

Muhlenberg College

DANA FORUM 2015



Tuesday, April 14, 2015

Miller Forum, Moyer Hall

5:30 PM

Thursday, April 16, 2015

Trumbower 130

5:30 PM



About the Dana Scholars Program

Mission Statement

The Dana Program offers outstanding, intellectually versatile students an opportunity to belong to a community of scholars that fosters conversations across disciplines, rigorous academic inquiry, and promotes engaged citizenship and leadership. Each Dana scholar can major in any academic department or program. All Dana seniors engage in collaborative research projects on issues of public concern and interest.

Director: Dr. Mohsin Hashim

Forum Director, 2014—2015: Dr. Cathy Marie Ouellette

Faculty Advisory Committee:

Dr. Margo Hobbs, Dr. Daniel Doviak,
Dr. Jefferson Pooley, Dr. Joseph Keane

Student Advisory Committee:

Class of 2015

Andrew Trautmann
Ellen Herschel

Class of 2016

Jessica Wilson
Jillian Mauro

Class of 2017

Lara Roseto
Alison Smith

Class of 2018

Jonathan Walker
Weston Connor



Dana Forum

The **Dana Forum** is designed as a senior year capstone experience to deepen a greater sense of community among DANA scholars and to enrich the intellectual climate on campus. Each year the Forum helps Dana seniors develop and execute collaborative research projects that are tied to the Center for Ethics's annual theme. In the Fall semester, under the supervision of the Director of the Dana Forum, students engage academic questions related to the annual theme chosen by the Center for Ethics. They also form working groups to research a topic of their choice and identify a faculty mentor for the project. The collaborative research component of the Dana Forum is completed during the spring semester of the Dana Scholar's senior year under the mentorship of a faculty member chosen by each group. The specific nature of each team's project depends on the students' background, interests, and goals. Because of the goals of the DANA program, projects that also serve the community are strongly encouraged.

Dr. Cathy Marie Ouellette, Forum Director, 2014-2015



Center for Ethics

The Muhlenberg College Center for Ethics seeks to develop our capacities for ethical reflection, moral leadership, and responsible action by engaging community members in scholarly dialogue, intellectual analysis, and self-examination about contested ethical issues.

Through thematic lectures and events, the Center for Ethics serves the teaching and study of the liberal arts at Muhlenberg College by providing opportunities for intensive conversation and thinking about the ethical dimensions of contemporary philosophical, political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific issues. In service to its mission, the Center for Ethics hosts special events and programs, provides faculty development opportunities, provides support for student programming, and sponsors a Living & Learning Community coordinated by a Faculty Scholar-in-Residence. The Center and thematic programs are directed by full time faculty members. Muhlenberg College gratefully acknowledges the Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation's support of the Center for Ethics.

The 2014-2015 program is entitled *Civility and Disobedience*.

Dr. Bruce Wightman, Director, Center for Ethics



Schedule of Events

Tuesday, April 14

5:30 p.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks
Dr. Brian Mello
Hors d' oeuvres Served

6:00 p.m.

*Vital Voices: A Critical Analysis of the
#MublenbergMobilize Movement*
Mel Ferrara, Ellen Herschel, Ben Nassau, Kyra
Smith

6:30 p.m.

*Performing Revolutionary Time: Occupy Wall Street and the
Tea Party*
Christopher Chaky, Kevin Mitchell

7:00 p.m.

*Rethinking Complicity: An Analysis of Agency and Action
in Women's Religious Movements*
Kelly Anne Cann, Natalie Evans, Shauna Kehoe

7:30p.m.

*Black Music, White Noise: The Gray Areas of Sampling
and Copyright Law*
Tess Dul, Rachel Gonsenhauser, Ryan Gross,
Andrew Trautmann

8:00 p.m.

*Glitter, Glamour, and Gender: Cinematic Representations of
Drag Queens*
Nicole Carusone, Michael Chase, Michael Kho

8:30 p.m.

