

Working in a group of four, you'll research a particular "hazard" of digital literacy—fake news, trolling, loss of privacy (big data), screen addiction, social alienation/isolation, change in language and grammar, to name some possibilities—and you'll present your research, as well as your argument about your research, in a podcast. Over the course of about two months, you'll listen to podcasts to determine what the features of a good podcast are, and you'll do library-based research to learn more about the particular aspect of digital literacy that you've chosen to study. Working with print and digital texts and using Audacity (audio software), you'll make a podcast in which you make an argument about what you've learned—what is the "hazard" that you've chosen to study? Why is it dangerous? For whom and by whom? What are the effects of this practice? What are some possible solutions to the problem? Each group will use Slack to communicate with each other about the project. Each group member will speak for at least two minutes (combined) in the podcast. Each group will present its podcast to the rest of the class. Everyone in the class, as well as Instructional and Reference Librarian Amy Stewart-Mailhot, will participate in evaluating the podcasts.

Before we can start to do the work of making our own podcasts, we need to learn more about podcasts as a particular medium and as a particular genre.

1. What makes a podcast?
2. What makes a *good* podcast?

Your next assignment, then, is to go forth and find a podcast. What elements do you notice?

- ☞ Is there music? What kind of music? When is it used? When? How? Are there other sound effects? When/how are they used?
- ☞ How do the podcaster(s) let the listeners know what the focus of the episode will be? Do they start with a broad topic and then move to a more specific position/argument/opinion within that topic? How do they frame what their listeners will hear?
- ☞ What other voices do the podcasters bring in? Do they have guests? Do they interview people? Do they play clips from the news, film, TV, music, the street or the wilderness? How do they share data or histories or research?
- ☞ How clear are the podcasters—both in terms of voice quality and in terms of the information they're giving? How hard do you have to work to understand what they are saying?
- ☞ Does the episode follow an organizational structure? What is it? How does the podcaster(s) let you as a listener know where you are (rhetorically, structurally) in the episode? What kinds of transitions do they use to move from one section to the next?

- ☞ How does the podcast end? Is there a conclusion? Are there questions? Is there an announcement about what will happen next? Other than the absence of sound, how did you know that the episode was over?
- ☞ Did the podcast make you think? During the podcast? After the podcast had ended? Did it stay with you? If so, how did it do that?
- ☞ What else did you notice that I haven't mentioned here? What are some things heard that you would like to reproduce? What are some things you heard that you would like to avoid?

Please write answers to these questions and bring them to class on Tuesday, October 17, 2017. You'll share your findings in a small group and begin to make a rubric that will guide us in making podcasts of our own later in the semester.