

Student Spotlight



Student Concerns Subcommittee
Canadian Sociological Association



Sara Hormozinejad

PhD Candidate, University of Toronto, Dept. of Sociology

Sara is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto and a Researcher at the Global Migration Institute at Toronto Metropolitan University. Her research examines how contemporary societies negotiate membership, belonging, and diversity amid migration, demographic change, and rapidly evolving technologies. Sara is also involved in student advocacy as a member of the CSA Student Concerns Subcommittee and currently serves on the CSA Conference Program Committee.

Emma Nelson

**PhD Student, Dalhousie University,
Dept. of Sociology and Social Anthropology**

Emma is a second-year PhD student in Dalhousie University's Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. Their research looks at the medicalization of modern-day rites of passage, with a specific focus on death and dying care, how people advocate for a "good death" within the palliative care system, and rural experiences. They are a part of the OpenThink cohort for 2025-2026 for which they regularly write about their research in an accessible, public format.



For more information and nomination forms:

www.csa-scs.ca/student-spotlight

Have something you'd like to share with us?



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She/Her

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Canadian Sociological Association: Student Concerns Subcommittee - Central Rep

I first learned about and joined the Canadian Sociological Association as a student member during the COVID-19 pandemic, when I began my PhD in Sociology at the University of Toronto. My first CSA presentation was based on my BA Honours and MA research. I remember feeling somewhat intimidated presenting on a panel alongside established university professors. Afterward, however, one of the presenters reached out, offered thoughtful feedback, and introduced me to literature that I later drew on and cited in my publications.

A couple of years later, I organized a CSA session for the first time. During that session, an engaging conversation with one of the presenters introduced me to the concept of the social imaginary, which later helped shape the direction of my dissertation and publications.

Experiences like these have made the CSA an intellectually stimulating and supportive part of my doctoral journey. Two years ago, I joined the Student Concerns Subcommittee because I wanted to contribute to a space from which I had benefited and, particularly, to help newer student members find ways to engage with and benefit from the association.

Student Spotlight



Sara Hormozinejad

Additional insights...

This is my third and final year on the Student Concerns Subcommittee, and the experience has opened possibilities I had not anticipated when I first joined. It led to my involvement with the CSA Conference Program Committee last year and again this year, while giving me a much better understanding of the organizational work that happens behind the scenes of the association and its annual conference. Through these roles, I have grown intellectually, strengthened my organizational and collaborative skills, and expanded my academic community. I have especially valued working alongside students from different universities, backgrounds, and areas of sociology on the Student Concerns Subcommittee, who share a commitment to making the CSA a welcoming and accessible space for students. As my term comes to an end, I hope other students will consider nominating themselves for the Student Concerns Subcommittee and continue building on the work of those who came before us. It is a meaningful opportunity not only to contribute to the association, but also to learn from one another and help shape the kind of academic community we want students to experience.

More About Me...

As I approach the end of my three years on the Student Concerns Subcommittee and move closer to completing my PhD, I find myself reflecting on how much my relationship with academic life has changed since I first joined the CSA. The journey has been intellectually demanding, as it should be, but it has also reminded me that scholarship does not happen in isolation. It is sustained through conversation, collaboration, disagreement, mentorship, and community. I often return to Patricia Hill Collins's ideas of intellectual activism and flexible solidarity. For me, they offer a way of thinking about scholarship beyond knowledge production and about solidarity that does not require identical experiences or perspectives, but can grow through shared commitments, respectful dialogue, and a willingness to work across differences. I hope the CSA continues to create spaces where students can ask difficult questions, exchange ideas openly, support one another, and develop their own voices. For me, this hope lies in believing that the relationships and spaces we build together can make our institutions better. As I look forward to next year's CSA conference, I hope we continue building that kind of community, grounded in curiosity, generosity, and connection across difference. That is one of the most valuable things I will carry with me from my time on the Student Concerns Subcommittee.

