

Transcript Interview 3: Students create podcasts for social justice in the classroom

Featuring Dr. Laura Harrison (LH) and Tahmina Sobat (TS), interviewed by Abigail Bakke (AB)

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AB Welcome to the series on Podcasting for Social Justice, prepared for the International Journal of Equity and Social Justice in Higher Education. My name is Abigail Bakke and I'm interviewing instructors and students about the role podcasting plays in teaching and learning about social justice.

In this interview, you will hear from Dr. Laura Harrison, a professor of Gender and Women's Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and Tahmina Sobat, one of the Master's students in Gender and Women's studies who created a collaborative podcast in one of Dr. Harrison's classes. The podcast ("[Activism during the Global Pandemic](#)") highlighted diverse activists' stories of organizing during the pandemic. Meanwhile, the project helped students connect to each other and community members, learn new technical and project management skills, and recognize their role as knowledge creators.

This is a question for both of you. So give me a little bit of background on yourself, especially as it relates to podcasting and/or social justice and what's your relationship to each other?

LH So my background is I've been teaching at MSU, Mankato since 2012 after I got my PhD in Gender Studies at Indiana University. And I have used podcasts in my classroom for many years. And I've been using podcasts increasingly in the last four or five years as that modality has become more familiar to students and more accessible to students. Especially because there is such a wide range of podcasts that address feminist issues. I find podcasts are a way to engage students in different types of texts. I like to use a wide range of texts in my classroom, not just essays and books but also films, television, alternate types of media

LH and podcasts have been one of one of those. My engagement with podcasting up until last year has been primarily in that mode. And then during the COVID pandemic, I turned to podcasting as an assignment in two classes, Collective Action, and Feminist Activism and Social Justice for Students. And Tahmina was a student in Collective Action, which is a required class for our first year Master's students. I know Tahmina through our Master's program; we have a small program and a small faculty, so we know all of our students quite well. And it's been an honor to know to Tahmina because she is a fantastic student and person.

AB Excellent.

TS I will start with a little bit of background. I am originally from Afghanistan and I got my law degree from that country. And then in 2019 when I came to the United States, I pursued my first Master's degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Notre Dame. And then right after that, I started my second Master's degree through a Fulbright scholarship in Gender and Women's studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Before coming to the United States, I also was working with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission that was highly focused on social justice work and then human rights work. So I was working there too for three years. In that role, I was also working with women and I was focused on the cases of harassment in the workplace for security and defense organs and women who were, who were working in those organs and forces.

But my relationship with podcasting kind of started with the Collective Action course that we took with Dr. Harrison. And I think I'm loving it. Yeah. As you mentioned earlier a little bit about that. Like it's something different comparing to the traditional academic sources that we have that sometimes that they can be kind of complicated, specifically for a general public. But like podcasting, I think it's an interesting kind of way of learning things based on other people's experiences and from other people and very easy way to follow it. So yeah, I think that's why I have been introduced to it and I have made it somehow a part of my life because with a student life, we read a lot of readings and a lot of books that sometimes it's just like yeah, let's listen to some podcasts now and do some work while we're listening to it too.

Another part of my engagement with podcasting is that in our Collective Action project, my cohort and I, we decided to do this podcast because we,

TS we had a lot of other ideas to do, but to do with this Collective Action project. But then because it was like in the peak of pandemic, that's why we decided to do podcast. And then we worked on our podcast named activism around the world and during the global pandemic. Yeah.

AB Wow. You love learning.

TS I love learning.

AB I get it. I totally get it.

TS I can say that I was surrounded with amazing people like Dr. Harris and all of my professors that they encouraged me a lot in this process.

AB That makes a big difference. Laura, let's go back to the beginning. You mentioned that you've been using podcasts in your teaching for several years. And as of the pandemic, great time to start a brand new project, right? You started assigning podcasting to the students, having them create their own. Can you tell me where the inspiration for that came from?

