

The Reflection of Power on Your TV Screen: The Political Narratives Behind the Entertainment Industry

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Recently, there has been an immense amount of political turmoil surrounding not only the news, but the entertainment industry as well. The political environment intertwines itself with most aspects of daily life, especially television, but a unique problem has posed itself specifically in the late-night TV industry. This would be the sudden and arguably unprecedented urge for TV networks to cancel segments of late-night comedy and talk shows that America has known and loved for years. **Some call it funding issues and lack of talent, others call it censorship and an infringement of free speech in the media as we know it.** On July 17, 2025, Stephen Colbert announced on a live taping of his show, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, that the segment would be cancelled by CBS after the current season ends. **“It’s not just the end of our show, but it’s the end of “The Late Show” on CBS... “I’m not being replaced. This is all just going away...” said Colbert.** CBS and parent network Paramount Global stated the decision was “purely financial” and unrelated to the show’s performance. However, many fans were skeptical about this statement, as the program had been the highest rated late-night segment on television in Q4 of 2024 as well as in past quarters. The show had been



Photo Credit: cnn.com

averaging around 2.5 million viewers at the time of the cancellation announcement. Viewers were concerned with the logic behind this decision, but skepticism furthered due to the timing of it. The cancellation was announced a few days after Colbert called out CBS, his own network, for their \$16 million settlement with the White House. Shortly after the cancellation announcement, it was revealed that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) merged Paramount Global with Skydance Media in an \$8 billion merger deal in an effort to make changes to CBS’ entire broadcast, meant to “eliminate invidious forms of DEI discrimination.” (Brendan Carr, FCC Chair). Paramount Global CEO George Cheeks attempted to make it clear in a press-

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conference related to the merger that this decision was difficult and that the network loves Colbert and his work, but the show wasn't sustainable. While his words may seem genuine, the logistics and timing of the issue continue to confuse and concern viewers.

Nearly 2 months later, another popular late-night show, *Jimmy Kimmel, Live!* hosted by comedian Jimmy Kimmel was pulled off the air, supposedly due to comments made by Kimmel about the conservatives' reaction to the recent passing of conservative icon Charlie Kirk. ABC , a Disney owned network, announced that Kimmel's live segment on their network would be pulled off the air indefinitely on September 18th, 2025. Though there has been lack of explanation from ABC behind the decision, it is known that the network was facing political pressure from the FCC as well as the Trump administration to act against Kimmel. This is seen in Brendan Carr's comments in response to Nexstar's announcement to stop airing Kimmel's segment. "I want to thank Nexstar for doing the right thing...I hope that other broadcasters follow Nexstar's lead." (Carr, X).

While Jimmy Kimmel hasn't spoken publicly about his cancellation yet, Stephen Colbert has been extremely outspoken and emotional regarding his show. Amid controversy regarding the cancellation, Stephen Colbert took home an Emmy for outstanding talk series for *The Late Show*, the show's first Emmy win ever. In his speech, he reminisced on the early inspirations he had for The Late Show, after he took over for comedy legend David Letterman. **Colbert said** he wanted to lead the show with themes of love, and concluded his speech with a powerful, personal, hopeful statement: **"I have never loved my country more desperately. God bless America. Stay strong, be brave, and if the elevator tries to bring you down, go crazy and punch a higher floor."**

Educated, Not Influenced Becoming Better Influenced in Today's Society

By: AMANDA FARLOW
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**“Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.”
- Martin Luther King Jr.**

This past Tuesday, I had the opportunity to attend a presentation hosted by the Iota Phi Theta Fraternity here at Radford University. It was an engaging session which dove into the topic of remaining informed and educated about the media you consume, especially in such a toxic political climate as we live in today.

The speaker, Isaiah Kigwe explained how to find reliable news sources, and how easy it is to get lost in fake or unreliable sources. Social media can often be one of those unreliable sources. We as humans have become cognitively lazy, and prioritize quick and instant google searches over taking the time to research and double-check if what we're reading is true. When we do take time to research, there's a chance for confirmation bias. It's human nature to seek out information that aligns with the ideals or beliefs of what we already know and deem true.

It's best to avoid getting information from heavily biased sources. This goes for either side. Any biased source could spread potential misinformation, and it's easy for users to trust media sources without second guessing. Popular biased sources are sites such as Fox News and MSNBC. For more reliable information, try sources such as AP News, NPR, and the New York Times. It's always best to avoid sites like

Wikipedia or Reddit, that allow users to edit articles. Always double check what you see on social media, as it's likely heavily edited. The speaker went on to discuss how important it is to take time out of our lives to step away from the media. We are constantly surrounded by negativity in both the media and in our daily lives. In addition to coursework, extracurricular activities, and our commitments to the workforce, it takes a toll on our mental health as students. Here's my best advice for protecting your mental health: **spend time with your loved ones, go out in the sunlight as much as you can, and turn off your phone. Protect your peace. Stay informed.**



Mark your calendar & join us!

