

# The Mount Observer

“Voices of the students of Mount Wachusett Community College”

November 7, 2022

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 3

11 PAGES

## Be Well at the Mount Mental Wellness at Any Time and on the Line

By **Cody Nathanson**  
Assistant Editor

With the rollout of MWCC’s new “Be Well at the Mount” program, students can expect an easier time accessing mental health services on and off campus alongside a new host of options that give greater control to their mental health.

As of September 8, MWCC teamed up with mental health service and wellness provider Christie Campus, a Massachusetts-based company currently supporting over 70 campuses and just over 600,000 students across the U.S. The

30-year-old health insurance company now turned mental health provider, is still relatively new in the venture, only having made the switch back in 2018.

Although prior mental health services at the Mount offered both in person and online counseling, this new partnership also provides the college with year-round 24/7 access to certified counselors, telehealth visits over the phone, and additional wellness resources like coping strategies and mindfulness programs. In practice, “Be Well at the Mount” is a sort of mental health service

re-launch that is aiming to make practicing mental health as convenient and as accessible as possible.

The brainpower behind the mental team-up between MWCC and Christie Campus radiated from the Mount’s one and only Mental Health Counselor, Melissa Manzi. In a conversation with Manzi, she talked about her “holistic” view and purpose of mental health services. She stated, “... it’s not just about a mental health condition that they have, it’s about how it affects everything that they’re doing.”



Image courtesy of MWCC

Manzi explained that for students who might prefer to stay home, lack transportation, or maybe want to be more selective with their therapist, they have that option. “If you

want options, this service gives you all the options,” said Manzi. She continued, “Before you would just have one counselor,

**continued on page 2**  
“Be Well at the Mount” >>>

## The Play That Goes Wrong... Gone Right!

### Theater at the Mount’s October 16 Performance Sells Tickets and Laughs

By **Elysian Alder**  
Observer Contributor

On Sunday, October 16—the day of the *Theater at the Mount*’s final production of *The Play That Goes Wrong*, pulling up the website to purchase tickets for the show revealed a pleasantly surprising fact: tickets were selling, and they were selling fast.

Within ten minutes, the total number of tickets remaining went from 87 to 62, and that didn’t even account for the tickets that would doubtlessly be purchased on-site at the box office. To put those numbers into perspective, the website for *Theater at the Mount* stated that the theater can seat a whopping

total of “515 people in 15 unobstructed rows.”

With a 2:00 PM showtime, showing up even fifteen minutes before curtain time would turn out to be a risky gamble when it came to obtaining parking in close proximity to the entrance.

After speaking with Gail Steele, the long-time director of the theater itself, she provided some insight as to why that would be. When it comes to what types of shows the theater chooses to put on, she said, “We very much are responsive to our clientele, and what our clientele likes are musicals, classic comedies—we don’t do well with heavy dramas.” So, the reception and turnout that their

production of *The Play That Goes Wrong* received, even on just that final performance of it, supports that sentiment entirely.

A 2012 play by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer, and Henry Shields of *Mischief Theatre Company*, *The Play That Goes Wrong* has been described by the website *Broadway Goes Wrong* as “a hilarious hybrid of Monty Python and Sherlock Holmes,” which falls squarely into the category mentioned by Steele: classic comedies.

It’s a play within a play, where the actors are playing actors who are also putting on a play—a murder mystery, to be exact. Hijinks, shenanigans, and downright disasters ensue over

the course of the play.

British accents are donned, cues are missed, words are mispronounced by a character who writes their lines on their hand to remember them, props are “broken” convincingly, and one of the “actors” is hauled off of the stage through a makeshift window after she’s accidentally rendered unconscious by another character, only to be replaced by a clumsy stagehand who’s given the script to read on the fly. It’s all in the name of comedy, of course, and there was no shortage of laughs that day from the packed crowd.

**continued on page 2**  
*The Play That Goes Wrong* >>>

## PREVIEWS

### What’s the Point of a Gap Year?

Students Take Gap Years for Many Reasons; Laziness Isn’t One of Them.

**For the full article, see page 3**

### Profiles:

Read about students Annabelle Kennedy and Lexi Gallagher, as well as Vet Tech Professor Hilary Blair.

**For the full articles, see pages 4-5**

### Review: *Black Adam* (2022)

**For the full review, see page 9**

### Review: *Doctor Who - The Power of the Doctor* (2022)

**For the full review, see page 9**

**Art On Campus: see pages 7-8**

**Comics: see page 9**

**Events: see pages 11-12**

# The Play That Goes Wrong

>>> continued from page 1

After the curtains closed, patrons and audience members on the way out could be heard chatting contentedly with one another, saying things along the lines of, “That was just what I needed,” or, “You didn’t stop laughing the whole time.”

In a mostly post-pandemic world, Steele said, “Since we reopened after Covid, this is the first show where I feel like we’re back up to where we were before Covid. We’ve done four or five shows since Covid, and attendance was off, but this is the first time it feels like we’re getting back to normal. People were really slow to come back.”

But come back they did, and in inarguable droves. *Theater at the Mount* isn’t the only performance art medium to have struggled and suffered attendance losses as a result of the pandemic, even during the aftermath, so to

speak. An article from *The New York Times* was published with a subheading that stated that Broadway itself had “attendance that was soft” and “multiple shows that have closed.”

Yet, the arts and theater itself have survived and prevailed. Just a few quick flips through the playbill provided before the show revealed a who’s who in the cast page, where patrons can read brief biographies for each cast member and a statement or two from some of them, and almost every quote included makes mention of how tight-knit the cast and crew are.

Kate Sheridan, who plays Annie in *The Play That Goes Wrong*, is quoted saying, “Thanks to the fam (TAM & biological) for the love and support. I hope we give you a giggle.”

