

The University Writing Program Presents

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# FALL SHOWCASE

A Celebration of Student Work in Writing Classes



A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains. The foreground shows rolling hills with sparse vegetation in shades of yellow and brown. The middle ground consists of dark, rugged mountain peaks. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds against a pale blue background. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is centered horizontally across the middle of the image, containing the text.

# **BEST WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE**



# **“HOW HAS THE EXPERIENCE OF DENVER’S HOMELESS POPULATION SHIFTED DURING THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS?”**

## **An Excerpt**



In a new world committed to COVID-19 containment, the phrase “stay home” is repeated by every media outlet and public informant alike. With a confirmed 1.8 million cases, 106,000 deaths, and the prospect of millions more, America has forced its population to adhere to social distancing policies. These policies, dictated by the Center for Disease Control and Infection (CDC), include “remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance,” all in an effort to keep people from getting sick with the virus. This is where the phrase “stay home” has originated. But this phrase and the policies attached inherently privilege those with a reliable home, and marginalize those who don’t.

**Christopher (Chris) Crosby,**  
class of 2023, is a Daniels  
Scholar and a Denver native.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
“Producing and Consuming  
Politics and Media”  
**Professor:** Pauline Reid

## **BEST WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE**



# “DANGERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY”

## An Excerpt



Everyone has been guilty at one point or another of taking a cell phone out to snap a picture of a colorful sunset, a snowy mountain range or anything so beautiful one thinks only a photograph will do it justice. With the evolution of phone cameras, we as a species have learned to document our special encounters with nature through pictures in order to keep those memories from fading. In the past, humans have been able to further connect with nature because they did not need a mediator, like cell phones, to fully enjoy Earth’s natural wonders. Instead of enjoying nature in real time with our vision, the ability to instantly take pictures has created a new way to appreciate the outdoors: looking at a picture of it through a phone screen. People have created a widespread belief that a picture can act as a form of memory, but what they do not know about are the negative consequences which these photographs bring along with them.

**Henry Freedman**, class of 2023,  
is a Finance major from  
Winnetka, Illinois.

**Class:** WRIT-1122  
“Nature/Writing”  
**Professor:** Keith Rhodes

## BEST WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE



# “WE ARE ALL BORN NAKED AND THE REST IS SIMULATION”

## An Excerpt



In all, while the arts can portray a false image of reality, they still have the potential to remain authentic in a sense. The degree of inauthenticity in art encourages us to take ourselves less seriously and have fun, which is something everyone could use a taste of. In addition to taking advantage of the simulations and simulacra, it's important to recognize their prevalence and power in order to not get trapped. Next time you're stressing out about posting the perfect photograph, or reading an article that you agree with but may not be legitimate, or learning about a historical event from a biased perspective, or even neglecting to spend time with your pets because you have too much homework, I hope that you are able to see through the levels of inauthenticity in order to be your authentic self and enjoy what's really important in life.

[Read the full text here](#)

**Lilian Schaffer** (she/her), class of 2023, is from Denver, Colorado. She has not yet declared a major.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
**“Formalized Curiosity”**  
**Professor:** LP Picard

## BEST WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE



# “FEMALE PERSPECTIVES FROM THE MUSIC INDUSTRY”

## An Excerpt



Out of all the themes uncovered in my research, the most consistent and overarching theme was just that: the community that lives within the music industry. This can be seen through the positive comments in music forums, the connections audience members and panelists made after listening to a nearly three-hour long bass panel, and through hearing Leslie and April talk about the wonderful friendships and connections they have made through music. But each member within this kind and tight-knit community would point out the lack of female representation, even the male community members. As Leslie cleverly put it, “there are few women in jazz already, which is why there are still so few women in jazz.” If male musicians claim to support their female colleagues and want to see more representation, why do they keep contributing to that very issue? And what can they do to stop exacerbating the disparity?