Closing remarks
Dr. Cathy Marie Ouellette



Schedule of Events

- Thursday, April 16**
- 5:30 p.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
Dr. Bruce Wightman
- Hors d' oeuvres Served
- 6:00 p.m. *The Fight Against Sexual Assault: Understanding the Influences of Legislation, Perception, and Activism from the 1970s to Today*
Leah Boecker, Kerry McGowen, Myles Dworkin, Jake Krutsick
- 6:30 p.m. *The Ethics and Future of Cyberactivism*
Macauley Smith Breault, James Powell Custer Jr.
- 7:00 p.m. *Vivid Representations of Economic Protest in the Media: Comparing WTO to OWS*
John Bennett, Elizabeth Grace Celente, Jennifer Weeks
- 7:30 p.m. *Think Outside the Bubble: The Emotional Aspects of the Opt-Out Movement*
Emma McGahan, Anna Thiessen, Kristen Wendt
- 8:00 p.m. Closing remarks
Dr. Mohsin Hashim
-



Event Schedule

**April 14
6:00 P.M.**

Vital Voices: A Critical Analysis of the

Presenters

Mel Ferrara
Ellen Herschel
Ben Nassau
Kyra Smith

Mentor

Dr. Brian Mello

In November 2014, a grassroots student movement erupted in the wake of the Darren Wilson non-indictment in Ferguson, MO. The movement began with a midnight march around Muhlenberg's campus and ultimately coalesced into the #MuhlenbergMobilize movement. Our report serves as a critical analysis of the internal and external dynamics of the #MuhlenbergMobilize movement within the framework of the broader #blacklivesmatter movement. Information was obtained through several methods, including qualitative in-person interviews, compilation of photographs, and review of existing literature from multiple disciplines (i.e. political theory, performance studies, aesthetics). The first section of our report engages historical and contemporary political theory in the investigation of tensions between liberalism and radicalism in the performance of protest and ideological framing of #MuhlenbergMobilize. The second section focuses on racial performativity, specifically how students involved both in the movement and outside it performed their race and how that performance influenced the broader racial politics of the movement. The third section focuses on performances of gender within the movement and how these gendered interactions informed or were informed by the racial focus of the movement. The fourth section focuses on how photographic documentation of the #MuhlenbergMobilize protest movement affects our cultural memory of activism on this campus through analysis and personal interpretation of images. We conclude that, on the one hand, the presence of an embodied protest on Muhlenberg's campus may have shifted the institution's cultural paradigm from one of apathy to a more engaged student body, informing the campus' collective memory around social movements. The intent of the #MuhlenbergMobilize movement to combat racism deviated from its actualization in a way that was counterproductive to the objectives of the #blacklivesmatter movement, and that ultimately served to reinforce normative systems of racialized power.



Event Schedule

**April 14
6:30 P.M.**

Performing Revolutionary Time: Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party

Presenters

Christopher Chaky
Kevin Mitchell

Mentor

Dr. Matt Moore

This project discusses the Occupy Wall Street and Tea Party protests as performance, meaning that all aspects of a political protest, such as costumes, rhetoric, and the use of space, can be analyzed as value-carrying components of performance. Using Tavia Nyong'o's idea of "revolutionary time," this research finds that these protests perform a distinct form of time contrary to the country's perceived contemporary narrative trajectory. By compiling photographs, videos, and news articles, this project analyzes how each protest creates a space of revolutionary time. In particular, this project explores the role of the American Revolution and historical protest movements in shaping 21st century dissent. Through historical appropriation, revolutionary language, and the creation of utopic spaces, Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party perform the idea and history of revolution without conducting one themselves.



Event Schedule

**April 14
7:00 P.M.**

Rethinking Complicity: An Analysis of Agency and Action in Women's Religious Movements

Presenters

Kelly Anne Cann
Natalie Evans
Shauna Kehoe

Mentor

Dr. Kammie
Takahashi

The purpose of our presentation is to critically interrogate the idea that women in conservative religious movements have restricted opportunities to participate fully in their respective religious traditions. We seek to complicate the idea of agency by examining whether it can be achieved through strategic compliance, perhaps even more efficiently than assertive action. In exploring this more nuanced approach, we also address the following questions: How do we define agency and complicity? How do the ways that women's religious movements claim agency perpetuate existing hierarchies? What are the religious and extra-religious benefits and costs of engaging in women's religious movements? How does our research complicate the binary between obedience and disobedience? In our study we analyzed primary source materials from the Roman Catholic Womenpriest Movement, Buddhist Bhikkhuni Women's Ordination Movement, and the Women's Mosque of America to investigate the use of language indicating agency and action. We compared different means of obtaining and using agency by placing material from these three areas of research in conversation with one another. The goals of our research are to: (1) complicate the perception that religious women lack agency within their traditions, and (2) challenge the notion that religious women assert agency within conservative religious contexts either as expressions of full obedience or solely for the aim of progressing social or extra-religious ends.



