Hong Kong parents' shifts in values and practices upon arrival in Canada. The session also extends beyond Canada; the final paper examines the relationship between educational attainment and perceptions of discrimination among Asians in the United States.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

Session Chair: Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University

SOM3a-1 - Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Immigrants with Disabilities

Presenting Author - Allison Leanage, Statistics Canada

Non-presenting Authors - Christoph Schimmele and Rubab Arim, Statistics Canada; Maciej Karpinski and Jing Shen, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada

In the context of an aging immigrant population-a population that is also growing into disability - individuals may have smaller social networks and experience various social and structural barriers. This study aimed to better understand the experience of the immigrant journey on loneliness as an indicator of both immigrant health and social integration. In a jointly conducted study by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Statistics Canada, this study examined how social isolation—including living arrangements, social support, communication barriers, and housebound status—was associated with loneliness among immigrants with disabilities compared with Canadian-born persons with disabilities. The study used data from the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability to compare loneliness between immigrants and Canadian-born persons with disabilities. Descriptive statistics examined differences in social isolation, and multivariable models estimated the probability of experiencing moderate and severe loneliness versus no or low levels of loneliness. Models included interactions between nativity and four indicators of social isolation—living arrangements, social support, communication barriers, and housebound status—and were adjusted for disability-related and demographic characteristics. Bivariate results showed no significant differences in the indicators of social isolation between immigrants and Canadian-born persons with disabilities. Multinomial results controlling for covariates revealed that living alone associated with a higher probability of severe loneliness, and this association was stronger for immigrants than Canadian-born persons with disabilities. Lacking social support, having a communication barrier, and being housebound also associated with higher probabilities of severe loneliness. However, immigrants with disabilities who had social support, had no communication barriers, and were not housebound remained to have a higher probability of severe loneliness than their Canadian-born counterparts. There was a strong association between social isolation and the experience of severe loneliness among immigrants with disabilities.

SOM3a-2 - Immigrant, Discrimination and Pride for Canadian Society: A Cross-Sectional Analysis Using the Canadian GSS

Era Rana, Western University

Immigrants constitute nearly one-quarter of Canada's population (Statistics Canada 2022), making their integration central to a well-functioning society (McCollough, Sargsyan, and Luo 2023). This study examines how immigrants and non-immigrants perceive social integration, conceptualized as feelings of pride for the Canadian society, and evaluates whether experiences of discrimination

influence this relationship. Reitz and Banerjee (2007) found that experiences of discrimination negatively affect immigrants' rates of social integration into Canadian society. Furthermore, since the onset of COVID-19, race, ethnicity and religion-motivated hate crimes increased at a faster rate than before (Wang and Moreau 2022). Drawing on data from the General Social Survey (GSS) Cycle 35 on Social Identity public data file, this study constructs indices of perceived pride in Canadian society and experiences of discrimination before and since the start of COVID-19. The data collection period of Cycle 35 was between August 2020 and February 2021, making this data a good indicator of the social conditions important to examining this relationship. The analysis uses OLS linear regression to assess the influence of discrimination on the relationship between landed immigrant status and feelings of pride for Canadian society. Furthermore, controls for the province of residence, age group, gender, and visible minority status. The findings indicate that, after accounting for missing data, experiences of discrimination before and since COVID-19 significantly moderate the relationship between immigrant status and pride. Before Covid-19, despite discrimination, immigrants were significantly more likely than native-born Canadians to report greater feelings of pride in Canadian society; however, since Covid-19, higher experiences of discrimination are significantly associated with lower feelings of pride among immigrants compared to native-born Canadians.

SOM3a-3 - Divergence Without Detachment: Value Discrepancy and National Pride Across Immigrant Generations in Canada

Capri Kong, University of British Columbia

This study examines how value discrepancy—the gap between individuals' values and those of average Canadians—shapes national pride across immigrant generations in Canada. Building on scholarships of boundary work and social identity theory, I ask whether perceiving shared value distance from average citizens undermines national membership and pride. National pride is a form of group attachment with implications for civic engagement. Yet two gaps limit current scholarship. First, research often treats pride as event-driven, emphasising crises or major national moments and under-theorising "everyday nationhood," in which attachment can be built in settled times. Second, scholarship often conceptualises sameness as the basis of group attachment, treating difference as a threat to cohesion and collective identity. The literature thus has not sufficiently theorised how individuals sustain national pride when perceiving divergences between their own values and those of average citizens. Using Canada's 2020 General Social Survey (N=34,044), I construct a 12-item Canadian national pride index as the dependent variable. I operationalise value discrepancy across six civic domains (i.e., Human Rights) by subtracting self-rated values from perceived national averages. I employ hierarchical linear regression with interaction terms to analyse the relationship between value discrepancies and national pride across first-, second-, and third-plus generations. Across generations, respondents rate their own values higher than they attribute to average Canadians. Discrepancies are smallest among first-generation and widen significantly among subsequent generations, driven by declining evaluations of the "average Canadian" rather than shifts in self-values. In regression models, larger discrepancies predict lower pride among first-generation, but this negative association is attenuated—and, in some domains, reversed—among subsequent generations. I theorise a generational shift from boundary softening (minimise difference to validate memberships) to boundary monitoring (critiquing the average to claim stewardship). I argue that perceived value discrepancy can function as a claim to national ownership rather than an assimilation deficit.

SOM3a-4 - Reworking Parenting and Family Belonging: Hong Kong Migrant Families in Vancouver After the 2019 Political Crisis

Jocelyn Chu, University of British Columbia

Many Hong Kong parents who migrated after the 2019 political upheaval find that everyday parenting carries both emotional and cultural weight as they navigate stability and identity for their children. While previous literature have explored Hong Kong migration and transnational parenting separately, they rarely examine how political crises reshape parenting ideologies for post-2019 middle-class migrants in Vancouver. This leaves an important gap in understanding how political events affect family life. This study investigates how Hong Kong parents explain their decision to migrate and how they redefine what "good" parenting means in a new institutional and cultural environment. Using semi-structured interviews with recently arrived parents, the project applies thematic analysis to identify how they describe their shifts in values and practices. Early findings suggest that migration in the midst of political uncertainty makes parenting challenging because parents try to preserve cultural traditions and values while their children adapt to assimilate. This creates tension between the families working to maintain their ethnic identity and helping the children feel included in Canadian society. These findings have implications for designing settlement, education, and family-support programs that help parents preserve cultural identity while reducing conflict with their children.

(SOM3b) Evidence-based Research on Immigrant Integration II

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

This SOM research cluster contributes to discussions on the immigrant economic integration including labour market outcomes, poverty, entrepreneurship, and inequality. All papers use quantitative approaches, but they examine a wide range of topics such as religious differences in economic integration, occupational clustering by visible minority status, and the persistence of poverty over time, the factors associated with refugee self-employment, and the relationship between housing tenure and emigration.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

Session Chair: Ka U Ng, Saint Mary's University

SOM3b-1 - Occupational Niches of Recently Graduated Visible and Non-Visible Minority Students in Canada: Who Takes the Low-Status Jobs?

Fernando Mata, University of Ottawa

Using data from the 2023 National Graduate Survey of Canada, this paper explored the occupational niches of recent graduates, comparing those of visible minorities to their non-visible minority counterparts who received degrees in 2020. The main research question guiding the research was whether visible minority status played a role in their insertion in low-status occupational niches while taking into account investments in human capital in the form of study programs as well as other factors yielding similar positions in Canadian labour markets. The sample of graduate students drawn

for the study totalled 12,034 respondents, representing approximately 400 thousand who graduated in Canada during 2020. Multiple Correspondence and logistic regression analyses revealed that, net from other factors, students of Black and/or Latin American backgrounds were among the most likely to work in low-status occupational niches in 2023, while those of South Asian origins were among the most likely to avoid them. Overall, the study highlights a scenario of difficult occupational decisions that both visible and non-visible minority students face at the initial stages of their transition into Canadian labour markets.

SOM3b-2 - Refugee Poverty in Quebec: Vulnerability Shaped by the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and Life Trajectories in the Host Society

Marcus Fraga, Université Laval

The socioeconomic integration of immigrants in Quebec has been widely studied, whereas research focusing specifically on refugees remains scarce. This paper seeks to address this gap in the literature by examining the economic vulnerability trajectories of refugee men and women in Quebec. Using the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), we analyze the relative poverty of Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs), Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs), and Inland Protected Persons (IPPs) admitted to Canada in the prime working age group (those aged from 25 to 54 at admission), between 1991 and 2011, and who declared income in Quebec. We apply the Low-Income Measure (LIM-50), defined as a fixed percentage of the adjusted median family income, to assess poverty levels. We then compare whether refugees admitted after the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) came into force in 2001 are more likely to live on a low income than those admitted after its implementation. This enables the assessment of the IRPA's impact on the profiles of prime working age refugees and its implications for their poverty trajectories. Using mixed models for recurrent events, we estimate the probability of a refugee experiencing economic vulnerability based on admission cohorts, refugee category, and demographic characteristics collected at the time refugee status was granted (sex, region of origin, age at admission), as well as human capital attributes (education level and knowledge of official languages) and time-varying family characteristics (marital status and number of minors in the household). Our findings reveal that although prime working age refugees admitted after the IRPA have more vulnerable sociodemographic profiles at admission than those admitted before the Act, they are less likely to experience episodes of relative poverty. This suggests that refugees in Quebec post-IRPA have seen improvements in their socioeconomic conditions compared to their pre-IRPA counterparts.

SOM3b-3 - The politics of home: Attitudes toward immigration and housing market competition

Terhas Ghebretecle and Thomas Soehl, McGill University

The literature on attitudes toward immigration has historically been split into two broad camps. The first emphasizes economic self-interest as a prime motivator influencing attitudes toward immigration (e.g. perceptions about competition for jobs). The second emphasizes sociopsychological influences on attitude formation (e.g. national identity, ethnocentrism). To date, a growing body of evidence points to these latter 'sociotropic' factors. Rather than economic self-interest about one's own job, it is (for example) concerns about a national labour market more generally that are the primary driver of attitudes. However, these studies have primarily focused on concerns about labour market competition. Our study puts these longstanding debates to the test in

a new (yet salient) domain - concerns about the housing market effects of immigration. We adapt existing tests of the labour market competition model into the Canadian housing market context — a particularly instructive case as public sentiment toward immigration has recently reached historic lows widely attributed to the perceived impact of the housing crisis. During the 2025 federal election we fielded a survey experiment to about 8000 respondents across Canada. Contrary to the dominant finding that anti-immigration attitudes are rooted in sociotropic concerns about the "national community", we find that when it comes to housing, anti-immigration sentiment may at least in part be rooted in concrete economic self-interest.

SOM3b-4 - More Education, More Discrimination? The Integration Paradox for Asians in the United States

Presenting Author - Vanessa Zhu, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Sophie Xiaoyi Liu, University of British Columbia

Previous studies have identified the "integration paradox," whereby structurally better-integrated minorities report higher levels of perceived discrimination. In this study, we examine this paradox among Asians in the U.S. using data from the National Asian American Survey 2016 Post-Election Survey. We find that higher educational attainment is consistently associated with increased perceptions of discrimination. Mediation analysis and Structural Equation Model analysis reveal that this relationship is driven by outward-facing integration mechanisms, specifically increased U.S. political knowledge, political interest, and intergroup contact. Furthermore, based on interaction analysis, we find that while the paradox persists for the U.S.-educated Asians, the association is significantly stronger for those educated abroad. This suggests that while the structural effect of racialization affects all Asians in the U.S. regardless of nativity, transitional migration experience can add to the effect as an amplifier. Our findings underscore that education not only confers socioeconomic status but also provides the cognitive frameworks and exposure necessary to perceive systemic inequality, reframing integration as a dual process of objective success and subjective exclusion.

(SOM4) Sociology of Migration: Politics, Citizenship and Public Perceptions on Immigration

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

SOM research cluster's open session examines the political dimensions, issues of citizenship, and perceptions of immigration. The first paper examines interest in both host- and home-country politics among Syrian refugees in Canada. The second paper examines how Canadian political discourse constructs different refugee groups and how these constructions shape facets of refugee admission and settlement. The third paper adopts a qualitative approach to explore how lived experiences shape naturalization decisions. The fourth and fifth paper explore perceptions of immigration. Using data from survey experiment conducted during the 2025 federal election, the fourth considers the roles of economic self-interest and sociopsychological influences on attitude toward immigration. The fifth paper focuses on the prevalence of myths about migration among security services and armed forces.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

Session Chair: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University

SOM4-1 - Politics Between Here and There: Political Interest in Syria and Canada Among Syrian Refugees in Canada

Ka U Ng, Saint Mary's University

Political socialization among migrants and refugees is not a new topic in migration research. Classic arguments suggest that migrants often shift attention away from homeland politics toward the destination, with political engagement being one of the domains most likely to fade or reorient. Yet few studies systematically examine interest in both host- and home-country politics within the same framework. Using two waves of a recently collected, nationally representative survey of Syrian refugees in Canada, this study analyzes political interest in both Syria and Canada. I estimate baseline and lagged ordered logistic models, along with multinomial logistic models, to assess stability and change over time. The results show no significant shift from interest in Syrian politics to Canadian politics over time. Instead, both baseline and lagged models highlight variation tied to settlement and social ties. At baseline, ethnic capital is associated with lower Canadian interest but higher Syrian interest, and those who find life in Canada harder than expected remain more Syria-focused and less Canada-focused. In the longitudinal lagged models, native friends increase Canadian political interest but do not reduce Syrian interest, while cross-border ties help sustain Syrian interest without necessarily lowering Canadian interest. Women show lower political interest overall. Together, these findings suggest that political interest is not simply a zero-sum choice between “here” and “there,” but can be sustained—or decline—in both contexts at the same time.

SOM4-2 - Compassion Without Equality: Afghan and Ukrainian Displacement in Canadian Politics

Presenting Author - Hamid Akbary, University of Lethbridge

Non-presenting Authors - Omid Asayesh and Abdie Kazemipur, University of Calgary

This paper examines how Canadian political discourse constructs different refugee groups and how these constructions shape the perceived urgency, legitimacy, and manageability of refugee admission and settlement. Focusing on Afghans and Ukrainians, the study asks how parliamentary debates narrate crisis, responsibility, and belonging in ways that matter for migration governance. Canada is often portrayed as a humanitarian leader in refugee protection, yet responses to different displacement crises have varied markedly. While the Ukrainian displacement following Russia’s 2022 invasion prompted rapid and exceptional policy measures, Afghan displacement after the Taliban’s 2021 takeover unfolded through slower, more bureaucratic processes. Existing migration scholarship has shown that refugee policies are shaped not only by law and institutions, but also by political narratives that define who is deserving, urgent, and feasible to admit. The study draws on Canadian House of Commons debates on immigration, refugee resettlement, and humanitarian response between 2021 and 2024. Using topic modeling to identify dominant themes, the analysis is based on computational analysis of an extensively large corpus of textual data. The study finds that Ukrainians are consistently framed through language of immediacy, shared history, and moral clarity, emphasizing speed, visa facilitation, community welcome, and defence of democracy. Afghans, by

contrast, are discussed primarily through bureaucratic and humanitarian frames, emphasizing processing delays, security checks, vulnerability, and administrative constraints. Even when compassion is expressed, Afghan displacement is narrated as complex and difficult to manage, while Ukrainian displacement is framed as urgent and politically actionable. The findings show how unequal treatment of refugees can emerge through discourse rather than explicit exclusion. The paper contributes to the sociology of migration by highlighting how migration management, humanitarianism, and deservingness are produced through political language long before they appear in formal policy outcomes.

SOM4-3 - To Naturalize or Not? A Comparative Study of Naturalization Decisions among Migrants in Canada

Presenting Authors - Sara Hormozinejad, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Toronto; Deepa Nagari, Toronto Metropolitan University, York University

Non-presenting Author - Anna Triandafyllidou, Toronto Metropolitan University

This study offers in-depth insights into how migrants in Canada navigate decisions to naturalize, delay naturalization, or refrain from pursuing citizenship despite being eligible. In Canada, naturalization trends have been shifting over the past two decades. While quantitative studies document these shifts, less is known about migrants' lived experiences that shape their naturalization decisions. This study adopts a qualitative approach to address this gap. Drawing on 50 semi-structured interviews with naturalized citizens and eligible permanent residents across Canada, the study examines migrants' decision-making processes regarding naturalization. Participants came from a diverse set of countries, including those that permit dual citizenship—Iran, Pakistan, the Philippines, and France—and those that prohibit it—China, India, Nepal, and the Netherlands. Our findings reveal naturalization as a multidimensional and life-course process shaped by shifting personal circumstances and structural constraints. Global mobility, long-term security, and children's futures emerged as central motivations for naturalizing, especially among migrants from the Global South. Participants from countries that prohibit dual citizenship described significant material and emotional barriers, including property rights and caregiving responsibilities in their countries of origin, while others sought policy exceptions or relied on informal strategies to retain dual citizenship. Permanent residency's extensive rights in Canada further reduced incentives to naturalize, while geopolitical tensions introduced vulnerabilities for some dual citizens. By centring migrants' perspectives, this study shows how legal frameworks, transnational obligations, and emotional attachments interact to shape naturalization trajectories. These insights contribute to ongoing debates about immigrant integration in Canada's evolving naturalization landscape.

SOM4-4 - When Contact Is Not Enough: Migration Myths among Security and Armed Forces

Marketa Seidlova, University of Defence

Migration and the coexistence of diverse ethnic population groups are significant social issues in contemporary Western democracies, including Czechia. The Russian attack on Ukraine in 2022 led to an unprecedented influx of refugees, effectively doubling the migrant and refugee population in the country within less than a year. Despite this increase, many people harbour ambivalent feelings about immigration, and politicians and media often perpetuate a series of pseudoscientific claims about migration. Consequently, public debate fluctuates between concerns, expectations, and practical

challenges of coexistence. In spring 2025, a quantitative study using a questionnaire (N = 155) was conducted to understand the prevalence of ten popular myths about migration among security services and armed forces. Preference was given to diverse respondents, including army personnel, police, firefighters, and prison service members, over achieving statistical representativeness. The study revealed that the most widely believed myth is that Muslim migration is the biggest threat to national security (67%), linked to fears of terrorism. The second myth (63%) concerns the emigration of Czech professionals as a significant national economic issue. Additionally, 60% of respondents believe in the myth that migrants are associated with crime, although this view is least held among firefighters. The belief that migrants come for social benefits is divisive across the different services. Half of the respondents think that migrants pose a health threat. Interestingly, 85% of those who know a migrant personally still perceive international migration as a security threat, suggesting that attitudes are shaped more by the broader social environment than by direct experience. Only 30% would consider accepting a foreigner as a family member. The high level of social distance displayed by members of these services presents significant challenges for future educational interventions on migration.

(SOM-RC) Sociology of Migration Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Migration Research Cluster

Members of the CSA are invited to attend this brief but important Sociology of Migration Research Cluster meeting. The winner of the best student paper award for the SOM cluster will be announced. Come prepared to share new ideas and to propose possible themes for sessions and panels for the 2027 annual CSA meeting of the Sociology of Migration Cluster. The mission of the Sociology of Migration Cluster, and the CSA-related sessions, is to cultivate diverse and enriching conversations that bring together students, faculty, independent researchers, and research institutes/centers from across Canada together to share research results and policy-relevant developments.

Session Organizers: Max Stick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Shirin Khayambashi, Toronto Metropolitan University; Lisa Kaida, McMaster University

(SPT) Sociology of Sport Research Cluster

(SPT1) New Directions in the Sociological Study of Gender and Sport
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Sociology of Sport Research Cluster

This session features contemporary Canadian sociological understandings of gender and sport. Presenters address a range of timely issues, including violence against women in sport-related contexts, gender inequality in sport organizations, the policing of women's and gender-diverse athletes' bodies, media representations, and the intersections of gender with ethnicity and social class. Collectively, the presentations highlight how sport functions as a site of social exclusion and harm, while also examining possibilities for resistance, human agency, and social justice.

Session Organizers: Walter DeKeseredy, West Virginia University; Kim Dubé, Université de Moncton; Bryan Hogeveen, University of Alberta; Lauren Dormer, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Walter DeKeseredy, West Virginia University

SPT1-1 - Fanfiction as Subversion? Analyzing Expressions of Gender in Fanfictions Centering Mitch Marner and Auston Matthews

Adri Prattas, Queen's University

With the rising interest in the hyper-masculinity imbued within professional ice hockey, some discussions suggest that creative works of fiction hold the potential of subverting this toxic masculinity through 'queering' the sphere of hockey (McKenzie 2026; Much Much Spectrum 2026). One avenue for these generative creative works is the domain of fanfiction, which has been recognized in literature for its subversive potential (Fiesler et al. 2016; Fiesler and Dym 2020; Robertson 2019). In this content analysis, I ask: how are gender and masculinity performed within fanfictions written in the context of stereotypically hyper-masculine spheres that centre fictional gay male relationships? To answer this question, I analyze 44 fanfictions on the platform AO3 centering the relationship between NHL hockey players Mitch Marner and Auston Matthews. I argue that representations within fanfictions embody and reproduce dominant heteropatriarchal and heteronormative gender and sexual structures through their portrayals of an oppositional feminine-masculine relationship between Marner and Matthews respectively. In these fanfictions, authors consistently position Marner as feminine through the portrayal of his ‘small’ physique, emotional and sensitive personality, and his role as a submissive recipient of sex. This is in direct opposition to Matthews, who is positioned as masculine through exaggerated physical size and strength, unemotional and authoritative personality, and sexual dominance in the fictional relationship with Marner. This analysis suggests a need for critically approaching and reconsidering what is deemed as a ‘subversion’ of hyper-masculine cultures within fanworks; merely writing men in a fictional same-sex relationship is not a subversion when the fictional relationship embodies and reproduces dominant heteronormative scripts.

SPT1-2 - Woman Abuse in Hockey-Related Contexts: The Current State of Social Scientific Knowledge

Walter DeKeseredy, West Virginia University

A new international cadre of social scientists is revisiting male-to-female violence in sport-related contexts (SRC), a social problem that received much scholarly attention in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the bulk of the current empirical and theoretical work on woman abuse in SRC today focuses on the gendered harms caused by U.S. football and basketball players. Recently, though, due in large part to the significant international media attention given to the Spring 2025 sexual assault trial involving five former members of Canada’s 2018 World Junior hockey team, some academics are generating new data strongly suggesting that elite male hockey players are just as, if not more, abusive than men who play in elite basketball and football leagues. The main objective of this article is to review the current state of social scientific knowledge about hockey players’ violence against women. Recommendations for further research and theoretical development are also provided.

SPT1-3 - Professional Female Hockey Coaches: Issues of Gender, Race and Power

Presenting Author - Lauren Dormer, University of Alberta

Non-presenting Author - Bryan Hogeveen, University of Alberta

Jessica Campbell made history in 2024 when she became the first female assistant coach in the National Hockey League (NHL). Like Jessica, many women have been making important inroads into what has traditionally been a male dominated profession. Despite the small gains women have made, they remain highly underrepresented in paid hockey coaching positions. Women not only face unique barriers to entry into this field, but those who eventually gain access experience distinct challenges from their male counterparts that may hinder their advancement. This paper examines the experiences of female professional hockey coaches. Our research intends to inform best practices and policies that can foster a more inclusive and equitable environment for women in not only hockey, but sport in general.

SPT1-4 - When social status protects athletes: A feminist analysis of media discourses on sexual violence

Presenting Author - Kim Dubé, Université de Moncton

Non-presenting Author - Luc Léger, Université d'Ottawa

This communication examines media representations of sexual violence committed by male athletes, focusing on the interactions between social status, public notoriety, and the credibility afforded to survivors. Grounded in a feminist critical criminology framework, the study employs a feminist critical discourse analysis to examine how Canadian media in French and English contribute to the construction of gendered and status inequalities and power struggles. The analysis suggests that media emphasis on the social status of athlete-perpetrators reinforces their public visibility while simultaneously contributing to the disqualification and questioning of survivors' credibility among audiences.