**Dani Garcia** (she/her/hers), class of 2023, is seeking her Bachelor of Arts in Music. She is from Longmont, Colorado, and is a member of the Excelling Leaders Institute at DU.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
“The Ethnographic Experience:  
Stories of the Other”  
**Professor:** April Chapman-  
Ludwig

## BEST WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC GENRE





# **BEST WRITING IN A POPULAR GENRE**



# “AN OPEN LETTER”

## An Excerpt



[Read the full text here.](#)

At only eight years old, you knew that there was something bad about the fact that boys your age threw buckets of green apples at the windows of your family’s restaurant. Those boys were the ones that you had tutored after school, the same boys that you saw every single morning before classes started. You had known those boys since preschool, growing up together in classrooms only a few feet away from each other. (The very next day, as you stood behind those boys in the lunch line that ran along the cold walls of the hallway, you had wondered, “Why my family?”)

**Noire Lin** (no-waa; they/them/theirs), is from Chicago, Illinois.

Currently a third-year Molecular Biology major at the University of Denver, Noire Lin is a member of many groups such as Kappa Phi Lambda Sorority Inc., Excelling Leaders Institute (ELI), and the Undergraduate Student Government (USG). In the past, they have been published in and read for *826Chi*, *ChiArts Writes*, and *Ricochet Review*. Now, Lin still participates in the Chicago arts scene by volunteering with *826Chi* as a part of their after-school writing program to encourage Chicago youth to pursue creative writing.

**Class:** WRIT-1122

“Rhetorics in Politics”

**Professor:** Pauline Reid

## BEST WRITING IN A POPULAR GENRE



# “SEVEN BILLION SHADES OF HUMAN”

## An Excerpt



As a child, I never quite understood the color brown. In kindergarten, I remember being tasked with drawing a picture of myself. This was supposed to encourage creativity and inspire the artists within our five-year-old selves. As I finished the rough outline of my stick figured masterpiece, I realized it was time to fill it in with bold crayon strokes. The only problem was that the “Flesh” crayon that was handed to me by my friend was not the color of my skin. I wish I could say that my five-year-old self realized the issue behind this and instead colored in the self-portrait with a darker color. Instead, I colored in my skin with the color “Flesh” because no one wanted a brown picture.

[Read the full text here](#)

**Sameha Haque** (Suh-may-huh Hawk; she/her/hers), class of 2023, is majoring in Molecular Biology.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
“The Question as Quest”  
**Professor:** David Riche

## BEST WRITING IN A POPULAR GENRE



# “UNFIXED: AN INVESTIGATION OF HUMAN INTELLIGENCE”

## An Excerpt



[Read the full text here](#)

Think of the smartest book, movie, or TV characters you can. You may be picturing Hermione Granger, or perhaps Dexter Morgan, Lisa Simpson, Sherlock Holmes, Sheldon Cooper, Annabeth Chase, or Spock. While there are no hard-and-fast rules for the genius character archetype, all these characters tend to show their intelligence in similar ways. They are book smart. They are excellent problem solvers, often using their intellect to bail other characters out of danger. They are often social pariahs, and they may use unnecessarily complex language to answer simple questions, prompting the other characters to demand they “say it in English.” The genius trope begs the question of whether intelligence is defined by someone’s ability to memorize facts out of books and use big words. Some researchers feel there is more to intelligence than the way it is commonly represented.

**Morgan Martin** (she/her/hers), class of 2023, is from Louisville, Colorado. Majoring in Molecular Biology, with minors in Chemistry, Spanish, and Leadership Studies, Martin works as a Thrive Peer Educator at the HCC and is a member of the Pioneer Leadership Program and the Idiosyncrasies, a DU acappella group.

**Class:** WRIT-1733  
“Cosmic Secrets”  
**Professor:** LP Picard

## BEST WRITING IN A POPULAR GENRE





# **BEST WRITING IN AN ALTERNATIVE MODE (MULTIMODAL WORK)**



# “A THANK YOU FOR THE FRONTLINE”

## An Excerpt



In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, I focused on the graduating seniors and the impact the pandemic would have on them. In particular, I followed the journey of my oldest brother, Caleb Rueth, as he graduated nursing school and was about to enter the frontline against this disease.