Family and Friends Weekend

Sept. 26-28

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FAMILY AND FRIENDS WEEKEND

2025

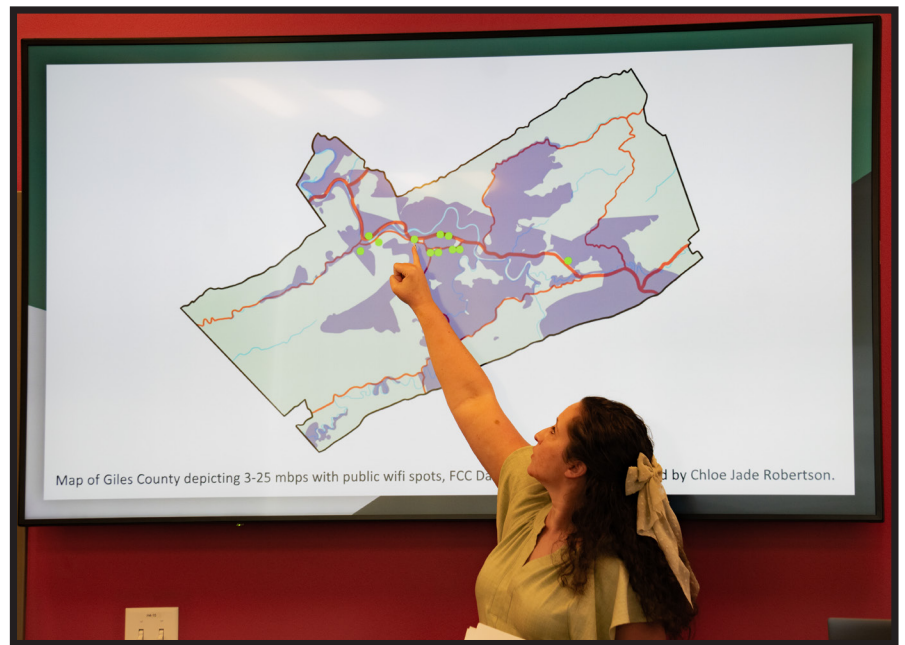
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The poster features a photograph of three people (two women and one man) standing outdoors in front of a fountain. One woman is wearing a red shirt with 'HIGHLANDERS' on it. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner of the poster.

Digital Literacy In Appalachia: CHBS Speaker Recap

By: AVA LONGMATE
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As society accelerates into a digital future, lacking internet access has become more than just an inconvenience; it has become a barrier to education, employment, and civic participation. It is now commonplace to have access to this interconnected network, many regions—especially in rural Appalachia remain cut off from this essential infrastructure. **Dr. Marti Wagnon**, a distinguished alumni of Radford University and a PhD graduate in Rhetoric and Writing from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, illuminated this disparity during her guest lecture on Wednesday in Hemphill Hall. Drawing from her lived experience in Giles County and extensive fieldwork across rural communities. Dr. Wagnon offered a compelling narrative of resilience, adaptation, and systemic neglect. Dead zone is a term I'm sure we are all familiar with. Those moments in the car when you are calling your mom or a friend, but right as you pass below too many trees, the call cuts out leaving your conversation splintered until you reach a place with stronger service. These annoying and sometimes dangerous situations are what people who live in community dead zones must deal with every day. But we humans are nothing if not adaptable. So, in communities like Giles County, Community Wi-Fi Spots are a valuable solution where free Wi-Fi can be accessible for public use. These Wi-Fi spots include school districts, McDonalds or other popular fast-food joints, or public libraries. While these hot spots can be beneficial for commonplace usage, if you need a stronger connection, individuals are forced to drive miles out of their way through treacherous mountain roads for only a few bars of service. When a region is isolated by



Dr. Wagnon points to a chart showing public wifi locations in Giles County Photo Credit: Jack Buckner

a physically challenging landscape, this causes an abundance of pressing issues.

Through Dr. Wagnon's interviews and personal testimonials from inhabitants living in the Appalachian region, she deduced that the environment posed the main competitor for internet accessibility. However, there are some families who have learned to adapt to their frustrating situation. **One family she came across in her research had built water proof routing poles powered by car batteries that they strung up on trees to reach areas where they could find stable connections to internet satellites. This is how creative these people must get just to have internet access at home.** The lack of experience when it comes to technology causes individuals to struggle with Digital Literacy. Which essentially means a person's ability to navigate and understand digital tools and communication. Your great grandfather could potentially be an example of someone who is not well versed in digital literacy. And in our society, knowing how to send an email or even how to use a search engine is essential. Digital literacy is a crucial ability that allows us to navigate our vastly complex society; without it, individuals will struggle to find their place in the world.

