Panel teaches ways to fight back against tide of fake news

Raymond Arke
news editor
Fake news. Alternative facts. Crooked media. Over the past year, these phrases have fixated themselves into everyday life.

The dangers these labels present and what they really mean took center stage at “Media Literacy and Battling Fake News,” a panel discussion sponsored by the Duquesne chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and the McNulty College of Liberal Arts. Moderated by Duquesne alum and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reporter, Julian Routh, the Jan. 23 panel featured Joshua Gillin, a staff writer for the Tampa Bay Times and former reporter for PolitiFact Florida, and Mila Sanina, executive editor for PublicSourcePA, an independent Pittsburgh media outlet.

Gillin had spent his time at PolitiFact directly combatting trending stories. “My job was to disprove false stories ... [and show] why they were false,” he said. He also contested the Trump administration and its supporters’ use of the phrase “fake news” against mainstream media sources, calling it “a deliberate attempt to delegitimze media outlets ... That is not the definition of fake news.”

Sanina agreed and explained that the retooling of the label is “Orwellian in its nature.” “It is an attempt to undermine the institution of the free press ... to put doubt in your mind,” she said.

Gillin said that the work of PolitiFact was “a deliberate attempt by a media outlet to deceive a consumer.”

These attempts to weaponize media outlets could be very dangerous, Sanina said. “The threat is real and it undermines reason and the value of truth,” she warned.

Sanina said she knows from experience what it is like in a country with no freedom of the press. “As someone born in the USSR, I can appreciate how difficult it is to live somewhere with no protections of the press,” she said. “There are places in this world where people die for truth.”
**POLICE BRIEFS**

Well, hello again, yinz. Grandpa PB has been buffeted at how the weather has been acting up, just as much as you kids are! But don’t worry, I’m still able to roll my wheel.

On Jan. 16, Duquesne Police responded to a Residence Life call at St. Ann for a marijuana violation. The officer was referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Somebody was getting wacky with the tabacky.

On Jan. 19, a university employee reported being harassed from a current relationship. It was referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX Office.

Talk about waking up on the weekend with a headache. On Jan. 20, Tah Ngjoi Yogo of Washington, PA was found semi-responsive and heavily intoxicated in his Vickroy dorm room. When Duquesne Police were assisting medical personnel in moving him to the medical vehicle, Yogo became combative and hit a Duquesne Police officer above the eye with his head. Yogo was taken to Mercy Hospital and treated for high alcohol levels. The officer was treated for a minor abrasion above the right eye. Yogo will be charged with assault and disorderly conduct. He will also be referred to the Office of Student Life.

Also on Jan. 20, a Duquesne student’s vehicle was damaged while it was parked on Bluff Street.

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March for Life draws more than 30 students

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New wheelchair lift not operational

RAYMOND ABBE
news editor

A new stair lift installed during Christmas break in College Hall will help disabled students more easily access the building — if the university makes it operational. The $40,000 lift has remained dormant since facilities installed it to the dismay of some students who are eagerly awaiting its assistance...

...I would cut my commute by 10 to 15 minutes, especially during inclement weather," said graduate student Grant Stoner, who uses a wheelchair due to spinal muscular atrophy Type 2. "I’m not upset at the university, but it is disappointing that it is here but I can’t use it."

It was unclear when the lift would be working but University officials did say that the lift was added after campus survey results indicated its need.

Rod Dobish, assistant vice president and chief facilities officer for Duquesne, said the lift was added after "a survey of College Hall indicated that there was a need to access the building’s upper floors internally from the Locust Street level without having to exit the building."

"College Hall has always been accessible from Locust Street into the first floor for access to all of the rooms on that level and from Academic Walk onto the second floor, which leads directly to the elevator lobby and the building’s four elevator cars," Dobish said.

Stoner, who is an A&E writer for The Duke, said Duquesne has always been mindful of his needs, but traversing College Hall has been challenging.

"Duquesne is very accommodating with moving classrooms. They have always moved classrooms if I needed it ... made events accessible," Stoner said.

Normally, if Stoner has class in College Hall, he has to take a convoluted route from Locust Garage through the Student Union and onto Academic Walk. The path between College Hall and the Student Union can sometimes be traver, but during bad weather it can be "troubling," Stoner said.

"Freshman year I had one class [on the first floor of College Hall] and one upstairs, and I was always 15 minutes late," he said.

see LIFT— page 12

Sports doc sentenced up to 175 years

AP — The former sports doctor who admitted molesting some of the nation’s top gymnasts for years under the guise of medical treatment was sentenced Wednesday to 40 to 175 years in prison by a judge who proudly told him, “I just signed your death warrant.”

The sentence capped a remarkable seven-day hearing in which more than 150 women and girls offered statements about being abused by Larry Nassar, a physician who was renowned for treating athletes at the “perfect place” for his crimes — the “rubber room” of Michigan State University’s sports medicine department.

“It is my honor and privilege to sentence you. You do not deserve to walk outside a prison ever again. You have done nothing to control those urges and anywhere you walk, destruction will occur to those most vulnerable,” Judge Rosemarie Aquilina said.

Nassar’s actions were “premeditated, calculated, manipulative, devious, despicable,” she said.

When the hearing ended, the courtroom broke into applause. Victims and prosecutors embraced at the conclusion of the six-month case.

But the anguish of the past week will have little, if any, practical effect on Nassar’s fate. Before serving the Michigan sentence, the 54-year-old must first serve a 60-year federal sentence for child pornography crimes. With credit for good behavior, he could complete that sentence in about 55 years. By then, he would be more than 100 years old if still alive.

He is also scheduled to be sentenced next week on more assault convictions in Eaton County, Michigan.

A prosecutor called Nassar “possibly the most prolific serial child sex abuser in history” and said competitive gymnastics provided the “perfect place” for his crimes because victims saw him as a “god.”

Prosecutor Angela Povilaitis also said Nassar “perfected a built-in excuse and defense” as a doctor, even though he was “performing hocus-pocus medicine.”

