

Calgary Institute for the Humanities

**Annual Report
2023-2024**



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

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Director's Report

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the Calgary Institute for the Humanities, we've had occasion to look back at where we've come from and what we've accomplished. One of highlights of last year was the inauguration of a new endowed lecture, the Egmont Lee Founders' Lecture, funded by a gift from the Lee family. Dr. Egmont Lee was a driving force behind the foundation of the CIH in 1976, and he served as its second director. He was a long-serving professor of History at the University of Calgary, studying immigration in medieval and early modern Rome. As an immigrant himself, Lee was clearly invested in the topic, and one of his projects was to work with undergraduates to provide Calgary high school students with information about the various immigrant communities in the city. The first Lee Lecture was given by Dr. Matt Croombs to a crowded lecture hall that included some of Egmont's former colleagues, his family, and a good number of film and history students. It was an auspicious beginning to our latest annual lecture.

Our other lectures were similarly well attended. The year kicked off with the fifth annual LGBTQ2S+ Lecture during Calgary's Pride Week, held at the Central Library. Prof. Amy Villarejo, head of Film, Media and Television at UCLA, gave a snapshot of new directions in international queer cinema. In September we held a multi-disciplinary panel on polar bears at Fort Calgary (now the Confluence Historic Site & Parkland), featuring an animal historian (George Colpitts), a drama scholar (Penny Farfan), and a religious studies scholar (Craig Ginn). In October we held the seventh annual Wayne O. McCready Lecture, with Dr. Courtney Konshuh from

the Department of History speaking passionately about the history of Norman church architecture. November saw a lecture by English professor Dr. Anthony Camara on neural networks in science fiction. January was the Egmont Lee Lecture, and in February Dr. Martin Wagner gave the Naomi Lacey Memorial Lecture on "Literature and Freedom," at C-Space. This was another lively event, with a delightful and convivial reception generously provided by the Lacey family. March brought us the fourth annual Applied Ethics Lecture with Dr. Agnes Tam speaking about narratives of belonging. The audience for our lectures continues to grow, with the best attendance we've seen in years.

Our 43rd Annual Community Seminar brought three speakers and an artist to talk about Conspiracy Thinking. This lively, day-long event was held on May at The Confluence Historic Site & Parkland. Our speakers provoked wide-ranging discussions, and our friends at Shelf Life Books were on hand selling copies of the speakers' books, as well as our Calgary Atlas Project maps.

2023-2024 marked the tenth year for our Interdisciplinary Working Groups, another significant anniversary. We were delighted to learn about the success of one of our working group convenors, Dr. Daniel Voth, in securing a major partnership grant, which you can read about in these pages. One of the convenors of the Energy *In* Society working group, Dr. Petra Dolata, had similar success with a project involving the Sahtú Dene in Tłegóhłı̨ (Norman Wells). The two projects demonstrate some of the vital work in Indigenous studies that the CIH continues to foster.



As a result of our long history promoting interdisciplinary scholarship and conversation at the University, the VP Research asked the CIH to research transdisciplinarity and provide a definition for the university. I worked along with former scholar-in-residence Petra Dolata and postdoctoral fellow Görkem Aydemir-Kundakcı to review the scholarship, interview colleagues working with transdisciplinarity, and survey other programs. We presented our final report to the university in May, having presented preliminary results to the university community a couple of times along the way.

More than anything, it's been a year of rich conversations. We are conscious of the legacy of people like Egmont Lee, who worked to create a space where humanistic inquiry and dialogue could flourish. We continue to be inspired by the example of our founders, and we hope you'll join us in the conversations to come.

Resident Fellows

Since 1977, the Institute has offered Resident Fellowships to faculty members at the University of Calgary. Awards are given to support specific research projects and provide the recipient with release from a portion of their teaching obligations. Without such leave time, the scholarly output that is crucial to a university's mandate would be substantially reduced.



Mushegh Asatryan

CIH Resident Fellow
Associate Professor
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures,
and Cultures, Arabic Language and Muslim Cultures

Sages, Skeptics, and Pietists: The Culture of Debate in the Abbasid Empire (750-1258)

In his project, Professor Asatryan studied the culture of debate in the Abbasid empire as a cultural, social and literary phenomenon. Thematically, he approached the culture of debate from two perspectives. First, he explored it as a cultural and social phenomenon and tried to answer the following questions: What were the historical possibilities for the rise of the culture of debate? What was its place within the broader social fabric? How were debates conducted? What does all of this teach us about class, cultural expression, patronage, and approaches to knowledge in the Abbasid empire? Secondly, Professor Asatryan studied the descriptions of debates found in primary sources such as literary artefacts, in order to study the formal characteristics of these descriptions and the values which they articulated with the assumption that these two approaches would complement and illuminate each other.



Christopher Framarin

CIH Resident Fellow
Professor
Department of Philosophy and
Department of Classics and Religion

The Joyful Sage: Renunciation and the Good Life in the *Mahābhārata*

Professor Framarin's book project investigates the apparent tension between renunciation and the good life in the Sanskrit epic the *Mahābhārata*. The good life, in this sense, is a life that is intrinsically good for the person whose life it is. It is a life high in welfare value. In abandoning worldly pleasures, desire satisfactions, and the pursuit of worldly goals more generally, the renunciates of the *Mahābhārata* seem to forsake their own welfare. The *Mahābhārata* allows that a renunciate might live the good life after all, however, so long as they enjoy the world without wanting it and act in the world without desire. This project is aligned with some of the earliest discussions of the status of the renunciate in South Asian literature. It invokes the distinction between the good life and the moral life to clarify and advance current debates about the contemporary relevance of renunciation.



Courtney Konshuh

Wayne O. McCready Emerging Fellow
Assistant Professor
Department of History

Norman Consolidation and Communication in Kent

Normanization of the English landscape after the Conquest of 1066 included a widespread building program, destroying Anglo-Saxon cathedrals and replacing them with dominating Norman structures. This development has been studied as a vehicle of colonisation and legitimation on a grand scale; however, the same rebuilding can be seen on a more thorough level across the countryside with the rebuilding of parish churches at all nodes in the transportation and communication network. This made Norman rulership omnipresent at the local level. This development can still be seen in the rural churches in the bishopric of Rochester, many of which were rebuilt during the episcopacy of Gundulf, the first Norman bishop there. Professor Konshuh's study aims to recover the range of local landscape control in the bishopric of Rochester, thereby piloting a local history study with national implications for England and possibly for other areas of Norman dominance such as the medieval Mediterranean.