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month: How To Help Those at Risk

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According to the World Health Organization (WHO), over 700,000 people die by suicide each year worldwide. In fact almost every person knows someone who has attempted suicide, whether they realize it or not, or know someone who has died by suicide. Unfortunately, many people continue to suffer in silence with suicidal ideation, afraid to speak up due to the stigma that surrounds suicide. One main issue is simply that people tip toe around talking about suicide, they fear the topic or it's too taboo for them to discuss. However, talking about suicide is one of the most important steps in preventing it, so that's what we are going to do, discussing what you can do to prevent suicide and manage a suicide attempt because everyone can make a difference.

Recognizing the Signs

The first step in preventing suicide is seeing the signs that someone may be contemplating taking their life. While they may not always be obvious there are some in which are considered common, including but not limited to: Social withdrawal, giving away important items, taking dangerous or out of character risk, displaying extreme mood swings, changes in eating/sleeping habits, engaging in more drugs/alcohol use, and statements of hopelessness. If anyone you know seems off at any time, particularly after a traumatic event, death of a friend/family, medication change, or other life altering event, check in and be there.

Finding Support/Being a Support Figure

Firstly, let's discuss campus resources, whenever suicidal ideation is involved it's important to consult professional resources as necessary. Here at Radford University there are two main resources: Student Counseling Services(SCS), and for those in immediate crisis, RUPD. SCS also features SAVES, Substance And Violence Education Support for those with specific substance abuse problems or in abusive relationships/situations. If you or someone you care about is ever in a crisis or struggling with suicidal ideation they can walk in SCS-located in the first floor of Davis Hall- and ask for help. Another resource available nationwide is the National Suicide Hotline, 988, which is available 24/7. Nextly there is being a support figure, as a support figure the most important thing you can



do is listen. Sometimes a person struggling with suicidal ideation wants to be heard and feel as though they are important. When you recognize the signs of ideation it's vital that you make sure the person is aware you are there to listen if needed.

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Safety Measures for a Suicidal Person

When someone is feeling suicidal it is important that with their permission you take steps to help them to avoid attempting. Most importantly is removing triggers: this can include things like medications and various weapons/sharp objects. Next is seeking support: encouraging the person to reach out to a professional resource such as a counselor or other trusted person in a position of authority who may be able to help such as a teacher or mentor. Lastly is careful monitoring, if someone is actively in a crisis it is important that they are not left alone. If you are unavailable, encourage the person to seek out a professional resource or even RUPD. Remember it doesn't all have to be on your shoulders, support should come from multiple people and resources when needed.

Handling an Attempted Suicide

It's never easy to know what to do when someone you care about attempts to take their life, here are a few important steps to keep in mind when handling such a situation. Firstly, secure the scene: If there is still a weapon, pills, or other harmful objects in the area, clear them out to prevent the person from causing more harm to themselves. Secondly and most importantly, call 911/EMS: We want help as soon as possible to the individual who has attempted, calling 911 once the scene is secured is 100% necessary regardless of whether or not they want an ambulance- it's about keeping them safe. Lastly is comforting the person: the last thing a person needs in that moment is your judgement, do your best to comfort the person while following any instructions given to you by 911/EMS.

Support After an Attempt

if you find yourself in a situation where someone has attempted suicide, they may now be in the hospital or just coming home,

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how do you handle such a sensitive subject with them? Firstly is simply letting them know you are there, that you are available whenever they may need help- something as simple as having a conversation with them regarding your support. As well as showing yourself as reliable and trustworthy can make a big difference in someone's life post-attempt. Secondly is small acts of support, this could be picking up their favorite candy or writing them a letter from the heart. Small acts of support show that you care and make the person feel seen and heard. Lastly is getting support for yourself, handling a friend or family member who attempted it is difficult and you are valid for struggling with it as well- remember you can't do it all by yourself and that's ok.

Suicide is never an easy topic to handle, but by addressing it head on you can make a difference in someones life. Remember to do your best to be vigilant of the signs of suicidal ideation and that being a support figure can be as simple as listening to a person. **Don't hesitate to contact professional resources as necessary and know that you are never alone.**



Mysterious Hanging Deaths in Mississippi Spark Controversy on Social Media

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On September 15th, 2025, Demartravion 'Trey' Reed, a 21-year-old black student at Delta State University was found hanging from a tree near the university's pickleball courts at approximately 7:05 a.m. Many posts online reported that Reed had suffered from a broken leg prior to his death, insinuating that his death was not caused by his own matter, but instead a lynching. Lynching in the United States was overwhelmingly used to terrorize and control Black people, especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. White mobs carried out these killings

