

WHY BABY WHY: HOWARD BROOMFIELD'S DOCUMENTATION OF THE DUNNE-ZA SOUNDSCAPE

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ABSTRACT/RESUME

This paper reviews the acoustic environment of the Dunne-za (Beaver Indians) of British Columbia. It describes and interprets an audio archive inspired by the late Howard Broomfield. Information is presented on the changing soundscape of a northern people; techniques for recording and cataloguing an ethnographic soundscape archive; and the use of audio actualities in producing ethnographic audio documentaries.

Cet article étudie le cadre acoustique des Dunne-za (Beaver Indians) de la Colombie britannique. Il décrit et interprète des audio-archives inspirées par feu Howard Broomfield. Des renseignements sont présentés sur la phonothèque variable des gens du nord; les techniques d'enregistrer et de cataloguer une phonothèque ethnographique; et l'emploi des audio-actualités pour la production des audio-documentaires ethnographiques.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1979 and 1985, Jillian Ridington and I worked with Howard Broomfield documenting the acoustic environment and aural culture of a northern hunting people, the Dunne-za of northeastern British Columbia. We worked with him in the field and collaborated in the production of ethnographic audio documentaries. This paper and the audiotape that accompanies it present information about 1) the changing soundscape of a northern hunting people; 2) techniques for recording and cataloguing an ethnographic soundscape archive; and 3) the use of audio actualities in producing ethnographic audio documentaries.

The Dunne-za audio archive, now at the University of British Columbia, is a unique and comprehensive collection of audio documents from the life of a northern Native people. It currently contains ethnographic field recordings in the following categories:

1. 34 – 5” reel-to-reel tapes recorded between 1964 and 1971
2. 184 – 5” reel-to-reel tapes recorded in 1979
3. 134 – 60 minute cassette tapes recorded in 1981 and 1982
4. 75 – 90 minute cassette tapes recorded between 1983 and 1989

Subjects and settings covered by the archive include the following:

1. the northern forest soundscape
2. the outdoor soundscape of a northern Indian reserve
3. interior soundscapes on the reserve
4. outdoor and interior soundscapes in town
5. soundscapes of oil production facilities in the bush
6. radio, tv and tape recordings played by the Dunne-za
7. conversations between anthropologists and Dunne-za
8. conversations between Dunne-za
9. interviews with the Dunne-za of all ages
10. interviews with local non-Indians
11. popular music performed by non-Indians
12. country and western music performed by Dunne-za
13. Dunne-za stories and oratory
14. Dreamer’s dance songs in concert
15. Dreamer’s dance songs in a pow-wow setting
16. political meetings and oratory
17. conversations while riding in vehicles
18. recorded fieldnotes

Howard Broomfield created or contributed to the following ethnographic documentaries from the Dunne-za archive:

Audio Documentaries

1. "Soundwalk To Heaven" (50 min.). Howard Broomfield and Robin Ridington. CFRO Vancouver 1979.
2. "Trails of the Dunne-za: A Suite of Four Radio Pieces" (four 5 min. pieces). Howard Broomfield, Jillian Ridington, Robin Ridington. CBC "Our Native Land" 1980.
3. "Suffering Me Slowly" (60 min). Howard Broomfield, Jillian Ridington. CBC "The Hornby Collection" 1981.
4. "Nextdoor Neighbors" (30 min). Howard Broomfield, Robin Ridington. CFRO Vancouver 1981.
5. "Old Time Religion" (60 min). Howard Broomfield, Robin Ridington. 1982. Presented as a slide-tape "docu-drama" to the Canadian Ethnology Society.
6. "In Doig People's Ears" (42 min). Howard Broomfield; Robin Ridington, consultant. 1983.

Video Documentary

1. "In Doig People's Ears; Portrait of a Changing Native Community" (30 min). (See Ridington, 1983)

I began doing fieldwork with the Dunne-za in 1964. When Howard Broomfield joined me and Jillian Ridington in 1979, I had not been back to Dunne-za country for about eight years. Thus, hearing the soundscape of a northern Native community through Howard's ears felt like a renewal of my earlier experience. Howard came to the Dunne-za following his work as an associate of the World Soundscape Project directed by composer R. Murray Schafer. During the time we did fieldwork with Howard, he recorded nearly every kind of setting and event. Howard carried a tape recorder wherever he went. His first recordings were "soundwalks" in and around the Doig River reserve. Like other people in this small Native community, Howard acquired a nickname that identified him. The Dunne-za called him "Soundman." They came to accept that wherever Howard went he would "take sound", unless specifically asked to turn off the machine.

In addition to his recordings of the northern soundscape, Howard recorded most of my interactions with the Dunne-za during the time we did fieldwork together. Thus, his work uniquely documents conversations and events upon which I have based my own written accounts of Dunne-za life.

His work was an ethnographic document of an ethnographer's daily experiences and interactions as well as a document of Dunne-za culture itself. Some of his work contributed directly to my narrative ethnography, *Trail to Heaven* (Ridington, 1988). One section of that work, "Old Time Religion," describes events Howard and I were witness to during a field trip in April of 1982. Other written work resulting from our collaboration appears in a collection of papers, *Little Bit Know Something: Stories in a Language of Anthropology* (Ridington, 1990).

Documents And Actualities

When I began fieldwork in 1964, I thought of the tape recorder as a tool for capturing oratory, music and important ceremonial events. I turned it off when I thought "nothing was happening." My choice of what to record had a profound influence on the nature of the documentary record. Songs and oratory seemed important and extraordinary. Conversations seemed normal and thus less important. Howard taught me how to hear ordinary events. He taught me to be an intelligent listener. He taught me that to be alive in this world is an extraordinary blessing.

