

WRITERS BLOC

GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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WELCOME

We're happy you've joined us in the *Writers Bloc*. This issue features some great interviews with GSU folks you may or may not already know. Student writers also share their thoughts on some of their favorite films and present their creative writing. We've got one more issue this semester, so feel free to send us your writing and photos.



SEND WRITERS BLOC

SUBMISSIONS TO

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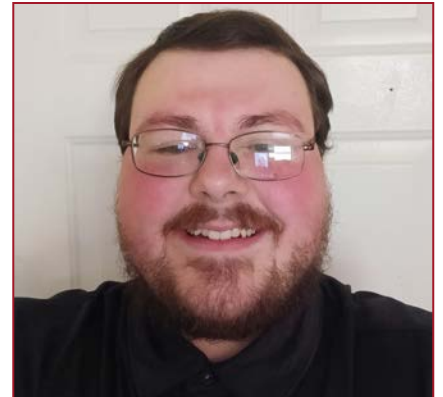
www.glenville.edu/departments/language-literature

WHO IS ENGLISH MAJOR JACOB BONDS?

The Department of Language and Literature is proud of all of its students majoring and minoring in English, including Jacob Bonds. Let's see how Jacob feels about being an English major.

Writers Bloc: Looking back on the literature you've encountered this year, which text challenged or transformed your perspective in the most unexpected way?

Jacob Bonds: Without a doubt, the most toilsome work I have encountered this year is John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. With his awe-inspiring craftsmanship and dedication to making this epic transcend mere categorization are what make it so remarkable; however, Milton also creates a plethora of pitfalls that obscures meaning if the reader approaches this text like any other, requiring steadfast commitment and critical thinking to surpass the deliberate difficulty.



W B: What literary character or author have you found yourself thinking about outside of class, and what about them continues to resonate with you?

J B: I would say that a literary character that I found myself thinking about in the dead of night is Frederic Henry from *Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway. This was a selection from Modern Novel and honestly it was the ending that made Frederic Henry stick in my head so much. I will not spoil the novel, but I found myself rather fond of the character and fullheartedly sympathetic towards his plights.

W B: What aspect of being an English major do you most enjoy or value?

J B: The aspect that I enjoy most as an English major is that I am actively encouraged to explore beyond the intended path. I have the freedom to explore aspects of English that I love, such as creative writing and analyzing literature, both are of paramount importance. In creative writing, I was free to explore different styles and elements of writing with the gentle guidance of insightful Dr. Minton. In my literature courses, I have been able to determine underlying themes in texts that feed my curiosity. Having the ever-attentive Dr. Amanda Chapman help with the refinement process of these ideas is beyond wonderful.

W B: What connections have you discovered between your English studies and other aspects of your academic or personal life?

J B: My answer is best captured by the term of "aporia" simultaneously in rhetorical context and its definition. When presented with a logical impasse, my English studies have equipped me with the ability that allows me to think beyond just what is immediately presented as possible. It allows me to explore all options and possibilities that have yet to be considered through thorough examination. Then, after careful discernment, I can express my findings in a compelling manner that captures the intrigue appropriately.

In an academic sense, I can apply this for deeper inquiry and allow myself to become more comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity for the greater goal of cultivating critical thought. In my personal life, it allows me to explore multiple perspectives that can very well collide in a logical manner—with careful consideration, I can find a compromise that allows parties to be content with the results. All with the confidence I need to present it.

Turn to page 3 for more of our interview with Jacob Bonds

MEET KENDRA PULLEN

Contributed by Emily Lauria, Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit

Kendra Pullen
Professional Mental Health Counselor
Office: MCCC 137 / Phone: 304-462-6429
Email: Kendra.Pullen@glenville.edu

Kendra completed her undergraduate degree at Glenville State. She received her Master's degree at Marshall University but was able to intern with Glenville again while completing her Master's. She really enjoyed working under the former director at Glenville for two years, and afterwards, when GSU asked her to come back to campus for a job, she said yes.

She has a lot of daily responsibilities including meeting with students who need help, whether it be by appointment or walk-in, and crisis intervention and behavioral intervention if needed. She receives, compiles, and interprets reports on students from her colleagues, tracks mental health trends and test scores from the students, completes assessments and evaluations of students, and deals with the interpersonal wellbeing of the students at the college.



Kendra also helps advise students on coping mechanisms such as a "smashplate." This is when a student writes what is bothering them on a plate and then smashes it. Due to having an increase in students seen, Glenville offers a 24/7 online telehealth service with counselors available from the state. Glenville also offers a 24/7 crisis intervention hotline which students can reach out to in times of need. Kendra is also on call with her work phone 24/7 in case her coworkers or a student might need to reach her.

