

ENGAGING THE WORLD  
LEADING  
—— the conversation on  
*Health Equity*

2023-2024

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**Special Thanks to:**

Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences  
Dr. Karen Wilkinson and Reverend Reg Lancaster



**Wilkinson College of  
Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences**  
**Crean College of  
Health and Behavioral Sciences**

# ENGAGING THE WORLD

## Leading the Conversation on Health Equity

Wilkinson College is committed to leading the conversation in our community on issues of humanity, unity, and justice. As such, the college has undertaken semester-long examinations of key societal issues. These interdisciplinary, campus-wide conversations promote thoughtful dialogue; mindful reflection; social tolerance; awareness and respect; peace and kindness. For the 23-24 series on health equity, Wilkinson partnered with Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.

### What is Health Equity?

- Health Humanities is an interdisciplinary field of study that uses approaches from the arts, humanities, and social sciences to examine concepts and issues of health, well-being, illness, and disability in relation to diverse histories, cultures, perspectives, and communities within and beyond the United States.
- Health Equity refers to conditions in which everyone has the just opportunity to attain the highest level of health.
- Health Equity identifies and challenges the historical, cultural, social, and economic disparities that interfere with access to health and health care.
- The global COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing repercussions have further reinforced the need for Health Humanities to understand the complexity of health not only in its medical understanding, but also as individual and communal, physical and emotional, historical and political, and cultural and statistical.
- The purpose of this year's series was to promote informed, sustained, and enriching dialogues through an in-depth exploration of what the human condition of health means in our lives.

<https://www.chapman.edu/wilkinson/about/events/etw-health-equity.aspx>

## Events

### Neurospectrum Conference – Cedric Tai

This conference was led by Artist Cedric Tai at the Guggenheim Gallery as part of the @fakingprofessionalism series. Cedric Tai is an "un-disciplinary" artist born in Detroit, MI. Their artwork and teachings focus on neurodivergent experience, labor, and politics.



### Health Equity Lessons from the Field

Three Sikh health professionals discussed the topic of Health Equity. Dr. Angad Singh spoke on "Partnering with Community to Nurture Health Equity," Dr. Jasjit Singh discussed "Promoting Health Equity from Pediatrics to Mentorship," and Dr. Gurpreet Ahuja talked about "Health Equity Challenges and Solutions."



*Dr. Angad Singh, Dr. Jasjit Singh, Dr. Gurpreet Ahuja (left to right)*

## ***Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on Health in America* with Linda Villarosa**

Linda Villarosa is the author of the groundbreaking *Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on Health in America*, which tells the full story of racial health disparities in America, revealing the toll racism takes on individuals and our nation's health. Villarosa was the keynote speaker for the Engaging the World series and spoke to an audience of over 500 guests.



## **Promoting Equitable Food Systems — World Food Day**

An expert panel that included Mark Lowry, the director of the OC Food Bank, Dr. Denise Payán, Assistant Professor of Health, Society, and Behavior, Public Health at UCI, and Jennifer Pearce, a registered dietician at Children's Hospital of Orange County, explored food equity challenges with the perspectives of healthcare, medicine, academia, and food insecurity domains. Dr. Jason Douglas, Associate Professor in the Dept of Health, Society, & Behavior, Center for Environmental Health Disparities Research at UCI, moderated the event.



Mark Lowry, Dr. Denise Payán, Jennifer Pearce (left to right)

## ***Medicine, Science and Making Race in Civil War America* with Dr. Leslie Schwalm**

Drawing on archives of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, recollections of Civil War soldiers and medical workers, and testimonies from Black Americans, Leslie A. Schwalm's talk and book of the same name exposes the racist ideas and practices that shaped wartime medicine and science in her book. Painstakingly researched and accessibly written, her book helps readers understand the persistence of anti-Black racism and health disparities during and after the war.



## **Environmental Health Equity**

Dr. Patrick Hunnicutt, Environmental Science and Policy professor, invited a panel of four researchers, Dr. Timnit Kefela, Dr. Megan Mullin, Dr. Regan Patterson, and Ph.D. candidate Sandy Sum, who work at the intersection of the environment and health equity, to discuss the topic of health equity through an environmental lens.



Dr. Timnit Kefela (top), Dr. Megan Mullin, Dr. Regan Patterson, Sandy Sum (bottom, left to right)

## ***Tabula Poetica* with Suzanne Edison**

Poet and therapist Suzanne Edison shared her journey as a writer and as an American mother of a daughter from Guatemala with an autoimmune disorder. Referencing her own work and that of other poets, Edison explored how poets, patients, and physicians use image, metaphor, and language to communicate about health, illness, and disability.



