Introduction to Podcasting 1102

This sheet explains a bit about podcasts and how to do them well. It is *not* the podcast assignment itself.

This is what a podcast sounds like. This is what a podcast looks like.

A podcast is a newscast, saved to the web. If you've ever heard "It's 3 p.m. the news is next" you've heard a newscast. I use the terms newscast and podcast interchangeably. You are going to write a 3 minute podcast, about a historical subject from between 1400 C.E and 1914 C.E. The trick is to find a subject and a way of talking about it that an average radio listener will find interesting.

Because I assume you've never done an assignment like this, I've created five parts. See the D2L calendar or Dropbox for the due dates.

Part 1. The form. This form requires you define a subject and find sources. It helps me steer your away from off topic podcasts, like aliens, as well.
Part 2 The first draft.. This will be a full, totally complete version of your podcast.
Part 3. A peer review. I'll partner you with someone else from class, and you'll be responsible for reviewing their podcast using a form I give you. This is designed to help you improve your writing by working on process.
Part 4. The final written version. Most of your work will be in revising your first draft.
Part 5. A recorded audio version. You'll record your audio. If you don't have a software of preference, you can use Audacity, which is free, and easy to use. I'll train y'all on how to do this. If you can cut and copy in MS Word, your can record audio.

To start, you need to find a subject that has good primary sources and that a general audience will find interesting. You might find16th century knitting to be fascinating, but if you have neither good sources nor an interesting angle for a general listener, it's no good.

Once you have subject and sources, fill in the form, posted in content.

The full assignment is also under content in our weeks section.

The list below includes IMPORTANT tips and requirements for the podcast. Print it and keep with the podcast assignment itself.
- News radio is listened to alone. Write as if speaking to one person, not an audience.
- This should be a conversation style. You'd never end a conversation with Grandma with "In conclusion," neither would a newscast. Write like you speak to stranger you met while waiting for the bus.
- Most folks overwhelmed their podcasts with numbers and details. Listeners retain very little. Listeners can retain maybe two numbers and one date, that's all.
- Think of it this way: your listener will remember one thing from your podcast- what should that be? Stick that up front and cut everything that doesn't accomplish your goal.

- Citations are done with 1. a bibliography and two, in-text citations. If you quote, write the word Quote or indicate another way the words aren't your own (say pause. . . then resume). Your bibliography tells me where you got your information, your in-text citations (for example, as we learn from this 15th century letter from X to Y) let you be honest with your listener as to where your info comes from, and what words aren't yours.
- Three sources are the minimum, just like in journalism. More sources are better, most non-internet sources are better. NO GENERAL WEBSITES (.COM, .NET).
- Your audience is apathetic or mildly interested (the overtly hostile will change the station). Give them a hook, a reason to want to listen right up front.
- Repeat information (As you heard in the first part of the newscast, now we'll discuss.) Your listener needs signposts to mark the path of your narrative.
- Write everything you'll say, including foreign words phonetically. Anything you won't say, for example (sound of bell), put in parentheses. Only uses parentheses for directions or non-read sound.
- The format should be one sentence, one line. Yes, this makes it long on paper. But it allows you to look up when reading on air, and find your spot again quickly. Looking at a paragraph to find your spot results in dead air.

For more examples of podcasts, go to http://www.uh.edu/engines/keywords.htm . There are hundreds of podcasts, all about the right length.