Sound and Social Research: 
*Listening, Recording, Playing Back.*
Tony Schwartz
(New York radio)

The "responsive chord“, means hearing the world the way it is rather than the way we think it should be.
Pay attention to the “attitudes, values, and beliefs current in the community concerning the means of speech and their use”

Dell Hymes (1962) ‘The Ethnography of Speaking’
“There is no better way to sharpen one's (listening) sense of linguistic and poetic differences and possibilities than transcribing and translating the discourse of the others, not only getting it on paper but also giving it voice – through recording”

Jerome Rothenburg & Dennis Tedlock
To see the world, or to see it as an object presented to sight, is to believe that it has a form; to hear the world, or to experience it as something heard is to encounter materiality without continuous

(Steven Connor 1997)
"[S]ound .. [is] .. a foundation of experience...
A deeper appreciation of sound could force us to overturn our static, spatialized world and consider the dynamic nature of sound, an open door to the comprehension of cultural sentiment"

Paul Stoller (1989)
‘world is not for the beholding it is for the hearing...we must learn to judge a society more by its sounds than by statistics’

What is the Soundscape

• “An environment of sound (or sonic environment) with emphasis on the way it is perceived and understood by an individual, or by a society. It thus depends on the relationship between the individual and any such environment. The term may refer to actual environments or to abstract constructions such as musical compositions and tape montages, particularly when considered as an artificial environment.” Barry Truax (1999) Handbook of Acoustic Ecology
[t]he axiom of much work has been: when a sound is not complex in the material aspects of its acoustic organization, assume that its social meaning is essentially shallow. Musical meaning, in this view, is essentially ‘in the notes’ and not ‘in the world’

Steven Feld: Sound and Sentiment

• “Acoustemology explores acoustic knowing as a centre-piece of Kaluli experience; how sounding and the sensual, bodily, experiencing of sound is a special kind of knowing, or put differently, how sonic sensibility is basic to experiential truth in the Bosavi forests. Sounds emerge from and are perceptually centred in place, not to mention sung with, to, and about places. Just as ‘life takes place’ so does sound; thus more and more my experiential accounts of the Kaluli sound world have become acoustic studies of how senses make place and places make sense.”
TECHNIQUES OF RECORDING

• **Listening** as prelude to recording
• **Layering** as a paradigm for the way that you work with sound
• First Layer – ‘atmosphere’. Non-synchronous background sounds with small dynamic range.
• Second Layer – ‘Habitat’. The ‘sonic-identity’ of a place with a wide dynamic range.
• Third Layer – ‘Species’. The ‘featured sound’, with a very close and direct perspective.
The “sonic regimes” of modernity and “the theoretical abstraction of the ear”

Jonathan Sterne
*The Audible Past: the cultural origins of sound reproduction.*
WARNING
AIRCRAFT TURN-UP AREA
HIGH WIND BLAST AND
EXTREME NOISE LEVEL

警告
航空機ターンアップエリア
エンジンによる極度の騒音と突風に注意
ETHNOGRAPHY AND SOUNDSCAPE COMPOSITION

• 1. Both disciplines engage in embodied open-air-research

• 2. Fieldwork is primarily through sensuous experience and the creation of an outward response to that experience from an inside perspective.

• 4. Both are interdisciplinary contextual enquiries which take a greater holistic approach to the environment and its people.

• 5. Both are tied up with transducing their findings into condensed, itinerant forms.

• Practice and study of soundscape composition - has roots in acoustic ecology and soundscape studies,