

# Chapter 16. From Postcards to PSAs: Activist Soundwriting

Timothy R. Amidon  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

This chapter discusses Postcards for Privacy (PfP), a transmedia activism project that included a soundwriting component undergraduate students at Colorado State University undertook as part of Writing Democracy in a Digital Age, a capstone course in fall 2017. This chapter includes materials related to two elements of this project: assignment directions for the public service announcements (PSAs) students produced for our campus radio station, KCSU 90.5, and an image of a postcard students designed to collect stories about community members' experiences with digital privacy and security.

In the course, students explored the nexus of democracy and digitally networked writing technologies while cultivating critical digital literacies necessary for safely and ethically entering civic conversations in a digital age (Beck, 2015; DeVoss & Porter, 2006; Hutchinson & Novotny, 2018; Selber, 2004; Vee, 2017; Vie, 2008). As the culminating assignment in the capstone, PfP built upon work that students had completed earlier in the semester. They had formed a local chapter of the Electronic Frontier Alliance (EFA at CSU), researched activism and digital rights, and engaged in multimodal composing to produce content and documents for the organization. For this particular project, students were asked to consider how discourse circulates on campus before producing activist soundwriting that sought to promote awareness about the effects of online privacy and security issues.

Pedagogically, two broad goals for the course were to provide students with opportunities to critically enact activism and to design and compose content that would support the aims their teams had established. For the culminating project for the course, I hoped “[to] encourage students to deploy multiple modalities in skillful ways—written, aural, visual—and [to] model a respect for and understanding of the various roles each modality can play in human expression, the formation of individual and group identity, and meaning making” (Selfe, 2009, p. 626). During the semester, the tragic events associated with Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, had given rise to expansive discussions about the materiality of, and suasive force that surrounds, civic rhetorics. Students had remarked on the arresting *imagery* (white supremacists carrying torches; Nazi salutes; American and Confederate flags) and popular *hashtags* (#charlottesville; #thisisnotus; #altright; #antifa), but they also dwelled on the ways that *sound* (white supremacist chants; screams from counter-protesters;

silence from government leaders) and *phrases* (“blood and soil”; “you will not replace us”; “many sides”; “no place for hate”) echoed with a different kind of resonance—magnifying, aiding, abetting, or countering the acts of hate-speech and terrorism we had witnessed.

PfP grew directly from these conversations, as students had reflected on “the complex ways that a greater variety of senses, semiotic resources, and rhetorical positionings might be taken up together and brought together” as they turned toward creating their own content for activism (Shipka, 2006, p. 355). Turning toward the goals of raising awareness about how online privacy issues impact members of our campus, students developed informational pamphlets and fliers and organized teach-ins. Discussing potential options for a culminating assignment, I proposed adapting Frank Warren’s (2005) PostSecret project into a multisensorial, transmedia activist project. Students, staff, faculty, administrators, and/or community members would anonymously submit stories about their experiences with online privacy and security via postcards that the English Department sponsored. Thereafter, students could practice soundwriting by transforming the words and images we would receive via anonymous postcard submissions into embodied oral performances and digital PSAs.

**POSTCARDS FOR PRIVACY**

**About:** Postcards for Privacy is a media literacy project undertaken by EFA at CSU. Our aim is to raise awareness about the ways online privacy and digital security impact members of our campus and surrounding communities.

**Participate:** Anonymously describe an experience where online privacy or security impacted your life. Topics might include: password theft; compromise of social media accounts; cyberbullying; cyberstalking; cyberviolence; hate speech; trolling; data collection; surveillance; cookies; online harassment.

**Listen:** Selected submissions will be read on the stump on CSU’s Ft. Collins Campus between 4:00-5:00PM on Wednesday November 15th. We will also use a number of the selections as components of a PSA campaign that we will seek to air on KCSU 90.5 FM.

**Contact:** For more information or to join, email us at [efacsu@gmail.com](mailto:efacsu@gmail.com) or follow us on Twitter at [@csuefa](https://twitter.com/csuefa).