“It takes some kind of sick perversion to not only assault a child but to do so with her parent in the room, to do so while a lineup of eager young gymnasts waited,” Povilaitis said.

She urged people to believe young victims of sexual abuse no matter who they accuse and praised journalists, including those at The Indianapolis Star. The newspaper’s 2016 investigation of how the sport’s governing body handled sexual abuse allegations against coaches prompted a former gymnast to alert the paper to Nassar.

Although Nassar’s work with gymnasts received the most attention, the allegations against him spanned more than a dozen sports over 25 years.

At one point, Nassar turned to the courtroom gallery to make a brief statement, saying that the victims’ accounts had “shaken me to my core.”

Center of Catholic Faith plans project to create a network for scholars

CATHOLIC— from page 1

various fields: STEM, the arts, religion, international affairs and public policy, to name a few. In this case, it will fund numerous, ambitious initiatives led by Weaver and the Center of Catholic Faith and Culture.

According to Weaver, “The grant will be used to accomplish a number of goals: to develop a network of scholars and policy leaders to research religions and develop practices, strategies and methods for implementation in Catholic higher education.”

Additionally, Weaver said, “The grant money will support faculty work [particularly on issues like] migration, the environment, racism ... especially with a focus on the intersection of religion and race.”

"Catholicism & the Common Good," the name of the project, intends to shine light on the different factors that make up the Center of Catholic Faith and Culture and to make these resources “accessible to different audiences,” said Executive Director Public Good.

The project’s website offers a chance to donate a monetary gift to help “fulfill our mission,” the site said.

To learn more about the project, visit https://www.duquesnecommongood.org.
Women’s March on Washington: Saturdays are for the boys polls

Shivani Gosai
opinions editor

Last year, I was not able to attend the first Women’s March — the groundbreaking event that sparked an international movement — so I made it a point to attend this year.

When I arrived in D.C. the morning of the March, the sun was shining high and the air was warm with positivity.

The atmosphere wasn’t filled with anger or frustration, but rather hope and optimism. Strangers danced and laughed to the music while holding signs along with their owners.

A few pro-life supporters had set up in front of the White House with megaphones. Their rhetoric was not welcomed, but no fights or arguments broke out. Instead, protesters held their signs of peace in front of them and chanted, “My body, my choice,” to drown out their speeches.

Protest, a term with a more negative connotation, became the complete opposite of what you would traditionally expect. Women were not screaming and burning bras, and they were not destroying cars or government property.

The atmosphere wasn’t filled with anger and frustration, but rather hope and optimism. Strangers danced and laughed together. They sang along to “You’re So Vain” by Carly Simon and “Run the World” by Beyoncé. Women held hands and chanted.

It was surreal. There was no negativity. Just strangers uplifting others.

It was here when I realized how strong all of these strangers are and how much of an impact they make together. The same people who feel abused by our government are standing here resolute and proud, to show that we are not going to be silenced. It was a prominent message that even though they feel de-moralized, they will not let it affect them.

Everyone was here for the same purpose, to show solidarity and support for what they believe in. People were there to advocate for varying goals such as healthcare reform, immigration reform, reproductive rights, LGBT rights, environmental protection, racial equality and freedom of religion. The main goal for this year’s march was to encourage women (and everyone else) to vote. A major theme was women running for office and combating sexual harassment and unequal treatment in the workplace.

I was so impressed and emotional that I had to take a few minutes to just spectate. I was so grateful to be able to have this experience and be apart of a significant moment in history. To create change we have to experience and be apart of a significant moment in history. To create change we have to be part of it.

Lea Tolstoy

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

You just read it - Now tweet it: us your thoughts.

@TheDuquesneDuke

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Duquesne Duke is the student-written, student-managed newspaper of Duquesne University. It is published every Thursday during the academic year except during semester breaks and holidays, and prior to final exams. The Staff Editorial is based upon the opinions of the editors of The Duke and does not necessarily reflect the views of the students, faculty, administration, student government or the University publications board. Op-ed columns do not reflect the opinions of The Duke, but rather are the sole opinions of the columnists themselves.

Letters policy

Letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced and include the writer’s name, school/department and phone number for verification. Letters should be no longer than 300 words and should be delivered to The Duke office at 113 College Hall or e-mailed to theduqduke@gmail.com by 5 p.m. Tuesday. The editors reserve the right to edit any and all submitted copies. All letters must be verified before being published.

Correction/clarifications

Readers should report any story or photo error to The Duke. All legitimate errors will be corrected in print the following edition.

Contact

email theduqduke@gmail.com
New York Times gives voice to opposing views

KAILIE LOVE
photo editor

According to the New York Times editorial page, all we need to achieve progress in our country is the “vision, chutzpah and some testosterone” provided to us by the current administration.

In a compiled editorial series, the New York Times once again caught flack from many on the left for publishing a series of letters to the editor from Trump supporters across the country.

In the small paragraph preceding the string of letters, the Times stated that even though their editorial board “has been sharply critical of the Trump presidency,” they don’t believe these pieces are resonating with all readers. So, “in the spirit of open debate,” they published the editorial in hopes that liberal readers would better understand the reasoning of Trump voters and maybe find common ground.

However, as we saw with their “Nazis next door” piece, it did not go as well as they may have hoped.

James Warren of Poynter wrote, “The New York Times is in bed with Donald Trump! Or in the guest house out back,” in response to the letters piece. Jon Alloof of the Columbia Journalism Review called the editorial “patronizing” and further went on to say that publishing the letters was an “unnecessary stunt — more likely to remind Americans why they hate each other than to advance mutual understanding.” This isn’t even delving into the thousands of angry Tweets that clogged the Twittersphere upon the publication of the editorial.

Despite my own reservations about how the New York Times has conducted itself in its human-interest stories (dubbed “media safaris into Trump country” by Huffington Post reporter Ashley Feinberg in December) as well as my disagreements with the opinions expressed in the letters, I have to say it.

