

THE LISTENER:

Remembering the Dane-zaa Soundscape Recordings of Howard Broomfield

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“The Listener” audio file is openly available online at:
<http://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/bcstudies/issue/view/182772>

ACTUALITIES

AUDIO RECORDINGS, like photographs, are documents of particular times and places, but unlike photographs, which are snapshots, audio documents record an ongoing flow of sonic vibrations in real time. As R. Murray Schafer points out, “the real paradox is that although sounds are pronounced in time, they are also erased by time” (Schafer 1993, 176-77). In this respect, film and videography are more like audio documents than they are like photographs. Audio and visual actualities do not recreate events but simply record images and sounds of transitory moments that would otherwise exist only in memory. Soundscape recordings are audio actualities that document natural and cultural acoustic environments that have once been part of living experience. These actualities are the product of modern technology and did not exist for virtually all of human history. Unlike musical performances and vocal recitations, which are performative recreations, audio actualities are mechanical copies of acoustic vibrations captured from the flow of events at a particular time and place.

Sound itself is distinctively terrestrial. It is transmitted through a medium of air, water, or even the earth itself by relatively slow-moving vibrations. Sound cannot propagate in a vacuum. The waves we experience as sound can exist in only a tiny fraction of the universe. Beginning in the twentieth century, the global soundscape has been transformed by the capacity of electromagnetic waves to transmit signals that are independent of a physical medium. Radio frequency signals derived from audio frequency vibrations propagate through the atmosphere and through the vacuum of space. They are then resolved back into sound waves by local receiving stations that reconstitute them into acoustic

vibrations that are facsimiles of the original sounds. In a touching attempt to humanize the device used to reconstitute sound, it is called a “speaker,” at least in English. A sound document becomes meaningful when the speaker’s reproduced vibrations are experienced by a listener. That listener lives in a different cultural and acoustic space than do the people who only received the original vibrations and added creatively to them.

The person who listens to an audio document receives and processes acoustic information but does not contribute to it. The line of transmission goes only one way. We are all familiar with the difference between a live performance and a recorded actuality. It is customary to enter the performative space by applauding at the end of a piece in recognition of having shared a common acoustic environment. To the extent that we might do the same at the end of a particularly moving recording, our applause resonates only within the acoustic range of ourselves as listeners: it does not include the performers. We will never hear Caruso live, but we can still enjoy his recorded artistry. R. Murray Schafer (1993, 10) begins *The Soundscape: Our Environment and the Tuning of the World* with a quote from Walt Whitman’s *Song of Myself*.

Now I will do nothing but listen ...
 I hear all sounds running together, combined,
 fused or following.
 Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds
 of the day and night ...

In the World Soundscape Project, Schafer shows that the acoustic range of a particular sound, whether a church bell, human voice, musical instrument, or bird song, defines a social space. In Europe, “the parish is an acoustic space, circumscribed by the range of the church bell” (Schafer 1993, 64). He writes, “A soundscape consists of events *heard* not objects *seen*” (16). Before the advent of electronic media, people within the range of a sound have always shared the common experience of being together at a particular place and time. Horns, drums, bells, whistles, and the human voice have created a culturally meaningful soundspace. People within that soundspace are “earwitnesses” to a shared experience. A commonly recognized “soundmark” is “a community sound which is unique or possess qualities which make it specially regarded or noticed by the people in that community” (19).



Figure 1. Howard Broomfield at Doig, 1979. Photo by Robin Ridington.