Agnes Tam

Resident Fellow in Applied Ethics
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy

Telling a Better Story of Who We Are: A New Ontology and Ethic of We-Agency

The collective agent “we” are who make or break the world. We are a force of unity and solidarity, mobilizing progressive movements and inspiring sacrifices in times of crisis. Yet, we can be a force of exclusion and division, animating xenophobia and tribalism. Even though we are central to political life, the individualistic orientation of Western philosophy has impoverished our understanding of who we are, and how we can improve. To correct this anomaly, Professor Tam's project bridges the cross-disciplinary scholarship on narratology, social ontology, and political philosophy, to develop a novel narrative theory of we-agency. Ontologically, it shows that stories and storytelling practices are what make and shape us. Ethically, it articulates a new theory of joint narration, called we-reasoning, to guide we-agents to tell and enact better stories of who we are. We-reasoning reframes political problems of populism, reconciliation, and migration and narrates new solutions.



Martin Wagner

Naomi Lacey Resident Fellow
School of Languages, Literatures, Linguistics and Cultures

The Emergence of the Modern Writer and the Shifting Semantics of Obedience, 1750-1850

The decades around 1800 mark a crucial period in the emergence of the modern literary writer in German culture. A market for literature developed that allowed writers to live independent of traditional patronage. This independence began to include also women writers, who gained a significant foothold in this period. Additionally, through the prominent debates on artistic genius, an image of the writer as independent from traditional precepts took hold. Yet this simple narrative fails to consider both the longevity of some of the old forms of authority under which writers operated (such as poetic rules), as well as the new forms of authority that came to replace the old (such as market pressures and audience expectations). By investigating how writers defined their own practice through their relative submission to—or transgression of—the existing demands, Professor Wagner's project explores the pressures of authority not only as a burden to the artist, but also as a formative force.

Scholar-in-Residence

In addition to our Annual Fellowships, the CIH hosts a Scholar-in-Residence.

The term of this position is 5 years and carries with it the expectation of attracting post-doctoral fellows to the Institute. Each year the Scholar also programs a major public event.



Petra Dolata

Scholar-in-Residence

Associate Professor, Department of History

In January 2024, the residency of CIH Scholar-in-Residence Dr. Petra Dolata came to an end, but her many projects continue and benefit from the collegial and administrative support she has received and still receives from the CIH. During the last semester of her residency, Dr. Dolata successfully applied for a SSHRC Connection grant to hold an international conference on the 1970s energy crises, which took place at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in March 2024. Together with renowned energy historian David S. Painter she organized a four-day program which brought together historians from all over the world. The conference, entitled “Everything, Everywhere, All at Once: The Energy Crises of the 1970s and the Transformation of the Postwar World,” took a closer look at the causes, course, and consequences of the energy crises of the 1970s to understand the transformation of the international order in the late twentieth century. It featured new research by over thirty junior and senior scholars, whose papers addressed the role of the crises in the Global South and for the Global Cold War, for the environment, and in Canada. The conference opened with a public

keynote at the Central Library in Calgary given by environmental historian John R. McNeill, who spoke on “The Oil Crises and the Global Environment, 1973-2023.” Some presenters shared their research beyond the conference via blogposts which can be found on the conference website <http://niche-canada.org/oil-crisis/>. Select contributions will be published in an edited volume.

Based on the successful collaboration with the Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (SRRB), who invited her to join their project on the history of oil at Tłegóhłı (Norman Wells), NWT, in 2022, Dr. Dolata successfully applied for a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant in Fall 2023. Over the next three years, “From Treaty to Land Claim: Energy, Environment, and Dene and Métis Ts’ı́lı (Ways of Life) in the Sahtú Region” aims to put the Sahtú region and its experience with over one hundred years of oil and gas production on the national and international map and ensure that its story is heard outside the region. The project will generate and mobilize research results that are informed by Indigenous ways of knowing, oral histories, fieldwork and gatherings on the land as well as community “harvesting.”

Dr. Dolata used the last term of her residency to write an in-depth policy paper on Canadian-German energy relations for the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, “The Energy Partnership Between Canada and Germany: Opportunities and Challenges,” and she spoke at a related event at the Petroleum Club in Calgary. She was also invited to discuss the History and Future of Renewable Energy in Canada at an online panel organized by the Canadian Business History Association and was interviewed about the Climate and Environmental Policies of the USA for a podcast by the Aspen Institute Germany, *America’s Choice Der USA-Podcast* (Episode 55, 2023).

Graduate Student Fellow

The Frances Spratt Graduate Student Fellowship continues the tradition of supporting a PhD candidate whose research contributes to the public good by promoting the core values of the humanities and building bridges of learning to the broader community.