LH Yeah. So I teach two classes that center on activism. And one is an undergrad class called Feminist Activism and Social justice. And the other is a graduate course called Collective Action. And in both of those classes, the expectation is that students learn about the history and contemporary feminist activism and organizing. And then they conceptualize and carry out their own Collective Action project. And historically those have often been projects that happened on campus and in the community and were very involved in in- person engagement. But in 2021, that was not an option for students due to the COVID pandemic. So really my inspiration for turning to podcasting was a necessity because I wanted the students to still have an opportunity to engage in activism and engage with each other in a way that felt safe and that felt doable during the pandemic.

I think my motivation for assigning a podcast, podcasting project was that I had been building off of the use of podcasts for several years in class. And I do have several friends and colleagues who create their own podcasts and had heard from many of them that while there is definitely special knowledge, specialized knowledge involved in podcasting, It is something that you can learn, that you can teach yourself, that you can get assistance around campus and be able to start on your own. So I felt that it was something that students could take on in a semester of kind of teaching themselves how to do podcasting.

AB That's great. So the pandemic, the idea was that they could connect with people virtually, whereas normally they'd been actually maybe out in the community or interviewing people in person. Is that right?

LH In the past, projects might be, for example, I had students who are interested in sex education. And so they would research sex education standards in the state of Minnesota, they would create a survey and learn more about what types of sex education Minnesota students have had in the past and what was useful and what needed more. Then they would write a letter to the school board, and then they would go to a school board meeting and they would sit down with school board members and have a one-on-one, one-on-one conversation with them and propose change. It was very face-to-face.

Or it'll be out in the mall in front of the CSU and have a protest. We had students do a die-in related to DACA protests a few years ago in the CSU, they, they staged a die-in at four or five different locations. Things that were very in-person that often involved crowds. So for this year, I didn't want to water down the experience that students had with activism because it's very inspirational and transformational for many students to realize that they can be activists, that they can be organizers. And I didn't want the class to lose that experience due to COVID since students were losing so many other things as a result of COVID. So podcasting was a way for them to really dig into ways to create social change. And ways to not only raise awareness about the issues that they were interested in and concerned about, but to create knowledge together and bring awareness to voices that often don't have the kind of stage that podcasting can offer.

AB So the project was borne of necessity, but it sounds like it was a success. Do you plan to continue it?

LH I did this year offer podcasting as an option to students in my Feminist Activism and Social Justice class. And I think this year they were eager to get back out in, in-person. And so they chose in-person activism this year. But I definitely would use it again in the future because the students really created incredibly impressive results by teaching themselves how to podcast in one semester.

AB I started with podcasting last summer, so nearly a year ago. And just every step involved in it is a learning curve. So that is, that is very impressive. Tahmina, was Laura's class your first exposure to podcasting? Had you dabbled in that before at all? Tell me how you got started.

TS Yeah. I had heard a lot about it. Um, my roommate and I, we were listening to it sometimes, but not like this direct exposure to it that like, yeah, it's part of assignment. And I need to come up like, similar to what we used to read, we should kind of listen to this podcast and then reflect on them and like submit some questions related to the dialogues and conversations that the speakers were having about the subject. So it was kind of a different kind of an experience for me. That's why I'm kind of always saying that like yeah, I was introduced to it during this class.

And because also we not only were kind of exposed to it, but also we're asked to learn it and then produce one. It was a good experience and we learned a lot of new things with it. We, like in our cohort, none of us had experience of working on a podcast or like creating one. So it was something that like a learning process throughout the way we were trying to search about it, read about it. And then Professor Harrison, she invited people to kind of like teach us how to like, what to expect during the way and like how to use the technology involved. We never used Anchor, for example but we started to use that and then started to learn how to edit. That was a very painful process. Let me say. It took us so many hours to do that for each episode. But throughout the way I think I can just say that it was a learning process for us that we truly enjoyed.

