

New Media100 Lab: Assignment 6

Objective:

Capture twelve (30-60sec.) audio clips within a 24-hour time range, portraying aspects of your daily life.

Purpose:

As an audio engineer, this exercise presents an opportunity for opening your ears and finding sounds in your natural environment, resulting in audio clips which represent your unique perspective of the world around you. This exercise also presents an opportunity to practice the decision-making processes necessary to capture audio, and to physically hear the results of those decisions.

Process:

Read and Review the "How to use a Sound Recorder" PDF document in the FirstClass Folder. You may need to refer to this document to supplement the topics we were able to discuss in class.

Capture twelve (30-60sec.) audio clips within a 24-hour time range. There must be at least 12 hours between the first and last audio clip.

When creating your audio clips, look for interesting ways to approach things that are already happening around you and to capture a variety of interesting and diverse sounds. You are only limited by your own imagination. The audio clips can be of anything but they must all be distinctly different from each other. Try to vary your samples as much as possible- capturing both natural and artificial sounds. Have fun!

A minimum of 6 audio clips must be captured using the Sony PCM-D50 Field Recorder using the electret condenser stereo microphones.

2 audio clips must be captured using the using the Sony PCM-D50 Field Recorder Handheld Dynamic ENG Microphone.

The additional 4 clips can be obtained using a different sound recorder of your choosing, with a DSLR camera*, using the line input jack, the lavalier mic, the field recorder or dynamic mic- your choice!

**If using a DSLR camera to record audio:*

Keep in mind that sound recording with a DSLR is compromised- for one thing it is not a professional grade audio, you don't have the same control over it like you do with an audio recorder and the microphone is on the front of the camera-its positioning is directly dependent on where the camera angle is (which isn't always the best solution). These tracks must be isolated and separated from the video clips before class.

***If using the lavalier mic to record audio:*

Rental and use of the lavalier mic is not required but encouraged and will result in 10pts of extra credit towards this assignment. Keep in mind there are only two available, so plan ahead if you want to gain this valuable experience. The lavalier mic provides consistent close-range sound pickup and is ideal for interview situations.

Some things to **consider**:

Make decisions about microphone positioning. When recording Audio you can't zoom the microphone like you can with a lens- so you must get closer. The choice of microphone and the directional placement of the microphone are important decisions in capturing great audio. Don't place the mic so close that the audio is distorted and don't place it so far away that you can't capture a good audio sound file.

Adjust the ambient sounds that you can control- move to a quieter place, turn off loud computers, air conditioners, etc...

You may wish to also rent a tripod to minimize handling noise. If you can't use a tripod, be careful when handholding- these recorders are sensitive and will pick up the sound of your hands holding it. Don't put it on a hard surface like a table-it picks up vibrations too easily, instead put it on something soft like a sweater- this will buffer the vibrations and really help. When using the external mic or a lavalier mic- be careful about handling the cables while recording.

Use a windscreen. These recorders are sensitive and can pick up wind noise even when it doesn't seem too windy so be sure to use the provided wind screen almost all the time. If it is very windy or if someone is talking in a breathy way, you can also use the Low-Cut Filter.

Use the Limiter to protect you against occasional loud noises if you are in an unpredictable sound environment.

Some things to **remember (to avoid frequent mistakes)**:

1. **Make sure to bring your own headphones as they are not included in the rental or ask to rent a pair of headphones separately!** Noise cancelling headphones are better because they can help you to better distinguish different sounds.

2. **Headphone Volume and Gain Adjustments are Different. What you hear through the headphones is NOT linked to what is being recorded.**

Gain is like exposure- it controls the quality that the sound gets recorded at and must be set properly so that can get the best possible audio files. Look at the UV meter and make sure it is between 0 and -6db and check that the Peak Level Lamps are not red (which indicates clipping)- adjust the gain accordingly to get a proper audio file.

Headphone volume only adjusts what you hear not the quality of the audio you are recording. Use that as a tool to adjust microphone positioning, turn off unnecessary ambient sounds and to review that you did indeed make a recording before moving on to your next recording situation.

3. **To begin recording press the Record Button- Adjust your Settings and then- When you are ready to record press the Pause Button.**

*Be careful! If you just press record without pressing pause you may think you are recording when you are not!

4. **Conduct a full search for your audio files before you worry that you didn't record anything.**

When downloading your audio files remember that the files are not saved sequentially but in the folder that you have chosen to save them in (or if you have not chosen a location they default to the last chosen location). There are 10 folders each with the capacity to record 99 files each. This

means that your files might be in folder 4 even if there are no files in folders 1-3. There are a lot of places it could be and look through them all before you worry.

If you reviewed your recordings as you made them you know they are in there it is just a matter of finding them. You could also choose which folder to save your files in before you begin recording and save yourself the time and worry later.

Reference:

For your reference, the lab presentation, "Using a Sound Recorder" is posted in the course documents folder on FirstClass.

Submit:

Download your .wav files on to a **flash drive** and bring it to class. You will begin editing the files in class and continue with them on your own. Be prepared to discuss the choices you made to create these audio clips in class.

Name your files: LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_1.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_2.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_3.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_4.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_5.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_6.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_7.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_8.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_9.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_10.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_11.wav

LastnameFirstname_Assignment6_12.wav

***Your assignment will not be accepted if you do not follow these naming conventions.**

Good Luck!