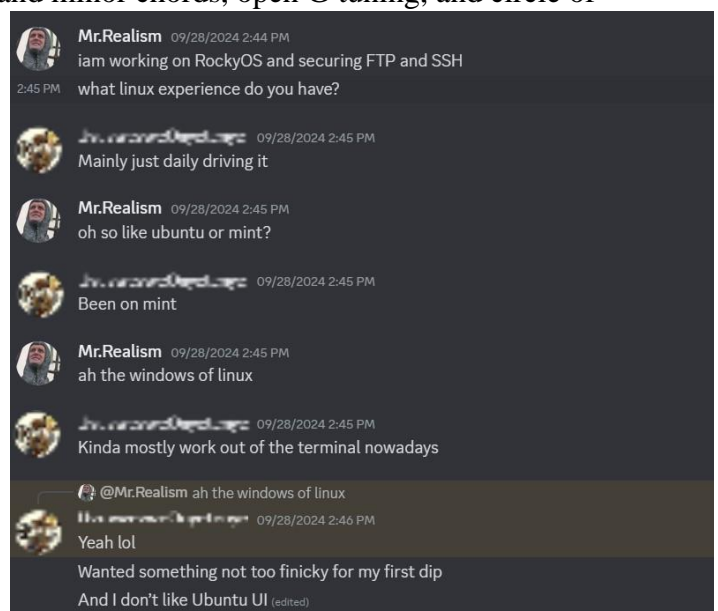


# Hacking and Photos: Far apart, yet so close

Nature photography and hacking, however different, are both outlets of creativity, community, and communication. These both can be examined using socio-cultural frameworks to examine how they interact with our society. By looking at hacking through the lens of a Discourse Community framework, and photography through Rhetorical Situation. We can dive deep into how community, audience, and many other aspects, influenced how I interact with these lifestyles. Hacking as part of a Discourse Community relies on internal/technical language, norms, and ethical considerations. Photography, however, is majorly influenced by rhetoric and the situation in which the rhetor was at the time of the photo (see what I did there?).

The world of cybersecurity is extremely massive with tons of different ideals, motives, etc. But my focus for this essay will be a specific discourse community that I had found at UCF called a Cyber security Blue-Team club called Hack@UCF. In Dan Melzer's *Understanding Discourse Communities*, he talks about when he first got into Guitar, about how there was a bunch new vocabulary and the like "At first, the vocabulary the online guitar teachers used was like a foreign language to me—terms like major and minor chords, open G tuning, and circle of fifths. I was overwhelmed by how complicated it all was" (Melzer, 100). Cybersecurity also was a vast pool of internal lingo that could confuse some new people. As much as I dislike it people in cyber love to shorten things into three letter acronyms, you can see in my artifact where I am seeing what our new team member knows. There are two of these being in



this artifact being “FTP” and “SSH”, these stand for file transfer protocol and secure socket shell respectively. There are many other terms that I personally like to use like “I just caught a shell” or “OpSec”, well if I spend too much time on this I can easily get carried away but here is a dictionary I found if you want to look at more “Hacker” words:

<https://spyscape.com/article/hacking-glossary>. Anyhoo, we use these terms mostly to shorten down words or phrases, for example OpSec stands for operational security which is an idea that during a secure operation people should not up personal identifiable information about the operation (we shorten this too to pii), this just boils down to not posting everything you hear. Not only does our language help define where you are in the many subcategories in cybersecurity (Both the offensive “Bad hackers” and Defensive “good” hackers have individual lingo) but helps bring those sub communities closer together through shared technological knowledge. Many look to join these groups and like Mathew Chen said in *Read the Room! Navigating Social Contexts and Written Texts* “I had to accomplish three main tasks: adapting to their way of communicating, understanding their professional motives, and building their trust.” (Seeley, Xu, and Melzer, 289) With many different groups, there is a wide range of ideals and thoughts on cyber ethics. Finding where you want to go is hard, and fitting into that community can be even harder. While you have the coldest cyber criminals, stealing millions of dollars from countries to people who work to help defend systems learning how to fit in can be a challenge but, in the end, a well worthy one! Most cyber ethics however are in the gray zone with mixed thoughts and most people around the middle (maybe just leaning a *twinge* to the black hats side). Many illegal hacker groups create manifestos which tell people where they land on the scale of ethics. The most famous hacker group Anonymous, a decentralized hacktivist collective, also used public manifestos to align their community with core values and accountability. Many people view

