



Alumni Spotlight

Gary Arnold '91

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When Gary Arnold '91 began capturing memories on his first video camera in 2005, he had no idea that his new hobby would one day thrust his family into the limelight. Arnold's story begins in Oxford, PA, the town where he grew up and now lives. He says Millersville University was his first and only choice. It was close to home, and he loved the open spaces and welcoming environments.

Weather patterns and details in nature have always interested Arnold, leading him to enroll in Millersville's meteorology program. He later shifted focus to English and recalls being inspired by professors Goodman and Patton of the English department and professor Smith of the philosophy department. Arnold says, "Their classes were full of energy and life."

Arnold went on to become a writing instructor at Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, where he has worked for nine years. "I like to keep it real," he says. "Students appreciate authentic communication. There is an element of entertainment that students crave. It's everywhere,

so I try to incorporate that into the classroom to help them stay engaged." Arnold says he also valued the opportunity to get involved with extracurricular activities while at the 'Ville, because they helped to give him a unique life perspective which he now brings to the classroom. "Life is short, and those experiences matter," he explains.

Arnold brought this mantra to his home movies. His hope was to share the recorded family experiences with relatives living in Germany, by putting them online. In his own words, Arnold describes the videos of himself, his wife and two children as "mundane moments" at home, school, and on vacation. As technology evolved, internet services like YouTube allowed Arnold to share his vision and memories with the world. His focus on finer details within ordinary events, coupled with his visual style, gained the attention of YouTube viewers across the country. One video, featuring his children running through an obstacle course at Great Wolf Lodge, amassed more than 600,000 views. "It became more than a hobby," Arnold says, but he didn't intend to cultivate a brand. He hoped to "capture the flavor of the moment" and the things that his family enjoyed.



The twist in Arnold's story came in 2015, when he received a call from film director, Dean Fleischer-Camp. Arnold says Fleischer-Camp saw something special in the YouTube channel, remarking that the videos were "different because they focused on the smaller details of life that others weren't capturing." Fleischer-Camp hoped to edit the home movies into a work that was part fiction, part documentary—adding in elements such as voiceover and sound effects. He planned to turn the factual videos into a fictional narrative of his own. After much consideration, Arnold and his wife, Antje, gave their blessing.

While there was little contact from the director during the two-year production process, Arnold remembers Fleischer-Camp calling to say the film had taken a unique turn. “He wanted to know if we were comfortable with our family being portrayed as a family eluding the law for fraud,” says Arnold. With the green light to continue, “Fraud” premiered in 2016 and reimagines the Arnolds as a materialistic family that turns to crime to fund its lavish spending habits. The film was an independent hit and is currently available online. “It completely boggles my mind that this ever happened,” Arnold says.

The experience inspired Arnold toward an even bigger vision, creating an independent documentary of his own. With the working title “Subterranean Séance,” Arnold’s film will be an investigation into EVPs, “electronic voice phenomena,” unexplained sounds that appear on audio recordings that sometimes sound like human voices. Some people believe they are paranormal or supernatural in origin. Arnold’s wife, Antje, is a creator too, having published a novel titled “The Girl Behind The Wall” in 2018 about growing up in 1980s East Germany.

Arnold continues to bring his knack for entertainment and communication to his work as an educator, and still maintains a YouTube profile. He’s definitely grateful for his ‘Ville experience, too. “You never know how much what you learn in college will help you in life,” he says. “Seize every moment and look for opportunities that are out there. Don’t be afraid to try new things and expand your thoughts.”

More information about “Fraud” can be found at <https://memory.is/fraud>. “Subterranean Séance” is expected to be released in 2020, and “The Girl Behind The Wall” can be found at online retailers or in store.