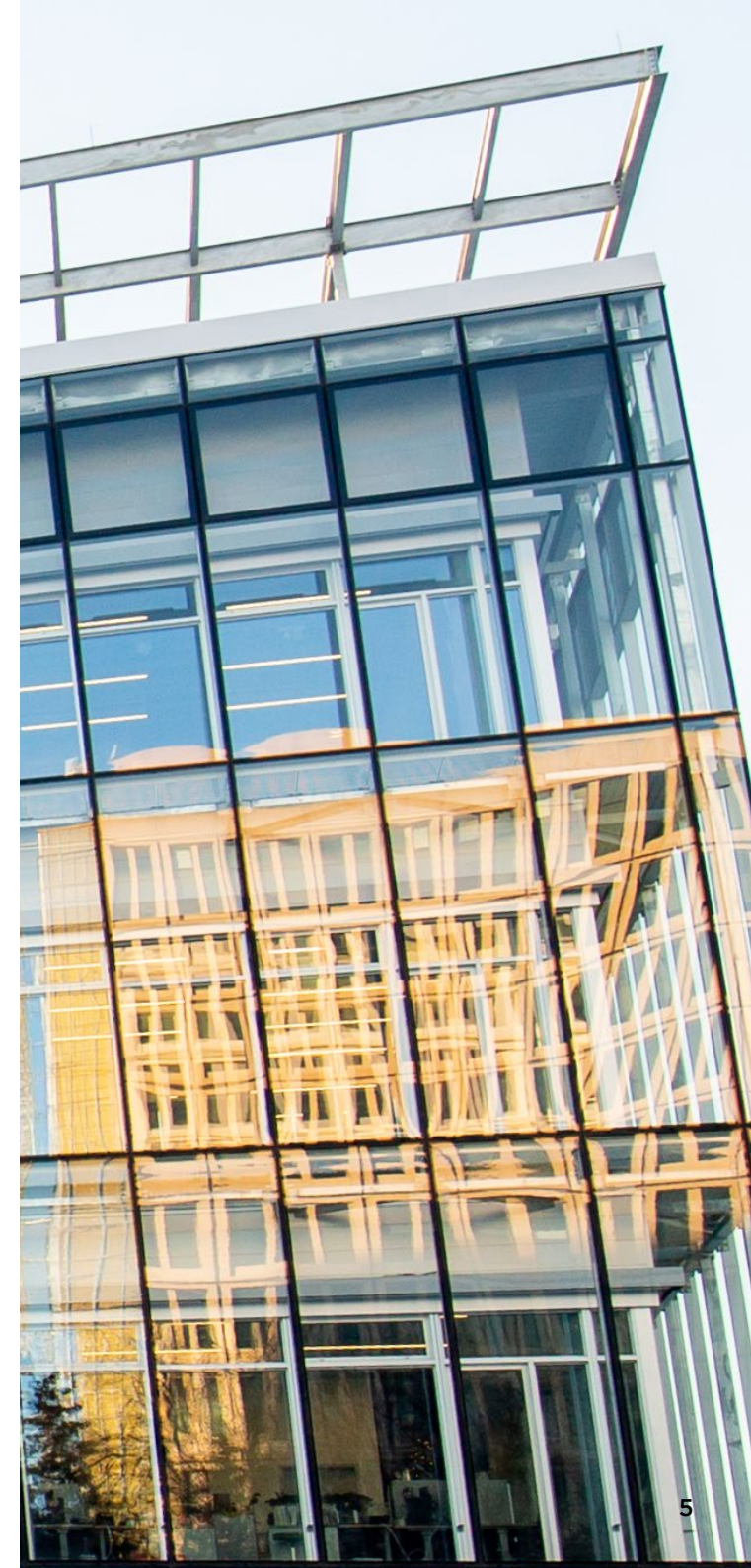
Anastasiia Gushchina

CIH Frances Spratt Graduate Student Fellow
PhD Candidate

Department of Communication, Media and Film

“The Stuff of Reality”: Towards a Materialist Theory of Animated Documentary

Anastasiia Gushchina’s doctoral research focuses on artisanal animation techniques used in independent animated documentaries (anidocs) of the 2000s. She explored how material-based animation practices, such as stop-motion animation, along with the processes of painting on glass and tracing over live-action footage, affect the representation of ‘invisible’ aspects of human reality. In the last two decades, cinema scholars have noted the proliferation of documentary animation—a film genre that presents factual content in a fictional form. Animated documentaries are most often produced by independent filmmakers and work with narratives absent from conventional non-fiction cinema (e.g., representation of mental health conditions, traumatic experiences, and stories of vulnerable populations). Centrally, Gushchina’s project asks, how do material-based animation techniques affect the interpretation of the topics that the films address?



Public Humanities Fellows

This annual program partners community organisations with highly skilled doctoral students in the Humanities.



Faezeh Izadi

PhD Student
Department of Classics and Religion

Faezeh was awarded a placement with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society for the project “Representation and Cultural Safety”.

At CCIS, Faezeh was engaged in three key projects. She collaborated with various teams to create educational resources and train ambassadors for the HPV Self-Sampling Project, to advocate for cancer prevention within specific immigrant communities. She contributed to the development of the Newcomer Research Library (NRL), an accessible digital repository of research on immigrants and refugees in Alberta, by reviewing and curating content on relevant topics and participating in user testing of the NRL. She also assisted in implementing the Cultural Thinking Framework for CCIS partner organizations, serving as both a researcher and content creator. These projects collectively enabled her to leverage her strengths in research, analytical thinking, content development, and teaching to advance CCIS’s objectives of fostering cultural safety, improving healthcare access, and upholding research ethics among newcomers and ethnocultural groups in Calgary.



Sanaz Safari

PhD Student
Department of Classics and Religion

Sanaz was awarded a placement with The Confluence Historic Site & Parkland for the project “Voices of the Ancestors: Indigenous Radio Revitalization Project”.

This project is dedicated to capturing and sharing the oral histories of elder Indigenous people from the Treaty 7 territory, including members of the Blackfoot Nations, Îyârhe-Nakoda Nations, Tsuut’ina Nation, and the Métis Nation of Alberta. To support the recording of these voices, Sanaz focused on transforming an old radio station located within the museum into a functional recording studio. The project represents a meaningful step towards preserving cultural heritage, promoting intercultural dialogue, and honoring the enduring legacy of the Indigenous communities connected to The Confluence Historic Site & Parkland. Sanaz’s research expertise allowed her to explore the history of oral storytelling in Canada, deepening the project’s historical context and aiding in the development of a new history panel for the studio. Her proficiency in writing grant applications also contributed to efforts to secure financial support for the initiative.



Photo: Exterior of the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society offices. Sculpture by Chaka Chikodzi.



Jessica Tannenbaum

PhD Candidate
Department of History

Jessica was awarded a placement with Alzheimer Calgary for the placement opportunity “Enhancing the Capacity to Adapt”.

Alzheimer Calgary was looking for a Public Humanities Fellow to support the ongoing work to adopt policy to meet the demands of an expanding, culturally diverse population of persons living with dementia. 17,000 people are living with dementia in the Calgary area, and this number will double in the coming decade. Adding to this, caregivers and people living with a diagnosis are suffering the ongoing effects of isolation and decreased services and respite programs. Jessica worked with Alzheimer Calgary to develop better outreach strategies to extend services to underserved communities. The project involved skills in knowledge translation and intercultural communication as well as some understanding of the effects of dementia and the demands on the caregivers.



Siranat Thamtrachai

PhD Student
Department of Philosophy

Siranat was awarded a placement with the Esker Foundation for the placement opportunity “Youth Engagement and Decolonizing Gallery Spaces”.

Esker Foundation sought a Public Humanities Fellow to continue ongoing work on the topic of decolonizing gallery/museum spaces. Siranat was responsible for reviewing research on, and enacting decolonizing methodologies that de-center the Eurocentric view, challenge white supremacy, and value alternative narratives. In this role, Siranat developed the “Assemblage, Personal History, & Creativity: Turning Found Objects into Artwork” workshop, which invited participants aged 15 and older to explore the artistic potential of repurposing discarded items. Attendees learned about the concept of assemblage, gaining insight into how everyday objects can be transformed into meaningful art. The workshop included a presentation on the significance of ideas in art and how they can be creatively expressed through found materials. Participants then had the opportunity to create their own unique artworks, drawing inspiration from personal history and memory.



Interdisciplinary Working Groups

The CIH Interdisciplinary Working Groups bring together expertise from different disciplines to produce groundbreaking research. They are convened by distinguished researchers and graduate students and the work of these groups has frequently received recognition through their impressive track record with SSHRC grant applications, peer-reviewed publications, international collaborations, and community outreach events.

The CIH's Interdisciplinary Working Groups program started ten years ago, with an initial cohort of four groups. The aim of the working groups was to bring people together from across the humanities, and indeed, across the university, to explore interdisciplinary questions from multiple perspectives. Groups meet three or four times a term, discussing readings, planning events, and applying for grants. Later, we teamed up with the Kule Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Alberta to offer the KIAS-CIH Alberta Humanities Research Grant, with groups lead by a pair of scholars representing each university.