Kendra states that the most rewarding aspect of working at Glenville is seeing small goals reached by the students specifically. Her role has evolved very much since working at Glenville, and she has witnessed many changes since the former director left. Her department tries to contribute to the community by simply trying to have some fun and be relatable to the students. Kendra says one of her favorite tasks is making and creating posters for upcoming events. The department organizes mental health events periodically to reduce the stigma around mental health by showing movies and providing training sessions to students. Her advice to students who want to make the most of the resources her department provides would be to not be afraid to ask for help. Everyone needs help these days, but if you don't ask, it makes it hard for others to know when you need help, if at all. She says that it is okay to ask for help. Her inspiration is seeing college-age students figure out who they are. She says she never knows what to expect.

Kendra has advice for students wishing to obtain a job in her field. She recommends they complete a bachelor's degree in behavioral science, psychology, or sociology. The next step would be to complete a master's degree. Kendra has a master's in clinical mental health counseling. After a master's, students would need to obtain a professional counselor's license, log hours, and complete continuing education credit after gaining their license. Lastly, students may want to work on expanding their network of people they know connect with other mentors to continue to expand their knowledge and build connections to help others in need. You can visit with Kendra if you need mental health counseling or if you are interested in a career as a mental health counselor.



TRILLIUM READING

Join us on **Wednesday, April 30, at 4:00 p.m.** at the Glenville City Park on Main Street (RFK Library in case of rain) for the annual *Trillium* Reading. The *Trillium* is GSU's literary arts journal.

With guidance from the Department of Language and Literature, GSU students have edited and produced issues of the *Trillium* annually since 1979.

Faculty advisor Dr. Jonathan Minton notes, "The *Trillium* is an important part of GSU for several reasons. For one, it gives our students, staff, faculty, and community a space to voice and showcase their creative expression, and it gives our student editorial staff some practical, hands-on experience in terms of editing, design, and collaboration."

The *Trillium* is not just for writers. It also includes art, and its student art editors are from the Fine Arts Department. The *Trillium* hosts an annual art show, held in the Spears Art Gallery in the Fine Arts Building, that features works from the current issue.

Minton explains, "We have our annual art show and live reading for the same reasons. A gallery show and a live reading are, in some ways, the last step in creative expression—going public. These events also give our students practice in the very useful skills of curating and event planning."

The RFK Library has provided a welcoming space for the *Trillium* reading as well as the Little Kanawha Reading Series, and other literary and dramatic reading events over the years. This year, the *Trillium* Reading will be an outdoor event. We hope to see you all there to help celebrate our community's creative voices.

"The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls."

— Pablo Picasso

WHO'S DON KNOTTS?

Contributed by an anonymous Criminal Justice Major



The Don Knotts statue that stands outside of the Metropolitan Theatre in downtown Morgantown, West Virginia, is a landmark I've visited and walked past numerous times. Don Knotts was born in Morgantown in 1924, and later in his life, he became a famous actor starring in shows such as *The Andy Griffith Show*, playing deputy Barney Fife from 1960 to 1968, and *Three's Company*, playing Ralph Furley from 1979 to 1984. He also appeared in a number of Disney movies in the 1960s and '70s and

played the TV repairman in *Pleasantville* (1998). The statue's design shows Knotts holding the deputy cap he wore as his most famous character, Barney Fife. The landmark pays homage to someone who was once a resident of Morgantown and blossomed into a well-known actor. This landmark sparks feelings of happiness and being proud knowing that Knotts came out of my small town and made it to Hollywood, starring in shows that I grew up watching. He walked the same Morgantown sidewalks that residents do today, and now he's honored with being placed in a spot where people can walk by him and learn who he is. Older people can walk by with younger folks and teach the little ones about someone from their town who made it big in history. Next time you're in Morgantown, stop by the Metropolitan Theatre and visit Don Knotts.

"Lock up your libraries if you like; but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."

— Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

JACOB BONDS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

W B: What is one insight or skill you've gained from your English courses this year that you envision applying in your future?

J B: Syntopical reading—though this is a more recent skill that Dr. Amanda Chapman has been subtly pushing the senior seminar course towards (at least I speculate). The ability to understand patterns, ideas, and various elements across multiple selections of text regarding the same or similar material is amazing. This is a great skill to develop mastery of any skill through research and conceptually deconstructing the material to see overarching trends.

W B: What are your plans for next year?

J B: After graduating in the fall, I plan to finish my novel (*Myriad of Delicate Dreams*) and seek out publishing opportunities. In terms of occupational aspirations, I would love to pursue something along the lines of Education. I have thought about getting certified as a Public Notary, becoming an English Teacher here in West Virginia, or furthering my education through pursuance of a master's degree. One thing that will be forever certain is that I will continue writing and critically thinking about the world around me.



Travelling Together

If we are separated I will
try to wait for you
on your side of things

your side of the wall and the water
and of the light moving at its own speed
even on leaves that we have seen
I will wait on one side

while a side is there

— W. S. Merwin

VISIT THE SUTTON DAM

Contributed by Mayson Shingler, Elementary/Early Education Major

I live in Sutton, West Virginia, home of the Sutton Dam. Sutton is known for its history and tourist attractions. Sutton Dam is just one of many. My great grandfather helped build the dam and loved telling stories about it during my childhood. Sutton Dam was authorized to build by the flood Control Act. Construction for the dam started in 1946. Build was interrupted by the Korean War and resumed in 1956. The dam was completed in 1961. It costs about \$35 million to build Sutton Dam. It is 210 feet high, 1,178 feet long, and made of concrete and pipes. Taking a tour of the inside of the Sutton Dam was one of the best things I have experienced in my life. I would compare being inside the Sutton Dam to being inside a gloomy cave. When I was little, my family would drive to the bottom of the dam and see how high on the concrete stones we could reach. Many people enjoy fishing and having picnics at the dam.



