

Student 1

Student

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Writing Across Boundaries in Relational Communication

Relational Communication is proving to be a very interesting field of study for me. It has everything to do with close, interpersonal relationships that every person on earth can relate to.

Relational Communication can be loosely explained as the focus on the expression and interpretation of messages within close relationships; it includes all types of messages and interactions as long as the two people are in a close relationship. These relationships can include

family relationships, friendships and the most obvious relationship that would be a part of Relational Communication is romantic relationships. Even abusive intimate relationships would belong to this category of communication considering the fact that the people in these relationships are considered to be close. In abusive or violent relationships, it is particularly interesting to me how the violence comes about and who in the relationship is the one that carries out the violence; or rather who has the most control and power within the relationship.

Manipulation can be seen as a common tactic of the abusers in these types of relationships according to the post that I read in a public space. I chose to read a BuzzFeed post, which was titled "What I Know Now," that was uploaded by a community user who goes by the name Nextdoorpizza. BuzzFeed is a social news and entertainment company that is focused on digital media. Like many other social sites, there is a community portion that anyone can post in, and this is where I came across Nextdoorpizza's post. The post is pretty short; just a long paragraph, but she is able to get her point across with very striking ideas and thoughts. Also on the page

Commented [KL1]: Be aware of your tone.

Student 2

along with the post, there are many suggestions for other articles on BuzzFeed’s website. There is a space for comments, but there were none on this particular post. Also, right underneath the post is an Instagram picture of two women wearing the same shirt that says “Love Doesn’t Hurt.” The caption aims to inspire people to speak up against domestic violence, which is obviously related to what Nextdoorpizza was trying to say in her **writing**.

The community portion on BuzzFeed allows anyone and everyone to create posts, quizzes, or polls. It is open to any type of post concerning any matter the author chooses to write about and these people are called “BuzzFeeders.” To become one of these, all someone has to do is sign up for an account on the website. The BuzzFeeders suggest their post and then if BuzzFeed’s Community editors find it to be fun, original, interesting, or humorous they will post it on the Community page. There are little restrictions and sometimes the posts written in the community portion may not even be read by many people. But, having a spot on the site for people to use as an outlet is a positive aspect of the BuzzFeed website. Most likely, the age group of people participating in this forum would be around eighteen years old to around thirty years old; or the millennial generation as the site focuses on current, popular, social situations. BuzzFeed is meant to entertain its users and provide them with a site that helps them keep up to date with the world around them.

In “What I Know Now,” she discusses her own experience in an abusive relationship and how manipulation was her partner’s main form of power control. It is interesting because Nextdoorpizza is in a lesbian relationship and she explicitly states that in the beginning of the post saying, “There’s an assumption about domestic violence — that it’s between a man and a woman. But domestic violence in a gay relationship can occur on so many levels. The abuse can be physical, emotional, verbal and **sexual**.” Only recently has the Communications field started

Commented [KL2]: Nice job with your intro! It's well-developed and you do a nice job of thoroughly describing the post you are analyzing. Also, I appreciate the background information on BuzzFeed; while I like reading their posts, I never realized that anyone could create content.

Commented [KL3]: Nice integration of a quote from the source to connect with your discussion.

Student 3

to look at relationships outside the constraints of being between a white man and a white woman. They are beginning to look at how different relationships function, such as partnerships between gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual people. The title of the post plays an important role throughout the writing. She uses reiteration by saying “What I know now:” about five times and then explaining how she felt during the relationship compared to how she sees things now, finally being out of the relationship. She talks about the development of the abuse and how it started out with just words to tear down her self-esteem, to actual violence that her partner would end up blaming her for.

In terms of comparing the kind of writing in this post to one you would find in an academic setting, these styles have a distinct difference. In an academic setting, particularly in the article I read in Project #1 titled, “Relational-Control Motivated Aggression: A Theoretically-Based Typology of Intimate Violence” by Loreen N. Olson, it is clear that these types of relationships are looked at objectively in a research based approach. Since relationships in the academic Communications field are typically researched, writings about their findings are written based on the scientific method that they followed, which included a hypothesis and an experiment. Communications theories and definitions are applied to these abusive relationships, and in particular, a typology was used in this article to categorize the different kinds of violence in abusive relationships. Clearly, the way this type of relationship is written about in this scholarly article is completely different than the way it is written about in the BuzzFeed post.

Nextdoorpizza wrote with the intention to invoke emotion on her readers. She did this by writing subjectively and being very personal and open in terms of self-disclosure. She wanted the readers to see abusive relationships through the eyes of someone who has been in one and how it affects a person during and after the relationship. I noticed a few grammatical errors, which is

Student 4

expected because it is not a scholarly article that is being reviewed and edited multiple times over and over before publication. She did not approach her relationship scientifically or as though she was seeking to explain her relationship through definitions and theories. She approached it with the feelings and emotions taken from her own experience; almost as if she was writing in a diary. It is clear that the writing about abusive relationships in “What I Know Now” differs entirely from the writing in “Relational-Control Motivated Aggression: A Theoretically-Based Typology of Intimate Violence.” A simple comparison can be made between subjectivity and objectivity, respectively.

I like that you chose a post that wasn't about a “traditional” heterosexual relationship, but rather chose to look at a post about a queer relationship. Ties in nicely with our course! Great job of discussing the writing between Project #1 and Project #2.

97/100

Commented [KL4]: I would have liked to see a clearer conclusion paragraph, but this is a nice draft overall.

Student 5

Works Cited

Nextdoorpizza. "What I Know Now." *BuzzFeed Community*, 14 July 2017, 12:20 p.m.,

[www.buzzfeed.com/kkattack/what-i-know-now-](http://www.buzzfeed.com/kkattack/what-i-know-now-2axvz?utm_term=.sm2eG17doJ#.oire9mqWYp)

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