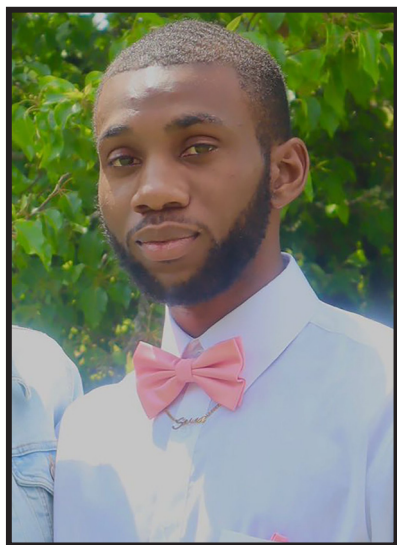


Photo Credit: Trey Reed Facebook

to enforce racial hierarchy and discourage black political, social, and economic progress. When asked about Reed's death, Murray Roark, a deputy coroner at the Bolivar County Coroner's Office told the *Mississippi Free Press* on Sept. 15, that he saw no broken bones and believed Reed's death was self-inflicted, suggesting a suicide. At a news conference on the same day, DSU police Chief Michael Peeler stated that investigators did not suspect foul play, meaning they did not believe violence or murder was involved.

However, Reed was not the only body found that day.

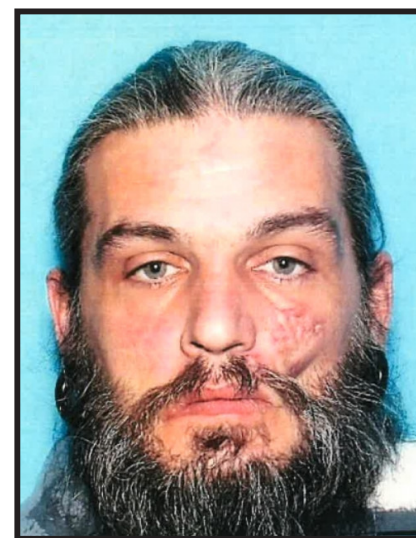


Photo Credit: inews.zoombangla.com

On September 15th Cory Zukatis, a 35-year-old white man was found deceased, hanging from a tree in a wooded area near the Ameristar Casino around 1:30 p.m., in Vicksburg, Mississippi, about 100 miles from DSU.

Warren County Coroner Doug Huskey said Zukatis was homeless and living in the wooded area where his body was found and he was on drugs at the time of his death.

Although Zukatis was white, the matter of his death is similar to Reed's and questions of foul play remain for both. Police have said that their deaths are not related to each other, but both bodies have



Cory Zukatis Photo Credit: Vicksburg Police Department

been sent to a crime lab for an autopsy, where more information will be provided.

Highlander Highlights: Soccer Programs Have Dominant Start to Conference Play, Volleyball Team Upsets Virginia Tech

By: BRANDON WHITAKER

Men's Soccer

Junior, Kenshin Akimoto Scores Two Goals in Dominant 3-0 Win vs. Longwood

Saturday afternoon at Cupp stadium is where the Highlanders faced Longwood University for their first conference matchup of the season. In the first half both offenses were stalled and then the match itself was stalled twice due to lightning. After nearly an hour of delay the Highlanders would finally take the field and In the final minute of the first half sophomore **Carter McClain** broke through the Lancer defense for the first goal of the match. The second half was the Akimoto show. After assisting on McClains goal, junior forward **Kenshin Akimoto** scored his third goal of the season in the 61st minute and came back and scored a beautiful header off an assist from freshman **Anton Jerga** for his fourth goal. **Head Coach Chris Barrett** was asked how it felt to see Akimoto embraced by all his teammates after the goal, considering the team's struggles in recent years:

"As a coach, you live and die by every kick of the ball, so a little bit of relief, better to be honest with you, a little bit of relief. It's been a long time since we kind of put ourselves in this position, but also not terribly unexpected, because this is a good group here, and we've shown that we can play well and play with good teams. I tell the guys; we're going to get the result that we deserve so **if we come out here and we do what's asked, and we have the right attitude and the energy level and effort, I believe we can win every game."**



Kenshin Akimoto Celebrates with his teammates and takes the ball from a Longwood defender Photo Credit: Brandon Whitaker

Radford Volleyball Highlanders Upset Virginia Tech 3-0 in Virginia Tech Classic

On Friday September 19th the Highlanders traveled to Blacksburg for the Virginia Tech Classic Tournament and left their cross town rivals with a 3-0 sweep. Set one was a back and forth affair with Radford squeaking by, 25-23. Set two saw Radford with a narrow 19-17 lead but then five unanswered kills won it for them down the stretch. The Hokies weren't ready to go down easy and in the third set after Radford gained a 21-15 lead, the Hokies went off for 8 unanswered kills to take the lead. After the score got knotted up at 24 all, it was senior setter **Rylee Sloss** who scored the final two kills to secure the win.