I understand what the New York Times is trying to do, and as a journalist, I agree with their decision.

Upon reading the letters, I came to several conclusions. Many of these letters were very focused on praising Trump’s policies and “victories” in the past year (“real pressure” on North Korea and Iran, the “defeat of ISIS,” the tax bill and immigration policies among them), and all of the letter writers seem perfectly pleased with his presidency.

Several people definitely didn’t support him for a few others, but there were a few that cited his tweets and overall character as unsettling or a bit unsatisfactory. One of the letters even referred to him as a “crude, rude and chauvinistic president,” but still said they believe he is effective in his presidency.

One of the letters that particularly struck me came from Ellen Mackler of New Haven, Connecticut. She said, “I thank my dear New York Times for asking to hear from Trump voters. It has been difficult to read the paper this year, in reference to their ‘anti-Trump’ coverage.” She then went on to describe the alienation she felt as an avid New York Times reader and Trump supporter, but closed with, “New York Times, I will always love you, despite our disagreement.”

We cannot deny that the media is under attack from the right who are trying to discredit them, and that those attacks have been successful. The Trump administration has singed out the press as an enemy of the public on multiple occasions, and a large amount of his base believe the same thing.

We criticize people on the right for turning to conservative outlets such as Fox News, but in reality, that is where they feel their voice is represented. Many of the opinions or analysis pieces in the New York Times and the Washington Post are often left leaning, because many in the media are often left leaning. And who could blame us when the Republican president is verbally attacking us on a daily basis and labeling us as an enemy? But also, how can we battle such a “fake news” if half of our country views us as a mouthpiece for the left only? How can we show them the facts if they refuse to believe them because of that?

You may not agree with how the New York Times is going about winning the affection of Trump voters, but I can’t blame them for trying.

For anyone who has chosen to go into journalism, it means putting aside biases and exploring all sides of an issue. First and foremost, we are journalists, and we are a voice for the people. And that doesn’t mean just the people that agree with us, that means every one. From a senator on the Hill to a farmer in Oklahoma, we represent everyone equally. It is time we remind people of that.

This means allowing someone who loves Trump to praise his “vision and chutzpah” even if we personally may not see it that way. I decided to pursue journalism because I wanted to tell other’s stories, and give a voice to the voiceless. No matter my own opinion, I am a journalist first. If somebody who voted for Trump wants to tell me what they think of his policies, it is my job as a journalist to listen to them. And I’m proud to do so.

Fighting this war on alternative facts is going to be arduous, but I believe that it’s just going to have to start with the simplest thing we as journalists do: listening.

Racially insensitive editorial from Post-Gazette receives backlash

The editorial, that happened to appear on Martin Luther King Day, has been condemned by 28 former employees claiming it to be racist, saying, “This is not the Post-Gazette we knew.”

Rachel Pierce
staff columnist

Imagine an editorial so offensive, the editor’s own family, friends and coworkers publicly criticize their work. This editorial was published right here in Pittsburgh.

On Jan. 15, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Editorial Board published an article titled “Reason as racism.” It opens by explaining that today’s McCarthyism is calling someone a racist. In other words, we are quick to accuse people of racism without evidence. Additionally, accusers are protected from an accusation themselves. It is argued that “calling the president a racist helps no one.” True, nobody will instantly agree with us, that means every one. For anyone who has chosen to go into journalism, it means putting aside biases and exploring all sides of an issue. First and foremost, we are journalists. According to The Incline, the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh cited the editorial as a “blight on the 231 years of service the Post-Gazette has provided its readers,” including its long fight against racism and for civil rights.

As for the ties to civil rights, the timing of the article adds an additional dimension. Its publication on Martin Luther King Jr. Day was seen as deliberate, although the Post-Gazette denies this accusation.

The Post-Gazette made a few mistakes surrounding this editorial. First, the piece was racially insensitive. The editors also seemingly forgot the goal of journalism; to expose the questionable and always true. Lastly, the decision to not publish letters to the editor fueled the growing frustration of ignorance.

It is intimidating to critique a highly respected newspaper. As a college journalist, it doesn’t feel like my place. At the same time, it doesn’t take an established journalist to do this. Journalists are simply the voice of the people.

Apart from the obvious ignorance and racism, the Post-Gazette has lost touch of the purpose of journalism. This editorial does not reflect the purpose of American journalism. Within the government, we have the three branches that check the power of one another so one branch does not overpower the others. But who checks government as a whole? Journalists check the power of the government and keep them in line.

Yes, journalists are entitled to their own opinion, whatever that may be. But to say, “So what?” to blatant racism in our government is to lose touch with the essence of journalism. The article encourages readers to look the other way, to disregard the president’s racist comments. To dismiss and ignore criticism is to lose touch with the essence of journalism.

The Professional Journalist Code of Ethics says that journalists should expose “questionable behavior,” even if it means within journalism. Journalism is finding the truth, and the truth cannot be found by forcing one view.

The damage is done, as for now the Post-Gazette can only hope that the community moves on from this piece as easily as our nation seems to move on from other “questionable behavior.”

Pictured above is Steven Sanabria of Oakdale, California. He wrote to NYT that Trump is “learning, adapting, and getting savvier everyday.”
Women's March awakens PGH feminism, calls for unity

Ollie Gratzinger
features editor

On an unseasonably warm Sunday morning, the streets of downtown Pittsburgh began to fill with a united and diverse crowd. The City that Always Sleeps had seemingly woken up.

The 2018 Pittsburgh Women's March began at 11 a.m. on Jan. 21 on the steps of the City County Building. Looking out upon a sea of pink hats and picket signs, speakers called for an increased presence of women in public office with a battle cry of “Power to the polls!”

Suzi Neft, who graduated from Duquesne University in 2016 with her master's in corporate communications, served as the public relations director for the March. As rewarding as organizing an even this size is, it was no easy task.

“The most challenging part was that there are some groups that are not in favor of women’s rights,” Neft said. “There are districts not in favor of the type of things we’re interested in pursuing. Making sure everyone can vote was really the main thrust of the event.”