She isn’t alone in emphasizing the importance of that found family feeling. Steele agreed



Image courtesy of MWCC

that the resilience of theater arts shows how important having a sense of community, an outlet for temporary escapism, and

opportunities for connection is, and that it “goes a long way toward healing a lot of the depression and anxiety that

people are experiencing. It’s good for your health.”

## Be Well at The Mount

>>> continued from page 1

but now you have a choice.”

In an interview with the Executive Vice President of Client Engagement of Christie Campus, Amaura Kemmerer, she mentioned that the demand for mental health services has “exploded” and that “it’s been hard for even well-resourced colleges...to keep up with that demand.”

Kemmerer also stated that alongside their service’s intended goal to “wrap around college and university counseling center[s] to help fill demand”, that it’s also about providing “more paths” and “more choices” in how students engage with their mental health. “It just opens the door for so many more students to be able to get access to the care they need without getting stuck in a waiting list...,” added Kemmerer.

“When it comes to mental health, we are always talking about a range and a spectrum,” said Kemmerer.

The spectrum according to Kemmerer covers students “that

might have a really bad day or a [have] conflict in a relationship”, or are expressing “symptoms of anxiety, depression, [or] struggling with grief.” She added, “that it all starts with a phone call to that 24/7 line, regardless of what’s happening for a student.”

Manzi similarly touched upon the “spectrum” of students’ issues, saying how she views her work more “holistically” and how often she plays the role of “coach” to meet the different needs of the student.

“I realize that everyone has a different way of responding...,” said Manzi. She went on to explain, “I’ll be the counselor that listens...because that’s what they need, or I might be the coach as that person has already done talk therapy, and they are like, I don’t want to talk about it.”

When asked what a successful day on the job looked like, Manzi replied, “A successful day is when I have seen a student and when they leave, they feel slightly better, ...or they feel more confident that they are

going to be ok.”

The ability and decision to find out if a counselor like Manzi gels with your needs is what Kemmerer attributed and described as, “the number one outcome for people to get better in counseling,” and that a student “feel[s] like the person understood them.” Kemmerer later added that students, “Can say hey, I met with John Doe, didn’t go very well, I’d like to meet with a new counselor.”

“I think what students will find is that there are a variety of approaches out there, but I always encourage, give it a try, find someone who fits,” said Kemmerer.

Manzi, who originally had plans to become a nurse, ended up pursuing a master’s in social work due to her time working under grants at MWCC. “I have always known that I wanted to go into a helping position,” said Manzi. “I am an individual who is very much doing what I love to do for work,” she explained.

The origins behind the MWCC and Christie Campus partnership started like most things, with

a grant from the government, explained Manzi. She continued, “I could have spent the money on a really expensive speaker, but that to me would have been a timed program that wasn’t going to keep lasting, but the service was going to last.”

As the “Be well at the Mount” program is soon approaching its nearly 7-week anniversary, Manzi wrote in a follow-up email

that even though the response to the program has been positive, currently, not many students are using the services. She further elaborated, “I think over time as everyone gets more familiar with it the usage will increase,” and how that as “semester stressors” grow that there will be an accompanying expectation of usage.

## Have a Story to Tell?

If you’ve got the scoop on the latest community news, feel free to contact our editors about adding your voice to the *Observer* crew! To reach out, send an email to:

[mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu)



# What's the Point of a Gap Year?

## Students Take Gap Years for Many Reasons; Laziness Isn't One of Them

By Kaitlyn Churcher  
OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Many college students feel pressure to graduate in 2 or 4 years, but what is the rush? Taking a gap year before or during college can help students take time to plan for the next couple of years ahead of them.

After graduating high school, many students are unsure of what they want to do. Some students decide to take a gap year to try out different things and see what their options are. Some may want to work for a year to save up to pay for school, travel the world, or even to just make the decision if they want to continue their education.

According to a 2019 *Forbes* article, 90% of students who take time off after high school enroll in a four-year institution within one year of completing their gap year. This article also stated that taking the time to figure out what success looks like is a surefire way to be directed in achieving it.

There are also some students who decide to take a gap year during their college years for the same reasons students take a gap year after graduating high school. Students who have already started their college career may take a gap year to handle financial issues, take care of their mental health, and again,

to make the decision if they want to return to school.

Sharon Rivers, MWCC Transfer Counselor and Academic Advisor, said that the media sometimes portrays gap years as “a frivolous thing that attributes to students being lazy, indecisive, and financially privileged.” In her years spent as a counselor and advisor, she said that her experience with students has been the opposite.

Since the pandemic hit in 2020, Rivers said that a significant number of students wanted to take time off from school because online education was not for everyone. Rivers also said that some students who

