



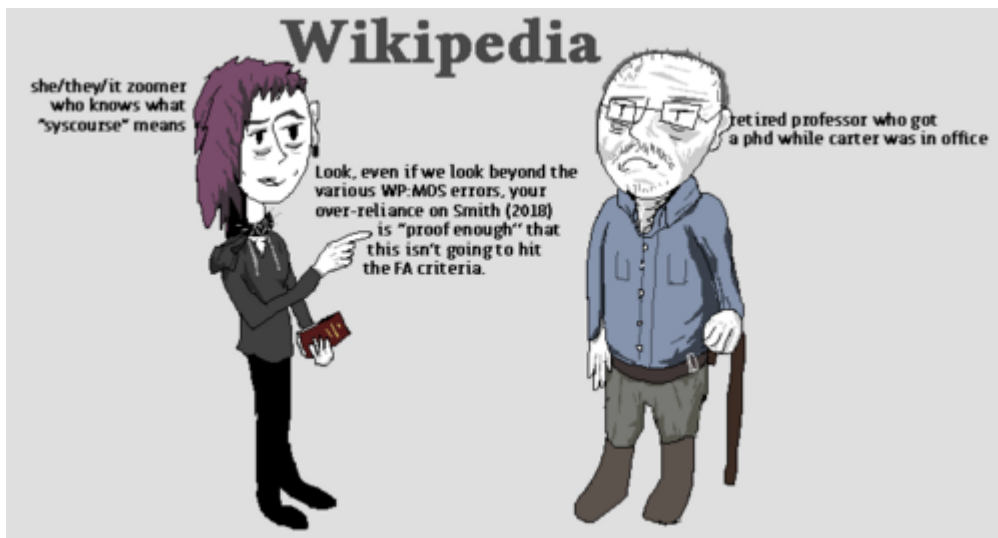
Wikipedia:Wikipedia Signpost/2024-05-16/Comix

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Comix

Generations

By [Generalissima](#)



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THESE COMMENTS ARE AUTOMATICALLY TRANSCLUDED FROM THIS ARTICLE'S TALK PAGE. TO FOLLOW COMMENTS, ADD THE PAGE TO YOUR WATCHLIST ([HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/W/INDEX.PHP?TITLE=WIKIPEDIA_TALK:WIKIPEDIA_SIGNPOST/2024-05-16/COMIX&ACTION=WATCH](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wikipedia_talk:Wikipedia_Signpost/2024-05-16/Comix&action=watch)). IF YOUR COMMENT HAS NOT APPEARED HERE, YOU CAN TRY .

Here's what syscourse means (https://www.bing.com/search?q=syscourse+meaning&cvid=0770dff4f55a43838b863f09e03becdc&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUqBggBEAAYQDIGCAAQRRg5MgYIARAAGEAyBggCEC4YQDIGCAMQABhAMgYIBBAAGEAyBggFEAAYQDIGCAYQABhAMgYIBxAAGEAyBggI)

[EAAYQNIBCDY0ODhqMG00qAIIsAIB&FORM=ANAB01&PC=EDGEDSE](#)) in case balding cane-using Wikipedians with low-riding pants are wondering. [Randy Kryn \(talk\) 12:42, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

- this isn't funny, and if it's trying to make a point, i don't know what it is. [ltdl \(talk\) 13:26, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)
 - The point is obvious, silly: Ancient Wikipedians with abnormally short legs are stupid. [Randy Kryn \(talk\) 13:38, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)
 - It's slightly funny, until you read the comments. Then it's funny. I can identify with either icon or both or neither, or either neither or both or neither either nor both. All the best: [Rich Farmbrough 20:52, 21 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#).