Every human being experiences the world through the categories of his or her culture. Much of what we hear and see seems so ordinary and "natural" that we do not recognize these sights and sounds as highly cultural information. When we experience another culture we are struck at first by a different and unfamiliar set of sights and sounds. Audio recordings and photographs of foreign sights and sounds appear exotic and extraordinary. They may not make sense to us initially or we may interpret them incorrectly. They must be contextualized in order to have meaning. Cultural insiders take the sights and sounds of their daily experience for granted. They understand them within a context that seems normal and ordinary.

Sights and sounds recorded in a culture at one time may also seem strange in the context of a later time. As a culture changes, what had seemed normal when it was documented may appear extraordinary and exotic in the context of a later time. Audio recordings and photographs provide documentary evidence of particular happenings at particular times and places. Examining them in a different context may reveal the degree and direction of a culture's change. In the language of radio and television production, these recorded sights and sounds are called "actualities." In the language of post-modern critical theory they can also be read as "texts." Recorded actualities by themselves reproduce sounds, but they do not necessarily reproduce meanings. They are documents of acoustic events, not those events themselves. They become events in their own right (and thus texts) when we "read" them in a different context. An audio documen-

tary, like any other ethnographic construction, textualizes actualities (and experiences) so that we can give them a new and different reading.

Actualities from a past or foreign culture are primary documents of that culture's everyday appearance and soundscape. Soundscape, as defined by composer and historian R. Murray Schafer, is "any acoustic field of study ... a musical composition...a radio program...an acoustic environment." According to Schafer, "the general acoustic environment of a society can be read as an indicator of social conditions which produce it and may tell us much about the trending and evolution of that society... A soundscape consists of events heard not objects *seen* (Schafer, 1977:7-8)." Actualities documenting changes in a soundscape over time provide primary evidence about the "trending and evolution" of that culture's change.

The work that Jillian Ridington and I did with Howard Broomfield documented a wide range of soundscapes, settings, events and interactions. These recordings are the primary documents that make up the Dunne-za audio archive. Since Howard's death in 1986, we have continued to document moments in the life of this northern Native community, thus keeping the archive alive and current. The presence of particular sounds and settings in the archive reflects a complex and often opportunistic pattern of contact between ourselves and the people whose lives we are privileged to share and to document.

The ultimate ethnographic instrument is a human being, not a tape recorder. Recordings in the Dunne-za archive document moments when our lives connected with those of particular individuals among the Dunne-za. They document events that were also experiences. The audio document is both a mnemonic of our experience and the source of a new and different experience when we textualize it within the context of a different reading.

Sometimes our recording sessions became formal occasions during which people told us stories, recorded songs or granted interviews on particular topics of interest. Sometimes it seemed that our presence as documentarians had little or no effect on the pace or content of events. Because we recorded extensively, we were able to document many conversations and ordinary interactions with a minimum of interference. We documented not only the Dunne-za themselves, but also their non-Indian neighbors and the acoustic settings within which they encountered these people. Many of our interviews with non-Native settlers were set up by Dunne-za ethnographers who wanted the language and perceptions of these people to be on record in the archive. People at Doig recognized their long-time non-Native neighbors as an important part of their history and experience.

The Dreamer's dance songs and oratory I recorded in the 1960's are invaluable documents from the Dunne-za past. The many copies I sent back to the Dunne-za have come to be important in their present lives today. It is not unusual to enter a house and hear one of my Charlie Yahey tapes playing on a tape deck. These recordings are now part of the Dunne-za soundscape. Most Dunne-za knew Charlie Yahey's songs and oratory firsthand in the 1960's. Now, people know them through the actuality of audio documents. The recordings we make continue to have a life of their own among the Dunne-za. I hope that the tapework we have realized for this special issue of *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* will reveal the world of Dunne-za experience to people who have not known it directly. I hope the piece will bring back the memory of good times for the Dunne-za who listen to it now and perhaps take future generations back to a world their elders knew firsthand.

Why Baby Why: A Montage Of Actualities From Dunne-za Country

Listening to audio documents generates an experience that is different from the experience created by reading words written on a page. The audio piece carries information in its timbre and ambience. It is meaningful beyond the words it may contain. It is musical as well as literal. *Why Baby Why* is a musical composition realized from audio actualities. Although Jillian and I put the tape together over a single weekend, we drew upon lessons Howard taught us as we worked with him to realize many other tapeworks. We felt his presence guiding us very strongly as we worked on this piece. We hope that you will experience Howard, too, as you listen to the tapework he helped us produce.

Why Baby Why is a montage of seventeen separate recorded audio actualities Jillian and I selected from the many hundreds of tapes available in the Dunne-za archive. Some of them were Howard's favorites. The piece takes its name from one of these. It is Howard's field recording of Sally Takola playing "Why Baby Why" on her tape recorder and bantering with Tommy Attachie in a party mood one summer afternoon in 1981. The tape we named "Why Baby Why" is a classic example of what we used to call "a bush mix" in that it is a juxtaposition of commercially taped music and conversational improvisation captured in a single field recording. We used other actualities in the piece you will be hearing from recordings we made in the years following Howard's death in 1986. In twenty-one minutes, you will experience seventeen different settings recorded over a twenty-three year period. In order to help you understand what you are hearing I want to explain how we realized the finished documentary from the individual tapes.

We created *Why Baby Why* using very modest equipment. The production inventory included three stereo cassette tape recorders, one reel-to-reel mono tape recorder, and an inexpensive (\$100 on sale) mixer capable of controlling levels on two inputs and mixing to a single output tape. We did all our editing by starting and stopping tapes with a pause button. We mixed down to a cassette master. We did no editing by cutting and splicing reel-to-reel tape.