Making sure everyone can vote, of course, and also insisting that they have the chance to vote for a woman.

“We need new blood,” Neft said. “We need more women in office. There are so few.”

One hope was that those who contested women's rights would be moved by the demonstrations of solidarity at the March in Pittsburgh and others around the world. Neft, however, was unsure that they were even watching. Still, she remained adamant that the best way to open the eyes of feminism’s opponents is through discussion and, ultimately, partnership.

“People often don’t want to [discuss women’s rights] in a peaceful way, but I don’t want to fight,” she said. “I want to be part of a peaceful discussion. Sometimes you don’t want to argue — you want to partner.”

The idea that cooperation is key — a theme echoed throughout the event — became especially apparent in the discussion of disability and accommodations.

In 2017, a woman protesting Medicaid cuts outside of Ohio Senator Rob Portman’s office was pushed out of her wheelchair by a Columbus police officer. That woman was Pittsburgh native Alisa Grishman, who addressed the Women’s March crowd in Market Square.

Grishman was nearly moved to tears as she told her story about voting accessibility at the polls — or rather, the lack thereof. Six states, Grishman recalled, do not have standards in place to protect and accommodate disabled voters. That’s more than 10 percent of the country, she reminded the crowd.

At her polling station, the ramp leading from the door collapsed shortly after Grishman used it. She’d also been met with ramps too steep for her chair, or voting stations too high for her to reach.

Listeners were urged to “report it,” if they should happen to come across anything at polling stations — or anywhere else — that violates the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Act prohibits discrimination against disabled individuals and requires public accommodations to be made.

“How can you guarantee that you won’t be disabled, come Election Day?” Grishman asked the crowd, and a poignant silence followed. She maintained that the adjustments allowing disabled individuals to vote in midterm elections this November are a question of human rights that affect anyone, anywhere.

As an eight-year veteran of poll worker training, Neft said that there’s no excuse for polling stations to lack reasonable accommodations for disabled voters such as Grishman.

“Take those voting machines out of the stands and put them in people’s laps so they can vote,” she said. “As a poll worker, I have access to those keys. I teach every last poll worker how to use an audio ballot. [Accommodation] can happen, and it can happen easily.”

Ray Linsenmayer, a Duquesne graduate and Democratic candidate in the running to become the US Representative for Pennsylvania’s 12th District, stressed that “all the diverse parts of society” contribute to a collective strength.

“I think that it’s important that people — you have, the hopes and dreams in what they want,” Linsenmayer said, speaking on the topic of the March’s significance. “I think that there’s so much divisive rhetoric, and people can feel like they’re by themselves. But when they come to events like this and see people being friendly with each other and carrying signs, they feel like they’re part of a movement.”

For as “inspiring and heartwarming” as the March was, Linsenmayer found it upsetting that it was still, unfortunately, a necessity.

“It is still astounding to me that in 2018, we are still out there fighting for women’s rights,” he said. “I have a two- and-a-half year old daughter. If we’re still fighting for women’s rights when she’s older, when she comes of age, I’ll feel like we failed, somehow.”

Linsenmayer believed strongly in the themes of the March, and he called for an increased presence of female voices in positions of power, both in political office and in the world beyond.

“I just think that the more different views you have, the better. It helps everyone challenge their underlying assumptions, and it helps people challenge the way they think about things,” he said. “Even in the business realm, when companies are smart enough to incorporate more diverse voices into the board, the company becomes stronger.”

The march’s themes of political involvement were accompanied by a hunger for change and a thirst for justice.

For as united as the crowd was, several signs towering high above heads were critical of certain motifs and symbols of the movement. Some felt that the hat is a literal symbol of female anatomy, promoting Trans-Exclusionary Radical
Men's basketball team falls in OT to Richmond

DAVID BORNE  
staff writer

With just under 14 minutes to play in Duquesne and Richmond's Jan. 24 matchup, the Dukes found themselves in a position that they haven't been in all season. The Dukes were down, significantly, in the second half of a game at the Palumbo Center.

Things went from bad to worse when a Duquesne turnover at mid-court resulted in a Richmond 2-on-1 fast break that resulted in an emphatic Grant Golden put-back jam, which increased the Spiders' lead to 16.

Golden apparently wasn't satisfied with the highlight reel dunk, and for whatever reason, decided to shove Duquesne freshman Eric Williams Jr. following the play, resulting in a technical foul. Williams Jr. remained calm after the altercation, knocking both down. The Dukes managed to get a stop on the follow through, and a Williams Jr. bucket cut Duquesne's deficit to 12.

Eric Williams Jr. wasn't done yet. The freshman followed up with a Red & Blue's next seven points, and Duquesne's comeback effort was in full force. Finally, with some scoring help from Tarin Smith and Chas Brown, a Williams Jr. layup knotted the score at 52-52 with 7:44 on the clock.

The teams went back and forth for the next handful of minutes, with a career-scoring performance from Richmond sophomore Nick Sherod keeping the Spiders in the game. The comeback was capitalized with a Mike Lewis II three-pointer with just over 35 seconds left to play, putting the Dukes up 66-65 with just 32 seconds on the clock, but the Spiders were not done yet.

With the game on the line, Richmond decided to not put the ball in the hot hands of Sherod, but instead for the man of the hour, Grant Golden.

Duquesne's thundering cloud of boos from the Duquesne supporters, Golden knocked down a shot from inside the paint, drawing a tool in the process. As everyone put Richmond back up by two, and Duquesne had 15 seconds to tie the game.

The play drawn up was for Tarin Smith, and a layup from the junior knocked the score back at 68-68 sending the game into overtime. Duquesne had 15 seconds to tie the game and suffered its first loss of the season at Oliver J. Ocasek Natatorium by a score of 197-101.

Unfortunately for Duquesne, the Dukes in securing more points instead for the man of the hour, Eric Williams Jr. He scored 14 points in a 77-73 Duquesne loss.