POST OFFICE WILL NOT DELIVER WITHOUT POSTAGE

RETURN OR MAIL CARD TO

EFA AT CSU  
C/O DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
359 WILLARD O. EDDY HALL  
1773 CAMPUS DELIVERY  
FT. COLLINS, CO 80523-1773

COMPOSE A RESPONSE BELOW

Figure 16.1. The Postcards for Privacy postcard.

By centering sound, students were invited to consider how “sensations of sound attune us, through attention to our human communities and connections and a renewed access to the non-human environment and agents that surround us” (Hocks, 2018, p. 96). For example, students took stock of both the physical and digital environments that comprise campus, analyzing the existing sound- and media-scape, and based strategic decisions—such as selecting The Stump, a high-profile location on the center mall at CSU as a place to publicly read the postcards—that enabled them to amplify and boost the circulatory potential of their message. By carefully adapting and recomposing the handwritten stories, and by weighing decisions about how the media, modalities, and locations where they could reach audiences across campus in order to raise awareness about on-line privacy issues, students leveraged “the power of language fluidity [that] lies not within bounded words and symbols systems but within the rhetorical expertise of the communicators negotiating meaning across contexts” (Gonzales, 2018, p. 18, citing Canagarajah).

Upon receiving the submissions, we headed out to the Stump where students who had volunteered took turns reading aloud the stories that community members had shared. Again, students had selected this location to read the postcards for its prominence in the center of campus, as this aural and visual performance had the potential to scaffold more expansive conversations with individuals passing by. For the hour that students held the Stump, a sizable crowd stopped to listen and converse with the student activists. In turn, other students answered questions from the crowd, shared facts about digital privacy issues they memorized, engaged in dialogue with passersby about these issues, and handed out pamphlets. The written words on postcards had been reorganized into a living moment. By translating textual submissions into an embodied, voiced, emplaced, dialogic event, students were able to construct a moment when their activist work could perceptibly circulate and resonate across and beyond the physical soundscape of CSU. Their next objective was to extend the reach of their work by recomposing those submissions into PSAs.

Students returned to class eager to design their PSAs. As we debriefed on the successes and limitations of the embodied performance, students began to realize that the PSA genre would provide another opportunity for recomposing and resounding how those stories might mean. Designing the PSAs for the campus radio station, which has a considerable listener base, for instance, extended a distinct exigence and seriousness to their work. To increase their familiarity with the genre, students broke up into teams and critiqued other PSAs. Then, they turned toward the work of composing scripts, offering peer feedback, and revising the scripts to ensure they conformed to the constraints KCSU had outlined for PSAs (e.g., each PSA had to be 30 seconds or shorter and clearly identify who was sponsoring the message). Thereafter, they turned toward production, locating and/or creating sound assets, editing and weaving soundtracks, and polishing and submitting radio-ready PSAs.

In sum, by integrating a soundwriting component within the Postcards for Privacy project, students were asked to “prepar[e] themselves to become effective and literate citizens of the 21st century” (Selfe & Selfe, 2008, p. 84). They coordinated, translated, and composed meaning across and through textual, visual, aural, and oral modalities by vocally embodying and emplacing those stories in a physical location and then recomposing those stories as PSAs that utilized a different set of semiotic resources and held a distinct set of circulatory potentials. In doing so, students designed activist and civic rhetoric, while considering particularly how various modalities, delivered via embodied, broadcast, and digital media, may resonate across particular audiences and locations.

## Assignment and Sequencing

As noted above, the PSA soundwriting assignment was a component of the PFP transmedia activist project. By this time in the semester, students had designed and produced logos, recruitment information, event flyers, and presentations. As a soundwriting assignment, the PSAs assignment challenged students to expand their activist repertoire by cultivating skills such as identifying and accessing existing sound assets, recording voiceovers using cellphones and high end microphones, navigating the copyright and ownership issues when selecting copyrighted content, editing, considering the ethical and affective impacts of various sonic compositions for audiences, and blending and layering tracks using software such as Audacity or Adobe Audition. The content below was included on the assignment prompt that students were given for this component of the project. The background section provides topical framing on online privacy and security issues relevant to the project, so educators interested in assigning PSAs as a soundwriting activity would likely want to revise this particular section when adapting this assignment to address topics appropriate in their classes.