RECORDING THE DANE-ZAA

When Howard Broomfield (1947-86) joined us in our work with the Dane-zaa First Nations in 1979, he brought with him the experience of working with R. Murray Schafer on the World Soundscape Project. Schafer dedicates his book on the Soundscape “To my co-workers on the World Soundscape Project.” In addition to Howard, these co-workers were Hildegard Westerkamp, Bruce Davis, Peter Huse, and Barry Truax. Howard taught us to be good listeners. He echoed Schafer when he told us: “clean your ears.” Howard was intensely attuned to the world around him. With his ears, his microphone, and his own voice, he simultaneously documented and shared in the creation of audio actualities. The audio recordings he created document sounds that were commonplace at the time but that, to a large extent, are no longer part of the Dane-zaa soundscape. Like childhood, which seems normal when you are in it and fabulous in retrospect from the vantage point of later years, sounds on the Doig River Reserve that we heard with Howard between 1979 and 1982 have become the documents of a cultural and natural history that now live only in the memory of those who experienced it.

Although recordings cannot recreate experiences, they can create new experiences that reflect those that have gone by. Older members of the Dane-zaa community will experience these sounds with nostalgia.

Younger people will hear sounds that are entirely new to them. Their soundscape is now replete with highly produced saturated soundtrack recordings available on every smart phone. Domestic soundspace is usually filled with the acoustic wallpaper of a TV that nobody is really watching. Outdoors, there are the sounds of trucks, quads, aircraft passing overhead, and snowmobiles. The soundscape is still punctuated by dogs barking but now also by the occasional sound of loud, commercially recorded music coming from a house or vehicle.

The pervasive silence that framed many of Howard's recordings is seldom experienced on the reserve today. The acoustic environment was what Schafer calls "hi-fi," with a "favorable signal-to-noise ratio." The hi-fi soundscape, he writes, "is one in which discrete sounds can be heard clearly because of the low ambient noise level" (Schafer 1993, 52). There is a great difference between a soundscape without electricity and one in which it powers every home. The Doig soundscape Howard recorded had no pervasive sixty-cycle vibration and no array of electric motors, fluorescent lights, or the blare of television sets. There were no phones to ring. Although people listened to battery-powered transistor radios and tape decks playing country-and-western music, the soundscape included people playing guitars and fiddles as well as others singing and drumming Dane-zaa Dreamers songs. It was also common to hear the oratory and songs of the last Dreamer, Charlie Yahey, from tape copies of recordings I made in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Children spoke Beaver as their first language but were also fluent in "Indian English."

We have called the twenty-five-minute audio piece based on the recordings Howard made between 1979 and 1982 "The Listener," after a program devoted to the soundscape Howard hosted on Vancouver's Co-op Radio. Many of the audio pieces he aired were drawn from his work with us at Doig. The program began with a theme recorded by Don Druick on shakuhachi flute and Howard on percussion. Our piece opens with that theme.

When Howard joined us with his stereo Uher reel-to-reel tape recorder and large stereo microphone in 1979, Doig was a very different place from what it is now. Howard, Jillian, Robin, and two of Robin's kids, Eric (Aballi) and Amber, set up pup tents behind Tommy Attachie's house. We made a sign that read: "Monias City, Population 5." "Monias" is the Cree word for white people, and it is used to mean that by the Dane-zaa. Doig then had no electricity, no phones, no functioning running water or indoor plumbing, and very few vehicles. When it rained, the unpaved road that led to Doig became virtually impassable with slick Peace River

gumbo mud. We made tea and cooked with muskeg water collected in lard pails behind our tents. The sound and light of a campfire and the smell of wood smoke were pervasive signatures of the experiences we shared with the Dane-zaa. Away from the reserve, kids were exposed to a world of different sights, sounds, smells, words, and images. They were bussed to school at Upper Pine, about sixteen kilometres from the reserve. They also learned Christian hymns in Beaver from missionary linguists Marshall and Jean Holdstock, who had spent years learning Beaver and translating biblical passages into a phonetic script. Like all children, the Dane-zaa kids at Doig were eager to assimilate any and all cultural information that came their way.