(TEA) Teaching and Learning Cluster

(TEA1) Thinking with Undergrads: Meeting their Worlds, Experiences, and Selves
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Teaching and Learning Cluster

How does the 'doing' of sociology translate to the undergraduate classroom environment? Experiential learning invites instructors to ground their teaching in the practical needs and lived realities of their students, while sociology motivates us to ask what, within those realities, students may take for granted. Presenters discuss the techniques and strategies best suited to engage students in making sense of the social, political, environmental, and epistemological challenges they face today. Topics include conducting classroom-based social research, working collaboratively with other students, assignments using non-traditional media, and land-based learning in the context of decolonization.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Michael Follert, St. Francis Xavier University; Patricia Cormack, St. Francis Xavier University

TEA1-1 - Finding the cracks: teaching and learning sociology at a time of collapse.

Presenting Author - Riley Olstead, St. Francis Xavier University

Non-presenting Author - Emma Dixon, St. Francis Xavier University

While sociologists like C. Wright Mills, Jane Addams, and Karl Marx have long urged a praxis-oriented discipline that connects theory with social transformation, sociology has remained largely embedded in "the map, not the territory" (Korbynski, 1933)—such that even our calls to action are often suspended in abstraction. The Nova Scotia government's directive to implement Experiential Learning (EL) in universities has triggered backlash. Many academics interpret it as government overreach, a threat to academic autonomy, and yet another gesture toward turning universities into talent pipelines for capitalist markets, rather than sites of critical inquiry and public good. Guided by the Mi'kmaw principle of *Etuaptmumk* (two-eyed seeing) (Bartlett et al,) and other Indigenous worldviews, we offer another reading. We ask, what if this moment is marking more than neoliberal encroachment? What if it signals the decomposition of modernity itself—a collapsing system rooted in the illusion of separation: between humans and nature, mind and body, researcher and subject, thought and action (Machado de Oliveira, 2021). From this view, EL emerges as both symptom *and* seed: It reflects the crumbling scaffolds of modern knowledge production, but also opens a space (however unintended) for relational, emotional, and land-based ways of learning that are urgently needed in our time of intersecting crises. Drawing from our experience from within a sociologically-inflected, land-based learning course grounded in two-eyed seeing, we explore how EL might become a context for preparing students not merely for employment, but for entangled living on a planet in upheaval. We argue that EL, approached with care and accountability, may offer a rare institutional crack: a site where decolonial and meta-relational shifts can be seeded within the ruins of the university.

TEA1-2 - From Start to Finish - Guiding Undergraduate Students Through the Social Research Process

Annette Tézli, University of Calgary

Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CURE) provide undergraduate students with experiential learning opportunities and equalize access to applied research experiences throughout the curriculum. In this presentation I will discuss my approach to guiding students through a group-based, semester-long empirical research project in my Introductory Social Research Methods course. I will provide an overview of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles I relied on in the course design and show how I guide students through the research process using scaffolded assignments. I will share specific strategies I use to encourage students to not only empirically examine the social world, but also to interrogate their own assumptions about that world. Finally, I will demonstrate how students, through their own empirical inquiry, learn to critically examine the benefits and limitations of dominant social science research principles.

TEA1-3 - Socio-ME-ology: How un-essay assignments aid in students' explorations of sociology and self

Sarah Yercich, Capilano University; Connor MacMillan, York University

"Un-essay" projects are an innovative approach to engaging learners in sociological exploration. This presentation explores an un-essay assignment, *Socio-ME-ology*, which is used in Introduction to Sociology courses as a means through which students make sense of the relationship between sociology and self. The Socio-ME-ology project supports learners' engagement with their sociological imaginations to unpack their lived experiences through the lens of socio-structural concepts. This project challenges the boundaries of traditional academic expression and assessment by allowing students to choose their own medium(s) for conveying their "sociology of self" including, but not limited to, photography, film, art, music, poetry, storytelling, and performance; that is, anything other than an academic essay.

TEA1-4 - Centering Student Voice: Listening to International Students in Community-Engaged Sociology

Katherine Lyon, University of British Columbia

Community-engaged learning (CEL) is a popular educational approach for sociology teaching across Canada and globally. Students in sociology courses with this experiential component can opt in to enhance their learning by working with community members and organizations in structured, low-stakes ways that forward community priorities. Evidence shows that CEL in sociology courses supports students in developing a wide variety of skills. However, little is known about how international students in sociology courses engage with this pedagogy. Drawing on 20 semi-structured interviews with international students from Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe who completed CEL programming as part of their sociology course curriculum at UBC, I show how these students engaged in unique learning practices. The findings indicate that international students draw upon their life experiences from diverse national contexts to navigate and reflect upon their CEL placement in sociological ways. These students' voices offer rich insights for sociology educators designing course-based CEL opportunities with a multinational student body.

(TEA3) Teaching and Assessment in the Age of AI: Supporting – Not Circumventing – Learning
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Teaching and Learning Cluster

The growing presence of artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education is reshaping the landscape of teaching and learning in higher education, challenging traditional practices while creating new opportunities for innovation. In sociology, where students engage in writing as part of their learning and development, there is a significant risk that GenAI will obfuscate traditional methods of demonstrating understanding and engaging with sociological ideas. This session invites presentations that explore how sociologists are engaging with AI pedagogically - whether by designing innovative assignments that incorporate AI, developing assessments that foster critical AI literacy, or reimagining classroom practices to address academic integrity in the AI age. Presentations will focus on evidence-based strategies and experiences. The goal of the session is for participants to have the opportunity to engage with sociology instructors who have found ways to articulate uses of GenAI

that are beneficial to student learning of sociology, learn from those instructors' experiences, and walk away with a new teaching or assessment strategy.

Session Organizers: Chris Tatham, University of Guelph; Jayne Baker, University of Toronto Mississauga

Session Chair: Jayne Baker, University of Toronto Mississauga

TEA3-1 - Learning Curves: Discussing Assessment Designs that Enable and Restrict GenAI Use

Nathan Innocente, University of Toronto

Anecdotally, many teachers are at a crossroads with the use of GenAI by students in higher education. The use of GenAI is banned in some classes, embraced in others, and ignored in others still. Research on learning and GenAI shows that reliance on AI, rather than critical engagement with course material, can lead to passive learning and a reduction in overall knowledge acquisition and skills development. Yet, integrating GenAI can also expand student learning and teach students how to navigate the often-fraught landscape of GenAI output. Using two courses in the sociology of crime as examples, this session discusses assessment design strategies to maximize student learning: one that restricts the use of GenAI, and one that embraces it. First, this session will invite discussion about assessment design strategies that restrict the use of GenAI and compel students to rely on their own thinking and research. Second, this session will discuss an example assessment designed with support from librarians and educational developers trained in the integration of GenAI that encourages the critical use of AI and critical assessments of AI output. These GenAI enabled assessments both achieve course learning outcomes and also introduce new learning outcomes focusing on the use and interpretation of GenAI output.

TEA3-2 - The Impact of Open-Book, Open-Web (OBOW) Exams on Student Satisfaction and Motivation

Oral Robinson and Amos Toh, University of British Columbia

As generative AI and asynchronous learning reshape higher education, Open-Book, Open-Web (OBOW) exams have gained prominence. Unlike traditional formats, OBOW assessments prioritize critical thinking, synthesis, and the application of concepts over rote memorization. Despite their increasing use, empirical research remains limited regarding how student characteristics influence performance and satisfaction in this format. This study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, analyzing open- and closed-ended questionnaire responses from three large undergraduate Sociology courses (n = 539) that transitioned from closed-book to open-book examinations. The research addresses three primary questions: (1) the impact of OBOW exams on study motivation; (2) overall student satisfaction; and (3) the role of social location in shaping these perceptions. Preliminary findings indicate high levels of satisfaction, with students noting that the shift from memorization to application fostered deeper learning and reduced exam-related stress. Conversely, a significant portion of the cohort reported a marked decrease in motivation to prepare. The analysis suggests that while OBOW formats are perceived favorably, they require careful calibration to maintain academic rigor, especially in light of pervasive AI use. The presentation concludes with evidence-based strategies for educators to optimize the balance between student satisfaction and engagement, specifically by designing OBOW assessments that intentionally incorporate and

critically engage generative AI as a tool for higher-order analysis rather than unexamined substitution. We argue that, in an era shaped by generative AI, social science pedagogy can be structured to promote complex, creative application of course material while preserving the foundational benefits of content retention and academic integrity.

TEA3-3 - Rethinking Assessments in the Age of AI

Chris Tatham, University of Guelph

As generative AI becomes increasingly embedded in academic work, instructors face pressing questions about how to design assignments that acknowledge its presence while preserving meaningful learning. This session presents practical strategies for integrating generative AI into assignment design in intentional and pedagogically sound ways. Drawing on experiences from courses that permit limited AI use within assessments, the session explores how students can employ AI to generate imagery, improve slide design, locate and evaluate sources, outline and edit written work, and aid studying. The session highlights strategies to maintain academic integrity throughout this process, such the submission of drafts of work, as the use of AI-interaction transcripts.

(TEA5) The Politics of Learning: Sociological Dialogues of Education

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Teaching and Learning Cluster

Education has become one of the most visible sites of political and cultural polarization in Canada and beyond. Public debates over curriculum reform, parental rights, and diversity mirror deeper anxieties about social cohesion, democracy, and belonging. In this context, the sociology of education provides a vital framework for analyzing how institutions, policies, and discourses reproduce or resist inequality, and for imagining more inclusive futures of learning. By bringing together critical, decolonial, and interdisciplinary perspectives, the session aims to foster nuanced conversations about education as both a site of conflict and a space for collective transformation. Drawing from ongoing research on the discourse in Canadian policy and media, this session also highlights how the language of crisis can obscure structural inequalities while shifting responsibility from institutions to individuals. Through such analyses, we can better understand how education both reflects and shapes public anxieties about race, merit, citizenship, and social order.

Session Organizer: Aleah Klein-Gebbinck, Athabasca University

Session Chairs: Aleah Klein-Gebbinck, Athabasca University; Paula Elias, Brock University

TEA5-1 - Education and Socio-Economic Immigrant Integration: Canadian Perspective

Anila Zainub, Independent Researcher

In this presentation, I argue that educational institutions are spaces for immigrant integration as they present valuable opportunities for socialization as well as skills for future financial independence. However, insufficient emphasis is placed on the role of educational institutions in immigrant integration in current research. There is a need to understand how education must value immigrant inclusivity and representation while helping them align their goals with future aspirations. In support of my argument, I draw insights from my previous research on high skilled immigrant integration of Muslims in Canada (Zainub, 2023) and the current research literature on Muslim immigrants in

academia (Baksh, 2024) which shows issues such as professional challenges, gender discrimination and racism. This work also connects policy (Bill 21) and social inequity (Zainub, 2025) and brings perspective to social and economic implications of Canadian institutions as spaces for immigrant integration. This discussion presents an intersectional analysis of race, gender, and religious identity, and the lived experiences of Muslim immigrants in particular which shows discouragement and feelings of fear, isolation, stress, and anxiety (Alizai, 2021; Anwar, 2020).

TEA5-2 - From Resistance to Integration: Mapping the Global Transformation of AI in Universities

Sameena Karim Jamal, University of the Fraser valley

Artificial intelligence has rapidly transitioned from an emerging technology to a ubiquitous presence in higher education, yet institutional responses remain fragmented and often reactive. This presentation examines global trends in AI adoption across universities by synthesizing data from multiple international surveys spanning student, employer, graduate, and faculty perspectives. Drawing on recent studies, this presentation reveals a striking misalignment between stakeholder expectations and institutional preparedness. Survey data demonstrates that between 86% and 90% of students currently use AI for academic purposes, with usage rates rising sharply year over year. Simultaneously, employers increasingly prioritize AI literacy in hiring decisions, with over 50% expecting foundational AI knowledge from candidates. However, only 3% of employers believe universities adequately prepare graduates for AI-augmented workplaces, while 80% of students report their institutions fail to meet their AI integration expectations. Faculty perspectives reveal additional tensions: two-thirds recognize AI integration as essential for preparing students for AI-augmented workplaces, yet 40% identify as beginners in AI literacy, and over three-quarters report insufficient institutional support in this area. This presentation maps recent institutional initiatives worldwide, situating these developments within broader patterns of educational transformation. The analysis critically examines the implications of two divergent faculty approaches: permitting versus excluding AI in higher education. Ultimately, this research argues that higher education faces not a choice about whether AI will transform teaching and learning, but rather whether institutions will shape that transformation intentionally or respond to it reactively, with profound implications for institutional relevance and student preparedness in an increasingly AI-augmented world.

TEA5-3 - Education Under Authoritarianism: What Is Home-Based School A Tool For?

Selay Ghaffar, University of Toronto

Girls' secondary education was banned by the Taliban through a decree issued on September 12, 2021—just days after the start of the academic year—following their return to power in Afghanistan. In response, clandestine home-based schools emerged as a vital educational alternative. This paper examines the clandestine home-based school as a tool constructed through feminist resistance and grassroots innovation in opposition to authoritarian repression. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 23 women teachers across Afghanistan from November 2024 to August 2025 and employing Adele Clarke's Situational Analysis and the Science and Technology Framework, this paper analyses home-based schools as a tool within the current historical and socio-political context. My use of Adele Clarke’s Situational Analysis allows me to map the complex socio-material relations that shape these clandestine schools, including teachers, students, households, technologies (e.g., textbooks, mobile phones, and etc), and repressive actors. The findings reveal that these home-based

schools are not only an alternative tool for educating girls in Afghanistan today but also a tool for invisible activism, women's resistance, and empowerment; a tool for socialization, solidarity and hope; a tool for combating early forced marriages; and a tool for feminist pedagogy. The findings emphasize the importance of recognizing grassroots, women-led education initiatives as feminist resistance strategies for survival, women's empowerment and gender justice under the Taliban's authoritarian regime. The paper provides empirical insight and a theoretical contribution to feminist resistance, the sociology of education, and Science and Technology Studies.

(THE) Social Theory Cluster

(THE1) Symposium for Early Career Theorists (SECT)

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Social Theory Cluster

The Social Theory Research Cluster invited paper proposals for its twelfth annual Symposium for Early Career Theorists, a dedicated session that spotlights the work of emerging social theorists at an early stage in their careers (PhD Candidates who are ABD status and those who are no more than five years beyond completion of their doctorate). Social theory is an open and dynamic field, and so in that spirit we seek papers that reflect, expand and/or critique the array of social phenomena that can be theorized. The Social Theory Research Cluster aims to make SECT a flagship for social theory in Canada and to renew and consolidate the place of theorizing in the Canadian sociological imagination.

Session Organizers: Mario Marotta, Université du Québec à Montréal; Sarah Badr, McGill University

Session Chair: Sarah Badr, McGill University

THE1-1 - Five decades of theorizing the post-industrial society: an uncertain retrospective

Elizabeth Cameron, Dalhousie University

In 1973, Daniel Bell drew a portrait of what he termed the post-industrial society: a modern, globalizing social order that primarily revolved around intellectual technologies instead of industrial production. An intense and productive dialogue about how to conceptualize contemporary social life followed. Since then, smartphones and social media platforms have further collapsed time and space, a global pandemic unfolded, and we find ourselves waking up to increasingly blunt declarations from political leaders that the old world order is over. How do we make theoretical sense of social life in a globalized world that is interlaced with interdependencies and novel uncertainties? This paper revisits sociological theories of post-industrial (post)modernity to explore what resonance these accounts have for conceptualizing the social worlds we encounter today. I approach this through a thematic lens of uncertainty: in addition to Bell's work, I engage in a retrospective critical synthesis of the ways that uncertainty is relevant in theorizations from Anthony Giddens, Zygmunt Bauman, David Harvey, and Ulrich Beck. I then bring sociological theories of ambivalence and ambiguity into the picture through an additional account from the (post)modernity discourse. Roughly a decade after Bell published his seminal book, Donald Levine argued for sociological theorists to resist what he described as a modern impulse to flee from ambiguity. With this in mind, I argue that recognizing

a dynamic chronicity of uncertainty provides a lifeline of hope, albeit an uncomfortable one, particularly for those who are unfamiliar with apocalyptic living. Thus, I conclude the paper by engaging theories of post-industrial (post)modernity with a different kind of "post", namely, that of postcolonial modernities. These avenues offer expansive means to theorize the twilight of the post-industrial society, as well as its "after", whenever and if that may be.

THE1-2 - Queering Sociology: An Intersectional Approach

Chris Lapp, University of Victoria

The notions of queering and intersectionality are often presented as relatively recent phenomena in sociology. This presentation aims to highlight and connect the historical genealogies of queering and intersectionality. Following Moussawi and Vidal-Ortiz's 2020 paper on "queer sociology," queering is understood as a theoretical intervention rather than a focus of traditional sociology on queer topics. In this sense, queering functions as a call to emphasize relations of power, including race, class, and gender, while simultaneously engaging with questions concerning the destabilization of the subject. For that reason, queering and intersectionality are seen as mutually entailed. This presentation develops its arguments through a historical-genealogical approach, drawing on readings of Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South* and Jane Addams' *Democracy and Social Ethics* as precursors to contemporary queer theorizing. Through this comparative analysis, points of convergence and divergence between early Black feminist and Pragmatist thought emerge and will be discussed. A central element of this will be the concepts of democracy as lived practice, standpoint epistemology, and intersectionality. Building on this analysis, the presentation turns to contemporary iterations of intersectional, queer, and feminist theory to trace lines of continuity between the historical work of Cooper and Addams and the more recent contributions of Audre Lorde, H. L. T. Quan, Françoise Vergès, and Nat Raha. This approach situates contemporary ideas of care, solidarity, and intersectionality within a broader historical trajectory while underscoring their continued relevance to current sociological inquiry. Overall, the presentation advances queering and intersectionality as foundational sociological frameworks rather than mere additions, and highlights their interconnection. This historical-genealogical perspective fosters research that is more attentive to how intersecting forms of exclusion shape knowledge production around historically marginalized bodies and underscores the need for their conceptual critique.

THE1-3 - A Theory of Freedom: Rights-Based Freedom, Quasi-Freedom, and Unfreedom

Yuewen Qu, York University

This paper presents a discussion of freedom in both free and non-free societies. In settings of the latter, individuals do not hold rights politically, legally, socially, or culturally; nevertheless, limited forms of freedom may be permitted in certain domains of social life, yet remain subject to revocation by law or official discretion, with deprivation operating through individualized targeting based on behavior and conduct rather than group identity. Thus, the existence of revocable freedoms does not imply the presence of rights; freedom and rights are no longer interchangeable. When freedom exists as permitted and subject to withdrawal, such permission-based freedom, or quasi-freedom, is distinct from freedom as a right and a constraint on authority itself. Therefore, across societies, freedom can be analytically distinguished into three forms: rights-based freedom, in which freedom functions as a constraint on power; quasi-freedom, in which freedom exists only as a revocable

permission; and unfreedom, in which no such permission exists. However, some quasi-free societies may appear indistinguishable from free societies in terms of freedom. An exemplary case of such appeared in Hong Kong, whose sovereignty was transferred in 1997 from the U.K.'s colonial rule to China's sovereign rule. The population did not recognize the changed form of freedom until after the mass protests of 2019. In such contexts, security legislation and administrative regulation criminalized and revoked freedom, retroactively delegitimizing its practice. The public witnessed the transfer of its legal system from a constraint on power before 1997 into a legal mechanism for repression.

(THE2) Foundations for Social Theory: Classical Perspectives and Metatheoretical Approaches
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Social Theory Cluster

This session explores the nature and scope of social theory as a foundational pillar of the social sciences. We welcome contributions that engage with sociological metatheory, the philosophy of social science, and critical re-readings of the "classics" of social thought. Among the classics we count not only the typical reference points of sociological thought - Marx, Durkheim, and Weber - but encourage engagement with a wider range of interdisciplinary influences. The session aims to foster a dialogue about old and new ways of understanding the social sciences, challenging the fundamental assumptions that guide present approaches to chart new paths and possibilities for social theory.

Session Organizers: Mario Marotta, Université du Québec à Montréal; Sarah Badr, McGill University

Session Chair: Soroush Masoud, University of Calgary

THE2-1 - Negative Dialectics and the Persistence of Affirmation

Anas Karzai, Laurentian University

In one of his last published works, Negative Dialectics (1966), the German philosopher and sociologist, Theodor Adorno writes, "to lend a voice to suffering is a condition for all truth." Adorno makes this sentiment more explicit through the sociological method he developed and named, negative dialectics. Adorno argues that negative dialectics, both as a concept and method of human emancipation focuses on the non-identity of the present. That is to say if our concepts, theories, methods and language do not capture and give voice to this suffering, then there is a contradiction within society. The concept of the dialectic has always been an integral part of western philosophy as is evident in the works of Plato, Hegel and Marx. However, Theodor Adorno breaks new ground by proposing the negation of the dialectic in order to overcome the pitfalls of both the idealist (Hegel) and the overoptimistic materialist (Marx) conceptions of dialectic. This paper has two goals: First, to explain Adorno's concept of negative dialectics which proposes to examine and challenge the thesis of the present and to not focus on the synthesis or the next stage of an unfolding history. For Adorno, the purpose of negative dialectics is not to look for grand synthesis or a moment of a final reconciliation but to embrace contradictions and non-identity as essential aspects of reality. And second, to argue that negative dialectics as a critique of society should not focus on individual phenomena - common in sociological thought - such as the environment, or workers' exploitation and or unemployment in capitalism but rather on the underlying social and political contradictions in

society as a whole. Adorno called this method of thought 'constellation thinking' - a way of making connections between many parts thus revealing the totality of society as its object of investigation.

THE2-2 - Turning into the World

Khalil Martin, University of Toronto

How to people generate the sense of participation in a shared World? Dualistic cultural theories--which presuppose a separate ideal realm of definite meanings--do not address this question at the heart of culture and, therefore, do not support World-sensitive cultural analysis. Instead of a dualist ontology, this paper employs a relational emergentist ontology to diagrammatically unfold a conceptual vocabulary which supports World-sensitive cultural analysis. Rather beginning with apriori cultural contents, the paper begins by identifying axiomatic World *tensions*, each of which features a near pole and a far pole. Drawing on the concept of 'opponent processing', and Mead's theory of self, the paper theorizes how orthogonal tensions may interact to produce *orbits* of meaning; meaning is 'circled', not definite. Further, it identifies different types of artefacts which can be socially practiced to produce and converge such orbitals; each draws attention in a different way, to address World tensions. The paper argues that an object is iconic to the degree that it cycles among these artifactual types. It uses the American Domestic Porch as a demonstrative example. Overall, the paper encourages thinking tensions before contents, moving orientations before semantic networks, as it is the dynamic triangulation of the former which generate transindividual coincidences in the latter. Diagrams are used to capture such orientational thinking in both form and content. Ultimately, the hope is to help draw cultural analysis away from this or that scholastic perch, and into the living Whorld [sic].

THE2-3 - Introducing Reflexive Grounded Trust: Reflecting on Trust to Advance Theory Development in Grounded Theory

Annika Barzen, TU Chemnitz

This presentation introduces a cumulative Habilitation project introducing *Reflexive Grounded Trust* (RGT), a framework which aims to explicitly integrate the reflection of trust into the process of qualitative theorizing. Drawing on Luhmann, trust can be understood as a key mechanism for managing complexity in multifaceted research processes, shaping and supporting a variety of consequential decisions. Trust is often an implicit and underexplored dimension in qualitative research, shaping decisions about data selection, interpretation, and theoretical abstraction. RGT proposes a systematic approach to make these trust-based judgments explicit, thereby enhancing both methodological transparency and theoretical rigor. Drawing on empirical examples from ongoing research, this project illustrates how trust operates in qualitative data collection and analysis, and how reflecting on trust can support the generation of socially robust, credible theory. The presentation outlines a conceptual framework for RGT, highlighting core components of Grounded Theory while introducing generative questions designed to prompt reflexive engagement with trust. By making trust visible and deliberatively examined, researchers can better navigate the complexity of qualitative work, foster reflexivity, and strengthen the credibility and applicability of emergent theory. This work situates trust not merely as an ethical or relational concern, but as a methodological resource integral to high-quality theorizing. The session will engage participants in discussion about the role of trust in theory generation and consider how RGT can be applied in

diverse empirical contexts, offering a pathway for methodologically informed and reflexive social theory.