### The Assignment Prompt

#### **Background on Online Privacy and Security**

Citizens across the world make use of online platforms for work, leisure, and civic participation. Yet internet users must navigate an increasingly complex set of privacy and security issues when interacting within digitally networked platforms. According to Lee Rainie (2016) of the Pew Research Center, “91% of [American] adults agree or strongly agree that consumers have lost control of how personal information is collected and used by companies.” Rainie also found that nearly half of the survey respondents were uncertain how personal data and information is used by these platforms. Indeed, Zeynep Tufecki (2017) observes that platforms, as “corporate entities,” devote little effort toward protecting individual privacy and security in comparison to the resources they invest to protect and police intellectual property in these spaces (p. 146).

## Aim

Your aim is to develop a public service announcement (PSA) that will air on KCSU that offers students, staff, faculty, administrators, and members of the broader regional community information about an online privacy issue that can adversely impact their life or the lives of those they care about. More specifically, you will work as a team to identify one story or topic raised within the PFP submissions and develop a PSA that might raise awareness about how that critical digital literacy issue affects our local community.

## Design Criteria

Groups will develop a script and produce a 25–30-second audio PSA about online security and privacy for KCSU. KCSU (2017) notes that the PSAs it airs are “designed for CSU or Northern Colorado listeners with the objective of raising awareness and/or changing public attitudes or behaviors toward a social issue.” Additional design requirements include the following:

- 2–5 seconds should be reserved for a message that identifies EFA at CSU as the sponsor of the PSA and briefly describes the aim of our group (e.g., “This PSA is brought to you by Electronic Frontier Alliance at CSU, a student group that . . .”).
- The PSA should incorporate content from at least one of the Postcards for Privacy submissions that we received.
- Your production should include one sound effect, two or more voices, and/or make use of music.
- All secondary content elements must be in the public domain or available for use under a Creative Commons attribution license. (By selecting content licensed under a CC BY 3.0 License, you can adapt and freely utilize content in this project, as long as you are sure to give attribution to artists who originally create the content).

## Genre Exemplars

PSAs are a common genre that organizations use to raise awareness about issues of public concern. Consider the rhetorical situation that impacts the design of these examples, and note how the designers have carefully incorporated voice, music, silence, and sound effects to create an appropriate tone and communicate information:

- Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office, *Let’s Face It*, <https://youtu.be/erhpSMkqGSY>
- NYC Mayor’s Office, *Pre-K for All NYC*, [https://youtu.be/WBoFbFgg\\_Ls](https://youtu.be/WBoFbFgg_Ls)
- American Association of People with Disabilities, *I Am Not Going to Be Bullied*, <https://youtu.be/VbFmoI9WXrg>

## Locating Media Assets

There are many sites where you can locate sound assets that are in the public domain or available for use under open source or creative commons licenses. Here are websites where you might begin your search for secondary or

supplementary sounds that can enrich the voice work you will perform in your PSA:

- Creative Commons: [creativecommons.org/use-remix/](http://creativecommons.org/use-remix/)
- Freesound: [freesound.org](http://freesound.org)
- Jamendo: [jamendo.com](http://jamendo.com)
- American Folklife Center: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/onlinecollections.html>
- Zapsplat: [zapsplat.com](http://zapsplat.com)
- Wikipedia Public Domain Resources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Public\\_domain\\_resources](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Public_domain_resources)

### **Tutorials for Editing Audio with Audacity or Adobe Audition**

- Instructables, *Basic Recording and Editing with Audacity*: <http://www.instructables.com/id/Basic-recording-and-editing-with-Audacity/>
- Kyle Stedman, *Audacity Basics: Recording, Editing, Mixing*: <https://youtu.be/8ClwSNm362E>
- David Taylor, *Complete Tutorial Guide to Audacity for Beginners*: <https://youtu.be/aCisC3sHneM>
- Adobe Audition Tutorials, *Record, Edit, and Mix Audio for Video, Podcasts, and Effects*: <https://helpx.adobe.com/audition/tutorials.html>

