

Myth Made Visible

Final Digital Project¹

Tasks

You will create a podcast that explains and evaluates the influence of myth represented in contemporary society. This task is a team effort, which means that you will work with at least one other student to research the myth persisting in our society. Your podcast will aim to describe the context in which the myth lives, analyze its role as a rhetorical space, and advocate a clearly articulated opinion it.

Purposes

By completing this assignment, you have the opportunity of exercising skills such as:

- rhetorical approaches that persuade a broad audience
- constructing a multimedia text that draws attention to the persistence of classical myth in the modern world
- engaging in an effective collaborative process including working as a group and partnering with a community organization
- creating a well-researched argument in audio form
- creating a product that has value beyond the semester

Discussion

Because this project requires a lot of planning, you want to get started ASAP. One way that you could begin is by deciding with your teammate which representation you will focus on. The best way to decide is by identifying several myths that you both find particularly interesting and then set about finding businesses or agencies that incorporate that myth. You want to find individuals whom you could interview, which means that you'll want to contact these individuals early and ask if they're willing to talk with you about their group and the role that the myth plays. When I was creating the sample podcast, I had to scramble to a second business because the first would not respond to me. Don't delay. Preference is given to agencies local to Charleston, SC, though that is not a stipulation. There cannot be duplicates, so please let me know ASAP which group you'll be analyzing. ***You must decide by 12 March 2021.*** Then, you will want to decide what sort of information you will want to gather besides the interviews so that in the end you will have a variety of sources (websites, digital branding; interviews, etc.).

Beyond these initial sources, you will also research the selected myth. Care must be given to choose three (3) sources that have a peer-review process as you would find in an academic journal or a scholarly text (i.e., written for an expert audience). You will need to include the information gathered from these sources in your podcast in a way that recognizes the sources. Because your product is an audio file, you will need to name the sources. For example, you can say "According to . . . in her book . . ." in the narrative sections of your podcast.

¹ This assignment is adapted from the "[Iowa Narratives Project](#)" that is managed by Iowa Digital Engagement and Learning (<https://IDEAL.uiowa.edu>) and used in accordance with [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License](#).

When you have gathered your research and recorded your interviews, you can begin composing the script (what you will say in your podcast). Make sure to note where you will place interviewed recordings (you don't need to write out what exactly the people you interviewed say in the recording). ***The script is due 26 March 2021***, and I will give you general feedback on the script by the following class. I would encourage you to wait to begin the heavy creation of your podcast until you receive feedback from me. However, you may want to begin editing the interviews so that you have just the portions you need. I have provided short tutorials on how to use Audacity, but if you need further assistance on how to use Audacity, you can access these free resources:

- [Tutorial – Editing an Existing Audio File](#)
- [How to Record and Edit Audio with Audacity: A Step-by-Step Guide](#)
- [Audacity Tutorial: 17 Essential Podcast Recording and Editing Tips](#)

I'm really excited to listen to your productions!

Requirements

Evidence of an in-depth investigation

- Your podcast describes the context accurately
- Your podcast advocates a clearly defined argument within the greater investigation of what the represented myth is and how it has influenced the business/agency
- Your podcast incorporates reasoning, evidence, and research that develops a solid argument
- Your podcast does not content itself with an obvious, predictable argument but instead explicates nuances in reason and evidence
- Your podcast demonstrates direct connections to the modern world
- Your research includes interviews
- Your podcast incorporates a minimum of three (3) peer-reviewed or scholarly sources that you submit to the [class Google drive](#)

Narration

- Compose multiple drafts and keep research notes
- Revise (i.e., re-write or re-think) extensively between the first and final drafts
- Re-read this assignment prompt many times and ask me if you have questions
- Participate fully in class workshopping activities
- Proofread and edit carefully
- Speak in a manner that reflects a provocative, emotional tone aimed at hooking your audience's attention and persuading their perspectives

Interview material

- Aim at intriguing your target audience; your classmates and instructor should be interested in learning about the investigation
- Empathize with your audience in order to help them become/stay engaged
- Use rhetorical appeals and stylistic devices with an understanding of their effect in multiple contexts
- Use formality and informality as appropriate
- Talk about your team with minimal uses of "I" or "we"

Texturing

- Background music must comply with CC BY (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)
- Your podcast should use each of the following editing effects: fade in, fade out, negative amplification (as when music plays softly behind the narration or interview)

Grading Criteria

Podcasts satisfying the above requirements and purposes will receive a satisfactory grade between C- and B. Podcasts not satisfying these requirements and purposes will receive a D or lower. Productions exemplifying mastery of the requirements and purposes will earn a B+ or higher. The percentage scale can be found in the course syllabus.