Howard's recordings, as well as our own, have been digitized and are now part of the Ridington/Dane-zaa audio archive. The research we did with him was supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the then National Museum of Canada. Audio files are available to the communities on portable hard drives. Robin's own recordings began when he first began fieldwork in 1964, and we have both added to the audio archive since then. In 2002, Robin began video recording on mini-DV tape. The audio archive consists of more than one thousand hours of recordings. There are now about three hundred hours of video recordings. Our work with the Dane-zaa is ongoing. In 2013, we collaborated with elders from the Doig River First Nation on *Where Happiness Dwells: A History of the Dane-zaa First Nations*.

Today some of the kids heard in Howard's recordings are our friends on Facebook as well as being actual friends when we see them in person. For an even younger generation the world that we and Howard recorded in the late 1970s and early 1980s is hard to imagine, but it continues to be represented by actualities in the Ridington/Dane-zaa archive. In the summer of 2016, Robin showed an outdoor audience at Doig a video he had created based on his recording of the last Dreamer, Charlie Yahey, telling the Dane-zaa creation story. The original recording was an audio actuality. Robin used that as well as recordings of Dane-zaa drummers and singers as the audio accompanying a scrolling text translation of the Dreamer's words, along with video images of scenes from Dane-zaa territory. Combining audio and video actualities with a written text is a way of introducing a younger generation to the wisdom of previous generations. We hope Howard would have approved of expanding soundscape recording into a video documentary medium. Here is a link to this and other Dane-zaa videos: <https://sites.google.com/site/plumeofcockatopress/dane-zaa-videos>.

Howard never really outgrew his childhood wonder at the world around him. Maybe it was because of this that he was particularly drawn to recording children at Doig. They responded enthusiastically to him, quickly coming to call him “soundman.” After he died, they named a place where they used to camp with him “Broomfield Creek.” He has become part of the Doig cultural landscape. People still ask for copies of particular recordings they remember Howard making, and in this way he continues to be part of the Doig soundscape. In the same way, they ask for information about the many other recordings in the Ridington/Dane-zaa archive. We are hoping that Doig will eventually train a band member to be an archivist for our extensive collection of actualities going back to the mid-1960s. The short time we had to collaborate with Howard changed the way we think about recorded actualities. We have transferred some of what he taught us into the medium of video recording, which was unavailable in 1980. With modern lightweight and unobtrusive video cameras, the ethnographic videographer can also be a good listener.

The elders we knew in 1979 were born in the first decades of the twentieth century and lived most of their lives in tipis during the summer and in log cabins during the winter. They were functionally monolingual Beaver speakers. They were also the curators of what Billy Attachie calls “wise stories.” Today, Doig has many new houses, a new subdivision, and a beautiful architect-designed band hall. Most families have at least one 4x4 crew cab pickup truck and several all-terrain vehicles. Kids no longer speak Beaver at home. A distinctive sound signature today is the roar of quads or snow machines taking people where they used to walk, both on the reserve and in the bush. Doig members and the band itself own companies providing services to the oil and gas industry. Sounds from television sets and stereos pervade most homes. People keep in touch with one another by cell phone and social media. Like young people everywhere, Dane-zaa kids habitually surround themselves in the sound bubble of ear buds plugged into a smart phone or iPad.

Editing Analog and Digital Audio Documents

Howard created a number of tapeworks from his many soundscape and ethnographic recordings. We joined him in creating some of them, and they were broadcast on Vancouver Co-op Radio and CBC. Jillian and Howard produced *Suffering Me Slowly*, a documentary about a poison gas well leak on the Blueberry Reserve in 1979. The piece aired on CBC’s *The Hornby Collection* in 1981. We made our reel-to-reel recordings on a Uher portable recorder; Howard had a stereo Uher and we had two mono

models. By 1981, Howard had moved on to a Sony TCD5M professional portable cassette recorder that was his pride and joy. Editing, though, still had to be done by cutting and splicing reel-to-reel tape. Until the advent of magnetic recording tape, it was virtually impossible to separate and join segments of recorded actualities. Howard and Jillian used editing blocks that had a groove into which a segment of tape could be placed and cut with a razor blade. Because cutting and splicing required a great deal of accuracy, they joked about using a “laser blade.” Now, of course, cutting and mixing is done digitally on a computer. Although we always saved the original recordings and dubbed material to copies for editing, there was the concern about a loss of generations. Mixing was done by dubbing through a mixer from two source tapes onto another that could then be cut and spliced. Howard never lived to experience the joys and frustrations of digital editing.