And I want to also mention that like it, kind of besides learning, it was kind of like bringing us all together. Because our master's degree started in the peak of pandemic and we had all classes online, no interaction out of the, like beyond the screens. So it kind of like was a way for all of our cohort to come closer beyond the classroom. And then have some fun. We also had like some sometimes after finishing the work on podcasts that like we were chitchatting and talking about our life, seeing the cats and dogs that we had. So it was it was a very, very valuable experience for me.

AB I hadn't even thought of that community aspect. But that makes a lot of sense. Laura, you described kind of the basics of the project, what other parameters or details do you have to share about that assignment?

LH So in retrospect, I gave the students very few parameters in, in deciding what the project was going to look like or how they were going to actually create a podcast because I've never created a podcast. So I'm really looking back at the assignment that I wrote, and it's about five sentences long. And it says, as a group, you will identify, plan, and create an activist podcast. We'll prepare for this by listening to feminist and social justice podcasts throughout the semester. I asked them to please go beyond consciousness raising on a given topic. But I let them decide how many episodes of the podcast that they would create.

They were asked to do research as part of the creation of the podcast in thinking about who appropriate guests would be and what kind of questions they would be prepared to ask the guests. But I did not assign them a specific podcasting platform to use. I did not tell them a minimum number of episodes that they had to create. They were very much sort of on their own in formulating that. And part of that again, was because I, I don't have experience creating podcasts, so I didn't have a clear set of expectations of this is, you know this is what you should use or this is the outcome that I expect.

But also because traditionally in this class with their final activist project, I would not give them those type of parameters. I would not, I would say you're coming up with a Collective Action project. You're deciding the topic. The outcome is going to be part of a result of the process of organizing together and working together and creating ground rules and expectations together. So again, I didn't want to radically re-imagine the results of what this class would be. So it, I think gave them a lot of leeway, which I don't, Tahmina, was that a good thing or a bad thing?

TS It was definitely a good thing. I remember that like you asked us that like you shouldn't only work on awareness raising but like actually work on kind of highlighting some strategies of activism too or like, specifically about our podcast there was about activism during the global pandemic. So we weren't trying to only say that like yeah, this is, these are some of the ways that people have been doing activism. But at the same time we were kind of trying to analyze and strategize that like what ways are also good and like What ways have a better outcome and just put it out there for people to kind of like know about the different experiences of other people too. But also use it as maybe social justice work. But at the same time, that kind of freedom of working on this podcast kind of helped us to also bring our research and our activism in too. For example, like all of our cohort in those days we were like thinking about like what a topic for our research or like some of us that had a topic for research, we were kind of building the structure for that. Like how should it get developed and stuff like that. So we kind of tried to bring all of those aspects of our research to this topic or to this activism too, for example, in my case, as I mentioned that I'm working on war, peace and representation of Afghan woman in these processes.

Related to that, we tried to bring the transnational feminist aspect and intersectional aspect to this project too. Like we tried to interview people from different backgrounds with diverse topics of activism that they're, they have been doing from different countries beyond borders. We had interviews from Afghanistan.

TS We kind of tried to show that how, this interconnectedness of the different social identities of people will put them in a unique kind of situation. For example, for Marjan Alipour, she was from Afghanistan. And while we were talking that like how during the pandemic activism shifted to online, somehow, it was different for her because she was saying that like, yeah, we are working. We have all these amazing programs we previously we were like arranging protests, peaceful protests and stuff like that. But now that, we have all these ideas. But people do not have access to Internet.

And we were like, Yeah, Wait a minute, we should talk about that more because some people from some source, some parts of the world, they don't even have access to internet while we are talking about that, like how we can shift the activism during pandemic to online. So all of these things kind of like came out along the way and I kind of like give credit to, to this way of leaving us to explore this project. And at the same time kind of nourish it with our research.

AB So it was almost a whole class assignment, is that right?

TS Yes. Yes. Because there were seven of us, so we decided to do one project together. And then in that cohort, we had so many diverse backgrounds from different countries such as Japan, Afghanistan, USA, Finland, and Thailand, and so many different countries. So it's kind of like was a good thing to have people with diverse backgrounds and at the same time be aware of that aspect of it too.