(THE4) Theory and Praxis: Preparing Social Theory for a Hopeful Future?
Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 3:30pm ADT
Track: Social Theory Cluster

This session invited presentations that reflect on the power of social theory as a harbour for hope in turbulent times. This year's panel turns attention to how theory can illuminate pathways toward more sustainable and just futures. We consider how classic and contemporary theory help make sense of division, cultivate collective imagination, and inspire transformative praxis.

Session Organizers: Mario Marotta, Université du Québec à Montréal; Sarah Badr, McGill University

Session Chair: Anas Karzai, Laurentian University

THE4-1 - Hope in the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School

Patrick Gamsby, Memorial University of Newfoundland

The first generation of the Frankfurt School has been famously charged with checking into the Grand Hotel Abyss for an indefinite stay, thus occupying and maintaining a space that produces nothing but pessimism and melancholy in their Critical Theory. This paper contests this rather pervasive assessment through a re-reading of some well-known and some lesser known works of Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969), Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Leo Lowenthal (1900-1993), and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). In looking at this constellation of Frankfurt School figures, an argument is made that there is a persistent thread of hopefulness running throughout their respective contributions to Critical Theory, one that unites all of them. To be able to pull this thread out of their various works, a particular focus will be paid to their respective contributions to the sociology of literature. Perhaps somewhat counterintuitively, this re-reading will reveal a certain emphasis on praxis that is embedded in their Critical Theory, even in places where it seems to be entirely absent from the scene. In doing so, the goal of this paper is to shine a new light on the Critical Theory of the first generation of the Frankfurt School as not simply a form of hopeful scholarship from times gone by, but instead as collective work that remains highly relevant and hopeful for twenty-first century sociological inquiry.

THE4-2 - The effects of historical disabling knowledge: Deconstruction as a process of enabling

Ladan Adhami-Dorrani, York University

In postmodern approaches to knowledge, there is a salient commonality among those who delve deep into the disproportionate systemic and structural setup. In the context of the mainstream Western conceptual framework, the postmodern philosophers and intellectuals' endeavour to show us that the knowledge that we have gained through socialization is not given and natural. Rather, it has been constructed, evolved, normalized and internalized over time, and has been subject to challenges, negotiations, interpretations and refutations which point to the power of agency. Instead of scratching the surface, such philosophers like Jacques Derrida, and many other after him, who have followed his deconstructive footsteps come to show that the knowledge that we have gained is neither universal nor objective or value free. Rather, it is context-dependent under the strong

influence of the normative power interests. This paper presentation delves into the historical disabling knowledge that has led to the marginalization of the intersectional "Other," and maintains that deconstruction is a process of enabling that allows us to develop a critical mind and heart. When accompanied with Hannah Arendt's political vision to act in concert, energized with inclusive Love, deconstruction can uproot historically disabling knowledge and give growth to the new enabling process.

(THE5) Social Theory

Scheduled: In-person – Saturday June 13, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Social Theory Cluster

This session invited research addressing issues in sociological and wider social theory, broadly defined.

Session Organizers: Mario Marotta, Université du Québec à Montréal; Sarah Badr, McGill University

Session Chair: Sarah Badr, McGill University

THE5-1 - Ideology in North American Sports Betting

Soroush Masoud, University of Calgary

Sports betting is a massively proliferating industry in North America in recent years, with literature demonstrating its range of associated individual harms and risks. Few studies, however, have examined sports betting as a cultural institution, and its reflection of dominant ideology. Theorists like Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser assert the role of media and discourse as part of cultural apparatuses which legitimize and reinforce existing relations and inequalities, inculcating hegemonic norms, beliefs, and practices. As such, my research aims to analyze the latent and manifest content in media promoting the North American sports betting industry, and to explore the discourses surrounding sports betting among those exposed to or engaging in the practice. Thus, employing content analysis and critical discourse analysis, my research explores the ideological relationship between sports betting and the reproduction of inequalities in the North American context. Furthering the theoretical scope of ideology in the contemporary context is crucial to understanding the impacts of emerging cultural phenomena such as precarization and gamblification, of which sports betting has surfaced as a key industry. Sports betting has been increasingly legalized in past years, gaining prevalence and popularity, but the extent of its social implications remain necessary to examine; Thus, through a novel application of theories of ideology, this research will broaden inquiry into how emerging cultural products and institutions relate to the reification and reinforcement of sociopolitical inequalities.

THE5-2 - Theorizing a denial reaction to coming out: Revising Goffman's stigma through a sexual identity process model

Sonali Patel, University of British Columbia

Erving Goffman's seminal theorization of stigma is at the heart of social scientific conceptualizations of identity management. Using data from qualitative interviews with queer South Asian women in Canada, this article proposes revisions of Goffman's *Stigma theory*. Intervening his supposition of acceptance and hostility as the two possible reactions to stigma revelation, I establish denial as an

additional reaction to identity disclosure. A denial reaction has four key characteristics: (1) resistance to queer sexuality, (2) prescriptive enforcement of heterosexuality, (3) refusal to accept lesbian relationships, and (4) avoidance of conversation about queerness. I argue that disclosure to parents does not always translate to being out; rather, it can force the individual back into the closet. I refer to this non-linear process as the culturally expansive closet. The article presents a sexual identity management process model that accounts for these culturally collectivist experiences. The results are significant for rethinking and affirming non-Western ways of managing stigmatized identities.

(THE6) New Directions for Social Theory

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Social Theory Cluster

The current moment in social theory features a profound awareness of its own analytical challenges. Concepts like 'polycrisis', 'super wicked problems', 'hyperobjects', the 'Anthropocene', 'post-postmodernity', and the 'end of the end of history' point simultaneously to the extraordinary complexity of our current socio-historical moment and the novelty of its social and ethico-onto-epistemological conditions. This intellectual landscape signals a necessity for theoretical innovation that can adequately grasp emerging social realities that resist conventional analytic tools. Responding to this imperative, this session invited papers that seek to chart new theoretical trajectories for sociology.

Session Organizer and Chair: Mauricio F. Collao Quevedo, York University

THE6-1 - Revisiting Sociology's Relationship to Biology: Styles of Evolutionary Theorizing Past and Present

Valerie Haines, University of Calgary

Sociology's relationship to biology has a long and contested history. In this paper I investigate the evolutionary theorizing of major players in this history—Spencer, Parsons and Turner and colleagues—focusing on the question: How did they bring evolutionary biology into sociology? To answer this question, I use a two-dimensional approach that draws on insights from the history of sociology. The contextualizing dimension situates the theories in the evolutionary biology of their time and links them to each other. The content dimension uses the distinction between biological evolution and sociocultural evolution and the distinction between evolutionary explanations and evolutionary analogies and disanalogies to specify possible ways of forging the evolutionary biology-evolutionary sociology link. I begin by introducing central theoretical concepts from evolutionary biology that are required to understand the context and content of evolutionary theorizing in sociology. I then offer outline accounts of the evolutionary theorizing of Spencer, Parsons and Turner and colleagues that pay close attention to where and how they use Lamarckism, natural selection, functionalism, and associated concepts of teleology, emergence and its corollary concepts of superorganism and agency, selection (units/objects/levels, pressures, processes), and fitness. Based on these accounts I identify three very different styles of evolutionary theorizing in sociology: one theorizing social evolution as a literally Lamarckian evolutionary process (the evolutionary explanation style of Spencer), one theorizing sociocultural evolution as a Darwinian evolutionary process (the evolutionary analogy style of Parsons) and one theorizing sociocultural evolution as biologically based in that human's capacity for culture evolved genetically but centered on multilevel

non-Darwinian selection processes that are unique to sociocultural evolution (labelled Spencerian, Durkheimian and Marxian (natural) selection) (the evolutionary explanation/evolutionary analogy and disanalogy style of Turner and colleagues). Finally, I explore implications of this investigation for existing historical reconstructions of the biology-sociology relationship in evolutionary theorizing in sociology.

THE6-2 - Counter-Policy as Social Theory: Public Code and the Canadian Aporetic Condition

John Bessai, Independent Scholar

This paper develops *public code* and *counter-policy* as social-theoretical concepts that emerge from the Canadian aporetic condition. The Canadian aporetic condition names a recurring field of institutional tensions that shape public legitimacy, collective memory, and the governance of plural claims in Canada. That field brings procedural questions to the foreground: who gains public standing, how claims circulate, what counts as evidence, and how publics return to prior disputes across time.

Public code names the procedural rules through which institutions organize public standing, circulation, and return. Public code operates through sequence and classification, including access conditions, documentation practices, metadata categories, language regimes, credentialing conventions, moderation rules, and institutional timelines. *Counter-policy* names the capacity of organized publics to treat those procedures as levers for accountability and redesign. Counter-policy takes form through practices that render procedure legible and contestable, including documented challenges, evidentiary compilation, curriculum uptake, classification disputes, interface capture, and governance proposals. The paper advances three claims. First, procedural design sets interpretive tempo and coordinates collective attention, which shapes public knowledge under conflict conditions. Second, procedural arrangements distribute visibility and credibility, which amplifies division when institutions treat procedure as settled administration. Third, counter-policy develops when publics convert procedural experience into shareable evidence that travels across settings and compels institutional response. Methodologically, the paper outlines a comparative reading practice that traces procedural chains across institutional sites and treats design artifacts as theory-bearing objects. The result positions the Canadian aporetic condition as a generative problem-space for social theory that connects institutional procedure to legitimacy, accountability, and durable public judgment.

THE6-3 - Algorithmic Interactionism: Theorizing the Sui Generis Behavior of the Oversocialized Machine

Mohammed Al-Ani, McMaster University

As AI systems become more integrated into social life, the field of "AI Alignment" ensuring systems align with human values, has grown into a key scientific focus. Yet, current alignment methods often treat algorithms solely as computational entities, overlooking the social dynamics that emerge during deployment. This work contends that algorithmic Alignment is, at its core, a social theorizing challenge. I offer a critical assessment of recent efforts to involve social scientists in algorithm design and testing. While these efforts represent progress, they often lack strong theoretical foundations. To address this, I suggest a framework based on Symbolic Interactionism, which reframes the machine-machine interaction as an interactive event that simulates process of 'impression management' rather than a simple input-output process. By treating algorithmic behavior as *sui*

*generis (*a unique form of social action distinct from human agency yet impactful within the social structure) we can better evaluate how machines interpret social cues and how they, in turn, shape human behavior. I contend that Social Theory should not merely critique technology from the sidelines but must serve as the primary conceptualizer for evaluating machine behavior. This presentation demonstrates how sociological concepts can be operationalized to create more robust, context-aware, and socially aligned AI systems.

THE6-4 - Reimagining cemeteries as multifunctional spaces for hope

Lauren Smith, Royal Roads University

Cemeteries are often associated with grief, mourning, and loss, viewed as 'taboo' spaces; youth are told to hold their breath when passing by (Maddrell & Sidaway, 2016). In Western society, death is seen as something to avoid at all costs - whether through longevity efforts, delayed end-of-life planning, or cemeteries maintained as pristine, controlled spaces (Gibson, 2023; Solomon et al., 2015). Yet, cemeteries can be - and have been - spaces for leisure, community, and resilience, for human and non-human species alike (House & Westendorp, 2023, Rugg, 2022). Urban cemeteries especially hold important green infrastructure roles and can function as an increasingly rare *third place* (Oldenburg, 2023). As urbanization pushes cemeteries to their physical limits, as funerary practices trend towards cremation, and as workplaces continue to minimize grief opportunities, the socioecological and cultural importance of reimagining cemeteries as spaces for hope is timely and essential. In this paper presentation, I discuss the sociopsychological underpinnings to dominant Western relationships with cemeteries and death before arguing that by reimagining these relationships we can begin to confront our mortality fears and see cemeteries as spaces for socioecological and cultural hope. Urban cemeteries provide valuable, uniquely protected biodiversity hotspots and rare, lasting green spaces within city limits. They provide important space for reflection, grief, and mourning, but also, I argue, for awe, community, and hope. By opening ourselves to death discussion and acceptance, and learning to die well, we can learn ways to strive towards living well through ongoing polycrises.

(THE7) Does Canadian Sociology Need Heterodox Sociology? Yes, Maybe, Maybe Not or Hell No
Scheduled: In-person – Friday June 12, 2026 @ 3:30pm
Track: Social Theory Cluster

More than a decade ago, American social psychologist Jonathan Haidt created a non-profit called Heterodox Academy, as an organization of academic insiders with the goal of creating more viewpoint diversity, constructive disagreement and open inquiry in American higher education. The organization expanded internationally and now has a Canadian wing of faculty, staff and graduate students who run conferences, and campus based communities. They also promote a wider set of perspectives in their disciplines, including a number of Canadian sociologists who are active in Heterodox Sociology. With this as the context and background, this panel will be a spirited but cordial discussion of whether Canadian sociology needs more heterodoxy. Taking the yes side based on their membership in the organization and involvement in various activities will be Kevin Gosine (Brock), Axel van den Berg (McGIll) and Neil McLaughlin (McMaster). Taking the maybe position will be Judith Taylor (University of Toronto) and the maybe and/or hell no side will be represented by Howard

Ramos (Western). Come find out why some sociologists believe we need to become more heterodox while others are sceptical that this is a good idea or that the organization will succeed in its goals.

Session Organizer: Neil McLaughlin, McMaster University

THE7-1 - Kevin Gosine, Brock University

Dr. Gosine is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Brock University. Kevin's primary areas of research interest include the study of ethnicity and racialization, youth studies, social identity construction, the sociology of education, and social welfare. Published scholarship has spanned numerous areas including the lived experiences and social identities of upwardly mobile Black Canadians, antiracism education, racial bias and disproportionality within Ontario's child welfare system, marginalized youth subcultures, and evaluation studies of non-profit organizations. Courses taught include research methods (undergraduate and graduate levels), quantitative data analysis, community engagement and service learning, and the sociology of education.

THE7-2 - Axel van den Berg, McGill University

Dr. Axel van den Berg is Professor of Sociology at McGill University. His research interests include labour markets and labour market policy, sociological theory and the relation between economics and sociology. He has done work on the effect of labour market policies on labour flexibility in Sweden and Canada and collaborated in several EU-funded research networks conducting cross-national comparative research on current transformations of the welfare state. His most recent work has focused on the evolution of labour market and social policies and outcomes in Canada and the largest Canadian provinces in comparison with other major advanced countries.

THE7-3 - Neil McLaughlin, McMaster University

Dr. Neil McLaughlin is Full Professor in the Department of Sociology at McMaster University. His research focuses on the sociology of public intellectuals, the sociology of reputations, the international spreading of conspiracy theories and the sociological dynamics of disciplines, universities and ideas. He is currently working on the political correctness debates and the Jordan Peterson controversy. He has studied the rise and goal of the reputation of critical theorist Erich Fromm, the radical writings of Noam Chomsky, the philanthropy of George Soros, the public intellectual debate in Canada the missing women Canadian public intellectuals, the crisis and renewal of Canadian sociology, the writings of Edward Said, David Riesman and George Orwell.

THE7-4 - Judith Taylor, University of Toronto

Dr. Judith Taylor is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto and is jointly appointed in the Women and Gender Studies Institute. Her research focuses on feminist activism, neighbourhood community organizing, and social change making within public institutions. Her publications analyze the obstacles to coalition building, the intersection of biography and strategy, activist memoirs and cultural production, burn out, intergenerational relations, coalition building across difference, the politics of NGOs and movement formalization, corporate use of social movement ideas, and state engagement. Taylor also teaches and writes about qualitative research methods, feminist approaches to studying people, and community-based learning, with a particular focus on the dilemmas posed by institutional ethical review. She also researches and writes about

memoir and feminist approaches to friendship, using feminist creative work as a lens to better understand this central focus of feminist imagination and life.

THE7-5 - Howard Ramos, Western University

Dr. Howard Ramos is a political sociologist who investigates issues of social change. He has published on social movements, human rights, perceptions of change, urban change, environmental advocacy, immigration, ethnicity, race, and Indigenous issues. He is currently working on projects looking at existential threats, perceptions of change, new forms of politics, environmental advocacy, immigrant and refugee issues, and the social implications of new technology and new forms of data. Ramos previously served as the Chair of the Canadian Statistical Advisory Council, which advises the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry and the Chief Statistician of Canada. He has also served as the President of the Canadian Sociological Association and has been active in working with communities and engaging in public debate.

(URS) Urban Sociology Research Cluster

(URS1) Open Session - Urban Sociology Research Cluster
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

This open session invited papers that focus on the theoretical, methodological, and empirical issues pertaining to urban sociology.

Session Organizer and Chair: Andrew Crosby, Carleton University

URS1-1 - The Post-Pandemic City: The Enduring Legacy of the Pandemic on Contemporary Urban Life

Harris Ali, York University

This paper analyzes how the pandemic has transformed the contemporary city. It examines changes in lived experiences of post-pandemic urban life, including shopping and dining, alongside broader shifts in the cultural, political, and technological fabric of cities. Particular attention is given to transformations in urban third spaces. This includes: (i) changes in sociability and conviviality in areas targeted for gentrification with the rise of ghost kitchens, food delivery, and online shopping; (ii) the transformation of urban public space by social movements (e.g. Black Lives Matter following the George Floyd killing, the U.S. Capitol riots, and the Freedom Convoy in Ottawa), including a reaction and response informed by increasing revanchism and militarization of cities, illustrated by violence during U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids in public spaces; (iii) technological transformations through strategies such as the 15-minute city and Smart City, sometimes drawing on and adapting pandemic-era surveillance technologies to monitor disease spread and mobility; and (iv) the emergence of "paranoid urbanism," that links post-pandemic urban politics to fear, mistrust, populism, and conspiracy theories that frame urban planning as government overreach, an outlook intensified by pandemic misinformation spread through social media. Notably, taken together, this

set of factors, it will be argued has contributed to increased cultural and political polarization in urban centres and beyond.

URS1-2 - Exploring the Experiences and Needs of Unhoused 2S/LGBTQIA+ People in Edmonton

JP Armstrong, NorQuest College; Juliana Kaned and Landon Turlock, Queer & Trans Health Collective

The impacts of housing injustice disproportionately impact Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (2S/LGBTQIA+) people. Despite making up only 5 to 10% of the general population, approximately 25% of unhoused youth in Canada identify as 2S/LGBTQIA+ (Homeless Hub, 2025). This presentation will share an applied, community-based research project that aimed to identify and make visible the experiences and needs of unhoused 2S/LGBTQIA+ community members in Edmonton. In partnership with two local non-profit organizations, data were collected from January 2026 to February 2026 using a variety of approaches: a survey identifying the demographics and unmet needs of our participants; focus groups exploring their experiences accessing existing services and supports; and a photovoice project documenting a day in the life of an unhoused 2S/LGBTQIA+ person. We will present the key findings from this research project as well as a resulting list of recommendations developed to inform programming and supports for unhoused queer and trans individuals. Additionally, we will share community-facing outputs (e.g., a social media campaign, a zine) that were designed to promote awareness, education, and advocacy for housing justice within the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community.

URS1-3 - Alone and/or Lonely: Narrating Young Single Women's Experiences in Calgary's Urban Environment

Lizzie Rajchel, University of Calgary

What does it mean to be lonely in an urban setting? How is loneliness experienced and understood by young women who must navigate the gendered landscape of the city? Amid what has been named a "loneliness epidemic" for young people in Canada, research indicates that many young Canadians lack a sense of community. Loneliness is linked to adverse effects on mental health, self-esteem, and increased morbidity and mortality. Beyond the individual ramifications, loneliness also has detrimental effects on social cohesion and community trust. This research situates the perceptions of loneliness within the context of Roy Oldenburg's (1999) "third spaces", which are described as "inclusively sociable" physical locations outside of the home or workplace, such as libraries, cafes, bars, gyms and "other hangouts at the heart of community". While these spaces can help foster feelings of social inclusion and well-being, which mitigate the experiences of loneliness, they are also shaped by gender performance expectations (Butler, 1990). Utilizing Butler's gender performance theory alongside the idea that loneliness is inherently social and relative (Franklin, 2009; Yang, 2019), this study rethinks our conceptualization of loneliness using theories of gender, performance, and urban space. How comfortable do single young women feel with being in and performing socially (Goffman, 2021) in third spaces and how is participation in these spaces impacting feelings and definitions of loneliness?

(URS2) Tents & Encampments Today: State of the Research and Literature in Canada

Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

Contemporary transformations in the housing and rental market — real estate speculation, financialization of housing, gentrification, the rising number of evictions, and the shortage of affordable rental units — have fueled a growing crisis of housing instability and visible homelessness across Canada. Annual homelessness counts have consistently shown an increase in visible homelessness over the past decade, a trend mirrored in cities and regions across the country (Government of Canada, 2024). Tents and urban encampments are the most visible manifestation of this crisis. While not new, their numbers rose sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasing concern for public health and safety led to reduced shelter capacity, closure of indoor gathering spaces, and widespread loss of income among precariously housed populations. In the absence of alternatives, many turned to tents and makeshift shelters as a means of survival (Flynn et al. 2022, Bureau du défenseur fédéral du logement, 2024; LeBlanc et al., 2022). Canadian scholarship is emerging, documenting residents' voices (Boucher et al., 2022; Olson & Pauly, 2023; Young et al., 2017), new forms of punitive governance (Braimoh et al., 2023; Evans, 2022; Maier et al., 2024; Rady & Sotomayor, 2025), the regulation of encampment residents' possessions (Blomley et al., 2020; Mokhtari et al., 2025), and public perceptions of encampments (MacDonald & Chapados, 2025). To further these critical debates, this panel seeks to foster dialogue among scholars studying tents and encampments in Canada, in both French and English, and across sociology and related disciplines.

Session Organizers: Sandrine Carle-Landry, University of Montreal; Daniel Kudla, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Wasifa Tasnim Shamma, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Session Moderators: Sandrine Carle-Landry, University of Montreal; Wasifa Tasnim Shamma, Memorial University of Newfoundland

URS2-1 - Andrew Crosby, Carleton University

Andrew (Andy) Crosby (he/him) is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University, on unceded and unsurrendered Algonquin land. He completed his Ph.D. in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University. His research engages with various themes relating to policing and housing justice—including settler colonialism, the financialization of rental housing, insecurity governance, gentrification/evictions, social movements, and tenant resistance. Working with Dr. David Hugill, Andy's postdoctoral research involves leading the Housing Finance node as part of a CMHC-SSHRC-funded partnership grant—A Safe and Affordable Place to Call Home: A Multi-disciplinary Longitudinal Outcomes Analysis of the National Housing Strategy.

URS2-2 - Erin Dej, Wilfrid Laurier University

I received my PhD from the Department of Criminology at the University of Ottawa and my MA in Legal Studies from Carleton University. Before joining Laurier, I held a SSHRC funded postdoctoral fellowship with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, York University. I am a critical criminologist, using qualitative researcher to support efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Canada, with an emphasis on unpacking social exclusion and working to build social inclusion.

URS2-3 - Véronique Lapalme, University of Montreal

Véronic Lapalme se situe à l'intersection du travail social, des études urbaines et de la justice spatiale. Chercheuse et doctorante à l'École de travail social de l'Université de Montréal, elle se spécialise dans les enjeux liés à l'itinérance et à l'accès au logement abordable. Elle mène actuellement une ethnographie urbaine à Montréal sur les campements afin d'analyser les dynamiques sociospatiales entre personnes en situation d'itinérance, résident·es et acteur·trices institutionnel·les. Ses travaux interrogent les limites des politiques actuelles en matière de logement et plaident pour une reconnaissance accrue du droit à la ville des personnes marginalisées.

