

SASAH Dialogue Paper 1

Lauren Knafelc

I chose to record my audio files in my grandma's woods, which has a creek running through it. The day I recorded the files was a couple days after the weather warmed up and a bunch of snow had melted, so the creek was running quite quickly. However, that day was quickly beginning to cool back down, due largely to the strong cold winds. It was not a particularly pleasant day of winter, the sky was grey, the wind was strong and the air was cold. Normally on a day like that, I would not choose to take a walk in the woods, so I thought that it would be interesting to listen to an environment I typically avoided.

I decided to start recording by the creek, from a wider, deeper area where the current wasn't too strong, and then a narrower area where the current was stronger. I had to continually shift my position as the creek walls were angled and difficult to stand still on. I then chose to walk away from the creek and deeper into the forest where the wind had picked up and was rustling the dead leaves on a small tree. I then noticed that the wind had shifted; instead of blowing directly on me I heard it blowing above me through the crowns of the trees, and I was able to record some creaking of the tree limbs.

While in the process of recording, I did not pick up on the many nuances of sounds that I could hear when listening to the recording. As I previously stated, I had to walk around to different parts of the woods to record different sounds, and upon further listening I could hear the stark differences in the noises created from my steps. The sounds made from when I stepped on pure snow, for example, were much deeper and less sharp than when I stepped on a mixture of snow and ice. However, the thing that shocked me the most was how loudly my footsteps came out in the recording, because I was not holding my phone anywhere near my feet, and was unaware that my movement through the woods was actually that loud. I believe that I tuned out the magnitude of the sounds my body produced in its interaction with nature

because I am accustomed to those sounds, and as I was also focusing on listening solely to the nature around me. Incidentally, it was this tuning out of the volume of noise made by my body that allowed for my ignorance of the fact that I was actually covering up some of the sounds I was trying to record. I did actively try and step quietly; however my focus on noise created from that beyond myself allowed me to tune out the noise I was making and not realise how loud it actually was. When listening to my recordings outside the environment from which I recorded, I was able to listen to every aspect of the recorded sounds (including the occasionally dominating noise of my movement), not just the nature sounds I was trying to listen to while recording. Therefore in a removed state, I was able to listen to the whole spectrum of noise that occurred in the environment.

I believe that this revelation reinforces Heidegger's notion of the fourfold. My goal while recording was to capture the sounds of nature and highlight what they sounded like as if I was not there to manipulate them. My mistake was assuming that I could act like I was not there, as with that goal in mind I disregarded the noise made by my presence. Heidegger describes the fourfold as the "simple oneness of the four" - the *oneness* of the four, and therefore how each aspect of the four are *together*. It focuses on the interaction of each of the four- mortals, divinities, sky and earth. When I was recording, I was not attempting to be one with the earth, I attempted to be separate from it which allowed me to overlook the impact of my interaction with the environment. My lack of "oneness" with the environment I was interacting with allowed me to overlook how very loud I was, a volume which often inhibited my capture of nature's sounds. If I had focused on the environment as it was, including my presence, I would have been able to respect it more and capture the nature sounds I set out to capture.

This insight allowed me to ruminate on the fourfold, and conclude (as I believe Heidegger insinuated) that in order to dwell effectively as members of the fourfold, we must

be aware of the interactions we have within the fourfold. This means not just having an understanding of each aspect of the fourfold, but an understanding of how each aspect interacts with the others and the effects from that interaction in order to truly understand the oneness, the togetherness of the four. From this understanding, respect and preservation of the fourfold may occur, creating the ability to dwell in a worldly nurturing way.