## **Trans Health and Wellness Panel**

This panel consisted of four trans Chapman alumni, Addison Rose Vincent '15, MLin '14, Mckenzee Griffler '13, and Tuck Woodstock '13, who joined together for an in-person panel discussion moderated by LGBTQ Studies director Dr. Joshua Liashenko. The discussion was focused on transgender and non-binary health and wellness with alums who are active in the community.



Addison Rose Vincent (top), MLin, Mckenzee Griffler, Tuck Woodstock (bottom, left to right)

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## Leading the Conversation on Health Equity

### First-Year Focus Courses (FFC)

Engaging the World, Wilkinson College's First-Year Focus program combines coursework and extra-curricular programming to promote mindful reflection and thoughtful dialogue around critical social issues of our times. The program encourages students to envision the previously unimaginable and bring disparate ideas together in new configurations to cultivate nuanced and informed responses to current social challenges. Other elements of the program help students successfully navigate the transition from high school to college.

Each year, Wilkinson College selects one pressing societal issue concerning the college-age generation to examine deeply through its signature fall event series, Engaging the World: Leading the Conversation on.... By connecting some or all FFC course content to these events, the Engaging the World FFC program ensures that visiting speakers, art exhibits, and film screenings have a meaningful impact on students' education, which often informs their research and artistic FFC course projects.

#### Engaging the World FFC Course Titles:

*Constructions of Race and Health in Nazi Germany*  
*Environmental Health Disparities*  
*Exploring the Escalette Permanent Art Collection: An Experiential Journey*  
*Health Equity, Disability Rights, and Global Humanitarianism*  
*The Intersectionality of Gender, Health, and Mass Media*  
*The Latino Health Paradox*  
*Reproductive Health and Women's Rights*  
*"Silence Equals Death": Stigma, Health, and Resistance*  
*Trials on Trial: Famous Legal Faux Pas*  
*"Who are you and what will you fight for?": Difficult Histories and Critical Theory*  
*Your Body is a Battleground; Biopolitics and Reproductive Justice*

## Film Series



#### Professor Art Blaser

**FFC: "Health Equity, Disability, and Global Humanitarianism"**

**Film: *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement***

**October 10, 2023**

*Fixed*, a documentary, questions commonly held beliefs about disability and normalcy by exploring technologies that promise to change our bodies and minds forever. Through the perspectives of five people with disabilities: a scientist, journalist, disability justice educator, bionics engineer, and exoskeleton test pilot, *Fixed* takes a close look at the implications of emerging human enhancement technologies for the future of humanity.



**Professor CK Magliola**

**FFC: "Your Body Is a Battleground: Biopolitics and Reproductive Justice"**

**Film: No Más Bebés**

**October 27, 2023**

They came to have their babies. They went home sterilized. The story of immigrant mothers who sued county doctors, the state, and the U.S. government after they were pushed into sterilizations while giving birth at the Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center during the 1960s and 70s. Led by an intrepid, 26-year-old Chicana lawyer and armed with hospital records secretly gathered by a whistle-blowing young doctor, the mothers faced public exposure and stood up to powerful institutions in the name of justice.

**Professor Christine Fugate**

**Queen Moorea Documentary Screening**

**Film: Queen Moorea**

**November 6, 2023**

Moorea Howson, a spirited Asian American homecoming queen, struggles to fulfill her dreams in a world that insists on labeling her. Born with Williams Syndrome, a rare and incurable genetic condition, Moorea finds hope through her family, friends, and community. Dr. Megan Cosier from the Thompson Policy Institute on Disability, film producer Christine Fugate, Dr. Art Blaser, and Moorea Howson rounded out the panel discussion following the film screening.