## **Sample Student-Designed PSAs**

1. “Webcams” by Jenn, Kristy, Jatón, and Emma: In this example, Jenn, Kristy, Jatón, and Emma adapted a specific Postcards for Privacy submission, which had described how a member of the CSU community had their webcam turned on by an outside computer. One element of authorized webcam hacking that the authors of the submission had emphasized was how relatively easy this is for hackers to do.<sup>1</sup>
2. “Photos” by Anastasia, Elizabeth, Natalie, and Zihan: In this example, Anastasia, Elizabeth, Natalie, and Zihan developed a PSA that involved one member of the production team reading verbatim from one of the Postcards for Privacy submissions. Their PSA demonstrates how the unexpected resharing of intimate images by downstream audiences might lead to harmful outcomes.
3. “Cyberstalking” by Tim, Danny, and Kara: One of the most prevalent themes across the Postcard for Privacy submissions was how cyberstalking adversely impacts and has directly affected students, especially those students with female and gender-nonconforming identities, at CSU.

---

1. Four student examples (audio files and transcripts) can be found on the book’s companion website.

In this example, Tim, Danny, and Kara demonstrated how text messaging can quickly lead to a form of threatening, unwanted harassment.

4. “Words Are Weapons” by Lara, Hannah, and Laura: Another prevalent theme that appeared across the Postcard for Privacy submissions was the issue of cyberbullying. Drawing from a range of submissions, Lara, Hannah, and Laura demonstrated how digital environments can amplify hateful and hurtful words.

## Reflection

*[A brisk and fast-paced music track, Podington Bear’s (2018) “Frog in Tuxes,” fades in. Peppy xylophone notes speak back to one another, then fade into the background at 00:15 as voiceover begins.]*

**Timothy R. Amidon:** Hey! I’m Tim Amidon, an associate professor of English at Colorado State University.<sup>2</sup> Today, I’m going to talk to you a little bit about a soundwriting assignment called Postcards for Privacy. This is an assignment that English students completed as part of Writing Democracy in a Digital Age, a capstone course I taught in 2017. In this audio reflection, I briefly contextualize this assignment within the larger trajectory of the course. I discuss how students undertook the work of transforming and recirculating stories they had received as text-based submissions as embodied and digital sonic recompositions. I close reflecting on some of the goals I sought students to pursue within the soundwriting components of this assignment. I also discuss aspects of the assignment that other educators might consider if they too are thinking about integrating soundwriting in their courses.

*[Music fades out.]*

Welcome to CSU, y’all! Our campus is located in Fort Collins, *[ambient sound of a city: engines from vehicles; horns; a skateboard resonates, as it strikes the concrete from an ollie; distant voices of people conversing]* a mid-sized city located in foothills of the Rocky Mountains in northern Colorado. Like other universities, CSU can be a clamorous place. Student organizations line up on the walkway to the Lory Student Center entrance to wage a daily battle of decibels, attempting to drown out the jams pumping from neighboring booths *[fast-paced EDM build-up enters and volume increases and quickly decreases]*; evangelists, activists, artists, and politicians line the center mall upon campus *[sounds of skateboard trucks increases as a skateboarder nears microphone and skates away; voices of people conversing in background increases]*, competing for the attention of any passersby brave enough to make eye contact; BNSF engineers blare their locomotive’s horn *[train horn booms and sounds of train cars passing on a rail can be faintly heard]*,

---

2. The audio version of Timothy R. Amidon’s reflection can be found on the book’s companion website.

interrupting all campus activities until their cars safely travel the railway that divides campus east and campus west.

*[Happy-sounding, upbeat music track, Podington Bear's (2007) "Budsbursting," fades in. Volume fades as track becomes background for voiceover.]*

Listener, if you're like me, right now you're probably thinking: What do all those random details and sounds have to do with Postcards for Privacy? What exactly was this assignment and how did the assignment fit into your course? What were your pedagogical goals, Tim? And, perhaps, most importantly what did students learn about soundwriting from this assignment? Well, those are good questions. Let's get to that.