Event Schedule

**April 14
7:30 P.M.**

Black Music, White Noise: The Gray Areas of Sampling and Copyright Law

Presenters

Tess Dul
Rachel Gonsenhauser
Ryan Gross
Andrew Trautmann

Mentor

Dr. Michael Schnack

Sampling should not be viewed as an inherently disobedient form of music making. For instance, it can be justified by the pervasive and accepted use of musical borrowing throughout history. Copyright law was intended to benefit the store of cultural material available to the public. However, this public domain has been attacked by large corporations seeking copyright laws that benefit them to the detriment of artists and the public. Recent initiatives such as the Creative Commons and the Grammy Creators Alliance are attempting to return to the vision laid out by the framers of the Constitution. Digital sampling originated in the 1970s with hip-hop deejays and developed and diversified during the Golden Age of Sampling during the late 20th century. While many lawmakers and constituents of the music industry may condemn it as disobedient or lazy, sampling represents a form of music making that both requires a great deal of finesse as well as one that, in its practice, democratizes the music-making process. Sampling allowed political hip-hop artists like Public Enemy to engage their musical and political history and foster a sense of black community through music. The criminalization of sampling, the moral panics surrounding gangsta rap, and the institutionalized sample clearance system are structures that perpetuate an ongoing oppression and silencing of black voices as well as the view of sampling as disobedient. With an ever changing musical landscape, copyright regulations regarding use and distribution of music need to be changed to protect both the creator's work and creative recontextualization such as sampling.



Event Schedule

April 14
8:00 P.M.

Glitter, Glamour, and Gender: Cinematic Representations of Drag Queens

Presenters

Nicole Carusone
Michael Chase
Michael Kho

Mentor

Dr. Beth Schachter

Drag queens, or members of the male sex who temporarily adopt feminine mannerisms and/or appearance, for the purpose of entertainment or political statement, have played an important role in American cinema and mainstream media since the *Stonewall* era. Drag can play with the notion of gender binaries by occupying both a male and female space simultaneously. By using exaggerated femininity and physically expressing the performativity of gender, drag may, under certain circumstances and with specific audiences, expose both the way gender has been structured in society and the flaws within that system, a potentially disobedient act. Scholars argue whether drag's disobedience is able to disrupt notions of the naturalized male/female gender binary and hierarchy or if drag simply reinforces these structures. This presentation will explore this question by examining the functions of drag queens in three very different films: *Kinky Boots*, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, and John Waters' *Multiple Maniacs*. These films will be analyzed through the lens of contemporary feminist and queer theories. The presentation will discuss whether the abundance of drag queens in mainstream media is a progressive move toward equality, or a hindrance to those movements by reinforcing traditional gender binaries, and how this is impacted by the civility, or lack thereof, of each drag queen.

8:30 P.M.

Closing Remarks
Dr. Cathy Marie Ouellette



Event Schedule

April 16
6:00 P.M.

The Fight Against Sexual Assault: Understanding the Influences of Legislation, Perception, and Activism from the 1970s to Today

Presenters

Leah Boecker
Myles Dworkin
Jake Krutsick
Kerry McGowan

Mentor

Dr. Lanethea
Mathews-Schultz

Activism against sexual assault has gained widespread media attention in recent years thanks to both governmental and student-led campaigns. This renewed interest in activism, a form of civil disobedience, is best understood in the context of a larger historical trajectory of feminist organizing around the nature of sex, sexuality, and sexual relations. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the second-wave feminist movement began demanding new social services and legislation pertaining to sexual assault such as the establishment of rape crisis centers. Their protest strategies focused on raising awareness and providing survivors with basic necessities. Similarly, modern day activism has sought to address the problem of perception as well as raise awareness about the seriousness of sexual violence, especially on college campuses through organizations such as the It's On Us campaign. The similarities and differences between activism in the 1970s and present day campaigns, in terms of goals, strategies, identities and organizational forms, emphasize the interrelationships between cultural and political change. Whereas the 1970s were focused on establishing legislation, modern day campaigns have looked to reform these laws and ensure they are being implemented properly. This has occurred, in part, because the social atmosphere surrounding sexual assault has not seen the same development as legislative reform, causing activists to target cultural catch-up as their primary objective. Analyzing the anti-sexual assault movement throughout history grants us a better understanding of modern day campaigns, where they are heading, and how they will get there.