10 THINGS I ~~HATE~~ LOVE ABOUT THIS FILM

Contributed by Zoey Kute, Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit

10 Things I Hate About You (1999) is a classic teen rom com that is still being watched to this day and is still resonating with audiences over two decades after its release. With sharp humor, an incredible cast, relatable high school experiences, and a more modern spin on Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, it remains one of the genre's most beloved films. In the film, Kat Stratford (based on Katherina) is a strong-willed, independent teenage girl, and Patrick Verona (based on Petruchio) is the guy who is paid to date her so her younger sister Bianca can date. This movie keeps the central theme of Shakespeare's play of trying to "tame a shrew," which we actually hear Kat being called in the movie by Michael when Kat almost runs him over.

The story takes place in a Seattle high school; it follows the life of Kat Stratford (Julia Stiles). Kat Stratford is a smart and rebellious teen who is determined not to fall into the stereotypical high school romance, and would rather spend her time reading or focusing on school. Her younger sister Bianca Stratford (Larayne McKenna) is the complete opposite of Kat. She is popular at school and a sweet girl, who has a very overprotective father who will not let her date until her sister Kat does. Enter Patrick Verona (Heath Ledger), the charming bad boy who gets paid to date Kat in order for Bianca to be allowed to go out with the popular boy at school, Joey Donner (Andrew Keegan). Like with all classic rom coms, the sparks are flying, and it plays out like all rom com classics do. I feel like this film is different from other films in this genre because the characters were made to be more relatable, and we really get to see the characters fully and in depth.



While this tale is familiar, *10 Things I Hate About You* is unique with witty dialogue and highly memorable performances. Julia Stiles acts wonderfully as Kat, giving her character both humor and vulnerability. But Heath Ledger steals the show as Patrick, giving his character the perfect sense of humor, the perfect bad boy edge, and effortless charm as an actor, especially in his memorable scene where he tries to make up with Kat by embarrassing himself and performing "Can't Take My Eyes Off You."

Though the film's universal themes of rebellion, love, and self-discovery are apparent, *10 Things I Hate About You* never shies away from mocking the high school stereotypes. I just graduated high school, so I'm familiar with these stereotypes like Kat's "independent, rebel girl" or Bianca being the "super popular, pretty girl that all the boys want a chance with" and then of course Patrick's "bad boy with a mysterious vibe to him." I have seen them all firsthand, and this movie portrays each stereotype perfectly. It is equally well-balanced between emotion and humor and is an emotionally satisfying and entertaining film. Though it sticks to the script of the most romantic comedies, the wit and intelligence of the characters take it to a level higher than most teen films.

When I saw this movie for the first time, it made me feel accepted and brought a tear to my eye. It was very relatable for me as a teenage girl trying to make sense of what high school life was going to be like. As someone who felt just like Kat, I didn't know myself as well as I thought I should, or as well as other people knew themselves. Her rough, stubborn demeanor was something that I related to, and I admired that she did not change in the slightest from what she believed in, despite whatever was being forced down her throat from her peers. Kat and Patrick's relationship was like the complicated relationships that I've had; how impressions can be false, and how sometimes a little bit of vulnerability must come into play so that people can trust one another. That moment in the movie when Kat recites her poem in front of the class was a gut punch. I have never related to a movie more than I did when I saw that scene. The mixture of strength, insecurity, and need to be perceived as me. Watching this film made me think that I was not alone because there were other girls, even in the 90s, experiencing the same thing I did, through relationships and high school. My rating of this movie would be a definite A.

WEIRD QUESTION *of the* WEEK

Let's tap into sense memory. *What's your favorite smell?*

Tessa Simmons - Management Major

"My favorite smell is vanilla, or fresh paint on pavement!"

Steven Shepkosky - Land Surveying Tech Major

"Cinnamon apple spray."

Kandas Queen - Associate Professor of Business

"Mine is lilac."

Abigail Hall - English Major

"Vanilla!"

Amanda Chapman - Associate Professor of English

"Woodsmoke."

Skyler Davis - Math Major

"My favorite smell is white board markers. I know that is weird, but I am a math major, so all I do on white boards is math. When the day is done, I can smell the markers in the room because I have used like two whole markers on one proof. The smell of markers makes me have pride in my work because it means I did a good day's work."

Marjorie Stewart - Professor of English

"Toast and coffee."

Schuyler Chapman - Associate Professor of English

"Marinara cooking."

Michael Vozniak - Assistant Professor of English

"Definitely woodsmoke, especially from a campfire."

Jacob Bonds - English Major

"I would say my favorite smell is lavender!"