The Final Project: Oral Presentation

Three presentations will take place on 3/16 and four will take place on 3/18. You will have significant class time on 3/11 and 3/13 to work in your groups. We will have a second library session on 3/2.

For this final project you will work in groups of five and create a presentation on a topic from the attached list. (One group only will have six members.) Your jobs are these:

- to bring the topic alive for your audience via presentation of relevant, well selected, well edited information from secondary sources AND via oral interpretation of primary sources

- to share some scholarly analysis about your topic—historians’ or cultural critics’ analysis/interpretation of how, why, cause, effect, significance, etc. (Consider the essays that conclude Rachel Calof’s Story, for example—these provide perspective and context for the memoir. Think of Davis; her book provides ample facts AND her analysis as to the significance and impact of the facts. Think of Karen’s lectures—she frequently cites her sources when sharing interpretation or analysis of the events in her lectures.)

- We also hope this will be an exciting and creative way to conclude our course work together. So your third job is to enjoy your work and one another.

Assignment Goals:

- to cover and give voice to key events, movements, individuals in American women’s history that we have not yet studied together

- to work closely with primary sources of various types—as presenters and as listeners

- to synthesize both informational and analytical secondary sources into your presentation

- to keep growing in terms of clarity, tempo, variety, expressiveness and emphasis as oral presenters and oral interpreters

- to further develop information literacy and library research skills

- to further develop small group communication and problem solving skills

Some basic tips for working effectively together on a big project:

- Exchange ways to reach each other outside of class.
• Generate a list of guidelines to shape the ways you work, make decisions, and interact in your group. (Or at least review the shared guidelines we created as a class for safe and productive learning communities.)
• Create a timeline for the project and give yourselves due dates for various components.
• Check in on these due dates with each other—help one another as needs arise.
• Build in at least one practice run-through of your presentation that you can all attend. Note above that you have some class time to work on this.

Research:
We recommend breaking the topic into sections and having one person research one section. Remember to share relevant sources you come across with your group members, however.

The topics, as written, give you quite a few names, questions, topics, and prompts to get you started on your research. If you’re having trouble finding relevant sources and/or if you find other lines of inquiry you want to pursue, please check in with Karen and Jane. Also check with us and/or librarians if you want more help recognizing and finding scholars’ analysis of your topic.

Be sure you’re using appropriate sources for academic work. Books written by scholars or for college readers, scholarly articles in scholarly journals, materials found in online reference databases or in our hard copy reference collections are appropriate secondary sources. They have all been peer-reviewed and/or edited by other scholars before being published. Websites with .edu domains and some with .org and .gov domains might also prove useful.

Pay attention to the discoveries and details that mean the most to you as you research. These will probably enliven your presentation for your listeners.

Avoid plagiarism: whatever note-taking system you use, make sure you are always clear on when you are using a source’s phrasing. Then, as you present and as you write your essay, make sure you notify listeners/readers when you use others’ wording. (This should be easier for your audience to glean in the interpretation of primary sources, but must also be made clear in the presentation of any sources.)
You will need to find primary sources, as well. These might include treaties, letters, speeches, diaries, resolutions, newspaper articles, editorials, songs, novels, radio or television transcripts, and more. Again, primary sources are documents written in the era you’re researching and by the folks involved in the movement, event, etc.

Structure and transitions:
The topics as written cover considerable ground. You will need to focus and shape your presentation as you see fit based on what your research uncovers. Whatever organization you decide on, remember your listeners need a lot of help to stay with you every step of the way as you present. Consider the following:

- A distinct introduction that announces your topic, your subtopics, your purposes and that gives a sense of what to expect in the next 30 minutes.
- Clear transitions between the various subtopics and sections of your presentation
- Clear signals about whose words and analysis we’re hearing when
- A conclusion that helps your listeners to remember the key strands of your presentation and that helps them pull these all together at the end.

Using power point, film clips, etc:
We want you to do your presentation live, in the immediate moment, in the same space with us, without the distraction and distancing that most technology involves. Do not use power point to deliver your materials; do not rely primarily on technology but on your own voices and bodies and expressive capabilities. We’re not ruling out using projected images. You might have other creative ideas that involve technology; if so, please run these past us.

Basic requirements:

- All members must deliver some primary source material and some secondary source material.
- All members must spend about the same amount of time speaking.
- Your presentation must take no longer than 30 minutes. Time yourselves, edit, and leave some wiggle room in your timing.
- Your group will have five minutes to get set up for the presentation. Plan accordingly
Tips and Expectations:

- As part of preparing and cohering as a group, review the expectations and hints on your earlier oral presentation assignment sheets. They all still apply. PLEASE ACTUALLY DO THIS STEP.

- Be sure you practice presenting to and with each other. Act as coaches and constructive critics. You are all working together to make this the strongest presentation you can.

- All in the group should know the program, the order, the transitions, and the content of each other’s sections. Your audience should feel like we’re in practiced, knowledgeable hands.

- Listen attentively to each other during your actual presentation. Don’t whisper, fidget, or distract your audience during one another’s sections.

- And please DO NOT READ your information to us. Tell us what you’ve learned with lots of eye contact and frequent glances at your notes.

Written requirements:

- An outline of your presentation detailed enough that you could deliver all your secondary material directly from this outline. (You may staple together the outlines of your separate sections if that makes it easier to turn this in.)

- Copies of all the primary source material you interpret/perform for us.

- A paragraph from each member of the group that describes and discusses his or her experience working in this group on this project.

- On the same sheet of paper, a paragraph describing how you as an individual stretched your skills and took new risks as an oral presenter.

- A bibliography of sources you included and/or consulted in MLA format—you may also turn this in on separate sheets for each group member. Be sure names are on these separate sheets.

NOTE: All written requirements for the group must be turned in together all at one time in an orderly fashion that makes sense. All written requirements must be word-processed except for the copies of your primary source materials. You may turn in the written requirements on the day of your presentation or the next day the class meets.
Grading Criteria:

- Helpful organization and clear introduction, transitions and conclusion
- Demonstrated preparedness, practice, and cohesion as a group
- Demonstrated focus, depth, and “mastery” of research using appropriate sources including some scholarly analysis.
- Committed performance/presentation of your primary sources—observable effort to bring the author’s words, circumstances, concerns, ideas and voice alive
- Control of volume, pacing, and enunciation throughout the presentation so all can follow you
- Effective use of the space, of blocking, and of any props, images, etc. you include
- Observable effort to connect to your audience through eye contact, attention to the whole room etc.
- Commitment to and completeness of written work

All group members will receive the same grade for the oral presentation unless we observe or learn of reasons to grade otherwise.