

WRITERS BLOC

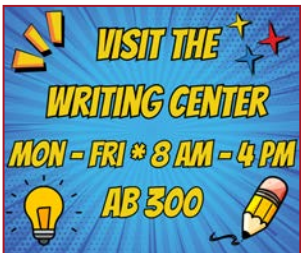
GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
V16 N5 / 15 MARCH 2025

JOIN THE BLOC

We hope you are enjoying our newsletter's new style. We'd love to see you here in the *Writers Bloc*. Share your opinions, ideas, reviews and recommendations, fun experiences, and creative writing, and photographs.

And have you seen seen the Department of Language and Literature's new Facebook page? It's a great place to get a daily dose of literary inspiration as well as updates on our events.

Click to check us out!



SEND WRITERS BLOC

SUBMISSIONS TO

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The views expressed in Writers Bloc are not necessarily the views of GSU.

CONTACT FACULTY AT

www.glenville.edu/departments/language-literature

GUEST AUTHOR MARCH 20

The Little Kanawha Reading Series will host author Renée K. Nicholson on Thursday, March 20, at 4:00 p.m. in the RFK Library. She will read from her books of essays and poems and participate in a Q&A session. Here's a bit about our guest:

Renée K. Nicholson is the author of *Fierce and Delicate: Essays on Dance and Illness*, co-editor of the award-winning anthology *Bodies of Truth: Personal Narratives of Illness, Disability, and Medicine*, and the poetry collections *Roundabout Directions to Lincoln Center* (Urban Farmhouse Press, 2014) and *Post Scripts* (Wild Ink, 2024). She directed the Humanities Center at West Virginia University until 2024, and is a creative partner in Healthcare Is Human, a nonprofit dedicated to authentic storytelling in healthcare. Renée is a contributing writer for *Synopsis: A Journal of Health Humanities*, and the author of many creative pieces and scholarly articles. Renée was a past Emerging Writer-in-Residence at Penn State-Altoona, and the recipient of the 2018 Susan S. Landis Award for Distinguished Service to the Arts from the West Virginia Division of Arts, Culture, and History.



"My world is about words—how they convey something meaningful, move people to see beauty, help people when they are struggling with illness, bring voice to those who feel without voice. I recently left a position in academia to focus on the work of writing, both my own, and writing in healthcare. I've worked with patients with ALS, cancer, and HIV and with health providers, such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and others. Narrative medicine allows us to bring story practice into healthcare spaces, in order to acknowledge, absorb, interpret and act on the stories of others, bringing a narrative competence into clinical spaces. Patients and providers become people through their stories, helping to instill a sense of trust between them."¹

"I started my life thinking one thing: I am a dancer. But because of health issues, that came close but did not become a long-term reality. Instead, I found myself drawn to writing. Expression is part of my make up, just like my blood and bones. . . . I wrote a book, *Fierce and Delicate*, about training as a dancer and living as a rheumatoid arthritis patient. I found ways to let dance back into my life, and to make meaning from the changes I faced."²

"I believe the best artists and writers have a deep sense of compassion for others. While we can't view the world through the proverbial rose-colored glasses, we can bring forth difficult aspects honestly. This honesty helps those who interact with our art feel compassion towards the plights of others. It's one of the things that art is well equipped to do."¹

"I continue to hold the belief that stories—real, authentic storytelling, steeped in craft as to be well told—can impact our lives in a myriad of ways and that these artifacts of our lived experience are vitally important."²

Read more about Nicholson

¹ "Meet Renée Nicholson." *Bold Journey*, 19 Nov. 2024, boldjourney.com/meet-renee-nicholson/.

² "Meet Renée Nicholson." *CanvasRebel*, 25 Apr. 2024, canvasrebel.com/meet-renee-nicholson/.



Another Poem About West Virginia

Cascading sky tears, the ones
I did not shed, the ones I wish
to cup in my dirt hands and make
a milky mud. In streaks I see the sun
through the gap, ridge drenched,
the saplings bowed as if in deep prayer,
suppliant of a fearsome god I do not
know. A distant rumble suggests another
downpour. This place I refuse to leave,
my valley, flood. Flood.

