

SPEAKER DISCUSSES ADJUNCT FACULTY CONCERNS

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Late Wednesday evening at Youngstown State University, students and faculty gathered together as one to listen to Staughton Lynd, a civil rights and anti-war movement activist, lecture on the nationwide struggle of part-time faculty workers to receive fair working conditions through unionization.

The working conditions of part-time faculty have long been a concern for many at YSU.

Lynd was a participant in the southern Civil Rights Movement, an early leader of the 1960s anti-war movement and a member of the first civilian peace delegation of North Vietnam — a decision that ended in him being blacklisted from Yale University, along with five other universities.

Lynd, a workers' rights activist attorney, is best known for the case Local 1330: United States Steel Workers of America versus U.S. Steel, which challenged the closing of Youngstown steel mills in the 1970s.

Lynd said the purpose of the lecture was to inform students and faculty about the legal obstacles that adjunct faculty face in Ohio and how they can overcome these limitations through worker solidarity.



'We may get our asses fired, but we are not alone'

Lynd compared the plight of the adjunct faculty to workers' attempts to unionize in the early 1900s. Depicted are members of the Amalgamated Ladies Garment Cutters Union striking for better working conditions and higher pay in New York in the early 1900s.

"I'd like to make clear that I don't think of myself as here to organize anything ... [part-time faculty] don't have to be part of the same organization, they don't have to be part of the

same bargaining process, but they need to be in solidarity with each other and if that could happen, three quarters of the problems that you all bring to this circle would have a

chance of resolution," Lynd said.

ADJUNCT FACULTY
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Looking into Alternatives: YSU Reallocates Investment Portfolio

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Youngstown State University has decided to allocate \$5.5 million of its nonendowment assets into alternative investments.

Alternative investments consist of a broad range of assets that do not fit into the traditional classifications of stocks, bonds and cash. Common types of alternative investments include hedge funds, real estate and commodities.

\$2 million is being invested in the Wells Fargo Absolute Return fund, \$2 million is being invested in the Diamond Hill Long-Short Fund and the remaining \$1.5 million is being invested in the Voya Global Real Estate Index.

\$4 million of the money being moved into alternatives was previously invested in short-term bonds, while the other \$1.5 million was invested in long-term bonds.

Neal McNally, interim vice president for finance and administration at YSU, said the \$62,970,000 that the university has invested is the accumulation of prior year-

ending balances. The money is used as a buffer or reserve fund for the university in case of emergency.

Hartland and Co., the investment firm that handles the university's assets, suggested the change.

The investment plan they presented to the university's Board of Trustees states that alternative investments provide an opportunity to target improved returns over bonds while assuming less risk than if the money were invested in stocks. It also states that there is low correlation between alternative investments and other asset classes, which results in better diversification.

Stocks offer a projected return of 10 percent and a projected risk of 15 percent. Projected returns for bond markets range from 2.4 percent to 2.6 percent while the projected risks range from 1.9 percent to 3.2 percent. Alternative investments fall somewhere in the middle with a projected return of 4.3 percent and a projected risk of 5.5 percent.

The university is currently seeing between \$700,000 and \$1 million in returns on investments in any given year.

Alternative investments are also less liquid than other asset classes, which means they cannot be easily turned into cash in the short-term.

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GAMERGATE COMES TO LIFE AT YSU

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Twenty-five minutes into her presentation at Youngstown State University on Friday night, Brianna Wu, head of development at the video game company Giant SpaceKat, began to tear up.

The harassment began after multiple women in the video game industry became the targets for organized misogynist attacks from sites such as 4chan, 8chan, Reddit and Twitter after expressing their dislike of how women were treated and portrayed in video games and throughout the industry.

The Internet argument, known as GamerGate, spread through the media like wildfire, with Wu bearing the torch and appearing to publicize the scandal on multiple platforms. CNN, Bloomberg and other major news networks spoke with her concerning the conflict.

Wu came to YSU to speak to the students, sharing experiences, tweets and videos, which served as explicit evidence of the harassment at the center of the controversy. She wanted the audience to know what it feels like to be sent rape, death and bomb threats just for wanting to do their jobs well.

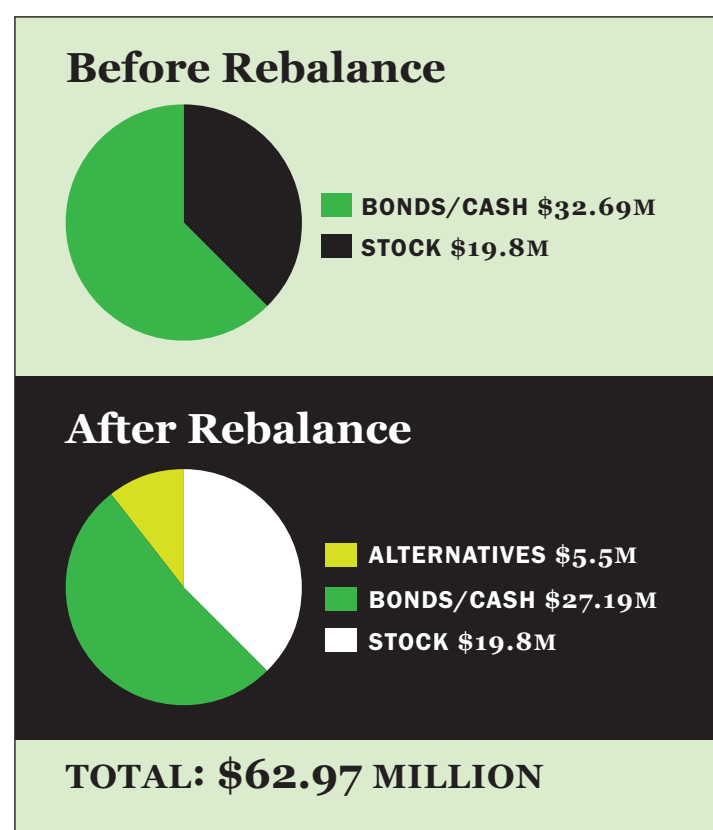
According to Wu, around half of all American women play video games, and what they want isn't brutality or sex; they want "stories instead of mindless violence and sports."