For “The Listener,” we were pleased to work from first-generation digital copies of the original tapes. We listened to digital clips on headphones, totally isolated from the surrounding acoustic environment. The editing process is both intensely auditory and also visual and tactile. We transferred digital copies of the original recordings to Amadeus Pro, an audio-editing program, for rough editing. Because Robin is familiar with video editing using Final Cut Express on a MacBook Pro, he imported the edited clips into Final Cut, where it was easy to mix cuts and adjust levels. Here, the manipulation of recorded sound is entirely tactile and visual but is guided by sound heard through the earphones. Clips are inserted into the timeline and juxtaposed on adjacent audio tracks, using the computer mouse. Levels are adjusted by dragging the sound level line up or down with the program’s pen tool. Robin then exported the final timeline document to an audio-only QuickTime movie file and imported that back into Amadeus Pro to save as a WAV file. There are probably other ways to have done this, but it worked for us because it used formats with which Robin was familiar. Through digital technology, the traditional editing booth has been miniaturized into computer programs, a mouse, and a good set of earphones.

We have shared our montage of Howard’s Dane-zaa soundscape recordings with some of his former colleagues on the World Soundscape Project as well as with people who knew him at Doig. We have encouraged them to share their memories as part of this tribute. Hildegard Westerkamp wrote:

His recordings are not just incredibly clear, but definitely have Howard’s signature in a variety of ways: his choices of what he

recorded, what was important and significant in a community; his interactions with the children are full of life and one can hear his affection for and attention to them; his sound combinations, such as the chain saw and the beautifully resonant percussive sounds on the timber, or the footsteps in the snow and the wolf howling, and so on. People always felt comfortable and at ease around Howard. It was his listening, his being in the moment and never being in a hurry, that allowed room for people to enter and be with him. It was very special to hear his voice again!

ANNOTATED PLAYLIST OF RECORDINGS IN "THE LISTENER"

"The Listener" is a collage of recordings Howard made in 1979, 1981, and 1982. We have assembled clips that document events that might occur in a typical day at Doig. Some of the clips are linked by extensive crossfades so that, for a time, they blend together as a single sound portrait. Howard's recordings were always very clean, and we have avoided using an equalizer on them. The piece begins with a dawn chorus of birds and barking dogs. It proceeds through a heavy rain and thunderstorm, and then to a conversation about making the rain go away by burning spruce boughs. It continues through later events of the day and ends with walking on snow, a wolf howling, and whistling to the northern lights. The recordings of the wolf and whistling were made on separate nights but blend nicely together. As bookmarks to the collage, the first clip is the theme from Howard's show on Co-op Radio, *The Listener*, and the last is a recording Robin made in 1966 of the last Dreamer, Charlie Yahey, singing a song about *Suu Na chii K'chige*, "The Place Where Happiness Dwells." The song was "brought down from Heaven" by a Dreamer named Guayaan, who died at this place in 1921.

The recordings of Charlie Yahey continue to be an enduring part of the Dane-zaa soundscape. People listen to his songs and speech in their homes, in vehicles, and at community events. Some of the elders say that God must have sent Robin to record their last Dreamer so they can continue to learn from him. It seems as good an explanation as any for Robin's serendipitous first encounter with the Dane-zaa in 1959, when he drove several thousand kilometres from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania to Dane-zaa territory near mile 210 on the Alaska Highway. Robin went there to visit friends from Swarthmore who had planned to homestead, and he found his life's work. See *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* (Ridington 1988) for a

narrative ethnography describing his first encounters with the Dane-zaa and his later adventures with Jillian and Howard.