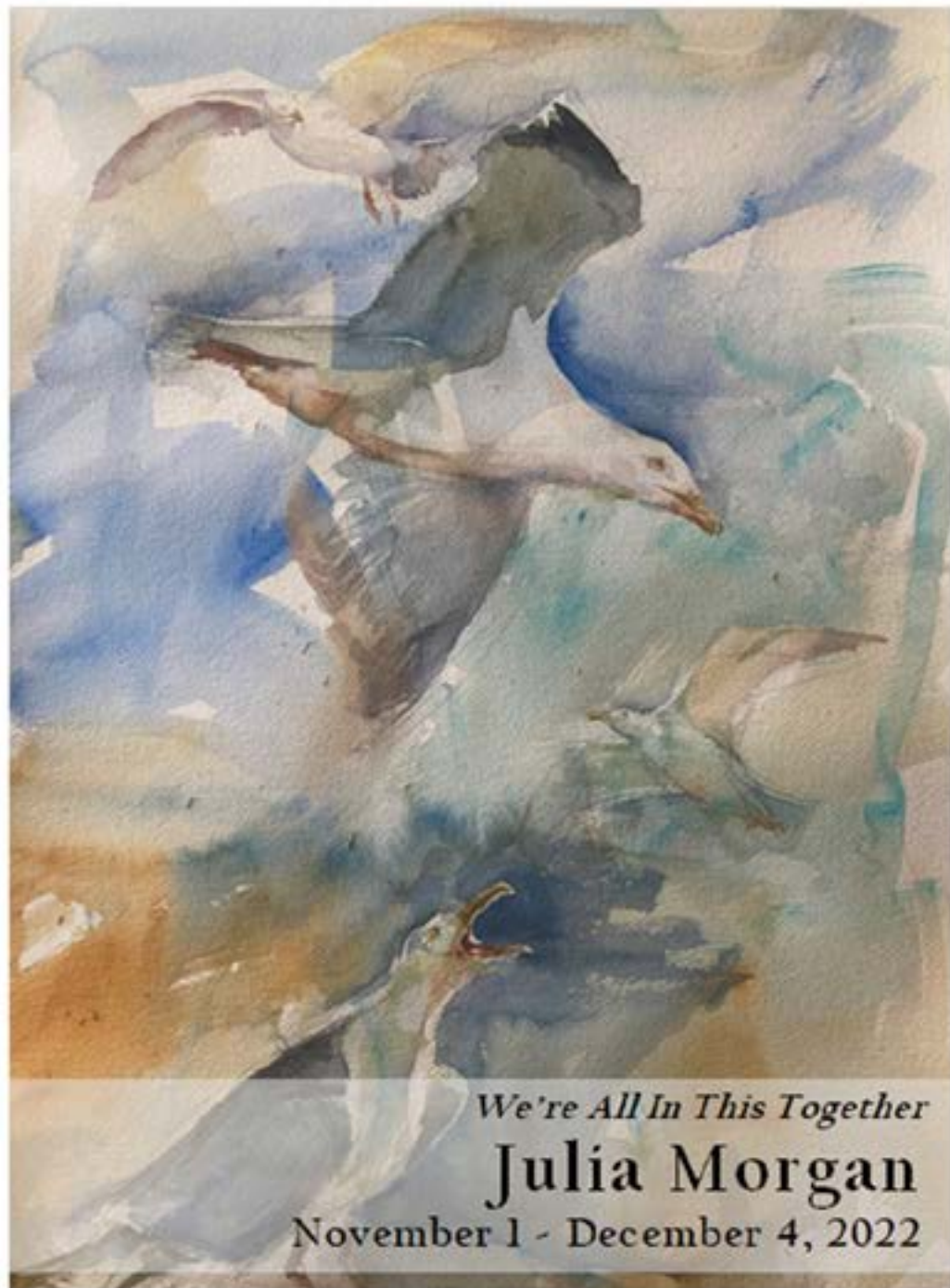
were considering taking a gap year knew not to because they knew they would not return.

According to a survey conducted at the University of California, Los Angeles, the number of students taking a gap year has been on a steady increase as gap years grow in popularity. Gap years give students time away from school to determine what their goals are and what they need to do to achieve those goals.

Some students consider taking a gap year to use the time for self-exploration and self-discovery. However, the most important thing when considering a gap year, according to Rivers,

is “Making a guarantee to yourself,” that you will either return to school or follow a set plan if you decide to not return. Rivers said that she has seen people who have taken more than a year away from school and have still returned over ten years later to get their degree.

When asked what advice she would give to a student who is considering taking a gap year, Rivers said, “Plan your time off, work with an advisor or career counselor, and in the case of students planning to transfer after taking a gap year, speak to the advisors at the school you are planning to transfer to.”



*We're All In This Together*  
**Julia Morgan**  
November 1 - December 4, 2022

### THE EAST WING GALLERY

Mount Wachusett Community College  
444 Green St., Gardner, MA

*We're All In This Together*

**Julia Morgan**

November 1—December 4, 2022

Reception: Thursday, November 17  
5-7:30 p.m.

Gallery Hours: Mon.-Thurs.: 8 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Open during Theatre events  
Closed: Nov. 11, 23, 24, 25

For more information: [j\\_miller@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:j_miller@mwcc.mass.edu)



**Mount Wachusett  
Community College**



# Profile: Annabelle Kennedy

## Professional Writing Major Discusses Interest in Pursuit of Being a Death Doula



Photo courtesy of Annabelle Kennedy

**Annabelle Kennedy**

*By Lexi Gallagher*

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

Lunenburg resident and Mount Wachusett professional writing student, Annabelle Kennedy, has a history with the written word

and enjoys the act of writing. However, she also has a passion towards going in a different direction than most after graduating: being a death doula. “Helping dying people and

their families process emotions and help with a difficult transition really seemed to call to me,” Kennedy said. “I’ve been definitely exploring the idea of being a death doula. I started listening to a Tarot podcast about five years ago, and the woman who hosted it is a thanatologist and discussed the subject there.” From there, Kennedy found out about the death doula movement.

According to experts, death doulas are people who give a range of social, emotional, practical, and spiritual support to people nearing the end of life and those close to them.

Kennedy, 38, has also enjoyed writing for a while. Kennedy’s mother was a professional writer when she was growing up. “My mom worked for the local paper while I was growing up. I spent my formative years in a newsroom. I remember when I was little, my mom had to hide me under a desk while she was working because the publisher at

the time wouldn’t allow children in the building. All of her coworkers knew I was there and even her direct boss, but nobody ratted her out,” Kennedy said.

Kennedy said she has found the most enjoyable part of her Professional Writing degree to be in creative writing, specifically poetry. When asked about her favorite class at MWCC so far, Kennedy responded, “I think it’s been creative writing. It has really helped me kind of explore writing in its different forms, and I discovered I like poetry a lot.”

Though within her degree, she has found poetry to be her passion, Kennedy foresees her even deeper passion of becoming a death doula to greatly impact her path after college. She said, “I feel like my poetry really helps me explore and express my spiritual side. Poetry also lets me process all feelings and situations.”

