
Retrospective

ALISSA WARREN

Alissa Warren's article, "[Tuesday Night Is HamBingo Night: A Glimpse of the Drag Queen Culture](#)," was published in *Stylus* 2.1 in Spring 2011 and earned 2nd Runner-Up for the 2011 John C. Hitt Prize for Excellence in First-Year Writing. She also served as assistant editor for Issues 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, and 4.1.

In education, writing is often distilled into two categories: windows or mirrors. A reader is either given the opportunity to experience a completely different world or immersed in something reflective of their own life.

"Tuesday Night Is HamBingo Night" was the first serious thing I wrote that had *nothing* to do with me. Until that composition class my first semester at UCF, most of what I read were "mirrors," and rarely was I in a position to write about anyone with an experience different than my own.

As a result, the process was difficult and uncomfortable. But I did it. Partly because I didn't want to fail Professor Ives' class, but mostly because the more I trusted the process, the more passionate I became about sharing Carol Lee's story.

Ultimately, I received a lot of positive feedback on "Tuesday Night Is HamBingo Night," and one recurring theme stuck out to me: storytelling—factual, fictional, or otherwise—is about making *others* feel seen.

I enjoy writing but am not normally inclined to share it with others. Even now, I find that I enjoy writing most in a professional or anonymous capacity; however, I am proud of having been published in *Stylus* and grateful to have been given the tools and experience to share that learning with my own students.

Alissa Warren

Alissa Warren graduated from UCF in 2014 with a degree in English Language Arts Education. She taught English for 2 years in Orlando and the next 3 in Denver, where she now resides. Alissa currently works as Dean of Instruction and IB Coordinator at John F. Kennedy High School.