Véronic Lapalme works at the intersection of social work, urban studies, and spatial justice. A researcher and PhD candidate at the School of Social Work at the Université de Montréal, she specializes in issues related to homelessness and access to affordable housing. She is currently conducting an urban ethnography in Montreal on encampments in order to analyze the socio-spatial dynamics between people experiencing homelessness, residents, and institutional actors. Her work examines the limits of current housing policies and advocates for greater recognition of the right to the city for marginalized populations.

URS2-4 - Laura Pin, Wilfrid Laurier University

I was awarded my PhD in Political Science from York University in 2019, with a focus on Canadian and comparative politics. During my doctoral studies, I spent time as a visiting scholar at the Great Cities Institute at the University of Illinois in Chicago. Prior to joining Laurier, I was a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Guelph, with a joint appointment to the Political Science Department and Community-Engaged Scholarship Institute. My work focuses on community-engaged approaches to publicy problems, and I engage with a number of analytical lenses including intersectionality based policy analysis, human rights discourses, and political economy (broadly defined). I focus on the relationship between structural inequalities and public policy problems. Current research projects focus on policy responses to encampments, eviction prevention, migrant political participation and lived expertise leadership in policymaking.

(URS3) The Sociology of Homelessness Governance
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

This session is cross-listed with the track (HOU) Sociology of Housing Research Cluster.
As homelessness continues to rise and become more visible throughout Canada, it is crucial to understand contemporary homelessness governance strategies that attempt to supervise, regulate, prevent, and integrate people experiencing homelessness into civil and market society. This session invited papers that engage in debates about contemporary homelessness governance by an array of state, nonprofit, and/or private sector actors in spaces.

Session Organizers: Daniel Kudla, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador; Wasifa Tasnim Shamma, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador; Sandrine Carle-Landry, University of Montreal

Session Chairs: Daniel Kudla, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador; Wasifa Tasnim Shamma, Memorial University of Newfoundland

URS3-1 - Governing Homelessness in Times of Urban Crisis: A Conjunctural Analysis of Halifax and Vancouver

Sanaz Labbaf, Memorial University

Urban homelessness governance has become a key terrain through which neoliberal urban restructuring, moralized yet unstable constructions of deservingness, and spatial regulation are articulated and contested. This study develops a conjunctural analysis of homelessness governance by examining how adaptive reworkings of "common sense" emerge in confrontation with the figure of the unhoused subject during moments of crisis. Drawing on a Gramscian-Hallian framework, the analysis treats conjuncture as a moment of condensation in which political, economic, and cultural forces are brought into unstable alignment. The COVID-19 pandemic is examined as such a conjunctural moment, one that disrupted established assumptions about urban order, risk, and responsibility while intensifying housing precarity and the visibility of unsheltered homelessness. Empirically, the study undertakes a comparative qualitative analysis of encampment governance in Halifax and Vancouver, combining analysis of municipal bylaws, policy documents, council records, and media materials with semi-structured interviews with municipal officials, police, outreach workers, and advocacy actors. Halifax and Vancouver are approached not as typologically comparable cases, but as strategically contrasting conjunctural formations. While both cities experienced heightened encampment visibility within a shared national policy context, differences in housing markets, welfare legacies, political cultures, and socio-spatial pressures generate distinct urban problematics. This contrast enables an analysis of how similar governance pressures produce divergent and open-ended forms of municipal response rather than uniform outcomes. The analysis foregrounds the contingency of municipal responses to encampments, tracing how decisions to tolerate, regulate, or dismantle them are framed, justified, and contested, and how these framings intersect with longer-standing practices of spatial ordering and poverty regulation. Rather than treating care-oriented and coercive interventions as opposing policy logics, the study examines their co-presence as evidence of the uneven and provisional reworking of hegemonic common sense under conditions of crisis.

URS3-2 - Encampment crackdowns: Police and carceral campaigning

Andrew Crosby and Jeffrey Monaghan, Carleton University

A number of recent police crackdowns against encampments of the unhoused in Canadian cities have garnered significant media attention. Repeated police actions to evict people from public space, destroy their homes, and dismantle their communities comes amid urgent international conversations about housing and houselessness crises. This paper examines encampments with a particular emphasis on governance and policing. Police play a central role in the governance of the unhoused, from dehousing to dispersal but also through surveillance and spatial control. Police are integral in both (re)producing narratives about dangerousness as well as dismantling encampments. Often curated through police communications, encampments are represented by discourses of drug use, health infestations, organized crime, among other dangers. Embracing crime fighting postures, police warn the public of various oncoming crises emanating from the unhoused, who are then policed accordingly. This paper explores encampment evictions in Canadian cities as political actions shaped by established police grievances against the moral evils and dangerousness associated with the unhoused but aligned with broader interests of police campaigning. In this paper we characterize

the attacks on encampments as a police campaign that functions on two levels: First, we explore how police reconfigure grievance frames to lash out against critics of their encampment removal policies and the localized populations with nowhere else to live, presenting police as both victims and protectors of a NIMBY public. Second, the actions against the unhoused are situated in a broader context of police campaigning: the structured political mobilizations of a police movement deeply attached to carceral, far right politics and the advancement of police resources through a narrating of the urban as a decaying, degraded, dystopic public exemplified by the encampment.

URS3-3 - The governance of affordable housing in Ontario: Four outcomes for homeless young people

Presenting Author - Jacqueline Kennelly, Carleton University

Non-presenting Authors - Holly Petersen and Cihan Erdal, Carleton University

This paper draws upon first- and second-round interviews with 55 formerly homeless young people in Ottawa, Ontario, in combination with focus group data from municipal officials, youth service providers, and affordable housing providers. The young people (ages 18 to 30) are participants in longitudinal research (with three interviews across 2-3 years) on their pathways into affordable housing, and their social, economic, and health outcomes after housing. Here, we will trace the complex, confusing, and often perverse pathways that youth face if they are homeless and seeking housing in Ottawa. The majority of young people in homelessness who are seeking housing will interface with the bureaucracy of the City of Ottawa's Central Registry (or Housing Wait List) and/or the provincially administered Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (a 'portable' housing benefit co-funded with the federal government that is one of the key pillars of the National Housing Strategy introduced in 2017). Our qualitative research reveals four potential pathways and outcomes for youth navigating these systems in Ottawa, each of which further entraps them in poverty and marginalization. One pathway sends them back into homelessness, if they are unable to acquire government identification and get their taxes filed. Another sends them back to abusive or over-crowded family situations, for similar reasons. The other two pathways lead to housing, but with administrative systems which further entrap them in poverty. We will argue that these outcomes are consistent with neoliberal governance of the poor, steeped in a punitive welfare state which 'rewards' only the 'deserving poor' but does so in ways that reproduces their marginalization and further entrenches the inequality upon which capitalism relies. Our analysis reveals that despite growing awareness of the housing affordability crisis, and political commitments to end homelessness, the logic of neoliberal governance instead maintains the status quo.

(URS4) Urban Informality and Inequalities in the age of Cities

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

The world is undergoing rapid urbanization. The urbanization process faces many challenges including high rate of unemployment, informality, poverty and inequality. Inequality is a global problem and the most pressing issue over the years. The COVID-19 pandemic and increasing urban challenges have exacerbated pre-existing inequities. There is growing interest in research on the intersections of urbanization, urban informality and challenges that produce poverty, inequalities and threaten urban life. Growing informality and how various forms of inequalities are produced,

expressed, contested and addressed in urban centres, cities and regions across the world is posing theoretical and methodological challenges for the study of inequalities. Intersectionality as a theoretical and methodological tool has become central to the study of inequality, identity and power relations. There have been multiple theorizations of intersectionality since it was first coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989). Existing intersectionality research often prioritizes scholarship from the Global North and overlooks the diverse realities and perspectives of the Global South. Scholars emphasize the importance of investigating intersectionality application in specific research contexts and practical applications. There is a need to incorporate intersectional analysis in research and policy, for instance, around the changing nature of work, growth of urban informality and economic precarity, growth of homelessness, the impact of climate change, gender and access to public services. The objective of this regular session is to understand, inform and promote intersectional approaches to research on vulnerable and marginalized populations, particularly research into the dynamic intersections of critical challenges that produce inequalities and threaten urban life. The interests encompass overarching themes on conceptual and methodological contributions to urban informality, marginality and inequalities.

Session Organizers: Daniel Kennedy Amoah, Memorial University; Manzuma Ahsan, East West University, Bangladesh; Dorcas Hanson - Amanor, Usawa Inc

Session Chair: Daniel Kennedy Amoah, Memorial University

URS4-1 - Ownership as Empowerment: Inclusive Commercial Real Estate Redevelopment and Community Co-Ownership

Presenting Author - Yang Li, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Author - Qingfang Wang, University of California, Riverside

Commercial real estate (CRE) is a powerful—yet understudied—engine of neighborhood change. In Black-majority neighborhoods shaped by historic disinvestment, retail revitalization is often driven by outside capital: storefronts improve, but residents are excluded from ownership, governance, and long-run wealth creation. This paper examines an emerging alternative—community-centered CRE redevelopment that treats neighborhood residents not only as consumers or tenants, but as co-owners. Drawing on a case of two distressed shopping centers redeveloped through a social-purpose development partnership, we analyze how inclusive ownership is assembled through crowdfunding alongside blended public, private, and philanthropic finance. Data include 42 semi-structured interviews with stakeholders across sectors (residents, local entrepreneurs, Black professionals, philanthropic and impact investors, and public partners), supplemented by document analysis and field observations. We ask: Who participates, what motivates engagement, and what organizational features make inclusive CRE development feasible in markets widely framed as “too risky” for conventional investment? Findings show participation cohering around an “ownership as empowerment” logic. Residents and entrepreneurs emphasize low-barrier co-ownership as both a wealth-building pathway and a claim to influence neighborhood trajectories. Black professionals highlight opportunities to apply financial, legal, and real estate expertise within their own communities, aligning career capital with place-based responsibility. Mission-aligned investors describe providing patient capital—accepting slower returns in exchange for measurable social impact, including efforts to narrow the racial wealth gap. Across groups, trust-building practices

function as core development work rather than peripheral "community engagement." We identify three interlocking features enabling this model: catalytic social-entrepreneurial leadership, mission-aligned investment networks that blend public/private/philanthropic resources, and "dual wealth creation" linking investor returns to community benefits (essential services, small-business support, and local job creation). By centering CRE—rather than housing—as a site of racialized exclusion and opportunity, the paper specifies mechanisms through which shared ownership can reconfigure urban revitalization toward equitable growth.

URS4-2 - Differentiated Informality: Gender, Ethnicity, and Inequality in the Urban Beauty Industry Sector of Bangladesh

Manzuma Ahsan, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

In urban Bangladesh, the beauty salon sector, with Dhaka as a focal site, operates as a consumption space linked to middle-class growth, embedded in informal labour systems, and shaped by broader processes of neoliberal urban transformation and aesthetic capitalism. This paper examines how these dynamics structure differentiated inequalities within the sector, focusing on Indigenous women (*i.e.*, Chakma, Garo, and others) while situating them alongside non-Indigenous Bengali workers in Dhaka. Drawing on qualitative interviews and workplace observations, the study argues that urban informality functions not merely as the absence of regulation but as a differentiated system that distributes precarity unevenly across intersecting dimensions of gender, ethnicity, and class. While salon work is often framed as a pathway to urban mobility for young women, employment conditions remain characterized by verbal contracts, commission-based wages, long hours, and limited labour protections. Within this collective vulnerability, Indigenous women experience distinct positioning shaped by ethnic stereotyping, linguistic marginality, rural-to-urban migration trajectories, and differential access to social networks. Comparing their experience with those of Bengali workers reveals how informal labour markets simultaneously homogenize women as flexible service workers while differentiating them through subtle hierarchies of belonging, skill, and value. By situating aesthetic labour within these broader urban processes, this paper contributes to debates on how informality functions as a key mechanism through which inequalities are reproduced, negotiated, and contested across cities in Bangladesh.

URS4-3 - Luxury Bag Consumption and Identity Formation Among Young Japanese Women

Wato Ito, University of British Columbia

Japanese consumers are known for their unique consumption patterns grounded in collectivist values, group harmony, and social conformity. Despite Japan's stagnated economy and stagnant wages, more young Japanese women are purchasing luxury handbags. Hence, Japan's economic and cultural conditions provide a compelling context for examining the relationship between luxury consumption and identity formation among young Japanese women. Previous research suggests that most women consume luxury handbags because these items allow them to physically present a version of themselves that is visible—and acceptable—to others. While past research on consumption has primarily focused on class and race in North America, limited attention has been given to Japanese women, who belong to the dominant ethnic group yet remain subordinated and marginalized within a patriarchal society. Through in-depth interviews with single, working-class women in their twenties, this study examines whether their luxury consumption is driven more by

status-oriented conspicuous display or by a desire for group belonging. Preliminary findings suggests that participants are highly concerned with how others perceive them, and that the luxury handbag functioned as a symbol of politeness, respectability, and a tool to avoid embarrassment. These results highlight the importance of cultural context when examining individual consumption behaviour. By focusing on Japanese women's experiences, this study emphasizes how identity, social norms, and gendered expectations shape the meanings attached to luxury goods and why this form of consumption continues despite economic stagnation.

URS4-4 - Between a rock and a hard place: Why workers engage in the urban informal economy in Ghana

Presenting Author - Daniel Amoah, Memorial University

Non-presenting Authors - Bismark Osei-Acheampong, University of Technology Sydney; Eunice Adjei, Taylor University; Jennifer Jaaga, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Ghana; Patrick Appiah, University of Ghana

Rising unemployment and inequality are current global challenges. Informality has become a defining feature of contemporary cities, especially in the majority world. Informal work is crucial to the livelihoods of urban dwellers in Ghana. However, individuals involved in the informal economy often face many challenges, such as urban precarity, economic inequality, lack of access to labour protections, and benefits. Moreover, informal workers are among those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and recurrent urban challenges. This paper examines reasons why informal workers engage in the urban informal economy in Ghana despite the challenges that confront the sector. Drawing on narratives of 25 informal workers at selected urban neighbourhoods in the Accra Metropolitan through in-depth semi-structured interviews, this paper finds that the challenges in both the formal economy and the informal economy present a difficult situation for informal workers, choosing between a rock and a hard place.

(URS5) Urban Sociology: Reflections from the City
Scheduled: Virtual – Wednesday June 3, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

This session features presentations reflecting on city living.

Session Chair: Susan Goli, Memorial University

URS5-1 - Civil (In)Attention on Metrobus: An Ethnographic Study

Susan Goli, Memorial University of Newfoundland

This paper studies how civil inattention on St. John's Metrobus is constantly negotiated, breached, and reconstructed. Through an ethnographic study of social interactions of Metrobus over a year (summer 2024-25), this paper studies situations in which people ignore Goffman's civil inattention and break the silence. I selected three distinct case studies where the silence was broken, from pro-social bonding to severe anti-social breaches. Through thick description of these cases, I argue that civil inattention is not a static concept, but a flexible one with contested boundaries where safety, sociability, and community are in constant negotiations. My work highlights the bus not as a vehicle for transit but as a site where the fundamental rules of urban co-existence are tested and redefined.

URS5-2 - The roaring engine: aesthetics, ethics, and politics of motor vehicle noise in the city

Jan Doering, University of Toronto

As Georg Simmel observed in his classic study of the metropolis and mental life, the city is a place of sensory overstimulation. Simmel argued that overstimulation would dull urbanites' senses and lead them to feel indifferent about other people's self-expression. Yet contemporary cities are marked by persistent conflicts over sensory phenomena, including odors, sounds, and visual appearances. What accounts for such conflicts? To answer this question, this paper examines the aesthetics, ethics, and politics of performance car and motorcycle noise, a highly contentious issue in many cities around the world. The paper builds on two years of participant observation and 96 in-depth interviews with motorsports enthusiasts as well as residents who feel heavily affected by related noises in Toronto. Residents experience motor vehicle sounds as uniquely ugly and unethical, thereby intensifying their emotional and political response in ways that sensory overstimulation alone cannot explain. Beyond exploring this empirical case, the paper develops core concepts for the study of sensory experience and expression and demonstrates how a sociology of urban sensory life can illuminate broader processes of urban change, such as densification and gentrification.

(URS-RC) Urban Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 12:30pm ADT
Track: Urban Sociology Research Cluster

This Urban Sociology Research Cluster engages sociologists whose work seeks to understand human interactions and institutions in urban areas both in Canada and globally. This includes research on topics that explore the various and interrelated dimensions of cultural, economic and social life in cities such as housing inequality, gentrification, race, gender and sexuality in the city, the changing nature of work in the sharing economy, and relationship between urban design and sociability. This meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities.

Session Organizer: Andrew Crosby, Carleton University

(VIS) Visual and Poetic Sociology Research Cluster

(VIS-RC) Visual and Poetic Sociology Research Cluster Meeting
Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Visual and Poetic Sociology Research Cluster

The Visual and Poetic Sociology Cluster welcomes current members, including students, researchers, educators, museum educators, archivists, documentary filmmakers, visual journalists, artists, storytellers, diverse community members, and others who explore the social world through visual, poetic, and creative methods such as photographs, videos, film, television, social media images, visual arts, archival materials, exhibitions, and/or poetry.

Session Organizers: Erin Woodford, Thompson Rivers University and University of Lethbridge; London McBride, Utah State University and the Museum of Tolerance

(VLS) Violence and Society Research Cluster

(VLS1) Anti-Violence Research, Collaboration, and Knowledge Mobilization

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

Violence research spans multiple scholarly disciplines and interconnects with knowledges of survivors, activists, legal professionals, policymakers, and service providers. As the recognition of structural dimensions of violence (and its various intersections) becomes increasingly prevalent across professional, political, and public discourses, sociologists are well positioned to contribute to the ongoing formation and mobilization of anti-violence projects. Efforts to integrate sociologically imaginative understandings violence with the experiences of survivors, advocates, and front-line practitioners provide exciting opportunities for the cross-pollination of critical insights on violence. This session features papers reflecting a diverse range of areas where anti-violence research and knowledge mobilization converge, including health, culture, law, and media.

Session Organizer and Chair: Robert Nonomura, Western University

VLS1-1 - Beyond a Textbook Narrative of Female Suicide Bombers?: Representation of Female Terrorism in the Amazon Prime 'The Family Man'

Md Nazmul Arefin, University of Alberta

Honourable Mention from the Social Theory Cluster's Best Student Paper Award Committee.

In dominant masculine state-centric narratives, men's decisions to become militants are credited to the politics of nationality and/or religion, whereas women's motivations for suicide bombing are attributed to personal and social/cultural factors. But how is the story of female suicide terrorists and their political agency constructed and disseminated through contemporary visual culture, such as OTT? Using Amazon Prime Video's '*The Family Man*' TV series as a case study, this paper focuses on understanding the cinematic narratives about motivational sets for female suicide terrorism, agency, involvement, and personality traits of a female suicide bomber. The findings reveal that the series problematizes simplistic "textbook" portrayals, engages with socio-political relational complexities and underrepresented intersectional nuances of female suicide bombers and the power dynamics of their identity construction. This article aims to explore how popular visual culture shapes and genders narratives surrounding the motivations, agency, and personality traits of female suicide bombers. Drawing on an analysis of the second season of the massively popular Indian OTT series *The Family Man*, the paper contributes to the literature on female terrorism from a Global South visual perspective—an area that remains critically underexplored in academia. It investigates how visual representations of female suicide bombers interact with academic discourses and media narratives in today's spectacular mediatized landscape, offering new insights into the gendered construction of extremist violence.

VLS1-2 - The Social Field of Moral Inaction in Adolescence

Presenting Authors - Haniya Waseem and Zayah Samad, Western University

Non-presenting Author - Kawthar Fedjki, Western University

This paper examines how Netflix's *Adolescence* portrays gendered violence as a collective moral accomplishment produced through silence, inaction, and diffused responsibility. While most sociological analyses of violence centre on perpetrators and victims, this paper shifts the analytic focus to bystanders, witnesses, and surrounding institutions, asking how harm is allowed to unfold when no single actor feels accountable. Drawing on the bystander effect, moral disengagement, institutional non-performativity, and Bourdieu's concept of social fields, the paper conceptualises a "social field of moral action and inaction" in which responsibility is continually displaced across peers, adults, and professional authorities. Focusing on the circulation of Katie's intimate images, peer mockery and grief jokes following her death, and repeated moments of adult hesitation or deferral, the analysis traces how harm is witnessed but not interrupted. Peers normalise cruelty as humour, adults perform concern without sustained intervention, and institutions signal responsibility through procedural gestures that substitute for moral action. Even Jamie's self-narration oscillates between victimhood and denial of responsibility, further diffusing moral accountability. Across these scenes, harm becomes ordinary not because no one sees it, but because everyone assumes someone else will act. The paper argues that *Adolescence* exposes how moral responsibility is not merely an individual attribute but a socially structured position shaped by power, gender, risk, and institutional role. Complicity emerges less through malicious intent than through everyday practices of silence, deflection, and emotional self-protection. By reframing violence as something that is collectively permitted rather than only individually committed, this paper contributes to moral sociology, theories of complicity, and feminist critiques of gendered violence. It concludes by highlighting the need for cultures of moral repair, intervention literacy, and shared accountability to disrupt the social conditions under which harm becomes tolerable and invisible.

VLS1-3 - Youth Justice and Youth Voices: The Youth Restorative Action Project and Innovation in Youth Justice

Presenting Author - Erin Embury, University of Alberta

Non-presenting Authors - Bryan Hogeveen and Samantha Knapp, University of Alberta

In 2005 one of the authors (Hogeveen) conducted a study of the how a youth-led restorative justice organization, the Youth Restorative Action Project (YRAP), was created and became active in the Youth Justice System. The present study examines the developments over the last 20 years to understand what challenges the program has faced, and where there may be opportunities for growth in the future. Through 40 interviews with past and present members, this paper highlights what has been successful, what challenges remain, and how the program can improve in the future. We maintain that the youth-led nature of the program has contributed positively to member empowerment, leadership development, community engagement and, most importantly, the youth who have been involved with YRAP.

VLS1-4 - Resilience through DigitalSmarts: Developing, Implementing and Evaluating Digital Literacy Resources for Survivors through Meaningful Collaboration

Kara Brisson-Boivin, Vanessa Turyatunga, and Khadija Baig, MediaSmarts

In this presentation, MediaSmarts, Canada's non-profit center for digital media literacy, will share key insights and learnings from our four-year intervention research project titled *Moving On: Digital Empowerment and Literacy Skills for Survivors* (MODELSS). This project adapts, delivers, and

evaluates digital media literacy resources for both practitioners in the violence against women (VAW) sector and survivors of family violence. We will discuss each stage of the MODELSS project, including:

1. Development: of the *Resilience through DigitalSmarts* program for survivors of family violence. This was done in collaboration with translators, literacy and accessibility consultants, and Indigenous facilitation and evaluation experts, as well as a project advisory committee comprised of researchers, practitioners, and frontline staff in the VAW sector. The program is comprised of two forms of content. First, *digital triage handouts* with important online safety, security, and well-being information in a printable format to assist survivors in crisis and their families. Second, *Resilience through DigitalSmarts workshops*, designed to educate and empower survivors to confidently participate in online communities.

2. Implementation: of the *Resilience through DigitalSmarts* program in collaboration with local, provincial/territorial and national organizations in the family violence and VAW sector across Canada. This process included training VAW practitioners to facilitate *Resilience through DigitalSmarts* program content.

3. Evaluation: of the program, using an iterative and mixed-methods evaluation design (surveys and interviews) to understand and respond to the ongoing needs of survivors participating in the program as well as practitioners facilitating it.

We will highlight the centrality of cross-sector collaboration throughout each stage of the project. This presentation will focus especially on the evaluation of this program, which demonstrates the value of trauma- and violence-informed digital media literacy research and resources that directly engage with, and respond to, the needs of survivors and the frontline workers who support them.