These groups have pursued a wide variety of topics, from innovative interdisciplinary angles. One of our long-standing groups, *Energy In Society*, brought a humanist lens to the pressing issue of energy transition. Groups have looked at translation studies, food studies, and the border between philosophy and linguistics. They have explored issues of social justice in the smart city; used performance studies to look at business practices; and reimagined Latin American studies by focussing on southern perspectives. A number of groups have looked at climate change and environmental justice, at indigenous ways of knowing, and decolonization. Their activities have enriched the discourse at the university, and created connections across departments and faculties.

All in all, it's been a remarkable ten years. We've seen quite a number of groups pass through, and their energy, inventiveness, and varied activities have surprised and impressed us. The groups have hosted speakers, mounted exhibitions, and organized conferences. They have created innovative zoom dialogues, international lecture series, and published special issues of journals. We have had groups lead by graduate students (two in the coming year, in fact) that have organized walking tours of sacred sites and visits to Calgary's organic farms. And, as we hoped, the groups have often gone on to bigger and better things. As you can see below, ideas that had their initial exploration in the working groups have provided the foundation for much larger initiatives, receiving millions of dollars in funding: multiple SSHRC Connection grants, Insight Development grants, Partnership Development grants, and Partnership grants.

2023-24 Interdisciplinary Working Groups

Energy In Society focuses on the human experience, histories and stories of energy systems and energy transitions. Using the 50th anniversary of the 1973 energy crisis, the group discussed new work and approaches to studying energy crises on multiple scales and in different historical and cultural contexts.

Food Studies engaged with food studies scholars, activists and community leaders outside the university, addressing themes such as: How can agroecological food practices provide solutions to the issues of climate change as well as food security? And, how can we ensure that local food production is regenerative, inclusive and diverse?

Performance and Business challenges performance researchers to broaden their perspectives on where and how performance occurs while challenging business researchers to deepen their insight into the dynamics of performance and implications within business. The group continued to build bridges through a series of interdisciplinary dialogues between leading scholars from business and theater or performance studies.

Science, Technology, Environment and Medicine Studies conducts research that aims to yield historical and social lessons for society's contemporary problems. In 2023-24, the group focused on sponsoring activities that cultivate social insights on science, including a workshop on "Changing Perspectives in Speech and Language Neuropsychology, 1863-2023," and developing journal publications for submission.

Seeds Turn Into Trees: CIH-KIAS Seed Grant Drives Successful SSHRC Partnership Grant

In 2018 the Calgary Institute for the Humanities and the Kule Institute for Advance Studies held the inaugural CIH-KIAS Alberta Humanities Research Grant Competition. The aim of the grant was to provide seed money for a collaboration between scholars at UCalgary and UAlberta to advance interdisciplinary research in the area of the Humanities. The winners of that grant were Dr. Matthew Wildcat

(UAlberta) and Dr. Daniel Voth (UCalgary). The project was titled “The Prairie Indigenous Philosophy Project” and sought to bring together scholars to collaborate ethically with some of the most esteemed philosophers in prairie Indigenous communities. The aim of the work was to make the unpublished works, talks, and public commentary of these thinkers available to students and researchers.

The seed money helped fund the co-creation of an ethical engagement framework. It also funded the first phase of a partnership with Dr. Leroy Little Bear as the project’s inaugural partner philosopher.

The work produced in this seed grant was used to secure a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant to



build the Prairie Indigenous Relationality Network with an expanded theme of Indigenous relationality and a wider network of scholars.

This past June, a team made up of Drs. Shalene Jobin, Daniel Voth, Matthew Wildcat, Gina Starblanket, UCalgary PhD Candidate Ryan Crosschild, and Indigenous Engagement Librarian Jessie Loyer secured a SSHRC Partnership Grant entitled “Critical

Approaches to Indigenous Relationality” in the amount of \$2.5 million. This grant has continued to deploy the framework developed in the CIH-KIAS seed grant and now sports a range of community and scholarly collaborations. In all, 25 projects looking at a range of Indigenous intellectual traditions are being funded in both Canada and the United States.

What started as \$10,000 from this unique interdisciplinary

collaboration has grown to a multi-year, multi-community, multi-university project that will fund collaborative research in support of the rich intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples. Seeds do indeed turn into trees.



Above (left to right): Tasha Hubbard, Daniel Voth, Shalene Jobin, Darcy Lindberg.

Right (top to bottom): Shalene Jobin, Gina Starblanket, Jessie Loyer, Ryan Crosschild, Matt Wildcat, Daniel Voth.

Looking Back on Eight Years of Energy *In Society*, a CIH Working Group

When Dr. Petra Dolata arrived in Canada in the summer of 2014 to take up her Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in the History of Energy at the University of Calgary, it did not take long for her to hear about the exciting programming at the Calgary Institute for the Humanities.

Less than two years later, she put together a public event for the annual conference of the Canadian Historical Association (CHA) during Congress 2016 in Calgary, which was co-hosted by the CIH. Entitled "Is Oil a Dirty Word? Stories from the Humanities," this event, which took place at the Grand Theatre in downtown Calgary, featured academics and artists who talked about the stories and identities linked to oil. It was accompanied by an exhibition by the Kainai artist Terrance Houle. It also brought together a group of like-minded energy scholars based in the Faculty of Arts who were interested in broadening the scope of the energy humanities to include insights from historians, anthropologists and political scientists. Feeling that the almost exclusive emphasis on petroleum and the predominance of English literature and critical studies in what was termed Petrocultures was confining the energy humanities, they applied successfully to convene a CIH working group during the 2016/2017 academic year which was initially called "Beyond

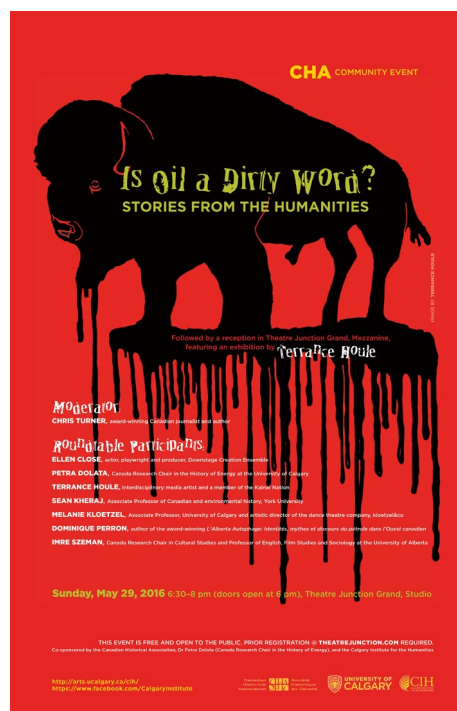
Petrocultures." Throughout the year, Drs. Petra Dolata (Department of History), Sabrina Perić (Department of Anthropology and Archaeology), Roberta Rice (Department of Political Science) and Saulesh Yessenova (Department of Anthropology

and Archaeology) met regularly with graduate students and interested colleagues, discussed recent research findings, organized guest lectures and academic workshops. Acknowledging the multiple and complex ways energy intersects with society and arguing that energy systems do not determine societies but instead simultaneously impact social organizations while being shaped by societal actors, norms and institutions, they changed the working group's name to Energy *In Society* (EIS) to indicate that energy originates in society and is part of our social fabric.