Dub-editing is particularly suited to material recorded on cassette since tape in this format cannot be cut and spliced practically. Cut editing material recorded on cassette is possible only by dubbing it first to the reel-to-reel format. A dub-edited documentary has an improvisational quality to it. It is as much a performance as it is a studied composition. It is linear in form but its effect on the mind is cumulative. Each actuality dubbed onto the sequence effects the meaning of all the others in the same way that each Dunne-za story effects the meaning of all other stories. Once a selection has been dubbed onto the master tape and another laid down after it, the first cannot be altered without starting from the beginning again, but later additions do influence the meaning of those at the beginning. The simplest way to lay down one piece after another is to dub from one machine to another. You create a transition between passages by pausing the master tape and switching tapes in the playback machine. This kind of dub-editing is available to anyone with access to two good quality cassette recorders. In a pinch you can even create a simple dub-edited piece using a dubbing deck. Dub-editing using two machines or a deck is effective but inherently monophonic.

In producing *Why Baby Why*, we chose to take advantage of the polyphonic juxtapositions that a mixer makes possible. With a mixer, you can blend sounds from two tapes or cross-fade one into the other. These blending techniques mimic the normal acoustic transitions we experience as we walk from one sonic environment to another. Walking into a house from outdoors cross-fades outdoor ambience into that of the indoor environment. Normal acoustic experience is a continual blending of the sounds that surround us. Using a mixer to blend acoustic actualities plays upon that normal experience. Blended actualities create an imaginary experience. The blend juxtaposes sounds in the way that dreams blend images from very different times and places into a whole that cannot be experienced in the sequential linearity of waking reality. A mix can put together sounds from very different times and places to create a dream-like effect. It can stimulate the kind of creative intelligence dream phenomenology makes possible. Because dreaming is important to the Dunne-za, mixed actualities provide an

entirely appropriate medium for communicating an understanding of Dunne-za reality.

The artistry of a dub-edited tapework begins with listening to tapes from an archive and selecting those that blend in a meaningful juxtaposition. Sometimes Howard called his compositions a "pastiche." We had a running joke in Beaverland about the eternal quest for an intimate little "pasticherie" with Perrier and croissants somewhere in the bush. His compositions played upon a passion for juxtapositions. In thinking about a twenty minute tapework for this special issue of *CJNS*, Jillian and I listened for actualities that together would evoke both Howard's passion and Dunne-za reality. We relied on our memories of the recorded events we had experienced directly in making our selections, but we were immensely aided by the Dunne-za archive catalog. Scanning this document, we could identify and locate tapes we remembered in order to listen to them for possible inclusion in the finished piece.

The Dunne-za archive catalog suggested hundreds of possible soundscapes, settings and events we might include in the piece. We tried to narrow down the possibilities by thinking of sounds that were keynotes of our experiences with the Dunne-za. We imagined the piece as a soundwalk through time as well as through space. We imagined it as a musical composition in which the audio actualities available to us took the place of instruments. We imagined it in the dreamspace between memory and realization. We dreamed along a trail of song and sound that we knew existed within the audio actualities packed away in tapes neatly shelved in a perfect little room in the UBC Department of Anthropology and Sociology. We thought about the story we remembered and the one we wanted to tell. We thought about the limitations of dub-editing and about what the medium can do naturally and with ease.

Cross fades between two tapes are easy to do, but the idea of fading from one to another to another of seventeen tapes in sequence seemed dauntingly difficult. We decided to divide the material into editing units, each of which we would mix onto a separate tape (a cart in radio talk). Producing the piece would then require only cross-fading between carts which already contained the product of previous mixes. Dividing the piece into discrete editing units allowed us to listen to the piece as it developed and to think about where it might go next. It also allowed for the possibility of more complex mixes as we cross-faded one already mixed cart into another.

We wanted to begin *Why Baby Why* with the sounds of birds and dogs and running river water recorded at dawn near the summer solstice. Howard had been astonished by the northern nighttime soundscape. The first few nights at Doig we stayed up late to record the distinctive sound signatures

of this time and place. As we listened to several of the reel-to-reel tapes from the summer of 1979, Jillian discovered one in which Howard and I had talked about the meaning of creating audio documents. Our conversation took the form of a make-believe radio program like the ones we had done together for CRFO in Vancouver. Thus, we more or less serendipitously came upon the first editing unit of our piece, a blending of birds and dogs and anthropologists doing make-believe radio and real ethnography in the early dawn of a long northern solstice day. In the following pages, I will tell stories about the seventeen actualities that went into *Why Baby Why*. Each was an event, each was an experience, each was meaningful at the time it happened. Each actuality takes on another meaning as it takes its place within the completed documentary. I will introduce each editing unit with the production notes we developed to guide us in putting the piece together. Each tape from the archive is identified by its catalog number and description.

EDITING UNIT ONE – 4:00 (4 min:00 sec)

RR 23 6/20/79 Birds and dogs 3:05 am – Doig River Reserve
fade in over

RR 16 6/19/79 Robin and Howard at the break of dawn 2:35 am
Doig River – 2:53 (2 min:53 sec)

fade out birds and dogs – fade in Charlie Yahey song & oratory

OT 7 1/2/66 Blueberry – Charley Yahey and Jumbie talk about
Roads to Heaven and how to be good – singing

fade down unit one – STOP

WHY BABY WHY begins with an ambience that is both natural and cultural. Birds and the river are in the soundscape for purposes that have little to do with a community of Dunne-za. A recording ten miles upstream from Doig would have sounded much the same as this one, but for the presence of camp dogs calling to one another from where they are chained beside the square plywood Department of Indian Affairs houses. Birds and the river are a continuous and encompassing presence. They draw the listener out along the river's muddy course and back into the stiller fastnesses of bush where Mosquito Man rivals the chorus of these birds. Here, too, are moose and bears and wolves and coyotes. Here are rabbits and beavers and squirrels and weasels and fishers and martins and the boss of all furs, Wolverine himself.

