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# DANA FORUM 2023



**Tuesday, April 18, 2023**  
Great Room, Seegers Union  
5:00 PM

**Wednesday, April 19, 2023**  
Miller Forum, Moyer Hall  
5:00 PM

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## *About the Dana Scholars Program*

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, 2022-2023:** Dr. Marcia Morgan  
**Faculty Advisory Committee:**  
Dr. Irene Chien, Dr. Gretchen Gotthard  
Dr. Cassandra Hartford, Dr. Tad Robinson

**The Dana Forum** is designed as a senior year capstone experience (0.5 credit each semester) to promote engaged citizenship and leadership to enrich the intellectual climate on campus. Each year the Forum oversees the development and execution of collaborative research projects as Dana seniors pursue rigorous academic inquiry on issues of public concern and interest tied to the Center for Ethics' annual theme. In the Fall semester, under the supervision of the Director of the Dana Forum, students engage with academic questions related to the annual theme chosen by the Center for Ethics and form working groups to research a topic of their choice. 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.



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*Center for Ethics 2022—2023 Program*  
*Speculative Futures*

Our contemporary moment is shaped by the pressures of multiple, simultaneous crises: between the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing crises of political legitimacy, growing economic inequality, the onslaughts of white supremacy and xenophobia and the looming threat of irrevocable climate disaster, the future seems intractable and murky.

Longstanding questions about what the future holds are haunted by doubts and the scale of systemic issues. Fears about scarcity and the changing world seem to hamper opportunities for solidarity and coalition-building. At the same time, this juncture presents an opportunity to reimagine the futures we want and how we might get there. In thinking about the future as something speculative — and something we might speculate about — we might collectively resist fatalism and think instead about the world we hope to create. We might think about how art helps us envision alternative possibilities, how native and evolving technologies change the ways we relate to each other and the world, how philosophy hazards rearrangements that could unlock future ways of being and knowing and how shifts in forms of political engagement offer us new opportunities for resistance.

**Center Director**

**Dr. Mark Stein**, Professor of History

**Program Directors:**

**Dr. Archana Kaku**, Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow,  
Political Science

**Dr. Dawn Lonsinger**, Associate Professor of English

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## *Schedule of Events*

### **Tuesday, April 18**

- 5:00—5:15 p.m.            Hors d'oeuvres Served
- 5:15—5:25 p.m.            Welcome and Opening Remarks  
Dr. Marcia Morgan, Dana Forum  
Director
- 5:30—6:05 p.m.            *A Comprehensive View of the Preception and  
Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorder: A Medical-  
Moral Dilemma*  
Ava Bianchi, Jodie Goldberg, Faith  
Maldonado, and Anna Mirsky
- 6:05—6:40 p.m.            *Racial Biases of Neural Networks in Modern  
Healthcare*  
Emily Luo, Raivat Shah, and Conner  
Soderstedt

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## *Schedule of Events*

### **Wednesday, April 19**

- 5:00—5:15 p.m.                      Hors d'oeuvres Served
- 5:15—5:25 p.m.                      Welcome and Opening Remarks  
Dr. Archana Kaku, Consortium for Faculty  
Diversity Fellow
- 5:30—6:05 p.m.                      *The Power of Language & the Media: Imagining  
and Forging a Sexual Assault-and Sexual  
Harassment-Free Future*  
Sadra Bowie and Camryn Griffon
- 6:05—6:40 p.m.                      *The Should/Should Not Problem: How  
Narratives Inform Literacy*  
Ava Duskcic, Carina Filemyr and Alison  
Rutyna
- 6:40—7:15                              *Casting Against History: Anachronistic Racial  
Representation in Film, Television, and Theatre*  
Haley Arnold, Eben Cornine, Liam Safran, and  
Peyton Sloan
- 6:45 p.m.                                Closing Remarks  
Dr. Mohsin Hashim, Director, Dana Scholars  
Program
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## *Event Schedule*

**April 18  
5:30 P.M.**

### **A Comprehensive View of the Perception and Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorder: A Medical-Moral Dilemma**

**Presenters**

Ava Bianchi  
Jodie Goldberg  
Faith Maldonado  
Anna Mirsky

**Mentor**

Dr. Jacqueline  
Antonovich

We seek to analyze and deconstruct the persistent stigmas that have been attached to AUD throughout time in order to contextualize why treatment for AUD must look different than that of other medically diagnosable disorders moving forward. Albeit often hidden, alcoholism is a serious epidemic in the present day. In order to ensure that in the future more accessible and effective systems of treatment are available, the intense stigmatization of the Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) needs to be taken into consideration in the creation of said systems. We present a complex picture of alcoholism in the country, informed both by its tense history of treatment and current scientific developments, and argue for a healthier and more equitable future for a disorder that has plagued individuals for centuries. The construction of this future must come from a reframing of AUD not as a moral failing or an intentional choice on the part of the afflicted person, but as a serious (yet treatable) condition that deserves as much attention as any other mental health issue. Similarly, while novel remedies should be approached with caution, it is important not to restrict appropriate education and research based on unfounded cultural associations created on the basis of denigrating or disenfranchising a group as has been done in the past.