This feels like a mangling of interesting aspects of Wikipedia. I feel like there's two things here: queer youths (which I would count myself among) versus old professors is one of them. I think minimizing the spectrum between these different types of people and the amazing way they work together is a shame. The other is Wikipedia bureaucrats versus externally expert writers. Quoting Wikipedia policies at people in a smug way sucks! It's interesting that the sticking point here is a bad source that is relatively recent, it's hard to know what to really make of that, for me. Anyway, I'm sorry if Generalissima feels alienated by us youths with our neopronouns and syscourse :/ I hope we can figure out together how to replace Smith (2018) with a better source. ~[Maplestrip/Mable \(chat\) 14:23, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

- Is this the Wikipedia equivalent of a "phone bad i hate my wife" boomer comic?[DogsRNice \(talk\) 14:49, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

IDK; it very likely isn't a "queer bad" comic, as the artist is a lesbian. Maplestrip's points on collaboration still stand though. [Firestar464 \(talk\) 15:26, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

[@Maplestrip](#): I wish my user signature made it on to this post; I am a nonbinary neopronoun using system. my message here is not that these things are bad, but rather that wikipedia is comprised of, primarily, very young people and very old people, who are coming from very different cultural contexts [Generalissima \(talk\) \(it/she\) 16:35, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Fair enough, weird that I got the exact opposite vibe from this cartoon. Keep drawing and making cartoons :) ~[Maplestrip/Mable \(chat\) 18:24, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

[@Maplestrip](#): Did you mean [Wikipedia:bureaucrats](#) when you said "Wikipedia bureaucrats" because my mental image of myself is closer to the old guy with a cane and I'm still one of our newest Bureaucrats; as a group we skew strongly to people who've been on this site for over 15 years..... [WereSpielChequers 16:33, 21 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

[@WereSpielChequers](#) I read it to mean the "people who enforce/encourage/promote/like the bureaucracy" as in [WP:NOTBURO/WP:BURO](#). An "expert writer" might be an expert in their own field, but be clueless with regard to hundreds and hundreds of [Wikipedia:Policies and guidelines](#). —[andrybak \(talk\) 17:12, 21 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

[@WereSpielChequers](#): Andrybak's interpretation indeed aligns with my intention; it was a reference to [WP:BURO](#). The connection isn't very strong here tho (only the Manual of Style is mentioned), the

cartoon just brought this to mind. ~[Maplestrip/Mable](#) ([chat](#)) [06:33, 22 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Speaking as a balding middle-aged nonbinary queer who didn't know what *syscourse* meant until reading the above comment, I didn't find comic this particularly funny. But seeing the author's bio I figure it's not intentionally harsh, just maybe misguided and probably too obscure for a general Wikipedia audience. [Funcrunch](#) ([talk](#)) [16:31, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Personally speaking –I am on *The Signpost* editorial team, but didn't see the comic prior to publication – it's curious to me that we as a community pick and choose sensitivities so finely. There's a discussion in the current issue about transphobia, which is great (the discussion, I mean), but also a comic that depicts a doofus as someone using a cane. Not a great look, as far as I'm concerned, no matter what identities the author portrays. ☆ [Bri](#) ([talk](#)) [16:39, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

How are they are a doofus? [Generalissima](#) ([talk](#)) (*it/she*) [16:42, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Isn't the point of the comic that they're being lectured at by a younger person who's "hip" to the WP TLAs, and literally pointing a finger at them? ☆ [Bri](#) ([talk](#)) [16:45, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

It's supposed to portray both sides seem out of touch with the other. [Generalissima](#) ([talk](#)) (*it/she*) [16:49, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

The conversation here is certainly bearing that out, given what people have revealed about themselves. However a) I'm not sure it's funny and b) I still hold that our sensitivities are oddly selective. Nobody's being taken to Arbcom for ageism, and that's good, but still, inconsistent with past reactions to *The Signpost* humor. ☆ [Bri](#) ([talk](#)) [17:36, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Maybe we need a [Wikipedia:No ageism](#) essay. [Some1](#) ([talk](#)) [23:46, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

I think they're both doofuses because they both hang out on this doofus website 🙄 [jp×g](#) [22:45, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

If someone had told me that this was AI-generated, the result of a request to 'make a cartoon about Wikipedia', I'd probably have believed them. It entirely fails to exhibit actual humour. [AndyTheGrump](#) ([talk](#)) [16:47, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

- For what it's worth, before realizing that Generalissima had created this comic and that self-attacking is unlikely, my impression was that this was supposed to be an unkind jab at folks in the plural community. While I'm not someone who got a PhD when Jimmy Carter was president, deeply reading history means I'm familiar with the work of and respect a lot of people who do (numerous of my favorite books were written by people who look a bit like the gentleman in the comic). Perhaps this comic is something of an unintentional Rorschach test: what rib one sees (is it teasing both characters? teasing just one?) reveals less about the comic than the reader.