(VLS3) Victimization, Violence, Recovery, Resilience, and Prevention

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

In this session we feature papers that examine all aspects of victimization, violence, and aggression in all forms, from varied perspectives including, but not limited to, those of victim(s), offender(s), witnesses, the social context(s) in which violence occurs, reactions to norm violations from both formal (e.g., governments, police, courts, etc.) and informal (e.g., support systems, social media, etc.) systems, recovery and resilience, and prevention.

Session Organizer and Chair: Hannah Scott, Ontario Tech University

VLS3-1 - Intimate Partner Violence and Patriarchy: A Macro-Level Analysis

Tian Yi Xu, Western University

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious global issue, with more than 30 percent of women worldwide experiencing physical, sexual, financial, and/or emotional abuse within their romantic relationships at some point in their lives (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, 2021). Past studies of IPV have extensively examined factors at the individual, interpersonal, and community levels. However, as a worldwide issue, a complete understanding of IPV cannot be obtained without investigating macro-level factors and international variations. In this study, I examined national-level patriarchal beliefs as a macro-level societal factor of IPV, given that IPV disproportionately affects women compared to men (Cotter, 2021). Patriarchy theory stems from feminist theory, which argues

that patriarchy is the ultimate cause of all abuse against women (Tracy, 2007). In a patriarchal society, men with all the power resort to violence when their position of dominance is threatened, and patriarchal beliefs undercut women's ability to challenge abusive behaviours from their partner, thus reinforcing IPV (Tracy, 2007). Hence, patriarchy theory implies that societies with more patriarchal norms are more likely to have higher IPV rate than societies that challenge such norms. To test this theory, the current paper examined whether national-level patriarchal beliefs in a country affected its IPV rate. Using variables extracted from the Global Health Data Exchange (GHDx), the World Values Survey (WVS), and the Quality of Government Dataset (QoG), I conducted quantitative linear regression analyses with country fixed-effects models. The results initially indicated a positive association between IPV and patriarchy. However, such association became negative and non-significant with the presence of social structural variables. These results suggest that national-level patriarchal beliefs do not directly affect a country's IPV rate, and more prominent factors are social structures such as women's educational attainment, income inequality, and democracy.

VLS3-2 - "If I'm calm, they're calm": Mothers' Perspectives on Relational Resilience Following Intimate Partner Violence

Presenting Author - Maria Zangari, University of Western Ontario and University of Windsor

Non-presenting Author - Kaitlynn Mendes, University of Western Ontario

In Canada, 44% of women have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV), underscoring its profound impact on mothers and their children. This qualitative study explored mothers' perspectives on how the mother-child relationship functions as a protective factor supporting children's resilience following exposure to IPV. Semi-structured interviews with 30 mothers with lived experience of IPV were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis grounded in resilience theory and a socioecological framework. Mothers consistently identified the mother-child relationship as the core source of emotional grounding, stability, and safety for their children. They emphasized providing individualized responsive care including physical closeness, emotional validation, consistent routines, and open communication to meet each child's developmental and emotional needs. Mothers noted that after leaving the abusive relationship, they became more emotionally open, nurturing, and attuned, enabling coregulation and psychological security. Mothers frequently positioned themselves as emotional anchors for their children, recognizing that their own emotional regulation shaped their children's ability to cope. Several described how providing reassurance, affirming children's feelings, and encouraging communication throughout transition periods created a psychologically safe space where children could begin to process their experiences. Importantly, mothers framed resilience not as an inherent trait within the child, but as a relational process emerging through their ongoing advocacy, emotional warmth, and deliberate efforts to create safe and supportive environments for their children to flourish. Collectively, mothers' accounts illustrate that the quality of the protective mother-child relationship plays a central buffering role in children's recovery and ability to thrive following IPV exposure, highlighting the critical importance of supporting caregivers as agents of resilience in the aftermath of violence. These findings reframe resilience as a relational and socially situated process, positioning the mother-child relationship as a key site of recovery and underscoring the need for trauma-and violence-informed policies and interventions that prioritize strengthening caregiver-child relationships following IPV.

VLS3-3 - IPV Severity, Social Support, and Women's Well-Being in Canada: A Population-Based Analysis

Jen Sever, Western University

Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a critical public health issue in Canada with profound implications for survivors' well-being. To address this issue, this study examines whether structural and functional social support mitigates the negative effects of IPV victimization on self-reported well-being among women and girls aged 15 and older. Using Statistics Canada's Research Data Centre files, the analysis draws on the 2014 and 2019 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization and Canadians' Safety, which captures experiences in both current and former relationships. To test this relationship, IPV is conceptualized as a continuum of severity, operationalized through a weighted cumulative severity index comprising over 20 indicators of emotional, financial, physical, and sexual abuse. This approach recognizes that emotional and financial abuse often precede and coexist with physical and sexual violence. The analysis examines the moderating role of social resources, divided into structural support (network size and density) and functional support (perceived quality and availability of assistance). Ordinal logistic regression models the impact of this index on well-being, controlling for demographic, economic, and health characteristics. Grounded in intersectional feminist theory, the stress-buffering hypothesis, and Dutton's nested ecological model, this research contextualizes individual well-being within broader systems of social capital and community support. I hypothesize that both forms of support will buffer IPV's negative impact, with functional support demonstrating stronger protective effects, underscoring the importance of intervention quality over network size. These findings will contribute to understanding how social infrastructure supports recovery and resilience among IPV survivors. Consequently, this research may inform policy development for targeted intervention and support services that provide harbours of hope for women survivors across Canada.

VLS3-4 - Prosecuting Sexual Assault: Did the #MeToo Movement Make a Difference? Sexual Violence in a Canadian Prairie City

Presenting Author - Melanie Murchison, University of Manitoba

Non-presenting Authors - Richelle Ready, Jessica Gomes, and Jane E. Ursel, University of Manitoba

In fall 2017, following the exposure of sexual abuse allegations against Harvey Weinstein, the phrase 'Me Too' began to be used as a hashtag and a social movement to bring attention to the magnitude of sexual violence (Burke, 2021). This paper offers results of pre-post #metoo analysis of all cases of sexual violence that reached the prosecutor's desk in a mid-sized Canadian city for 2015 to 2016 and for 2018 to 2019. This study is the first of its kind in Canada, with access to all reported cases of sexual violence to police services and subsequently to prosecutors for monitoring of attrition rates. Sexual violence is associated with one of the largest dark figures of crime of all violent crimes and is underreported to the criminal justice system (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2022). This analysis specifically focuses on the attrition of sexual violence cases once those cases reach a prosecutor, as well as the correlation of attrition with prevalent rape myths. Subsequent analysis considers an understanding of differential intersecting identity characteristics and their relationship with stays of prosecution from the criminal justice system at the level of prosecutor involvement. The level of attrition of sexual violence cases with the criminal justice system indicates the need for systemic change and asks the question 'what is needed to advance the pursuit of justice for those who

experience sexual violence', particularly within current global context of increasing toxic masculinity and heteropatriarchal norms.

(VLS4) Violence and Society: Risk, Harm, and Vulnerability

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

This session examines how violence is produced, interpreted, and legitimized across institutional, interpersonal, and medical contexts. From state discourses that render certain populations disposable, to the reliance on intuition in assessing domestic violence risk, to the authority of medical systems that can both enact and obscure harm, these papers and researchers collectively interrogate how vulnerability is constructed and managed. Together, they highlight the limits of law and policy in addressing violence, while calling for more critical, accountable approaches to protection and care.
Session Organizer and Chair: Katherine Morton Richards, Memorial University of Newfoundland

VLS4-1 - A Campaign of Violence, the Politics of Vulnerability and the Discourse of Disposal by the Manitoba Government

Melanie Murchison, University of Manitoba

In mid-2023, the governing Progressive Conservative (PC) party ran a campaign in the provincial General Election, against the search of the Prairie Green Landfill for the remains of two Indigenous women, Morgan Harris and Marcedes Myran, who had been killed by a serial killer months previously. Their killer, a white man, had been charged with first-degree murder in December 2022, after the partial remains of Rebecca Contois were found. All of the victims in this case were vulnerable, Indigenous women who had been deliberately chosen for their perceived disposability – a message that was reinforced and perpetuated by the campaign against the search for their remains. This paper will discuss the epidemic of violence against women against Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada, specifically in the Prairie provinces and the lack of progress that has been made since the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In addition, the research highlights the political weaponization of the vulnerability and disposability of racialized women in an increasingly politicized and polarized Canadian environment.

VLS4-2 - Delivering Harm: Medical Authority, Obstetric Violence, and the Gendered Limits of Law

Presenting Author - Louise Roth, University of Arizona

Non-presenting Authors - Theresa Morris and Madison Adams, Texas A&M University; Jennifer Hyunkyung Lee, University of Arizona

Human rights include a set of protections specific to pregnancy and childbirth, including the right to autonomy and self-determination, informed consent, dignity and respectful care, freedom from discrimination, and bodily integrity. Despite growing international recognition of these rights, violations during pregnancy and birth are widespread, even in high-income countries, while legal remedies remain rare. These violations are often described as obstetric violence. This paper examines how the medicalization of childbirth produces gender-based institutional violence and constrains the ability of law to recognize and remedy harm. Drawing on 56 in-depth interviews with birth justice attorneys and legal advocates in the U.S., we analyze how routine obstetric practices,

including coercive interventions, refusal or distortion of informed consent, threats involving Child Protective Services, and forced surgical procedures, violate pregnant people's legal rights while remaining normalized within medical and legal institutions. We argue that the cultural authority of the medical model of childbirth operates as a central barrier to legal accountability. Courts, judges, juries, and even plaintiffs' attorneys routinely defer to medical expertise, framing coercion and injury as acceptable clinical judgment rather than as gender-based violence or rights violations. This deference renders harm legally invisible when a baby survives birth, even when providers override explicit refusals of consent or inflict lasting physical and psychological injury. Situating obstetric violence within feminist theories of gender-based violence, institutional power, and reproductive governance, we show how law both reflects and reinforces medical authority by privileging fetal outcomes over pregnant people's autonomy. We conclude by arguing that meaningful legal accountability requires reframing medicalized childbirth as a site of routine gendered violence rather than clinical safety and certainty, with important implications for feminist legal strategies, birth justice advocacy, and the limits of existing legal frameworks for addressing institutional harm.

VLS4-3 - "Gut Feelings" and the Prevention of Domestic Violence: The Role of Intuition in Risk Assessment

Marie Laperriere, University of Manitoba

Assessing and managing risk of victimization and perpetration has been a central goal of domestic violence policy since the 1980s. With the development of standardized risk assessment tools, screening practices have been implemented on a large scale and the number of actors involved in assessing and managing risk have multiplied, with criminal justice actors such as police forces, courts, and probation offices increasingly sharing the responsibility of screening with welfare agencies, hospitals, schools, and some workplaces. The routinized integration of risk assessment practices, however, can create an illusion of objectivity and moral neutrality - rendering invisible the role of human judgment and discretion. For instance, while observing partner abuse intervention programs, I found that program facilitators regularly describe relying on "intuitive thinking" to make decisions. In a context where the state relies heavily on domestic violence experts to assess risk, one must question how relying on one's sense of intuition becomes a legitimate strategy to make decisions. In this paper, I examine the organizational and institutional contexts in which strategies such as relying on intuitive thinking emerge. Through ethnographic observations of partner abuse intervention programs and interviews with program facilitators and participants, I show that facilitators deploy the language of intuition as they grapple with the challenges of risk assessment in domestic violence intervention. I argue that the notion of intuition plays important functions by allowing facilitators to manage the emotional toll of uncertainty, resolve internal conflicts, settle disagreement, and assert expertise. I discuss what this practice tells us about the state response to domestic violence, the operations of risk assessment, and the administration of criminal justice.

(VLS5) Violence as a Cultural Process: Advancing Theory and Methods

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 3:15pm ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

How do people construct the meanings they attach to violence? A large portion of sociological literature studying violence and culture has looked at the institutional end of this question - from

media representations of violence to national narratives of trauma. On the other end, symbolic interactionists and behavioural scientists have looked at how people participate in and enact violence. But how do individuals make sense of experiences and develop ideas about violence?
This session aims to advance sociological theories, methods, and empirical explorations of how people come to see various experiences as violent - whether lived, observed or distant. What experiences or conceptual understandings prevent or enhance various meanings of violence?

Session Organizers: Marie Laperrière, University of Manitoba; Lily Ivanova, University of British Columbia

Session Chair: Marie Laperrière, University of Manitoba

VLS5-1 - Case Study of a Culturally Integrated Response to Muslim Family Safety in New Brunswick

Cathy Holtmann, University of New Brunswick

Research on health care service provision has emphasized approaches based on cultural competency, safety and humility (Foronda et al., 2015), without which service providers risk perpetuating harmful stereotypes about racialized minority clients (Taylor et al., 2024) and erecting barriers for those seeking help. Since 2019, the Arabic Cultural Community in Fredericton, New Brunswick has partnered with the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research at the University of New Brunswick and the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration in London, Ontario in the development of a culturally integrated response to family safety for Muslim and Arab families. A culturally integrated response to family safety is informed by a family's collectivist cultural values and practices as well as pre- and post-migration experiences (Baobaid & Ashbourne, 2016). The partners have been supporting Muslim and Arab immigrant families of diverse ethnicities whose children have come under the supervision of child protection services following experiences of family violence. While the New Brunswick *Child and Youth Wellbeing Act* emphasizes the rights of children and youth in care to participate in cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual activities related to their families' heritage, many child protection workers are unfamiliar with the ethno-religious backgrounds of Muslim and Arab families and the existing community resources. This case study explores the challenges and opportunities experienced by the Arabic Cultural Community and their partners in building bridges of understanding between child protection workers and Muslim and Arab families. It highlights that cultural competence, safety and humility are long-term processes involving risk assessment and management, safety planning, education, awareness raising, ongoing communication, supportive interactions, development of trust, and self-reflection.

VLS5-2 - The Cultural Process of Making Highways into Spaces of Exception: Hitchhiking, Gender, and Violence

Katherine Morton Richards, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

This research examines how hitchhiking became culturally constructed as a dangerous and contested form of mobility and how these perceptions intersect with the emergence of highways as spaces of exception. Following a critical discourse analysis of archival media narratives, public signage, and legal responses, I argue that violence associated with hitchhiking was not merely a reflection of empirical risk, but instead a product of culturally constructed moral panic. Hitchhiking is routinely framed as a conduit for criminality, shaped by urban legends, media saturation of high-profile violent

cases, and persistent narratives portraying hitchhikers as escaped inmates, fugitives, or social outsiders. Signs posted near U.S. prisons to this day warn that "hitchhikers may be escaping inmates" exemplifying how discourses mark hitchhikers as inherently lawless, reinforcing fear-based interpretations of roadside encounters. Popular media played a significant role in solidifying these perceptions. A 1950 *Reader's Digest* article, "Thumbs Down to Hitchhiking," circulated widely in both the United States and Canada, presented hitchhiking-related crimes as evidence that violence was an inevitable outcome of this contested mobility practice. Such narratives positioned the Highway as a liminal and criminal zone where normative social protections were suspended, producing a space of exception in which strangers were presumed dangerous and violence was anticipated. The figure of the young woman hitchhiker, imagined as the most likely victim of violence is central. Gendered assumptions about women's fragility and responsibility for their own victimization allowed violence to be attributed to hitchhiking itself rather than to systemic patterns of gendered violence. This framing legitimized paternalistic legal prohibitions and regulatory interventions, recasting mobility as a moral and security issue. By tracing these discursive constructions, this research tracks the cultural and discursive processes through which highways became symbolically and materially governed as exceptional spaces. This research illuminates where fear, criminalization, and mobility intersect.

(VLS6) Military Sociology and the Sociology of War and Peace

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 9:00am ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

Historically, Canadian sociologists have rarely engaged in research about military institutions and experiences. The subjects have been left to political scientists and historians; however, the field is very rich and diverse for sociological research. For that reason, this session was open to all research about the roles of the military in contemporary societies.

Session Organizer and Chair: Stephen Harold Riggins, Memorial University

VLS6-1 - Civility and incivility of war during Taliban insurgency in Pakhtun tribal society of Pakistan

Nizar Ahmad, Bacha Khan University Charsadda

In history, Pakhtun have been termed as "uncivilized, violent and savage like" people by colonial writers. Unlike western or modern societies, in tribal communities, cultural and religious norms define the rules regarding civil and uncivil behavior in the war, especially concerning protecting the vulnerable population who are not active players in the war. This study aims at defining and explaining the religious and cultural norms of civility of tribal Pakhtuns. The study further explores the civility and incivility being practiced in the Taliban insurgency. For this purpose, an ethnographic approach was adopted. The researchers spent about three months in the field and conducted 50 in-depth interviews in a tribal district named Bajaur. It was noted that the tribal culture and religion offer clear principles of civility and incivility for war and peace. Both religion and culture emphasize tolerance, respect and empathy with weak and vulnerable persons who are considered non-participants of war such as children, women and old age persons. The paper discusses findings at three levels. Firstly, it counts the civility of local people during the war and their peacebuilding efforts. Secondly, the violation of norms of civility of security forces in their search for militants. Thirdly, the

civility of the Taliban for gaining power and their barbarity after gained power. The paper also discusses the implications of inhuman treatment of local people in post-conflict and post-state building contexts.

VLS6-2 - Branding the Nation: Wartime Propaganda and Identity Formation in Rostov-on-Don

Maria Sergeeva, Carleton University

How does wartime propaganda shape national identity under authoritarian conditions, particularly beyond capital-centered narratives? This paper examines Russian state-led nation branding during the war in Ukraine and its relationship to identity formation, focusing on Rostov-on-Don - a major city in southern Russia near Ukraine that has become discursively central to wartime narratives and everyday imaginaries of the conflict. Rather than treating Rostov solely as a geographically bounded "local setting," I approach it as a symbolic and mediated field, invoked across state discourse and circulating widely through digital environments. The paper draws on preliminary data from a mixed qualitative design combining: (1) targeted digital ethnography of publicly accessible online spaces in which Rostov and the war are discussed and represented, and (2) remote semi-structured interviews with individuals who live in Rostov-on-Don or are socially and biographically connected to the city. This approach allows for examining not only the content of wartime messaging, but also how it becomes socially meaningful through everyday interpretation, emotional response, and narrative negotiation. The analysis explores how official themes - patriotism, sacrifice, historical continuity, and moral boundary-making ("us vs. them") - are encountered, appropriated, and questioned in everyday talk and online engagement. Early findings suggest that wartime identity formation in contemporary Russia often operates through ambivalence, fatigue, and selective appropriation, rather than simple endorsement or rejection of state narratives. These dynamics complicate standard models of propaganda reception and highlight identity as an ongoing social practice shaped by uncertainty and mediated participation on the "home front." By foregrounding a strategically significant border-region city, the paper contributes to sociological debates on nationalism, propaganda, and the lived experience of war, demonstrating how nation branding becomes embedded in everyday identity work under conditions of prolonged conflict.

VLS6-3 - A Relational Approach to Military Sociology, Conflict, and Peacebuilding

Paula Thorne, University of Manitoba

The perception of the military existing as a monolith separate from the rest of society is a misconception. In reality, the military and society are intrinsically linked parts of a single whole where the boundary is fluid and interconnected. Because conflict and peacebuilding are increasingly shared experiences among the population, both military action and peacebuilding must be rooted in consideration of the people themselves. By drawing on philosophies that emphasize the interconnectedness of all individuals, and the idea that our humanity is tied to one another, we can see that the military and society are fundamentally linked. When we accept this connection, we must also accept that the military has a vested interest in the success and well-being of the community because they are a part of it. The war in Ukraine demonstrates how social media and digital connections manifest this reality, narrowing the gap between the military and the public. In peacebuilding, efforts to rebuild must move away from top-down structures. Instead, the restoration of relationships and local voices should be prioritized. With a focus on this shared responsibility, we

can foster a more compassionate peace - one sustained by recognizing our interconnectedness and prioritizing human rights within our shared spaces.

(VLS9) Restorative/Transformative Responses to GBV

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

Restorative justice (RJ) and transformative justice (TJ) have emerged as alternative approaches to addressing harm that prioritize healing, accountability, and community-based responses over punitive legal processes. While RJ often focuses on repairing relationships and involving those harmed and responsible in processes of dialogue and reparation (Burgar, 2018), TJ emphasizes structural change and the creation of systems outside the criminal legal framework (Campbell et al., 2024). Both approaches are increasingly looked to as promising responses to gender based violence (GBV), particularly as survivors identify dissatisfaction with conventional justice concerning intimate partner and sexual violence (Pennell, 2023). However, the application of RJ and TJ for GBV remains contested. Proponents point to their potential for centering survivor agency, promoting accountability, and facilitating emotional closure (Strang et al., 2013). However, critics raise concerns about power imbalances, safety concerns, and standards for implementation (Balser et al. 2024). The suitability, safety, and effectiveness of RJ and TJ in such contexts remain largely under-researched and conceptually underdeveloped. This session invited submissions that offer insight into the risks, limitations and potential benefits of using RJ and TJ in cases of GBV.

Session Organizers: Mavis Morton, University of Guelph; Laura MacDiarmid, Guelph-Humber

Session Chair: Mavis Morton, University of Guelph

VLS9-1 - Restorative Justice for Perpetrators of IPV: Assessing Opportunities and Challenges

Noah Ramsammy, University of Guelph

Due to growing rates of intimate partner violence (IPV), coupled with survivors' dissatisfaction with conventional legal processes, there is an urgent need to explore alternative methods to address IPV (Scott & Stewart, 2004). To provide meaningful criminal legal interventions that meet the needs of IPV survivors, such as having a voice and standing in the process, academics have discussed the suitability of restorative justice (RJ) for IPV cases (Keenan & Zinsstag, 2014; McGlynn et al., 2012; Hadar & Gal, 2023). RJ is a form of addressing conflict/crime where parties who have a stake in the conflict, such as survivors, perpetrators, and community members, gather to address how to repair the harm and move forward with healing (Marshall, 1999). With increasing rates of IPV in Ontario, and limited evidence that intervention programs for IPV reduce reoffending, there is a need to explore alternative community-driven processes, such as restorative justice, to address IPV (Scott & Stewart, 2004). To address this gap, my research seeks to assess: to what extent is restorative justice suitable for cases of IPV? Drawing from in-depth interviews with 21 practitioners who work with male perpetrators of IPV, this study contributes to the expanding literature on the suitability of restorative practices in cases of gender-based violence. By exploring the views of practitioners who work with IPV perpetrators, there is increased opportunity for alternative forms of justice for IPV cases. The focus of this research - on perpetrators rather than survivors - stems from the need to address IPV

through the diverse perspectives of survivors, perpetrators, and community members whose voices should be included as part of the prevention process.

VLS9-2 - "'A Good Idea in an Ideal World': Survivors' Views on Restorative Justice for Intimate Partner Violence"

Presenting Author - Laura MacDiarmid, University of Guelph

Non-presenting Authors - Carrie Campbell, Sheridan College; Savina Nankoo, University of Toronto; Noah Ramsammy, University of Guelph

In response to longstanding critiques of the legal system's ability to meet survivors' justice-related needs, restorative justice (RJ) has been proposed as a complementary approach that emphasizes healing, accountability, and survivor participation. However, the use of RJ in cases of intimate partner violence (IPV) remains highly contested, with concerns surrounding safety, power imbalances, coercion, and the potential for re-traumatization. Despite these debates, there is limited empirical research examining how survivors themselves perceive the suitability of RJ in the context of IPV. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 57 survivors of IPV in Ontario, Canada, this study explores their willingness to engage in RJ processes and perceived benefits and risks. Using a community-engaged research approach, findings reveal substantial variation in survivors' views. Participants identified potential benefits of RJ, including having a voice, achieving closure, holding perpetrators accountable, involving the community, and preventing future harm. At the same time, many expressed significant concerns related to personal safety, the sincerity of offender accountability, and the adequacy of community capacity to support restorative processes. Overall, survivors tended to view RJ as an idealized model of justice, with practical benefits contingent upon stringent safeguards. The paper concludes by situating findings within ongoing debates about RJ and IPV, and by offering recommendations for practice and future research grounded in survivors' lived experiences.

