



Popular Culture Scholars' Association Newsletter

Happy Spring from the PCSA!

Please join us the first Thursday of each month for the PCSA open meeting in East Hall room 101 from 5:30-7:30. This month, April 4, 2024, will be the last open meeting of the spring semester. It will also be our last meeting in East Hall before the American Cultural Studies department moves to Shatzel for a reunification of all the Critical and Cultural Studies programs, including the Popular Culture program.

In preparation of the efforts to be more unified, the Popular Culture Scholars' Association will be changing our name in the fall semester to the Ray Browne Association.

Through changing our name, we hope to bring together graduate students within the School of Cultural and Critical Studies and other students within the humanities. This change will also help avoid confusion between our organization and the Popular Culture Association (PCA).

Our mission is still to center the experiences of graduate students through professional development and community. Which is why the Ray Browne Conference will be returning next year. This conference focuses on graduate level presentations within cultural studies. Class Con will also be returning in 2025 as well!

Join

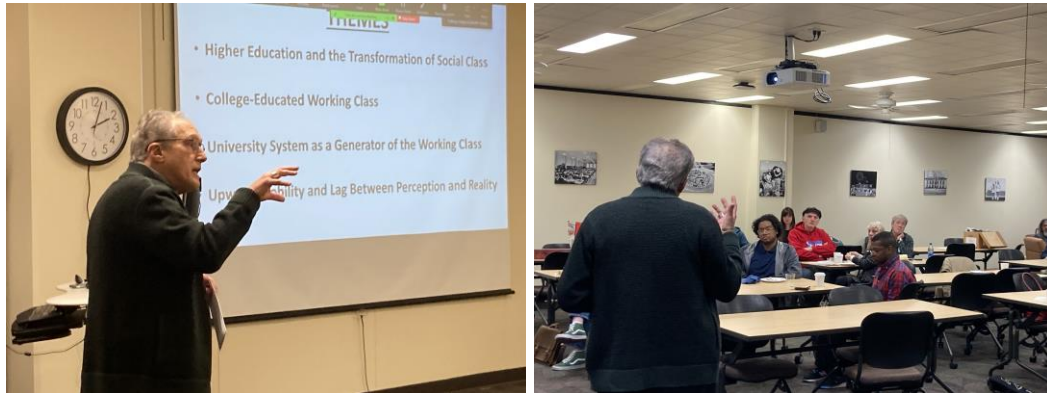
If you would like to be an official member of the Ray Browne Association (RBA) please send an email to pcsa@bgsu.edu or apply [here](#).

Class Con

Class Con 2024, *Approaching Academia: A Conference on Class Consciousness and Culture*, held on March 15th and 16th, in the Pallister Room of Jerome Library, was a complete success! We had over 100 attendees and over 30 presenters on topics including Academia, Comics, Film, Literature, Music, Politics, and Television, as well as guest speakers, roundtables and workshops.

A detailed list of presentations is available on the Class Con webpage [here](#).

Event Photos



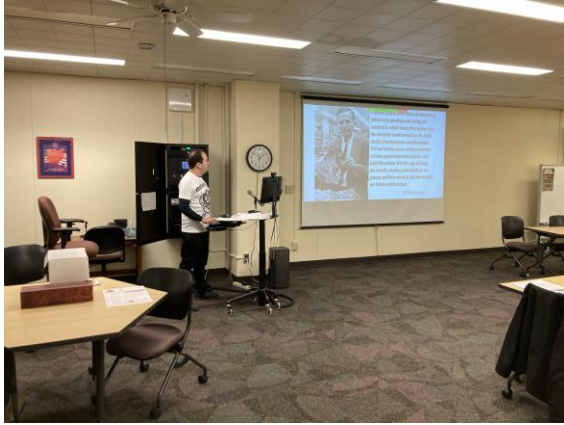
Keynote Speaker Gary Roth giving a talk on "The Educated Underclass"



BGSU Associate Dean Phil Dickinson speaking about the "Midwestern Erie."



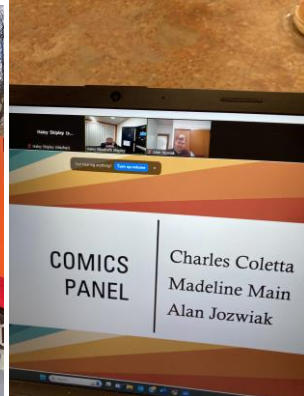
Indiana University Graduate organizers Zara Anwarzai and Anne Kavalerchik discussing graduate student bargaining.



BGSU Popular Culture professors Mathew Donahue and Jeremy Wallach.



Assistant Professor Zulfqar Hyder from the University College of the North in Northern Manitoba, Canada, and Class Con organizers Haley Shipley and Will Walton.



Editorial

While I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished of the last few years with Class Con as an outlet to discuss an important aspect of cultural studies that is often overlooked or even purposely avoided in academic settings, class issues are no less politically charged even within safe spaces such as Class Con.

During the opening speech at Class Con this year I spoke of the precarious footing the BGSU cultural studies programs find themselves in. This includes issues relating to a restructuring within the School of Cultural and Critical Studies resulting in CCS students losing directors and graduate coordinators. This is a hotly contested and often discussed situation within our halls, with each side seeing the situation differently. While discussing this I inadvertently seemed to take one side of the argument. I had mentioned that instead of our program celebrating our 50th anniversary, coordinators in “are resigning in shocking numbers.” But some see one side as not honoring work contracts and thus one is not resigning, but the administrative contract and position is thus voided, while others see it as moving closer in line with how other programs operate. Far be it from me to stand in the way of anyone who feels they are being unfairly treated by their employers, and yet I received some feedback that suggested that I was taking that standpoint.

My talk was an attempt at pointing out that a truly unique program, now entering its 50th year, is in peril due to administrative conflicts and university strategic choices, and it is the students, present and future, that will suffer in the long run. And I maintain that throughout this process students are mostly left out of the discussion. Students should be included in this process and should be encouraged to speak their mind about what is affecting them, and not chastised for having an opinion about it.

It also occurs to me that during this uncertain time and conflicting information about faculty contracts and compensation that the conversation of fair wages is not extended to graduate students. For many years graduate students have expressed the near impossibility of surviving on their wages, especially when 40% of those wages are returned to their employer in semester fees and insurance requirements. This could be a remarkable opportunity for faculty and students to support each other for fair compensation, instead of a time of division and resentment. Without students there would be no faculty, and without faculty there would be no students. We are all in this together, and we all need to support each other and work towards a sustainable environment where everyone thrives, and no one feels they are being taken advantage of.

John M. Mora King,

PCSA Co-President and ACS Graduate Student