[Read the full text here](#)

**Gabriella Rueth**, Class of 2023,  
is a Psychology and Sociolegal  
Studies major.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
“Researching Cultures &  
Subcultures”  
**Professor:** Kamila Kinyon

## BEST WRITING IN AN ALTERNATIVE MODE (MULTIMODAL WORK)





# **BEST RHETORICAL ANALYSIS**



# “PUT YOUR HANDS UP: RESTORING INNOCENCE AND EXPOSING PREJUDICE IN *WHEN THEY SEE US*”

## An Excerpt



[Read the full text here](#)

The criminal justice system is by no means the truthful institution individuals have been conditioned to praise. Rather, as the mini-series *When They See Us* makes clear, it is a racialized process that forgoes its “innocent until proven guilty” mantra when convicting minorities. The Central Park Jogger case is a prime example of not only how media influences blind the justice system to the truth, but also how innocence is pre-determined on the basis of race. The Netflix limited series challenges traditional media connections between the law and minorities by humanizing the boys convicted in the Central Park Five case, thereby revealing the racialized undertones of the criminal justice system and forcing viewers to reflect on their understandings of innocence, justice, and truth. So what? Thirty years after the Central Park Five case, not much has changed. Ultimately, we as a nation must question to what end, at what cost, and at whose expense will justice overpower truth and innocence.

**Caitlyn Aldersea** (Kate-lyn All-der-see; she/her/hers), is from Portland, Oregon.

Graduating in 2023 with a major in International Studies and a double minor in Journalism and Leadership Studies. She is in the Pioneer Leadership Program, a contributing Writer at the DU Clarion, and serves as Travel Team Secretary of Model United Nations.

**Class:** WRIT-1733

“Honors Writing”

**Professor:** Geoff Stacks

## BEST RHETORICAL ANALYSIS



# “BONDING THROUGH ABSURDITY: A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF RUSSELL PETERS”

## An Excerpt



Peters displays his talent at mimicking accents and uses his Indian accent to explain to the audience that Indian people think to themselves “I thought I was the only one!” (0:57) whenever they see another Indian. There is an ironic element in this sentence because India is currently the second most populated nation on the planet. Thus, it is ironic for an Indian man to think that he would be the “only one” in a densely packed area like Times Square. Thus, Peters points out one of the absurd thoughts that run through the mind of an Indian person, and the camera pans to what appears to be a laughing Indian woman in the audience. This demonstrates that even when people in the audience are the subject of his jokes, the people are not hostile or aggressive towards him, rather they are amused by his perspective.

[Read the full text here](#)

**Ameen Al Shaibani** (A-Mean Al Shay-BA-knee; He/Him/His), class of 2023, is from Iraq. He is majoring in Computer Engineering.

**Class:** WRIT-1122  
“The Rhetoric of Humor”  
**Professor:** Heather Martin

## BEST RHETORICAL ANALYSIS





# BEST PORTFOLIO



# “GENDER ROLES: THROUGH THE EYE OF CARRIE MAE WEEMS”; “STUDIES IN TIMES OF COVID”; “FROM HERE AND FROM THERE”

## An Excerpt



[Read the full text here](#)

For the first unit, our main focus was to analyze a set of photographs. In my paper, titled “Gender Roles: Through the Eye of Carrie Mae Weems,” I chose to focus on how one photographer told a story through her work. Weems tells a story from a very intimate setting, her kitchen table. I chose to focus on the opportunity to see what stories I could learn just from seeing a set of photos. After careful thought, I decided I wanted to focus on how Weems portrays gender roles in her work. More specifically, I wanted to focus on how Weems portrayed gender roles in the African American community. For this paper, I had to research how gender roles and patriarchy have affected African Americans in the United States. By the end of this unit, I felt confident in my work and was able to create a story from the photos I used.