"I don't want to take away anyone else's games, I just want to make new things. Women are usually portrayed as damsels in distress, they always have been," Wu said. "If you're a dude playing a game, here, enjoy this sexualized woman as your prize ... you're the king. ... [There can be] sexy characters, but they're people. The camera [doesn't always have to] focus on her butt or her boobs."

Wu is one of the many women in today's gaming industry, ranging from developers to game journalists, who experience a violent form of cyber bullying that some relate to being closer to domestic terrorism.

She reports having multiple death and rape threats sent to

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GRAPHIC BY STACY RUBINIC/THE JAMBAR.

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YSU CONNECTIONS REKINDLED

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An alumni group based out of Phoenix, Arizona will be meeting with Youngstown State University Board of Trustees members Carole Weimer, Delores Crawford and Ted Roberts this upcoming April at the Sierra Bonita Grill to talk about trusteeship.

The Phoenix Alumni Group is a chapter of YSU alumni in Phoenix, Arizona that began in 2001 from founders Renny Domini, Ed Stizza, Art McGaffic, Andy Conti and Jim Reed.

Elaine Timmins, YSU alumna and Phoenix Alumni Group leader, said that the members would attend a dinner in honor of the National Conference on Trusteeship that will take place at the Arizona Biltmore, a resort in Phoenix.

Mollie Hartup, assistant director of alumni relations at YSU, said that she saw an opportunity for connection between YSU and their alumni through this event.

"The Arizona alumni group typically meets three times a year. When the group learned that members of the YSU Board of Trustees would be in Phoenix this spring, the alumni decided this would be a wonderful reason to get together for an April dinner," Hartup said. "This will not be the first time that direct collaboration has been made between faculty at YSU and alumni in Phoenix. In January of 2012 YSU's then president Cynthia Anderson was a special guest at the Arizona Alumni Winter Dinner."

Timmins said that collaboration concerning the event has been underway since February.

"I was originally approached by Mollie Hartup in the YSU Alumni Office in February about the possibility of our group scheduling our first event of the year

on that Monday. I then contacted the members by e-mail to see who was interested in attending the dinner with the trustees," Timmins said. "The event has been well received and anticipated."

Hartup said that the event would offer benefits for those in attendance as well as opportunities for future students at YSU.

"Events organized by the Arizona alumni group offer social and networking benefits to those who attend. Gatherings offer opportunities for alumni living in the greater Phoenix area to meet fellow Penguins. Members pay annual dues of \$20 to the local independent Arizona alumni group, which are used to fund scholarships for YSU students. In its 15 year history, the group has awarded five scholarships," Hartup said.

Timmins also clarified information about the annual dues.

"Our association uses our \$20 annual dues for \$2,000 scholarships for family members who attend YSU. There is a scholarship committee who selects the recipients from students who submit a scholarship request form," Timmins said.

Timmins said that the group has continued to grow over the years and is expecting new members from the dinner.

"The Arizona chapter has been around since 2001 when Renny Domini, Ed Stizza, Art McGaffic, Andy Conti and Jim Reed decided to start the group in the Phoenix area. They contacted YSU alumni from lists provided by the Alumni Office, and the original chapter started out with 16 members," Timmins said. "Since then, we have grown to as many as 50 members, with the current membership around 40 individuals. We have several new members who will be attending the April 20 dinner."

Hartup added how wonderful the group is doing.

"The Arizona alumni group does a wonderful job of organizing its own events throughout the year. Un-

der the leadership of YSU alumna Elaine Timmins," Hartup said.

Timmins also noted why someone from the Youngstown area would venture to Phoenix.

"I would have to say that our great weather and job opportunities attract alumni to Phoenix. Some also had relatives here and decided to move here to be closer to family," Timmins said.

One of the alumni who had previously helped the Phoenix group was Loraine McPhillips.

"Loraine McPhillips was very instrumental in organizing dinners and raffles and writing the newsletter. Loraine has since moved back to Youngstown last year, and she is greatly missed by our association," Timmins said.

Even with the departure of McPhillips, the Phoenix Alumni Group is expanding and striving to create more events for its members.

"We are always looking at adding other events that may be of interest to alumni, such as baseball games, horse racing, wine tasting, museum tours and lunch, casino days and boat cruises on area lakes," Timmins said.

Timmins said that she, along with the alumni group, is excited to hear from the trustees.

"The response from our group has been overwhelming with 35 members attending the dinner with the three trustees," Timmins said. "Our group will be very interested to hear from the trustees about the latest developments at YSU. It should be a wonderful evening of good food and great conversation."

Hartup expressed how she said she feels the event would positively impact the alumni group.

"The event was designed to allow the YSU trustees to meet this group of active alumni who collectively form the longest running and most philanthropic YSU alumni group," Hartup said. "Alumni out west are looking forward to meeting the trustees and hearing the latest updates about what is happening at YSU."

Going Global After Graduation

LAUREN FOOTE

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Youngstown State University will host the largest career fair in the school's history on March 31 — offering students access to opportunities in a variety of fields. Among these opportunities is one that perhaps students may not have otherwise considered — the opportunity to join the Peace Corps.

The Peace Corps is a volunteer program run by the United States government. Their stated mission is to provide technical assistance, help people outside the United States to understand American culture and help Americans to understand the cultures of other countries. The work is generally related to social and economic development.

Peace Corps volunteers work with governments, schools, nonprofit organizations, nongovernment organizations and entrepreneurs in education, hunger, business, information technology, agriculture and the environment. After 24 months of service, volunteers can request an extension of service.

There will be a Peace Corps representative at YSU's upcoming career fair who will broadcast to students the benefits of joining the organization.

Annabel Khouri, a representative for the Peace Corps, is in constant contact with YSU students and encourages students who feel a connection with service and development to apply. She said that she believes all students, from any major or background, can get something out of the opportunity.

