

FYEP 190 – Religion & Politics in the U.S.

January 2019 – Professor Dowland

Podcast Assignment

Your major assignment this term is to produce a podcast with one or two classmates. These podcasts will run 10-15 minutes. Your podcast will feature a narrative component and a discussion component. In the narrative component, you and your group-mates will find a creative way to tell a story about the intersection of religion & politics in U.S. history. In the discussion component, you and your group-mates will provide reflections on the relevance of this historical narrative for the present, ideally by connecting it to a current issue in the news.

The first step in the assignment is to identify the story that will anchor your podcast. This story should be relevant to your broad topic but specific. Focus on our class readings to identify stories that you might want to cover. (You don't have to choose a story from our class texts, but that's the place to start looking.) We'll have group meetings on Tuesday, January 15, to discuss potential stories you've found in the readings. **Please bring at least 3 story ideas to the meeting on Tuesday.** Feel free to look for other stories on your own, drawing on resources linked from our Sakai site and from books you have read in other courses. The goal here is to locate a story that is interesting, filled with colorful characters, and relevant to an ongoing issue in American religion & politics. As you look for a story, consider how you could tell it in a creative way, and what discussion it would spark among you and your group-mates.

The second step is to do a little research about the figures and story you're presenting. Professor Dowland will direct you to appropriate resources in our meeting on January 15.

Third, you will use your research to craft an outline for your podcast. This outline should follow the format of the handout you received in the podcast workshop on January 4; include the speakers, research notes, external audio sources, and music ideas on your podcast. It's up to you how you sequence the podcast. You should draw on the examples we've listened to over the course of the month for ideas about pacing, story delivery, use of music, and use of external audio. The only content requirements are that you include a creative narration of your story and a discussion about the issues raised in your podcast. Every group member should speak for at least two minutes (cumulative, not consecutive) in the podcast. Depending on how you format it, the outline should run 2-5 pages. It's important that your outline reflect research through the inclusion of notes. I want to see evidence that you understand the historical context and contingencies of the narrative you're using, as well as thoughtful reflection about that narrative's relevance to contemporary issues.

Finally, you will record and edit a 10-15 minute podcast with your group-mates. Your narrative should be clear, engaging, and creative. It must include some external audio, either from the historical figures you're studying or from interviews with historians about the story and/or historical figures you're researching. Your discussion should feature each group member and should – to paraphrase historian Jill Lepore – make an argument about the past using stories.

Logistics

Tuesday, January 15 – 3 story ideas due (bring a hard copy listing the ideas, with names/dates/basic details of the stories) at group conference with Prof. Dowland

Wednesday, January 23 – Podcast Outline due via Assignments and in hard copy (bring one copy for each group member to group meeting with Prof. Dowland)

Thursday, January 24—Sunday, January 27 – Record podcast audio in the library studio (you must record in the studio) – **sign up for your recording time now (budget 90 minutes)**

Thursday, January 24—Tuesday, January 29 – Edit your podcast (budget lots of time for editing)

Wednesday, January 30 – Podcasts due to Sakai podcatcher by 10:30am

Evaluation Criteria

Podcast Outline

- 50% Structure (does the outline suggest a logical and creative way to tell the story? Does the outline clearly identify speakers, external audio, and music ideas? Does the outline imagine an audience of listeners—is it written for the ear?)
- 50% Content (does the outline reflect sufficient research through notes on the story? Does the outline feature talking points that show contextualized understanding of the past, as well as thoughtful reflections about present issues?)

Podcast

Evaluation of the podcast will follow the rubric distributed in class on January 3, with the following weighting: 20% Format, 50% Main Content, 10% Delivery, 20% Technical Production. Your classmates will assess podcasts according to these criteria in class on January 30, and those assessments will factor into your final evaluation.

NOTE: Each group member should contribute equal amounts of work to the podcast outline, recording, and editing. It's up to you to decide how to divvy up the labor, but I will write an email to each group member asking for a confidential report on how evenly the workload was shared. In the event that the workload was uneven, I reserve the right to award different grades to each group member.

Initial Group Meetings (All meetings will be in Prof. Dowland's office, Blomquist 8)

- The role of churches in promoting slavery or abolition (1830s-60s): Alejandro Perez Dolores, Jessica Yan, Ashley Weaver (Sehat, ch. 4) **Meet with Professor Dowland, 1/15 @ 1:30pm**
- Religious ideas and the first wave of American feminism (1848-1918): Kayla Hay, Emily Solan (Sehat, chs. 5 & 7) **Meet with Professor Dowland, 1/15 @ 1:45pm**
- Censorship of obscene materials in the late 19th and early 20th c.: Andrew Irwin, Nicholl de Peralta, Aly Johnson (Sehat, ch. 8; Griffith, ch. 2) **Meet with Prof. Dowland, 1/15 @ 2:00pm**
- Churches and birth control (early/mid-20th century): Carolyn Sutton, Sabrina Pietron, Maya Witherspoon (Griffith, ch. 1) **Meet with Professor Dowland, 1/15 @ 2:15pm**
- Christians and American wars (Civil War, WWI, or WWII): Ryan Baerg, Trey Garey, Alex Gillies (no direct reading – talk to me!) **Meet with Professor Dowland, 1/15 @ 2:30pm**
- The Rise of the Religious Right in the 1970s and 1980s: Quintessa Waud, Shannon Bacon, Alexis Herion (Griffith, chs. 5-7) **Meet with Professor Dowland, 1/15 @ 2:45pm**