The Listener Theme – Don Druick and Howard Broomfield

Each week Howard hosted a soundscape show on Vancouver's Co-op Radio called *The Listener*. Some of the pieces listed below appeared in part on the program.

HB26 June 15, 1981 – Morning ambience 6:00 AM

Dawn chorus from Tommy Attachie's side porch – slow crossfade to RR107 described below. Howard and Tommy had a particularly strong bond. Tommy later became a Songkeeper after his teacher Albert Askoty died. One of the disciplines Howard learned from the World Soundscape Project was to record the dawn chorus of birds as the sun rose. In addition to the chorus of birds, an early morning soundscape on the Doig Reserve inevitably involved dogs barking. Today the dawn chorus of birds has virtually disappeared from the Doig soundscape because of oil and gas development, which has destroyed much of their habitat, but barking dogs are still a dominant feature.

RR107 June 30, 1979 – Rain and thunder, 4:00–5:00 PM Doig River

Howard recorded a heavy downpour with thunder and lightning in 1979. It seemed appropriate to crossfade from the dawn chorus into a recording of rain and then crossfade again to HB24b, a recording he made in 1981 of Danny Dominic talking about making the rain go away by throwing spruce boughs on the fire. Danny obviously thinks of the lightning as a bird with flashing eyes and beating wings. He says that when the lightning smells the smoke, he will go the other way. The voice of a man saying this is “bullshit” is not Howard's. It was probably Terry Spinks, Maxine Davis's partner at the time. Sadly, Maxine passed away as we were writing this piece and never got to hear it. We will remember “Mad Max” fondly. Danny Dominic is Maxine's younger brother.

HB24b June 14, 1981 – Kids around campfire, Monias City

Danny Dominic talks about tricks for making rain go away as described above. This recording crossfades from RR107, rain and thunder recorded in 1979.

RR44 June 21, 1979 – CKNL Radio, Fort St. John Message Time

Before the Dane-zaa and many people living on isolated ranches had phones, Message Time was an important means of maintaining contact. Doctors in town routinely used it as a way of informing patients, particularly those living on the reserves, of their appointments. The Department of Indian Affairs often used it to communicate with band members.

HB27a June 15, 1981 – Howard’s conversation with Tammy Poole

Howard loved talking with kids, and they responded in kind. Tammy said she was three but also described being in school, so she was either older or was describing going to preschool. When Howard asks her if she knows any stories she immediately launches into a recitation of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears.” The recording shows how adept kids in general and Dane-zaa kids in particular are at picking up any and all cultural influences to which they are exposed.

RR178 August 15, 1979 – Howard talking with kids about words in Beaver language

The kids are obviously fluent in Beaver. One boy brags in Beaver about what he’s going to tell his grandfather. Howard asks for a translation and is told, “I tell grandpa that next squirrel’s going to beat him.” This reflects a time when snaring squirrels near the reserve for trade was a common experience shared by old and young. The kids then tell Howard the Beaver names for sun, moon, squirrel, rabbit, and beaver. Howard at first hears the word for sun, *saa*, as being the same as that for beaver. The kids correct him with *saa?*, a word ending in a glottal stop, which is the correct term for beaver.

HB18ab June 8, 1981 – Howard talking with kids at Molly Apsassin’s

Shirley Acko, Annie Aku, Dolly Apsassin, Colleen Apsassin, and Debbie Apsassin sing “Yagesadoin” and “Living Below.” The first is a Christian hymn that Marshall and Jean Holdstock have translated into Beaver and taught the kids. It is obvious that the Holdstocks are considered friends. The kids refer to a songbook the Holdstocks have prepared for them. Next, Colleen and Ian Apsassin, Shirley Acko, Debbie Apsassin, and Dolly Apsassin play, “Who Stole the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?” and Howard joins in the game.