VLS9-3 - A Practice-Based Reflection on Program Development for Restorative Justice as a Response to IPV.

Regina Wiggins, Shalem Mental Health Network

Through the Ontario Victims' Justice Fund and the Ontario Government, I have developed and implemented Roads to Repair: a pilot program running from Shalem Mental Health Network, a non-profit organization and Family Service Ontario (FSO) member. Roads to Repair uses an integrative model of restorative justice (RJ) to address instances of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Hamilton and its surrounding communities. This presentation offers a reflection on the process of program creation and implementation, with the hope of providing insight into the sociological factors associated with the efforts to establish restorative justice as a viable response to intimate partner violence. Some insights include an analysis of the community response to the program, the methods of developing an integrative model, and an evaluation of the systemic and institutional barriers to service. Lead by the instigating question, can restorative justice be applied as a response to intimate partner violence and is such an approach something the community needs, this presentation highlights the tensions between theoretical commitments to restorative approaches and the practical realities of implementation. Frameworks of justice, power, gender essentialism, carceral feminism, and retributive logic have contributed to the challenges of community engagement and

adaptability in regards to RJ initiatives especially within the lens of IPV. Most notably, it reflects on the unanticipated task of initiating a broader cultural shift in community understandings of justice, positioning community education as the most significant barrier encountered during program implementation.

VLS9-4 - Widening the circle: Ubuntu-informed Zulu insights & Bourdieu's concepts to heal & decolonize responses to family violence

Presenting Author - Mthoko Ngobese Sampson, Kingston University London

Non-presenting Author - Joan Pennell, North Carolina State University

The Zulu nation South Africa's largest Indigenous group, located primarily in KwaZulu Natal holds a proverb that states "akukho zinyane lemvubu ladliwa izingwenya kwacweba iziziba", meaning "a hippo calf cannot be eaten by crocodiles without muddying the entire pool." Within Zulu relational ethics, this expresses a fundamental truth: when violence is inflicted on a woman or child, the harm reverberates across the entire kinship network. The injury is not only physical but also symbolic, disrupting the social bonds, obligations, and moral order that hold families together. The waters of the collective are churned, and the wider family must intervene to cleanse, restore, and rebalance relationships. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence provides a powerful analytic frame for understanding this disruption. Just as the death of the baby hippo disturbs the whole pool, acts of family violence destabilise the habitus and social capital of the entire lineage. The response, guided by Ubuntu, is inherently collective: both families engage in dialogue, accountability processes are activated, and restorative practices are mobilised to repair the social fabric. South Africa's rates of gender-based violence can only be understood against the backdrop of centuries of colonial oppression and the apartheid system that was legally entrenched in 1948, which systematically fractured Black family structures. Yet, despite this historical assault, core Indigenous relational systems have endured. This paper brings Bourdieu's theoretical insights into conversation with Ubuntu to illuminate how colonisation reshaped, but did not erase, African kinship based mechanisms of care and accountability. Drawing on a Zulu case study of restorative and transformative justice, we demonstrate how Indigenous practices resonate with contemporary Family Group Conferencing. The case shows how widening the circle restores relationships, rebuilds communal responsibility, and offers a decolonial pathway for responding to family violence. We argue that other societies can learn from these Indigenous frameworks, turning to their own ancestral knowledge systems to develop culturally grounded, sustainable responses to family violence.

(VLS10b) Contextual dynamics of gender-based violence II

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 11:30am ADT
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive global issue, impacting vulnerable populations. Rooted in systemic gender inequities, GBV is shaped by intersecting socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, political structures, and the inadequate enforcement of domestic violence laws. The lack of GBV-focused professional support further entrenches violence against marginalized populations. This session includes papers that critically examine the multifaceted contextual drivers

of GBV, including the roles of socio-economic disparities, gender norms, lineage identities, and institutional shortcomings.

Session Organizers: A. Pearl Sedziafa, Memorial University; Eric Y. Tenkorang, Memorial University

VLS10b-1 - Social norms and intimate partner violence (IPV) against university female students in Sylhet, Bangladesh

Presenting Author - Pranto Paul, Simon Fraser University

Non-presenting Authors - Md. Ashraful Haque and AFM Zakaria and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology

A large number of married and unmarried girls show up at the higher educational institutions in Bangladesh who are at a possible risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) in their educational surroundings, which eventually impacts their health and future careers. Though social norms theories and models explore the informal rules that govern an individual's behavior within one's own peer group, it has been established as a concept for understanding and expanding interventions following gender-based violence (GBV) globally. Following ALIGN model (2018) and adopting both inductive and deductive approaches, this study intends to understand the nature and drivers of IPV in public university and how do social norms contribute to the IPV against female students. We took 20 in-depth interviews (IDI) (ten with married and ten with unmarried female students) using vignettes and found that the married girls face physical and sexual violence, mostly. In contrast, the majority of the unmarried girls are victims of controlling and emotional violence. Both groups identified that the conservative perspective of masculinity is one of the major drivers of intimate partner violence, where the dominant norm is making girls obliged. Compromising attitude of female partners is a prime indicator to the unmarried male partners of being assured to consider them as long-term partner. On the other hand, married female students must need to comply with their husbands' aspirations and commands as the family members of married females also push them not to go any disagreement to get a sustainable conjugal relationship. To reinforce weak IPV norms, it is necessary to revise university policies, increase liability, increase bystander intervention, and strengthen present committees.

VLS10b-2 - The Autonomy Paradox: How Sexual Autonomy Shapes Intimate Partner Violence among HIV+ Women in Ghana

Presenting Author - Akosua Adjei, Memorial University

Non-presenting Author - Eric Tenkorang, Memorial Newfoundland

Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a global public health crisis which disproportionately affects women. IPV rates are exceptionally high among HIV+ women (WLHIV) than among the general population. Some studies show that IPV undermines women's sexual autonomy, despite the critical importance of sexual autonomy for the well-being of WLHIV. For instance, sexually autonomous women can demand safe sex, prevent unwanted sex, and sexual acts. However, these actions can potentially trigger retaliatory actions or violence from their male partners to assert control. Conspicuously, the relationship between IPV and sexual autonomy remains underexplored in the Ghanaian context. This study investigates the relationship between sexual autonomy and IPV among WLHIV in Ghana. Logistic regression analysis was used to examine these relationships. Findings

revealed the majority of WLHIV are not sexually autonomous. Sexually autonomous women were more likely to experience physical, economic and emotional abuse, suggesting that autonomy may provoke retaliatory violence from partners who perceive threats to patriarchal control. The study also found evidence of reverse association, where women experiencing physical and economic violence were more likely to assert sexual autonomy. These findings suggest that, while violence often constrains women's autonomy, experiences of violence among WLHIV may prompt greater assertion of sexual autonomy as both a health-protective strategy and a form of resistance against partner control. This study highlights the complex, bidirectional relationship between IPV and sexual autonomy. Interventions should seek to empower WLHIV through vocational training, financial literacy, and income generation to reduce women's dependence on potentially violent partners. Also, advocating for sexual autonomy should be accompanied by safety planning measures to mitigate potential violent retaliation from partners.

VLS10b-3 - Power at the table: food as coercive power and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) among HIV+ women in Ghana.

Presenting Author - Clifford Semabiah, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Non-presenting Author - Eric Yeboah Tenkorang, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Previous studies indicate a high prevalence of food insecurity among HIV+ women (WLHIV) in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Women's vulnerability to food insecurity is attributed to several factors, including entrenched norms that promote socio-economic and gender inequality and their reliance on intimate partners for food. Current discussions on the interactive effects of food insecurity have been extended to include IPV. These discussions show that WLHIV are mostly victimised due to controlling behaviours of their partners, gendered norms, and power asymmetry. However, these studies did not elucidate the mechanisms through which gender power influences access to food among WLHIV. For instance, sociocultural norms undergird food access in SSA, and intimate partners may use food as power to control and coerce their partners, with implications for IPV. This study fills this gap by drawing on in-depth interviews with 30 ever-married Ghanaian WLHIV in the Eastern Region. Data were analyzed thematically and grounded in resource theory. Results show food insecurity was common among WLHIV. Many women rationed food, skipped meals, reduced food size, and sacrificed their food for their children. Women were dependent on male partners for food, which exposed them to forced and unwanted sexual acts. Women denied their partners unwanted sex, leading to abandonment, economic deprivation, and withdrawal of food support by their partners to assert power. Male partners controlled resources, and their inability to provide housekeeping money resulted in confrontation and physical violence. They also used their power and dominance to exploit and control their partners' finances. These tactics entrenched female dependence on male partners and jeopardized women's ability to be financially self-sufficient to be food secure. The findings imply a need for HIV-care and treatment policies to also prioritise IPV screening, educate WLHIV about IPV, and empower them to be financially and economically self-sufficient to safeguard their access to food.

VLS10b-4 - Mediating Intimate Partner Violence: Media Discourse, Gender Ideology, and Structural Power in China

Yi Qin, University of Saskatchewan

This study examines how intimate partner violence (IPV) against women is framed, interpreted, and normalized through media and public discourse in contemporary China. Focusing on high-profile IPV cases that generated sustained attention across both news media and social media, it analyzes how violence against women is explained and evaluated in ways that reflect broader conditions of state regulation, gender ideology, and uneven legal enforcement. Drawing on qualitative content analysis of news reports from both state-owned and privately owned media, alongside public discussions on Weibo, the paper traces dominant narrative patterns through which IPV is explained and evaluated. Rather than challenging structural gender inequality, media coverage frequently frames violence through individualized and moralized narratives, emphasizing relationship failure, emotional conflict, financial disputes, or personal deviance. These framings shift attention away from institutional responsibility and obscure the role of gendered power relations embedded in marriage, family norms, and social expectations surrounding femininity and masculinity. Public discussions partially reproduce these narratives but also reveal moments of discursive tension. Feminist-oriented interpretations emerge that challenge victim-blaming, question the adequacy of legal and institutional responses, and situate IPV within broader patterns of structural violence against women. In some cases, sustained public attention contributes to increased visibility, institutional pressure, or more timely case handling, suggesting that online discussion can shape case-specific trajectories. However, such interventions remain largely episodic and case-bound, leaving the underlying gender regimes, legal practices, and institutional constraints that enable violence fundamentally unchanged. Counter-discourses thus remain fragmented and limited within a tightly regulated media environment. Situating China within broader Global South debates on gender-based violence, this study demonstrates how media discourse allows violence against women to be publicly addressed without being structurally confronted, thereby highlighting the limits of legal reform and awareness-raising initiatives in the absence of deeper transformations in gender ideology and institutional practice.

(VLS11) Gender and Violence in Migration

Scheduled: Virtual – Thursday June 4, 2026 @ 2:00pm
Track: Violence and Society Research Cluster

This session invited papers to address and interrogate the modalities and specificities of gender-based violence in a migration and refugee context. Gender-based violence (GBV) affects both men and women, however statistics show that, globally, women and girls are the principal victims of such violence. Our presenters will aim to understand the different forms and dynamics of violence in the process of migration (including forced migration) that includes the various stages of leaving, transiting, arriving, and settling in a new society. Papers will be selectively addressing various forms of GBV, ranging from domestic violence, economic violence, GBV in conflict situations, violence against individuals fleeing conflict and violence while awaiting refugee status determination or settlement. As gender operates in a complex web of social relations, we will be deploying an intersectional approach to understand gender interactions with a multiplicity of social divisions such as those based on age, race, religion, national origin, gender identity and expression, and sexuality, as well as the unique experiences such intersections create. Furthermore, we will be paying attention to the structural, cultural, and discursive causes of GBV in various settings, locations, and times.

Session Organizer: Evangelia Tastsoglou, Saint Mary's University

Session Chair: Sangar Salih, University of New Brunswick

VLS11-1 - Framing Honour and Violence: A Thematic Analysis of Indian Newspaper Representations of Honour Killings

Jasmine Padam, University of Victoria

Honour-based violence and honour killings are frequently mediated through news reporting, shaping public understandings of gender, morality, and national identity. This paper examines how honour violence is represented in South Asia, primarily India, through a thematic analysis of forty-six news articles published within the past year. Drawing on feminist and sociological research, this study investigates how Indian media narratives frame honour-based violence and killings, responsibility, and construct victims, perpetrators, and communities. Using qualitative thematic coding, newspaper articles are analyzed to identify dominant patterns in language, framing, and explanation. Preliminary themes include the culture of violence, moral regulation of women's sexuality, collective family accountability, state failure and legal inadequacy, and the tension between modern narratives and traditional honour norms. Particular attention is paid to how caste, religion, rural-urban divides, and gender intersect within reporting. The analysis situates Indian media representations within broader socio-political contexts marked by rising nationalism, gendered moral surveillance, and contested legal reform. While honour killings are formally criminalized in India, newspaper narratives often frame these acts as rooted in "backwardness" or "tradition", obscuring the structural conditions, such as caste hierarchies, weak institutional enforcement, and political complicity, that sustain honour-based control. Thus, media reporting may distance honour violence from everyday social relations, reinforcing narratives of exception, rather than systemic gendered harm. This paper contributes to sociological debates on media, gendered violence, and honour. It demonstrates how South Asian news coverage participates in regulating women's bodies, shaping public perceptions of justice, and legitimizing particular forms of belonging and exclusion. The findings stress the importance of critically engaging media representations in efforts to address honour-based violence beyond culturalized explanations.

VLS11-2 - Precarious Migration Status and Domestic and Family Violence in Canada and France: Experiences and Responses

Evangelia Tastsoglou, Saint Mary's University; Jane Freedman, Université Paris 8

Drawing upon qualitative interview data of the international Gender-Net Plus Consortium funded project on "Violence against Women Migrants and Refugees: Analyzing Causes and Effective Policy Response" we analyze the intersections of precarious legal migration status with other forms of social divisions and inequalities, such as gender, class, race/ ethncity, nationality, and age in the experiences of domestic and family violence (DFV) of temporary migrant survivors in Canada and France. Precarious legal migration status encompasses a range of diverse, state-specific range of temporary statuses. Our approach to understanding the experience of DFV will be multi-pronged, ranging from the level of diverse victim/survivor experiences and responses to them, to the meso and macro-levels, that is community responses, institutional and structural levels of legal / policy border, migration and DFV protection regimes and access to services. Although this is not a detailed comparison of Canada and France on DFV, since our project data derive from a global lens on gender-based violence (GBV) and collaboratively developed theoretical and methodological approaches

adapted to specific national contexts, we anticipate a broad comparison and generalizations on the experiences and responses of survivors in their respective national contexts.

VLS11-3 - Empowerment in Context: How Gender Regimes Shape Women's Exposure to Severe IPV in Africa

Eugene Dim, University of Victoria

Empirical studies of IPV experiences have focused on individual- and community-level predictors. However, in many societies in the global South, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, the link between women's socio-economic status and IPV can be understood within the broader political context. Drawing on ecological and gender regime theories, this paper examines how the link between women's socio-economic status and IPV is shaped by the community and political contexts of African societies. To operationalize the theoretical constructs of ecological and gender regime theories, women's socio-economic status was measured at the individual level, their decision-making status within their marriage was captured at the relationship level, their place of residence represented the community level, and the level of female representation in the national legislature reflected the macro-level. This study combines Demographic and Health Survey data from 32 African countries and conducts a multilevel analysis to examine cross-level interactions among women's socio-economic status, decision-making, place of residence, and experience of severe violence. The study revealed that countries with higher women's legislative representation protected women across the middle and richest wealth index groups from severe IPV. Similarly, the protective influence of education on severe IPV was accentuated in societies with higher female legislative representation. In contrast to wealth and education, the association between women's employment and severe IPV intensified in contexts of higher female legislative representation, suggesting potential gender backlash effects within intimate relationships. This study contributes to the mainstream literature on the impact of the political context on the persistence of IPV against women, especially in the global South.

(WPO) Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

(WPO1a) Professions: Complexities and Challenges

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

This session explores the complex and often challenging realities faced by various groups of professionals, realities that are understood within broader institutional, organizational, structural, and regulatory contexts. Papers address issues such as: the understanding of mid-career nurse retention as a sociological problem; state intervention in the changing landscape of dental therapy in Canada; tensions between standardization and diversification in contemporary professions, with a focus on army officers in the United States; the construction of hybrid identities of early-career professors in Canadian universities; and, dimensions of state intervention in collective bargaining with public-sector teachers. Collectively, the papers point to the need to develop more nuanced analyses of professionals and their workplaces, and to understand the dynamics of the transformation of the work of professionals within the context of broader organizational and societal changes.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph

WPO1a-1 - Staying or Stepping Away: Mid-Career Nurse Retention as a Sociological Question of Work, Knowledge, and Care

Presenting Author - Victoria Babysheva, University of Waterloo

Non-presenting Author - Elena Neiterman, University of Waterloo

Health care systems are struggling to retain nurses amid intensifying workloads and rising organizational pressures. Turnover among mid-career nurses is especially concerning, as it reduces the availability of experienced practitioners who play key roles in patient care, mentorship, and the transmission of institutional knowledge. From a sociological perspective, mid-career attrition raises questions about work sustainability, professional identity, and the organization of care under contemporary health system constraints. We conducted a scoping review using Arksey and O'Malley's framework to examine research on mid-career nurse retention. Searches were conducted in PubMed and CINAHL, for publications released between January 2014 and February 2025. The review aimed to map the scope and focus of existing research, examine how retention is conceptualized, and identify gaps relevant to workforce policy and organizational practice. Twenty-two studies from ten countries met the inclusion criteria, of which sixteen examined interventions targeting mid-career nurses. Ten focused on retaining nurses within their current roles, while six aimed to prevent organizational exit. Interventions clustered into three themes: role satisfaction, work culture, and customized retention strategies. However, evidence of effectiveness was limited. Many studies lacked outcome measures, provided minimal organizational-level data, and rarely considered unintended consequences. Across the literature, there was also no clear conceptualization of what constitutes a "mid-career" nurse. This review highlights conceptual and empirical gaps in how mid-career nurse retention is understood and addressed. The absence of robust evaluation and theoretical clarity limits the development of sustainable workforce strategies. We argue that retaining mid-career nurses should be understood not only as a staffing issue, but as a sociological problem tied to the organization of work, professional meaning, and the political and institutional conditions shaping contemporary health care. Addressing these gaps is essential for developing evidence-informed, socially responsive approaches to sustaining the nursing workforce.

WPO1a-2 - Professions and States Under Capitalism: The Case of Dental Therapy

Bruna Moraes, University of Western Ontario

Dental therapy emerged as a profession in Canada primarily through government efforts to address oral health inequalities in remote and rural areas, and among children. Despite the evident success of initiatives employing dental therapists, most were defunded and discontinued, along with training schools. As a result, the country was left with fewer than 300 practitioners, most of whom had to leave public practice due to a lack of opportunities. Today, the profession reemerges with the recent launch of a dental therapy program at the University of Saskatchewan. In this presentation, I share the findings of my ongoing study exploring this changing landscape of dental therapy in Canada, with the primary goal of understanding how a profession created and shaped primarily by state initiative

develops and operates within capitalist and welfare contexts. This centrality of the state in the trajectory of a profession is underexplored in the sociology of professions. I draw on exploratory and qualitative thematic analysis of secondary historical data and in-depth interviews conducted with dental therapists and key informants in the field to show how the material context shapes governmental and professional action. Specifically, I discuss how government attention to dental therapy over time has been associated with the conditions and relations of healthcare production, often marked by a shortage of professionals, market dependence for investment, internal and external pressures to expand healthcare access, and interprofessional conflict, in which dental professions may feel threatened by one another, depending on how scopes of practice and autonomy are legally defined. I also discuss how this context helps to understand working conditions, work experiences, and professional relationships in the practice of dental therapy today, as well as the ways in which dental therapy can and has been advocating for itself at provincial and national levels.

WPO1a-3 - Unstandard Standardization in Professional Socialization

Taylor Paige Winfield, University of Arizona

What happens when professions that value uniformity have increasingly diverse entrants? Contemporary professions rely heavily on standardization—the process of making individuals or practices conform to a set standard—to regulate entry, training, and performance. Yet, over the past fifty years, the populations entering professions have become increasingly diverse. Professions that were once reserved for only the most privileged groups now include people from a wide range of backgrounds. However, greater access and diversity have not necessarily led to equality or inclusion. In most cases, occupational standards and procedures continue to reflect the norms of dominant groups. This paper uses the strategic case of prospective U.S. Army officers to examine tensions between standardization and diversification in contemporary professions. I argue that tensions between standardization and diversification produce what I call *unstandard standardization* during professional socialization. Drawing on three years of immersive ethnography and over 100 interviews at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School at West Point, I demonstrate that unstandard standardization emerges in two ways: (1) Pressures toward sameness are applied and experienced differently across social groups; and (2) Individuals navigate these pressures in distinctive ways shaped by their social positions and life experiences. I reveal how the illusion of equality and efficiency through standardization masks deeper social hierarchies built into the system itself. By attending to unstandard standardization, scholars and practitioners can isolate a key mechanism that sustains inequality in contemporary occupations. This perspective invites critical rethinking of whether existing standards truly serve professional effectiveness or persist as artifacts of dominant culture that exclude those who could otherwise thrive. The paper ultimately challenges the long-standing assumption that standardization is the hallmark of equality and efficiency in modern organizations, showing instead how the illusion of standardization undermines organizational and individual outcomes.

WPO1a-4 - Navigating New Academia's Job Hierarchies: Understanding How Newly-Hired Professors Create Academic Identities

Natalie Adamyk, University of Toronto

Recipient of the Work, Professions, and Occupations Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

This paper analyzes how early-career professors construct identities amid the decline of “traditional” academic career pathways. As higher education becomes increasingly focused on aspects such as productivity and employment in North American universities becomes less stable, many academics increasingly embrace professional-based identities, which emphasize professional skills and engagement outside of the university. Building on the existing literature on academic hybridized work and spaces, this research, consisting of interviews with 61 contract and tenure-track professors at major Canadian research universities demonstrates that participants create cohesive professional identity in different ways, despite often experiencing career instability and the flux of the academic job market. However, the ways in which each group achieved and maintained this sense of identity differed. While tenure-track academics framed their non-academic work as supplementary to their jobs, many contract faculty, referred to here as “hybrid professionals,” characterized their non-academic work as highly meaningful and central to their professional identities. However, these hybrid identities remained out of reach for some contract professors, depending on factors such as access to non-academic work and financial stability, who instead engaged in more “piecemeal work,” rather than more stable forms of employment. This research also points to newly-emerging job hierarchies within academia, in which job prestige functions along a spectrum rather than more traditional binary of contract and tenure-track jobs, with various forms of hybridism occupying certain places in between. Academics therefore have varying access to professional hybrid identities in much the same way they do tenure-track jobs.

WPO1a-5 - The Limits of Charter Protections: Alberta’s Approach to Public Sector Teacher Bargaining

Presenting Author - Susan Cake, Athabasca University

Non-presenting Author - Jason Foster, Athabasca University

Governments in Canada have long intervened in public-sector collective bargaining through back-to-work legislation, strike restrictions, and other measures. Panitch and Swartz describe this ongoing pattern as “permanent exceptionalism,” where interference is presented as extraordinary while actually being routine. Recent research shows these interventions have intensified and evolved, partly in response to Charter jurisprudence. The province-wide teachers’ strike in Alberta in fall 2025 marks a significant escalation of this trend. In addition to ending the strike, blocking local-level bargaining, and imposing contract terms, the Alberta government invoked the Charter’s Notwithstanding Clause to shield its actions from judicial review and potential remedies. This in-progress analysis, building on our broader research on public-sector collective bargaining across Canada, looks at Alberta’s response through a feminist political economy lens. We examine the government’s strategies, rhetoric, and justifications alongside the political conditions, timing, and framing because these factors show when and how governments act, how interventions are sequenced to maximize leverage, and how legitimacy is constructed. Together, these elements help explain how exceptional measures become normalized and used to reshape bargaining dynamics. Situating Alberta within national patterns of intervention, we argue that the use of the Notwithstanding Clause represents a major escalation of permanent exceptionalism and a deliberate attempt to shift bargaining power, especially in relation to a predominantly female education workforce. In an unusual move, the Alberta government also departed from traditional justifications, openly admitting the action was not about protecting students but about shielding the government

from further potential costs. This case extends our earlier findings by highlighting the gendered power relations of state intervention and their implications for collective bargaining in Canada.