"I served as a Peace Corps

volunteer in Kenya and it remains one of the most memorable, challenging and rewarding experiences of my life," Khouri said.

Volunteers receive language, cross-cultural and technical training. The Peace Corps also provides travel and living expenses as well as health insurance and vacation time.

Certain student loans may be eligible for deferment depending upon how long a person is part of the corps. There can also be a "re-adjustment" allowance of more than \$8,000 (pre-tax) upon completion of service.

There are also unique graduate school opportunities associated with the Peace Corps. They provide transition, job support and social networking to volunteers after service. Also, if undecided on a further course of action, there are opportunities for short-term assignments through Peace Corps Response.

All majors are welcome to apply for Peace Corps positions in education, health, community economic development, youth in development, agriculture and environment. Some students will gain skills through their course work and may be more competitive as a result. Education, public health, social work, environmental studies and business nicely align with the corps' current needs.

"Our strongest applicants have community service, internship and leadership experience. Teaching, tutoring and mentoring are great skills for Peace Corps," Khouri said. "We also welcome those with second language skills, particularly French and Spanish, though we have several open positions that have no language requirements."

California Workers' Comp Law Gets Criticism, Praise at Senate Hearing

Some hearing witnesses say the 2012 reform law had "unintended consequences," prompting insurers to deny medical care and doctors to leave the system.

MICHAEL GRABELL

ProPublica

An architect of California's recent workers' comp reform testified Wednesday that the law was being misused by insurers and that the system may need to be streamlined to make it fairer for injured workers.

In remarks before a senate committee, Angie Wei of the California Labor Federation said the state needs to crack down on insurers using the law as an excuse to deny medical care and eliminate some of the layers of medical review that give employers and insurers multiple chances to overrule workers' doctors.

Several reforms of the state's workers' comp system over the years have given insurers more control over workers' medical treatments, she said.

Insurers can steer workers to certain doctors by setting up medical provider networks. But if they don't agree with these doctors' recommendations, they can pick outside doctors to review them, Wei said. Then, under a system set up by the new law, if injured workers challenge the decisions of the outside doctors, the disputes are sent for a final review by an anonymous doctor picked by a state contractor. These reviews have upheld nearly all the insurers' medical care denials.

"Why should the employers and insurers get another bite at the apple that increases friction and drives up costs and delays for everybody?" asked Wei, who negotiated the law with business representatives.

Wei's comments came as part of the California senate's first oversight hearing on the contentious 2012 workers' comp law. The legislation sought to restore some benefits that had been severely cut years before and to speed

up the system by moving decisions over medical disputes from judges to doctors. Costs would be controlled by reducing infighting and waste.

But earlier this month, ProPublica and NPR reported that some insurers were using the new law to reassess medical care that had been approved years before. In one case, a paralyzed warehouse manager had his home health care terminated, leaving him for hours at a time with no one to help him.

The investigation by ProPublica and NPR found that California is one of more than 30 states since 2003 that have cut benefits, created hurdles to getting medical care, or made it harder to qualify for workers' comp.

During the hearing before the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee, testimony about the law's impact fell largely along expected lines. Insurer representatives said the law is working as intended. Employers complained that administrative costs are still too high. Workers' lawyers said the new medical reviews were denying injured workers vital care.

But some testimony highlighted unexpected ramifications of the law. Dr. Brendan Morley, a pain specialist who heads the California Society of Industrial Medicine and Surgery—an organization of physicians who treat injured workers—said doctors have become increasingly frustrated as their recommended treatments are rejected during the review process.

"Not all reform is good reform, and there can be unintended consequences," he said, citing ProPublica and NPR's investigation. "This is driving a lot of good physicians out of the workers' comp system."

State officials and other hearing witnesses defended the law as a necessary fix to a system that had become dysfunctional and expensive.

"It is not perfect, but it is certainly better than it was before," said Christine Baker, director of the state's Department of Industrial Relations, which oversees workers' comp.

Last week, in response to our story, the workers' comp agency warned insurance companies not to use the new law to deny approved home health care. It has also launched an audit of the insurer that removed the paralyzed worker's aide.

Data presented at the hearing by the state and by the California Workers' Compensation Institute, an insurance research group, showed that most medical care is getting approved. But when disputes reach the final stage, the new medical reviewers are upholding insurance company denials about 90 percent of the time.

Alex Swedlow of the research institute said that means doctors hired by the insurers "got it right." He added that most of the review requests are coming from a small number of physicians.

But Bernardo de la Torre, an attorney for injured workers, said the data distorts the picture because the overwhelming majority of claims involve minor injuries, which involve routine, inexpensive treatment. He said the claims that often end up in disputes involve the most serious—and typically more costly—injuries.

The data, he said, proves the new review process is merely a "rubber stamp" for insurer decisions.

Wei said that while nearly every other player in workers' comp took a hit during the recent reform, insurers were left unscathed.

"I think it's time," she said, "to really zone in on the insurance company industry and to understand what it is that they're doing to affect the plight of injured workers."

NPR correspondent Howard Berkes contributed to this report.

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NEWS BRIEFS

YSU Sophomore Wins
Award from Harvard
National Model UN
Conference

Abigail Kovacs, a Youngstown State University sophomore majoring in the foreign affairs track in political science, has received a verbal recognition award at the Harvard National Model United Nations conference. This conference, held annually in Boston, Massachusetts, brings together more than 3,000 delegates from over 70 different countries to discuss matters that pertain to the entire globe. Kovacs, who represented the Republic of Kenya at the conference, has won 13 awards and attended over 20 conferences since middle school. She is also one of only two YSU students to ever win an award at this conference.

YSU Enactus Wins
Grant and Donates
to Beatitude House

Youngstown State University student entrepreneurship group Enactus won a \$1,500 grant and decided to use that money to donate four computers to the Beatitude House, in Youngstown. The Beatitude House is a nonprofit nondenominational corporation of the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown that addresses the needs of disadvantaged women and children. Presentation of the computers will be at the Beatitude House at 287 Lora Ave in Youngstown, and will start at 3:45 p.m. on Wednesday April 1.

