



a journal of first-year writing

**In What Ways Is the Rhetoric Used in
YouTube Videos Altering the Perception
of the LGBTQ+ Community for Both Its
Members and Non-Members?**

NATALIE MAURER

**Identity Construction in Model Rocketry:
How Newcomers Learn and Construct
Identity in AIAA's Rocket League at UCF**

DANIEL DYSON

**Croisé: Untangling the Effects of Non-
Compete Clauses in Dance Studio
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**Embracing My Culturally Diverse
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Ebony & Ivory: Lyrics of Anti-Harmony

VANESSA QUILLAO

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Knights Write Showcase

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From the Guest Editor

The Department of Writing and Rhetoric here at UCF held its 9th Annual Knights Write Showcase on February 11, 2019 in the Pegasus Ballroom of the Student Union. This is one of the most anticipated events in our department because it features and recognizes the exceptional work that students in our first-year writing courses produce. The number of students in our ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 courses is between 6,000 and 8,000, so the pool of submitted essays for the Knights Write Showcase is quite large and the review process by the selection committee is extensive. Some of the projects submitted are featured as poster presentations on the day of the showcase and a few authors are selected to present on faculty-moderated student panels to share and discuss.

The student essays featured in this special issue are from the 9th Annual Knights Write Showcase panelists. This year we had one *Stylus* panel titled: Cultures and Communities of Writing. This panel was moderated by Department of Writing and Rhetoric Instructor Stuart Dees and featured work from five students who took an interesting look at questions concerning involvement and representations of communities through writing.

The panel began with Natalie Maurer's "In What Ways Is the Rhetoric Used in YouTube Videos Altering the Perception of the LGBTQ+ for Both Its Members And Non-Members," which seeks to answer the question of how the LGBTQ+ community is represented on YouTube, and how that perception affects those people in the community here at UCF as well as those outside of the community. Maurer's survey examined multiple reasons why students use YouTube along with their awareness of some of the most influential personalities from the LGBTQ+ community. Some of those that participated were members of UCF's Pride Student Association, which allowed for a more insider look at perceptions on YouTube. This study discussed the opportunity and challenges that the YouTube platform presents for the representation of the LGBTQ+ community.

Daniel Dyson was the next presenter on the panel. His essay, "Identity Construction in Model Rocketry: How newcomers learn and construct identity in AIAA's Rocket League at UCF," examined a group with which he has experience and how members gravitated toward this community of practice at a large learning institution such as UCF. His research also focused on how students who were a part of this community learned skills and knowledge that could possibly be transferrable to future careers and workplaces. Through the analysis of multiple means of

communication in the community and by interviewing members of the group, Dyson was able to also discuss collaboration strategies exhibited by the community.

A look at the rhetoric surrounding the dance community and the studio contracts used was the topic of Monique Velez's presentation and research. Her essay, "Croisé: Untangling the Effects of Non-Compete Clauses in Dance Studio Contracts," begins with an overview of the function of the non-compete clauses and then moves towards a textual analysis of the current situation and motivations for being a part of a studio. Along with the textual analysis conducted as part of this research project, Velez also conducted interviews with members of the dance studio community to gain insight on the importance of these contracts. This essay seeks to inform members of the community about the effects of the non-compete clauses so that those in the community can make more informed decisions.

The fourth presenter on this panel was Sarah Royer with "Embracing My Culturally Diverse Literacy," where she takes a personal look at her literacy sponsors and traces their influence on her own perceptions of identity and language. By looking back at her culturally rich upbringing in Jamaica, Royer situated her observations in the context of cultural and linguistic studies and added to that conversation with her analysis. This thoughtful examination allowed the author to not only appreciate some of her sponsors over the years, but also to be aware of new linguistic situations moving into the future.

The panel finished with "Ebony & Ivory: Lyrics of Anti-Harmony" by Vanessa Quillao which discussed the craft of songwriting and its development as a tool for self-expression and social commentary. As a songwriter herself, Quillao was curious to see if there was a difference in songs that addressed racial issues in the United States over different periods in history and how the rhetorical situations shaped the songs. This study also takes a close look at the lyrical themes of songs written by African-American and Caucasian composers and compares the differences in how each approached racial issues in their music. This analysis by Quillao connects the past with the present of songwriting for social awareness and shows us how some things have changed and how some problems are still being addressed by artists today.

All of the essays presented in this special issue are excellent models for how students are able to develop their areas of interest, personal experiences, and observations of the world around them into successful research projects. The variety of topics presented in this issue are a testament to the diverse areas of interest that our first-year writing students possess. The Knights Write Showcase is a very special event where you can see and hear from our talented group of students here at UCF, and on behalf of all of us from the Showcase we invite you to experience some of that work here in this issue and hope to see you at next year's event.

Nikolas Gardiakos
Knights Write Showcase