Audio Diary: Communication through Listening
Grade level: 9-12 (adaptable for younger students)

Lesson Designed by: Sarah H. Chung

Essential Questions:
How does history affect the present as individuals? As communities?
How do we experience places through our sensory perception?
How does sound influence our memories of places?
How does technology affect our histories/present/future?

Summary of the Project: Students will be introduced to a history of audio technology, find/research/share an archive audio recording using the public library as well as online resources. Students will use an audio recording device to record an audio diary over the course of two weeks or longer. The diaries will include the audio recordings as well as accompanied daily reflection, writing, drawing, photograph or other regular art practice. Students can use tape recorders, 4Track or other audio recording device to collect audio. Students will produce an audio CD package that includes their original research/audio archive as well as edited versions of their own audio recordings and excerpts of the art practice or writing.

Skills: Historical research, Reflective and creative writing, Focused listening, Audio recording/editing skills, Technological understanding, Package design, illustration, photography and or graphic design, development and documentation of a regular practice.
Assessment:
Students will be assessed in their ability to meet scheduled deadlines for the production of CD/Booklets as well as their ability to work collaboratively through technical issues, ability to contribute and support the learning and creative space. All will participate in a final group critique.

Resources:

Artists:
Pauline Oliveros: http://paulineoliveros.us
Stud Sterkel: http://www.studsterkel.org/
John Cage: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters

Books:
Art of Field Recording: 50 Years of Traditional American Music Documented by Art Rosenbaum.
The Handbook of Field Recording by Frank Dorritie.

Online:
Dust to Digital: http://www.dust-digital.com
Archives: http://www.archive.org and click on audio to get to the audio library
History of Audio Technology: http://history.sandiego.edu/GEN/recording/notes.html
Audio Engineering Society: http://www.aes.org
Fieldmuzick: http://fieldmuzick.net/
Sarah Chung  
The Exhibition: Gravity and Memory

My process is an independent contemplation of a collective human history, where electro-magnetic technologies have dramatically formed our way of life. My interest in Denver’s history began in the urban legends regarding paranormal activity tied to the unacknowledged history that took place on that land beginning with the Arapaho ceremonial grounds now known as Cheesman Park.

Through Gravity and Memory, I offer a multi-dimensional meditation of this collective history. My hope is to revisit the past as a way of creating a point of reference for direction towards the future. We live in contradictory times, where modern technologies have revised how we understand the world around us while at the same time have created systems that contribute greatly to polluting our ecosystem. Living in this state of irony and a desire for more sensible systems, I am compelled to revisit the past and comb through bits of veiled histories that may hold some answers to questionable human practices.

In this audio/visual installation I collect and synthesize salvaged commonplace objects, collected field recordings/video footage and images. Through layering and juxtaposition, I make comparisons between systems, natural patterns, objects and human histories, analyzing how industries have and continue to influence our psychology and ultimately our quality of human life.