Slideshow assignment

3/28/18

I hope this assignment will be both challenging and enjoyable. The challenge may be coming up with an angle that lends itself to visuals, and to photos that you can take. You should also try for something on your blog topic so that this can be integrated into your final story package. I would like either the podcast or the slideshow (or both) to be part of that final story.

So—you decide. If nothing fits your topic, then a photo essay on La Salle or its neighborhood would work. Take an angle—history, a timeline, a guided tour, signs of growth or hope, issues or concerns, look for superlatives: biggest, smallest, brightest, darkest. Explainers work well for this format (How to do X). Give this some thought.

The enjoyable part might include being able to dive into a new platform to make the slideshow. We used to use [Soundslides](http://soundslides.com/) in this class, and it’s still there (you could download the demo version) and I can walk you through how to use it. But that’s old, and based on Flash, which is almost gone. So, we are going to look at three current options, or you could simply create one using Premiere and post it to YouTube or Vimeo (more on actual videos later). We will look at these in class today:

1. A fairly new and simple cloud-based app from Adobe called [Spark](https://spark.adobe.com/)
2. Use Snapchat to make a stony
3. Use Instagram to make a story

I’m not on Snapchat or Instagram, so I’m not going to pretend I know how to do these. We do have a NewsU webinar to watch that does a good job of covering and comparing them. We will look at Spark in class, so that you will be familiar with it, even if you choose the Snapchat/Instagram option.

Your slideshow will be 1:45 to 2:30 in length. Based on a typical rate of 3–5 seconds per slide, you will need perhaps 30+ images so keep that in mind. You may eventually need a good deal of scripted narration, plus perhaps some background music, all mixed down to a single .MP3, AIFF or WAV file in Audacity (or your sound editor). Spark allows you to narrate directly into the visuals, if you have an external or built-in mic.

For free music, try [**Jamendo.com**](http://www.jamendo.com/en/) (also on the Creative Commons link under Legal in the sidebar). Again, Spark offers some canned options that are okay.

You can use your own camera, or sign one out from the Olney 210 or the comm center.

The procedure is up to you but here are some tips:

* storyboard the show either at the start or after you have collected the images; note that for some topics, you might want to include photos that you did not take, which is a fine idea if it fits your narrative—just be certain that they are under Creative Commons or searched with Usage Rights in Google (image search, then Tools -> Usage Rights)
* for photos, remember the rule of thirds; keep the main lighting behind you (over one shoulder); vary your shot depth (wide, medium, close, extra close/macro); get a mix of action and static images; move subjects among foreground, middle ground, background; move camera above, below, left, right of the subject; if you have to, crop foreheads, not chins; don’t cut off leading lines, don’t cut off limbs
* try to get some contrast—big, small, expensive, inexpensive, colorful, drab. Try to be certain that each image would be clear and speak for itself, for anyone who came to your blog
* make it a narrative with beginning, middle and end; think of good opening and closing (reflecting the opening) shots
* alternate action and still photos in the sequence
* aim for about 3–5 seconds per slide, so that you will need about 30–40 images
* size photos in Photoshop to 500 X 375 pixels at 72 ppi; Save for web as jpegs
* if the software does not provide this, make a closing [credit](http://www1.lasalle.edu/~beatty/356/credits_jb.gif) in Photoshop and Save for Web as a JPEG (500 X 375); to be safe, use .jpg as the file extension
* consider doing the same to make text slides to explain your story (see [this example](http://weshallnotbemoved.net/stories/marshall-cooper/); maybe also an inspiration for the course project)
* for Soundslides, you would post your publish\_to\_web folder on alpha.lasalle.edu and link to the index.html file that will be in that folder in a post on your blog that explains the show to your visitors
* if you used YouTube, copy the embed code and paste it into the Text/HTML tab of your post; Spark, Snapchat and Instagram will probably allow you to link to it, but not to post the actual content, so you could put the link on a static slide that represents your project (need not be the first slide); Spark allows you to download it as an MP4, so you could do that, then post it on the alpha.lasalle.edu that we used before and link to that version
* Add a text link to your post as a backup, and give a brief explanation in the post of where you went, what the angle was, and how it connects to your topic, if it does.

Due date: **April 11**. By next week, get a start, let me know where you are doing it, and maybe bring some photos to class to experiment with.