QUEST Student
Scholarship Holds
Annual Forum April 7

Youngstown State University's annual QUEST Forum for Student Scholarship will be held on Tuesday, April 7, with sessions running throughout YSU's Kilcawley Center, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and last until 5 p.m. Nearly 400 students will present research on a range of topics, and awards will be given in different categories, including Best Undergraduate Project and Best Graduate Project. This event is free and open to the public. For more information on the program and the presentations, visit http://www.ysu.edu:8080/quest/?page=presenter_info or on Twitter @Ysu_Quest.



Part-Time Faculty at YSU

Lynd read from YSU's department of communications manual, which had been revised as of July 2010.

"I've been trying to give myself a crash course on working conditions for part-time faculty at Youngstown State University and Kent State-Trumbull branch. I have tried to rely on primary sources. For example, I've been told by knowledgeable persons that the rate of pay here at Youngstown State University has not changed for 17, 18, 20, or tonight, 25 years," Lynd said.

According to page six of the university department of communications manual, part-time faculty will teach no more than six workload hours in one semester. The rate of pay is \$800 per workload hour for a person with a master's degree.

The maximum annual salary for a part-time faculty member at YSU with a PhD is \$12,600.

"Of course, money only begins to describe the separate and unequal status of a part-time member of the YSU faculty. The manual states in an introductory note, 'Welcome, we are happy to have you with us. I hope you feel at home here.' For you — as for employees at Wal-Mart or Starbucks — insecurity of employment, the absence of a firm future schedule on which you can rely appears to be a grievance as weighty as your miserly rate of pay," Lynd said. "I have spoken with adjuncts at YSU who say that they may not know what they will be expected to teach a few days, or even a few hours before the semester begins."

Lynd said that the Ohio Revised Code states, "Employees of a public employer are public employees except for various categories of workers that explicitly exclude them, among them, part-time faculty members of an institution of higher education."

This code causes many of the problems for adjunct professors.

"Since part-time faculty members at Youngstown State University and Kent State University are not public employees under the law for this purpose, where does this leave us?" Lynd said. "The answer is, it seems to me, that you are in the same situation as were American workers, until the mid 1930s, were. Nothing protects you if you take dramatic direct action, but nothing forbids you either."

Though there is nothing legally barring part-time faculty from forming their own union, it is a risk and would likely require the assistance of full-time faculty.

"It's disgraceful what this university permits to happen to part-time employees and all we need to do to cure that disgrace is to agree to do it. The essential principal that one glimpses in the early 1930s is simply solidarity, the need to rely on the spark that leaps from person to person, especially in times of crisis," Lynd said.

YSU Reacts

Students and faculty members were attentive to the lecture and participated in open conversation with Lynd. Bill Brophy, a part-time instructor in the telecommunications department, said that he is inspired to see support of adjunct faculty members.

"It's really encouraging to see full-time faculty at a meeting like this and show solidarity, and to see somebody like Staughton Lynd be here, and other union members who have been through some of these fights that we were taking a look at," Brophy said. "One of the things that I think is encouraging ... we may get our asses fired, but we are not alone. ... We are beginning to build, I believe, that solidarity, not only with our fellow employees, but with some people outside of the community. I think that is very encouraging for those of us who are trying to improve our situation here at Youngstown State."

Thomas Sabatini, a part-time faculty member in the department of history, said adjunct faculty members are afraid to voice their opinions because there is limited protection from the law.

"We're terrified as a group because we have no power, and our safety net is about a piece of dental floss," Sabatini said.

Johanna Slivinske, a part-time faculty member in the department of social work, also spoke on the issue of fair representation for adjunct faculty members at the university.

"I know that it is a fear and that it is a risk, but sometimes taking a risk is worth it. I feel better already taking the risk and I think most of us do," Slivinske said. "I have taught here for about 11 years. I think it's time for a raise. I think it's time for an increase. We do a lot of good work. We're hard workers."

Lynd concluded his suggestion of solidarity would allow adjunct faculty to overcome these working conditions. He gave his encouragement to the audience.

"It follows that the only realistic way to try to deal with such common problems is to act together," Lynd said.

McNally said it's worth pursuing alternatives in an attempt to increase revenues to the university.

It's not an uncommon approach among higher-education institutions. A 2014 study conducted by the National Association of College and University Business Officers looked at 832 colleges and universities and found that on average 51 percent of a university's assets were invested in alternative investments.

McNally emphasized that YSU is taking a conservative approach, with the \$5.5 million comprising 10 percent of the university's investments. They will look at the returns over the next few years and decide whether to increase the amount allocated to alternative investments or to dial it back.

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YSU Lacking LGBT Center

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When it comes to addressing the needs and concerns of the LGBT community, Youngstown State University may be falling behind.

Schools such as Kent State University, Ohio University and Bowling Green State University have dedicated institutionalized LGBT centers for the recognition and support of the LGBT community. The development of such a center has not yet occurred at YSU.

Dedicated LGBT centers often offer students a variety of different services and support, including faculty support, student advocacy, alumni relations and public relations with the greater community, especially in times of crisis. Also a dedicated center could offer psychological counseling, specifically for individuals struggling with their sexual and gender identities.

Currently YSU has a Center for Student Diversity to cater to all different groups facing adversities. William

Blake, the center's director, feels this isn't enough.

"We need to really diversify ourselves, because we call ourselves being very much connected to the community here in Youngstown and in the United States and we have to be connected with them by making available specified services to cater to the different groups," Blake said.

Recently, YSU has experienced financial hardship. Both Carrie Anderson, assistant director of student activities, and Sylvia Imler, interim director of diversity and multicultural affairs, feel it is important to have an institutionalized LGBT center amongst other centers but said there just isn't any money to fund such institutions.

Blake disagreed, indicating that he feels it is necessary to serve the students and its many diversified groups, regardless of finances.

