

MY HERO 10 Day Documentary Production Bootcamp
By Marc Ostrick

Day 1 - AUDIO

Audio (interviews, nat sound, observational conversation - field exercises, digitizing, radio play, presentation)

Intro to Audio - Overview on the importance of Audio for documentary / filmmaking - Show examples. Discuss the different types of audio techniques filmmakers use as part of their "sonic landscape" - interviews, nat sound, voice over, observational conversation, sound fx, etc. Show short scene samples of documentaries that use effective audio and discuss with group

Break

Review Audio Zoom Device (or audio recorder if using DSLR) - How it works. **1 hour.**

Review Shotgun Mic / Boom Pool / blimp - how it works (directional mic) - mounting and best practices for recording. **1 hour**

Review Hardwired Lav and Wireless Lav w accessories - How it works, best practices for mounting on subject. **1 hour.**

Lunch

Supervised - Hands on practice with audio equipment (Students get familiar with gear - practice recording techniques with mics, testing equipment, etc). **3 hours.**

Break

Walk through with students - Digitizing, Backing Up, Organizing Media (editing software will be needed). **2 hours (students can follow along with instructor using the audio they recorded)**

Evening Screening

DAY 2 - AUDIO - FIELD EXERCISE

Students get to record an “Audio Story/Radio Play” That is no longer than 5 minutes when finished. Not shorter than 3 minutes. Explain Project - **30 min.**

Location - Use busy location like Main Beach, A Mall, Supermarket, Downtown Area, City Bus, etc...

Raw audio recordings should not exceed 2 hours of material. Do not be in the field for more than 3 hours. **3 hours.**

Raw material must consist of the following elements:

- Formal Interview (person 1): 2-3 questions
- Informal Interview (person 2): 2-3 questions
- Natural Sound: (observational conversations / nature / traffic, market place, etc.)
- Voice Over/Narration (person 3)
- Sound FX (optional - need to have SFX library available)

Lunch - 1 hour

*Review Digital Workflow & Digitize - Media Management / Naming Conventions / Backing Up - **1 hour**

Use up to 4 hours of edit time to compose a “Radio Play” using each of the elements you recorded. Save. Share with group. **3 - 4 hours.**

Dinner - 1 hour.

Share Radio Plays / Feedback - 1

DAY 3 - CAMERA & LENS REVIEW - KNOWING YOUR TOOLS

*Students can also share and discuss audio radio plays in the am if yesterday's workshop goes over. 1 hour.

DSLR - Camera Review

Hands on review with students and they walk through their DSLR Package.

Camera History.

Film to Video Tape to Digital - Instructor gives a brief review of documentary history and how filmmakers used (and still use) various recording technology - (Film, Video Tape, Digital). Show scene samples (TBD) - **2 hours**.

Break

Get to know your camera - Hand On - Walk through with students.

Learn how to use DSLR Camera and how to communicate cinematic language and emotion through various setting and decision-making - **(5-6 hours - broken up by lunch)**

- General overview of features
- Framing / Composition
- Film Angles (high, low, dutch)
- ISO / White Balance
- Aperture / F-stops
- Frame Rate
- Shutter Speed
- Lenses - (primes vs zooms) WS/MS/CU/ECU
- Focus - Shallow/Deep/Rack

Eve activity - Show documentary and discuss how camera was used to convey emotion.

DAY 4 - CAMERA & LENS - FIELD EXERCISE

(non-verbal communication - field exercises, digitizing, organizing, presentation)

Supervised Field Exercise - 3 - 4 hours - Go and shoot up to 50 PHOTOGRAPHS that tell a narrative story to convey emotion.

Use busy location like Main Beach, A Mall, Supermarket, Downtown Area, City Bus, etc...

Photos should be properly exposed, focussed, balanced, etc. The photos must tell a narrative story (using 10 images final) using the following (not necessarily in this order):

- Wide Shot(s)
- Medium Shot(s)
- Close Up(s)
- Low Angle /High Angle / Dutch Angle
- Shallow Focus / Deep Focus
- Color use to emphasize emotion

Lunch - 1 hour

Photo Editing / Selection Final 10 Shots - Placing in Narrative Order - 3 hours

Dinner - 1 hour

Share Photo Narratives & Discuss - 2 hour.