I'll begin by sketching out how Postcards for Privacy fit into the course. When I initially conceived of using postcards in the class, I thought of it as a way to scaffold a critical digital literacy project where students could practice multimodal and transmedia composing for activism. It ended up aligning well with the topical focus and learning outcomes for course, as I had organized the capstone using a collaborative, project-based learning approach. While I had the idea to utilize postcards, via Frank Warren's (2005) PostSecret project, as a way to collect stories, it was through discussion and brainstorming with students that we truly developed the Postcards for Privacy project and assignment sequence. Early in the semester, I had tasked students with helping create documents and a brand for a student organization that would champion digital rights issues like net neutrality or internet surveillance on campus. Students dedicated a good part of the semester to researching digital rights issues and building infrastructure to support that organization. As students completed the work of filing paperwork, establishing operating procedures, recruiting members, and developing a brand for the organization, they turned toward a group project that involved planning and hosting an educational event about one of the digital rights issues their groups had focused on: cyberviolence, fair use, accessibility, fake news, and surveillance.

This is where sound and Postcards for Privacy came in. As the groups worked on their events, many students thought it would be beneficial if we organized and sponsored an event collectively. Doing so would help raise awareness about the student organization they had formed, a local chapter of the Electronic Frontier Alliance. I shared Frank Warren's PostSecret project and pitched the idea of using postcards to anonymously collect stories about digital rights issues because it would involve a participatory element that would invite students, faculty, staff, and administrators at CSU to share their own stories and experiences with digital rights. Within our planning discussions, we narrowed our focus to privacy because it was a topic that students in our class had a strong opinion about. It was an issue that impacts students, faculty, and citizens. Students also understood that online privacy is an issue that has real material impacts for our community.

From a pedagogical perspective, I was also interested in pushing students to branch out in terms of the genres, modes, and media they had been using up to this point in the semester. They had composed a range of alphabetic, graphic, visual texts, and they had also planned presentations, but they hadn't performed any soundwriting up to this point. As mentioned in the introduction, members of our class had observed that sound plays a powerful role while examining civic, protest, and activist rhetorics, including the white supremacist terrorism that had unfolded that semester in Charlottesville, Virginia. Consequently, one of my aims in this project was to challenge students to directly consider how their activist message might resonate within the existing physical and digital spaces that comprise campus. I asked: How could their message reverberate within and across the soundscapes that make up campus? How might they carefully take up the rhetorical work of translating textual submissions received on postcards into activist performances and discourse that would circulate in these public spaces. What genres might be the most effective as a vehicle for amplifying the material impacts that digital privacy issues have within our community?

Collaboratively, we designed a postcard, including a prompt that asked members to share their stories. The language clarified that we planned to disseminate the stories to the wider campus community by giving voice to the stories on the Stump, a prominent public location outside of the student union. And we noted that we would develop PSAs incorporating those stories to air on our campus radio station, KCSU. Put differently, as students considered how to realize their activist aims, they had to take stock of existing sound- and mediascapes, consider the affordances of various performances, and develop strategies about how to raise the volume on these online privacy issues. They had to identify moments (when) and locations (where) their voices and transmedia projects might resonate across campus, and they had to pick genres that would be manageable in terms of the time, effort, and expertise.

*[A fast-paced, fun, and snappy bassy music track, Podington Bear's (2017b) "Smooth Actor," fades in and then fades down to background music as voiceover begins.]*

On the day we were scheduled to read the submissions, I gathered the sealed box, and we opened it in class discovering that there were about 30 in all. We read and discussed the submissions, identified volunteers to read the stories, and walked out to the Stump. Two students from the class had volunteered to do the reading, and they took turns climbing up and sharing each of the submissions we had received. As the students read and performed those stories, members from campus stopped to ask about the project and members of the class engaged them by sharing facts they had learned and memorized or inviting them to join the EFA at CSU. While this might not seem like soundwriting, following Crystal VanKooten (2016) I want to argue that we "invent meanings, find juxtapositions, and make personal, bodily associations with what [we] see and hear" (chora

section). That is, activist rhetoric that unfolds through embodied, oral performance is soundwriting, precisely because it is purposefully curated and carefully orchestrated as a sonic and extra-discursive modality within a situated rhetorical performance. Students had carefully planned this event, investing considerable effort in the work of how giving voice to these stores might promote their larger rhetorical aims: promoting the importance of digital rights and recruiting members of the community to join EFA at CSU, as you'll recall.