Kennedy continues to show that you can change your mind

about your life paths, take a pause on education, and have multiple interests, whether it is related to a degree decision you made years ago or not. Kennedy explained, “When I was 18, I came to MWCC for a few semesters and did most of my prerequisites, and then I left for a while, and then decided this year to come back with the goal to finish college before I am 40.”

To some, going in a different direction from your degree, especially with a job like this, may seem scary or dark, but to Kennedy, it is a job that would both be interesting for her and helpful for those who need peace within these challenging times. “Just being able to allow them to find peace in the situation is really interesting to me,” Kennedy explained. “It’s a way to help people heal in a way that you wouldn’t expect.”

# Profile: Hilary Blair

## MWCC Vet Tech Professor Shares Her Journey from Art to Animals

*By Isabelle Mascary*

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Once your passion meets your purpose, work no longer exists when you’re doing what you love. Meet Hilary Blair, the Mount’s new Veterinary Technician Professor who began at MWCC as an adjunct professor for two years and is now full-time.

Working as an emergency and critical care veterinary technician for the past fourteen years, Blair chose the Mount because of an opportunity to teach a subject she is passionate about. “I am deeply familiar with [the subject] just because of my profession in general as a veterinary nurse,” Blair said.

Prior to becoming a veterinary nurse, Blair worked in a large

referral hospital in emergency critical care for animals. As a graduate of Becker College and Mass College of Art, Blair’s passion for animals began when she was a child. “I have always loved animals, and we had a bunch growing up. Cats, dogs, rats, hamsters, gerbils, snakes, chinchillas, and birds. My favorite magazines were Ranger Rick and National Geographic,” Blair said.

Although she achieved a degree from Mass Art first, Blair shared, “I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do when I was in high school, so I decided to pursue a thing that I always enjoyed doing, which was taking pictures and art.”

Blair shared that the art department was a refuge for her.

She said that while she was at MassArt college, she realized she did not really enjoy the art world and the struggles associated with it, so she made the decision to pursue a career with animals. “My passion for the career [Veterinary Technician] grew as I was working in it,” Blair shared. “The longer I did it, the more I enjoyed it and wanted to expand my knowledge and skills.”

This realization led her to choose a career path that provided flexibility to be able to pursue many different offshoots, like emergency and critical care, exotics, zoo medicine, and research. It also sped up her ability to graduate in a shorter amount of time than an art degree.

When working in the

healthcare field, whether it is for servicing humans or animals, obstacles do exist. Although it depends on the situation, Blair has faced a few difficulties within this field of work. She said it is hard “Watching [animals] suffer and the owners having a hard time letting go.”

Blair also shared, “Every hospital everywhere is understaffed with veterinarians and technicians.” She continued, “It’s really hard to have to turn people away because we just don’t have the staff to care for that pet.”

Due to the lack of staff, resources and accommodations, Blair shared that, “Some people can be incredibly abusive towards us.” She continued, “Yes, there is animal abuse out

there, but also towards those of us trying to help in some degree or form, because usually, it comes down to financial problems. But the pandemic brought out some of the worst in people.”

Another major difficulty for those working in the Veterinary field is suicide. “It was always bad before the pandemic. The veterinary profession actually has the highest rate of suicide of any other profession. If you talk to anybody else in the field, everybody knows somebody that committed suicide,” Blair said. In fact, some sources have ranked the profession in the top five with the highest rates of suicide due to the repetition of seeing this suffering repeatedly.

continued on page 4  
“Hilary Blair Profile” >>>



# Profile: Lexi Gallagher

## MWCC Student Talks Photography and Pursuing College During the Pandemic



Photo by Lexi Gallagher

By Annabelle Kennedy  
OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

When Alexis “Lexi” Gallagher saw her mother taking pictures in middle school, she knew she wanted to do the same. What Gallagher didn’t know was it would open a lifetime love affair with photography. She grabbed her mom’s point-and-shoot camera and started taking photos. “I didn’t really understand how to use it yet, it

was mostly because I saw my mom doing it, and I wanted to do the same.”

Gallagher, now 20 years old, attends Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner, MA. While in high school, Lexi Gallagher, like most kids from her hometown of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, always knew she wanted to attend a 4-year college or university (and yes, she has heard plenty of jokes about

her name due to the hit show *Shameless*).

Unfortunately for Gallagher and thousands of others, Covid put a halt to those dreams. Many universities/colleges went to online formats due to the Covid restrictions, with students doing their work in online classes in their dorm instead of in person, taking away the classic university or college experience. Gallagher questioned what

choice would make sense for her. She said, “Why spend money on a 4-year school if you’re just going to be online anyway?” Instead, Gallagher decided to go to MWCC to save money by staying at home while still getting her education online and pursuing her passion for photography through the Media Arts and Technology program, in which she now majors.

“When I was very young, I wanted to be a singer, but as I got older, I always made YouTube videos and wanted to do anything I could in the online space,” Gallagher said.

After graduating, Gallagher plans on continuing her education with the Professional Photography Certificate. She said, “I’ve taken four photography classes now which have definitely been my favorites.”

While Gallagher didn’t take photography seriously until late high school, she certainly is now. She said, “The first photo I fell in love with and really was proud of was a portrait I took of my friend my first year of college, either that one or the one I took during a winter shoot.”

Gallagher said she enjoys the creativity and expression of photography. “I like the idea of being able to capture whatever I want and be creative while also getting an emotion or point across. It’s a fun way to express myself and my ideas,” she said.

While Gallagher is obtaining her degree, she still puts in 35-40 hours a week at a local coffeehouse. Although for her, it is difficult to fit it all. “The biggest challenge has definitely been time management. I struggle with a lot of mental health issues and with being able to concentrate, so there are times I get behind and have to catch up, and, on top of work, that can be hard. But I’ve learned to just push through and keep in mind my end goal,” Gallagher said.

