



a journal of first-year writing

Controlling the “Others”

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From the Editor

When you think of people writing and doing research, what do you imagine? Are they in a lab, taking notes on an experiment? Are they sitting in a quiet library late at night surrounded by piles of books? Where are they? What are they doing exactly? And, perhaps most importantly, why are they doing it?

As you read through the outstanding student work published in this issue of *Stylus*, I hope you'll return to these questions. Each article here presents a rather different vision of what research can do. Consequently, the way each author has chosen to write about his or her research varies, too, ranging from a narrative about a fictional patient to a highly polished video analysis. But, in spite of these differences, I think you'll see that all of the authors had a clear sense that their research mattered. They knew their work could do something more than simply serving as a response to an assignment in a classroom. Try to imagine these purposes for yourself as you read, and then check out the authors' writer's statements for their own take. Remember that they might not have had a sense of where their projects were going from the very start. That's okay and, in fact, pretty normal. Research can be a messy process, but it can also be incredibly valuable in many different contexts, and the articles you'll read in this issue demonstrate just that.

First up is Steven Heller's "Controlling the 'Others.'" If you've ever struggled with getting the words to come out while writing, I think you'll find something to relate to in Heller's analysis of his fictional patient. The problems Heller describes are based in his understanding of his own writing processes and practices. As you read, think about where you're similar to and different from this patient. Whose voices are you contending with when you write, and how are they affecting your process?

The second article, "Genre Analysis of Moves in Medical Research Articles," comes from Daniel Huang. If you're thinking about studying medicine, you'll likely find Huang's careful analysis of how medical research gets written up very useful. But Huang's thoughtful breakdown of this common research genre is useful for all student writers to consider. Consider how the sorts of articles Huang analyzes differ from the ones you're reading and even writing in your own composition class. Pay special attention to his methods as well. The techniques Huang uses to study a sample of medical articles could be applied to any number of different genres.

James Plyler's "Video Games and the Hero's Journey" takes up the subject of video games and the stories they tell. Many of you are likely familiar with the games Plyler analyzes (*The Last of*

Us and Beyond: Two Souls) as well as the framework he uses to analyze them (Joseph Campbell's "Hero's Journey" narrative structure). Consider how Plyler blends subjects that might otherwise be familiar, however, to come up with his own original ideas. Also, pay attention to why Plyler feels it's important to conduct this sort of analysis. How does this work help him to argue for the value of video games as he sees it?

The next article comes from Christina Coffee and is titled, "Persuasive Marketing: An Investigation of the Persuasive Effectiveness of Differing Media to Attract Individuals to Advertised Events at the University of Central Florida." Like Plyler, Coffee applies an analytical framework to something those of us who frequent UCF's main campus are likely quite familiar with: event advertising. Coffee's combination of ideas from different researchers is insightful and her analysis incredibly thoughtful. Coffee went even further above and beyond by translating her research and analysis into a video production. I recommend first reading her article and then watching the video. Compare the different moves she makes in each and what makes the two different works successful in their different forms. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each medium?

In the final article of this issue, "A Historical Approach to the Progression of LGBTQ Treatment and Acceptance at the University of Central Florida," Jacob Smith also studies UCF itself. Smith presents some of the history of the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Student Union on campus and contextualizes it through connections to other events happening around the state and country during the past fifty years. As you read, think about how Smith's emphasis on this local story helps to build your sense of what was happening both here and elsewhere.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Stylus* and find it to be helpful in your explorations of what writing and research can accomplish. We also hope that you'll consider submitting your own work for publication in the journal; at one time or another, all of the students published here were sitting in a composition class, just like you. To read about their experiences (and, sometimes, struggles) along the way from receiving an assignment to being published, be sure to take a look at the writer's statements accompanying each essay. If you're interested in submitting work to *Stylus*, simply ask your composition instructor to forward the piece you'd like to submit to the journal and we'll take care of the rest. If you have any questions about this process, feel free to contact me at Matthew.Bryan@ucf.edu.

-Matt Bryan