"If they thought it was important and they value diversity, the university would find a way to get funds to make different diversity services available, serving our students should be a priority regardless," Blake said.

YSUnity is YSU's LGBTQIA resource. YSUnity is a student run organization overseen by staff advisers with an office located in Kilcawley. YSUnity plays a very active roll in making the LGBT community noticed on

campus, but Blake said they could be doing more.

"The squeaky wheel gets the grease. Activism is very important in terms of helping people to understand the need to address the issues of that population of students," Blake said. "If our students were a little more vocal, visible and continued to press the issue of the need for a center then that might be something that the university might give more attention to."

Tim Bortner, YSUnity's student president, feels that the organization is doing what it can to make students, staff and the community aware of the LGBT community on campus.

"YSUnity can push for stuff like that [LGBT center] but they have the final decision, and we have to wait to see what happens," Bortner said.

YSUnity has the full support of the Student Activities Center as well as the Student Diversity Center. Bortner expressed appreciation for these campus centers, especially due to the fact that he doesn't see an institutionalized center being placed on campus any time soon.

"I think its bad that we don't have a resource center, and I don't think we will see one in the next three to five years, but we have a lot of other resources on campus that we can use and support us a lot," Bortner said.

TREVOR NOAH TO BE JON STEWART'S 'THE DAILY SHOW' REPLACEMENT

MEREDITH BLAKE
JULIE WESTFALL
Los Angeles Times
(TNS)

and most importantly, is wickedly funny," said Comedy Central president Michele Ganeless in a statement, noting that he would bring "a fresh voice" to the satirical news show.

Noah, a biracial South African who grew up in Johannesburg's Soweto township, was a surprise pick. Though he has hosted his own program, "Tonight with Trevor Noah," in his native country, the comedian joined "The Daily Show" as a contributor only in December and his name had not been among those floated in the press as a possible successor to Stewart until recently. One of the show's behind-the-scenes podcasts features an interview

with Noah.

"It's an honor to follow Jon Stewart. He and the team at 'The Daily Show' have created an incredible show whose impact is felt all over the world," said Noah in a statement from Comedy Central. "In my brief time with the show they've made me feel so welcome. I'm excited to get started and work with such a fantastic group of people."

Noah will also bring further diversity to late-night TV — and to Comedy Central. "The Nightly Show," hosted by African American comedian Larry Wilmore, premiered in January in the 11:30 slot vacated by "The Colbert Report."

In a tweet Monday, comedian Chris Rock — who some had hoped might step in as Stewart's replacement — thanked President Obama for Noah's hiring, presumably because both men are biracial and share powerful personal biographies.

As reported by the New York Times, which first broke the news of Stewart's replacement on Monday, Noah was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother, a relationship that was illegal under apartheid.

Noah is the subject of a documentary, "You Laugh But It's True," currently available on Netflix, and rose to interna-

tional attention in 2012 following a sold-out show, "The Racist," at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, a famed launching pad for comedy talent.

Noah also joins a growing list of internationally born late-night hosts that includes "The Daily Show" alum John Oliver, who now hosts "Last Week Tonight" for HBO, and James Corden, who made his debut as host of "The Late Late Show" on CBS last week. Both are British.

Stewart, 52, announced in February that he would be leaving the show after 16 years at its host. The show premiered in 1996 under then-host Craig Kilborn.

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This Film Festival is No Joke



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEFAN / FLICKR. "ABGEWICKELT, ENTWICKELT" CC BY 2.0

BILLY LUDT

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Youngstown State University students will be showing independently shot films this Wednesday as part of the April Fools Film Festival.

The April Fools Film Festival will take place Wednesday at the recital hall located in Bliss Hall. The event is open to the public and will run from 7 p.m. until all films are shown.

Bill Brophy is an adjunct faculty member and the technological coordinator in the

communications department at YSU. He conceived the event in hopes of garnering participation from telecommunication and art students in creating independently filmed movies.

"We're trying to stimulate and get something started to encourage independent film developers on campus," Brophy said. "Right now our department isn't geared toward that kind of single camera work."

The April Fools Film Festival's entries are filmed with a central idea, which Brophy also came up with: "it started with a joke."

"What I'm really looking

for is almost anybody who is interested in making films on campus and can show it," Brophy said. "Some pranks aren't so much fun. It could be more than just comedy."

Brophy hopes that the film festival will become a yearly event and eventually involve telecommunication programs in surrounding technical and high schools.

Awards for the films shown will be refurbished bowling trophies because, as Brophy put it, it's April Fools Day.

"If somebody has a film they shot on campus, come on down and we'll take a look at

it," Brophy said.

Jim Stickel is a senior telecommunication major at YSU and will be attending the April Fools Film Festival.

"Nowadays anybody can get a camera and go out and film something," Stickel said. "It will be interesting to see the turnout and people who share that interest. Hopefully it got out and people across campus are joining or showing something there"

Stickel, formerly a member of the YSU Film Club, directs the YouTube series "Relatively," and also filmed "The Story of Pete the Snow Penguin," a

crossover short about YSU's flightless avian mascot.

"It's nice to have a theme to play off of," Stickel said. "It might be intimidating if you have to come up with something yourself."

Courtney Kensinger, a fourth year telecommunication student, is submitting a medical commercial spoof about celiac disease to the April Fools Film Festival.

"Small events like this are really neat," Kensinger said. "We absolutely need more of them around campus. We have screenings of things, but no movie festivals."

GAMERGATE
PAGE 1



PHOTO BY GABRIELLE FELLOWS/JAMBAR.

her daily online, ranging from mundane insults to outright explicit threats of bodily harm. Her address has also been plastered all over the Internet, as groups of people claim that they're organizing to kill her.

While a large portion of society supports Wu and the other women who are fighting for feminism in the gaming community, there is a sizable and more highly vocal portion of people who believe GamerGate is a stupid, useless plea for attention — a way to turn victimization into profit.

