

FALL 2023  
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COOPER HOUSE,  
UNIVERSITY OF  
WYOMING



AMERICAN STUDIES



# Porchlight



GERALD LOVATO (B. 1978), AMERICAN REFLECTION, OIL ON CANVAS, LARAMIE,  
WY, 2023



AMERICAN STUDIES



# Letter from Our New Program Director!



DR. ULRICH ADELT  
HE/THEY  
UADELTA@UWYO.EDU



From left to right: Dr. Ulli Adelt, Dr. Frieda Knobloch, Dr. John Dorst, Dr. Eric Sandeen, Andrea Graham.



Welcome to our revived *Porchlight*, the newsletter for the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming. I'm honored to step into the position of director after having run the African American and Diaspora Studies program for six years. I'm deeply grateful to former directors Dr. Frieda Knobloch and Dr. Eric Sandeen for all the work they have done to make the program what it is today.

With my appointment came a major transition in personnel. Our folklorist Andrea Graham retired after many years in the program. We managed to hire a wonderful new colleague, Dr. Trisha Martínez. Art historian Dr. Rachel Sailor is now officially part of our program and has an office in the historic Cooper House, which is now shared between American Studies, the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research, and the Wyoming Humanities Council, which is run by Shawn Reese, one of our MA students. The American Studies program remains part of the School for Culture, Gender and Social Justice, which has a new director with another American Studies scholar, Dr. Stephen Dillon.

Our MA program continues to thrive, and you will see some more information on our current students in this newsletter. I would like to specifically thank our resident Brit, Georgie Mullins, for her work around the office, for our publicity, and for our events. And I would like to congratulate Diana Denison, who works for Wyoming Public Radio, on successfully defending her MA in American Studies.

You will get a glimpse of the many events we've hosted or co-hosted this semester from the newsletter. These included a very well-attended lunch and a dinner with music and dancing for Hispanic Heritage Month, a lunch with Dr. Pekka Kohlemainen, a postdoctoral researcher from Finland, and a Halloween film screening and costume party. We managed to send three of our graduate students to the meeting of the American Studies Association (ASA) in Montreal, and we successfully revived the Rocky Mountain chapter of the ASA, for which I now serve as president.

I'm very excited that American Studies continues to live at the Cooper House, and I wish you all happy holidays!

Ulli Adelt



# Interview with New Faculty: Dr. Trisha Martinez!



DR. TRISHA MARTÍNEZ  
SHE/HER/ELLA  
TMARTI40@UWYO.EDU

Please introduce yourself Dr. Martínez!

I am a proud University of Wyoming Alumna, sister of Sigma Lambda Gamma, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and Assistant Professor in American Studies ! I am a product of the Manito Trail with family roots that extend from northern New Mexico to Wyoming ! I love dancing, green chile, and making beautiful memories in community !

What have you most enjoyed in your first semester teaching at UW?