AB You mentioned that the overall theme was activism during COVID. Can you get more specific about like what are some of the subtopics you were able to explore in that?

TS Yeah. Yeah. We were kind of, I think trying to generally talk about like, how, how is the pandemic impacting the social justice work? And how are people trying to cope with it? What are some alternative ways that they have been trying to continue their activism? And the ways that like what are their suggestion, or some of the tips or strategies that they have been using that can be helpful for other people with other situations too. And that was, I think the main part of it that we were trying to like kind of like highlight those like tips, little strategies, little kind of like ways that people explored it and found it and tried to use it.

Before doing this, we also did a lot of research, as professor mentioned earlier. We did a lot of research and found like how people have been doing their activism for social justice in complex situations and the ways that they didn't expect it to be like that. So I think one of the main parts of it was that to kind of bring those little tips together and then put it out there as a strategy for kind of shifting our activism and continuing even during the pandemic.

AB And you were mentioning doing some interviewing and some research. What other new skills did the project allow you to develop?

TS One of the biggest one is that like we were not familiar with the technological part of podcasting that we learned a lot. We learned about some of the applications and some of the ways that we can edit the episodes and everything that was so new for us and we were never exposed to them. So that was, that was a plus for us to learn new things and explore new things.

Another thing was that like in general in social justice work and in podcasting, we're kind of like not, it's not only about us, but also like we are working with other people in these. So it's kind of like the way to just bring people together and reach out to different departments, different sections. For example, we tried to have radio station and everything set up for our interviews. And we had to have these meetings with them, share our project and talk about that more and convince people to give us resources for that. And I think that that was, that was a good thing that we learned and tried to benefit from that side of it too.

I think that like there's ways that like it allowed us, kind of made us to go through some paths, like go and promote this on social media. Have social media platforms created and like do designing. And I don't know, like things like this that we may never were thinking about to use or to work on them that this podcast kind of like made us to include, to kind of explore all of those things. And some like practical solutions for, for the times that we may not get to implement our first plan. That's like having a second plan or like having more people to ask for interviewing with this podcast because in this world we're all dealing with pandemic. Everyone has a lot of things on their busy schedule and they are sitting in front of screens for the whole days. So it's important to kind of like have plan B or like some more interviewees to just like have a successful podcasting.

LH Yeah, I would add for the undergrad students, I think one skill that they learned was how to use their professional and personal networks and how to communicate professionally with those networks to achieve the goals of their podcast episodes. For example, one of my undergraduate groups did their podcast on fast fashion. And they were able to connect with one of the students' aunts who had been a clothing buyer at Target and, at corporate target in Minnesota. And by interviewing her and they learned so much from a corporate angle of how clothing purchases are made and how, what motivates those decisions and the environmental impact of the purchases that were made. And who would have thought that they would have a family connection to be able to ask for that type of interview and it added so much to their podcast.

They also had one episode of their podcast that looked at Instagram platforms for fast fashion products. So they looked at the Instagram platform for four or five different fast fashion companies and analyzed the kind of advertising that was being used on Instagram. So they were able to have this sort of cross-platform analysis that I certainly never would have considered in creating a podcast on fast fashion.

Another group was examining the differential health impact of COVID-19 on various communities in the state of Minnesota. And they were able to reach out to a Professor of Languages and Indigenous Studies at Bemidji State University and interview him about the impact of COVID-19 on Native American communities. And really just had a fantastic interview with, with that professor who could speak directly to the experiences of Native American people in Minnesota in a way that again, they never could have accessed that information through other forms, other forms of assignments. They never would have had that experience by reading essays, especially when we're looking at, I think, very current, contemporary events.

At the time that the students were doing this podcast, Tahmina and her group couldn't have read an academic essay on how activism was being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It hadn't been written yet. They were producing that knowledge, that didn't yet exist. They were creating new knowledge from a feminist perspective that hadn't been created yet. And I think that's really powerful when students can see themselves being those knowledge creators.