Gallagher explained she is anxious to be done with school and start her “real life.” Upon graduating, she plans to do a combination of professional photography and social media management for her career and looks forward to creating a life for herself. She credits MWCC with really helping her get a great start in life without putting her in extreme debt.

# Hilary Blair Profile

>>> continued from page 3

Blair’s way of destressing includes, “I enjoy my home life as much as I can. I hike with my dogs. I cuddle my cat. I go for a long walk in the woods. I really need time to take a deep breath.” She said family time is a must but most importantly, “I leave work at work.”

Aside from being a veterinary nurse, Blair is a mother of four and enjoys mushroom hunting with her children. She said, “My children really like exploring, and they really enjoy mushroom hunting. We have learned quite a bit about the different mushrooms that are around.”

She also added that she enjoys home life as much as she can.

Her home life includes her two dogs, her cat, and her chickens. “I grew up with lots of animals, and having dogs and cats is just how things feel like home to me,” she shared.

Considering her profession, Blair is less likely to panic about minor things and injuries that may occur to her own pets when off the clock, but at the same time, she is very aware of all the terrible things that could be happening. Blair has the skills to assess things rationally. “I think how I treat my animals ends up being similar to how human

nurses exist with their kids,” Blair said.

When taking care of her patients, Blair shared that her favorite hospitalized patients to treat are cats. Blair said that she does find good things to like about all of them [animals], but her least favorite animals to treat are sugar gliders. “They are mean and not very nice,” she said. Although sugar gliders are adorable, she added, “They are a nightmare to treat in the hospital” and “If you look at them the wrong way, they will scream for no reason.”



Image courtesy of Hilary Blair

Professor Hilary Blair

# Creative Writing

## Playwright's Song

*After Edward Hopper's "New York Movie"*

By Maddie Willigar

I do my best writing in the New York matinee: standing far from the crowd, huddled deep in the corner of a spotlight-stained wall. Between the conversations that drift subconsciously out of

the mouths of strangers, I can create a life worthy of a curtain call: The first act would start beneath the green fluorescent hues of a dimly lit jazz club where the smooth hum of saxophones lulls nightcrawlers from sidewalks.

I would observe you come in from the corner, a glass of red wine swirling in my palm until you'd re-position your tie, walk over, and let a joke fall from your lips as if it had been hanging by a thread. A laugh would coat my throat

like the sweetest remedy to this bitter wine and our hands would hang heavy in electrifying air, until they were magnetically pulled into a single fist that yanked us forward into the streets

like being pulled by earth's gravitational leash. The starlight would point out your face like recognizing an old friend and for one more moment I could pretend—

But even a writer can only bend the waiting reality for so long, forcing the most beautiful fiction to memorize the words to her playwright's song.

## The Bard of the Mount

By William A. Lefrancois

England had Shakespeare, in prose and verse an unequalled man;  
the Mount had its great talent, humbly known as Professor David Wyman.  
In the teaching of English, Dave stood proud and tall;  
To many students, over many years, Dave always gave his all.

Always patient, always caring, there to make a difference;  
No student ever turned away, Dave helped all without inference.  
Everyone the same, all equal, the finest of the human race;  
Dave deeply cared, his sincerity driving him to keep pace.

For many years, Dave honed his skill in the English classroom;  
Respected by all, whether in person or on Zoom.  
Sought out by peer faculty, Dave was always kind;  
No matter the time, for any question, to help Dave would never mind.

Outside of the English classroom, Dave liked the musical art;  
In performance with acclaim, Dave turned to the guitar part.  
Strumming melodies, working on many a musical rift;  
Enjoying his passions, letting cares and concerns drift.

In poetry Dave excelled, a prolific writer;  
Book after book, verse after verse, making every day brighter!  
So many masterpieces, poetic license at its best;  
Works filling library after library, too busy to take a rest.

Sadly, an end comes to all great things.  
The very humble, very talented, Dave Wyman left on angel wings.  
The Summer of 2022, a pandemic ending a world in renew;  
With his life work done, his legacy assured, Dave bid the Mount adieu.

## God Who Are You?

By Daniel Mullane

A father I cannot see,  
I cannot touch,  
whose communication is like a guessing game.  
How am I supposed to know you?  
All you really have given me is a book.  
I heard you exist three in one;  
What on earth is that supposed to mean?  
You are too complex for me  
but I still desire you.  
I heard part of you is inside me;  
What on earth is that supposed to mean?  
I don't understand our relationship.  
Is there even one?  
The lack of acknowledgement of you has given me anxiety;  
I am high and low because of you.  
Your word was drilled inside my brain,  
I cannot put you in the sideline.  
Who am I if I am not fed by your people?  
Their food is not nutritious enough.  
The worst thing is I can't even eat your food fully,  
it is too complex.  
I see no meaning in life if you don't exist.  
Contrary to that, me just knowing about you is not enough  
to get rid of my high and low.  
I deeply want to be your son.  
Are you even listening to me?

Send your finished works  
of 1,000 words or less to  
mountobserver  
@mwcc.mass.edu.