HB13b June 8, 1981 – Tommy Attachie cutting fence posts for Chester Babcock – Robin and Howard performing percussion improvisation

Tommy occasionally took on work for local farmers. This clip documents Tommy cutting tamarack posts with a chain saw. As he stacks them by the side of the road, Robin and Howard realize that the posts can be played as an improvised xylophone. Like his mentor R. Murray Schafer, Howard experienced the world as a “macroscopic musical composition” (Schafer 1993, 8). Tommy continues cutting as they play. Howard thought of the recording as a percussion piece with the chainsaw serving as a kind of continuo. Howard later used this recording as a featured performance piece on *The Listener*, calling it “The Timbre of the Timber.”

HB13a – June 8, 1981 – 1:36–3:09 PM, Albert Askoty

Songkeeper Albert Askoty was also recognized as a storyteller. Howard recorded Albert telling stories in Beaver in his cabin by Beaton River Bridge. This recording is a beautiful example of spoken Beaver in the *tsipidanne* (muskeg people) dialect. Albert’s phrasing and his distinctive use of Dane-zaa phonemes can be a reference document for later generations. The clip included here talks about Mosquito Man and Tsayaa. Billy Attachie translated the recording in 2009:

When Mosquito Man moves somewhere, he doesn’t look back. He just goes one way. When he went away to set up a camp, she [a woman referred to earlier in the story] just got up and ran away to where her people moved to. She got up to her people and told them, “We’re not going to survive. Mosquito Man is following us.” So they set a big fire and made smoke all around them. He won’t go near smoke. They put all the smoke around their camp. Mosquito Man went around and round the smoke. He says, “My animal disappear into the big fog.”

There was one time Mosquito Man went down the river, boating down the river. Mosquito Man used his blanket for a boat. Tsayaa [the Culture Hero] saw him. He hid on top of where the trees grow over the river, waiting for Mosquito Man. When Mosquito Man went under Tsayaa in the trees, he saw a person’s shadow in the water. He kept shooting at that shadow and his arrows kept floating away. After his arrows were just about all gone, Tsayaa laughed at him from the top of the trees.

RR77a June 26, 1979 – Diesel-powered “gooney bird” oil well pump just outside the Doig River Reserve

By 1979, oil and gas wells, compressor stations, and pipelines were everywhere in traditional Dane-zaa territory. The one recorded here is powered by a low RPM single-cylinder diesel engine of a kind that has not been used for many years. Howard was drawn to its distinctive sound signature, and in another piece for his radio program he mixed it with the sound of Dane-zaa drumming to highlight the contrast between a culturally significant rhythm and one that is an artefact of the oil and gas industry. In the clip we have used here the diesel engine stands alone.

RR115 July 4, 1979 – Branding and castrating calves at Doig

During the time Howard was at Doig, the band raised cattle on reserve land. The annual event called “branding” was also the time young male calves were castrated. The sounds Howard recorded document the obvious distress these animals experienced.

HB1rob June 7, 1981 – Lodgepole Band – Tommy Attachie and Sammy Acko, guitars; Leo Acko fiddle

When Howard saw these young men jamming, he asked to record them and they said “OK.” After the performance he asked the name of their band. Immediately they came up with “Lodgepole” for a name. Howard thought of this kind of informal improvisation as authentic folk music. We have mixed this clip with the sound of branding since they are both distinctive sound signatures of country-and-western cultural experience that the Dane-zaa were making their own.

RR100a June 29, 1979 – Charlie Dominic singing and drumming

Charlie Dominic (1904–94), like most men of his generation, was adept at drumming and singing Dreamers Dance songs. He often sat by the fire outside his house and sang. People listened respectfully but Charlie sang as much for himself as for an audience. Howard enjoyed Dane-zaa music and understood its symbolic meaning as well as its non-Western tonalities. He recorded Charlie on several occasions and considered these to be fine examples of Dane-zaa musical tradition.

