

Editor's Introduction

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In 2014, *Young Scholars in Writing* embarks on its second decade of publishing undergraduate research. The journal will continue, I hope, to build on the traditions it has established in its first decade of publishing outstanding undergraduate research in rhetoric and writing studies and of furthering intellectual conversations among scholars at all stages in their careers. But the landscape of higher education seems quite different now than it did when *YSW* was launched in 2003. Ever-decreasing levels of public funding for higher education; the burgeoning movement to help high-performing students earn college credit while still in high school; the enactment of simplistic assessment practices that reduce student learning to an input/output model; and increased calls for the transferability of college coursework across a range of “educational providers” (e.g., for-profit enterprises that offer online degrees, certification programs that evaluate students’ competencies based on standardized tests, MOOCs)—these have all placed tremendous pressure on colleges and universities to demonstrate the unique value of what happens on their campuses.

In his 2013 chair’s address to the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Las Vegas, Chris M. Anson suggested that college writing teachers have a vital role to play in helping post-secondary institutions negotiate this troublesome new landscape. He argued that writing teachers at their best are “designers of doing” (340), a phrase he borrows from high school principal and columnist Elizabeth English. As English cogently argues, educators who wish to remain a relevant and vital part of their students’ lives in the twenty-first century need to design an “irresistible learning experience that asks students to think critically, solve a problem, create a product.” Undergraduate research involves faculty and students in just such a process of designing (and revising) a range of authentic inquiry experiences, of identifying problems, finding answers, and sharing the products of their collaborative efforts in ever-wider contexts. Such intellectual doings can’t readily be replicated in a secondary classroom, by a MOOC, or through a standardized exam.

This volume opens, then, with a powerful example of learning as doing. Brisa Galindo, Sonia Castaneda, Esther Gutierrez, Arturo Tejada, Jr., and DeShonna Wallace, all students at California State University, San Bernardino, offer their eloquent accounts of the emotional impact of being labeled “remedial” and assigned to a three-semester series of composition courses designed to ensure the adequacy of their writing skills. Not content, though, merely to share their personal stories, they investigate and challenge the concept of remediation in higher education, drawing upon the work of Deborah Brandt, Mike Rose, Jean Anyon, and others. In sharing their work in the pages of *YSW*, they call other students and faculty members to participate in a more complex retheorizing of the concept of college readiness.

While Galindo and her coauthors engage in scholarship/activism through traditional academic channels (e.g., conference presentations, journal publications), Rina James takes up the role that new media might play in bringing about social change. She offers a wide-ranging and insightful analysis of how both supporters and opponents of California’s Proposition 8 engaged in advertis-

ing, advocacy, and activism via digital media. Kristen Allred is also interested in texts that have circulated through digital channels. She asks readers to consider the rhetorical power of photographs, and more particularly photographs of women wearing the *hijab* that have been circulated since 9/11. Drawing upon the work of Edward Said, Sharon Crowley, and John Berger, Allred brings great discernment to the task of tracing foundationalist and Orientalist tendencies in four widely circulating photographs of Muslim women wearing the traditional headscarf. Her essay ends, though, on a hopeful note with a reading of a photographic collage of six Islamic women athletes participating in the 2012 London Summer Olympics. For Allred, these photographs best exemplify what Berger would term a “radial system” of memory that more fully acknowledges the complexity of a subject and his/her historical context and that holds out hope that antifoundational rhetorical encounters might be possible.

Lindsey Tanner, Andrew Bowman, and Ashley K. Allen all offer insightful rhetorical analyses of the types of texts that have more traditionally held the interest of scholars in rhetoric and writing studies. Tanner turns to newspaper articles to investigate the role the media played in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Using the concept of “source filters” from Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, Tanner offers a nuanced reading of articles published in the *Los Angeles Times* and their reliance on Martin Dies, chair of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, as a credible expert on the intentions and activities of Japanese Americans during WWII. Tanner’s work deftly opens up the mechanisms by which authority can be constructed and circulated in overly simplistic, dangerous ways, and she reminds us all of the importance of being astute readers of the media. Andrew Bowman asks and answers questions about the enduring appeal of Winston Churchill by ambitiously tracking the British leader’s rhetorical evolution and the emergence of his prophetic ethos in speeches delivered both before and during his tenure as Great Britain’s prime minister. Ashley K. Allen brings to bear the analytic power of genre theory and Kenneth Burke’s dramatic pentad as she analyzes the eulogy delivered by Al Gore for victims at Columbine High School in 1999. She unpacks the rhetorical force of Gore’s deployment of the “perpetrator-as-victim” narrative, and her analysis positions all of us to better understand the rhetorical performances that have become commonplace in the face of all too frequent public tragedies.

The final full-length article in this volume of *YSW* returns readers to writing and the teaching of writing at colleges and universities. While Galindo and her coauthors ask readers to reconsider the label of remedial and its impact on students as they enter the university, Sara Calicchia asks what we might learn from experienced writers who have been judged successful in the academic arena. Interested in the role that music and other environmental factors might play in the self-regulation of writers, Calicchia interviewed twelve faculty members and students recognized for their academic achievements. While the interviewees’ responses about the role music did (or didn’t) play in their writing processes varied widely, all the study subjects revealed themselves to be highly self-regulating writers. This leads Calicchia to suggest that writing instructors should be transparent with their students about the range of writing habits and processes that successful writers deploy in order to lessen students’ anxiety about writing and to enhance their ability to develop their own self-regulating mechanisms.