©2022 Abigail Sontag



©2022 Olivia Aube



## ART ON CAMPUS

Photographs from students taking Introduction to Digital Photography (PHO115)

©2022 Olivia Aube



©2022 Karel Machado



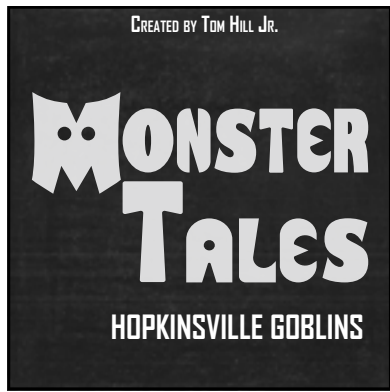


## ART ON CAMPUS

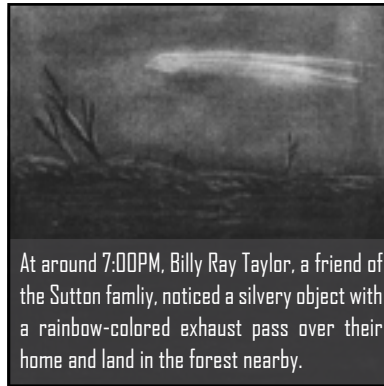
Ceramics 1 students participating in trash barrel kiln pit firing for ART 259







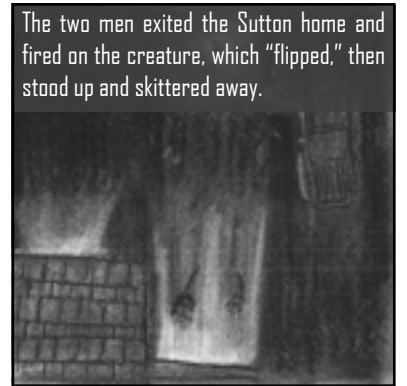
**LOCATION:** Kelly & Hopkinsville, Kentucky  
**DATE:** August 21, 1955



At around 7:00PM, Billy Ray Taylor, a friend of the Sutton family, noticed a silvery object with a rainbow-colored exhaust pass over their home and land in the forest nearby.



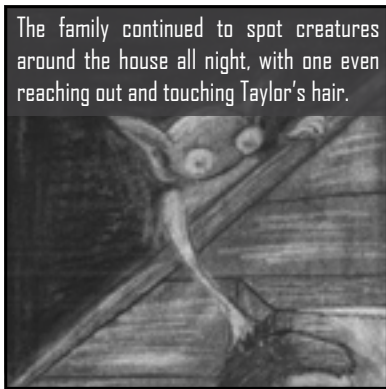
About an hour later, Taylor and Lucky Sutton spotted a strange glow in the forest, emanating from a small figure.



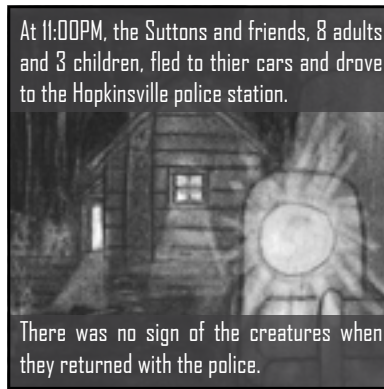
The two men exited the Sutton home and fired on the creature, which "flipped," then stood up and skittered away.



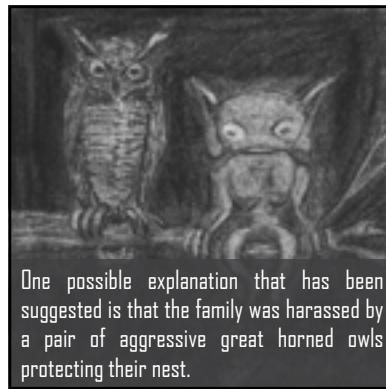
They then spotted the creature in a side window, peering into the home. It had a large head and ears, and metallic skin. They fired at it again, but with no effect.



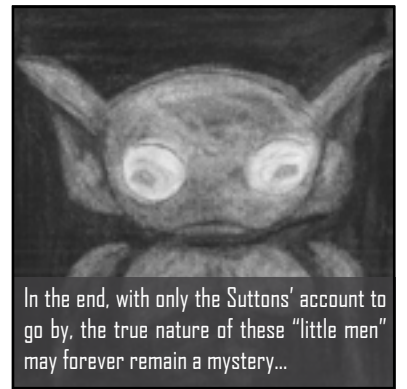
The family continued to spot creatures around the house all night, with one even reaching out and touching Taylor's hair.



At 11:00PM, the Suttons and friends, 8 adults and 3 children, fled to their cars and drove to the Hopkinsville police station.



One possible explanation that has been suggested is that the family was harassed by a pair of aggressive great horned owls protecting their nest.



In the end, with only the Suttons' account to go by, the true nature of these "little men" may forever remain a mystery...

Copyright Tom Hill Jr.

Have your own thoughts on a TV show, film, book, or video game?  
Write a review and send it to [mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu)  
It may just end up in our next issue!

# Review: *Black Adam* (2022)

## An Exaggerated, Messy, but Fun Time.



Image from IMDB, copyright DC Comics and Warner Bros. Pictures

By Gabriel Velez

OBSERVER CONTRIBUTOR

*Black Adam*, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra, centers around Teth Adam, the champion of his home country, Khandaq. After saving his country thousands of

years ago, he re-awakens in the present day, where the current Khandaq is being harassed by the evil Intergang corporation. After attacking Intergang, the Justice Society enters the picture, and at that point, a struggle between Adam and the Justice Society rages, and battles ensue.

Starring Dwayne Johnson, Aldis Hodge, Sarah Shahi, Noah Centineo, Quintessa Swindell, and Pierce Brosnan, *Black Adam*, is unfortunately not the grand spectacle or hierarchy shift that Johnson has proclaimed it is. Instead, it feels like a relic of the past, feeling like a script written in either the late 90s or early 2000s, before the comic book renaissance of the 2010s happened.

The script itself is rather horrendous, feeling incredibly cliched, rushed, and downright

messy. The film lacks any sort of focus. If anything, it's just a hodgepodge of superhero characters battling each other in big CGI-riddled explosions.

It more resembles Netherrealm's *Injustice* video games than anything; not that this is particularly a bad thing. I love the *Injustice* games; however, those games had much tighter and more focused stories to tell than this film did.

What the film does have to offer, however, is cool action scenes and fun characters. If I am being honest, I didn't particularly love the Justice Society and could care less to see them again. With that being said, they weren't annoying. I enjoyed Doctor Fate (played by Brosnan) the most.

