The mp3ater Project - Oldtime Radio in a New Medium

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The Bryan Center      Duke University       April 28, 2005

Overview
Through the lenses of culture, aesthetics, and technology in this course students explore one of the most neglected topics in theater and media studies: The Golden Age of Radio (1920-1960). Looking at race, gender, and class, we examine the ways in which radio, as both a new and evolving technology, helped to homogenize and diversify various forms of identity during this era. Our texts include such genre-defining and culturally significant shows as Amos 'n' Andy, The Jack Benny Program, Suspense, and The Chase and Sanborn Hour, as well as radio plays by Orson Welles and Arch Oboler.

Outcomes
- Blackboard provides increased convenience for student access to audio and visual content.
- Blackboard allows student groups to discuss their practical work and exchange large files.
- iPods provide portability of audio to class, which makes class discussions more precise.
- iPods help students understand radio by enabling them to produce their own audio performances.

Sponsors
- Center for Instructional Technology

Technology Used
- Blackboard
- iPod
- Griffin iTalk microphones
- Audacity sound editing software
- XML code
- RSS feeds

Students use iPods in this course in three specific ways: 1.) To provide convenient storage for the radio shows that constitute the course's primary source material; 2.) To enable students to record material for their own radio shows; and 3.) To allow students to hear their own radio shows as podcasts.

Through the use of the iPod, Blackboard, and related technologies, content for this course was made more accessible, concrete, and portable for students. But perhaps more importantly, students were able to understand the subject of audio performance from the “inside.” The iPod and podcasting allowed them to experience the early days of radio through the latest technology.”