**Naomi Perez** (neh-oh-mee), class of 2023, is a Communications and Spanish double major. She is from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**Class:** WRIT-1133  
“Researching Cultures & Subcultures”  
**Professor:** Kamila Kinyon

## BEST PORTFOLIO



**“CHEER: DEMANDING RESPECT AND REDEFINING A SPORT”; “AMERICAN ANTHEM STORY + COMMENTARY”; “WE SEE YOU. AND WE’RE PROUD OF YOU’: PRAISING EARTHGANG’S ‘PROUD OF U FEAT. YOUNG THUG’”; AND “ACTUALLY, NOT ALL GIRLS ARE THE SAME”**

**An Excerpt**



[Read the full text here](#)

My portfolio, composed of three pieces from WRIT-1622, was selected to be honored at the showcase. Each project was slightly different, but all involved working with and analyzing media in popular culture, typically to shed light on a new aspect/meaning that could be interpreted from the work. Upon reflection, all pieces center around a theme of hope/hopelessness. For example, my review of a series portrayed a story in which hard work and faith lead to a victorious outcome, despite overcoming adversity. My “American Anthem” commentary explored the many meanings of a song entitled “Proud of U,” all revolving around the idea of pride, and unifying humankind. Lastly, my cover, entitled “Actually, Not All Girls are the Same,” aimed to dispute the original assigned reason for the artist’s hopeless nature in the given song, and point out his thinking doesn’t apply to every scenario.

**Abby Williams** (she/her), class of 2023, is a Psychology major. She is from Castle Rock, Colorado, and is a student in the Honors College.

**Class:** WRIT-1622  
“(Re)reading & (Re)writing Pop Culture”  
**Professor:** LP Picard

**BEST PORTFOLIO**



**“‘THE GIFT THAT GIVES BACK’ A 9% DROP IN STOCKS”; “‘PRETTY HURTS,’ THE ANTHEM THAT SENDS A MIDDLE FINGER TO THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY”; “FROZEN REVEALS THE CULTURAL STIGMA SURROUNDING GIRLS WITH ADHD”; AND “LIFE: SECOND AMENDMENT ADDITION”**

**An Excerpt**



[Read the full text here](#)

It was during this time that I grasped onto Beyoncé’s feminist, self-empowering, body-loving anthem “Pretty Hurts.” The fractures society put in my soul slowly began to mend with every word Beyoncé sang. Never before have lyrics so truly resonated with me—there was an emotional connection between me, Beyoncé, and every other girl who grew up ashamed of their appearance. I remember standing up and feeling exhilarated: I wasn’t alone in my struggle, and I could overcome it just like Beyoncé and the millions of women before us had. Humanity’s patriarchal, archaic views of beauty would not dictate and destroy my life. “Pretty Hurts” was a symbolic middle finger to the beauty industry; it was a call to action for women to love and celebrate what society would rather conceal: our flaws.

**Matty Fultineer** (Ma-Tea Full-tin-ear; she/her/hers), class of 2023, is a Computer Science major. She is from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

**Class:** WRIT-1622  
“(Re)reading & (Re)writing Pop Culture”  
**Professor:** LP Picard

**BEST PORTFOLIO**



## 2020 Fall Showcase Winners (not pictured)

### Best Writing in an Alternative Mode:

Submissions in this category should demonstrate the writer's ability to compose with more than just printed words. In other words, they must make effective use of speech, image, audio, video, or any other non-print modality. Submissions may, of course, include printed words, but they should not be complete with only printed words. Sample genres include (but are not limited to) photo essays, podcasts, documentaries, board games, and spoken word poems. Print-based pieces with charts or graphs should be submitted to other categories.

**Aaliyah Montes**, Activism Exhibit, WRIT 1733, Professor Rob Gilmor

**Bergen Ingvaldsen**, "Covid 19 Oral History Documentary: The Student Experience," WRIT 1133, Professor Kamila Kinyon

### Best Rhetorical Analysis:

Submissions in this category should effectively analyze one or more artifacts through the lens of rhetoric. In other words, they should demonstrate the writer's ability to examine how an artifact is embedded within a rhetorical situation. Analyzed artifacts can be any genre or modality, including (but not limited to) speeches, songs, images, and videos.

**Ryker Stokes**, "Ethos? Yes. Logos? Of Course. But More So Energia," WRIT 1122, Professor David Daniels