The emphasis on soundwriting in the PfP project continued the following week when we returned to the class. I provided students with the assignment sheet for the PSA that you'll find in this chapter. Thereafter, I shared a couple of exemplars and asked students to identify and share PSAs that they had also found effective. We critiqued the examples as a group, identifying features of those exemplars that they might seek to emulate within their own scripts. Next, each group identified postcards that they could use to focus their PSA around a central topical issue before brainstorming how the stories could be transformed into scripts for an educational PSA. Many groups approached the task in a wholly collaborative fashion, but a number of them wrote individual scripts and then later combined the best elements to form a master script. (I thought that was a wicked smart approach.)

*[Background music crossfades as a transition to Podington Bear's (2017a) "Lightfeet," a moderately paced music track with synth-y piano keys placed gently over a funky backbeat. Then the music fades as the voiceover begins.]*

After that, groups paired up and provided one another feedback. We also engaged in a round of group share and feedback at the class level. Again, the class had been working together for a couple of months at this point, so they were really effective as collaborators and were able to offer each other high quality feedback and had become accustomed to sharing and incorporating peer ideas within their work. I asked students to finish revising their scripts before turning toward the task of identifying and downloading sound effects or music that they might want to incorporate before our next class. The assignment sheet provided information on some starting locations where students could find assets, but a couple students who were experienced soundwriters knew about other locations where they could locate sound files. In fact, a number of the students worked for KCSU, so they had suggested PSAs as a genre when we were considering options because they had broadcast PSAs produced and sponsored by other student organizations while working at the radio station.

The following class, we began with a brief overview of fair use. I reiterated the design parameters set out by the radio station, and I demonstrated how to record audio tracks using a high-quality microphone. Thereafter, I set up a computer and microphone in my office and allowed groups who wanted to record voiceovers to use my office as a sound booth, just as I am right now. The building where our

class was located is a pretty high-traffic classroom area, so we decided that the best place to capture high quality recordings would be in the office spaces on the third floor. While groups took turns recording in my office, I worked with teams who were editing, mixing, and weaving soundtracks for their PSAs. One pedagogical strategy that proved to be really beneficial at this step was identifying the more experienced soundwriters in the class and inviting them to serve as peer-helpers and resources for groups that were less experienced and/or confident. They were able to teach peers how to successfully carry out technical tasks using sound-editing software, such as creating multiple tracks, cutting a longer clip, filtering out unwanted sounds, and organizing sounds on a timeline. So that's kind of the gist of the Postcards for Privacy project, including the activist performance and PSA soundwriting assignments. I want to spend the next few minutes just reflecting on the lessons we learned and offering insights into aspects of the project you might do differently if you choose to use PSAs or postcards.

*[Music crossfades to the more contemplative tone of Podington Bear's (2015) "Floating in Space," a gentle slowly paced instrumental of a lightly keyed organ notes resonating. Music then fades to the background as the voiceover begins.]*

So one of the coolest parts of this project was that students were super into this. We had a lot of fun over the semester, but going out to the center mall to read the submissions aloud as well as developing a PSA that was going to air on a real radio station motivated students to work incredibly hard on these assignments. Initially, a number of students had voiced uncertainty about the public nature of the project, but by the time we did this, they were really quite confident about the knowledge they had developed, and they had also come to understand that they were empowered to participate in public-facing events in ways that aligned with their own comfort levels.

