

## Editor's Introduction

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Ten years of *Young Scholars in Writing*. One hundred and fifty-one authors who have majored in fifty different disciplines. Faculty members from seventy-seven post-secondary institutions located in twenty-seven states and on three continents who have encouraged undergraduates to stretch their research beyond the limits of a traditional academic course. Twenty-five board members who have shared their editorial wisdom and expertise in rhetorical history, cultural analysis, the teaching of writing, writing centers, and new media with undergraduate authors, most of whom are publishing their work for the first time. The numbers are, I think, impressive and serve as one fixed measure of this journal's impact on the field of rhetoric and writing studies.

But as *YSW* observes the tenth anniversary of its founding, how much richer might our assessment of the journal be if we used instead what Richard J. Murphy, Jr. has termed the "calculus of intimacy," a reckoning that could account for the ever-changing, expanding nature of the intellectual relationships the journal has fostered? Murphy laments that the "business of measurement"—assessment scores, class sizes, contact hours, teaching loads, learning outcomes—seeks to quantify the relational, unstable processes of education (8). Resisting such enumerative pressures and fixed formulas, Murphy eloquently reminds us that learning and intellectual inquiry always involve people in flux: "The acts of teaching and learning are dynamic. The area of our work is bounded by lines in motion" (9). A calculus of intimacy such as Murphy imagines would allow us, then, to account more adequately for the ways in which *YSW* has fostered new relationships, destabilized hierarchies, and expanded possibilities for learning.

Indeed, the authors who were invited to help observe the occasion of *YSW*'s tenth anniversary reflect eloquently in the special section that opens this volume on how the process of publication has changed them and how their work with the journal has knitted them into new, ever-mutable relationships. For Katherine Stuart, whose work appeared in volume 1 of *YSW* in 2003, writing for publication was not about preparing to seek a permanent place in the academic community via graduate school. Instead, recognizing that her ideas merited circulation to audiences beyond the classroom gave her the confidence to seek out new connections both within and beyond the university. Her essay is aptly titled "Flinging Myself into the Broader World." In 2010 Bernice Olivas published her essay, "Cupping the Spark in Our Hands: Developing a Better Understanding of the Research Question in Inquiry-Based Writing" in *YSW*. Now a doctoral student and graduate teaching assistant at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Olivas reflects on how her experience of being an undergraduate researcher affects her first-year writing students as she works to help them see themselves as active participants in the multitude of discourse communities that make up their local neighborhoods and their nation. In 2009 Margaret J. Marshall's student Alaina Brandhurst published "Using Rhetoric to Sustain Democracy: The Rhetorical Devices Utilized by Justice O'Connor in *Kelo v. City of New London*." Marshall's "observations" focus on how teachers are impacted when a student's work is published in *YSW*, and her insightful essay traces how Brandhurst's work has rippled outward, affecting the learning experiences of other students and the pedagogical practices of colleagues. For Sean Patrick O'Rourke, Stephen Howard, and Andrianna Lee Lawrence, *YSW*, and its Comment and Response feature in particular, exemplifies the ongoing conversation that is a liberal education. Focusing on the value of *controversia*, or the consideration

of all sides of a question, O'Rourke, Howard, and Lawrence observe that *YSW*'s C&R feature "encourages movement—not least the movement of the scholar from private contemplation to the active engagement of others" (30).

Concluding *YSW*'s "Observations" of its first decade of publishing undergraduate research in rhetoric and writing studies is Laurie Grobman's very special reflective essay. Grobman founded the journal with her colleague and friend, the late Candace Spigelman, in 2003, and here she constructs a history of *YSW* through some of the important relationships she has subsequently formed with the journal's authors and editorial board members. In the final pages of *The Calculus of Intimacy*, Murphy witnesses a colleague and student crossing paths on a sidewalk, pausing to talk for a few moments in the calm morning sunshine before the pageantry of commencement exercises overtakes the campus later in the day. Watching their conversation from afar, Murphy imagines that the student and teacher

had found or made a way to talk and listen to each other. That they read poems and essays together and brought to their subsequent conversations about that reading something of their deepest selves. That they let each other hear their fear, pride, anger, and hope. That the student learned from their talk to cherish his power to think and speak. That talking with him saved the teacher from cynicism and despair. (191)

No imagining is necessary, though, as one reads Grobman's crisp, moving vignettes. She beautifully renders her encounters with undergraduate researchers like Ryan Hoover, Matthew Bunce, and Jessica Didow, revealing that *YSW* has indeed fostered conversations that allow undergraduate researchers to "cherish" their "power to think and speak." For so many teachers as well, our affiliation with *YSW*—its co-founders, its editorial board members, the faculty who encourage students to submit, and the authors whose work is published in these pages—has indeed saved us from "cynicism and despair."

If *Young Scholars in Writing*'s impact on the field of rhetoric and writing studies might best be assessed through a calculus of the relationships it has fostered and the bonds of community it has created, it seems appropriate that Sara Mulcahy's essay is the first of seven outstanding articles in this volume. Mulcahy's research focuses on how English language learners can become comfortable in U.S. colleges and universities. Mulcahy explores the conditions under which English language learners might carry the rhetorical skills they acquire in a first-year writing class into other courses. Based on classroom observations, surveys, and interviews with students, a tutor, and the teacher of a first-year writing class that served ESL students, Mulcahy suggests how a foundation for transfer can be built: frequent and varied writing assignments, explicit instruction on transferring writing skills, supportive teaching strategies, and a campus culture committed to students' success as writers. Like Mulcahy, Rebekah Sims is also concerned with ideas about community and affiliation. Sims explores the writing of women in the Lubavitch community in order to challenge the notion that collective activity can be undertaken only by a group of people working to achieve an agreed-upon goal. By reading the newsletters and web articles produced by Lubavitch women as forms of both intertextual and intercommunity discourse, Sims establishes that members of serial collectives—people who may not identify with each other or share goals but who are often identified based on a common characteristic or affiliation—are capable of collective discursive action.