However, for me, the true disappointment there was

Hawkman (played by Hodge), as he came off as really annoying, and the film just kept beating him into the dirt over and over again. This character could not seem to get a win at all in the entire film.

This does balance out with the other horrendous side characters, particularly Amon. Every line of dialogue he had was just the worst. In general, the dialogue in this film was not the greatest, but his was just a 100 on the scale of "who speaks like this?"

As for direction, it's slick but honestly kind of poor. The CGI sequences are well done, but any time the characters have to speak to each other, the film became an editing nightmare. Two scenes, in particular, gave me such whiplash I wanted to speak to the editor personally.

The performances themselves were all, at the least, good.

However, the film does feature one of the worst endings to a comic book film since *Fant4stic* in 2015. I think that the film should have ended about twenty minutes prior.

Though I'm speaking a lot of bad about the film, in all honesty, I had a good time watching it; It's a theater experience, and it was fun to watch. I certainly enjoyed it more than Marvel's film offerings this year (Minus *Werewolf by Night*, of course).

Overall, I think it is a really messy movie exaggerated in all the wrong ways, especially by the main star himself. However, I had a good time and would urge people who have an interest in it to go watch it. It's about a 5.5/10 for me.



# Review: *Doctor Who - The Power of the Doctor* (2022)

## The Whittaker-Chibnall Era Comes to a Clustered Close

By Tom Hill Jr.  
OBSERVER DESIGNER

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) turned 100 years old on October 18, 2022. To celebrate, they released “Centenary Specials” of some of their various television programs, and one such program that was given the Centenary treatment was the long-running science fiction show *Doctor Who*, with a 1 hour and 28-minute special: *The Power of the Doctor*. A lot was riding on this special for many reasons, but for me, it didn’t quite meet the mark.

First, some brief background; *Doctor Who* began in 1963 and centered on the adventures of an alien known as the Doctor who travels through all of time and space in a ship called the TARDIS (Time and Relative Dimension in Space). It appeared as a 1960s Police Box that was larger on the inside than the outside and served as the Doctor’s home. The Doctor gathered a constantly rotating cast of companions over the years, as well as various enemies, which are usually alien monsters that threaten the safety of Earth.

The main trick to the show’s long life (and especially relevant to *The Power of the Doctor*) is the long life of the main character, supported through the nifty narrative tool of regeneration. When the Doctor is mortally wounded, they can “regenerate” every cell in their body at once, extending their life but simultaneously changing their appearance and aspects of their personality. This allows the story of the show to run continuously while also freshening things up with a new actor in the main role every few years.

The actor portraying the Doctor in this story is Jodie Whittaker, who has been the “Thirteenth” Doctor since December 2017. This episode was directed by Jamie Magnus Stone and written

by the now-previous series showrunner Chris Chibnall.

I say “now-previous” because *The Power of the Doctor* was Chibnall’s final episode as showrunner, as well as Jodie Whittaker’s final outing as the Doctor, with her regenerating into another actor at the end of the special (I told you it was relevant).

This leads us to one of the reasons I feel this episode fell short; not only was this special intended to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the BBC, but it was also the audience’s goodbye to this incarnation of the Doctor, this era of the show, and the various companions and side characters that have been introduced therein.

As if all of this wasn’t enough, the special also had the job of leading up to *Doctor Who*’s 60th-anniversary specials, which will air with the new Doctor and new (returning) showrunner Russell T. Davies throughout 2023. So, I can appreciate the weight this episode carried and that there was probably a lot of pressure to perform better-than-usual on the entire cast and crew, and I have taken this into account during my viewing.

Now, you’d think that with all of this riding on the episode’s shoulders, the writer may want to try for a simple story that would present a big threat (to make the special feel “special”), wrap up any hanging story threads for the incoming showrunner, and ultimately give closure to the characters and their journeys. Simple, focused, special.

What we got instead was what felt like an overcrowded sample platter of story ideas that would have made for a pretty neat season of television but instead are chopped up and reduced to pointless hints of wasted potential. Add to this an overly complex plot riddled with inconsistencies, dialogue mostly devoted to exposition as opposed

to character progression, as well as traditional anniversary trappings (references to old stories, cameos by old companions and Doctors), and you have a recipe for a clustered mess.

As an example, with only minor spoilers attached, the main plot of the special revolves around three of the Doctor’s most famous adversaries, the Master (a Time Lord like the

humanity into more Cybermen. Why would these two work together when they will clearly just be in each other’s way?

A better script may have had the Master keeping the Daleks’ and Cybermen’s involvement secret from each other and had the Doctor using this to her advantage to turn them all against each other. However, because this story is balancing what feels like twelve other plot points, this

and companions, and most of the performances are fairly strong, especially considering some of the material they are given. A particular standout is Sacha Dhawan as the Master, who, despite not being my favorite take on the character, has given it his all in every appearance and provides a performance that is truly mesmerizing. I’d also be willing to say that there is some rewatch value to the episode,



Image copyright the BBC

Doctor, only bent on dominating the universe), the Daleks (mutant alien squids in robot tanks obsessed with racial purity), and the Cybermen (humans that have replaced enough of themselves with machinery that they have lost their humanity) teaming up to destroy the Doctor and her legacy, as well as the Earth. Sort of. Each of the three have their own motivations for joining together, and at least two of them are diametrically opposed to one another.

The Master has promised the Daleks that they can destroy the Earth and wipe out all humanity but has also promised the Cybermen that they can take over the Earth and convert

discrepancy is never mentioned and ultimately proves pointless to the overall resolution.

This is the main plot, not even going into all of the side stories, which kind of sums up my main issue with not just this special but this era of the show as a whole: plot points and characters are introduced but never followed up on, no matter how interesting their potential, in favor of introducing other plot points and characters to create an overstuffed mess.