(WPO1b) Outcomes of Workplace Inequality and Discrimination

Scheduled: Monday, June 1, 2026 @ 12:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

Despite the many changes over the past several decades to workplace organization, practices, and policies, inequality and discrimination continue to rear their ugly heads. This session explores barriers that foster and reinforce workplace inequities that deeply affect different groups of workers. Papers address issues such as: gender differences in experiences and outcomes in the Royal Canadian Navy; gender differences in workplace mistreatment in the Canadian Armed Forces; employment discrimination and weakened corporate accountability; and, aesthetic systems of control in the food service industry. Together, the papers contribute to a greater understanding of the complexities of workplace experiences and outcomes for workers in different types of organizations.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph

WPO1b-1 - Exploring gender, rank and occupation differences in experiences and outcomes in the Royal Canadian Navy

Presenting Author - Shannon Gottschall, Department of National Defence

Non-presenting Author - Kerry Sudom, Department of National Defence

Recruitment and retention are top priorities for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and efforts in this area include research with gender-based analyses that may help to identify and address the unique needs of women and increase their representation in the CAF. The current study contributes to these research efforts through gender-disaggregated analyses of the job demands, resources, and outcomes of rank and occupation groups within the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Secondary analyses were completed with data from a cross-sectional electronic survey administered in 2018 to a stratified random sample of 930 RCN members. The data were weighted for analysis, and most of the weighted sample were men and non-commissioned members of the Regular Force. Linear regressions were conducted for women and men separately to examine differences between four rank/occupation groups within the RCN on measures of the workplace factors identified in Canada's National Standard on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, as well as outcomes, such as turnover intentions. Preliminary results indicate several differences in the pattern of rank and occupation differences between women and men. For example, women in technical occupations (e.g., engineers) across ranks reported lower confidence in their abilities, as well as lower perceived organizational support and lower reward and recognition for their work, when compared to the combat or operational occupations included in the analysis. In contrast, rank/occupation groups did not significantly predict feelings of competence, support or recognition for men. These findings may reflect broader challenges regarding the inclusion of women in fields related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and interventions related to this may help to increase the retention of women in the RCN in these occupations. Future research may seek to replicate these

findings with larger samples of women and further explore women's needs through in-depth qualitative research.

WPO1b-2 - Gender differences in military workplace mistreatment and associations with job stress and psychological distress

Presenting Author - Kerry Sudom, Department of National Defence

Non-presenting Authors - Shannon Gottschall, Manon LeBlanc, and Jennifer Peach, Department of National Defence

Workplace mistreatment is a pervasive issue that can have significant negative impacts on individuals and organizations. Mistreatment encompasses a range of negative interpersonal behaviours, including abusive supervision, microaggressions, personal harassment and discrimination, that can create an adverse work environment. Despite clear personal and organizational consequences, there remains a gap in our understanding of how different experiences of mistreatment are associated with personal and work-related outcomes, and how these relationships differ between men and women. The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is committed to a work environment free from mistreatment, and the organization's efforts to combat this issue include research on these experiences and their impacts. The CAF Harassment and Discrimination Survey (CAFHDS) was administered to a stratified random sample of Regular Force members in 2020, and 4,715 members completed the survey. Gender differences were examined in reported experiences of mistreatment, and gender-disaggregated linear regressions were conducted to identify associations with perceived job stress and psychological distress. It was found that a higher proportion of women than men reported experiences of mistreatment in the past year. Personal harassment was the most common form of mistreatment reported by women, whereas abuse of authority was most frequently reported by men. While mistreatment was linked to higher job stress and psychological distress for both genders, this association was more pervasive for women, with all types of mistreatment, except personal harassment, showing a significant link to both outcomes. For men, the link was less consistent: personal harassment and microaggressions were not associated with job stress, and microaggressions were not associated with psychological distress. The strong and more consistent link between various forms of mistreatment and adverse outcomes for women, contrasted with the more specific patterns for men, suggests that the impact of different forms of mistreatment may vary by gender in complex ways.

WPO1b-3 - Legal Governance of Workplace Discrimination: How Oligarchic Organisational Fields Dilute Corporate Liability

Haniya Waseem, Western University

This paper theorises a cross-sector organisational field of workplace discrimination governance shaped by the circulation of legal precedent, shared legal rationalisation scripts, and convergent HR-compliance logics among dominant U.S. corporations. Using a comparative qualitative analysis of employment discrimination lawsuits against major firms in technology, professional services, and automotive, the study initially sought to map three sector-specific organisational fields. Instead, the lawsuits reveal a collapse of sectoral difference: across formally distinct industries, dominant firms deploy highly similar legal and organisational strategies that dilute corporate accountability for discrimination. Critical discourse analysis of court filings and corporate defences shows that firms do

not merely respond to law; they actively construct and reuse justificatory scripts that recode systemic discrimination through recurring frames such as decentralised managerial discretion, neutral performance management, and isolated supervisory failure. These reframings shift responsibility from the corporation to local decision-makers, fragment organisational accountability, and make inequality legally legible as individualised employment decisions rather than an organisational pattern. This patterned cross-sector similarity supports the emergence of a single oligarchic organisational field governing workplace discrimination. A key mechanism is precedent laundering: the strategic, context-stripping mobilisation of favourable rulings across firms and sectors, through which ordinary precedent use becomes a liability-diffusion device and hardens into a de facto corporate liability regime. One illustration is the migration of reasoning from Wal-Mart v.Dukes into later corporate defences, including Google's gender pay equity litigation, where the precedent is invoked to legitimate decentralised HR authority structures and to limit or foreclose class-wide accountability. By constraining collective accountability and normalising decentralised liability, this regime weakens incentives to reform discriminatory HR systems, allowing discrimination to persist under formal legal compliance. The paper challenges assumptions that law functions straightforwardly as a corrective for workplace inequality and raises questions about law as a harbour-of-hope for marginalised workers amid growing corporate concentration.

WPO1b-4 - The Labour of Aesthetic Control

Presenting Author - Andrew Stevens, University of Regina

Non-presenting Author - Catherine Connelly, McMaster University

The food service industry across North America represents an important site of employment and struggle. Thousands of Starbucks baristas have gone on strike across the United States in a fight for better pay and working conditions - and to confront dress code requirements. In Canada, a wave of successful union organizing efforts drew attention to the needs of an often-ignored workforce, as well as a growing interest in unionization among younger workers. Our study examines how dress code and other aesthetic appearance requirements function as dynamic systems of control, constituting a basic feature of a food service labour process. Interviews with food service workers (n=128) further illustrate that these processes are gendered and racialized, with women subjected to higher expectations. These standards, workers explain, are also internalized, outlining the way in which systems of control and surveillance in the workplace are embraced (and in some cases enforced) by the employees themselves. Aesthetic requirements, then, are the embodiment of corporate values. Non-conformity and dissent are then subject to discipline and punishment. Our research further explores the labour and costs associated with aesthetic requirements imposed on nominally low-wage workers who are expected to shoulder the expense and time associated with aligning with industry expectations.

(WPO1c) Work, Employment, and Labour: Pressures, Barriers, and Opportunities

Scheduled: Monday June 1, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

This session examines various types of challenges that workers face in workplaces, the labour market, and unions. It also focuses on how pressures and barriers present opportunities for better workplace and organizational outcomes. Papers address issues such as: the role of social networks in shaping

Iranian immigrants' labour market integration in Canada; the impact of structural and organizational pressures on workplace stress and well-being of civil service officers in Bangladesh; the experiences of Vancouver community centre workers in providing programming for older adults; the working conditions and job/career satisfaction of carpenters in the Toronto construction industry; and, the reproduction of, and challenges to, systemic inequities within unions and the labour movement. Collectively, the papers demonstrate that, though there are overlapping dimensions to the difficult realities faced by workers worldwide, teasing out the specificities of the pressures and barriers they experience helps us gain a better understanding of work in contemporary society.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

WPO1c-1 - Occupational Stress and Well-Being Among BCS Officers in Bangladesh: Policy Implications for Sustainable Administrative Efficiency

Presenting Author - MD Helal Uddin, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Non-presenting Authors - Anisur Rahman Khan, Rasel Hussain, and Ruma Parvin, East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Occupational stress has become a serious health concern in public administration globally, particularly in developing bureaucratic systems where complex governance structures and high-performance demands coexist. In Bangladesh, officers of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) Administration cadre work at the frontline of government decision and policy implementation. They often perform their duties under conditions indicated by bureaucratic rigidity, excessive workload, long working hours, political interference, and limited institutional autonomy. These structural and organizational pressures not only weaken administrative efficiency but also pose serious risks to physical and mental well-being and to social and family life. Hence, this study systematically explored the levels and sources of occupational stress among BCS (Administration) officers in Bangladesh, assessed its impact on physical, mental, and social well-being, and explored the coping mechanisms they employ. Using the stress process perspective, the study conceptualized occupational stress as a result of structural stressors, mediated by social resources and individual coping strategies, with implications for both personal well-being and organizational performance. We applied a mixed-methods design, combining a structured survey of 200 BCS (Administration) officers across different divisions and ranks, 12 key informant interviews involving senior bureaucrats, mental health experts, public administration experts, academicians, and local journalists, and 4 focus group discussions. Validated instruments, containing the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21), and Work-Life Balance Scale, were used to collect quantitative data, and qualitative data covered institutional stressors, everyday administrative practices, and perceived policy gaps. The preliminary results showed that officers are exposed to high levels of occupational stress, mainly due to excessive workload, bureaucratic pressure, and work-life imbalance. The findings are expected to contribute to sociological discourse on work, stress, and governance, and to provide evidence-based policy recommendations to manage occupational stress and enhance sustainable administrative efficiency in the Bangladesh civil service.

WPO1c-2 - 'Funding is decreasing for seniors': Community centre workers' experiences of facilitating yoga for older adults

Maya Lily Willis-Fry, University of British Columbia

While there is a wealth of information on the experiences of older adults with community-based physical activity, less is known about the perspectives of the workers who create and run these programs. Yoga instructors and recreation programmers influence the accessibility and inclusivity of classes; these choices are made within broader power structures that are shaped by ageism and neoliberalism. This study aimed to examine how yoga instructors and recreation programmers construct meaning about their work with older adults, and how these meanings inform the accessibility of delivering community-centre yoga. This interview study examined 16 workers across 13 community centres in Vancouver, including 12 yoga teachers and four recreation programmers. Reflexive thematic analysis guided the data interpretation and resulted in the identification of three themes. The first one, "There's a lot of capacity in this role to make a difference in the community," highlights the triumphs of community centre workers in meeting the mandate to be inclusive and accessible. The second theme, "Community centers are built to accommodate everyone, and as a result, nobody is accommodated properly," describes the neoliberal system that constrains the workers. The third theme, "We're all fighting against aging," highlights the societal ageism that shapes workers' experiences of providing services to older adults. Focusing on those who plan and deliver community classes, this study intends to help contribute to academic understanding about the experiences of Vancouver's community centre workers. As these sites are widely used by those in later life, this study highlights the theoretical implications of ageism and neoliberalism on the services provided to older adults. The results underscore the demand for more funding for seniors' programs, better resources, such as education on inclusivity and accessibility, as well as the need for training on supporting older adults in community physical activity spaces.

WPO1c-3 - The Work of Unionized Carpenters in the Construction Industry in the Greater Toronto Area

Grace Pinkerton and Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph

This paper examines the work of carpenters in the construction industry in the Greater Toronto Area, focusing on two main dimensions: working conditions and job/career satisfaction. More specifically, the paper delves into issues such as the physical aspects of carpentry work, weather conditions, and health and safety hazards; skills, technology, and upskilling/deskilling; training; working time arrangements including work hours, overtime, flexibility in scheduling, and work-life balance; job security; workplace relations; and career advancement, as well as sources of job/career satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and carpenters' perception of their trade as a good or a bad career path. Using semi-structured one-on-one interviews, the analysis, which is informed by labour process theory, reveals that carpentry work is shaped by a dynamic whereby management seeks to control the work process through various means in order to maximize productivity and profit, while workers strive to maintain good working conditions and gain as much flexibility as possible to ensure their overall well-being. The study finds that, despite the various challenges they face, carpenters are generally satisfied with their job and career. The paper puts forward recommendations on how work in the construction industry needs to be changed to help attract and retain workers, especially in the current context of growth and a labour shortage in the sector.

WPO1c-4 - Rethinking Unionism Through Race, Justice, and Inclusion

Erin Woodford and London McBride, Thompson Rivers University, [2]Utah State University

While unions have long served as spaces for collective empowerment, many continue to reproduce the same systemic inequities they aim to challenge. Together, we will unpack historical and current examples of how race and power shape union organizing and reflect on the tensions between unity and exclusion within labour movements. Through a collaborative scholarly personal narrative, our paper reimagines union practices that centre intersectionality, community care, and collective liberation.

(WPO1d) Care Work and its Consequences

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 9:30am ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations

Caring for individuals is a fundamental aspect of society, and care work takes on many different forms, some overt and some hidden. Care work, regardless of its nature, has profound consequences for the well-being of care workers as well as care recipients. Papers in this session address various dimensions of care work such as: migrant care aids in long-term care homes in Atlantic Canada as a node within transnational care networks; the non-traditional training of medical students in the context of a growing diverse population; the role of care and relational labour in the educational practices of physical and health education teachers in Montreal; and, the effects of motherhood, occupational segregation, and employment conditions in shaping wage inequality in healthcare work. Collectively, the papers underscore the centrality of care work to society, the challenges of delivering care in an ever-evolving social and economic global landscape, the inequities faced by care workers, and the undervaluing of care work and its consequences.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Leslie Nichols, Laurentian University

WPO1d-1 - Migrant Long-term Care Aides and the Global Care Economy

Presenting Author - Heather Dicks, Mount Saint Vincent University

Non-presenting Author - Janice Keefe, Mount Saint Vincent University

Increasingly, researchers have come to recognize the important role of migrant workers in the provision of care. Existing literature situates these workers within “global care chains”, highlighting complex transnational networks, wherein migrants move abroad to fill gaps in care, often leaving behind children to be cared for by older parents or other relatives. Studies on global care chains have disproportionately focused on migrant domestic workers involved in childcare; there has been significantly less research to date on the care of older adults, especially in institutional settings. Atlantic Canada is facing a rapidly aging population, which is putting considerable strain on its long-term care (LTC) sector; the region is increasingly reliant on immigration to help meet the rising demand in LTC homes. The majority of care in these homes is provided by care aides, who represent a large yet unregulated and under-studied workforce. This descriptive study draws on survey data from 1,338 care aides in 53 long-term care facilities across four provinces in Atlantic Canada. Overall,

our research shows that approximately 26% of care aides were born outside of Canada and 76% of these workers are women. The largest diaspora comes from the Philippines and most arrived in the region within the preceding five years. We find that care aides who were born outside of Canada are significantly younger, have lower household income, and are more likely to be working in multiple care homes when compared to their Canadian-born counterparts. Meanwhile, an overwhelming 82% of these care aides are also sending money to family members outside of their home. This highlights their unique position as a node within transnational care networks. While they fill a growing need in the institutional care of older adults in Atlantic Canada, they also continue to support the financial needs of family abroad.

WPO1d-2 - Evaluating the Impact of Intercultural and Community Based Experiential Learning in Preparing Medical Students for Diverse Workplace and Human-centered Care

Presenting Author - Cindy Sinclair, University of Toronto

Non-presenting Authors - Dayana Davoudi, Amanvir Virdi, Thineesha Gnaneswaran, Stacy Chen, and Amel Sassi, University of Toronto

The medical education curriculum has traditionally emphasized biomedical knowledge and clinical competence in preparing family physicians for the future workplace. The curriculum, however, is no longer sufficient in preparing physicians to care for the rapidly growing diverse population made possible by increased immigration and refugee intakes from different parts of the world with unique talents and needs. Intercultural education, when grounded in community-based engagement and experiential learning, offers an essential complement to medical training. It enables learners to become more aware of the diversity of cultures, including differences in personal health beliefs, communication styles, lived experiences, and social styles of the emerging patient population, and at the same time reinforcing the foundational principles of family medicine that a family physicians serve a defined population; that patient-physician relationship is central to compassionate care while contributing to their preparedness as future family physicians who would more quickly recognize their patient population and provide more human-centred care. Building on promising results from a pilot study of an intercultural education program, this study seeks to examine and evaluate best practices to design an intercultural and experiential experiences in medical education. This mixed-methods research centres around the voices of patients in diverse communities to better understand their experiences and unique talents. It explores how exposure to intercultural and community-engaged learning may strengthen students' preparedness for future practice in family medicine, especially in navigating the relational and societal dimensions of care. Findings from this study will inform the support for curriculum reform with integration of social sciences, intercultural education, and community engagements. Moreover, this study will address the current imbalance where learners are technically competent but underprepared for culturally diverse practices. It will add new socially attuned and culturally awareness skills to help physicians provide more equitable care in a rapidly changing healthcare landscape

WPO1d-3 - Embodied Work: A Critical Ethnography of Teacher Labour in Contemporary Physical and Health Education

Presenting Author - Bobby Angelini, McGill University

Non-presenting Author - Jordan Koch, McGill University

Physical and Health Education (PHE) in public schooling is often framed as a space for promoting student well-being, inclusion, and physical literacy. Yet the everyday labour required to sustain these aims remains largely invisible. Drawing on four months of critical ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a Montreal-area high school, this study examines how PHE teachers experience and negotiate intensifying working conditions shaped by managerial oversight, emotional demands, and constrained institutional resources. The research combines participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to capture the embodied and relational dimensions of PHE teaching. Analytically, the study is grounded in Labour Process Theory and scholarship on emotional labour, focusing on how accountability mechanisms, care expectations, and organizational control shape teachers' professional autonomy, identity, and well-being. Preliminary analysis indicates that PHE teachers' work often extends beyond physical instruction. Teachers appear to engage in relational and affective labour that exceeds formal role expectations. These responsibilities are shaped by limited institutional support and accountability pressures, contributing to professional tension. At the same time, teachers demonstrate agency through collaboration, adaptive pedagogical practices, and everyday strategies that help sustain professional connection and integrity. By foregrounding the embodied and emotional dimensions of teaching, this study contributes to sociological understandings of contemporary professional work in public institutions. It highlights how care and relational labour are central to educational practice yet remain undervalued within existing institutional frameworks, pointing to the need for organizational and policy approaches that better support sustainable working conditions in education.

WPO1d-4 - Costs of Care: Motherhood and Wage Inequality Among Healthcare Providers

Cathrine Becker, University of Alberta

Recipient of the Work, Professions, and Occupations Research Cluster Best Student Paper Award.

Parenthood is known to shape labour market outcomes, but its effects in healthcare - a feminized and rapidly expanding sector in Canada - remain contentious. While fathers often experience wage premiums and mothers face penalties, recent research suggests that women in healthcare may be exempt from these patterns or may even benefit from a wage premium. Using the August 2025 Labour Force Survey, this study tests whether motherhood status influences hourly wages among healthcare workers and whether occupational and demographic characteristics moderate these effects. The sample includes 8,995 respondents employed in healthcare, and analyses draw on bivariate and multivariate Ordinary Least Square regressions, including models stratified by gender and healthcare occupation groups. Parenthood status, measured across family structures and child age categories, reveal minimal effect on wages. Once occupational and demographic characteristics are included, the effect of motherhood disappears entirely, indicating neither a motherhood penalty nor premium in this sector. Instead, wage differences are primarily shaped by occupation type, age, public-sector employment, and union membership, with only healthcare professionals displaying a persistent gender wage gap. These findings support arguments that motherhood effects are muted in healthcare, and they highlight the continued importance of occupational segregation and employment conditions in shaping wage inequality.

(WPO1f) The Complexities of Work and Inequality

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 2:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

People's experiences and perceptions of paid work and inequality are shaped by a multitude of intersecting structures, challenges, social locations, and identities that play a key role in how they understand, make sense of, and deal with, their work, employment, and economic realities. Papers in this session address these issues, focusing on topics such as: gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination faced by expert women immigrants to Canada and the United States; management practices within intelligence analysis units in Canadian police services; the career aspirations and frustrations of African managers and senior managers compared to those of skilled workers in a post-colonial context; and, changes over time in the perception of economic inequality in Canada and the determinants of this perception. Collectively, the papers underscore the importance of examining the complexities of inequality and organizational practice in different locations.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Leslie Nichols, Laurentian University

WPO1f-1 - Expert women in AI and Tech immigration to Canada and the US

Presenting Author - Netta Avnon, Western University

Non-presenting Authors - Haniya Waseem and Tracey L. Adams, Western University

Immigrants make up about 60% of the Canadian and US workforce in Artificial Intelligence (AI), data science (DS), and Machine Learning (ML). Most come from the Global South and East. Women account for one-third of the AI/ML/DS immigrants to Canada and a fluctuating, unspecified portion of immigrants to the US. In this study, we conducted 45 in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews with self-identified women working as AI/ML/DS experts in Canada and the US; among them, 32 are immigrants from the Global South and East. We explore their career trajectories, immigration experiences, and perceptions of gender relations in their countries of origin compared with the Canadian and US AI workplaces. Our findings deepen the understanding of gender and ethnic group discrimination in the US and Canada and highlight factors influencing expert immigration. We find that (a) unlike Latinx, Black, and Indigenous women, immigrant women from the Global South and East are often employed in the Canadian and US AI workforce; (b) women immigrants from the Global South and East encounter the typical Western STEM expertise-related gender discrimination, as well as immigrant-specific discrimination from both native-born and foreign-born men supervisors and colleagues; (c) as the literature indicates, the Global South and East are not homogeneous in fostering women's STEM skills; therefore, there are significant differences among countries and global regions regarding how AI expert women immigrants experience the US and Canada AI workplace and compare it to those in their countries of origin, the comparison is not always in favor of the former. We conclude by offering nuanced insights into gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination.

WPO1f-2 - Managing Intelligence: Leadership, Training, and Organizational Challenges in Canadian Policing

Presenting Author - Mina Hasanzada, University of Guelph

Non-presenting Author - Carrie Sanders, Wilfrid Laurier University

Contemporary policing increasingly relies on intelligence and crime analysis to support evidence-based decision-making. Existing scholarship has examined intelligence-led policing and analytical techniques, less attention has been paid to the organizational and managerial conditions that shape how intelligence work is supervised, evaluated, and used in practice. This paper presents preliminary insights from an ongoing qualitative study examining management practices within intelligence analysis units across Canadian police services. The study draws on semi-structured interviews with intelligence and crime analysis managers from municipal, regional, and provincial police services, alongside a scoping review of relevant literature. The broader project examines pathways into intelligence management, non-standardized education and informal training, managerial roles and responsibilities, and the governance of analytical work. This paper outlines emerging thematic areas that will structure the final report. Preliminary analysis highlights a range of organizational challenges shaping intelligence management work, including persistent data quality issues, uneven analyst integration with operational units, change management pressures, and ongoing debates over centralization versus decentralization. Participants also described tensions rooted in sworn-civilian hierarchies and gendered dynamics, which shaped credibility, authority, and expectations of analytical labour. Beyond structural challenges, early findings point to variability in analytical oversight, quality assurance practices, dissemination processes, and time and resource constraints, contributing to uneven analytical standards across organizations. Managers further emphasized disparities in data literacy and training across policing environments, resulting in variable understandings of analytical methods and evidence use among decision-makers. In response, participants described developing informal best practices related to analyst integration, team diversification, mentorship, and communication. Preliminary advisory insights also emerged regarding proactive policing, technical and analytical competence, and the emotional resilience required to navigate complex organizational environments. In line with the CSA's theme *"Committing Sociology for Social Impact,"* the paper highlights how managerial structures and practices shape the quality and use of intelligence in policing.

