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## **When Words Fail, Music Speaks: A Visual Ethnographic Examination of Vocal Performance Culture**

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Poster Presentationn P40

**WHEN WORDS FAIL, MUSIC SPEAKS: A VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHIC  
EXAMINATION OF VOCAL PERFORMANCE CULTURE**

Hannah Williams and Rebecca Gearhart\*

Sociology and Anthropology Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

Through the use of collaborative ethnography and photography, this poster provides insight into the vocal performance culture at Illinois Wesleyan University. Utilizing collaborative methods and visual media, this research provides an insider's perspective on the lives of vocal performers by demonstrating the qualities that members of the community find most significant. This poster visually examines the self-discipline that necessarily accompanies the lifestyle of vocal performers, as their bodies are their instruments and therefore must be well cared for. It additionally examines the self-confidence of vocal performers, in response to the critical and competitive nature of the field, and the emotional and physical connection that vocalists forge with their music.