

Analysis of rhetoric and policy

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As an English major, Natalie Midiri has an appreciation for the art of the written and spoken word.

The Rutgers–Camden senior knows rhetoric can influence and inspire people, especially when coming from world leaders and public figures.

Midiri took a closer look at one important [speech](#) for an article to be published Jan. 31 in the journal *Young Scholars in Writing: Undergraduate Research in Writing and Rhetoric*.

In her article "The Stylistic Effects of Human Rights Rhetoric: An Analysis of U.S. Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton](#)'s 2011 LGBT Human Rights Speech," Midiri analyzes the historic international gay rights speech Clinton delivered in Switzerland to the United Nations in December 2011.

"Rhetorical style is relevant in public discussions where arguments could influence subsequent policy decisions," says Midiri, a Mount Laurel resident. "I'm in love with Clinton's speech. I think it's a well-crafted speech, but in my article, I'm critical of it."

In her speech, Clinton talks about the work required to protect LGBT people whose [human rights](#) are still denied in many parts of the world today.

"In this speech, Clinton is speaking to American legislators, U.N. representatives, and lawmakers in Uganda, where virtually no legal protections are offered to LGBT people," Midiri says. "Her message is

clear, but I think in her speech, there's a distinct separation between the LGBT community and those who are in power. It's delivered in a way that maintains that the LGBT community is voiceless or that it is segregated from the greater community."

Midiri says it wasn't intentional, but Clinton's speech could have provided examples of LGBT people in leadership positions.

"Speeches like Clinton's effect how public policy decisions are framed moving forward, so the rhetoric needs to be accessible to all audiences," she says.

Midiri submitted her article to *Young Scholars in Writing*, a refereed journal funded by the University of Missouri-Kansas City's College of Arts and Sciences and English Department.

"I've learned so much about academic writing through the Young Scholars in Writing program," Midiri says. "Communicating one-on-one with an editor has been a great experience for me. Creative [writing](#) was never my thing, but when I realized I could write about [rhetoric](#) and be published as an undergraduate, I was sold on majoring in English."

This March, Midiri will present a project about undergraduate research in the humanities at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Las Vegas. She has also co-written an article on the same subject with William FitzGerald, an assistant professor of English at Rutgers–Camden.

"His mentorship, as well as the experience I've had at Rutgers–Camden, has been invaluable."

After graduating from Rutgers–Camden in May, Midiri hopes to continue her education and pursue her master's degree in rhetorical

studies.

Provided by Rutgers University

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