Destiny Hopkins

https://destinyahopkins.com | Linkedin

Education

2026 – Present **PhD in Sociology**
Western University
Supervisor: Dr. Kaitlynn Mendes

2023 – 2025 **MA in Communication and Culture**
York University & Toronto Metropolitan University
Thesis: *"What is a Newsfluencer?": Conversations About Identity, Social Media Platforms, and Journalism Boundaries*
Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Bergstrom

2019 – 2023 **BA in Criminology and English Language & Literature**
Western University

Research Experience

Research Coordinator, Status of Women Council, Corner Brook, NL, November 2025 – November 2026

- Coordinating a technology-facilitated gender-based violence research project funded by the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence to develop educational materials and political advocacy items in Newfoundland and Labrador

Research Assistant, York University, Toronto, ON, October 2023 – October 2026

- Assisting Dr. Kelly Berstrom on a SSHRC-funded research project studying true crime ethics, fans/fandoms, and Canadian media, including conducting a literature review, interviews, recruiting participants, ethnographic data collection, online data collection, and coding data

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Western University, London, ON, September 2026 – Present

- SOC 2236 - Population Studies
- SOC 3350 - Striving for Equity: Policy & Practice

Tutor, Notabilia Education Centre, Markham, ON, February 2024 – June 2026

- Instructing and assisting students in English from grades two to the first-year of university, both in-person and virtually, including developing sentence and essay structure, literacy (as well as media), vocabulary, and critical analysis skills

Presentations and Publications

CONFERENCES

October 2026	**Hopkins, D.** (2026). "Not a Journalist, Not an Influencer: How North American News Influencers Navigate Identity and Legitimacy." Association of Internet Researchers Conference in Mexico City.
October 2026	Bergstrom, K., and **Hopkins, D.** "'I just don't take her seriously': How Reddit's Toxic Technocultures are Shaping the Discussion of True Crime Creators." Association of Internet Researchers Conference in Mexico City.
June 2026	**Hopkins, D**., and Bergstrom, K. (2025). "'A YouTuber Where a Journalist Should Be': Examining Stephanie Soo's Coverage of the Diddy Trial." Canadian Communication Association Conference at the University of Windsor.
June 2026	Bergstrom, K., and **Hopkins, D**. (2025). "What is 'Canadian' About Canadian True Crime Podcasts?" Canadian Communication Association Conference at the University of Windsor.
June 2025	Hopkins, D. (2025). "Breaking News Boundaries: The Role of Newsfluencers in the Platformization of Journalism." Canadian Communication Association Conference at George Brown College.
June 2025	Bergstrom, K., and **Hopkins, D**. "I Hate True Crime and Makeup Videos: Discussing and Debating the Rise of True Crime Influencers." Canadian Communication Association Conference at George Brown College.
June 2025	**Hopkins, D**., Waldman, A., and Allain, Z. (2025). "Choose Your Character: Exploring Adolescent Female Roleplaying and Identity-Building on Instagram." Canadian Sociological Association Conference at George Brown College.
December 2024	**Hopkins, D**., Waldman, A., and Allain, Z. (2024). "#InstagramPlay: Exploring Subcultural and Affordance Theory in Adolescent Female Roleplaying Fandoms." Future Communications Conference at Toronto Metropolitan University.
September 2024	Hopkins, D. (2024). "'To Future Generations': Using Soundscape to Preserve Diasporic Cultural Relations of Land, Memory, and Place with Newfoundland Traditional Music." Situated Emergences Conference at Concordia University.