If time permits - night screening

DAY 5 - INTRODUCTION TO LIGHTING

Lighting (Indoor / Outdoor. Hard Lighting / Soft Lighting - field exercises - digitizing, organizing, presentation)

Overview - Instructor discusses importance of lighting and how various lighting techniques evoke different emotions. Show documentary scene samples (scenes TBD) - **2 hours**

Break

Hands On Lighting overview with student - Discuss various lighting setups and how it evokes various emotions / feelings (**6 hours - broken up by lunch**):

- Indoors (using natural light vs artificial light vs mixed light)
- Outdoors (various lighting conditions - side, front, back lighting)
- Hard Light vs Soft Light
- Controlling - Bounce / Diffusing / Flags
- Balancing light vs dark
- Backlighting / Sidelighting
- Golden Hour (sunrise / sunset)
- Shooting at night - pumping ISO / lensing, etc.
- Standard 3 point lighting - just for knowledge.
- Using LED lights

Evening Screening and discussion on how lighting was used to evoke emotion. (**2 hours**)

Discuss tomorrow field Exercise.

DAY 6 - LIGHTING FIELD EXERCISES

Exercise - Go shoot various lighting setups shots (5-10 seconds of static shot) both indoors and outdoors (more advanced groups can do moving shots) - 4 hours: *note time of day during shots - Use tripod.

- Formal Interview lighting Interior (one person) - side / back / front (beauty vs dramatic)
- Informal Interview (one person) - lighting Exterior - side / back / front (beauty vs dramatic)
- Exterior - Soft light vs Hard light on a person. Try to match similar framing and composition.
- Interior - Soft light vs Hard light on a person. Try to match similar framing and composition.
- Golden Hour shots
- B-Roll Lighting - shooting inserts, buildings, nature, etc.
- Motivated vs Unmotivated lighting

Lunch - 1 hour.

Return - digitize footage - organize footage - **4 hours**.

Review/Present footage with group - 1.5 hours.

If time allows, night screening.

Day 5

Video with audio - (10 shots total, will give subject matter for a focussed exercise, digitizing, organizing, presentation)

Breakfast - 1 hour.

Introduction to Camera Movement - how movement evokes emotion (2 hours):

motivated vs unmotivated movement

Handheld - methods for getting the shot/keeping steady, racking focus, setting exposure quickly, whip pans. Appropriate lenses for handheld. Long lens hacks for handheld)t-shirt, small sandbag. (Use Skip Workshop)

Tripod - lockoff shot / pan / tilt / rack - how camera movement advances story.

Exercise (4 hours) - tell a short story using 10 - 12 shots - video can have an opening title card and text setup. Each video must contain one of the following (can also be combined - for example, handheld shot is used for the informal interview):

- Formal Interview (2 questions max) using tripod and lav mic (team decides on lighting) - Sync handclap
- Informal Interview (2 questions max) using lav mic (team decides on lighting) - Sync handclap
- Narration / VO
- CU shot(s)
- Wide / Establishing Shot(s)
- Medium Shot(s)
- Handheld Shot(s) - static / following person
- Tripod shot - must use at least 1 pan/tilt - following person or subject (car, animal, etc.)
- Shot using LED light
- Use Natural sound

Lunch - 1 hour

Team digitize, backup, organize, edit footage, record VO, finish. - (5-6 hours)

Dinner - 1 hour

Present / Share work with other teams and discuss - 1.5 hours.

Day 6

Prepping for Post - Logging, Assembly - Digitizing

Breakfast - 1 hour

Review - digitizing, logging, scripting - 2 hours

- Review digitizing / naming conventions
- Backing up footage
- Making Footage and Interview Logs - Key Information
- Script Writing once a full Interview and B-Roll Log is Created

Intro to post/editing - 3 hours

- Creating sequences - not going over old work. Best Practices.
- Syncing Footage - Audio + Video / Slating takes
- J Cuts
- Dissolve vs Hard Cut
- Match edits
- Pacing / Parallel Action Editing
- Editing to Music - finding people to create music for your film.
- Finishing / Audio + Color
- Text / Titles / Graphics

Lunch - 1 hour

Wrapping up - Next Steps heading into production.