Another pleasant surprise was that I didn't have to spend a great deal of time preparing students to do the technical work. Now, I've done similar assignments in the past, and usually I need to spend a couple of weeks with students practicing with sound-editing software. The level of technical proficiency, especially with a couple of students, was unparalleled in my experience. Partially, this was likely due to the fact this was a capstone and a number of the students in the class had taken another class I teach where we had practiced soundwriting before. Because of the high level of functional literacy that students possessed working with these tools, we were able to more readily focus our work on the rhetorical dimensions of these soundwriting assignments. For instance, during our class debrief, after listening to all the PSAs, we reflected on what we had learned and talked through the ethical and rhetorical challenges of designing these PSAs. One of the real generative conversations that unfolded surrounded the use of trigger warnings. A couple of students noted that the examples felt like they could be triggering and they were concerned about that. Conversely, there were also students who

acknowledged that, yeah, PSAs definitely can be triggering but that trigger warnings are not something that PSAs tend to employ. They commonly utilize surprise and shock. We spent about 20 minutes discussing the various choices about using or not using a trigger warning in a PSA. And, we reached out to KCSU to see if they had guidance. As a class, I don't know that we came to a firm conclusion, but we realized that trigger warnings are definitely a thing that could and should be considered when designing PSAs.

You ask, what would you do differently? Well, I have a couple of pieces of advice here. One is I would spend more time on fair use. I am totally a copyright geek, and I enjoy spending time in class talking about it. But we just didn't have that kind of time this semester to dedicate to the issue. To avoid any complications, I required students to use copyleft/public domain resources. But, I'll admit, I didn't check on them, so when they submitted their sources, I discovered that there were submissions that potentially included assets that may not have been public domain or copyleft. Now for the purpose of this chapter, I'm going to claim that each of the PSAs shared here does fall into a fair use category, especially with respect to the purpose and character of these uses because this is a critical educational text and the goal of the PSA as an assignment was to raise awareness of digital media literacy in soundwriting. Still, there were definitely opportunities to explore fair use composing with more breadth than we did. If it had been a class that was centrally focused on digital composing, I would have been certain to dedicate more time to the topic.

An additional thing I would consider differently would have been adding more reflection within the project. Writing studies scholars have long understood that the metacognitive work associated with reflection is a powerful and generative tool for learning. We integrated a reflection during our class debrief, but one of the things I thought could have been really cool, especially as another soundwriting assignment, would have been to have every individual in the group audio record reflections on the contributions they made and the lessons they took away from participating in the Pfp and the PSA projects. As the instructor for the course, I was able to gain a general sense of what students learned, but those individual reflections would be really valuable for gathering more specificity about aspects of these assignments that they had struggled with. It also would have been cool to take those reflections and then to remix them into another sound project. I think that might have been able to engender even deeper engagement and reflection than we had in the class-wide debrief we had carried out.

A final thing that I have to share is that after when we sent the PSAs out, we discovered that there was an ally and advocate at the local radio station. They were pretty amped about these PSAs coming from a group of students. So one takeaway is that if you have a campus or local radio station you might partner with, there's a chance they would be really excited to work with you. Through this assignment, I discovered a colleague on campus that possesses a great deal of expertise about soundwriting, and they are interested in working with students in the future.

Finally, we focused on privacy, but there really are a host of issues that could connect to a range of English, composition and rhetoric, or professional writing classes, so I would say go for it. Find a topic that seems to resonate with students, and do something that's real, and you'll get students excited and they'll do really cool work. Thanks for listening, I hope you enjoyed Postcards for Privacy and that you give it a try!

Hey, thanks for listening again! I just wanted to take a quick minute to say thank you to some of the folk that made the sounds freely available for us to utilize in this project, so I'm just going to list some of those here. So all of the music you heard in the background on the audio reflection comes from Podington Bear. The specific songs you heard were "Frogs in Tuxes," "Budsbursting," "Smooth Actor," "Lightfeet," and "Floating in Space." They're excellent! Thank you, Podington Bear! Additionally, the ambient sounds came from Freesound.org. Specifically, you heard "Ambience: Urban City Campus" by CBJ\_Student (2020). You also heard "Urban Lullabies: Boston Common" by Inkhorn (2019), "EDM Sounds: EDM Buildup 4," by theartguild (2020), and "Train Horn" by L83 (2018). Thank you to those contributors on Freesound! Have a great day.