After she finished her presentation, Wu opened the floor up for questions, and a young man in the front row raised his hand and began criticizing her message. When Wu asked if he had a question or was just going to go on a rant, he said he wished her to speak on the positive impacts GamerGate

has had on women.

Wu laughed, spat out a furious "seriously?!" and continued on. The man got up, said a few choice words and angrily stormed out; the police were not far behind. The young man left his bag in the center aisle, which Wu eventually had removed, explaining that she's received many bomb threats and has a bit of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as a result.

So, why are so many people in all different parts of the world mad at Wu and other women in the gaming industry? What is it about the gaming industry in particular that generates this kind of vitriolic discourse? As a girl who would possibly pursue a career in the gaming journalism field, this piqued my interest.

I sent out a tweet directed at Brianna Wu that night that read something along

the lines of: "So glad to hear @SpaceKatGal talk about #GamerGate at YSU! What a great inspiration. #girlsfor-girls."

After the first reply to my tweet from a random stranger telling me that "there were way better role models in the tech & gaming industry" and that "she's an internet troll and victim," I deleted the post. Three more tweets coming from the same person and multiple favorites and retweets later, I realized how serious the Internet was about GamerGate.

My tweet was benign and my responses bland as well, yet it still elicited responses from random critics from the web. Their responses ranged from mild disinterest in my opinion to annoyance at my sentiment. Scouring the Internet's social networks, I found that Twitter, as well as Facebook, Instagram and

Reddit, were filled with hate coming from both sides — from GamerGaters and their critics alike.

Hate on the Internet isn't just about GamerGate either. Any semi-recognizable social figure who has a following on any social media site gets an extreme amount of comments from random people spewing out detestable words in their direction, for seemingly no reason.

GamerGate is the hate filled controversy that is in the spotlight at the moment because the gaming generation is the one that grew up with technology. Abhorrent feelings for major and minor celebrities and companies have always existed, but with today's technology, it gets personal. Everything is just a click away.

In years past, if someone felt a strong hate toward something or someone, they

would have to work to get their voice heard. They would have to express their opinion strongly enough to rally other individuals to work with them and possibly use a petition to get anyone to pay attention to them. Agents of change relied on work and perseverance, not hashtags and Facebook likes, to send a message. The bar for what messages deserve adoption by the public has been drastically lowered thanks to the Internet.

Today's culture makes it easy to threaten someone behind a computer screen. It makes it easy to get caught up in an emotional outrage and lash out.

It also makes it hard to realize that what you're saying and doing goes straight to another individual sitting at the other end.

Would you go up to somebody with a crowbar and explain how you were going to rape him or her with it? How about calling someone on the phone and telling him or her in detail how you were going to find them and decapitate them?

These statements and ones of the like are said on the Internet all the time with no repercussions. But if the same threats were said face to face, the person in question would be considered a psychopath.

Maybe it's because you can't see the person you are insulting's face as you demoralize them, or maybe because it's unlikely that you'll be met with any legal ramifications for your actions. Both scenarios are cowardly and neither serves as justification for mistreating another human.

At a time when social media and technology have seemingly made our lives as human beings more malicious, maybe one needs to step back and consider that it could be the malice in our human nature shining through, amplified by the anonymous veil of the Internet.

EDITORIAL

NEWSBOOK: IS FACEBOOK THE NEW KING OF NEWS?

We will begin our editorial as the late David Carr ended one of his own, “the Facebook dog is loose, and he’s acting more friendly than hungry. But everyone knows that if the dog is big enough, he can lick you to death as well.”

Carr, in his column for the New York Times, “Facebook Offers Life Raft, but Publishers Are Wary,” was echoing the concerns of many media publishers about the behemoth that is Facebook — boasting 890 million daily active users as of December 2014 and the second-largest driver of Internet traffic.

Facebook is a massive resource for all media publishers worldwide. Sites like BuzzFeed and the New York Times are receiving fewer of their daily views internally, instead receiving clicks from articles shared to or by their social media followers — the New York Times reported a drop from approximately 160 million daily home page views in 2011 to 80 million in 2013 in an internal review.

Why would users feel the need to actively frequent more than a handful of media sites? Social media companies have long-boasted their ability to bring the daily diet of information to your figurative front door.

Facebook is such a force to be reckoned with that content drivers have moved away from search engine optimization and toward social media optimization over the past few years — dictating content based on what plays well on social media platforms. Hint: it is often bright, shiny and with a headline that reads something like “you would never believe what this duck did when it saw some bread.”

Facebook has proven proficient in this strategy, using targeted marketing more accurate than most drone strikes, newsfeeds tailored by democratic algorithms and well-designed user interfaces on both mobile and desktop.

Many publishers enjoy their relationship with Facebook — the platform drives views and views drive ad revenue — but their growing dependency on the platform is a protracted concern.

As many of the unnamed publishers said in Carr’s article, Facebook has their neck in a noose; they’ve just been gracious enough not to tighten it. Well, at least until now.

An ongoing problem for Facebook has been the news sites that its algorithms often link to. They are frequently clunky, ad-infested, click-baity Franken-sites that feast on clicks and appear high on newsfeeds. Their design is diametrically opposed to the suave, slick platform that Facebook aspires to be.

So how do you get around this issue? Stop relying on external sites to do their job and cut out that annoying middleman — begin hosting the content yourself. Facebook recently announced their intention to do just that with news content.

The New York Times reported last week what Carr predicted: Facebook is holding talks with half a dozen media companies about hosting news content natively on Facebook — a plan that the New York Times is amusingly a part of.

This furthers an internet-age monopoly.

Facebook has done something similar before by encouraging publishers to use their video platform instead of posting links to videos from their external sites. In addition, their algorithms prioritize content that uses their video player.

This move, first with video and now with news, turns them into a vampire of content — controlling the flow of news for monetary gain.

Of course, Facebook would give participating parties a slice of their revenue, which will undoubtedly boost bottom lines. This is also a boon to users in the short term, as it will be more user friendly and provide a more seamless route to a healthy news diet.