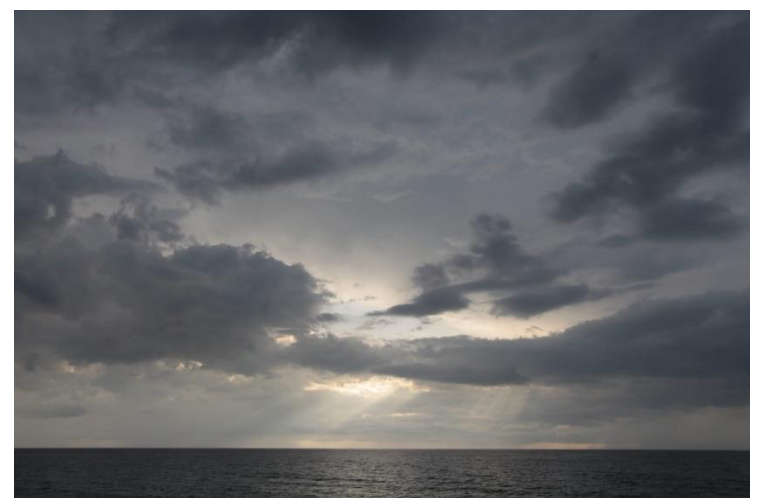
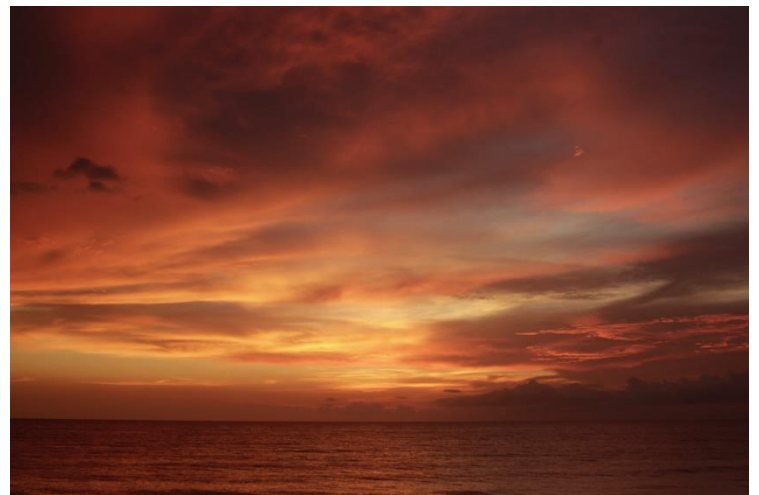
hacking as either defending systems or breaking into them, however I view them as more of a language. One where the speaker flows between the defenders and attackers. Both sides of cybersecurity play upon each other very much how stanzas act in a poem.

Photography is very much built like writing a poem. The rhetors intent, audience, context, and constraints dramatically affect how a photo can come out. I could take a beautiful picture of a sunset to highlight the waters or turn 180 degrees and photograph the dark brooding storm clouds the last rays of sunlight highlight or ignore the landscape completely and take a

macro photo of the humble fiddler crab trying to burrow into the sand to avoid a predator.

There is so much that goes into making a photo, just like the text *Rhetorical Situations and their constituents* by Keith Grant-Davie say, “define constraints, then, as all factors in the situation, aside from the rhetor and the audience, that may lead the audience to be either more or less sympathetic to the discourse, and that may therefore influence the rhetor’s response to the situation” (Grant-Davie, 273). Photography is practically defined by constraints, your lenses, camera, location, weather, and lighting can all change

and especially so for a nature photographer like me. One picture I am fond of took me a couple



of hours to set up in 40-degree weather in upstate New York. It was a long exposure so, I had to wait about 3-4 mins after every photo to slightly adjust my focus or to change my camera position just a few feet to the side. This constraint affected me physically, but also helped shape the overall photo, not to mention it makes the final photo



so much more important. Another quote from the reading that really resonated with me was from *Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis* by Laura Bolin Carroll, “Rhetorical messages always occur in a specific situation or context” (Carroll, 48). Most of the time when I grab my camera and head out to explore, I don’t think “ok, so I will find his interesting praying mantis, wildflowers and to round it off a good sunset with a plane in the sky”, 90% of my photos are completely random encounters which builds off the quote since all of my “Rhetoric” is based on specific context, but its really up to me on how to frame those contexts. As explained with the sunset example, you can be given all the situations or contexts in the world, but it is up to you to make the story of the photograph.

While completely different, both hacking and photography utilize literature frameworks making and shaping how both communities react with each other and the outside world. Together, these analyses show how both hacking and photography serve as powerful tools for communication and resistance, reflecting and challenging societal norms in their own distinct ways. By understanding their social functions, we gain insight into how these areas influence and are influenced by the cultures in which they are in.

Works Cited:

- Melzer, Dan. “Understanding Discourse Communities.” *Writing Spaces*, [writingspaces.org/?page\\_id=387](https://writingspaces.org/?page_id=387). Accessed 6 Oct. 2024.
- Grant-Davie, Keith. “Rhetorical Situations and Their Constituents.” *JSTOR*, Wikimedia Foundation, 9 Sept. 2024, [ucf-flvc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=PC&vid=01FALSC\\_UCF:UCF&tab=Everything&docid=cdi\\_crossref\\_primary\\_10\\_1080\\_07350199709359219](https://ucf-flvc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=PC&vid=01FALSC_UCF:UCF&tab=Everything&docid=cdi_crossref_primary_10_1080_07350199709359219).
- Carroll, Laura Bolin. “Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis.” *Writing Spaces*, [writingspaces.org/past-volumes/backpacks-vs-briefcases-steps-toward-rhetorical-analysis/](https://writingspaces.org/past-volumes/backpacks-vs-briefcases-steps-toward-rhetorical-analysis/). Accessed 6 Oct. 2024.
- Seeley, Sarah, et al. “Read the Room! Navigating Social Contexts and Written Texts.” *Writing Spaces*, [writingspaces.org/read-the-room-navigating-social-contexts-and-written-texts/](https://writingspaces.org/read-the-room-navigating-social-contexts-and-written-texts/). Accessed 21 Oct. 2024.