*[Music slowly fades out and ends.]*

## References

- Beck, E. N. (2015). The invisible digital identity: Assemblages in digital networks. *Computers and Composition*, 35(1), 125-140. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2015.01.005>
- CBJ\_Student. (2020, November 17). City campus [Audio file]. *Freesound*. [freesound.org/people/CBJ\\_Student/sounds/545182](https://freesound.org/people/CBJ_Student/sounds/545182)
- DeVoss, D. N., & Porter, J. E. (2006). Why Napster matters to writing: Filesharing as a new ethic of digital delivery. *Computers and Composition*, 23(2), 178-210. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2006.02.001>
- Gonzales, L. (2018). *Sites of translation: What multilinguals can teach us about digital writing and rhetoric*. University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9952377>
- Hocks, M. E. (2018). Sonic ecologies as a path for activism. In J. Alexander & J. Rhodes (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of digital writing and rhetoric* (pp. 95-103). Routledge.
- Hutchinson, L., & Novotny, M. (2018). Teaching a critical digital literacy of wearables: A feminist surveillance as care pedagogy. *Computers and Composition*, 50(1), 105-120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.07.006>
- Inkhorn. (2019, May 25). Boston Common [Audio file]. *Freesound*. <https://freesound.org/people/inkhorn/sounds/472744/>
- KCSU. (2017). Underwriting KCSU FM. *KCSU FM*. <http://kcsufm.com/underwriting/>
- L83. (2018, December 28). Train horn [Audio file]. *Freesound*. <https://freesound.org/people/L83/sounds/455157/>

- Podington Bear. (2007). Budsbursting [Song]. On *Said lion to bear* (Disk 3). [https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington\\_Bear/Said\\_Lion\\_To\\_Lamb\\_Box\\_Set\\_Disc\\_3](https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington_Bear/Said_Lion_To_Lamb_Box_Set_Disc_3)
- Podington Bear. (2015). Floating in space [Song]. On *Daydream*. [https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington\\_Bear/Daydream](https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington_Bear/Daydream)
- Podington Bear. (2017a). Lightfeet [Song]. On *Uplifting*. [https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington\\_Bear/Uplifting](https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington_Bear/Uplifting)
- Podington Bear. (2017b). Smooth actor [Song]. On *Soul*. [https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington\\_Bear/Soul](https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington_Bear/Soul)
- Podington Bear. (2018). Frogs in tuxes [Song]. On *Meet Podington Bear* (Disc 1). [https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington\\_Bear/Meet\\_Podington\\_Bear\\_Box\\_Set\\_Disc\\_1](https://freemusicarchive.org/music/Podington_Bear/Meet_Podington_Bear_Box_Set_Disc_1)
- Rainie, L. (2016, September 21). The state of privacy in a post-Snowden America. *Pew Research Center*. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/21/the-state-of-privacy-in-america/>
- Selber, S. A. (2004). *Multiliteracies for a digital age*. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Selfe, C. L. (2009). The movement of air, the breath of meaning: Aurality and multimodal composing. *College Composition and Communication*, 60(4), 616-663.
- Selfe, R. J., & Selfe, C. L. (2008). "Convince me!" Valuing multimodal literacies and composing public service announcements. *Theory into Practice*, 47(2), 83-92.
- Shipka, J. (2006). Sound engineering. Toward a theory of multimodal soundness. *Computers and Composition*, 23(3), 355-373. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2006.05.003>
- theartguild. (2020, September 2). EDM build-up 4 [Audio file]. *Freesound*. <https://freesound.org/people/theartguild/sounds/533732/>
- Tufekci, Z. (2017). *Twitter and tear gas: The power and fragility of networked protest*. Yale University Press.
- VanKooten, C. (2016). Singer, writer: A choric explanation of sound and writing. *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 21(1). <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.1/inventio/vankooten/index.html>
- Vee, A. (2017). *Coding literacy: How computer programming is changing writing*. MIT Press.
- Vie, S. (2008). Digital Divide 2.0: "Generation M" and online social networking sites in the composition classroom. *Computers and Composition*, 25(1), 9-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2007.09.004>
- Warren, F. (2005). *PostSecret: Extraordinary confessions from ordinary lives*. Regan Books.