As for the seeming/possibly implied comparison/contrast appearing in the comments of the current reader response to the negative reader reaction to a past *Signpost* attempt at humor that was transphobic, I think the difference is that even if someone thinks being an older man with a PhD makes one a 'doofus' (which I think Generalissima has in these comments made clear she doesn't believe, and which as my comment explains is not the initial read I got from the comic, though my read was still not in alignment with Generalissima's intent), being an

older man with a PhD is generally a position of relative socioeconomic power (this often means having a stable job, for example, since back in the twentieth century [when the Carter presidency was] the PhD-to-academic-job path was a lot more dependable than today's more-PhDs-than-job-openings situation; perhaps also being published and therefore having a legacy that will outlive the self). Punching down at trans people is punching down at a population systematically rendered by widespread discrimination more likely to suffer and even die, in some places/circumstances without memorial or recognition. Being thought of as stuffy is likely annoying for an older professor but isn't nearly as existentially threatening. Perhaps that accounts for the differential reactions. Hydrangeans (she/her | talk | edits) 19:04, 16 May 2024 (UTC)

since back in the twentieth century [when the Carter presidency was] the PhD-to-academic-job path was a lot more dependable than today's more-PhDs-than-job-openings situation

Not sure that's true! I remember reading a lot about this, and how many people fled academia in the mid to late 1970s because they couldn't find jobs with their PhD in the US. See also this (<https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/april-1997/precedents-the-job-crisis-of-the-1970s>). Viriditas (talk) 09:03, 17 May 2024 (UTC)

It's almost reassuring(?) in a somewhat macabre way that It's Always Been Bad, Actually... (or, rather, that the academic jobs crisis has been happening for over fifty years and not just since the Great Recession—interesting.) Hydrangeans (she/her | talk | edits) 09:31, 17 May 2024 (UTC)

Yeah, I never worked in my PhD field. In a year-and-a-half (starting in 1973) looking for a job in academia (in the US and in Puerto Rico), I got just one interview. That was a time when departments in my field were not hiring, or were actually shrinking, and some smaller schools were closing. That was one of the by-products of what the Vietnam War did to the economy. Donald Albury 14:11, 17 May 2024 (UTC)

Maybe another factor was that there were a lot of Vietnam veterans like me in school on the GI bill. That and all of the guys deferring the draft by staying in school. The schools were quite happy to have us paying tuition for degrees in fields that were getting over-crowded. Donald Albury 14:18, 17 May 2024 (UTC)

Don't forget what happened when the Moon program wound down! Far too many people with hard science PhDs to find jobs. IIRC, some of these people ended up working in the defense industry in the 1980s, while others went on to become founders in Silicon Valley tech companies. NYT covered this in 1970.[1] (<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/04/26/archives/young-physicists-find-fewer-jobs-a-state-of-emergency-for-new-phds.html>) Viriditas (talk) 19:36, 17 May 2024 (UTC)

- Well, all I can say is that I completed my PhD while Ford was president, so I guess I am really old. I hadn't heard of syscourse before, but I'm always happy to learn something new. But then, editing WP means I have to learn six new things every day before breakfast. Donald Albury 19:31, 16 May 2024 (UTC)
- Odd. I am almost always the biggest grump in the room, and ... almost always need comics explained to me, and ... MUCH closer to the dude on the right, and ... it seems harmless, even mildly amusing, and my first interpretation was what Generalissima said they were going for. In a way, I think drawing something that a boomer understands should probably worry Generalissima a little bit. --Floquenbeam (talk) 19:36, 16 May 2024 (UTC)

The "Previous Comix" button leads me to the Comix before the Comix before previous Comix and then, when I get to the actual previous Comix, the "Next Comix" button seems to be absent there. Strange, isn't it? [wADroughtOfVowels^P 18:49, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

[@ADroughtOfVowels](#), the previous comix link was fixed in [Special:Diff/1224224289](#). Some of the previous/next links are missing, because the Comix was published in three different columns over the years: [Comix](#) (as this edition's), [CommonsComix](#), and [Humour](#). —[andrybak](#) (talk) [20:58, 19 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

looking at some of these comments without looking at the actual comic (or the context of the author, who i diclose is my friend), you'd think this was some kind of egregiously offensive jab at both plural queer zoomers *and* at old white men... i think that says more about the jumpiness of the community than it does about the comic ... [sawyer](#) * [he/they](#) * [talk](#) [20:33, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

