

Dr. Cothran

HMXP Oral Presentation

Oral History by Lee Smith is known for its memorable characters. Jennifer is certainly an interesting creation; she is an intelligent young woman, eager to learn more about herself and her family's past. However, juxtaposed against this effort is her tendency to judge and stereotype others. Many of us, whether we admit the fact or not, can be just as determined to stay in our comfort zones as she is.

So, it's time to emerge from those safety nets and experience something different. For this assignment, you should put yourself in a situation in which you are decidedly ill at ease. For example, if you are a staunch Republican, attend a meeting of the College Democrats. If you are Catholic, attend a Free Will Baptist church service. If you are a rap fan, spend an evening at a county music club. Be creative, but be safe. Don't do anything even remotely stupid or dangerous!

Afterward, write a **4 minute speech** describing your experiences. The speech should retell the experience you had and also set up an argument for either the validity or the pointlessness of expanding your boundaries. You might examine the experience in light of its educational importance, its influence on you as a part of the university community, and its impact on your beliefs about your place in our world. Keep in mind that this course has been designed to make you expand your thinking and test some of your ideas. Conclude with your thoughts on the subject of self-examination and the value (or lack thereof) of seeing the world around us from other perspectives.

You will be graded on a) the length of your speech (if you go 15 seconds under *or* over 4 minutes, points will be deducted), b) how prepared you seem to be, c) how well-organized your discussion is, d) how clearly and engagingly you present your material to the class. Be sure to practice beforehand and to time yourself!

This assignment is worth 60 "daily points" – so the equivalent of 6 homework quizzes.