Audience:

I would like for my audience to be centered around anyone between the ages of 18-50s. I envision my podcast to cover topics that pertain to this age group, this one specifically. It will have a very laid back atmosphere and a satirical tone. I envision this to be very similar to talk shows, such as ‘The Talking Dead’.

(Open the show with a musical interlude)

Hello, hello! This is Rachel Slaugenhaupt and you’re listening to \*INSERT PODCAST/RADIO STATION NAME\*

(continue with music)

For today’s episode of \*INSERT TITLE\*, we’ll be exploring a little bit of a Throw Back Thursday…

(play throwback music)

Traveling back to the very beginning of the 20th century, we’re discussing what may have been the only New Year’s Eve where people had resolutions of surviving to see the light of the next day!

One of the world’s first apocalyptic scares, Y2K was exactly that: scary! Even some of the most rational people feared that when the clock ticked midnight, the technological advancements up until the 21st century would be completely reversed.

Dates in computers were designed to begin with a ‘19’, so it was prophesized that when the date changed from December 31st, 1999 to January 1st, 2000 the computers would become so confused that they would shut down completely!

There was also concern that if the computers didn’t malfunction to the point of technologies ultimate demise, the date may change to January 1st, 1900 when reading the ‘00’ after December 31st, 1999 was over, setting everything back a whole century.

Airlines would no longer function, power grids would be fried, power plants had the potential to meltdown, and banks would pay back 100 years worth of interest to their customers… I actually can’t see why anyone would be too upset about that last one, though!

Y2K was essentially equivalent to the most recent apocalypse hoax, 2012. I remember begging my mom to stay home from school that day, with the legitimate fear that my last hours were to be spent taking a calculus exam. Of course, my mother thought I was completely insane for buying into the media’s apparent desire to scare the living crap out of anyone who was willing to listen.

With this being said, I was actually very surprised to hear that my mom, the one who had so thoroughly convinced me that there was nothing to worry about, had actually succumbed to all of the concerns with Y2K. She’s joined us today in the studio, so let’s give her a warm welcome…

(clapping sound effect)

Andrea’s interview:

So, Andrea, were you concerned about Y2K at all?

A: Yes

You were?

A: Yeah! You know why?

Why?

A: Because Nick (my brother) was flying home on January 1st. He had went to Boston and Al was really freaked out about what would happen if all of the airports shut down. I was more lackadaisical about it all and I told Al, “If he can’t fly home, you keep him!” But if I’m being honest, I was pretty nervous myself.

Do you think the media had really emphasized the threat of airlines going down?

A: YES! They had completely blown it out of proportion. They had focused on it almost too much.

Do you think they were intentionally trying to scare people? Trying to make them believe that Y2K was going to be much bigger than it ever actually could be?

A: Definitely! They hyped everything up to get people to ‘invest in this and invest in that’ to protect what might be erased. They scared you into wanting to protect things that weren’t actually at risk of disappearing.

What do you mean by trying to protect things?

A: Well for example, Grandma and Pappy had started canning things daily and your father and I had decided to move all of our savings into a fixed income market, which is a mutual fund.

Why did you choose to move it into the mutual fund?

A: It was only short term. We were worried about the computers, and then the stock market, crashing. You earn very little off of interest but you never lose anything with mutual funds, either.

Did you guys prepare for Y2K in any other ways?

A: Your father bought 1000 rounds of ammunition.

Ammunition? Why?!

A: For the ‘Walking Dead’ scenario. If everything went down we were worried we would be targeted since we are self-sustaining, living on the farm and everything.

Do you think there were bad intentions behind this? Do you think it was a hoax?

A: I have no idea. I just remember this was so hyped up and NOTHING happened. Your dad filled up all of the diesel tanks, we bought extra rice. We were preparing for an apocalypse. And nothing happened. I certainly think there were some commodities and exchanges that benefited from this, definitely.

Well thank you for your insight today! We also have another very important guest with us today, my grandfather! Why don’t we also give George a very warm welcome?

(Insert clapping sound effect)

\*Interview with Pappy\*

* I plan on conducting an interview with my grandfather once I go home for Fall break. I figured it would be easier this way and I would really like to include some of this in my podcast as my mother has told me the amount of preparation they did for Y2K was truthfully incredible (or insane, maybe?).

Thanks again, George! So with all of this being said, was Y2K truthfully a hoax? Or was the majority of the computer realm genuinely concerned that all technological advancements were about to implode within a matter of seconds?

While some may argue that Y2K was an actual concern, and I’m sure that it definitely was, there’s no doubt that the media used this to their advantage to scare the living bejesus out of everyone. I mean literally, if you search Y2K on amazon, there are still survival kits up for sale!!

When society becomes threatened with the possibility that we will descend into a world without technology, without some of our every day needs, we tend to go into hysterics.

As I mentioned earlier, we even saw a very similar situation a few years ago. When the Mayan calendar had foreshadowed our quick demise come December 22nd, things got blown way out of proportion. I mean, they literally made a movie about all of the horrible things that could potentially happen to us. I remember being TERRIFIED after watching that!!

Why does the media obsess over scaring the general public with all of these fake prophecies? The idea of living in a world without some of the every day “necessities” that we have come to know and love seems unfathomable to us at this point. When the media blows these things out of proportion, we can not help but go along with them, terrifying ourselves with the idea that about 60% of the world’s population is too dependent on technology at this point to have even the slightest clue what it is like to survive in the world we live in.

Are we truly that disconnected with our surroundings? At this point in time, I don’t think it is too far fetched to say that one day, if one of these apocalyptic scares holds true, our world will be nothing but ultimately screwed.

(fade into music)

NOTE: I’m not exactly sure if this is how I would like to end my podcast yet. I took the approach of examining society, yet after my grandfather’s interview this may be adapted into something that examines the media’s role in these apocalypse scares instead.

Y2K Podcast Research/ Sources:

* Dates in computers were designed to begin with a ‘19’. It was prophesized that when the date changed from December 31st, 1999 to January 1st, 2000 that computers would be so confused that they would shut down completely
* Some believed that Y2K would have changed life as they knew it
  + Much of every day relied on computers at this point in time
* People also worried about:
  + Banks
  + Traffic lights
  + Power grids
  + Airports

<http://history1900s.about.com/od/1990s/qt/Y2K.htm>

* Concerned that computers may change the date to January 1st, 1900 when reading the ‘00’ after December 31st, 1999 was over
* Banks calculate interest daily,
  + If Y2K were to actually occur, computers would calculate an interest of minus 100 years
* Power plants threatened by Y2K bug
  + Depend on routine computer maintenance for safety checks (water pressure or radiation levels)
  + Not having correct date would throw off calculations, putting nearby residents at risk
* Due to lack of results, many people believed that Y2K was a hoax

<http://education.nationalgeographic.com/encyclopedia/Y2K-bug/>

Was Y2K a commercial hoax?

* The IT industry prospered during this time
  + Demand for business applications, systems, machines and processes was quite large

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140501024549-2886536-y2k-rememberance-the-greatest-commercial-hoax-of-all-time>

\*There is even a Y2K survival kit for sale on amazon\*

Other apocalypse scares to research:

2012

The Rapture

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