In the following years, the EIS working group continued organizing well-attended public and academic events while presenting their energy

humanities research in North America and abroad. In January 2017, Energy *In Society* was invited to talk about their approach to the energy humanities at a workshop in Berlin, Germany, organized by the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (MPI). Supported by an International Activities Grant from

UCalgary International (\$12,500) over the next two years, EIS embarked on a collaborative research journey with the Anthropocene Formations research group at the MPI to study the social dimensions of energy transitions. EIS members returned to Berlin in May 2017 to deliver research papers at another conference organized by the MPI, "Political Epistemology: New Approaches, Methods and Topics in the History of Science." After participating at the international MPI symposium, "Transformations of Energy Systems – Historical Perspectives on the Anthropocene," in Berlin in February 2018, EIS organized a workshop in Calgary and a field trip to Fort McMurray in June 2018, which brought five members of that research group over from Berlin. This trip, during which the group met with various local and regional stakeholders to hear their stories, also laid the foundation for a larger funded research project ("Storying the Oil Sands: Community, Innovation and Politics in Northern Alberta") led by Dr. Sabrina Perić, who subsequently founded the Energy Stories Lab at the University of Calgary, for which she received a Canadian Foundation for Innovation John Evans Leaders grant. Together with the research group from the Max Planck Institute and funded through a SSHRC Connection grant, Energy *In Society* organized a public event and conference on the topic of "Energy and Scale" in September 2019. The conference brought together a diverse group of scholars, artists, and activists who study the many ways in which energy and scale intersect. The conference featured an energy-themed historical walking tour of downtown Calgary, a public screening of the documentary *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* held at the Calgary Public Library, and three days of research presentations at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Based on the presentations,



Drs. Dolata, Perić, and Rice are currently finalizing an innovative transdisciplinary co-edited volume with the University of Calgary Press tentatively titled, *Energy & Scale*.

In 2021, *Energy In Society* received an International Research Workshop Grant from UCalgary International (\$10,000) to run a series of workshops on the topic of “Resilience in the Environmental Humanities” together with the Environmental Humanities research group at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS) at Albert Ludwig University Freiburg. After two virtual workshops in July and December 2021, *EIS* co-convenors attended a workshop in Freiburg in May 2022, which was dedicated to the topic of “Critical Approaches to the Energy and Environmental Humanities” and included a field trip to one of the earliest solar settlements in Europe and a visit to the environmentally friendly housing project Heliotrope. In March 2023 *EIS* held their fourth and final workshop at the Banff Centre discussing contributions for a special issue of *Ecology & Society* which the *EIS* and FRIAS group will guest edit.

Throughout the past eight years *EIS* has organized many public talks and workshops and inspired new cohorts of graduate students and Postdoctoral researchers. Motivated by the continuing and high-level intellectual discussions on energy systems and energy transitions, the three remaining co-convenors Drs. Dolata, Perić and Rice have initiated new research avenues. And even though some of these were pursued through individual projects, they took shape in the working group inspired by the collaborative insights and collegial energy and often led to the inclusion of each other as co-applicants or collaborators in funding applications.



One example is the work that Dr. Dolata is involved in through a SSHRC-funded partnership. Following an invitation by the Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (SRRB) to join their project on the history of oil at Tłęgǫh̄łı (Norman Wells), NWT, she received a one-year SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (2022-2023, \$25,000) and a three-year SSHRC Partnership Development Grant (2024-2027, \$200,000) to study the historical, social, cultural and environmental impact of oil extraction at this northern site. “From Treaty to Land Claim: Energy, Environment, and Dene and Métis Ts’ı̄łı (Ways of Life) in the Sahtú Region” aims to put the Sahtú region and its experience with over one hundred years of oil and gas production on the national and international map and ensure that its story is heard outside the region. *Energy In Society* is a collaborator in this partnership and has also successfully applied for additional UCalgary funding through a Transdisciplinary Connector Grant (2024-2025, \$16,978.75).

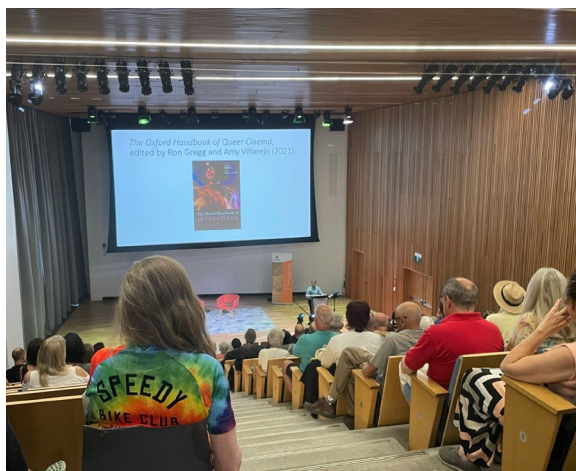
Energy In Society: Grants

- University of Calgary, Transdisciplinary Connector Grant, “Stories and Histories of Oil at Tłęgǫh̄łı (Norman Wells), NWT,” 2024 (\$16,978.75)
- University of Calgary International, International Research Workshop Grant for “Societal dimensions of energy transitions: Risk, resilience and vulnerability in energy/environmental humanities,” *Energy In Society*, Calgary Institute for the Humanities, University of Calgary and Resilience in Environmental Humanities research group, FRIAS, Freiburg University, 2021-2023 (\$10,000)
- SSHRC Connection Grant, “Energy and Scale,” 2019-2020 (\$16,654)
- University of Calgary International, International Activities Grant for “*Energy In Society*: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding and Facilitating Energy Transformations,” 2017 (\$12,500)

Through the Multiverse: Queer Media Today

The 5th Annual CIH LGBTQ2S+ Lecture

This year, for the 5th Annual LGBTQ2S+ Lecture, the Calgary Institute for the Humanities shifted the focus of the lecture from queer history to queer culture. We were privileged to host film and cultural studies scholar Dr. Amy Villarejo at the Calgary Central Library on August 29, 2024. Dr. Villarejo is Chair of the Department of Film, Television and Digital Media at UCLA and has published widely in cinema and media studies, with research on feminist and queer media, documentary film, Brazilian cinema, Indian cinema, American television, critical theory, and cultural studies. Dr. Villarejo recently co-edited the *Oxford Handbook of Queer Cinema* (2021), a volume which challenges the queer canon by broadening out to a new generation of filmmakers and scholars.