The earlier momentum seemed to run out, and a tired Duquesne team struggled in the additional period. The Spiders held Duquesne scoreless for the final 2:39 of overtime, and behind five more points from Mike Lewis II attempts a layup on Jan. 24, 1924, the Penguins prevailed, claiming the black and gold for the first time ever on the Penguins' home ice.

The weekend's competition was highlighted by Farwell's -19 in the 200-yard butterfly, which placed him second in the A-10 and fifth in the NEC. Farwell is both the NEC Bowler of the Month (9-17-20) and gold then.

Duquesne's last meeting with the Spiders was on Jan. 25, 1924, and the women bested Saint Joseph's in Philadelphia, 61-51.

— Following the Richmond game, Keith Dambrot's team (14-7, 5-3) prepares to face No. 24 Rhode Island (16-3, 8-0) on Jan. 27 at 12 p.m. in Kingston, Rhode Island. In Duquesne's last meeting with the Rams, a Jim Ferry-coached squad fell 90-69 on Jan. 21, 2017, at A.J. Palumbo Center.

— After the Duquesne women's team beat Saint Joseph's for the first time ever on the Hawks' home floor on Jan. 24, the Dukes (17-3, 7-0) are off to their best-ever start in the Atlantic 10. In the win, Julija Vojnovic scored 16 points and pulled down 10 rebounds, and 6-foot-6 junior Kadri-Anne Lothress tallied four blocks to become the program's all-time block leader. Up next, Duquesne will host St. Bonaventure (7-13, 2-5) on Jan. 28 at 4 p.m. at A.J. Palumbo Center.

— On Jan. 24, the North-East Conference announced that Duquesne freshman bowler Olivia Farwell is both the NEC Bowler of the Week and NEC Rookie of the Week. Farwell, the first athlete to receive both honors in the same week this season, posted the highest overall frame average of all NEC competitors at the 28-team Pete- Town Invitational, which included 17 ranked teams in the field.

— The weekend's competition was highlighted by Farwell's perfect game versus Medaille. The freshman's 300 game was the first-ever perfect game in Duquesne bowling history, which began competition last season

This Week in Sports History

— On Jan. 25, 1924, the first Winter Olympic games began in Chamonix, France.

— On Jan. 30, 1980, the Pittsburgh Penguins wore black and gold for the first time, hoping to gain fan support by aligning their colors with those of the Steelers and Pirates. The Boston Bruins protested the move to the NHL, claiming the black and gold had always been exclusively associated with the Bruins, but the Penguins prevailed, thanks to the Pittsburgh Pirates hockey club of the late 1920's, which sported black and gold then.
Andrew White
staff writer

On Jan. 16, the Northeast Conference announced that the Duquesne Dukes football team won the 2017 NEC Sportsmanship Team Award. It marked the fourth time the Dukes have won the award since 2011 and the first time winning the award since 2014.

The Northeast Conference created the Sportsmanship Awards in 2008, the same year the Dukes joined the NEC as a football-only member. According to the NEC website, “The awards are designed to acknowledge the team in each conference sport that, in the opinion of its peers, most closely demonstrates good sportsmanship based on the NEC Principles of Sportsmanship and Standards of Conduct.”

Voting is conducted at the conclusion of each season by each team and head coach, who rank teams within the conference based on a set of criteria.

“When I think of the traits common to Northeast Conference student-athletes, fair play and winning with integrity always come to mind first,” NEC Commissioner Noreen Morris said in a recent press release.

“I couldn’t be prouder of all the NEC student-athletes and coaches who continue to prioritize these values year after year and congratulate those teams that have been recognized by their peers with this prestigious honor.”

The Dukes were joined in the fall awards class by Central Connecticut State and Sacred Heart. The Blue Devils led the league in awards as they brought home the Sportsmanship Team Award for men’s and women’s soccer, men’s volleyball and women’s cross country. The Pioneers brought home the award for men’s cross country.

Prior to 2014, the last time the Dukes won the award, they had also taken home the honor in 2011 and 2012.

The award was just the latest of accolades that the Dukes brought home in the 2017 season. The Dukes had a league-high 12 players on All-NEC teams, including eight on the first team. Among those was graduate transfer quarterback Tommy Stuart, who was also named the 2017 NEC Offensive Player of the Year.

Senior Ben Huss has also racked up numerous awards, including being named to the Football Championship Subdivision All-American Team, as well as the HERO Sports All-American Team and the Associated Press’ FCS All-American squad.

Huss played this past Saturday in the NFLPA Collegiate Bowl at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, as well.

“The Dukes, who started off the year hot, dropped their last two games of the season, including a heartbreaking 28-27 loss to Central Connecticut State on Nov. 11 which eliminated them from postseason contention. They finished the season 7-4 with a 4-2 record in NEC play. The Dukes are scheduled to open the 2018 campaign against UMass on Aug. 25 at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts.”

Jacob Herda
staff writer

Over the past few seasons, the Duquesne football team has had one of the best offenses in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). While star players A.J. Hines and Nehari Crawford often steal the show, the team’s success could not have been possible without the contributions of a strong offensive line, led by senior Ben Huss.

Huss, a senior from the Pittsburgh suburb of Upper St. Clair, has been a star offensive lineman for the Dukes during the past four years. After a college career that was defined by lofty achievements, Huss is looking to take his talents to the National Football League.

As part of his training for the NFL, Huss played in the NFL Players Association Collegiate Bowl in Pasadena, California, on Jan. 20. The annual game gives draft-eligible seniors the opportunity to prepare for their potential NFL careers on a national stage.

Huss found the game to be “a great experience.” He said that it made him “better as a player and a person.”

Huss represented the National team, which was led by Super Bowl-winning coach Mike Martz. Representing Duquesne was offensive lineman Jon Bolar, a senior who was named to a 23-0 victory over their opposition, the American team.

The game was perhaps a high point in what Huss described as a lifelong passion for football.