Event Schedule

**April 16
6:30 P.M.**

The Ethics and Future of Cyberactivism

Presenters

Macauley Smith Breault
James Powell Custer Jr.

Mentor

Dr. Clif Kussmaul

While traditional forms of protest, such as mass movements, have proven to be an effective way to enact social change, through cyberactivism, and more specifically hacktivism, a small group of people can now have an impact similar to that of large physical protests. Cyberactivism is defined as using the Internet for a politically or socially motivated purpose, while hacktivism is a branch of cyberactivism that utilizes hacking as a means to accomplish the campaign's goals. As society becomes more reliant on the internet and computers, we become increasingly vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Frequently, hacktivists feel empowered to enact vigilante justice towards those who commit crimes and are overlooked by the rest of society. Movements by these groups against powerful institutions have resulted in dramatic consequences including extended jail time and large fines within the hacktivist groups.

We will tour the history of cyberactivism from its roots in the late 1970s to the present to see how cyberactivism has reached such a powerful level. We explore public perception of cyberactivism, the ethics of cyberactivism, and the punishments inflicted upon hacktivists through a survey that explores perception through a set of case studies. Our aim is to inform the public about these important issues that are a necessary part of a modern conversation about cyberspace.



Event Schedule

**April 16
7:00 P.M.**

Visual Representations of Economic Protest in the Media: Comparing WTO to OWS

Presenters

John Bennett
Elizabeth Grace
Celente
Jennifer Weeks

Mentor

Dr. Kate Ranieri

The discussion surrounding this year's Center for Ethics theme, Civility and Disobedience, raises interesting questions regarding the conditions under which protests arise as well as how they spread. What could be added to this discussion is the way we see protests when we are not there—that is to say, how protests are visually represented to a wide audience. To better understand the way in which visual representation of protest operates and how it has evolved into the information age, we have examined stills from both the Seattle WTO protests of 1999 and the Occupy movement of 2011. What's more, as the documentary format has become both more popular and accessible, we examined protest as visually represented through this medium as well. Our research seeks bring to light that, through both photographic stills and documentary footage, several sets of visual narratives emerge that have the potential to brand protesters as organizers, as vagrants, as pundits, as freaks, etc, and our analysis of this research seeks to identify what these narratives mean to our understanding of protest and how they have evolved as protest has marched into the Information Age.



Event Schedule

April 16
7:30 P.M.

Think Outside the Bubble: The Emotional Aspects of the Opt-Out Movement

Presenters

Emma McGahan
Anna Thiessen
Kristen Wendt

Mentor

Dr. Mark Wolfmeyer

This paper examines the Opt-Out movement, a current crusade against standardized testing, and the ways this movement uses emotion as emphasized in recent social movement theory. The first section details a brief history of the Standards-based movement in educational policy beginning with the recommendations listed in *A Nation at Risk* to the most recent policy, the Common Core State Standards Initiative. This section will also look briefly at the history of standardized testing and some of the major criticisms of the practice. The second section reviews the recent attention to emotion in social movement theory, highlighting five specific categories of emotion: reflex emotions, moral emotions, affective bonds, emotion as strategy, and management of fear. This section investigates how these components influence community and group behavior. The third section explores this emotional vocabulary and how it relates to the Opt-Out movement. These five concepts are examined through a close reading of pre-existing data gathered from interviews, first-hand accounts, and academic literature. This research demonstrates how each category of emotion behaves as a social tool that can be used as a strategy to promote the Opt-Out movement.

8:00 P.M.

Closing Remarks
Dr. Mohsin Hashim



DANA Scholars

Class of 2015

John Bennett
Leah Boecker
Macauly Smith Breault
Kelly Anne Cann
Nicole Carusone
Elizabeth Grace Celente
Christopher Chaky
Michael Chase
James Powell Custer Jr.
Tess Dul
Myles Dworkin
Natalie Evans
Melanie Ferrara
Rachel Gonsenhauser
Christopher Greco
Ryan Gross
Ellen Herschel
Shauna Kehoe
Michael Kho
John Krutsick
Emma McGahan
Kerry McGowan
Kevin Mitchell
Benjamin Nassau
Kyra Smith
Anna Thiessen
Andrew Trautmann
Jennifer Weeks
Kristen Wendt