AB Yeah, and creating something that you know is going to have a wider reach than just the professor, right?

LH Exactly. Their podcasts were very well received. They were able to see in real time how many people were listening to the episodes, how many people were sharing the episodes. Earlier in the semester, both classes had read a book by feminist activist Mona Eltahawy, and she had been kind enough to visit our undergrad classroom and talk about her book, which was amazing. One of the students reached out to her on Instagram and asked her if she would come in and talk to the class about her book, *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*. And she came in and spoke to the class about her book and the Collective Action students, grad students joined as well.

After they started making their podcast episodes, they would send the link to their episodes to Mona Eltahawy, and she would tweet them out to her thousands and thousands of followers on Twitter. And it increased the reach of their podcast far beyond anything that we could have expected. Again, those sort of unexpected connections, that's nothing that we could have predicted at the beginning of the semester. But it was really empowering to students to get to see that happening in real time.

AB That must have been so exciting.

LH Absolutely.

TS And I think that it really means that like we did something that lasted, because even these days after like a year, we receive messages or likes to our pages that we created for promoting our podcast and everything. And people are like interested in it because this application or website that we were using to kind of track down how many people, track down the reach of our podcast. It was showing that we had so many people from different countries like Afghanistan, Finland, UK, here and there. And it was like so amazing to see, Yeah, we did something that has a good reach beyond like the, beyond our town or the place that we're living or our campus. So that was really amazing.

AB And I need to go listen to it. What is it called?

TS Yeah, thank you so much, please. Activism around the world.

AB Great. I am looking forward to that. And I love how as both of you have been describing the kinds of skills that the students got to practice, the networking, the problem-solving, the plan B, that all matches the work of organizing, I would imagine. And so they truly are acting out the goals of the course in what they're doing. And you have largely answered this, but I will give you a chance to add, add on anything, but are there other ways that the project supported students learning about social justice, equity, activism?

LH I think the project taught students about social justice, equity and activism in that they were able to provide a platform for the voices of individuals who are not always given a platform to be knowledge producers and to share their perspectives, that they were experts in their own right often in many of these podcast episodes.

For example, my students who worked on a podcast about fast fashion interviewed experts, but they also spoke from their own perspectives as individuals who are targeted by the fast fashion industry. And they were able to speak to their own experience as purchasers of fast fashion or their own attempts to minimize their consumption of fast fashion versus the limitations economically of their ability to make different choices. By doing extensive research and then speaking from their own lived experiences, they could both be the experts in their own right, as well as find those individuals in our community who could bring in expertise to add to their lived experience.

So I think that was a good example for them of how social justice can provide an avenue for different types of expertise and can recognize and validate that expertise in ways that perhaps some other types of academic texts and sources may not do in the same way.

TS I remember that listening from other people and learning from their experiences was kind of inspirational too. Because I remember one day in class that we were listening to Sunstorm podcast. And the speakers were talking about the, the ways that they have been doing activism at a very young age. And like in that day, when we were asked to reflect on the Sunstorm episode that we listened to, I remember everyone was commenting on that like Wow, people are doing such an amazing job like at a very young age.

And then I think it was kind of like giving us the motivation too that our work is valuable and then we need to work more on that or how to use from their experiences, their courage and their motivation to do huge things in very young age. And then like that kind of, kind of helped us throughout the process to be aware of the value of social justice work. At the same time, that it's very tough and emotion consuming too. But to still be aware of the value that it has. Because there, there are a lot of more people that we can make, be counted among that community with this work and with this type of work.

LH I think that's a good point, Tahmina. Often students, especially feminist students who typically have multiple marginalized identities, tend to experience impostor syndrome, that they think that, you know, "I don't have the expertise, I don't have the authority to call myself an activist or to call myself an organizer." And through the podcasts that we listened to in class, we heard people talk about their own experiences, starting in small ways, and building on those small ways from the time they were 12, 13, 14 to being college students who were involved in activism and organizing, to moving into employment, that centralized activism and organizing. And I think that that does empower students to see the potential in their own small acts and to also speak to a key goal of our classroom, which is collective action is the way to create structural change.