“I started playing football at five,” he said.

“arly I realized I could play in college when I was little.”

Head Coach Jerry Schmitt, who has led the Dukes for the past 13 seasons, certainly recognizes the passion Huss has for football. Schmitt spoke extremely highly of the lineman, citing him as a key part of the Duquesne football program.

“He was a four-year starter, three-time All-American, a stalwart on the offensive line,” Schmitt said. He added that Huss is “very intelligent” and “helped manage players, including younger ones.”

It’s not just Huss’ coach who recognizes his talent. Football pundits have universally regarded Huss as one of the best offensive linemen in the FCS. He was chosen as a member of the 2017 STATS FCS All-America Third Team and has been selected to the All-Northeast Conference First Team three times.

After plenty of success in college, Huss is prepared to take on the challenge of playing professionally should he be given the opportunity.

When asked what sets him apart from other players, Huss explained that “It’s not my height, not my weight, but my athletic ability. God gifted me with athleticism.”

Coach Schmitt also praised the athletic abilities of the lineman. According to Schmitt, Huss has plenty of physical qualities that make him capable of playing in the NFL.

“For a guy of his size, he has an extraordinary amount of athleticism,” Schmitt explained. “He’s a scratch golfer, an all-around athlete.”

“However, Huss made clear that attention to detail is also essential. He repeatedly emphasized the importance of “paying attention to everything.”

He also described how his time at Duquesne has improved him as a person.

“It’s the little things,” Huss explained. “Show up to class, showing up a few minutes early to practice, taking good notes … It’s made me better as a human.”

Schmitt discussed how it feels to have watch one of his players mature as a player and a person saying, “He’s accomplished what we try to do here … He’s a good role model.”

As someone with plenty of experience both on the field and in the classroom, Huss had some advice for younger student-athletes.

“Manage your time well,” he said.

“There’s a lot of stuff going on … use your time well.”

Huss’ wise words could apply to more than just student-athletes.
Nintendo Labo resurrects old-fashioned play

Zach Landau
editor-in-chief

Nintendo has proposed some weird stuff before. Once upon a time, for example, the company announced a sensor that would measure gamers’ heartbeats and their level of relaxation (this was never released). More recently, the Nintendo 3DS was shipped with cards that the system would read and produce 3D, augmented-reality photos.

And who could forget the never-seen knitting machine that would have linked with your Nintendo Entertainment System? Strange, to be sure, but Nintendo’s latest concoction of the absurd has gotten somewhere — very excited — more excited for any gaming peripheral in a long time.

Nintendo Labo, packs of cardboard punch outs that can be folded into toys, has delighted me to my core. The toys (or “Toy-Cons,” as Nintendo is calling these creations) incorporate the Nintendo Switch and all the gadgets and gizmos embedded in the console. For example, the right controller can be slotted into the back of a mini piano and, using an infrared (IR) sensor, can read strips of reflective tape on the keys to make the console play corresponding notes. If this all sounds bizarre, that’s because it is. And that is why I am so in love with this thing.

Everything about Nintendo Labo — from its premise, to its ease-of-use, to its aesthetics — excites me to no end. The idea of making smart toys out of cardboard and video game consoles is genius, simply put. The price point is also great, just being $10 or $20 more than the normal amount for most games.

Not only that, the creative aspect is fantastic as well. The comparison to LEGO sets has been made across the internet, and that feels incredibly apt. The construction of each Toy-Con is its own 2-6 hour endeavor, depending on the project. But the making of these things is only half the joy in them; playing with toys is fun as well, right?

But two things about the conception of Nintendo Labo really speak to me, the first being its educational value. “Discover” is part of the marketing for this project, and the ability to watch how the mechanisms in the Switch work is a major selling point. I cannot wait to hear, 20 years from now, about a kid who was inspired to go into computer science or engineering because their parents or whoever bought them a Nintendo Labo kit.

Second, I am personally fascinated by the technology in the Switch and how Nintendo is taking that tech to its limits. Whenever I first got my Switch, I held the controllers for two hours straight, feeling them and tossing them over and over again in my hands. They are fascinating little devices, being three-and-a-half inch long powerhouses of technology. Packed with gyroscopes, IR sensors, HD rumble and other gadgets and gizmos, the Switch is brimming with opportunities for developers to explore for new ways to play.

Nintendo Labo is the ultimate expression of that curiosity I first felt when I got my console. Even though I know the kits are marketed for kids, I might pick up my own when Labo releases on April 20. I just don’t care; I am thoroughly impressed and delighted that there will exist a product that checks every box for me. Hopefully, most people will feel the same.

Phantom Thread weaves exquisite cinematography

Salena Moran & Evan Pennock
staff writers

From the mind behind Boogie Nights and Punch-Drunken Love comes Paul Thomas Anderson’s all-around exquisite period piece, Phantom Thread. Phantom Thread revolves around designer and bachelor Reynolds Woodcock (Daniel Day-Lewis) who attracts a variety of women that serve as both short-term companions — and inspirations. His very structured and scheduled life takes a turn upon meeting the headstrong beauty Alma (Vicky Krieps) who soon becomes a fixture in his life. Throughout their time together, Alma and Reynolds’ toxic give-and-take relationship alters the fabric of a traditional love story.

In terms of plot structure, the film possesses no major conflict and instead shows the relationship between the characters over time in more of a character study experience. While prolonged movies like Manchester by the Sea tend to drag, this movie presents new situations and drama as the characters’ relationship progresses. Our sympathy seemed to alternate between Alma and Reynolds, making both characters paradoxically liked and loathed simultaneously. These conflicting feelings reveal something truthful about the nature of romantic relationships with the satisfaction of being wanted/needed and the grief of rejection.

This film also features brilliant camera work that beautifully paints scenes according to the mood. The camera enhances the atmosphere and scenery of this piece, presenting fluid and smooth scenes when the seamstresses sew, for example, and contrasting it with choppy and rough scenes during heightened drama. The camera angles also show the background and characters from a more interesting perspective, and the addition of dim lighting cast haunting shadows on the characters’ faces.

