Audio Journalism for Radio and Podcasts (Fall 2017)
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INTRODUCTION

Audio Journalism for Radio and Podcasts will teach you how to craft a story in sound. We’ll review crucial concepts of audio reportage by studying narrative radio theory; at the same time, students will apply that theory by producing two pieces over the course of the semester. The goal is for you to emerge at the end of the course as aggressively competitive in seeking jobs/internships at narrative audio shows, or to create you own shows.

You will learn the basics of crucial concepts in audio reportage, such as:

- Idea vs. story; stakes; story structure.
- Audio equipment and recording techniques.
- Prepping and conducting interviews.
- Logging tape and choosing selects.
- Outlining.
- Scripting and writing for radio.
- Story editing and workshopping drafts.
- Cutting tape.
- Voicing.
- Mixing.
- Scoring.
- Finishing stories on tight deadlines while doing a million other things.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Vox**: 2-4 minute narrative piece based on vox pop interviews. Pieces will comprise of an anecdote and a reflection from either the best or worst experiences of the interviewee’s summer.
- **Your Choice**: 3-5 minute narrative piece based on planned interview(s) and original reporting.
- **Weekly Assignments**: As assigned.

GRADING:

*Sample Rubric*

- **Vox Piece**: 30%
- **Your Choice**: 40%
- **Participation/Assignments**: 30%
EXTRA SESSIONS

- **Office Hours**: Thursdays, 1pm-2pm, Room 641.
- **Mixing Workshops**: TK for both stories.
- **Tracking sessions**: TK for both stories.

RESOURCES

- **Google Drive**: Where you’ll upload all your homework. Please make sure to share it with me and make it editable. Link to be shared in class.
- **Slack**: Our primary means of communication. Please install on both computer and phone, and enable push notifications. Link will be shared in class.
- **NY Public Radio Listserv**: To get a taste of what the community is like. I will add you at your request, via Slack.
- **Podforum**: Class-related listening will be featured on Podforum. Feel free to post any additional audio you love, as well. Instructions on how to post are in #podforum (Slack).
- **Out on the Wire**: by Jessica Abel. Our primary text.
- If you do not own your own audio equipment, you must check out a field kit from NYU. They must be returned within 24 hours of rental. NYU’s kits include:
  - Zoom H4N recorder.
  - Mic.
  - XLR cable.
  - USB cable.
  - Headphones.
  - **You must provide your own SD card (32 GB minimum), AA batteries (bring extras!), and external hard drive.**

HOMEWORK

- Will be assigned at the end of class, on a weekly basis.
- Expect about a few hours of reading/listening each week, a brief paragraph (around 250 words), and the audio projects we’re working on.
- All assignments are due by 9am every Wednesday (the day before class).

CURRICULUM

Class 1 (9/7)

- Intros/Icebreakers.
- Review syllabus.
- Listening/discussion.
- Basic radio story structure.

*Homework:*

- **Texts as assigned.**
Class 2 (9/14)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- What makes good tape?
- Equipment and recording techniques.
- How to do a vox pop.
- Interviewing.
- Logging tape/choosing selects.

Homework:
- Collect vox interview tape; log tape; mark selects; write ABDCE/"e", and focus sentence; outline vox story. (Vox1)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 3 (9/21)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- Scripting/writing for radio.
- Story editing.
- Assign workshopping groups (individual and in-class).

Homework:
- Workshop outline with you editor; write first draft of script; send to your editor for edits; edit your partner's script; integrate edits into your own script. (Vox2)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 4 (9/28)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- In-class script edits (Group A).
- Mixing in Hindenburg.
- What is a live read?

Homework:
- Write second draft of script; send to your editor for edits; edit your partner's script; integrate edits into your own script. (Vox3)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 5 (10/5)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- In-class live read edits (Group B).
- Introduction to sound design.
Voicing.
Sign up for voicing sessions.

Homework:
- Record narration in your voicing sessions.
- Assemble first audio draft; edit your partner’s audio draft; integrate edits into your own draft. (Vox4)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 6 (10/12)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- In-class mix edits (Group A).
- Mastering.
- What does Alex want in a pitch?

Homework:
- Record pickups on your own; assemble second audio draft; edit your partner’s audio draft; integrate edits into your own draft; mix draft. (Vox5)
- Submit three Your Choice pitches to me/your editor; review your partner’s pitches. (YC1)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 7 (10/19)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- In class mix edits - (Group B).

Homework.
- Final mix! (Vox6)
- Hone your pitch; submit to Alex for final approval; book interview(s). (YC2)

Class 8 (10/26)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
- Listening/discussion.
- Workshop pitches.
- Structure, part 2.

Homework:
- Conduct interview(s); log tape; outline your story; workshop outline with you editor. (YC3)
- Texts as assigned.

Class 9 (11/2)
- Discuss texts/assignments.
• Listening/discussion.
• Interviewing, part 2.

Homework:
• Write first draft of script; send to your editor for edits; edit your partner’s script; integrate edits into your own script. (YC4)
• Texts as assigned.

Class 10 (11/9)
• Discuss texts/assignments
• Listening/discussion.
• Scripting, part 2.

Homework:
• Write second draft of script; send to your editor for edits; edit your partner’s script; integrate edits into your own script. (YC5)
• Texts as assigned.

Class 11 (11/16)
• Discuss texts/assignments.
• Listening/discussion.
• Advanced sound design.

Homework:
• Assemble first audio draft; edit your partner’s audio draft; integrate edits into your own draft. (YC6)
• Texts as assigned.

☐ No class on 11/23 ☐

Class 12 (11/30)
• Discuss texts/assignments.
• Listening/discussion.
• Workshop pieces.

Homework:
• Record pickups on your own; assemble second audio draft; edit your partner’s audio draft; integrate edits into your own draft; mix draft. (YC7)
• Texts as assigned.

Class 13 (12/7)
• Discuss texts/assignments.
• Listening/discussion.
• Workshop pieces.
Homework:
  ● Final mix! (YC8)

Class 14 (12/14)
  ● Final thoughts and moving forward.
  ● Public listening party!