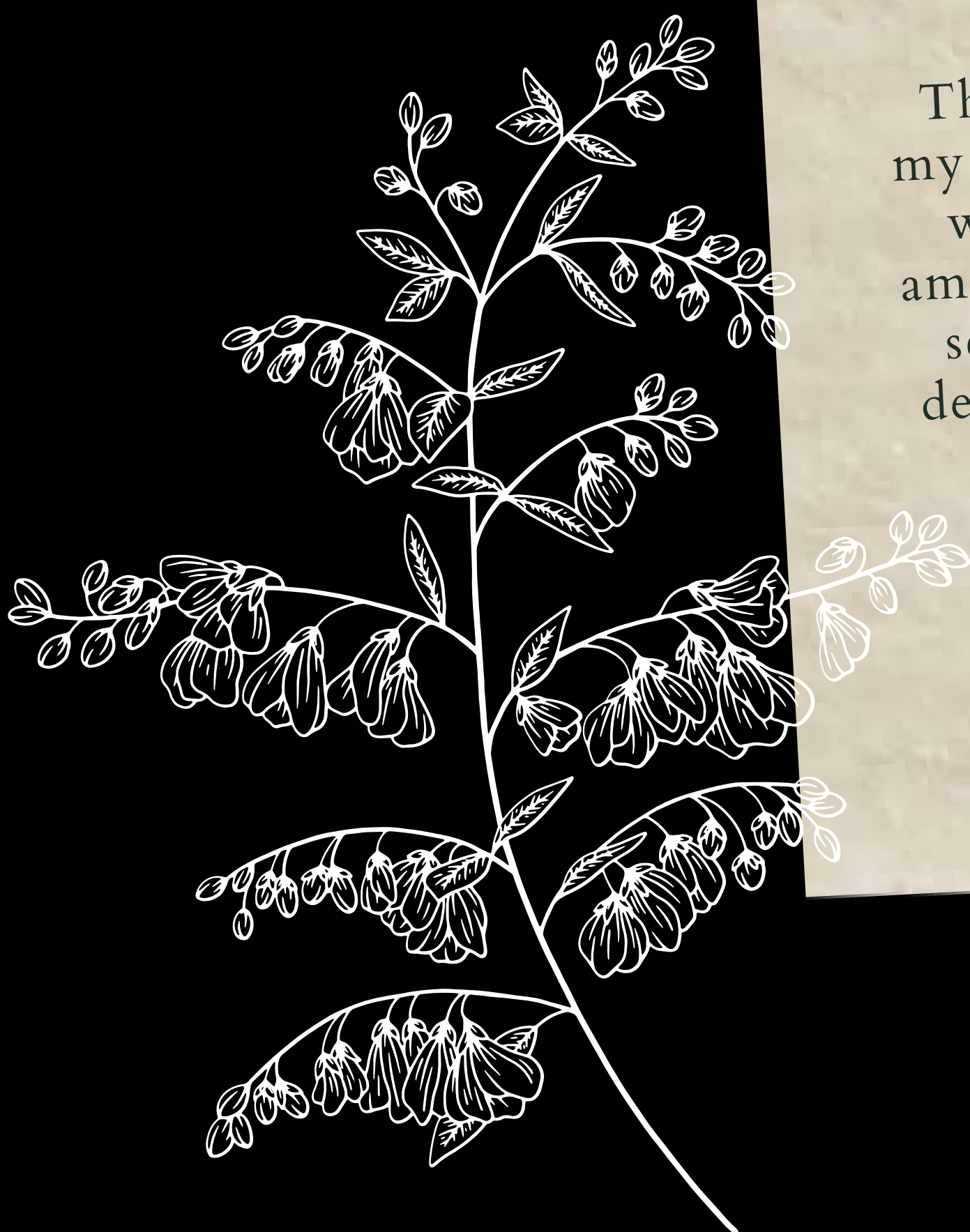
My first semester in American Studies was rewarding in many ways. I've had the chance to reconnect with friends and mentors, and the blessing of meeting new colleagues from across campus. I enjoy generating *querencia* (a love for place or sense of belonging) at the Cooper House with students and faculty.

What are you most looking forward to next semester?

This upcoming semester I am excited to continue my fellowship with the Humanities Research Group working on my book manuscript, alongside my amazing colleagues ! We have a DEI Art Exhibition scheduled for the Spring, so stay tuned for more details. I am also excited to attend some upcoming conferences and exhibitions !

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

If you have yet to take a class in the School of Culture, Gender and Social Justice, I highly recommend !





# CURRENT FACULTY



**Dr. Ulrich Adelt**

Director and William Robertson Coe  
Professor of American Studies  
Professor of African American &  
Diaspora Studies



**Dr. Trisha Martínez**

Assistant Professor of  
American Studies



**Dr. Rachel Sailor**

Professor of Art History &  
American Studies



**Jascha Herdt**

Academic Professional Lecturer  
of American Studies & African  
American Diaspora Studies