I think maybe its because its hard to identify what the "joke" is, and people assume that if they don't get the joke they are probably the but of it. [Bawolff](#) (talk) [21:07, 16 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

TIL we don't have an encyclopedia article on [Boomer humor](#). Also, I learned that only 16% of seniors use canes, which seems unusually low. For me, comedy that focuses on generational warfare is very low-hanging fruit, and should probably be avoided if it isn't done with exceptional care. "Kids these days" comics are rarely funny across the board, but some people like [Gary Larson](#) managed to reinvent the idea by using young and old animals, often extinct species, to further heighten the absurdity. I think that kind of extreme take is what is missing here. Recently, some younger people have dismissed Larson as an example of Boomer humor, and I think that might be true for some of his panels, but Larson did manage to reinvent the genre in a unique way that appealed to many different generations. Perhaps if the Carter-era professor was also promoting an idea unique to his older generation in the 1970s it would have some comedic parity, and for me, that would be funny. Part of the problem is that you are giving the appearance of punching down at the younger generation who have not had as many opportunities as the older generation and have had to struggle and come into their own in an altogether unique way. This aspect is covered in some detail in our article on [theories of humor](#). It can be difficult for some people of certain political affiliations to understand how this works. [Viriditas](#) (talk) [03:14, 17 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Good points all. My initial defense-of-older-Wikipedians above may be too harsh, and from reading this discussion it seems that the cartoon has served the principled purpose of creating dialogue. The youngster with the book pointing at the frowning geezer with a cane does create a wellsource test, we get what we get out of the cartoon. But by bringing whatever it brings to each reader it sets up a better understanding of the full community. I've read elsewhere that the photograph from the Toronto Wikiconference shows lots of people that look like your grandparents (that was written off-site, and not in a complimentary way). But looking at it from just a touch outside the box, what a great thing we have built! Members of all generations of many nations collabing! Has this ever occurred before in human history? Probably not, and that seems the important takeaway. And at least the cartoonist made him a professor, as one of the greatest groups of untapped potential editors are retired professors, active residents of nursing homes, and why we need a Wikipedian-in-residence in that huge Florida retirement community whose name slips my mind. [Randy Kryn](#) (talk) [03:17, 17 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

The bottom line is that ageism is and has been a huge problem, and it's often swept under the rug. It's such a huge problem in the modern job market right now that there's a burgeoning industry based on hiding your age from recruiters in internet searches. There's also the loss of institutional memory that goes missing each year

with older workers leaving or being pushed out of the job market. On the other side of the equation, there's a high barrier to entry for younger people in some fields that's almost impossible for them to break into, and this has come at the expense of higher education in countries where the younger generation cannot afford it anymore. My personal experience is that each brings something to the table that the other can use; the younger people bring fresh ideas and a willingness to experiment, while the older people bring experience and accumulated knowledge from many years that they can draw from so the younger people don't have to reinvent the wheel. Within all of this, there is a great opportunity for humor, we just have to be able to see it. [Viriditas \(talk\) 03:26, 17 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

Ageism doesn't seem to be a problem on Wikipedia, unless I'm missing it. The cartoon is about Wikipedia, not society in general. [Randy Kryn \(talk\) 03:35, 17 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

We might be using the terms differently. The trope of "Kids these days" depends on negative stereotypes of younger people. Also, ageism is one of the most common discriminatory attitudes in social discourse, with almost all of our interactions depending on some elements of it. You have a point that ageism is far less prevalent in faceless, virtual collaborative workspaces, but it still shows up if you look for it. This particular comic depends on it in various ways. Perhaps I am overly sensitive to it as I'm always on the lookout for it. [Viriditas \(talk\) 03:49, 17 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

I literally did not know what syscourse meant until I came across this, no joke. Coming from someone who edits [NETPOP](#)-related articles, BTW. [Eclipse \(talk\) \(contribs\) 00:34, 25 May 2024 \(UTC\)](#)

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