

THE WESTERN ANTHROPOLOGY GRADUATE
SOCIETY PRESENTS

Teaching & Learning Anthropology

TRANSLATING OUR
KNOWLEDGE TO
PUBLIC SPACES

March 14th, 2026

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



DR. JESS HIDER

SUPPORTED BY



Western
Research



Western
Graduate &
Postdoctoral Studies



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Jess Hider

Educational Developer at the DeGroote School of Business at McMaster University



Dr. Jess Hider uses ancient DNA as a tool to understand infectious disease in the past. She also enjoys making ancient DNA accessible to all people. She's been involved in repatriation and recovery work for Indigenous Ancestors. Recently, she realized that she was doing public archaeology. Jess is also working to make DNA work more ethical.

In an age of global digital knowledge transmission, there has been a growing call in academia to disseminate research beyond our respective institutions, recognizing our responsibility as academics to communicate our work to the general public. Following this trend, anthropologists have begun to work towards a more equitable sharing, teaching, and mobilization model of sharing anthropological knowledge, concerning humans both past and present.

Anthropological research has the power to engage the public in meaningful discourse that serves to foster change within society.

In light of this, the theme of the **WAGS 2026** conference is “**Teaching & Learning Anthropology: Translating our Knowledge to Public Spaces.**” It is our job as responsible scholars to prioritize knowledge sharing in an era of fast-spreading news, mass-mediated misinformation, and growing political unrest. Importantly, knowledge sharing takes place in many forms across a myriad of spaces and contexts: in classrooms, in communities, with interlocutors, and with governments and non-governmental organizations. It is imperative to explore best practices to engage in these spaces in ways that are appropriate for the contexts and individuals we encounter.

This conference will explore the diverse ways we can mobilize knowledge within and between people, places, and spaces of both contention and collaboration. **We invite submissions that reflect on how anthropologists can share, teach, and mobilize anthropological findings and understandings of humans in the past and present outside the academic sphere.** In line with this conference’s theme, we ask participants to consider how they might make their anthropological research accessible for the public in creative and digestible formats that transcend the systemic barriers of academia.