Dogs are different. They are of the camp, of the people. The Dunne-za have a rhyme they tell their children, "Dunne-za, Klin-za, Ke-za." It means,

“people, dogs and moccasins,” or more literally, “real people, real [people] animals, real [people] feet.” Dogs can be found only where there are people. The circumference of their calls marks out the social space of a camp. In the old days of not so long ago people used to move more often from one camp to another. Camp and bush were and are very different places. Dogs mark that difference from the inside. Their cousins, the wolves, mark it from a distance.

Abruptly, the ambience of dogs and birds is broken by an electronic tone. It is the feedback sound produced when a microphone is held too close to the speaker of its tape recorder. Someone quickly turns down the playback volume. A field recording begins. Howard says:

H. You are listening to the Monias broadcasting system.

[Monias is the Cree word for “Whiteman” - it is also used by the Dunneza]

R. Yeah, it's on.

H. With repeaters in Pigeon Park, from Doig River, British Columbia — We present...The All Night Show.

Cut [we cut a segment of the conversation because of time constraints]

R. Anyway, Charlie Yahey said things like that, you know, that he was sending messages to people with the tape recorder.

H. Sending tapes.

R. Well, sending them, sending messages to whoever happens to be listening to the tapes that I or anybody who gets hold of the tapes has to say, you know.

H. Huum. And he liked doing that?

R. Yeah, he just understood it. That's what he said. I guess he put it on the record that this was the medium in which he was speaking in and he understood more or less to whom it was going.

[Slow fade in of singing and drumming — it is Charlie Yahey himself speaking to us through a tape I made in 1966. By mentioning his name and the medium in which I recorded him, we seem to evoke his presence.]

H. Huh.

R. The first thing was like going over to another reserve, you know, like sending messages to people over there.

H. Like what we're doing now.

- R. Yeah, just like we're doing now. But obviously, the fact that he's a Dreamer means that he knows he's sending it to people who will continue to live after he's dead, things like that.
- H. Yeah.
- R. Just as his dreams are coming from people who are up in Heaven.
- H. Who are already dead.
- R. Who are sending them down. Yeap.
- H. He is in a way procuring his immortality in a different manner, or assuring it.
- R. I don't know. They don't really believe in immortality. It's just...He's, yeah he's adding his voice to the voices that will be heard.
- H. But it will be heard in a different way.
- R. Yeah, but it will be understood. I think the idea that these people have is that if you understand something, you have come to that understanding out of your own intelligence, your own accord.
- H. Yeeaah. Say that again.
- R. If you understand something, which is what they mean by "knowing something," you will come to have that, just out of your own ability to figure things out. So to know something is to have figured something out from your own experience. Just to know what's going on.
- H. Yeah, is to –
- R. To believe your senses and to put the information together intelligently.
- H. Is to reference it in terms of ego.
- R. No, it's to reference it in terms of the way things *are*.

The voices of Robin and Howard fade down and Charlie Yahey, the Dreamer, stands alone. He is speaking from a small government issue house on the Blueberry Reserve. It is January, 1966, winter solstice. I am there with Sam and Jean St. Pierre. Tonia [Antonia Mills] and I have driven down in our red panel truck to visit the Dreamer. The house is hot and pungent with the smells of drymeat and grease. In the background you can hear the sounds of children crying and the voice of Charlie's wife, Anachuan, speaking with the unquestioned authority of a woman who has experienced more than any other person in her community. Charlie Yahey is younger than his wife but people recognize the authority of his dream experience. When he finishes

singing, the Dreamer continues to beat upon the double sided drum inscribed with images of *Yagatunne*, the trail to Heaven, by his teacher, the Dreamer Kayan. He begins to speak in Beaver. He speaks with authority. He is telling what he knows from his dream experience. He speaks about a trail he knows, the trail to Heaven. He speaks about the way things are. He speaks in my memory as Howard and I talk about him. His voice fades down to end the first editing unit.

Dogs mark the difference between camp and bush from the inside. Their cousins, the wolves, mark it from a distance.

EDITING UNIT TWO – 1:32

HB 81-2 4/2/82 Robin, Howard, Gerry, Glen, Howard Attachie
whistling to the northern lights

mixed with HB 83-1 (mix done by Howard Broomfield as part
of the docu-drama, "Old Time Religion" – May, 1982)

HB 83-1 4/3/82 Cry of a distant wolf - Kevin Attachie talking about
the northern lights, yadiskwanchi – Doig River

STOP (out cue "dance") – begin unit three (no fade-up)

It is the night of April 2, 1982. Howard, Gerry and I have driven out along the old wagon road from Doig to watch the northern lights. We whistle to the northern lights to make them dance. I described the events of this evening in *Trail to Heaven* (1988; Chapter 19) and in a piece for *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, "The Old Wagon Road" (Ridington, 1985).

In this editing unit you hear the events of this evening mixed with a conversation Howard had with Kevin Attachie the following night during the course of a soundwalk to record footsteps on snow and a distant wolf calling. The wolf marks this community's social space by calling from its perimeter. He is out of it physically but reaches into it acoustically. He calls to us out of the dark, just as we call to northern lights of the Heavens from a darkened earth. A dog has followed us as we walk to record the sounds of feet crunching snow. He is close to us and whimpers for comfort. Kevin speaks about the northern lights in English and then in Beaver, calling them Ya-diskwonchi.