TS Yes.

AB It sounds like the assignment was scaffolded in a way, and that you started with listening to other podcasts and getting inspired. Were there other, Laura, either from your perspective as a professor, types of professional development you did that helped prepare you to teach this or Tahmina, from your perspective as a student, maybe class activities that set you up for success with this?

LH I wish that there was, Abi, but I sort of just jumped into it with the students. And I would say, what we did, like you mentioned was we listened to and analyzed podcasts, particularly the podcast that Tahmina had mentioned called Sunstorm, which is created by Alicia Garza, one of the co-founders of Black Lives Matter. And Ai-jen Poo, another, an activist around domestic workers' issues. We listened to many podcast episodes of Sunstorm. We had the opportunity to attend an online workshop about podcasting for social justice during the semester.

And then we also brought in a, a podcaster from our community, Laura Schulz from the Violence Awareness and Response program, who talked about her podcast and she gave the students some very direct practical tips about podcasting. Things that she wished she had known when she started. And in that instance, they were able to actually engage with her and ask questions, which they couldn't do as much in the workshop that we attended. But beyond that, a lot of it was trial and error. A lot of it was them doing research on their own to find out about the different types of platform and technologies that they might want to use. And I was not much help in that regard. They were learning as they went.

TS You were. You were guiding through the whole process. And I think that during the class, this class, the nature of the teaching and the learning process, we're also, all of everything was based on a real dialogue and conversation and talking about the ways that other movements, other groups and other Collective Action groups, they did kind of their activism. We talked about every single part of a collective work about like leadership, intersectionality, organization, social movement and everything that I think that like all of those also kind of prepared us to go and research more about the practical ways of building a Collective Action project too.

So I think throughout the process, being open to have conversation about that and then to research more and to learn more and ask questions in that, in that workshop, I think that like we asked tons of questions. And it really helped us because there were some few things like practical things that we may not be able to find them through doing research. But like learn from experience of other people who are experts in this area of making, creating podcasts. So I think that everything enabled us to be aware of all of these little things that we need throughout the process and to ask about it and talk about it.

LH Yeah. I think depending on what kind of class you were using a podcasting project in, you might have really different goals and expectations. We talked a lot about how the goal at the end of this project was not to have a flawless list of podcast episodes. We wanted to like Tahmina said, to apply some of the concepts that we had learned in class about different types of organizing leadership structures, about the feminist theories of intersectionality, to the experience of podcasting, and then be able to reflect in the end about what was successful, what was challenging, what were the barriers? What were we proud of? How did we use research?

And so while students really worked incredibly hard on the editing and the final product of their podcast, and I was incredibly impressed by what they were able to accomplish, the goal was achieved regardless of whether those final podcast episodes still could have been further improved had the students had more time to work on them. That wasn't the most important result that we were looking for.

AB For sure. I know that temptation to just tinker forever to get things perfect, but that makes a lot of sense that the class wasn't about that.

So you had mentioned challenges. And reflecting on those challenges, what would you say was the biggest challenge that you want listeners to know about?

TS Yeah. I think for us the most difficult part was to bring people on board because as I mentioned earlier too, it was somehow everyone was busy with the online courses, online teaching, online learning. And it was like adding one more or like one or two hours of like staying in front of a screen. It was kind of like a lot of like pressure. With the busy schedule of people, it was kind of like difficult for us to get response from the interviewees.

And then we also were thinking to have like different interviewees from different countries, different backgrounds and diverse backgrounds. So that's why we were trying to reach out to people out of the United States. And there was time difference and then people's kind of work schedules was not matching with us. So it was a little bit of difficulty that we faced there, but then we learned a lot about that. We learned from it because it taught us that, as I mentioned earlier too, that like, Yeah, while it's worth it to work for implementing the one plan that we have but it doesn't hurt if we have another plan too. It doesn't hurt if we reach out to more people for asking to interview with us.