This is their power to control the flow of information.

Newspapers and networks like Fox News and MSNBC have made it their business to control the flow of information to indoctrinated viewers. Facebook is not quite so obviously

noxious. The issue is about latent potential, not active malice.

Facebook is not going to indulge in Orwellian-type censorship — as a typical millennial organization, they know there is no benefit in these types of machinations. In all likelihood, they will not dictate the type of content that the cooperating news organizations will create — instead allying themselves with content producers that reflect the news diet consumed by their user base.

Our fear is less focused on the cooperating parties and more on those who refuse this deal. Some will see the loss of autonomy as not worth the increase in revenue. They will not want to join this new kingdom, even if the king seems benevolent.

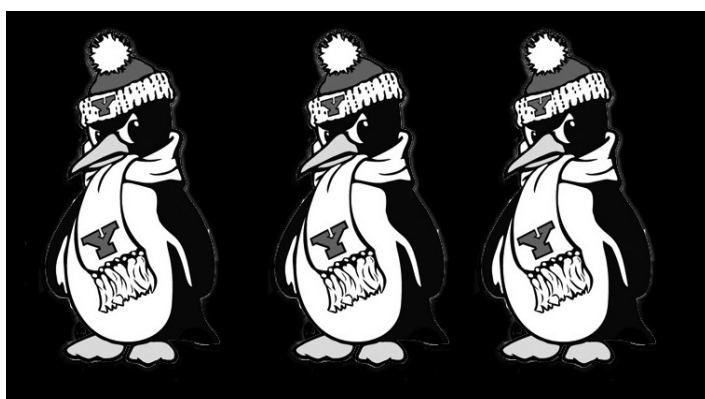
So what happens to them? It seems likely, by looking at Facebook’s video strategy, that their algorithm will give preference to native news content — damaging, intentionally or not, other news medias’ ability to promote their content on Facebook.

Any good capitalist would ask why doesn’t Facebook have the right to privilege its own content?

Facebook currently plays too large of a role in the dissemination of news and the success or failure of media outlets. These changes eerily parallel the net neutrality controversy; Facebook has the ability to give priority to affiliated content and good reason to do so.

Will Facebook become an empire with every news organization bending to their knees, hailing its reign because their other choice is death? We can safely say no. Will they change their algorithm to a less-democratic form? Maybe not. The point is not what they will do, but what they can do.

Facebook’s increasing role in information has been a concern for some time. This recent development will hopefully raise a few more red flags and remind people just because a king is giving free bread to the ducks every Thursday does not mean he can’t decide whether they live or die.



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Movie Review: ‘Home’ Not Worth Going Out For

COLIN COVERT
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)
(TNS)

For 15 years, Pixar and DreamWorks have been in an ongoing battle for animated entertainment. It was never like the rivalry of Coke vs. Pepsi — a feud between two ultimately similar types of sugar water — because there’s a clear winner in this taste battle every time.

While DreamWorks had several hits like “Shrek” and “Kung Fu Panda,” it aimed at safe mainstream work rather than unique, groundbreaking themes. Pixar is almost always artistically and creatively loftier, connecting with a more demanding audience.

After DreamWorks posted a massive \$247 million loss in February following the flop of “Penguins of Madagascar” (along with 500 staff layoffs, the sale of its California campus, and dropping several upcoming film releases) the studio needs to end its string of box-office disappointments. It hoped that its sole release this year, “Home,” could be a hit.

The studio’s latest is not a blockbuster but a depth bomb. With a stale story, blobby script, hodgepodge cast and needless 3-D design, it plays more like an overstretched short subject than a feature.

“Home” is an animated semi-sci-fi adventure about a bumbling alien race, technologically advanced but deeply timid, called the Boov. Though they resemble purple gumballs with octopus legs, they bear a suspicious resemblance to the little yellow Minions from “Despicable Me.” The aliens’ leader, Captain Smek (voiced by Steve Martin) leads them to colonize

planets where they can hide from the spooky looking alien life form the Gorg. Speaking in the pidgin English of comic aliens, Smek is the sort of haughty coward who always calls on his followers to “Run for my life!”

“Home” is based on author Adam Rex’s popular 2007 children’s book “The True Meaning of Smekday,” but has been much simplified and toned down to appeal to the youngest viewers possible.

The film begins as they view Earth for the first time. Liking what they see in the likes of New York and Paris, they send down flying vacuum cleaners to suck up the residents and move them to pleasant mini-cities far away in Australia, with huge amusement park Ferris wheels to keep the kids happy.

The film’s focal character is Oh, a lonely Boov whose presence triggers a bored sound-alike murmur from all his companions. Played by Jim Parsons (Sheldon on “Big Bang Theory”), Oh is a world-class schlub whatever world he occupies.

In his new homeland he tries to establish a relationship with 12-year-old Tip (Rihanna), a firebrand New Yorker looking for her mom (Jennifer Lopez). She gradually warms to the alien when he turns mother’s compact car into a hap-hazard plane and helps her shoot across the sky for her search. The Earthling-Boov connection grows when Oh begins shifting his shapeless booty to Tip’s collection of Rihanna-backed hit songs from her concept album for the film.

While it’s nice for a children’s film to have a girl-power protagonist, a stand-alone story makes it better. The upcoming Pixar film “Inside Out” promises that this summer, something doubtless worth waiting for. The bland “Home” is a crash pad at best.

'Remember Your Past Successes Rather Than Your Past Failures'

Baseball Head Coach Steve Gillispie Recaps First Half of Season



The Youngstown State University baseball team is 5-15 so far this season. Head coach Steve Gillispie thinks the team will become more consistent after members of the team recover from injuries in the next couple of weeks.

DAN HINER

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The Youngstown State University baseball team had high hopes heading into the season. After winning the 2014 Horizon League Championship, the Penguins believed their success in the tournament would transfer to the beginning of the 2015 season.