The mix in this editing unit is Howard's. Kevin was with us when we recorded the wolf but Howard recorded his talk about the northern lights at a different time and place. He did the mix for a piece we produced in 1982 called "Old Time Religion." Editing unit two comes to a full stop with Kevin saying, "I whistle to the northern lights so it can dance."

EDITING UNIT THREE – 3:32

HB 47-1 6/24/81 Sally Takola and Tommy Attachie with
tape recorder playing "Why Baby Why"

cross-faded to

HB 10-1 6/7/81 Lodgepole string band

quick cross-fade in unit four at 3:10

fade down lodgepole band

Unit three begins with an abrupt change in mood. Jillian, Howard and I are visiting Sally Takola at her summer campsite at Peterson's Crossing. Tommy Attachie has caught a ride in from town with us. He has been drinking. Sally puts a country and western tape on her portable tape recorder and presses the "on" button. Howard is recording our visit. He later called the "bush mix" that follows "Why Baby Why" for obvious reasons. As Sally continues to tell us about her daughter Rita ("my baby"), Tommy interrupts good-naturedly and Sally engages him in repartee. Jillian and I included this piece among "Howard's Greatest Hits" in a retrospective of his work we presented with Morgan Ashbridge at a 1987 Vancouver Community Arts Council series of audio works called "Soundcarvings." This little audio vignette is typical of the way the Dunne-za (and their ethnographers) interact with one another and with a social soundscape.

Another of Howard's greatest hits was his recording of Tommy Attachie, Sammy Acko and Leo Acko playing guitars and fiddle one summer afternoon in 1981. In a break between numbers, Howard asked, "What do you call this band?" One of them answered confidently, "Lodgepole," making up on the spur of the moment an appropriately Indian name for what was in fact an impromptu pickup group. The song they play on this selection is "Mansion on the Hill," a name they use to describe Tommy Attachie's bachelor house. The musicians of Lodgepole improvised within the suggestive capacity of names available to them. They also improvised within the form of country and western string music. They improvised in much the same way that Sally and Tommy improvised their polyphony with a tape deck playing "Why Baby Why." I have tried to show the continuity of their improvisations in this editing unit by creating a very slow cross-fade between the ambiances of Dunne-za playing commercially recorded country music and Dunne-za playing "live" music in the same genre on conventional instruments.

Both tapes are field recordings of country music performed by Dunne-za musicians. Both tapes document live improvisations. The cross-fade sug-

gests a characteristically Dunne-za creative mastery of the technology available to them. The Lodgepole performance is also noteworthy for its distinctively Indian phrasing. Although the performers play in a relentlessly two-four time, their transitions between phrases have a curious disregard for completing one bar before going into the next. Their style of playing “Mansion on the Hill” strongly suggests the style in which I have heard the same musicians perform Dunne-za Dreamer’s songs.

The transitions between editing units one and two and between units two and three both involved full stops. The shifts in ambience were abrupt. Unit one ended with me saying that “to believe your senses and to put the information together intelligently... is to reference it in terms of the way things are.” The next sounds heard are a wolf marking out the boundaries of the reserve from the outside and Howard, Gerry, and me whistling to the northern lights. Unit two ends with a young boy’s voice saying “I whistle to the northern lights so it can dance.” The next sounds are Sally and Tommy and “Why Baby Why.” We used cross-fades within these first three units but did not cross the transitions between them.

The transition between unit three and unit four is different. As Lodgepole nears the end of “Mansion on the Hill” you can hear children’s voices as if at a distance. They are speaking about the numbers used to identify songs in a songbook. They are preparing to read a musical text that Shirley identifies as “page one” of her book. This text is different from the ones read by Lodgepole and by Sally Takola. The transition into unit four is complete when Lodgepole finishes their song and the kids’ voices stand alone.

The transition called for a cross-fade because it demonstrated a continuity between Dunne-za performances from one genre to another. A similar continuity is demonstrated in the cross-fade already built into unit four.

EDITING UNIT FOUR — 2:38

HB 10-2 7/6/81 Girls in Molly’s house singing gospel songs
faded to

S85 4-2 7/7/85 Tent meeting — Ricky Apsassin leading
praise chant

slow cross-fade between units four and five at 2:15

Howard had a special rapport with kids. When he recorded Debbie, Dolly, Shirley, Colleen, and Ian singing songs from a Christian songbook, he became part of the event by being both its documentarian and its impresario. Here, Shirley Acko sings what she refers to as “page one,” a Christian hymn whose words have been translated into Beaver by Marshall Holdstock, a Wycliffe Bible Society missionary. The text is in her language,

but because it is written and distant from the language of ordinary discourse, her range of improvisation is limited. She sings with confidence and authority, though. Whatever its origin, there is no question but that the reading of this text is hers. Almost as soon as Shirley's voice has established itself and the transition from unit three is complete, we begin to hear the ambience of another voice and another setting fading slowly into the acoustic field. The voice is that of a young man, Ricky Apsassin. Although he is older than Shirley, his mother, Molly, is Shirley's half sister, making him Shirley's nephew. Both Shirley and Molly are children of Old Man Aku. Shirley, a teen-ager, is Aku's last child, born when he was at least in his eighties. Her sister, Molly, is already able to claim elder status when she chooses to do so. Ricky is leading other voices in emotional and charismatic Christian devotional praise chanting. The setting is a traveling tent meeting set up for a few days on the Doig reserve in July, 1985. This was Howard's last season in Dunne-za country. We are quite moved by the music and preaching, but also a bit apprehensive at the intensity of Ricky's performance. The fade-up of Ricky's improvisational rendition of a Christian text over Shirley's reading of "page one" makes ethnographic as well as musical sense. Evangelical Christianity is an important part of the culture at Doig these days. Ricky begins by preaching to the congregation of his fellow Dunne-za. He says,

Anyway, you can all stand up
and just praise God, you know.
Put up your hands like.
You supposed to put up your Holy hands.
Yes, The Bible says, you know.
I want everybody to do that in this here.
Right here.
[the sound of voices chanting "Praise God" begins to be heard]
That'll be right on.