In addition to these seven outstanding essays by undergraduate researchers, *YSW* is pleased to feature three essays in this year’s Spotlight on First-Year Writing. Rachel Whitted advances our understanding of the rhetoric of the environmental movement by analyzing David Brower’s cam-

paign to forestall dams that would have radically reshaped the Grand Canyon in the 1960s. Erin Ryan offers a nuanced, detailed reading of Fannie Lou Hamer's speech before the credentials committee at the Democratic National Convention in 1964. Aubrey Young tracks the discursive patterns of patriarchy in the field of music education by examining the transcript of a piano lesson involving a female student and a female teacher. Her research leads her to suggest that music educators may be unconsciously indoctrinated into masculinist norms. Dr. David Elder at Morningside College and Dr. Holly Ryan at Pennsylvania State University, Berks have served as coeditors for this year's Spotlight, and their hard, smart work in helping Whitted, Ryan, and Young prepare these very fine essays for publication is much appreciated.

Volume 11 of *YSW* concludes with three responses to previously published work in the journal. Julia Cooper considers how changing technologies and the ever-evolving capabilities of smart phones complicate Michaela Cullington's 2011 essay on texting and writing. John Matthew Reyburn artfully explores how Demirae Dunn's 2012 essay on propaganda contains elements of propaganda itself, and he ultimately cautions readers to be mindful of the persuasive techniques deployed by scholars and researchers as well as politicians and pundits. Caroline Walters revisits Sarah-Kate Magee's 2010 essay on college admissions essays as a masculine genre. Using Lloyd Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical situation, Walters suggests that college applicants are demonstrating their abilities to adapt to the exigencies of their rhetorical situation when they trumpet their accomplishments in admission essays, rather than acquiescing to narrowly gendered models of rhetorical invention. Dr. Jonathan Hunt at the University of San Francisco has served as editor of *YSW*'s Comment and Response section, and like Cooper, Reyburn, and Walters, he brings tremendous energy and a keen commitment to civility when engaging with the work of colleagues.

As always, *YSW* results from the collaborative energy of many hard-working, talented people. Peer reviewers this year were Kristen Allred, Sarah Ashlock, Amy Blakemore, Lydia Conrad, Shelby Dollar, Seth Harkins, Scott Hughes, Heather Hussmann, Riley Kurtenbach, Noria McCarther, Chell Navarro, Robert M. Pichardo, Scarlett Pinnell, Stephen Pizzi, Carli Sandweiss, Brittany Sheedy, Jonathan Shelton, Rebekah Sims, Brittany Specht, Kate Stuart, and Lauren Young. Members of *YSW*'s editorial board thoughtfully read and responded to this year's submissions, taking into account the recommendations of these peer reviewers. Board members made the difficult decisions about which essays would be included in volume 11, and they worked with authors to revise their essays for publication. Jeff Andelora, Paige V. Banaji, Melanie Burdick, Doug Downs, Abby Dubisar, David Elder, John Gravener, Jonathan Hunt, Joe Janangelo, Jeff Klausman, Sean Patrick O'Rourke, Steve Price, Rachel Riedner, Holly Ryan, Annette Vee, and Stephanie Vie are all fantastic models of scholarly acumen and professional generosity. Robin DuBlanc serves as *YSW*'s copyeditor, and David Grieff at Rieck's Printing has been a fantastic ally since the journal's inception in 2003. His design sense and patience with multiple sets of proofs are in large part responsible for the journal's professional appearance.

The University of Missouri, Kansas City serves as *YSW*'s institutional home, thanks to Wayne Vaught, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Everyone associated with *YSW* is deeply appreciative of his steadfast commitment to empowering undergraduate researchers. UMKC English department chairs, Virginia Blanton and Jennifer Phegley, have been untiring in their support for *YSW*. With great foresight, diplomacy, and creativity, they have helped to shepherd the journal's funding request through the College of Arts and Sciences' budgetary processes for the past four years. The amazing Sherry Neuerburg, English department administrator, has never encountered a

payroll problem, bulk mailing hitch, or accounting accident that she couldn't address. I am continually humbled by the patience, problem-solving skills, and good humor she brings to the office everyday.

The *YSW* community, though, is not composed just of the people who work to produce each volume. As one of the journal's readers, you play an important, active role in the life of *YSW*. Perhaps you are a teacher assigning an essay from *YSW* to students in a first-year writing class or a scholar citing the work of a researcher who has been published in the journal or a student who feels called to compose a comment/response essay after thinking about the issues raised by a *YSW* author—you are all engaged in the process of learning as described by Anson and English. As do-ers themselves, the authors whose research is featured in these pages and everyone associated with the journal applaud your work as you take up the ideas published here and continue to imagine new possibilities for both faculty and students on college campuses now and in the future.

Works Cited

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