HB18a June 8, 1981 – Listening to the car radio

Howard considered cultural as well as natural sounds as legitimate examples of a soundscape. Driving in a vehicle and listening to country-and-western music was a common experience then, as now. I found a

small clip of a song with a line about being poor: “If the wolf ever came to our front door, he’da hadda brought a picnic lunch.” It seemed a natural transition into the following clip Howard recorded of an actual wolf howling.

HB83b April 4, 1982 – Kevin Attachie and Howard walking on snow, 8:30 PM

Kevin Attachie (1969-2009) was thirteen years old when Robin and Howard walked away from the houses at Doig with Kevin and his dog to record the sound of footsteps crunching on crusted snow. It was a beautiful quiet night and the deep silence was punctuated by the howling of a wolf that had been hanging out near the reserve. Howard asked Kevin to describe what they were hearing in Beaver, and Kevin replied with words that translate as “the wolf is crying.” Howard loved the sound of this and asked Kevin to say it in different tones of voice.

HB81 April 2, 1982 – Whistling to the northern lights (mixed with the previous recording)

Late one evening Howard and Robin drove out from Doig with Tommy Attachie, Leo Acko, and Kevin Attachie to a place where there was a clear horizon. The northern lights were spectacular that evening. In Beaver they are called *yadiskwonchi*, “lights in the heavens.” The Dane-zaa say that the lights are spirits of people in Heaven dancing and that, if you whistle, they will dance towards you. Kevin summed it up when he said in Beaver and then in English: “I whistle to the northern lights, so it can dance.”

OT7 January 2, 1966 – Robin Ridington’s recording of the last Dreamer Charlie Yahey singing Guayaan’s song about “The Place Where Happiness Dwells,” just after winter solstice at Charlie’s house on the old Blueberry Reserve. Charlie tells people that they should dance together to help the sun on its return journey to the north. The song will encourage the ducks, geese, and swans to fly back to Dane-zaa territory.

Although this was one of the recordings Robin made in 1966, Charlie Yahey’s songs were then, and have remained, sound signatures for all the Dane-zaa communities. They continue to be played on MP3 players, CD players, and in vehicles. This song is particularly poignant. It celebrates *Suu Na chii K’chige*, “The Place Where Happiness Dwells,” which was a traditional summer gathering place where people came together to sing and dance. When reserve land was selected in 1916 under the terms

of Treaty 8, they selected *Suu Na chii K'chige* as the Montney Reserve. In 1945, the Department of Indian Affairs sold the land to the Department of Veterans Affairs for soldiers returning from the war. The Dane-zaa still mourn the loss of this special place. The song was dreamed by a Dreamer named Guayaan, who predicted that he would die and be buried there. This came true in 1921. He also said that the area near his grave will always have lots of game. The Dane-zaa continued to come together there because of its rich resources until they lost the land. In 2005, Gerry Attachie took us to the area where Guayaan was buried and we found recent signs of moose, deer, and bear, just as he had predicted.

CONCLUSION

The key to being a good ethnographer is being a good listener. We have been fortunate to have continued our relationship with the Dane-zaa over many decades. In 2011, Robin contributed to a special issue of *Anthropology and Humanism* devoted to articles on long-term fieldwork (R. Ridington 2011). He writes:

The collaborative relationships that developed over the years changed my understanding of anthropology by shifting the focus of ethnographic authority toward the Dane-zaa and away from the academic world. My fieldwork came to inform my theoretical interests, rather than these interests determining how to interpret the field experience.

(24)

Our work with Howard made us better listeners, and, because of that, we hope, better ethnographers. Unlike other members of the World Soundscape team, Howard did not enter the academic world. He continued to make soundscape recordings wherever he found himself and, from them, to create audio “tapeworks” that aired on his Co-op Radio program, *The Listener*. Although we will always mourn losing him so early, we continue to celebrate the audio soundscapes he recorded and the ways of listening he taught us. Working with Howard made our transition from audio to video recording easy. The Dane-zaa are fortunate to have had him as their soundman during the years he was with them. We are fortunate in having had him as our friend, colleague, and teacher.

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