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Emma Nelson

They/Them

PhD Student

Department of Sociology
and Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University

Canadian Sociological Association: Student Concerns Subcommittee - Eastern Rep

Wanting to connect with and support other sociology students, I ran for the Eastern Rep position on the Student Concerns Subcommittee and was elected in 2026. I am interested in developing initiatives that address barriers facing students in the early stages of their careers. Volunteering at the 2026 CSA conference in Halifax was a welcome opportunity to learn about the current state of the field, and I am excited to have the opportunity to shape the future of the CSA through representing student interests.

I am a newcomer to sociology but have realized that even as I studied English, Environmental Studies, and Urban Planning, sociology provided the theoretical and practical foundation for my previous degrees. After graduate school, I opened a cafe with my partner in rural Nova Scotia, where we hosted community gatherings and formed a strong social network through the power of good food and collaboration. Throughout my time away from school and living in a rural community, I continued to be interested in understanding how place affects access to services, specifically death care. I decided that the best way to understand the challenges of supporting rural communities was to return to school as a doctoral student. My current research examines how palliative care workers' perspectives on the nature of care shapes their work in rural areas.

Student Spotlight



Emma Nelson

Additional insights...

My academic work informs my anti-poverty and anti-capitalist organizing, and vice versa. My earlier graduate research on how land acknowledgements are understood by settler-identified people became a podcast and, later, a series of workshops intended to deepen settler's relationships with treaty agreements and the land. As part of a project on colonialism in Canada, I turned hundreds of centuries-old maps of "land transfers" into a digital map showing that the growth of Canada was, first and foremost, the theft of land from Indigenous nations. This kind of place-based organizing was also important as an activist with anti-poverty groups calling for the expropriation of empty buildings in Toronto's downtown core so that they could be turned into social housing.

In the early months of COVID, I felt called to train as a doula after hearing friends' experiences of obstetrical violence. I wanted to support people's desire to birth how and where they wanted, and I wanted to be there for someone undergoing a massive change in identity, their body, and in their relationships. The core mandate of being a doula—listen, support, advocate—continues to be relevant in my research and for my role as the Eastern Rep today. I believe that if wellbeing flows from a sense of connection to others and the environment, fully enacting treaty relationships will be our path to collective liberation.

More About Me...

When I'm not deep in the library stacks, I find a lot of comfort in a good movie (70s sci fi and political thrillers are the ultimate cozy-in-bed-with-some-ramen watch), exploring Halifax's natural and downtown spaces, staring at my cats while they sleep, and meeting friends for long, problem-fixing-filled coffee dates. I am currently developing an interactive map of historical midwifery practices in Nova Scotia, and so I get a lot of joy out of visiting the Archives to find new sources. I am interested in learning new languages, especially Spanish, Mandarin, Russian, and Mi'kmaw'simk, as well as (finally) becoming fluent in French. I have taken a long hiatus from baking after having done it for several years as a career, but slowly, and perhaps inevitably, my stand mixer has begun to make an appearance.

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Interested in being featured?

The Student Spotlight Program allows students to share academic research, applied sociological work, activism, and community engagement projects.

Eligibility

- Students may self-nominate or can be nominated by a faculty member or colleague
- Nominated students must be a member in good standing of the Canadian Sociological Association
- Nominees may be a university or college student at any level of study (Undergraduate, MA, Professional Degree, PhD)

Once Selected

- The nominee will be notified via email. They will be asked to confirm their profile information and given the opportunity to submit a photo (if desired) before the profile is made public.
- Profiles will be posted on the CSA website for one (1) year before being archived. Profiles will also be posted on SCS social media accounts.

Equity Statement

The Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) is committed to the values and principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization. We recognize and honour the intersectionality of equity-based identities. The CSA therefore invites and encourages the nomination (including self-nomination) of members from marginalized groups, including Indigenous peoples, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, persons who identify as women, and/or 2SLGBTIQ+.

For more information and nomination forms, visit:
www.csa-scs.ca/student-spotlight