WPO1f-3 - Espoirs et frustrations des salarié.es au Sahel : Articuler émotions et aspirations professionnelles au prisme de la classe, de la race et du genre

Constance Perrin-Joly, French Centre for Ethiopian Studies

A partir d'une enquête ethnographique menée dans une entreprise française dans un pays du Sahel où la présence de l'ancienne puissance coloniale est largement décriée, notre communication propose d'analyser les parcours et les aspirations des salarié.es africain.es. Il s'agit de saisir comment face à des injonctions contradictoires du management (responsabilisation et paternalisme), les salarié.es expriment leurs aspirations et leur frustration dans un contexte post-colonial et quelles stratégies ils et elles investissent pour se dessiner un avenir. Pour cette communication, nous comparerons deux situations : les cadres et cadres supérieur.es africain.nes d'une part et les ouvriers professionnel d'autre part. Nous montrerons comment les parcours des cadres s'appuient sur une importante mobilité qui leur permet de revendiquer une appartenance cosmopolite à même de

négocier leur place dans une grande entreprise internationale. Ces parcours font naître des aspirations nouvelles, les cadres africains souhaitent pouvoir bénéficier de carrières internationales au même titre que leurs homologues « blancs », avec lesquels ils entrent en concurrence pour les mêmes postes. Nous les comparerons aux générations des jeunes ouvriers dont la montée en compétences professionnelle participe également à la montée des aspirations. Ces dernières sont freinées par la dépréciation de leur diplôme liée notamment à l'augmentation des exigences associées à la maitrise de postes de plus en plus techniques. Nous mettrons en exergue les différentes tactiques mises en œuvre pour se ménager des perspectives professionnelles, notamment en articulant différentes activités. Ces parcours questionnent également l'évolution du rapport à l'argent et aux réseaux de solidarité qui traditionnellement obligent les plus riches ou ceux et celles qui bénéficient d'un revenu régulier comme les salariés. Le salariat oblige diversement les hommes et les femmes, dont la progression est freinée par une division des rôles genrés persistante, mais qui savent tirer profit d'une inégale responsabilité financière dans le ménage.

Based on ethnographic research conducted in a French company in a Sahelian country where the presence of the former colonial power is widely criticised, our paper analyses the career paths and aspirations of African employees. The aim is to understand how, faced with contradictory management directives (empowerment and paternalism), employees express their aspirations and frustrations in a post-colonial context and what strategies they employ to shape their future. For this paper, I will compare two situations: African managers and senior managers on the one hand, and skilled workers on the other. We will show how the careers of managers are based on a high degree of mobility, which enables them to claim a cosmopolitan identity that allows them to negotiate their place in a large international company. These careers give rise to new aspirations: African managers want to be able to enjoy international careers on the same footing as their 'white' counterparts, with whom they compete for the same positions. We will compare them to generations of young workers whose increasing professional skills also contribute to their rising aspirations. These aspirations are held back by the depreciation of their qualifications, linked in particular to the increasing demands associated with increasingly technical positions. We will highlight the various tactics used to secure professional prospects, in particular by combining different activities. These career paths also raise questions about changing attitudes towards money and solidarity networks, which traditionally oblige the wealthiest or those with a regular income, such as employees. Salaried employment places different demands on men and women, whose progress is hampered by persistent gender role divisions, but who are able to take advantage of unequal financial responsibility within the household.

WPO1f-4 - A Small Elite at the Top, and a Great Mass at the Bottom? Perceived Inequality in Canada Before, During, and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Presenting Author - Atsushi Narisada, Saint Mary's University

Non-presenting Author - Scott Schieman, University of Toronto

Scholars across the social sciences have written extensively about *objective* economic inequality and its consequences. However, in recent years there has been growing attention on *perceived* economic inequality. While studies have documented its effects on a range of political, psychological, and health outcomes, recent reviews have called for more longitudinal research to ascertain how the perception changes over time. We address this call by examining how perceived inequality changed

in Canada before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic--a historically consequential period marked by macroeconomic shifts. We explore explanations for the trend, focusing particular attention to changes in Canadians' financial circumstances. Beyond examining changes over time, we advance research on the determinants of perceived inequality by evaluating the effects of a comprehensive set of structural factors. Drawing on national samples of Canadian workers from 2019 to 2025, we find that perceived inequality in Canada increased in a non-linear fashion: It increased slightly from 2019 to 2020 and remained flat until 2022. This was followed by a sharp increase in 2023 and then a slight decline in 2024 that remained stable in 2025. Changes in financial circumstances partly explain this trend. Our analysis of determinants shows the interconnections among statuses, resources, and perceived inequality. Higher education is associated with lower perceived inequality--but more than half of the effect operates through occupation, income, and financial circumstances. Similarly, income is associated with lower perceived inequality--but a significant portion of the effect is explained by financial strain. We also explore differences in perceived inequality across working conditions. We interpret our findings by drawing on reference group theory and situate them in a broader discussion of the social psychology of inequality.

(WPO1g) Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Work and Well-being

Scheduled: In-person – Wednesday June 10, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

Over the past few years, we have witnessed the many impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on paid and unpaid work, workers, workplaces, and labour markets. This session explores a range of topics pertaining to the pandemic-driven transformation of work. Papers address issues such as: the deepening precarisation of young service workers in New Brunswick; the impact of the pandemic on the physical and emotional health and well-being of retail workers in Nova Scotia; and, the impact of the pandemic on the work experiences and careers of young frontline workers in Canada. Collectively, the papers draw out similarities and differences in the ways that the pandemic has been affecting workers, and highlight the economic, career, and physical and mental health consequences of the pandemic for particular groups of workers. The papers also underscore the need for solid analysis of pandemic-related impacts on workers, and point to workplace changes and policy interventions needed to ensure the long-term well-being of workers.

Session Organizers: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph; Tracey Adams, University of Western Ontario; Karen Hughes, University of Alberta

Session Chair: Cindy Sinclair, University of Toronto

WPO1g-1 - "I hate it here:" COVID-19, Exploitation, and Social Reproductive Labour in New Brunswick Service Work

Presenting Author - Isabella Matchett, University of New Brunswick

Non-presenting Author - Nathan Kalman-Lamb, University of New Brunswick

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted critical institutions, forcing frontline service workers to navigate unprecedented personal and professional challenges. This study investigates how the pandemic exacerbated the already precarious conditions of service work, heightening the emotional and physical responsibilities for interactive service workers in New Brunswick. By integrating Social

Reproduction Theory with Arlie Hochschild's (1983) emotional labour and Karl Marx's (1867) theory of exploitation, this research offers preliminary insights into the pandemic's role in devaluing the labour required to maintain human subsistence. Drawing on qualitative interviews with eight participants aged 18-24, the findings offer evidence of a dramatic increase in unpaid labour. Participants described navigating diverse expectations that extended beyond their traditional responsibilities, including evolving public health mandates, heightened sanitation protocols, and their own fears of viral transmission while attempting to maintain a 'perceived normality' for customers. These preliminary findings suggest the emergence of 'surplus emotional labour,' where young workers were expected to absorb customer frustrations and provide empathy as a core part of the service commodity. In this context, the worker's emotional performance *is* the commodity, as production and consumption occur simultaneously in the service industry; however, this effort often remained unrecognized and uncompensated. The evidence points toward systemic exploitation, characterized by stagnant wages despite increased health risks. Evidence suggests the pandemic served as a 'stress test,' deepening the extraction of surplus value from the youth workforce. This research concludes that addressing these disparities requires further consideration of structural changes and policy interventions to ensure fair compensation for the essential emotional labour that sustains economic stability during societal crises.

WPO1g-2 - Retail workers in Nova Scotia - Learning from the pandemic and moving forward

Rachel Brickner, Jesse Carlson, and Rebecca Casey, Acadia University

This paper focuses on the experiences of retail workers in Nova Scotia in 2020 and 2024. We argue that the initial experiences of retail workers during the pandemic have had long lasting implications and that retail work (both during the pandemic and following it) negatively impacted the physical and emotional health and well-being of workers. Additionally, we compare how the term 'essential worker' impacted employees in 2020 compared to 2024. Our analysis is centred around the political economy of work as we compare power imbalances and the exploitation faced by retail workers. This paper includes data from two cross-sectional surveys of retail workers in Nova Scotia - 2020 and 2024. The surveys include questions that were asked at the two different time points. However, the participants were not followed over time, and it is likely that the surveys include different participants. These online surveys were created in LimeSurvey and we recruited participants from Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter and used Facebook/Instagram ads. The surveys include primarily closed-ended questions and a few open text questions which allowed participants to expand on their experiences and provide a rich qualitative data source. We provide evidence of how the pandemic impacted the work experiences of retail workers and their health and well-being. Our findings show that working in retail during the initial waves of the COVID-19 pandemic created physical and mental health problems for workers, leading most to question the application of the term to retail workers. The negative impacts of working in retail continued throughout the pandemic and were reported by participants in 2024. The 2024 survey asked additional questions about how surveillance of workers and customers has an impact on their work experiences. We conclude our paper with recommendations from retail workers about the changes they need at the point of production.

WPO1g-3 - Young Workers: Frontline Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Leslie Nichols, Laurentian University

The COVID-19 pandemic brought in unprecedented changes to our daily lives, including social distancing, school closures for in-person learning, and the requirement to work from home, if possible. The pandemic resulted in a number of measures to limit the impact to the health care system by reducing the potential of spreading the virus, such as lockdown and closures of places of employment for a temporary period of time. While these closures impacted all Canadians, there has been a fair amount of attention towards the experience work, such as the experience of parents working through the pandemic (e.g. O'Reilly, 2020), and older workers (e.g. Morrow-Howell et al., 2020), there hasn't been ample attention to young workers (15 to 35 years old) about their experience of working during the pandemic and the long-term implications. Many studies note that young workers across countries experienced significant job losses early in the pandemic (e.g., Brouchu et al., 2020). Statistics Canada indicated that between 2019 and 2020, the unemployment rate increased for youth by a rate of 6%; 15.5% for men between 15 to 30 years old working full-time and not in school and 13.7% for women. A C.D Howe report (2022) indicated through a review of the literature and federal budget of 2021 that youth were working in industries more likely to be impacted by the pandemic, which will cause lower lifelong earnings, lower quality of work, and a cycle of unemployment throughout their work lives. This study involved: (1) a survey with 28 participants; and (2) 17 focus group participants, which both explored the experience they faced working, how and to what degree their career was disrupted, and what they need to avoid further career interruptions and long-term implications. The data was analyzed through thematical analysis through a political economy lens.

(WPO2) Workplace Harassment, Bullying, & Victimization

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 11:00am ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

Work spaces provide opportunity for abuse which, in other more public spaces, may be considered criminal. For example, employers are being forced to reckon with unhealthy and abusive aspects of work, including criminal activity, recent developments in antiharassment legislation across provinces, legislation dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, and disability claims as a result of work.
Papers in this session will look at all aspects of workplace harm, potential harm, and resilience of those who have experienced harm in workspaces (work, school, volunteer spaces, etc.). This session invites papers on all forms of workspace safety issues and workplace victimization.

Session Organizer and Chair: Hannah Scott, Ontario Tech University

WPO2-1 - Workplace Violence, Coping, and Emotion Practice: The Experiences of Gendered-Racialized Women Retail Pharmacists in Ontario

Alison Starkey, University of Toronto

Coping with verbal abuse and harassment, among other forms of workplace violence (WPV), is considered 'just a part of the job' for community/retail pharmacists. This work will present empirical data on experiences of WPV requiring engagement of nine pharmacists' emotion practice (EP) (Cottingham, 2022). An EP framework treats emotion as practice (Scheer, 2012; Erickson & Stacey, 2013; Cottingham, 2018, 2022), encompassing a continuum between unintentional habits and active strategies deployed in daily activities. Conceptualizing emotions as complex relational processes, embodied identities understand, interpret, and act through practices. Consideration of emotions, as

core to the practice of coping and resiliency in meeting the demands of day-to-day challenges, work intensification, and WPV, inform this research by acknowledging and including their impact on health and well-being. An EP approach simultaneously interrogates, mitigates, and refuses problematic endemic dualisms that obfuscate inequalities. Women, and increasingly racialized women, are overly represented in the 'caring' professions. The gendered nature of 'caring' jobs assumes a 'natural' or 'essential' nature to carework/labour (Erickson & Stacey, 2013). Gender bias in medicine is well-documented and compounded when women are concomitantly racialized (Wingfield, 2019). As the conditions of work are the conditions of care and the conditions of care are the conditions of work (Mehra, 2020; Keith & Brophy, 2021), WPV and the quality of workplace experiences directly correlates with worker absenteeism, retention, effective patient care, and functionality in healthcare systems. This work will describe and interrogate experiences of WPV, practices for coping, and inherent relationalities that reveal aspects of race, gender, and class. These experiences cohere, overlap, and reverberate beyond the microlevel, exposing the transnational dimensions of each. My research seeks to contribute to the creation of 'complex solidarities' and improve the material conditions for frontline workers. Doing so will support workers, patient care, the resilience and sustainability of healthcare systems.

WPO2-2 - Strong Allies, Stronger Communities: Community Perspectives on Gender-based Violence Allyship in the Skilled Trades

Allie Wall, Western University and Jasmine Sidhu, Fielding Graduate University

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive issue with significant impacts on individual, workplace, and community well-being. While engaging men in allyship has been identified as a promising strategy for GBV prevention, limited sociological research has explored allyship development within male-dominated workplaces, including the industrial and construction skilled trades. The Strong Allies, Stronger Communities (SASC) initiative is a collaboration between community, academic, and industrial trades organizations from Lambton County, Ontario, that aims to develop GBV allyship programming for men and young men working or training in the Canadian skilled trades. To better understand community needs and perspectives relating to GBV and workplace interventions, a community needs assessment was conducted using a mixed-methods, community-based research approach, including an anonymous online survey (n = 144) and three focus group sessions (n = 18) with both skilled trades and non-skilled trades community members. Findings indicate widespread recognition of GBV as an issue requiring attention and a strong interest in additional education related to GBV and allyship. The majority of survey respondents reported that they could think of at least one co-worker who would benefit from GBV education, and that their workplace benefit from programming that would promote allyship knowledge and skills. Focus group participants discussed regional and sector-specific GBV risk and protective factors, as well as the complex roles that industrial, community, and government agencies play in workplace GBV prevention. Participants identified accessible education and actionable pathways for allyship, as essential supports for strengthening community connections and GBV allyship. This presentation discusses how these findings inform the development of the multi-component SASC GBV allyship intervention, which includes an awareness campaign, workplace safety 'toolbox' talks, an online micro-credential, and an ally peer support model. The findings contribute to sociological discussions of masculinities, workplace culture, and applied community-based approaches to GBV prevention in male-dominated occupational contexts.

WPO2-3 - An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure: Towards a model of abuse prevention training using the Workplace Power Control Model in creating respectful workplaces.

Hannah Scott, Ontario Tech University

The understanding of power and control as motivation for tactics used in the workplace by bullies as explanations for this form of victimization (Scott, 2018) is becoming increasingly popular, having now been cited in over 30 studies since 2018. A second, unexplored, phase of the Duluth Model in practice is its therapeutic use for abusers and for prevention training in the workplace. This suggests that learning how to use this model not only to identify abusive tactics used by bullies at work, but also training may be required for prevention of toxic work environments. More traditional therapeutic practice with IPV offenders is often reactionary in that identified abusers, often officially by court systems, can be diverted into counselling programs in an effort to curtail abusive belief systems and stop violent behaviour patterns within IPV settings. This presents a challenge to the workplace as employers are reluctant to build the re-training infrastructure for abusive workers for a variety of reasons. This despite the fact that bullying within the workplace can divide workplace environments, negatively affecting production and worker health and safety. This paper discusses the use of the Workplace Power Control Wheel (WPCW) and the newly developed derivation of the Equity Wheel for workplaces, as therapeutic tools in abuse prevention in the workplace. Exploration of the application of Duluth Model to a respectful workplace program could be fruitful and offer hope to workplaces affected by workplace bullying. Models of how this could be done, based on existing therapy models using the original Power Control Model (PCW), will be discussed, along with consideration of some pitfalls of this model in offender therapeutic practice that have been identified.

(WPO3) GenAI and Work

Scheduled: In-person – Thursday June 11, 2026 @ 1:30pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

This session examines how generative AI technologies are reshaping labour dynamics, employment, and work processes across different industries. We welcomed research exploring job displacement, deskilling, labour transformation, ethical AI deployment, worker voice in governance, and impacts on professional occupations, among other topics.

Session Organizers and Chairs: Alex Miltsov, Bishop's University; Dilara Baysal, Bishop's University

WPO3-1 - Hidden Exploitation in the Age of AI: Human Labour Supporting Digital Modes of Production

Sarah Delorme, Saint Mary's University

Artificial intelligence (AI)'s rapid rise has affected the global labour market, rendering many jobs redundant, but also creating new employment opportunities. Despite the autonomous image promoted by AI companies, AI products rely on low-paid, vulnerable gig workers, usually from low- and middle-income countries. Commonly referred as "ghost work", reliance on this precarious labour is intentionally dissimulated by corporations to preserve AI's image as a fully automated system (Bloor, 2025; Gray & Suri, 2019; Lehtiniemi & Ruckenstein, 2022). While current literature focuses on labour disruption (Altenried, 2020; Bloor, 2025), far less attention has been paid to the precarious

nature and exploitative mechanisms of new AI-related jobs. In my research, I pose the following questions: a) To what extent does "ghost work" reinforce exploitation, precarity and vulnerability under corporate capitalism? b) In what ways do various factors of precarity including the lack of social safety nets, economic vulnerability and the uncertain nature of "ghost work" contribute to worker exploitation? Using a qualitative approach, I conducted an autoethnography of my experience as a "ghost" worker on the crowdsourcing platform Clickworker. My findings reveal financial exploitation, which diverges from Bergvall-Kåreborn and Howcroft (2014)'s theory on the emergence of collective organizing of "ghost" workers but supports Gray and Suri (2019)'s findings on gig work. I argue that the invisibility of "ghost work" allows corporations to exploit vulnerable, precarious gig workers who significantly contribute to AI systems and that this phenomenon represents a contemporary form of exploitation as opposed to a new social issue. This research contributes to the growing body of research on "ghost work" in AI through exposing the injustice and social inequalities exacerbated by new AI technologies. By questioning the moral and ethical responsibility of corporations, this study reveals current policy gaps to protect and regulate "ghost" workers within the new AI landscape.

WPO3-2 - Technofascism at Work: GenAI and the Affective Politics of Marginalized Tech Labour in Canada

Dani Rudnicka-Lavoie, Toronto Metropolitan University

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is changing the way tech labour works. Historically, computing and tech work are male-dominated and exclusionary industries (Ensmenger, 2015; Hicks, 2021; Twine, 2023). Within tech, the pervasive image of the "ideal worker" (i.e. male, single, under 35, without children) reinforces homophily in this industry (Papadantonakis, 2025; Wynn-Williams, 2025). At the same time, GenAI appears as a technodeterministic solution to all problems: its development is based on the neoliberal belief that technological innovation is always beneficial to society, regardless of its actual utility (Broussard, 2018; Harvey, 2005; Morozov, 2013). This technochauvinism is apparent in technology design that is exclusionary and harmful to historically-marginalized groups, indicating that the people who create digital technologies imprint their own biases onto them (Costanza-Chock, 2020; Eubanks, 2018; Hicks, 2019; Noble, 2018). Against this backdrop, this research explores how increased use of GenAI impacts labour in software development, especially for workers from historically underrepresented communities in the industry in Canada (women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+). I use a grounded transfeminist intersectional methodological framework for this exploratory study (Charmaz, 2006; Crenshaw, 1991; Davis & Lutz, 2024; Johnson, 2015). Drawing on 15 semi-structured qualitative interviews, I argue that existing labour inequalities are exacerbated by GenAI automation. In centering the accounts of these workers in the discussion of increased automation in digital labour, I highlight how the "GenAI hype" is experienced by workers themselves (Bender & Hanna, 2025; Crawford, 2022; Hao, 2025). In doing this, I adopt a situated, queer and decolonial perspective on GenAI that aims to deconstruct assumptions about this extractive and harmful technology as value-neutral (Haraway, 1988; Koster & dos Santos Bruss, 2024; Tacheva & Ramasubramanian, 2023). This study finds that GenAI is being used as a tool of technofascism that reinforces the power of the tech industry's "broligarchy" culture (Möllers, 2025).

WPO3-3 - Governance Strategies for GenAI Integration at Work

Presenting Author - Alex Miltsov, Bishop's University

Non-presenting Author - Dilara Baysal, Concordia University

This paper proposes a novel governance framework for the integration of generative AI into the knowledge work sector. As generative AI technologies enter a wide range of occupations, they bring both opportunities and risks for workers and organizations. Our core argument is that workers must be involved in the governance and decision-making processes of AI implementation. We argue that this inclusion is beneficial for both workers and organizations. First, we outline the multifaceted effects of GenAI on work and employment. We then discuss contemporary practices of AI integration and their shortcomings. Next, drawing on Labour Process Theory (LPT), we present a governance framework that recognizes both the active role workers themselves play in introducing GenAI tools into the workflow and their potential resistance to employer-driven, top-down implementation. Here, we discuss the ramifications of companies curtailing the use of GenAI introduced by workers and, conversely, of workers resisting GenAI tools introduced by employers. Our goal is to explore barriers to worker empowerment in AI adoption and to outline a governance framework that promotes creativity, organizational resilience, and collective capability. We address key concerns, including algorithmic transparency and worker data privacy, emphasizing their impact on workers' rights and dignity in increasingly automated workplaces. Finally, we offer specific recommendations for GenAI implementation in organizations.

WPO3-4 - Artificial Intelligence and Female Labor Dynamics: A Sociological Perspective

Presenting Author - Christabell P J, [1]University of Kerala

Non-presenting Author - Fathima Sherin M, University of Kerala

Artificial intelligence (AI), though it is well known for enhanced productivity, also raises considerable concern over the displacement of women's labor. The impact of AI on different sectors is giving a mixed picture (Cazzaniga et al. 2024; Mroue 2023). The ILO-NASK study (2025) points to the fact that one out of four jobs would be transformed due to GenAI. Women workers are more susceptible to this unprecedented transformation, as women occupy millions of white-collar jobs. It is found that a total of 3.5 percent of the jobs will be affected in the short run for men. On the other hand, for women, 9.6 percent of female jobs will be affected. Cortes and Pan (2019) emphasize that the 'gender gaps in skill acquisitions and job transitions' would affect women disproportionately. The current study empirically examines the relationship between artificial intelligence (AI) and female employment across G20 countries during the period 2019-2024. Using the AI Readiness Index developed by Oxford Insights' GARI reports, an attempt was made to delve into the depth of the impact of AI on the female labor force. The female employment-to-population ratios (ages 15 and above) are obtained from the World Development Indicators. The national AI readiness levels are measured using the Government AI Readiness Index (GARI). Descriptive statistics are employed to analyze cross-country trends. It is followed by panel econometric techniques, including pooled ordinary least squares and fixed-effects models, to estimate the impact of AI readiness on female employment while accounting for unobserved country-specific heterogeneity. The empirical results reveal a statistically significant association between AI readiness and female employment outcomes across G20 economies. The study sheds light on the matter that despite increasing investment in AI,

its impact on employment is uneven across countries, especially for the educated women in the global south.

(WPO-RC) Work, Professions, and Occupations Research Cluster Meeting

Scheduled: Virtual – Tuesday June 2, 2026 @ 4:00pm ADT
Track: Work, Professions and Occupations Research Cluster

The Work, Professions, and Occupations Research Cluster meeting is open to current members and those interested in learning more about our cluster activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to network with others working in this field of research and/or teaching. We welcome feedback on our current activities and encourage suggestions for future initiatives.

Session Organizer: Vivian Shalla, University of Guelph