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## *Event Schedule*

**April 18  
6:05 P.M.**

### **Racial Biases of Neural Networks in Modern Healthcare**

**Presenters**

Emily Luo  
Raivat Shah  
Conner Soderstedt

**Mentor**

Dr. Jorge Silveyra

In the past decade, significant innovations in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) have gained notoriety due to their seemingly superhuman capabilities. In the medical literature, peer-reviewed research in AI has increasingly demonstrated its utility, especially in the realm of diagnostics. Gaining its reputation from rapid functioning and equal, sometimes superior, performance to physicians in diagnostic accuracy, AI is poised to be integrated by healthcare professionals and systems alike. However, a particularly understudied component of AI and Neural Networks, a subfield of AI, are the biases that may emerge from their use. Explicit and implicit racial biases, from scientific racism to stereotyping, have been extremely prevalent throughout the history of American healthcare. In the present and future, differences in data quality, demographic representation, as well as inherent limitations in the study of AI each introduce bias and pose an obstacle to the safe and secure integration of AI in clinical settings across diverse populations. Hence, this investigation explores AI, neural networks, and the potential racial biases that may manifest from their implementation in healthcare settings. As we continue moving towards an exciting future of revolutionized health care delivery, it is essential that we cautiously, responsibly, and knowledgeably harness the vast potential of AI.

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## *Event Schedule*

**April 19  
5:30 P.M.**

### **The Power of Language & the Media: Imagining and Forging a Sexual Assault- and Sexual Harassment-Free Future**

**Presenters**

Sadra Bowie  
Camryn Griffon

**Mentor**

Dr. Alexandra  
Frazer

The authors analyzed the way in which American society conceptualizes sexual assault and sexual harassment and the propagation of such ideas through the language used surrounding sexual assault and sexual harassment in crime drama television shows. Indeed, as people are susceptible to the influence of linguistics and a person or society's reality is developed, determined, and reified by the way in which they speak, it logically follows that society's understanding of sexual assault and sexual harassment may also be influenced by the language that American society employs surrounding sex, violence, and gender. Therefore, by altering the way in which society speaks about sexual assault and sexual harassment, currently ingrained harmful social conceptions of sexual assault and sexual harassment can be dispensed with in favor of language that works towards building a future in which sexual assault and sexual harassment are blights of the past rather than a continuing societal scourge. In working towards forging such a future, the authors aimed to determine how American society's current ideas surrounding sexual assault and sexual harassment are initiated and propagated by identifying the language used surrounding sexual assault and sexual harassment on televised media. The research conducted reveals that the language employed surrounding sexual assault and sexual harassment on televised crime dramas is most frequently sensationalizing in effect, with language possessing the effect of mitigating the seriousness of such crimes being the second most frequently occurring language avoided; language stating the crimes of sexual assault and sexual harassment in a non-obfuscating way occurred the least frequently on the television crime dramas studied. Such findings reveal the need to minimize the occurrence of mitigating or sensationalizing language in describing sexual assault and sexual harassment on crime television dramas consumed by the public in favor of non-obfuscating language in order to aid in creating a future in which sexual assault and sexual harassment are vestiges of the past by influencing people's perceptions and behaviors through language.



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## *Event Schedule*

**April 19  
6:05 P.M.**

### **The Should/Should Not Problem: How Narratives Inform Literacy**

**Presenters**

Ava Duskic  
Carina Filemyr  
Alison Rutyna

**Mentor**

Dr. Jeremy Teissere

As researchers and self-ascribed word nerds, we have a bated interest in what high school students are reading. We found that there are many stakeholders involved in what students are reading; in other words, both individual people and formal institutions have strong feelings about what students should or should not be reading. We investigated some of the “shoulds” (recommendations) and some of the “should nots” (bans/restrictions). We began with our ethnographies, which explored the forces that shaped our reading trajectories as young adults. We then designed our own TikTok study to explore the influence of Booktok recommendations by looking at which stories were being recommended and whose voices were being amplified. We then examined the rise in book bans across the country— which themes were being restricted, whose voices were being intentionally silenced, who was spearheading the banning efforts. To our surprise, we found that TikTok’s narrow scope of recommendations prioritized the same perspectives that book bannings were purporting. Notably, the TikTok recommendations left out the types of stories being banned. In looking to the future, we suggest that whose stories are included in the mainstream literary canon, and whose are left out, will influence the world of tomorrow.

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## Event Schedule

April 19  
6:45 P.M.

### Casting Against History: Anachronistic Racial Representation in Film, Television, and Theatre



**Presenters**

Haley Arnold  
Eben Cornine  
Liam Safran  
Peyton Sloan

**Mentor**

Dr. Paul McEwan

Color blind and color conscious casting are sometimes used interchangeably; however, they are distinctly different. Color blindness refers to the practice of removing race from the equation, essentially not seeing color as a factor. Oppositely, color consciousness acknowledges race. Through a study of the films and TV shows *Bridgerton* (2020-Present), *Hamilton* (2020), *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* (1997), and *Our Flag Means Death* (2022-Present) we investigated the different consequences of color blind and color conscious storytelling, specifically in period pieces. Analyzing the critical analyses and audience reception for each piece of media demonstrates the effect their respective diversity has on the masses, while insights from psychology, neuroscience, and phenomenology help explain the effect the media can have on the individual. Through these methods, we can comprehend *how* these diverse period pieces affect individuals and groups who consume and derive meaning from representative media and consequently understand how to better the genre for a more equitable version of our speculative future. Through the various lenses of our research, we suggest that color blind and color conscious casting can be used as tools to create a future that is more inclusive to marginalized identities, despite its potential flaws in misrepresenting history, and should continue to be pursued despite these flaws because it consistently produces positive effects by sharing the representation public institutions ordinarily fail to provide.



*Notes*



*Dana Class of 2023*

Haley Arnold

Ava Bianchi

Sadra Bowie

Natalia Cieslar

Eben Cornine

Ava Duskic

Carina Filemyr

Jodie Goldberg

Camryn Griffon

William Howitt

Emily Luo

Faith Maldonado

Anna Mirsky

Nicole Randazza

Alison Rutnya

Liam Safran

Raivat Shah

Peyton Sloan

Conner Soderstedt

Alexa Ufberg