Despite all of this, there are bright spots in the special. The Doctor’s last goodbye with her companion Yaz is a nice simple moment, there are some good interactions with past Doctors

given how overstuffed it is, so I guess that’s both a blessing and a curse.

So, a mixed bag, to say the least, but that’s one of the reasons I love the show so much. It can be anything it wants, which means it won’t always mesh with your particular interests, and that’s okay because maybe it will mesh with someone else’s, and you can both take solace in the fact that something new will always be waiting around the bend. In the end, I guess I would call *The Power of The Doctor* a fitting end to its era, though maybe not in the way it was intended to be. All we can do now is look forward and see what awaits us around the bend in 2023.



# InvolveMOUNT November Events:

**November 8: "SGA Biweekly Meeting." 6:00-7:00 PM**

Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147426>

**November 8: "Election Day." 7:00AM-8:00PM**

The Brewer Center <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8507249>

**November 8: "JINDO- BINGO with a Beat." 7-8:30PM**

Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8130853>

**November 9: "Stay on Track." 9:30-10:00AM**

Walking Track at MWCC <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8314842>

**November 9: "ART Club Meeting." 12:40-1:30PM**

Studio 1 (Old Room 172) <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8437350>

**November 9: "CRU Club Weekly Fellowship." 12:30-1:30PM**

Room 309 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8353100>

**November 9: "Green Society Meeting." 12:30-1:30PM**

Greenhouse <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8536754>

**November 9: "SNAP Workshop." 1:00-3:00PM**

The Brewer Center Room 152 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8530113>

**November 10: "Native American Talking Sticks DIY Event." 12:30-1:30PM**

South Café <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8153524>

**November 10: "CATS Programming Group Meeting." 2:00-3:00PM**

W11&Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147365>

**November 14: "CATS Programming Group Meeting." 12:30-1:30PM**

W11&Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147366>

**November 14: "SAGA Bi-Weekly Meetings." 12:30-1:30PM**

Room 357 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8567759>

**November 15: "Making the Most of Your Degree." 12:30-1:30PM**

H107F Atrium (Old 125 G) <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8415237>

**November 15: "Financial Literacy Workshop: Topic TBD." 12:30-1:30PM**

Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8153690>

**November 15: "JINDO- BINGO With a Beat." 7:00-8:00PM**

Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8130854>

**November 16: "Stay on Track." 9:30-10:00AM**

Walking Track at MWCC <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8314843>

**November 16: "Farmers Market and Plant Sale." 11:00-1:30PM**

Common Area <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8506580>

**November 16: "ART Club Meeting." 12:40-1:30PM**

Studio 1 (Old Room 172) <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8437351>

**November 16: "Green Society Meeting." 12:30-1:30PM**

Greenhouse <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8536755>

**November 16: "CRU Club Weekly Fellowship." 12:30-1:30PM**

Room 309 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8353101>



**November 16: "Driving While Black: Race, Space and Mobility in America Film Screening."** 12:30-3:00PM  
Multipurpose Room <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8151235>

**November 16: "Open Gym Day."** 5:00AM-9:00PM  
Mount Fitness <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8314829>

**November 17: "Exploring Transfer Options RX&VISIONS."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room 258 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8277771>

**November 17: "Connecting Mount Wachusett Community College to International Education Week."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room H171 (Old 115) <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8415221>

**November 17: "Azeem Comedy Show."** 12:30-1:30PM  
South Café and Virtual <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8151988>

**November 21: "CATS Programming Group Meeting."** 12:30-1:30PM  
W11&Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147367>

**November 22: "JINDO-BINGO with a Beat."** 12:30-2:00PM  
South Café & Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8130855>

**November 22: "SGA Biweekly Meeting."** 6:00-7:00PM  
Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147427>

**November 23: "Green Society Meeting."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Greenhouse <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8536756>

**November 23: "CRU Club Weekly Fellowship."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room 309 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8353102>

**November 28: "SAGA Bi-weekly Meeting."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room 357 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8567760>

**November 28: "CATS Programming Group Meeting."** 12:30-1:30PM  
W11&Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8147368>

**November 29: "JINDO-BINGO with a Beat."** 12:30-1:30PM  
South Café & Zoom <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8130856>

**November 29: "RX & Visions Monthly Activity."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room 258 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8277772>

**November 30: "One Day Corn Hole Tournament."** 12:30-1:30PM  
MWCC <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8495000>

**November 30: "ART Club Meeting."** 12:40-1:30PM  
Studio 1 (Old Room 172) <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8437352>

**November 30: "RX & Visions Finals Countdown."** 12:30-1:30PM  
Room 258 <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8277773>

**November 30: "Green Society Meeting,"** 12:30-1:30PM  
Greenhouse <https://mwcc.campuslabs.com/engage/event/8536757>

## THE MOUNT OBSERVER | VOLUME 17, ISSUE 3 | NOVEMBER 7, 2022

**Editor in Chief:**  
Maddison Willigar

**Assistant Editors:**  
Josilyn Straka  
Cody Nathanson  
Isabelle Mascary

**Graphic Designer:**  
Thomas Hill Jr.

**Contributors:**  
Elysian Alder  
Kaitlyn Churcher

Lexi Gallagher  
Annabelle Kennedy  
William A. Lefrancois  
Daniel Mullane  
Gabriel Velez

**Adviser:**  
Katie Fuller

**Address:**  
Room H353, MWCC,  
444 Green St.,  
Gardner, MA 01440

**Telephone/E-Mail**  
978.630.9260

[mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:mountobserver@mwcc.mass.edu)

*The Mount Observer* reserves the right to edit and condense all submissions. *The Mount Observer* is a member of the College Media Advisers, Inc.

**The Mount Observer Advertising**

**Policy:**  
*The Mount Observer* will reject any ad that is libelous, obscene, violates any

laws or encourages discrimination against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, age, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. *The Mount Observer* reserves the right to edit or reject any ad copy at any time.