Formatting and Other Minutia

- Podcast is uploaded to OAKS Dropbox by date listed below
- Podcasts are between 10'-15' long
- Music tracts are given appropriate credit in compliance with CC BY (cf. documentation on [this page](#))
- Style and language effectively engage the audience, create credibility, and employ stylistic devices

Dates (descriptions of process steps will follow in handouts):

- Proposed landmark/monument to investigate: 12 March 2021
- Collaboration agreement: 12 March 2021 (discussed below)
- First complete script of a podcast: 26 March 2021
- Produced podcast: 18 April 2021
- Reflective writing assignment (250-300 words): 28 April (discussed below)

Process steps:

Process Log:

Throughout this project, you and your groupmates must keep track of your activities by keeping a process log. The process log will serve as a documentation of your group's work. Every activity done in service to this project, including group activities and individual activities, should be recorded in the log. The log should specify which members of the group completed each activity. Include details about research, interviews, writing, editing, etc., and update your visual bibliography accordingly. These documents will show, at the end of the project, what each group member contributed, and bolster the group's credibility as a whole.

Proposal assignment

Compose a proposal that describes your narrative project. In about a page of typed text, describe:

1. The narrative you plan to feature
2. The questions that will guide your inquiry into the details of the narrative
3. A thesis statement that argues why this narrative deserves wider attention

Collaborative agreement

As a group, compose a document that describes the collaborative roles of the group. Define your collaborative process. Write this in the form of an agreement that describes how you want to work together to make decisions, when and where you will meet, how you will schedule meetings, when you will complete tasks, and how you will address concerns and disagreements. This document will be helpful for your reflective writing assignment at the end of the course that is due 28 April 2021.

Conduct and record interviews

The format and formality of your interviews will depend on your focus. Work together as a group to write out some questions you might want to ask. But be sure you don't depend on a script. An open conversation that sometimes touches upon your interview questions will allow your interviewee space to add their own perspectives. You must inform the people you interview about your project. Ask them if they are willing to sign [the release form](#) to have their interview on a public platform. If they do are not willing, then don't include their voice in your podcast. **Be sure to create PDFs of interviewees emails.**

When recording interviews, make a few practice recordings to be sure that you know how to use your equipment as well as how to position the recording device in order to capture a strong recording of your interviewee. Remember that a noisy space is not a good space for recording interviews.

Record sounds that will help create the soundscape for your narrative. For instance, if your interviewee mentions a choir they enjoy, and if that statement is important in your podcast, try to get some recorded sound of the choir in a performance or practice. You will then be able to have choral singing in the background of your podcast.

Compose your podcast

Use the audio editing software of your choice (I'm recommending Audacity which is free, open-source software available for Mac, Windows, and Linux. You can download it at <https://www.audacityteam.org/download/>). Import the audio files you want to work with. Make cuts and position your tracks in order to compose a smooth, 5-8 minute podcast narrative. There are many online tutorials (mostly video tutorials) that will help you use Audacity, Garage Band, or another application to edit your audio. I will provide several tutorials for using Audacity.

In a nutshell, composing with audio tracks is just like cutting, copying, and pasting in a Microsoft word document. You select and move around bits of audio you want to use, and you cut out any bits you don't want to use. As a group, you will record narration to include in your podcast around the interviews and other sounds you collected while on location. Pay close attention to the organization of your project to ensure a cohesive and engaging podcast.

Draft workshop (in class)

Pair up with another group to workshop your multimedia presentation in progress. Bring a list of questions and concerns about your presentation to the workshop.

Reflection on group collaboration (Due: 28 April 2021)

As individuals, write a 250-300 word reflection that addresses the following prompts:

- Compose a few paragraphs that describe how well you as an individual have met the expectations of your group's agreement, what you invested in the assignment and what you gained from that investment, and how you could have improved your work in any way.
- Write about how effectively your group-mates met the expectations of your collaborative agreement. Mention each group member by name and assess their efforts to work together as a team in order to meet these assignments' expectations. Be honest. Know, however, that it's not classy to throw people under the bus. It's better to point back to the collaborative agreement in your assessment.
- Reflect on the skills and knowledge you worked to gain in this assignment. How did you challenge yourself to learn something new? What do you know now that you didn't before starting the assignment?

Upload your project (optional, though encouraged)

Your group can elect to feature your podcast and images on [the Classical Myth WordPress site](#). To share your work, each member of your group must submit a project release) and have a signed release from each person you interviewed who is featured in the podcast (interviewee release provided by your instructor). You will have full rights to edit your page, which means designing its look, uploading pictures, and describing your project.

n.b. I really hope that you will decide to feature your podcast publicly. The Classical Myth WordPress site will not only benefit those outside of the classroom; it will also ensure that your hard work and creative effort will last beyond the semester.