YSU is 5-15 this season and 1-8 in Horizon League competition. Head coach Steve Gillispie said the "inconsistency" with the schedule due to weather conditions translated to poor play on the field, but he doesn't consider that as an excuse for the team's performance.

"We've had a lot of irregularities with the weather and home series turn into road series, cancellations and single games become doubleheaders," he said. "Along with that there have been some

injuries that we're dealing with — some changes in the starting rotation, some changes in the lineup and some movement of some guys defensively from where we thought originally they might be the biggest factor."

Even though the team has gotten better over the last few seasons, Gillispie said he believes that there is still some room for improvement.

"All of that aside, we haven't played consistently in the small things of the game — pitching, defense, offense kind of things," Gillispie said. "We've had some really good moments and our numbers in some areas are even better than where they were last year, but bottom line is the record is still unacceptable. It isn't where we want it, where we need to be or where we want it to be."

The Penguins had to deal with injuries early in the season. Kevin Yarabinec was the team's best pitcher heading into the season. Yarabinec was 0-2 with a 4.70 ERA in three starts before leaving YSU's game against the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee on March 15.

"We hope to get him back in the next couple of weeks. We had to back him out of anything after the Milwaukee weekend that we played on the road. He hasn't pitched since then and we're hoping to get him back real soon," Gillispie said.

In Yarabinec's absence, Gillispie needed pitchers like Josh Fitch to step up in the bullpen to take stress of the starting pitchers.

"We have several guys — if you look at the numbers, we have a 2.5 ERA out of the bullpen with a .091 opponents' batting average with Josh Fitch. That's very good," Gillispie said. "We just have to have more opportunities to get to him late in the game. With some of the things, he's also been playing third base and [playing designated hitter] for us some. So it takes away from us the opportunities for him to pitch."

The pitching staff has been inconsistent this season. There have been several instances this season where the team has hit "rough spots" where the pitching staff was playing well, but one bad inning prevents the team from recuperating.

"There seems to be an inning or a four to five batter stretch that we're either not clean defensively or we'll walk a couple guys and we don't command the strike zone to well," Gillispie said. "Then it gets to the situation where a groundball could score a run or a sac fly or something like that — where we aren't necessarily giving up hits, but we're giving up runs because we haven't played the rest of the game to the best of our ability in those situations. It's just finding a way to eliminate those little bumps — those rough spots in the game. A six-run inning in the middle of the game could make it difficult to come back and win. We haven't been able to avoid enough big innings to make it something we could overcome."

One bright spot this season has been the play of center fielder Frank Califano. His .329 batting average and 10 RBI's lead the team. Califano has had a great season defensively as well. He hasn't committed an error in 20 games this season.

"He's a very good runner, he handles the bat well, he's able to get some base hit bunts and pressure the other team, steal some bases and he knows how to knock in runs when you get guys on third base," Gillispie said. "At times he's given away his at-bat to make sure he got the run in — he didn't try to hit a double off the wall, he just tried to get a groundball to get the run in. He's very productive that way and he knows how to play that way. He's been a real force defensively, too — [Califano's] made some really nice plays, ran some balls down. From an offensive side of things, the most positive thing we've had going from game one to game 20."

By comparison, the baseball team was 3-17 after the first 20 games last season. Gillispie reminds the players about their success at the end of the season last year and uses the championship as a tool to maintain morale.

"We talk continually about how you get into competitive situations or you get into the major points of a game, the spots where the game could go one way or another and the at bats are really big or the pitches to be made are really big. We are continually telling the guys to remember your past successes rather than remember your past failures in those situations," Gillispie said. "And with that, we hope to fall back on the positive things that have happened for us."

Softball Looks to Remain on Top

DAN HINER

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The Youngstown State University softball team will play in one of the most important series of the season. The Penguins will host Oakland University on April 1.

YSU is currently first in the Horizon League with a record of 10-12, 3-0 in conference play. Oakland is second in the Horizon League standings — 11-14 and 1-2 in the conference.

The Penguins were swept by Kent State University during YSU's last series on March 25. YSU lost both games of a double header against the Golden Flashes. The Penguins lost the first game 3-1. The Penguins cut the Kent State lead to 2-1 after a one-out walk by shortstop Katie Smallcomb was driven in by two hits from catcher Maria Lacatena and left fielder Sarah Dowd.

YSU lost the second game 5-1. The Penguins took a 1-0 lead during the second inning because of a triple by first baseman Miranda Castiglione. She was driven in after a groundout by freshman third baseman Stevie Taylor. Even after scoring first, the Penguins were unable to hold on to it. The Golden Flashes had a five-run third inning and the game was out of reach.

Statistically, the Penguins



Youngstown State University first baseman Miranda Castiglione has the second-highest batting average on the softball team; .353. Castiglione's 29 stolen bases ranks third in YSU softball history.

and the Grizzlies are almost exactly the same. Both teams have one of the top offenses in the conferences and both teams have pitchers who will play a big role in their team's success tomorrow.

Grizzlies' pitcher Erin Kownacki is the leader of one of the top pitching staffs in the conference. Kownacki is first in the Horizon League with a 7-6 record. Her nine complete games ranks

second in the conference. She is also tied for fifth in the Horizon League in strikeouts and earned run average.

The Penguins' pitching staff has been a team effort this season. The pitchers have a combined ERA of 5.13. Freshman pitcher Ashley Koziol has started nine games. She leads the team with four wins. Caitlyn Minney has been the best pitcher for the Penguins this season.

She leads the team with a 4.64 ERA and 3-5 record with four complete games in six starts.

YSU has scored the second most runs in the conference: 119. The Penguins are also third in the Horizon League with 105 RBIs.

The Penguins' offense will have to consistently score against Oakland. YSU's Castiglione leads the Penguins offense — .353 batting average

and 17 RBIs. Taylor is hitting .297 with 15 RBIs, and has been one of the most successful newcomers in the conference.

The game was originally scheduled for March 28 and 29, but was rescheduled for March 31 due to cold weather. The game was pushed back again on Monday.

First pitch is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on April 1 at the YSU Softball Complex.