**Dr. Frieda Knobloch**

Professor of American Studies  
& Creative Writing



**Dr. Eric Johnson**

Adjunct Lecturer of  
American Studies



# AFFILIATED FACULTY



**Dr. Steve Dillon**  
Director of the  
School of Culture,  
Gender, & Social  
Justice



**Dr. Scott Henkel**  
Director of the Wyoming Institute for Humanities  
Research  
Wyoming Excellence Chair in the Humanities /  
Associate Professor of English & African American  
and Diaspora Studies



**Dr. Nicholas Crane**  
Associate Professor of Geography &  
International Studies  
Program Director of International Studies in  
the School of Politics, Public Affairs, &  
International Studies



**Dr. Bridget Groat**  
Assistant Professor &  
Director of Native American  
Indigenous Studies



**Dr. Michelle Jarman**  
Professor of Disability Studies  
Associate Director for Gender &  
Women's Studies



# Hear from our Graduate American Studies Students! ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Gerald Lovato is our dynamic interdisciplinary artist and American Studies Masters student! He's all set to dive deep into the world of social practice art in the United States. Gerald's on a thrilling journey in Laramie, and he's stoked about how his thesis research will ignite his artistic flame! Stay tuned for his ground-breaking creations!



Maya Tsogo-onana is a transfer international student from Lyon II University in France. She is currently working as a Research Assistant with the University of Wyoming's American Studies program. Maya also works part-time as an expeditor at the American Heritage Center. She refers to herself as a "professional student" because she is now pursuing a second master's degree in American Studies at UW. Her objective is to graduate with a PhD in the same field and teach in France. Maya's childhood dream was to live in the United States at some point in her life, not only because she has always been fascinated by American culture, but also to be closer to her father, who lives in New Mexico. She is grateful for these opportunities and has learned a lot about the United States, although she wishes it was legal to send stinky French cheese through the mail!



Georgie Mullins is this year's winner of the British Association of American Studies' (BAAS) Peter Boyle MA Graduate Assistantship for the University of Wyoming. She graduated with a BA (Hons) from the University of Manchester in History and American Studies in July. As a first-year in the American Studies graduate programme, she is loving her studies so far. Georgie is particularly looking to specialise in Native American / Indigenous history here in Wyoming – with a focus on the twentieth century-to the present day. She hopes to travel more of the United States and enjoyed her first trip to the American Studies Association Conference in Montreal, Canada.



Shawn Reese is a part time graduate student in American Studies. In his day job, Shawn is the executive director of Wyoming Humanities (which now has an office in the Cooper House along with American Studies and the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research!) Being in the American Studies graduate program is important to Shawn for personal and professional reasons. Personally, the American Studies program gives Shawn an opportunity to be around creative, inspired, and thoughtful faculty and students. Professionally, the American Studies program inspires Shawn to share cultural studies to state-wide audiences. He feels that American Studies is a perfect program for professional, part-time ("non-traditional") students. He is excited about his thesis which will be a narrative history of the administration of UW President Arthur Crane during the years between the World Wars. This narrative history will use cultural studies perspectives of myths, morals, history and power.



Olaoye Samson Olukunmi earned his Bachelor of Science and Master's degree from Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He believes that American Studies will allow him to better understand the historical and cultural connection, similarities and differences between Nigeria and United States of America. His research focus is to explore how different social, cultural and political factors shape and affect the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals.



Julia Kremer is working toward her MA in American Studies and works full time at UW as an academic advisor in the College of Agriculture, Life Sciences & Natural Resources. She likes playing tabletop/board games and spending time with her dogs. Current areas of interest include game studies, gender and women's studies, popular culture and more.



Ewalefoh Ernest earned both his undergraduate and Master's degrees in History from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. His research focuses on pop culture, specifically honing in on fashion. This interest stems from his passion for African fashion, and he is particularly interested in the idea of narrating history through the lens of fashion.



# Meet our wonderful Fall 2023 MA American Studies Graduate: Diana Denison!



Diana Denison enjoyed working with the wonderful faculty and students in the University of Wyoming American Studies program. Her research focused on the history of the American West and its Anglo-American influences. The topic of her thesis was late nineteenth-century stained glass, looking at the materials and technique imported to the Rocky Mountains in tandem with industrialization. The focus was on one stained glass panel, a window displayed in Old Main on the University of Wyoming campus. This project turned into an historical analysis of how value was created...in glass.

