Chapter 5: Disabling Soundwriting: Sonic Rhetorics Meet Disability Pedagogy

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3. Untitled Project by Bryant Cauley

In this next example, Bryant Cauley explores mixing together sound effects to simulate the sounds of drinking while driving.

Transcript

[*sound of light rainfall on a glass surface fades in*]

[*thunder echoes in the background*]

[*a door opens and is soon closed, the sound of fumbling metal plays alongside the sound of glassware clanging and then a car's engine is started*]

[*ambient car noise is heard now, with the sound of more glassware and drinking of some unknown substance*]

[*sounds of screeching tires and an impact overcome all other sounds*]

[*a beating sound begins in the background, quiet at first followed by a clap of thunder and distant police sirens*]

[*a sound of a beeping in the rhythm of a beating heartbeat plays softly, later becoming louder and louder until it flatlines and all sounds fade away entirely*]

Bryant Cauley's Artist Statement

When deciding to inject some purpose into my Sound Project, I wanted to find an issue that could affect anybody. Unfortunately, the act of drunk driving can have far reaching implications for innocent drivers (or passengers) regardless of whether they accept them or not. In my sound project, I tried to set the mood of the environment. Using my phone and GarageBand, I recorded the sounds of rainfall on a car windshield and set this as a looping background with the sound of thunder in the background. I also recorded sounds of someone entering a vehicle with a subtle clang of glassware in the background as the driver fumbles to start the engine. Then I incorporated a sound made to imitate the ambient sound of a car on the road, while mixing in sounds of glass clanging together once again, followed by the sound of someone taking a few drinks from a bottle. Almost immediately following these sounds, the sound of tires screeching and an impact overcome the sound of the rainfall. Afterwards, another sound of thunderclaps in the background with the sound of a responding police officer layered behind it. Lastly, the sound of a heartbeat on an EKG plays in the back, becoming increasingly louder, overcoming the rainfall background. After the heart has continued to beat for a while, it flatlines and all sounds diminish into silence. The listener may believe that the driver has died by his own hand but what if someone else was affected by his decision? What if the driver ended up killing someone innocent in the process?

I left out words to try to tell the story explicitly with sounds. After reading my statement on my thought process, maybe your opinion of the piece will change. I tried to set the tone of the story with the rainfall and thunder rather than music in the background. I included the police siren at the end to symbolize whatever happened had to be serious and involved intervention. The EKG and sounds of a beating heart were incorporated to symbolize the lives that had or could potentially be lost by the act of driving under the influence.

Audio Sources

- Crash Sound: https://youtu.be/ts0rgLgNKmM

- Ambient Car Noises: https://freesound.org/people/squareal/sounds/237374/

- Thunder: https://freesound.org/people/sean.townsend/sounds/106869/
- Heart Monitor: https://youtu.be/Bp0UYoIsc6E
- Police Siren: https://freesound.org/people/MultiMax2121/sounds/156869/