Ricky begins to lead the chanting as other voices join him in a lovely but irregular polyphony. Each voice speaks as the spirit moves him. Each gives his own reading of the conventional phrases from which this multivocal text is constructed. Ricky begins, softly, showing the way. In mixing unit four I kept up the level of Shirley's voice singing "Yagay Sadoin" in Beaver as a parallel text to the praise chanting. I wanted the two to stand strongly together as double foregrounds rather than to cross-fade one into the background. Shirley holds her own but the shape of the praise chanting builds. The chanting is a polyphony of many voices. My written rendition of this passage is an ethnopoetic collage rather than a direct transcription. It conveys the words used and the sense of a rising level of emotion.

PRAISE
 PRAISE JESUS
 OH LORD – THANK YOU JESUS
 YES JEEUS – PRAAISE JESUS
 HALLELUJAH – YES YOU LORD JESUS
 YES LORD – THANK YOU JESUS – YES LORD
 YES JESUS – PRAISE YOU LORD – HALLELUJAH
 PRAISE YOUR WONDERFUL NAME – PRAISE LORD JESUS
 THAANK YOU LORD – THAANK YOU JESUS – HALLELUJAH LORD
 HALLELUJAH – HALLELUJAH – PRAAISE YOUR WONDERFUL NAME LORD
 PRAAISE YOU PRAAISE YOU PRAAISE YOU JEEUS – PRAAISE YOU LORD
 PRAAISE YOU PRAAISE YOU PRAAISE YOU JESUS – PRAAISE YOU LORD JESUS
 GLOWRRY GLOWRRY LORD JESUS – PRAISE YOUR HOLY NAME – PRAISE THE LORD

EDITING UNIT FIVE – 2:44

RR 26 6/20/79 Diesel powered gooney bird (oil well)
faded to

OT 8 3/28/66 Aku's song – Doig River
fade in unit six underneath Aku at 2:30

Editing unit four cross-fades into unit five with the introduction of a new and different sound signature, the voice of a machine. The recording documents a diesel powered “gooney bird” pumping oil from a site in the bush not far from the road into the Doig reserve. Unlike the previous juxtapositions of sounds made by people and animals, the fade between units four and five puts together praise chanting and the sound of a machine.

Charlie Yahey, the Dreamer, told me that the white people pump up grease from giant animals that the culture hero, Saya, put beneath the earth when the world was smaller than it is now. He said that they make the world small again when they exhume that energy and use it to travel quickly from one place to another. He told me you step out of your tracks when you step into one of their vehicles. He also told me that Jesus showed the Dunne-za a “short-cut to Heaven.” The juxtaposition of praise chanting with a gooney bird evokes a multiplicity of images from his texts. Our reading of material from the Dunne-za archive in this passage resonates with the Dreamer's reading of images from his own knowledge and experience.

Unit five is itself a mix of actualities that document very different sound signatures. The sound of the gooney bird engine alternates between being a sharp clicking of valves opening and shutting and a more dull distant throbbing. This change in ambience is in the original field recording. It documents my own motion as I walked away from the building in which the engine stood. At a point when it sounds particularly distant and throbbing, we introduce a sound that is resonant with it, the throbbing of a hand drum and the rise and

fall of a human voice in song. The voice is Old Man Aku, Ricky's grandfather and Shirley's father. He is singing one of the songs he brought back from Heaven, one of his songs.

I love this song of Aku's. It alternates between complementary falling and rising phrases as it expresses his knowledge of *Yagatunne*, the trail to Heaven. It brings to mind the healing presence of old people and their world. Its turns suggest the turns of *Yagatunne*. The song reminds me of Augustine Jumbie calling to his relatives in Heaven. To create the experience that is implicit in Aku's song, we have mixed the end of unit five with the beginning of unit six, itself a blending of the voices of two storytellers. One is Augustine Jumbie who died in July of 1989. The other is Albert Askoty, a storyteller of a younger generation than Jumbie.

EDITING UNIT SIX – 2:30

HB 1-1 6/4/81 Jumbie telling stories to Tommy, Robin and Howard at the Esta Villa Motel, Fort St. John, British Colombia.

cross-faded to

HB 12-1 6/8/81 Stories told by Albert Askoty at his cabin

cross-faded to

BS89J1-2 6/26/89 Lori Makadahay reading a story about her and Jaws that Robin wrote on his computer

fade in first tape of unit seven at 2:20

fade out unit six and stop tape at "jaws"

Unit six begins with Jumbie telling stories in Beaver to Howard and me through Tommy Attachie. In June of 1981 we took a room at the Esta Villa motel (Howard called it the "Pancho Villa") in order to record Jumbie in a quiet atmosphere. His sound signature is that of a very old man. He is telling about the Dreamer, Kayan. Tommy speaks to him in a loud voice, asking him in what year the events he is describing happened. Howard and I listen in silence. The voices of Jumbie and Tommy slowly cross-fade to another tape, also recorded in 1981. Another elder, Albert Askoty is telling stories about hard times the Dunne-za experienced in the past. He is speaking in Beaver to me and to his son, Jack, in his log cabin at Peterson's crossing. His voice stands alone for a moment. Then it is slowly joined by Lori Makadahay, age ten, reading a story in English. We made the first two recordings of story-telling in 1981. This third one is from 1989.

