

Description: As writers, we search to fill our calendars with readings, workshops, and residencies that support our work. Writers with a chronic condition also weigh the costs of attendance against health costs if the event is not accessible. We will address the following: How can event organizers make their events accessible? What privacy concerns should the writer discuss with event staff? How can writers with chronic conditions set boundaries around their own productivity at events?

Category: Writers Conferences and Centers Events

Event Organizer + Moderator:

P.D. Keenen is a writer and empathy activist. They write memoir and poetry. As an organizer, they once spent a summer managing over four hundred events while making time to write. Their work focuses on our shared humanity, points of cognitive dissonance and advocating for the less visible. pdkeenen.com

Event Participants:

Elyse Durham, a graduate of Kalamazoo College, is a fiction writer, essayist, and science journalist. She is a 2019 Glen Arbor Artist in Residence and a current MFA student in fiction at Warren Wilson College. She lives in Detroit. Twitter: @durham_elyse

Rachel Kurasz was a Fall 2017 Mentee in the AWP Writer to Writer Program under mentorship of Laura Creedle. Rachel is currently a PhD student at Northern Illinois University studying work by Neurodiverse and Disabled authors. Rachel earned her MFA from Roosevelt University.

Whitney Rio-Ross is a poet and essayist living in Nashville, TN. She teaches English as an adjunct at Trevecca Nazarene University and holds a Master's in Religion and Literature from Yale Divinity School.

Bethel Swift is the author of *Conversations with Good Men*. Her work has appeared online, in print, and in local art exhibits. She serves on the SDMWA Board of Directors and co-teaches writing and movement workshops. Bethel's blog focuses on the topics of activism, gratitude, and self-care. www.bethelswift.com
<https://facebook.com/authorbethelswift>
<https://www.instagram.com/bethel.swift> @bethel.swift

EVENT OUTLINE:

Opening moderator remarks and housekeeping announcements

Creativity and Chronic Illness: Accessibility, Privacy, and Productivity. A few reminders before we begin:

- For those needing or wishing to follow along to a written text, please let the moderator of the panel (identify moderator) know and a printed copy of the presentation will be delivered to you.
- Please make sure that spaces marked for wheelchairs remain clear of chairs or other barriers.
- Treat service animals as working animals and do not attempt to distract or pet them.
- Be aware of those with chemical sensitivities and refrain from wearing perfume.
- Please be aware that your fellow attendees may have invisible disabilities. Do not question anyone's use of an accommodation while at the conference, including for chairs reserved for those with disabilities.
- We realize the lines for the bathrooms may be long, but please refrain from using an accessible stall unless you require such accommodation. Please also be aware family restrooms located on level 2 are reserved for those with disabilities or those wishing to use a single-stall restroom.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding conference accessibility, please call or text the Accessibility Hotline (503) 455-4127 or email events@awpwriter.org.
- Introduce & identify all speakers in the order in which they are sitting.

INTRODUCTIONS:

DISCUSSION:

Our discussion today is broken up into three major sections: Accessibility, Privacy, and Productivity. Before we start, we'd like to see the breakdown of who is in attendance if you feel comfortable doing so please raise your hands for the groups you identify with. Writer with chronic health concerns? If you are an event organizer? If you organize overnight writer retreats? If you organize readings? If you organize one day events? Graduate program staff? Graduate program directors?

ACCESSIBILITY:

How can event organizers make their events accessible?

PRIVACY:

What privacy concerns should the writer discuss with event staff?

PRODUCTIVITY:

How can writers with chronic conditions set boundaries around their own productivity at events?

Q&A: (last 10 minutes of program)

We will now take questions from the audience on accessibility, privacy, productivity, or anything else you would like to discuss.

Suggested Reading & Resources:

AWP's Guide to Accessible Literary Events

<https://d3fmgxfzuxge2.cloudfront.net/pdf/conference/2019/AWP19ADAEventGuide.pdf>