

Final Project: Podcast

For *WAYS 103: Gender, Sexuality, and Music*

(Spring 2024)



Hi all,

This is a “medium-sized” project: big enough to do some productive thinking, but not something massive or something that you can’t complete over about 2 weeks.

What do you need to do?

STEP #1: Choose **ONE** piece of music you want to investigate.

- This piece **MUST** have something to do with gender & sexuality
- **Cannot** be a piece we covered in class or that you did for your group project on New York
- This piece of music **should** probably be at least 2-3 minutes long, just in order to help you out.

STEP #2: Turn in a **BIBLIOGRAPHY**: this can include materials you’ve used, or further readings on your topic

(submit this with the rest of your work)

- Your bibliography should include at least **THREE** items (you may have more).
- Of these, I want **ONE** of them to be a scholarly source (published by a university press).
- Having problems? Remember that your scholarly source doesn’t need to be about **EVERY** element of your piece: it could be about an issue related to your piece, something about the genre you’re working on, something related to other works by your selected musician, etc.
- Citation method: I don’t massively care whether you use Chicago, MLA, Turabian.....use whatever you know and can get correct

Step #3: due Friday, May 17, 11:59pm

Record a brief **Podcast** episode, no shorter than 5 minutes and no longer than 7 minutes.

This should include some polished spoken presentation from you and some audio examples.

I will not make you submit an outline, but make sure your speech has an introduction, 2-4 main body points, and a conclusion.

Tips, Notes, and Rules:

1. **Make sure to include some brief music examples**—but this shouldn’t be more than 1-1.5 minutes of music at absolute maximum (short snippets are better, not long excerpts).
2. This should not be a “book report,” but should include some analytical thought on your part, some analysis, some bigger picture demonstration of your continuing work and thought on our class topic.
3. You are most welcome to involve other people in your project (have a guest on your podcast, for example), but you need to do your own work (these aren’t jointly graded projects)
4. I don’t care how you record this; you may use any recording medium—I’m not judging on quality of sound. Many cell phones have apps for recording. You could also try web-based services such as Vocaroo (vocaroo.com) or Audacity (audacityteam.org). Let me know if you have questions about this and I may be able to guide you to some resources.

In your podcast, you should discuss your chosen piece by putting together some mixture of the following:

1. **Musician biography**
2. **How/when** the piece was composed or commissioned
3. **Performance history:** when was it first done, or who has famously performed it?
4. **Reception history:** did people always like this piece, or did it have ups and downs in its popularity?
5. **Subject matter of the piece,** if relevant. Is it programmatic?
6. **Lyrical meaning,** if relevant
7. **Some things to listen for in the piece of music**—please note, this should **not** be a blow-by-blow “then this happened, then this happens, etc.” Pick a couple things to point out to your listener.
8. **Anything interesting connected to the piece**—use in a film, how you encountered it, etc.
9. **Any large-scale issues** that are connected to the piece—much like we’ve been discussing as our major topics in class (gendering instruments, spaces, exoticism, virtuosity, activism, listening, musical theater, dance, the voice, etc). This is important—make **SURE** you connect why your piece tells us something important about gender and sexuality.
10. **Things YOU like** or find intriguing about the piece. Is there a section that you just swoon over? A personal touch is fabulous here!

Please balance your presentation carefully (you don’t want to spend 7 minutes in minute detail on biography and leave out everything else).

Where do I look up stuff to include?

So we all need to learn how to pull together various sources to do this kind of stuff, and it’s okay (even important) to understand the roles that various sources play. TLDR: of course we can use things like Wikipedia to launch ourselves, but **WHAT ELSE?**

- Composer webpages
- Interviews with the composer or other performers of the work
- Program notes written by other people: note these can be super helpful, but tread carefully here and **DO NOT JUST COPY THE WORDS OF OTHERS**—plagiarism isn’t just a college grade downer, it can actually lose anyone their job!
- Newspaper coverage

Scholarly articles:

- **This step is required—make sure you check a couple of the databases below.**
- go to <https://library.potsdam.edu/music>
- You’ll notice there are search engines for “Music Periodicals Database,” “Music Index,” “RILM Abstracts,” and “JSTOR.” Look up your piece or other related search terms in one or more of these databases and see what pops up.

Books:

- Try Bearcat (our local library): <https://library.potsdam.edu/home>
- Try Worldcat (libraries worldwide): <https://library.potsdam.edu/home>
- Google Books
- Drawing a blank? Make an appointment with me and I will help you! I love research (it’s nerdy fabulous fun) and love learning about your pieces :)