The recordings of Jumbie and Albert Askoty document their interpretations of oral texts about the past and about the trail to Heaven. The record-

ing we made of Lori documents a moment we shared with her last summer. Lori reads a story I wrote on my computer as we sat around the picnic table of our camp beside her house. I composed a story about a girl named Lori who encounters a giant fish named "Jaws." Now she is reading it. We use this document in juxtaposition with Jumbie and Albert Askoty in order to comment on differences between storied lives that are oral and those that are written. Lori here reads my text but gives it her own reading. She understands it because I have created the text out of information we hold in common.

EDITING UNIT SEVEN 5:50 (on three separate tapes)

- cross-fade cookie jar over end of unit six
- HB 18-2 6/8/81 Kids at Molly's playing "who stole the cookie from the cookie jar" with Howard
- fade in saddle bronc over cookie jar at 30 sec
- RR 40-1 6/21/79 saddle bronc riding practice, Doig River
- fade in singers after 30 sec of saddle bronc
- slowly fade out saddle bronc and let singers continue to end
- B589 12-2 7/2/89 Dunne-za singers at Treaty Eight Days, Doig River — sound of horsebells and fire crackling

Editing unit seven is not a single cart like the others. Because it ends the piece, we felt comfortable fading directly from unit six into the first actuality of unit seven and then simply alternating fades of new material until the end. Unit six ends with the story of Lori and Jaws. I wrote it and Lori performed it. The image of a great white shark belongs to a cultural text we shared. Our shared reading of this text suggested another reading that Howard shared with a group of kids in 1981. In this case, though, it was the kids who brought Howard into their circle. This tape is another one of "Howard's Greatest Hits." It is a rhyming game he played with the kids of Molly's house called "Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?" Acoustically and thematically, it provided a perfect transition between units six and seven. We allow the rhyming game to stand strongly by itself for a moment and then fade slowly into the sounds of young people getting a saddle bronc ready to ride.

The next sounds come from a 1979 reel-to-reel recording of Gerry and a group of boys practicing saddle bronc riding. We hear people talking excitedly in the chute and the sound of a horse straining against leather, wood, and earth. Most of the talk is in Beaver. Listening to this tape made us aware of the changes that have taken place in the last ten years. English would

probably prevail now. The final fade takes us to the summer of 1989 and a strong energetic Dreamer's dance. A large crowd has gathered around a fire across the river from the houses at Doig. It is the second night of the Treaty Eight Days celebration and an occasion to have what used to be called and is being called again, a "tea dance."

It is around midnight of a cool night under a scatter of towering cumulous thunder clouds. The singers tune their hand drums by holding them against the wall of heat thrown up by a large crackling fire. They set a fast pace that young people seem to like. Elders and young people alike have been influenced by the Dene-tha drum group from Alberta that sang the night before. According to Loney Metchooyah, a founding member of that group, one of their inspirations came from the tapes I made of Charlie Yahey that George Behn from Fort Nelson gave to them. And so a circle is completed. Another is already begun. Saya, the culture hero, continues to follow his trail around the edge of the sky world. Dogs mark the space where people live from the inside. Their cousins, the wolves, mark it from a distance. I make a tape recording of the event and label it:

B589 12-2 7/2/89 Dunne-za singers at Treaty Eight Days,
Doig River – sound of horsebells and fire crackling

It is wonderful to hear singing and drumming blended with the sound of horse bells again as I had twenty years before on the night my daughter, Amber, was born following a tea dance in August, 1969. Howard would have called the tape I am making a lovely "bush mix" of horse bells, drums, voices, and fire crackling. I like to think that he may have looked over our shoulders as Jillian and I put together this pastiche we call *Why Baby Why* in his memory. Thanks for being The Listener as always, Howard.

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APPENDIX

ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD RECORDING AND PRODUCTION TECHNIQUE

Tape Recording Technique – Miking

The most important single factor in getting a good quality voice recording is having the microphone close to the person being recorded – i.e. *close mike your subject* – A microphone cannot distinguish between voice and other sound. If your tape recorder has an automatic level control it will boost whatever signal it is receiving. If that signal is a TV set in the corner of the room, a loud fluorescent light, fans, budgies or whatever, the machine will try to boost it to the same level as the voice whenever there is a pause in the speech. Never give your subject the mike to hold. Any time you or anyone else touches the mike or fiddles with the mike cord it will sound like a raid by Attila the Hun. Either hold it yourself or place it on a stand as close as possible to the subject.