Robert J. Holt takes up the challenge of retheorizing long-standing rhetorical concepts in light of new communicative technologies. His essay revisits the concept of *ethos* as defined by Aristotle and Isocrates before turning to the ways in which contemporary social media present new challenges and opportunities for savvy rhetors. Holt unpacks some of the particular affordances of social media—their richness, collaborative nature, accessibility, and indestructibility—and documents the consequences of failing to effectively construct *ethos* via social media for political and

legal figures in the U.S. and Canada. Olivia Weitz also turns her scholarly attention to a “new” rhetorical space—the reader comment boards that have become a common feature of many online publications. By focusing on comments posted in response to Richard Pérez-Peña’s story in the *New York Times* about Yale quarterback Patrick Witt’s decision not to pursue a Rhodes Scholarship amidst allegations of sexual misconduct, Weitz uncovers intriguing discrepancies about how audiences, writers, and publishers understand the role of feedback in the process of composing and distributing the news, and she raises important questions about the attribution of rhetorical responsibility among publishers and authors. While Weitz’s study productively problematizes the relationships between publishers, writers, and audience members, Sam Borowik explores relationships between the audience and characters in the HBO series *The Wire*. More particularly, Borowik rejects the notion that music is simply a “sonic prop” and calls attention to the rhetorical power of diegetic music in long-form television series.

Natalie K. Midiri’s essay returns readers to the types of texts more traditionally associated with the field of rhetoric. She offers a deft analysis of Hillary Rodham Clinton’s 2011 speech celebrating the sixty-third anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and she demonstrates the importance of examining the rhetorical style as well as the content of public policy statements. Drawing upon the work of scholars like Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, Jeanne Fahnestock, and Barry Brummett, Midiri argues that Clinton’s decision to construct a “universal audience” through her language stands as a powerful indictment of nations that criminalize homosexuality, even as her stylistic strategies may have minimized the agency of the LGBT community itself. Like Midiri, Sarah Ann Singer pays close attention to the politics of style. Singer’s attention, though, is focused on the language of U.S. educational policies and of educators at Maryland State College who encouraged women to study home economics through most of the twentieth century. Singer concludes that programs in home economics afforded women opportunities to pursue higher education and scientific studies, even as such programs replicated traditional gender hierarchies.

In addition to these very fine articles, this volume also features the outstanding work of Elizabeth Carls in the Spotlight on First-Year Writing. Selected for publication by Dr. Patti Hanlon-Baker and Dr. Holly Ryan, editors of the Spotlight, Carls’s essay explores the rhetoric of environmentalists, who often posit a dichotomous view of “Old” and “New” earth, the planet before and after human impact. Carls ultimately makes a cogent argument that rhetorical maneuvers focusing on human impact as an “evolving integration” might garner greater public support for environmental causes.

Rounding out volume 10 is the Comment and Response section, which is masterfully edited by Dr. David Elder. This year’s Comment and Response features the work of Jordan Delk, Evelyn Henson, and Melissa Thornton. These three authors extend ongoing conversations about the powers and limits of virtual rhetoric, about the pernicious representations of the female body in popular literature, and about the history of the rhetorical strategies deployed by women within the Catholic Church. Their work very much continues the tradition of *Respondeo etsi mutabor* that O’Rourke, Howard, and Lawrence have described.

As always, the journal would not survive without the work of former contributors and editorial interns who review manuscripts with great care and a keen sense of the importance of offering constructive feedback to all authors, regardless of whether an article is accepted or rejected. The journal is indebted to Sarah Ashlock, Chris Brendel, Lydia Conrad, Ryan Fitzpatrick, Tatiana Flowers, Angie Ford, Jeffrey Grasher, Mikayla E. Green, Kara Kennedy, Jennifer Lowe-Brewer, Lyndsey Magrone, Marie M. Mayhugh, Leslie A. McCoy, Chad W. Mitchell, Allie Oosta, Antiqueka L. Tubbs, and Amanda Wisdom.

Members of the editorial board rely heavily on the insights of these peer reviewers as they read and respond to manuscripts throughout the spring and summer. Special thanks to Paige Banaji,

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The University of Missouri, Kansas City continues to be a most accommodating institutional home for the journal. Wayne Vaught, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, is steadfast in his commitment to supporting the work that faculty do with undergraduate students. Despite the many demands on their time and attention, English Department co-chairs Virginia Blanton and Jennifer Phegley work diligently to ensure that *YSW* has the resources it needs, and they are outstanding role models as academic administrators—persistent, politically savvy, and progressive in their vision of the work that faculty and students in English studies can accomplish together. And *YSW's* debt to the incomparable Sherry Neuerburg exceeds my ability to express. She has explained accounting codes, unsnagged payroll paper work, and facilitated bulk mailings more times than I can count, and she still shares her sunny smile with me every morning in the English Department Office.

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Due to the hard work, expertise, and dedication of all these folks and to our community of committed readers, *YSW* can observe its tenth anniversary with great pride and with high hopes that the next decade of publishing undergraduate research in writing and rhetoric will continue to be a dynamic, rewarding, relational enterprise.

### **Works Cited**

Murphy, Richard J., Jr. *The Calculus of Intimacy: A Teaching Life*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1993. Print.