For a nice break from academic theory, each summer while in the graduate program she embarked upon a research-related journey. The first year, with support from American Studies, she enjoyed a road trip to Portland, Oregon, following the rivers that Lewis, Clark, and Sacajawea had canoed, while opening up trade in the Pacific Northwest. The second year, with generous support from the University of Wyoming in Scotland program, she travelled to Glasgow to work as an intern at the Hunterian Museum. There she learned of aesthetic trends emerging in the UK during the nineteenth century, which were subsequently imported into the United States in glass.

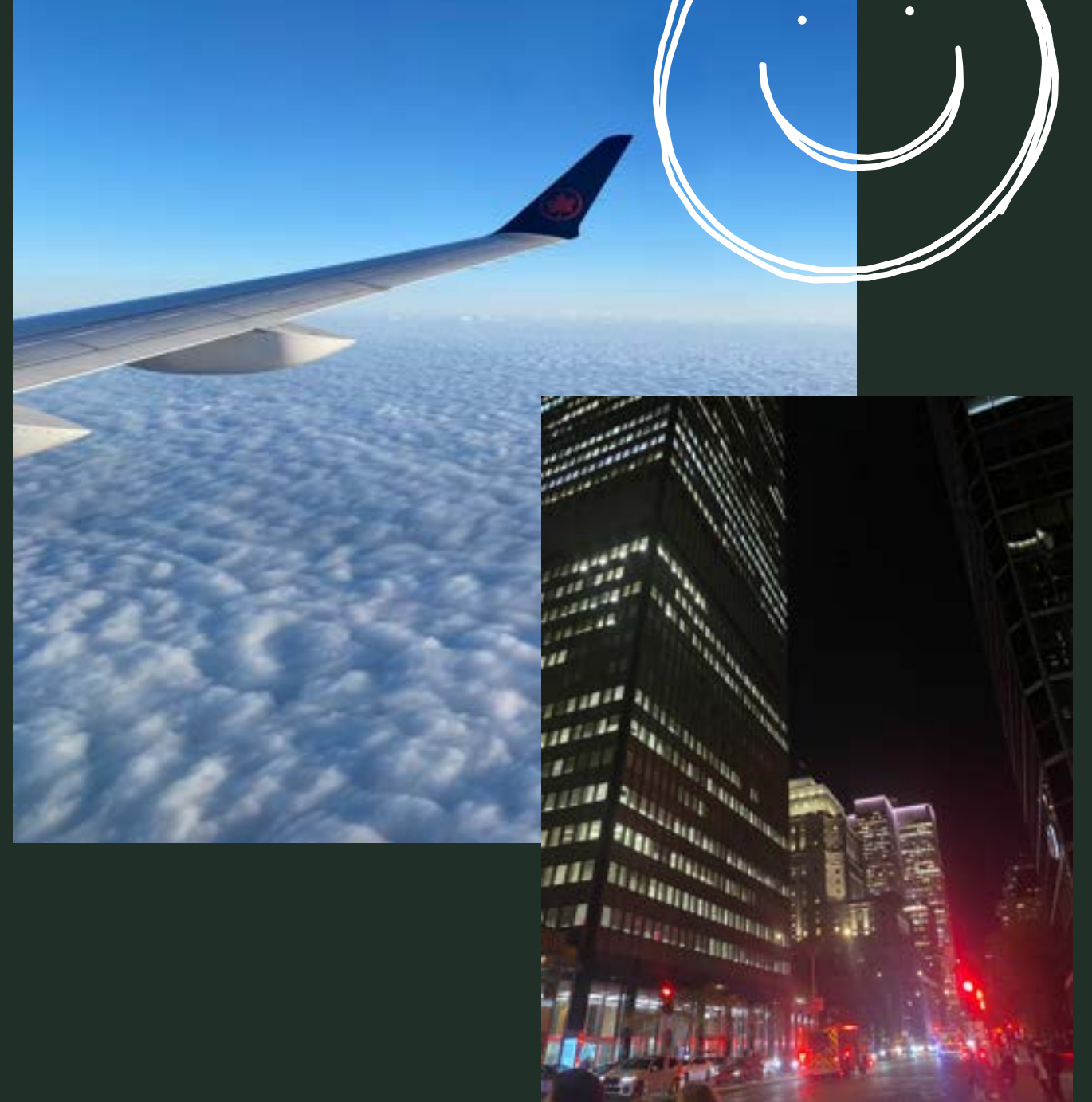
Before embarking upon her graduate program in American Studies, Diana completed an MS in economics. She then worked at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado for a short time and later joined the faculty at Red Rocks Community College. After moving to Wyoming, she surveyed for a local policy center, taught economics on-line for UW and LCCC, and then took a position at Wyoming Public Media, a Laramie-based radio station. She spends most of her free time biking, skiing, and hiking in the mountains with her Great Pyrenees.