Dr. Villarejo's lecture was one full of hope as she showed how filmmakers are making important work and telling the stories of LGBTQ2S+ lives even in places where the political climate may not be hospitable. Her talk was less an attempt to survey the field than to take a few inspiring examples by queer and trans makers and submit them for our collective scrutiny and enjoyment. Villarejo's enthusiasm

and excitement about these films and their power to move audiences was likewise inspiring as she discussed scenes from *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (directed by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, 2022), *Leroy* (directed by Marley Morrison, 2017), *Sweetheart* (directed by Marley Morrison, 2021), and *A Wild Patience Has Taken Me Here* (directed by Erica Sarmet, 2021).

While touching on highlights from these films, Villarejo also asked important questions. While queer narratives and characters are now ubiquitous across media and platforms, what kinds of stories claim our attention and interest? What priorities emerge as queer and trans lives are imperiled by assaults by the far right?

We are grateful for support from UCalgary Alumni, the Calgary Public Library and community donors for this event and we were thrilled to see many prominent LGBTQ2S+ community advocates at the lecture. This annual lecture provides a place for in-depth reflection on LGBTQ2S+ history and culture and it fills an important niche alongside other events during Pride Week that focus on expression, celebration and advocacy.



Calgary Atlas Project

The Calgary Atlas Project currently boasts nine completed maps. We are moving into the next phase of the project, to bring six new maps into production by Summer 2025. The visual nature of the maps makes them different from narrative histories in books, and they have the unique ability to help visualize how the city has changed, how the city's histories have shaped its current outlines, and which historical sites have gone missing. It can be a particularly transformative experience for a member of a community to see their history restored to the geography of the city, or to have the geography of the city re-storied to reflect their community's participation in it. Further, because of the involvement of artists in interpreting and visualizing this history, the maps are both striking works of art as well as artistic commentaries on the history.

Calgary Atlas Project researchers also support public engagement through community consultations and knowledge translation initiatives, as demonstrated by two forthcoming maps, one on places of significance to Calgary's Latin American community, and the other on migration histories, as reflected in the businesses along International Avenue.

This past summer, Valentia Gasca Castro (BA student in Anthropology and History) and Pablo Policzer (Associate Professor, Political Science) engaged in qualitative, community-based research at Fiestaval and Expo Latino to gather places of significance to the Latin American community in Calgary. The next step of the process, led by Francisco Alaniz Uribe (Associate Professor, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape), will host a focus group with community leaders where the researchers will guide a discussion to determine places and

events with historical and personal meaning. These conversations, combined with research in the municipal archives, will contribute to the *Latin American Mental Map*.

Forest Lawn Foodways maps a snapshot of migration histories in the city by focussing on the ethnic restaurants and grocery stores along International Avenue. These businesses put food on the table for the families of new Canadians who left their homes and families sometimes by choice, but more often because of political and economic dislocations. By sharing food from their homelands, and importing familiar produce and groceries, business owners established themselves as community builders. And they gave Calgarians a chance to venture beyond steak and potatoes.

Shuyao (Katie) Qin is principal researcher for this project. Under the supervision of her undergraduate Honours thesis supervisor Nancy Janovicek, she was awarded a PURE research grant to do archival research for the map. With funding from PURE, she presented her research to prominent public historians at the 2024 meetings of the Canadian Historical Association. In her article for the CHA's *Intersections* about her experience as an undergraduate student at an academic conference, she thanked Glenbow archivists Kim Gerald and Leland Reed.

The Chinook Historical Association invited Katie to lead a walking tour for their 2024 Calgary History Week. It was well attended, and she enjoyed Pho with family and friends after the tour. She plans to do another tour with Teresa Tam, artist for the map, to share her research.



Photo: Shuyao (Katie) Qin gives a tour of Forest Lawn Foodways, based on her research into the area's history.

43rd Annual Community Forum: Conspiracy Thinking



Starting in 1981, the CIH Annual Community Forum has brought together scholars and community participants for the discussion of problems important to society. Each year the CIH identifies a theme of interest to Calgarians and invites distinguished researchers to offer their perspectives on it in a day-long conversation with community members. Our 43rd Community Forum, held on May 10, 2024, looked at Conspiracy Thinking. The presentations ranged from theories that are fantastic, such as the Flat Earth and UFOs, to those that attack our democracy and legal system.

Conspiracy thinking has a long history, dating back at least as far as the Middle Ages, and often connected with anti-Semitism. The nineteenth century saw a rise in belief in conspiracies such as international bankers controlling world politics, and the twentieth century witnessed an explosion of theories about extraterrestrials (these would merge in a theory concerning Jewish space lasers causing forest fires in California). In recent years, however, it seems that conspiracy thinking is spreading further, faster and with more effect due to social media, and we see its effects in the world.

This year's forum hosted four guests to speak to some central questions: Are we in a new age of conspiracy thinking? Has social media simply amplified conspiracy thinking that would have spread through other channels in the past, or is there something new and different about the internet-driven conspiracies? Is conspiracy

thinking an understandable response to certain social conditions, or is it pathological? Why do some conspiracies have such long lives, in spite of repeated attempts to debunk them? What is the appeal of conspiracy thinking?

Our first speaker was Matthew Hayes, PhD, a writer, filmmaker and Instructor at Northern Lakes College. He is author of *Search for the Unknown: Canada's UFO Files and the Rise of Conspiracy Theory*. Hayes is an interdisciplinary scholar who approaches conspiracy theories as a mechanism for coping with unfulfilled emotional needs and to explain perceived failures of the state. In particular, he spoke about the history of the Canadian government's response to UFO sightings, and the frustration its largely dismissive responses occasioned. He showed that conspiracies can provide people with a chance to find community and build social bonds. Combined with feelings of alienation that are embedded in our economic system, Hayes made the case that people are eager for a story that simplifies a complex world.

Donald Netolitzky, KC, PhD, our second speaker, is the Complex Litigant Management Counsel for the Alberta Court of King's Bench. He spoke about the history of pseudolaw as a phenomenon that crystalized about 25 years ago. Dr. Netolitzky defines pseudolaw as a free-standing separate legal system used world-wide by anti-authority actors and groups and he explored how it now surfaces regularly in Canadian courtrooms. At its core, he argued, pseudolaw is inherently a conspiracy theory that proposes that a "good law" is suppressed and hidden from the public. It is frequently deployed to target governments, courts, law enforcement and financial

institutions in order to evade taxes, take possession of property, and escape criminal consequences. Although it will never meet with success in real courts, Dr. Netolitzky speculated that pseudolaw and the anti-authority violence that is sometimes associated with it will probably continue.

