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DSC 294: Media Editing
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Final Paper

People often debate on the purpose and function of art - whether it serves a specific purpose for the benefit of society as a whole or if the works of all of the great "masters" can be boiled down to nothing more than a nice decoration, a pretty tune, or an evening's entertainment. Much of the same can be said of Media Editing; but is Media Editing just an offshoot or cousin of traditional artistic practice, or is it something more? In my mind, Media Editing is similar to art in that it does have an aesthetic value all of its own, but it also brings something more to the table. Media Editing is art with a specific goal or purpose behind its creation, whether that be to shock, to persuade, to tell a story, to make your life easier, to inform, make you re-examine your life, or just plain sit up and pay attention. Many of these different motivations can be seen in the work I have done for this class.

My first piece of work done for this class (take a look at it here: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/53371765@N07/4930757371/>) was designed to make the viewer sit up and pay attention, to jolt them out of their normal reverie. Inspired by the song "Dog Days Are Over," by the band Florence and the Machine, off of their album "Lungs" my design sought to unify the light, happy tone of the music with the darker, more violent, almost dangerous content of the lyrics - all in a visual medium. Looking specifically at the lyric "Happiness hit her like a bullet in the back," I started with a close-up photograph of large caliber bullets, then added the song lyrics onto their tips, making them look like they had been engraved in a flowing, feminine script. The entire piece is a work of juxtaposition - male and female, light and dark, happiness and darkness - all designed to make the viewer look at art and listen to their music in a different way.

My second piece done for this class (available here: <http://www.freesound.org/samplesViewSingle.php?id=104699>) was a soundscape edited together out of a recording of a Shakespeare scene (specifically *Richard III*, Act 5 Scene 4) and various

other sound effects, taken from www.freesound.org. My motivation behind the creation of this piece was to introduce the public to Shakespeare and theatre in general as an auditory art form. When most people think of Shakespeare they think of the dry, dusty plays they were forced to read by themselves some time in high school, but plays are not literature, they are poetry - designed to be performed and heard, and are only written down so they can be moved and shared. Theatre is in a way the last bastion of our prehistoric oral traditions, when stories were told again and again and again, until you knew them in your bones and could envision the entire world of the story- the same could be said of Shakespeare, if more people were familiar with it. That was my goal in creating this piece - to introduce the public to theatre as an auditory art form.

My third piece of media editing done for this class was designed to tell a story and challenge my audience's viewpoints. It's an approximately two minutes long video (available for viewing here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbPUnsYvzJY>) looking at the relationships between carnivores "predators" and herbivores "prey" in the context of a hunt. Personally, when watching some kind of nature program with a hunt scene (and nearly all of them do) I really can't decide who to root for. From the time we are children, we are taught that every story must have a protagonist and an antagonist - a good guy and a bad guy - but these two figures don't and *can't* exist in the context of a hunt. How do you vilify an animal that causes the death of another, if it is doing what comes naturally, what it needs to survive? *You can't*. In my video, the idea is that whether it's lions and zebras, cheetahs and gazelles, or wolves and elk, there can be no good or bad guy, because a life is always on the line.

My fourth assignment is made up several pieces of work that ask the viewer to re-examine their life, specifically their social lives (The graphs were saved on my wiki page, here: <http://mediaediting.wikispaces.asu.edu/Tylar+Talkington>, but I took them down because they kept making the page freeze. If you want, e-mail me and I'll put them back up). The graphs are all maps of my different social networks and social ties - between family, close friends, or acquaintances, and the relationships between all of them. The first graph was made of the relationships between all of the people whose phone numbers I have saved in my phone, the second was of 15 different friends and family I came up with off the top of my head, and the third was made of all of my friends on

facebook. Some graphs I made by hand and with some I used a computer program to create the graphs, but what struck me with all of them was the sheer chaos and interconnectivity between all of the different nodes. I already knew that in my life I had my theatre friends, my honors college friends, my high school friends, and my family, and that each of these groups never really crossed over. What I didn't expect was the connectivity between the people in each of these groups - how many people knew each other. Nearly every person's node had at least four ties to another. In addition to being an exercise in self-reflection, graphs like this can also be a bit of a boost to self-esteem. If you think you don't have friends and no one cares about you - make one of these graphs.

Art can be made in several different degrees or phases. In its purest form, art is a non-representational block of color, shaft of light, piece of stone, or music note. The next degree of art takes us into representational works - paintings, sculptures, dance, theatre, music, photography, etc. When a piece of representational art is created, it is perfectly fine for it to remain nothing more than a decoration, a good song, or a funny play - something beautiful to make people enjoy life a little bit more. However it is also possible for this art to "move up" another degree into the realm of Media Editing, the home of things like WWII propaganda posters, union songs, PSA's, and certain class projects, each of which are designed and created to have some kind of effect on the audience or viewer. Media Editing is art made with a focus, with a purpose - that is what sets it apart from regular art.