That I think that, that was the biggest challenge, but at the same time, editing was also a pain for all of us during the process because we never had experience with it. And then I remember that like for one episode, my friend and I, we spent six hours, six hours in a row to edit. And I think yeah, administratively speaking, I don't know if that's a word or not. But yeah, that was kind of a challenge for us too.

AB Okay. And if we were to kind of transform that into advice, sounds like building in time for those kinds of things. What would you suggest for students doing work like this or instructors wanting to incorporate this?

TS I just want to say that like we learned with our Collective Action course and with this Master's degree throughout the process, that social justice work is not easy. It's emotion consuming, it's time-consuming. It needs a lot of commitment. And while you will feel so proud and you sense the achievement, you feel it. But at the same time, to reach to that outcome that you're looking for just the way it so tough. And that's why I think that having patience with it, taking it step-by-step and then trying to have like alternate plans.

And also I think that to have some sort of or some form of leadership or monitoring systems to the project is also good as we learned from the “Tyranny of Structurelessness,” a reading that we read for the class, even if you try to, not to have any leadership form, still it will form throughout the way, even if you do not intend to do it as it happened for us too, that like we did and we were like friends and we were like, oh, no way. We’re going to use expertise and whoever likes whatever part of the project he or she can like, they can follow and work on that part. But then throughout the process, we saw that like, Oh, no, I think there are some people that they are trying to monitor. They are trying to help like so friendly, help in dividing tasks are like following-up, like if meetings are happening or work is being done. So I think that is also something to keep in mind and then, yeah.

LH Yeah, Tahmina’s referencing, every semester we read a sort of classic feminist essay called, by Jo Freeman called “The Tyranny of Structurelessness.” And she argues that every group needs a structure. You need to have some sort of structure in your leadership and in division of labor. And every semester students, they read, they read the essay they’re like “Yeah, yeah, yeah, not in our group. We’re not gonna, we’re gonna go with structurelessness.” And then in the end, the end of semester presentations almost always they’re like, We should have had a little bit more structure. So that would be a good tip I think if you’re podcasting in a, in a group project to clearly define that structure and who’s responsible for what.

I found that students, groups that had more well-prepared research were more successful when they were interviewing outside guests. Not every podcast episode involved those type of interviews. But when they were able to bring in outside research, data, statistics sort of selectively and naturally within that conversation they were able to get better types of answers from the guests that they were interviewing. So that was really successful for, for groups that, that did that.

I found that as students, most groups did three or four episodes of their podcasts, as they progressed their conversational style improved. That, you know, having a list of questions but then being prepared to follow up in a way that feels natural is not an easy thing to do. That’s a skill that is learned. So students, especially in Tahmina’s class, because the same group of students were working on each episode. You could hear the difference from the first episode to the last episode, that they were starting to learn that style of really careful listening that then could lead them to ask a follow-up question that led to a more natural flow of conversation.

So perhaps practicing that might be something that I would recommend to students before they begin their interview or listening to a podcast episode and sort of annotating where do you hear those follow-up questions? How do you feel when someone asks you a follow-up question, rather than moving sort of systemically through a list, might be something that I would recommend that students try in advance as well.

AB I just wanna give you a chance to add anything else you might have to say about the potential for podcasting for social justice. Any final remarks?

LH None for me, Tahmina, do you have any wrap up?

TS I think I just want to add one thing that is important for, to consider inclusivity and diversity with the podcasts, either in the classroom or like outside of the classroom. It's important for, for a diverse group of students to feel represented and to feel that like their experience is also included in the podcasts or their ways of like life or their ways of thinking, their problems, their difficulties are also included and they are being represented in those parts or projects that are related to social justice. So I think that's one thing that I add.

And I am so proud that we tried to consider this in our podcast, interviewing people from diverse backgrounds, interviewing people with experiences of oppression, experiences of discrimination, and trying to highlight that into our project too. So I think that's also an important thing to remember while creating or listening or reflecting about podcasting.

AB Absolutely. Alright, thank you both so much.

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