INVITED TALKS AND MEDIA

August 2026	"A Day in the Life of an MA/MSc Student." Experience Grad York, York University
August 2026	"Youth and Tech." Rising Voices, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
June 2026	"World Elder Abuse Awareness Day." CBC Radio with Bernice Hillier
June 2026	"World Elder Abuse Awareness Day." The Plain Truth, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
March 2026	"AI Literacy Day." The Plain Truth, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
January 2026	"AI, Youth, and Intimate Images." The Plain Truth, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
January 2026	"Cyberstalking: National Stalking Awareness Month." The Plain Truth, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
November 2025	"What is Digital Violence?" The Plain Truth, 100.1 Bay FM Radio
October 2025	"Discussion Panel with Current Scholars: Discover the Student Experience!" Experience Grad York, York University

THESIS

Hopkins, D. (2025). "What *is* a Newsfluencer?": Conversations About Identity, Social Media Platforms, and Journalism Boundaries. Pages: 178. York University. https://hdl.handle.net/10315/43318

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Corner Brook Status of Women Council. (2026). *Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence in Newfoundland and Labrador*. https://www.cornerbrookswc.com/_files/ugd/7df0a9_511bd3634f6d4616bb8a9fd6039f42f4.pdf

SELECTED NEWS ARTICLES

Hopkins, D. "Students impacted by eClass outages during midterms amidst ongoing campus Wi-Fi issues." *Excalibur*, March 13, 2025.
Hopkins, D. "Post-secondary students inform Toronto's new Academic Housing Strategy." *Excalibur*, October 7, 2024.
Hopkins, D. "Western students on taking a future COVID-19 vaccine." *The Western Gazette*, December 7, 2020.
Hopkins, D. "Kyle Rittenhouse's Not-Guilty Verdict Leaves the Left Worried." *Western Unfiltered*, March 2022.
Hopkins, D. "Racism Is Everywhere – In Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, It's In The Mailbox." *The Odyssey*, June 27, 2020.

CREATIVE NON-FICTION

Hopkins, D. "The Power of Female Friendship." University of Waterloo #HeForShe Gender Equity Anthology, March 2019.

Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

2026 – 2027	Graduate Fellowship, Western University ($17, 000)
2025	Nominated for a Thesis Award, York University
2024	Ontario Graduate Scholarship ($15, 000)
2024	E. B. Rowe Politics & Policy Bursary, York University ($2, 500)
2023 – 2025	Graduate Fellowship, York University ($16, 667)
2023	Marguerite R. Dow Canadian Heritage Award, Western University ($600)
2019	Winner of the #HeForShe University of Waterloo Writing Contest ($500)
2019	Subject Proficiency Award in Earth and Space Science

Professional Work Experience

2023	**Digital Marketing Assistant,** See the Worth, Goodwill Industries
2022 – 2023	**Student Library Assistant,** Western University
2021 – 2022	**Museum Coordinator,** Superior Glove Works, The Canadian Glove Museum

Academic Community Involvement

2026 – Present	**Graduate Student Member,** Sociology Graduate Committee, Western University

2026	**Moderator,** Association of Internet Researchers, Mexico City, Mexico
2025	**Moderator,** Intersections | Cross-sections Student Academic Conference, York University and Toronto Metropolitan University
2024 – 2025	**Member,** Graduate Advisory Committee, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University
2024	**Volunteer,** Canada Youth Internet Governance Forum
2023 – 2024	**Co-Chair,** Intersections | Cross-sections Student Academic Conference, York University and Toronto Metropolitan University
2022 – 2023	**President/Editor-in-Chief,** The Coterie: Undergraduate English Society, Western University

Professional Associations

2026 – Present	**Member,** Society of Graduate Students Gender Equity Commission, Western University
2026 – Present	**Member**, Society of Graduate Students Academic Committee, Western University
2026 – Present	**Executive Member,** DOSE Initiative
2026 – Present	**Member,** Association of Internet Researchers
2025 – 2026	**Member,** Violence Prevention Newfoundland & Labrador
2025 – 2026	**Committee Member,** Sexual Assault Response & Advocacy Team
2025 – 2026	**Committee Member,** Western Wellness Coalition
2025 – Present	**Member,** Canadian Communication Association
2025 – Present	**Member,** Canadian Sociological Association
2024 – Present	**Member,** Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, Emerging Scholars

Professional Development

August 2026	Coaching Boys Into Men, Futures Without Violence
January 2026	LivingWorks ASIST
May 2024	TCPS 2: Core-2022 Certification
May 2019	DELF-Certified French Level A2