# THE EXCITING THINGS THAT AMERICAN STUDIES STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND THE COOPER HOUSE GOT UP TO THIS SEMESTER!



**THE COOPER HOUSE HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARTY (OCT 31) WHICH FEATURED A SCREENING OF THE 1999 HORROR FILM "RAVENOUS".**



**THE AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION (ASA) ANNUAL CONFERENCE (NOV 2-5) IN MONTREAL, CANADA - SOLIDARITY: WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE IN PUBLIC.**



**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH EVENT CELEBRATION (OCT 5) - LARAMIE RAILROAD DEPOT, 600 S 1ST STREET PUT TOGETHER BY: AMERICAN STUDIES (AMST) / MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (MA) / LATINA/O STUDIES & THE SCHOOL OF CULTURE, GENDER, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE (SCGSJ).**



**GUEST LUNCH WITH DR. PEKKA KOLEHMAINEN (NOV 21) - A POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER AT THE JOHN MORTON CENTER FOR NORTH AMERICAN STUDIES & THE TURKU INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, FINLAND.**



# *American Studies Association (ASA) Conference in Montreal, Canada (2023)*

## **Solidarity: What Love Looks Like in Public**



### **HEAR FROM MA AMERICAN STUDIES STUDENT, GEORGIE MULLINS, ABOUT THE TRIP:**

Early morning on Wednesday 1st of November, Ulli, Maya, Gerald and I drove to Denver in freezing cold darkness, filled with anticipation for our trip. Eating bagels in the airport, we checked our suitcases and sat ready for the flight to depart to Montreal. Arriving, the hotel was beautiful, and in the centre of town at Bar Dominion, we had our first taste of French Canada. The conference was set to begin the next day.

At 09:00am on Thursday, I collected my lanyard and attended my first panel, 'Memory and Memorialization in Space and Place', which featured four papers. The session would ultimately be my favourite of the conference and has subsequently inspired much of my current research into memory in the landscape of the American West. That afternoon, we also attended a panel on the politics of payment processing in Pornhub, and held the first, revived meeting of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of American Studies since 2017. The meeting engaged academics from Montana, New Mexico, Utah and of course us in Wyoming, and we are hopeful that across the region, we will be able to bring it back to life! That evening, we attended the Welcome Reception, chatting and gorging ourselves on French cheeses (Maya was happy!) and lots of poutine. Across the course of the next few days in Montreal, we explored the city (loading ourselves with various souvenirs) and sat in on a wide selection of papers, sessions and panels on topics as diverse as concepts of well-being in Indigenous, public spaces, education in the Yukon, prison abolition and an interactive art exhibit on incarcerated art. I was also lucky enough to meet Drew Lyness (the first of many British BAAS awardees) who attended the University of Wyoming in 2007. This was especially valuable as I was able to hear how he had continued his studies in the United States, and his work presently in Canada.

As a graduate student here in American Studies, if you are lucky enough to have the opportunity to go to ASA, I would highly recommend it!



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