

# Creating a Radio Documentary About Music's Influence On Mood

Kyle Pickard

Music Department, Music & Sound Recording, BA

Erica Haskell, Ph.D.

## **Abstract**

This study addresses the ways in which music's impact on an individual's mood can be subjective based on an individual's background, personal experiences, and moral beliefs. The purpose of this study was to conduct interviews through fieldwork, edit the audio collected and, finally, broadcast the gathered research through an audio documentary. Once the interviews were conducted, they were edited and mixed for placement in a radio documentary. Narration and music was added. By creating the documentary, the student showed some examples of how music affects individuals through ethnographic research, enhanced his recording and mixing capabilities, and opened doors for further research on music's emotional influence.

## **Introduction**

Almost every person on the Earth consumes music in some form. Whether it is through an mp3 player or live music passed down through the family, or distributed through media channels such as the radio, music is an omnipresent force in our world and has been used for several purposes. Scholars have long sought to understand the links between music and our brains. Indeed most of us have experienced the emotional impact of particular sounds and songs upon our emotions. Since music is largely a subjective art, studying music on a personal level was an important aspect of this project. (Jauregui, Antonia)

This multi-faceted project can be divided into two main categories of activity: fieldwork and studio work. In order to gather research, fieldwork was conducted through interviews in downtown New Haven. The International Review Board approved the fieldwork process to ensure proper treatment of human subjects in the research. Each

**Figure 1. IRB**

Can you talk about if you listen to different music

which helps even out the high and low peaks of the sound, which provides a steadier volume and is causing less fatigue to the listener. Another effect that was added was a high-pass filter, also called a low-cut filter, which reduces the volume of bass frequencies, such as the sound of wind that was aforementioned to cause problems in the recordings. The filter also helped to take away the boom-y quality of the narration and helped make it sound more natural.

After the compression and EQ, a volume controller, called the Maximizer, was used to raise the entire documentary volume up to commercial radio standards, while also preventing it from clipping, which is audible distortion in the sound. Once the final five segments were mixed together, one ultimate stereo track was created, and this was the 'final product'.

In order to make sure the documentary was as good as it could be, it went through a critical listening process. This involved contacting professionals in the field and other students in the Music and Sound Recording program at University of New Haven, and having them provide constructive criticism on all aspects of the documentary from organization to the quality of the sound. This improved the documentary and made it sound more professional.

### **Results & Discussions**

The project took over two months to complete and went through many different stages. While over twenty interviews were conducted, only about eight were used in the final documentary because of the quality of the