Since this film revolves around the fashion industry, it would be an injustice not to comment on the excellent costume work of this piece. When words fail, the imagery of the fabric speaks, expressing a kind of passion and uniqueness. During fashion show scenes, each woman dresses in vastly different ways that suit her body type. This provides a visual representation of the costume designer’s variety of skills and abilities. Phantom Thread has been nominated for an Oscar in Costume Design, and rightfully so.

Another fantastic, well-executed component of this film shines through in the musical score, whether it be basic piano pieces or swelling orchestral movements with violin solos. Every musical selection sounds to fit the mood and create another layer of enjoyment. Great music within a film can develop a heightened sense of believability and immersion into the experience. This is a film where the craftsmanship surpasses the craft itself. Possibly the only criticism to be had is in the artistic execution of this movie. If you are
Electric Dreams sparks reflection on humanity

Well, it turns out Amazon Prime is good for more than ordering those pricey textbooks. Joining the lineup of successful, thought-provoking Amazon Prime Original shows comes Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams, a science fiction anthology series based on the acclaimed author's short stories. The episodes are all stand-alone installments, each chapter boasting new, innovative characters and plotlines straight out of the mind of Dick himself.

Before starting off, I was apprehensive. With only 50 minutes to develop compelling charismatic and eloquent, articulate narratives, I had no doubt that Electric Dreams could display the same poignancy and pathos as its long-form counterpart, The Man in the High Castle, Amazon Studio's premiere Dick adaptation. Because High Castle has long since won my heart, though, I figured I'd keep an open mind.

Fortunately, Amazon delivered once again. With an all-star cast of household names like Anjelica Huston, Steve Buscemi and Timothy Spall, Electric Dreams was already off to a promising start. What really made the series a cinematic power-hitter, though, was the way that episodes took the ideas existing at the core of Dick's stories and expanded them, taking the viewer out of the Cold War and changing pace, commenting instead on contemporary society and current politics.

Episode One, “Real Life,” is based upon Dick’s 1954 Exhibit Piece, which follows the dystopian life of a self-delighted 20th-century historian, George Miller. In George's world, a group of LA cops wakes up one day to find himself transported back in time to an existence he doesn't recognize, but the longer he stays there, the more eerily familiar it becomes.

In Electric Dreams, George's counterpart is Sarah (Anna Paquin), a futuristic super-cop struggling with survivor's guilt after witnessing the murder of her colleagues in a failed police operation. Her wife, Katie (Rachelle Lefevre), offers her a virtual holiday to escape the PTSD-like effects of the whole ordeal, and in this so-called vacation, she wakes up as the billionaire CEO George (Terrance Howard).

With so much of science fiction dominated by the narratives of straight white men, Sarah and Katie were a welcomed change — and a great way to start the series. Take note, sci-fi writers: If aliens can exist in your stories, gay people can, too.

While some Dick purists might (wrongly) take issue with their favorite male protagonist being adapted into an emotionally damaged lesbian, the fact remains that no matter how vast the differences are between the original short stories and Amazon Studio's Electric Dreams vignettes, critical themes remain untouched. Along with paying homage to Dick's characteristic and epistemological meditations, the series aims to answer one overarching question: What does it mean to be human?

Each episode offers its own provocative supposition: To be human is to feel. To be human is to love. To be human is to destroy. Ultimately, though, the viewer is left with the impression that to be human is to be markedly complex — a leitmotif echoed throughout Dick's work.

For as much as Electric Dreams says about the diaphanous nature of humanity and personhood, it speaks just as loudly on the topic of the political climate in which we find ourselves today. Don't be fooled by the androids and aliens — Electric Dreams takes the far away concepts of science fiction and reals them into modernity with depictions of nuclear war, factory pollution, climate change, conformity, bigotry, totalitarianism and the dangers of unchecked power.

For example, the second episode, “Autofac,” follows a colony of rebellious settlers seeking autonomy from the self-governing factory that pollutes their air years after nuclear fallout. “Safe and Sound” shows the vices of a society so consumed by security that they eschew foreign foreigners and label them as terrorists at the first chance they get. Sound familiar?

The series is steeped in allegories and metaphors, serving not only to entertain, but to forewarn. It provokes a sense of unease, leading viewers to question whether or not our society could slip down the same rabbit hole. The future we see portrayed, while clearly science-fiction, is not necessarily too far removed from a future that could actually happen. With fascism, rapid technological growth and nuclear war as underlying catalysts, it's difficult not to draw hypothetical comparisons, and I believe that the show's creators aimed to do exactly that.

As far as genuine critiques go, my concerns see DREAMS — page 11

Den of Thieves’s plot keeps watchers enticed

Den of Thieves’s plot keeps watchers enticed

Nicole Prieto
staff writer

Den of Thieves is a power fantasy that blends the trappings of a smart crime-thriller and operatic drama. The film pits convicts against cops in a deadly cat-and-mouse game involving one of the least “caseable” banks in the nation: the Federal Reserve.

Ray Merrimen (Pablo Schreiber) is a released convict determined never to be put behind bars again, who leads one of the most professionally organized group of thieves in the bank-robbery hotbed of Hawthorne, Los Angeles. But when the botched theft of an armored car at a donut shop leaves a body count, the stakes suddenly change. With an unimaginable sum of money on the horizon, and the rest of their lives on the line, Merrimen's group prepares to face off against Los Angeles' best to pull off one last historic heist.

"Big Nick" O'Brien (Gerard Butler) heads the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's efforts in putting together the mystery behind several unsolved crimes. Foul-mouthed, unkempt and unabashed at eating donuts dropped by a dead guard at a crime scene, Nick is the embodiment of the "bad cop" trope. This character is certainly Butler at his most perpetually manic, perhaps trumped only by his role as Leonidas in 300. Nick leads a similarly-minded ragtag team of officers who skirt the rules of duty and professionalism. His group is the first on the scene to deal with the latest bizarre heist that leaves some guards and responding officers dead.