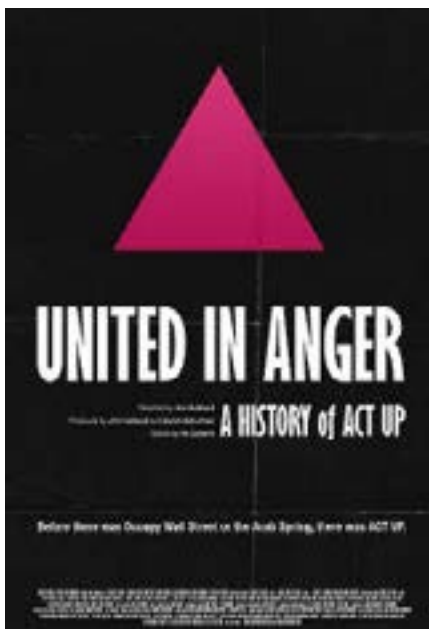
**Professor Joshua Liashenko**

**FFC : "'Silence Equal Death:' Stigma, Health, and Resistance"**

**Film: United in Anger: A History of ACT UP**

**November 30, 2023**

*United in Anger: A History of ACT UP* is an inspiring documentary about the birth and life of the AIDS activist movement from the perspective of the people in the trenches fighting the epidemic. Utilizing oral histories of members of ACT UP and rare archival footage, the film depicts the efforts of ACT UP as it battles corporate greed, social indifference, and government neglect.



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### Escalette Permanent Art Collection Exhibition

#### *Bound in Bone*

This exhibition was created by LA-based artist Jenny Yurshansky with students from the first-year course "The Escalette: An Experiential Journey." It presents students' memories of family resilience, recovery from hardship or trauma, and health and well-being through seemingly unassuming objects.

The components of this exhibition were inspired and created by students through various workshops and class projects led by Jenny Yurshansky during the fall semester. Wilkinson and Crean College students brought objects and recorded interviews recalling the significance of the objects, reflecting on how the past has shaped their well-being today. Then these objects were transformed several times. First, they were scanned and 3D resin printed into white "bones" displayed in a glass reliquary and translucent "ghosts" floating in a metal vitrine. They also became the elusive subjects of photograms printed by first-year art students, crafted to look like X-rays. Finally, the interview recordings were shared as X-ray records that could be played from a record player.

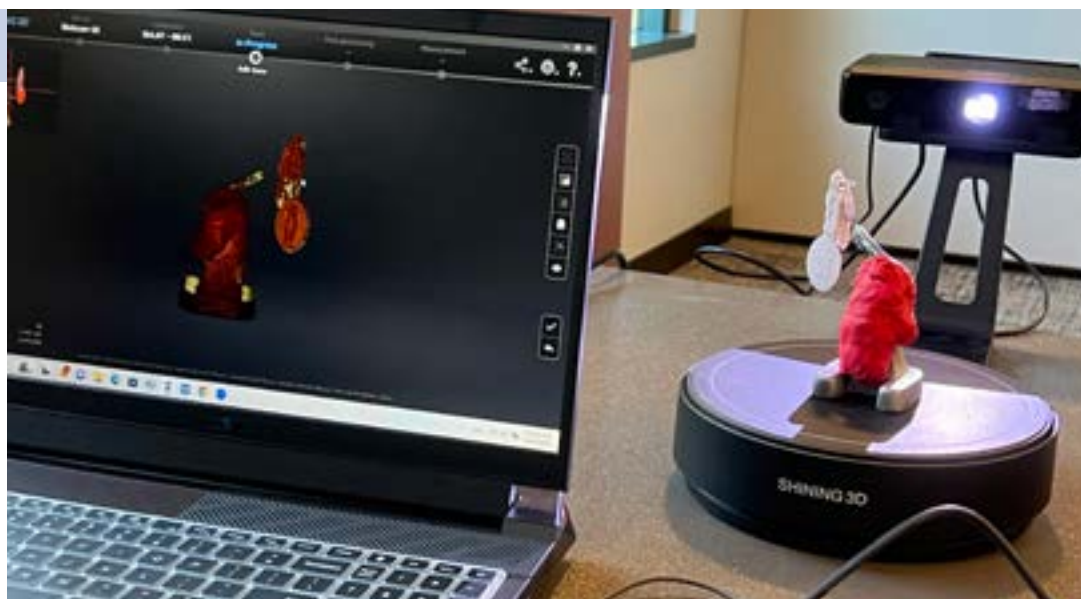
This project allowed students to consider the intergenerational aspects of health and wellness, both individually and in community with one another. Its components play with the ideas of what is visible, what is remembered, what is shared, and what is felt. It reflects on how we carry our stories in our bodies and how they bind us to our past and one another.

#### Partners and Sponsors:

This exhibition was created in partnership with students from Dr. Fiona Shen's "The Escalette: An Experiential Journey" course, Professor Julie Shafer's Photographic Imaging course, and students from Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences. Support for this exhibition was generously provided by the Phyllis and Ross Escalette Permanent Art Collection Endowment, Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, and Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.