Our final academic speaker, Whitney Phillips, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Digital Platforms and Media Ethics in the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon. Her latest academic book is *You Are Here: A Field Guide for Navigating Polarized Speech, Conspiracy Theories, and Our Polluted Media Landscape* (MIT Press, 2021), which she adapted in 2023 as a media ethics guide for teens, titled *Share Better and Stress Less: A Guide to Thinking Ecologically about Social Media* (Candlewick Press/MIT Teen). Phillips spoke about her research for her current co-authored book project, which focuses on the historical relationship between right-wing and Evangelical media in the United States. Her analysis of over 80 years of media messages outlines the development of a “shadow gospel” preached by right-wing media and politicians that equates liberals with a devil hellbent on censoring conservative voices, eroding traditional values, undermining religion, and destroying “real” America. This research will also point to links between contemporary conspiracy theories and this historical messaging.

The seminar also heard from multidisciplinary artist and curator Kay Burns, MFA, whose work often questions the authority of information and has included performance lectures, alternative history tours (as performances and as locative media),



and the creation of a parafictional museum. Her presentation, “Perspectives on the Flat Earth,” discussed how the history of the Flat Earth has emerged in her artistic practice. Burns’ work picks up from the satirical Flat Earth Society of Canada, led by Leo Ferrari in the 1970s. Burns developed a performance persona, Iris Taylor, who reinstated the Flat Earth Society of Canada, playfully hosting recruitment lectures from 2003 to 2015. From

physical materials developed over the years running the Iris project, Burns opened The Museum of the Flat Earth as a small seasonal installation on Fogo Island in Newfoundland (one of the four corners of the Flat Earth). She noted how the attitudes of visitors to her museum between 2016 and 2019 became more suspicious and less playful over time.

Fellows Lectures

Engaging with the community is a crucial part of the Institute's mandate. CIH Resident Fellows offer a public lecture on their research, either during the Fellowship year or the year following.

“Church-Building and Colonization in the Norman Conquest” - The 7th Annual McCready Fellow Lecture
October 24, 2023

Courtney Konshuh

Assistant Professor of History
CIH 2023-24 Wayne O. McCready Resident Fellow

Normanization of the English landscape after the Conquest of 1066 included a widespread rebuilding program, destroying Anglo-Saxon buildings and replacing them with dominating Norman structures. This development has been studied as a vehicle of colonisation and legitimation on a grand scale; the White Tower of London was built in this context, for example. The same rebuilding can be seen on a wide scale across the countryside with the rebuilding of small parish churches along established footpaths and Roman roadways. This made Norman rulership omnipresent at the local level and transformed how ordinary people participated in wider society. One of the most important builders after the Norman Conquest was Gundulf, who became the first Norman bishop of Rochester (1077-1108). Many of his churches and chapels are still of local importance today. Professor Konshuh looked at how these churches fit into the landscape and lives of local people during a time of upheaval.

“Neural Netfics: Science Fiction Stories for You and Your Posthuman Family”
November 28, 2023

Anthony Camara

Associate Professor of English
CIH 2022-23 Resident Fellow

Professor Camara explored the literary significance of the under-recognized contributions that Alan Turing, the progenitor of computer science, made to the field of artificial neural networks, a now pervasive form of AI that deploys simulations of biological neurons. While Turing's contributions are typically overshadowed by those of pioneering neural network specialists such as Warren Pitts, Walter McCulloch, and Frank Rosenblatt, Camara argued that Turing's thinking nevertheless exerts a profound impact on today's science fiction writers. Specifically, he contended that these authors adopt Turing's "child-machine"—a conceptual figure that he devises to explain the dynamics of neural computing—as a character in their fictions which enables them to speculate on the technological prospects and ethical problems of neuromorphic AI. Camara calls such science fiction stories "Neural Netfics," and in this talk he investigated how they challenge our ideas of kinship, love, ethics, and humanity by asking us what would happen if child-machines were to join our own families.

Photo: Agnes Tam gives the CIH 4th Annual Lecture in Applied Ethics at the Calgary Central Library, March 12, 2024.

**“Cinema Against State Terror: French Documentary and the Algerian War” - The Inaugural Egmont Lee Founders’ Lecture
January 24, 2024**

Matthew Croombs

Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, Media and Film
CIH 2022-23 Resident Fellow

This talk by Dr. Matthew Croombs examined how French documentary film in the 1950s and 1960s confronted the Algerian War of Independence, focusing on René Vautier, the filmmaker who is credited for working with the National Liberation Front (FLN) to create the nation’s emerging film industry. Part one examined Vautier’s *Algérie en flammes* (1958) and *Peuple un marche* (1963) as films of major historical significance, insofar as they formalize a Fanonian-inspired model of nation-building, in which the unstoppable movement of the people goes hand in hand with a figurative reimagining of the landscape. Part two opened Vautier’s work in Algeria onto a broader web of political relations, interrogating how his films would themselves become objects of internecine warfare between rival factions of the Algerian leadership. By examining this discord between the utopian history depicted in Vautier’s documentaries and the fragmented history of these documentaries, Dr. Croombs positioned the Breton filmmaker as an example of what Albert Memmi called, “the colonizer who refuses,” a figure who confronted the horizons of solidarity.



**“Literature and Freedom” - The 6th Annual Naomi Lacey Memorial Lecture
February 13, 2024**

Martin Wagner

Professor of German,
CIH 2023-24 Naomi Lacey Resident Fellow

In the century between 1750 and 1850, the idea of freedom became a central concept for the ways in which European writers understood themselves and their literary works. Yet different writers had very different types of freedom in mind. While some focused on the freedom from patronage, others talked about the freedom from the pressures of the literary market—and still others about the freedom from the rules governing individual genres, or even a more abstract sense of freedom that readers could experience when reading literature. Drawing on texts by Rousseau, Goethe, Schiller, and others, Professor Wagner’s talk assessed how these various types of freedom coalesced into a concept of literature whose legacy is still felt today.

**“Toward an Ethics of Belonging” - The CIH 4th Annual Lecture in Applied Ethics
March 12, 2024**

Agnes Tam

Assistant Professor of Philosophy
CIH 2023-24 Resident Fellow in Applied Ethics

In the age of migration, many societies are grappling with a crisis of belonging. Not only do immigrants and minorities feel alienated from their community, but even the majority feels disoriented in their homeland. What’s the missing social glue? Many philosophers have argued that the cement of a society is a social contract, and that civil debates can help define the right terms. In this lecture, Professor Tam challenged this conventional view. She argued instead that the social glue is the bond of history, and to create this bond, we need stories—ethical and artful ones—more than ever.