Routines to Avoid Disaster

- Label **Side One** of each tape with basic information prior to beginning recording – i.e. Tape Number – Date – Setting – People – event – ambience
- Label **Side Two** of each tape with additional information as soon as you have finished recording on it.
- **Punch The Tabs Immediately**
- Fill Out an Index Sheet with Description of Tape's Contents.
- **Always Remember To Check That The Pause Button Is Released Before Recording**

Summary

- Rule No. 1 **Close-mike Your Subject Wherever Possible
Do Not Use A Built-in Mike**

- Rule No. 2 **Make Sure That Your Machine Is Recording Properly**
 (check batteries – check levels if these can be controlled manually – make sure mike is plugged in and turned on – make sure the pause button is off)
- Rule No. 3 **Punch The Tabs When You Have Finished Recording**
- Rule No. 4 **Label Your Tapes**

Realizing An Audio Documentary From Recorded Actualities
 Cataloguing, Logging and Transcription

A tape *catalog* describes the contents of an entire audio archive. The following is a catalog excerpt illustrating the form we used for the Dunne-za archive:

Howard Broomfield – 1981-1982 (HB)

- HB 1 4/6/81 – Augustine Jumbie
 Side 1 – Jumbie talks in Beaver with Tommy Attachie
 Singing, discussion about the use of medicine by
 contemporary Dunne-za
 Side 2 – Talking with Tommy and Jumbie, “the big
 wolverine”
 Old timers dying and not being able to leave this world
 Pulling scows on the MacKenzie River
- HB 2 4/6/81 – Augustine Jumbie
 Side 1 – Jumbie talks with Tommy Attachie about
 White women and about his family
 Talking in Dunne-za, silence, and praying
 Side 2 – Jumbie speaking in an oratorical voice
 Inside Jumbie’s room in Fort St. John, people coming
 and going
- HB 3 4/6/81 – Augustine Jumbie
 Side 1 – Jumbie speaking and singing
 Tommy, Howard, and Tommy’s brother Ronald into room
 Discussion of prophets and departed relatives
 Side 2 – Discussion continues - speaking and singing
 7/6/81 - Scene change, inside a vehicle
 Gerry, Sammy Acko and Tommy Attachie talking about
 dressing,
 hitch-hiking, partying and blowing money
- HB 4 6/6/81 – Hudson’s Hope Rodeo
 Side 1 – CKNL Ft. St. John – ads and message time

- General rodeo sounds
 Side 2 – General rodeo sounds
- HB 5 6/6/81 -- Hudson's Hope Rodeo
 9/6/81 – Cutting Fence Posts
 Side 1 – General rodeo sounds
 Side 2 – 9/6/81 – In the car on the way to cutting trees for fence posts, sawing and chopping etc.
- HB 6 6/6/81 – Hudson's Hope Rodeo: Interview with Ernie Marshall, Rodeo Clown
 Side 1 – Clown routine at rodeo, general rodeo sounds
 Side 2 – Interview with Ernie Marshall
 Scene change to Doig, general ambience
- HB 7 7/6/81 – The Trip to Moig Flats – The Stone "Totem Pole"
 Side 1 – In the car with Gerry
 At Sally Takola's with Trevor and Lori Attachie, Sally's grandson, Ferlin, and Tommy Attachie
 Back in car, riding and talking ambience
 Johnny Askoty has joined group
 Side 2 – Riding and talking on a trail, walking through a clearing toward the woods

Tape Log

Log the contents of your tapes. The simplest way to do this is to time and note the contents of each tape using a stop-watch. Make note of the counter numbers of the machine you are most likely to use in editing. Selecting the categories to note will depend on the content of the tape, but some to consider are:

Setting – Ambience – Event(s) – Speakers – Changes

An audio document contains a great deal of information above and beyond the literal text of any speech it may contain. Listen for keynotes that indicate the soundscape in which an event is taking place. Note in your log any change in setting or whenever the document is interrupted by turning off the machine and moving to another time and or place. Note cultural information that is conveyed primarily in the acoustic medium rather than in words. You may want to transcribe particular passages. If so, indicate in the log where they are. Leave room for notes about possible editing units you may wish to use in realizing a documentary piece.

Transcription

You might want to transcribe portions of the spoken text. Some passages may be transcribed in normal prose form. Others may best be realized as poetry. Such passages could be set as autonomous audio documents within your documentary. It might help to transcribe a few in-cues and out-cues to suggest resonances between textual passages when thinking about ordering them in your final piece.

Documentary Production Technique – Dub-editing

An audio documentary may be realized entirely from recorded actualities. The simplest technique is to select passages from your original recording and dub them sequentially onto another cassette using the pause button to stop the destination tape while another passage is cued up on the source tape. Simple dub-editing can be realized on a dubbing cassette machine or by dubbing from the line-out of one machine to the line-in of another.

More complex dubbing overlays can be accomplished with a simple mixer that allows two source tapes to be dubbed simultaneously onto a destination tape, controlling their relative levels independently to create the desired mix. The mixer is also useful in an essentially linear piece by allowing cross-fades between segments. (If both segments are on a single source tape you will have to make a dub of the source in order to have two passages from the same initial document cued up simultaneously. You lose a generation with the copy so plan to take the largest possible amount from the original.)

Planning to Realize a dub-edited Documentary

A dub-edited documentary is essentially improvisational. It is as much a performance as it is a composition. You should select, time, and cue-up the passages you wish to use, indicating if and where mixes or cross-fades might contribute to how the story sounds. The easiest technique is a simple linear sequence of selections dubbed together to tell a story. Remember that more complex techniques create more problems and do not necessarily improve the piece. If done merely for effect, they can even ruin otherwise good material.

Decide on approximately how long you want the final piece to be. Decide on what story you want to tell. Select passages that complement one another. Complementarity may be acoustic, logical, textual, ironical, metaphoric etc. Think of the piece as a musical poem constructed of audio actualities. Try out a couple of segments for practice and to see how they

sound, i.e. two passages dubbed together, mixed, or cross-faded. Sometimes an abrupt shift in ambience is more powerful than a fade from one ambience to another, depending on what you are trying to say with the material. Do you want to shift between voices to create a conversational effect? Do you want to repeat certain key words in the same way as you might repeat keynote sounds? It would probably be a good idea to write out a score of the passages you want to put together. Then, all you have to do is practice and perform it. Good luck!