## The Process

1.



*Students' objects, like this necklace, were 3D scanned while they recorded interviews describing their significance.*

2.



Students' objects were then replicated in clear resin. This image shows rings, a sand dollar, a necklace chain, and a Minecraft chicken coming out of a 3D printer in Chapman University's Design/Create/Innovate Lab.

3.



The white 3D printed objects were treated to look like bone and displayed in a reliquary-inspired frame.

4.



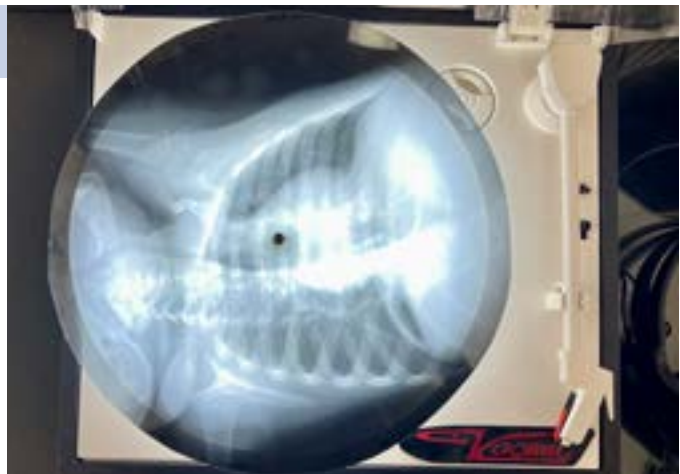
The clear 3D printed objects were displayed in a metal vitrine that casts a ghostly shadow from inside the conference room in Roosevelt Hall.

5.



A first-year photography class used the 3D prints to create photograms – a type of photography where objects cast their shape on photographic paper when exposed to light – to look like X-rays.

6.



The recorded interviews were archived on x-ray records that could be played on a record player.

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### Student Impact

#### **Students respond to Linda Villarosa's keynote address and her book *Under the Skin: the Hidden Toll of Racism on American Health*:**

*"It makes me hopeful that medical students are being trained in new ways and that some are specifically interacting with Villarosa and her work to improve their work and the field in general."*

*"Professor Villarosa...left me with a new perspective and valuable new ideas I still think about and talk about today."*

*"One fact that stood out to me was that the United States is the only developed nation with increasing maternal mortality rates, heavily skewed by the mortality of women of color, specifically black women."*

*"I learned that there needs to be more discussion about creating health equity for everyone in this country and that we need to start taking action to stop unconscious biases within the medical field as a start."*

*"One concept that she spent a lot of time addressing was the need for people of color, especially Black people, to present really well when dealing with healthcare professionals. She noted several instances where she had to dress in fancy clothing and bring her credentials just to receive proper treatment."*





**The ETW FFC course Reproductive Health and Women's Rights wrote "found poems" written with only words and phrases from Professor Villarosa's book. "I was deeply moved," Professor Villarosa wrote after reading the poems. Here are two examples:**

### ***Defined***

*stress*  
the body's response to a perceived threat  
worn down emotionally by the  
macro- and microaggressions  
slights, and subtle forms of discrimination  
but discrimination is discrimination

*black emotional pain*  
her already burdened community  
faced with  
decades of social, economic, and educational  
racism

*weathering*  
turns what should be the happiest day of a  
woman's life into tragedy  
higher rates of infant death  
everything from fatigue to feelings of  
failure and anger

to weather means to wear down  
but also means to withstand

### ***The Storm***

To weather means to wear down,  
Fatigue to feelings of failure  
The Peculiar indifference to human suffering  
yet one for which no one was sounding the alarm

But it also means to withstand,  
Look deeper, think differently  
The insidious consequences of present-day racism  
affects who lives and who dies

He called the problem a natural tragedy,  
an emergency analogous to a hurricane, flood,  
or other ruinous natural disaster  
As in weathering a storm

But sometimes hope gets slapped with  
a hard dose of reality  
Confront the problem  
live sicker and die quicker,  
Nobody's Safe

I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired.









DEATH  
HEALTH  
CARE  
COMMUNICATION  
DISASTERS  
HUMANITIES  
WELLBEING  
TO  
RIGHTS  
HUMAN  
SIGN  
advocacy  
ECONOM  
ARRIVED  
EVEN



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