— Renée K. Nicholson

This poem will appear in an upcoming *Anthology of Appalachian Writers*

WEIRD QUESTION of the WEEK

You've just become an Uber driver at the zoo. What's the largest individual animal you could reasonably fit in your car?

Amanda Cottrill

Campus Postal Worker

"I drive a truck and the first animal that popped in my head was a polar bear."

Brianna Mollohan

Business Major

"I have a minivan. The largest animal I could fit in there would be a medium-sized bear. He would definitely be snug in there."

Schuyler Chapman

Associate Professor of English

"Probably an orangutan (maybe only a chimpanzee). Our car is small."

Stephany Amos

Financial Aid Director

"I love animals, so I would attempt to fit pretty much any animal in my car. If not, maybe I could put them on the top of it. If I laid my seats down, I think I could reasonably haul a polar bear inside of it."

Jennifer Wenner

Senior Lecturer of Communications

Pretty sure a bear. A lion or tiger, anything that could curl up. I think no horse-like creatures and no antlered animals, except maybe a dik-dik. They would be ok.

Brook Hefner

Business Major

"If I put all the seats down, I think I could fit a lion."

Mike Wheeler

Chief Director of Public Safety

"A large alligator, I drive a pickup truck."

Marjorie Stewart

Professor of English

"Oh easy—a giraffe when I put the top down."



Image by Perchance

WHEN LIFE FELT PERFECT

Contributed by Angelena Zifka, GSU Dual Enrollment

Behind my childhood home lies a creek, a haven of tranquility in comparison to the constant restlessness occurring inside. The creek was livelier than the tense happenings going on indoors; salamanders, crawdads, minnows, and even the occasional cool looking rock that had no significance other than joining my rock collection all awaited me. The same thing that made me dread being in the house is what drew me to the creek— inconsistency. When I was uncertain about what was going on with my family, I would put on my old, ill-fitting outdoor clothes and my sparkly pink rubber boots, grab an old Tupperware container, and head outside. Every time I would go in the creek, I would find something different; no two times were ever the same. Nothing took my mind off things more than an engaging new experience, especially when it included finding as many creepy crawlies as I could—life felt perfect. These days, for reasons I assume arose from pollution, not much life is present there. This change was not exactly welcome, but in a way reflects my growth farther away from it. Walking down there does not feel the same—it is rare to come across any of the familiar animals I grew up seeing as a child. All that's left are the rocks that no longer feel like magnificent discoveries, but just rocks. I have come to understand that regardless of this, things still would never feel the same. The special feeling of the creek was not because it was particularly unique in any way, but in the reason I was there. I have changed just as much as that creek without realizing it. The hectic life that occurred indoors and the safety I felt in the creek are both part of my growth as a person and are equal parts of my identity.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES

Join us in GSU's Fine Arts Auditorium on **Monday, March 31**, when the Rustic Mechanicals theatre company presents Shakespeare's classic tragedy **Macbeth** as part of their 2025 Vaulting Ambition Tour. The show begins at 7:00 p.m., but the doors will open at 6:30 for a pre-show music jam. Everyone is welcome, and admissions is FREE!

THE PLAY'S THE THING

Contributed by Katelynn McGinnis, Education Major

The Little Kanawha Drama & Theatre Club at Glenville State University is a thriving hub for theatre enthusiasts. We revived the club during the fall semester, aiming to create a vibrant community where students can explore their passion for the performing arts. As the President, I have the honor of leading our enthusiastic group. We hold meetings every **Monday and Wednesday at 4:30 PM in the Presidents Auditorium** in the Administration Building, where we brainstorm ideas, rehearse, and plan for upcoming productions. Everyone interested in learning more about the club is welcome to attend.

In December of 2024, we successfully staged a heartwarming production of *A Christmas Carol*, which met with great enthusiasm from both the campus and the wider community. Currently, we are channeling our energy and creativity into preparing for our next performance, *Our Town*, scheduled for April. This play offers a unique opportunity for our members to showcase their talents and for the audience to experience the magic of live theatre. Being part of this club has not only allowed us to nurture our passion for the performing arts but also to build lasting friendships and a sense of camaraderie among like-minded individuals.