Viewers looking for a fun, mindless ride may have to temper their expectations. The film has its fair share of shootouts and tense robbery scenes to satisfy any action fan, but it takes its time with character building — at least, for the handful of the cast afforded adequate attention. At the outset, the latter is perhaps its most glaring and unnecessary weakness. The all-male main cast is big. It is so big, in fact, that audience members should be thankful for the onscreen superimposed text indicating who some of the major characters are. For everyone else, either memorize the IMDb cast list before you go in, or be prepared to list off “Henchman 1” or “Officer 3” in your head through the end.

Aside from major names like Butler, 50 Cent (Levi Enzon) or Straight Outta Compton’s O'Shea Jackson Jr. (Donnie Wilson), observant Walking Dead fans will also find Cooper Andrews. In TWD, Andrews plays King Ezekiel’s right-hand man, Jerry. For this longtime viewer, Andrews regrettably does not have as obvious a role in Merrimen's crew — much like 90 percent of the cast. The film does a good job of convincing us that everyone has some important role to play; it just skirts around giving us time to absorb who everyone is or what they are doing. The confusion drags the pace of an otherwise engaging film.

One thing this reviewer certainly was not expecting was the thoughtfulness given to the heist details itself. Without spoiling too much, Merrimen’s crew puts together an impressive plan that leaves viewers, and Nick, just enough in the dark to keep things interesting. Amidst Merrimen’s detailed planning, however, he becomes a strange, omniscient presence in Nick’s life to the point of being unrealistic. The lack of a strong “chemistry” in their rivalry does not help, though that is hardly a fatal flaw.

One item to appreciate is that, even though Nick is the hero we have to side with, the movie does not indulge in making everything in his life right again as he gets closer to figuring out Merrimen’s plans. Nick is, naturally, a jerk. We bear witness to his marital problems, inappropriate work conduct and racism — and it is difficult to tell whether he is sincere about the latter or putting on an act. While audience members will believe in his soft spot for his daughters, the film karmically treats his mess-ups with realistic severity. A scene with
Pgh March encourages activism

MARCH — from page 6

Stoner has gotten used to the Bluff’s hills in attending classes. “Pittsburgh is inaccessible because of the hills,” he said. “It’s not anybody’s fault. I’m so used to it I’m not going to die angry about it.”

He uses a wheelchair because condition affects his muscular system. “My mother and father were carriers of a gene for muscular atrophy. There was a 1-in-4 chance I would get it, and I won the ... lottery,” Stoner said. “Muscular atrophy weakens all the muscles in the body progressively throughout life. No one knows the rate for how fast it progresses,” he said.

Dobish said that the lift was installed and manufactured by Garaventa USA, a “world-class manufacturer” for specialized lifts and elevators, according to their website.

“Duquesne University maintenance staff installed the electrical power to this lift and also patched and painted the walls afterwards,” he said. “The Facilities Management team is always looking to maintain or improve the campus in all ways, including accessibility when the conditions are warranted.”

University Public Affairs did not immediately respond by press time to a question about when the lift will be operational.

No glitz and glam left behind

PHANTOM — from page 9

one that wants to be spoon fed every single detail about a film, then save your money. This film bears the most weight in the impact it leaves on the viewer than any actual message.

For those wanting to experience something aside from a superhero movie or sequels, Phantom Thread excels in all aspects of direction, score, cinematography, acting and set/costume design.

MBB faces quick turnaround in No. 24 URI

OT LOSS — from page 8

Sherod, Richmond came out on top by a score of 77-73. Sherod finished the night with a game-high 28 points, six more than his previous career best.

It was a valiant comeback effort and one that everyone in attendance certainly enjoyed, but the seemingly burned-out Dukes couldn’t pull out a win and suffered their first loss at the Pale Umbro Center since a 78-71 loss to Cornell on Nov. 27.

Mike Lewis II finished the night with 13 points, but shot just 3-7 from the field. Rene Castro-Canedy had a tough shooting night as well, wrapping up with only two points, shooting 1-11 from the field.

Next up for Duquesne comes the undeniably best team in the Atlantic 10 this season with a trip to Kingston, Rhode Island, to take on the Rhode Island Rams on Jan. 27. Ranked No. 24 in the latest AP Poll, the Rams sit comfortably at the top of the at the Atlantic 10 standings with a perfect 8-0 record.

Shaking off a tough loss like Wednesday night’s is a task in and of itself, but Duquesne will need a political edge right when the entertainment industry needs it most.

If you’ve got some time before the new season of your favorite show returns from the throes of post-production, give Electric Dreams a shot. Whether you like psychological thrillers, romance or pure science fiction at its finest, there’s bound to be an episode that captures your imagination.
In search of a ...

COMIC ARTIST

Those interested can contact Opinions Editor Shivani Gosai at shivanig96@gmail.com with a sample of their work by Jan. 31.

LIFT — from page 3

Student waits for wheelchair lift

Stoner has gotten used to the Bluff’s hills in attending classes. “Pittsburgh is inaccessible because of the hills … it’s not anybody’s fault. I’m so used to it … I’m not going to die angry about it,” he said.

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For Hire

Thieves — from page 10

his soon-to-be ex-wife cements him as a protagonist with serious issues, making him more an unlikeable antihero and less like Dwayne Johnson in 2015’s San Andreas. That is, Nick is not a sympathetic divorcee with a heart of gold; he is a mess who needs to straighten out his priorities.

For all its incredibly brazen hypermasculinity, Den of Thieves is a self-aware, melancholic experience that cannot help but trouble viewers about what is really on the line. Lives literally come at a cost in the movie, and we are not really left feeling triumphant once the end credits roll. Perhaps this is for the best. No matter what you think of the middle, the ending carries some interesting surprises that should leave audiences satisfied, even if there is arguably some tone whiplash involved. While maybe not slated for the Oscars, it is a worthy flick to spend an afternoon in a theater for.