Report on Endowments

We at the Calgary Institute for the Humanities are grateful to our donors for the confidence they have shown in us, enabling us to promote the value of the humanities and support individuals who critically engage in scholarship that explores what it means to be human.

As we approach our 50th Anniversary in 2026, the CIH is announcing a campaign to build its endowments to five million dollars. Hitting our target will allow us to:

- Award a second doctoral fellowship annually, which gives an outstanding graduate student an unparalleled research and mentorship opportunity;
- Ensure the continuation of our pilot Public Humanities program, which places graduate students in community organizations;
- Bring research to the community in new and creative ways, best demonstrated by the CIH's highly-successful Calgary Atlas Project;
- Support emerging scholars and innovative working groups, by reducing barriers to seed funding and providing administrative support;
- Continue to support prominent local and guest lecturers and host public conversations that build bridges between the university and the communities it serves.

This past year, the CIH's existing endowments have allowed us to support research excellence at the University of Calgary, through our Resident Fellowships Program (pp. 2-3). Fellows at the Institute are given the time and space to pursue

high-calibre research projects, and to share their insights with scholars from different disciplines.

The CIH has also continued to support Interdisciplinary Working Groups (pp. 8-11), bringing together scholars from across the university and the province to engage in collaborative research on cross-cutting, innovative topics. Their activities have resulted in visiting speakers, workshops, conferences, exhibitions, and tours. In the past ten years, funding for these groups has provided the foundation for millions of dollars in further research grants.

The flexibility provided by our endowments has also provided the CIH with the opportunity to continue to develop new initiatives, such as our Public Humanities Fellowships Program (pp. 6-7). These Fellowships are the perfect opportunity for PhD students in the humanities to apply their hard won but exceptionally transferable skills in research, communication, critical thinking, and writing for the public good.

The support we have received from the community has allowed the CIH to grow exponentially since 2017. We are thrilled that with this funding we have been able to support more researchers and bring their work to an expanded audience of fellow academics and engaged citizens in the city of Calgary.

\$3,620,049

**Combined Market Value
of all Endowments**

(Mar. 31, 2024)





Financial Report

Income

\$181,534 University of Calgary
Operating Budget

\$49,237 Donations & Grants
Donations toward future endowments
Donor contributions for operating expenses

\$110,222 Endowment Income
Applied Ethics Endowment
CIH Community Projects Endowment
CIH Endowment
CIH Fellowship Endowment
Fred A. McKinnon
Humanities Endowment
Naomi Lacey Memorial Endowment
Wayne O. McCready Endowment for an Emerging Scholar

\$3,053 Sales of Services and Products
Calgary Atlas Project Map Sales

Expenditures

Salary and Benefits
\$91,910 (29.9%)

Resident Fellowships
\$87,537 (28.4%)

Fellows Lectures and Guest Lecturers
\$50,786 (16.5%)

Meetings, Equipment and Office Expenses
\$20,107 (6.5%)

Public Humanities Fellowships
\$13,881 (4.5%)

Graduate Student Fellowship
\$10,000 (3.2%)

Conferences and Memberships
\$9,695 (3.1%)

Grants and Awards
\$8,459 (2.7%)

Calgary Atlas Project
\$7,960 (2.6%)

Interdisciplinary Working Groups
\$7,519 (2.4%)



Egmont Lee Founders' Lecture

A lecture series named in honour of Dr. Egmont Lee, a driving force behind the formation of the Institute in 1976, and Professor of History for more than 30 years at the University of Calgary.

An annual lecture within the Calgary Institute for the Humanities (CIH) has been established in memory of a distinguished scholar who became the driving force instrumental to the Institute's foundation 47 years ago. Dr. Egmont Lee arrived in Calgary in 1968 when the fledgling university was actively recruiting faculty. He spent more than 30 years teaching and researching in the history department and was the Institute's second director.

Egmont passed in 2016, and in his honour, the Lee family has gifted \$100,000 to establish the endowed Egmont Lee Founders' Lecture — an annual lecture presented by a CIH Fellow. This gift provides a meaningful way for the Lee family to continue the legacy and passion Egmont had for the CIH to benefit and enrich future generations of students and the community.

"This Institute is a pearl in the university's crown; more of a pearl than a diamond because of the opalescence and as something that grew," says Egmont's widow, Dr. Valeria Lee, PhD, Italian studies. "Egmont had the idea that the humanities needed a harbour where they could congregate with similar-thinking people and make connections. The idea of the Institute is something that opens the future for humanists."

Shaped by his early childhood migrant experiences in Estonia and Germany during the Second World War, and later emigrating to the U.S. and Canada, Egmont was interested in immigration research. A major initiative of his in the late 1990s was a Calgary

summer project for students that investigated immigration to Calgary and local immigrant groups, so — as his family relates — "students could become cognizant of who sat on the next bench."

Notable as the oldest humanities institute in Canada, the CIH contributes to the public good by supporting research excellence to improve lives and communities. The establishment of the Egmont Lee Founders' Lecture will embellish the existing lecture series of an institution that in its formative years owed much to Egmont's passion and dedication for the advancement of the humanities.

"Egmont saw the importance of the humanities in the contemporary university and also in culture in general," says Dr. Jim Ellis, CIH director. "His interest in immigration both in terms of his own scholarship, but also out in the world, demonstrates the value of humanities work in understanding other cultures, other peoples with their languages and other literatures. The Lee family's gift continues supporting humanist scholarship and affirming its values both inside the university and inside the city."

As Egmont explained in an interview from 1980, "Research in the humanities is more than merely valuable for its own sake. It is an integral part of society's capacity for reflection and self-analysis, enabling us to compare and evaluate disparate developments within the academic community, and within society, in order to situate them more objectively within an overall context of rapid change."

Advisory Council

The Institute receives support and advice from the Advisory Council, which is composed of dedicated members from the external community.

Heather A. Bourne

Former Chairman of Honens

Lauren Bell

Interior designer and education
and healthcare board member

Ronald B. Bond

Post-secondary educational consultant

Chris Dovey

Senior Sales Associate at O'Connors Menswear
and local arts advocate

David Holub, Chair

Lawyer, mediator and conflict resolution trainer

Amanda Koyama

Manager, Family and Children Services,
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Naomi Potter

Director/Curator, Esker Foundation

Nancy Tousley

Senior art critic & independent curator

Executive Council

Chaired by the Director, the Executive Council is composed primarily of university academics and advises on general operations and planning of activities.

Shelley Alexander

Geography

George Colpitts

History

Jim Ellis

English / CIH

Penelope Farfan

Drama, School of Creative and Performing Arts

Noreen Humble

Classics and Religion / CIH

Ozouf Sénamin Amedegnato

Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Culture

Pablo Policzer

Political Science

Nancy Tousley

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