Adobe Premiere: Getting Started

This instruction sheet explains how to get started editing video in Adobe Premiere, which can be used on PCs and Macs. These are the basics of using this video-editing that you should know! This is not, however, an adequate primer on the art of video storytelling or shooting video in the field.

Search YouTube for "Adobe Premiere tutorial" if you need more help. You can also learn more at: http://www.adobe.com/support/premiere/gettingstarted/

When you open up Premiere and select **New Project**, you'll be greeted with this screen **(Fig. 1)**. For **Location (Fig. 1, A)** click **Browse** and select a folder where you want to save all the files for this project. Under the **Scratch Disks (B)** tab, you'll choose the folders, either on an external or internal hard drive, where Premiere will store the video you transfer off a camera. It's best to create **one new folder**, give it a name you'll remember, and keep all the files in there together.
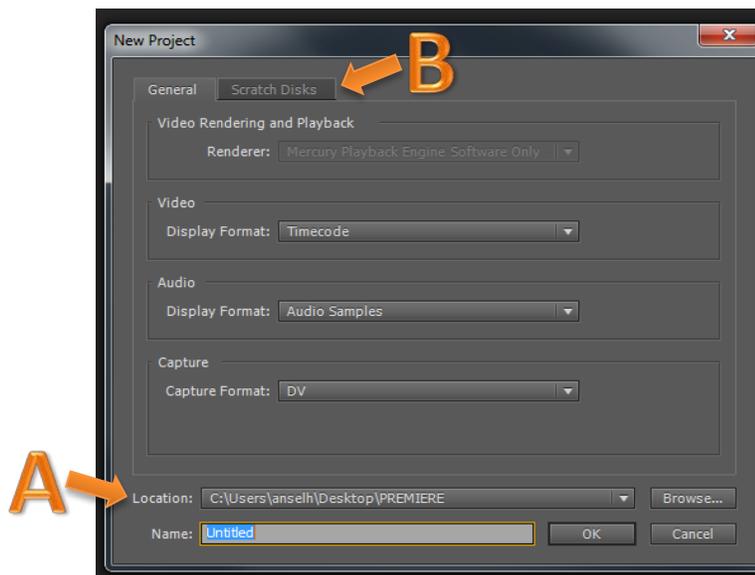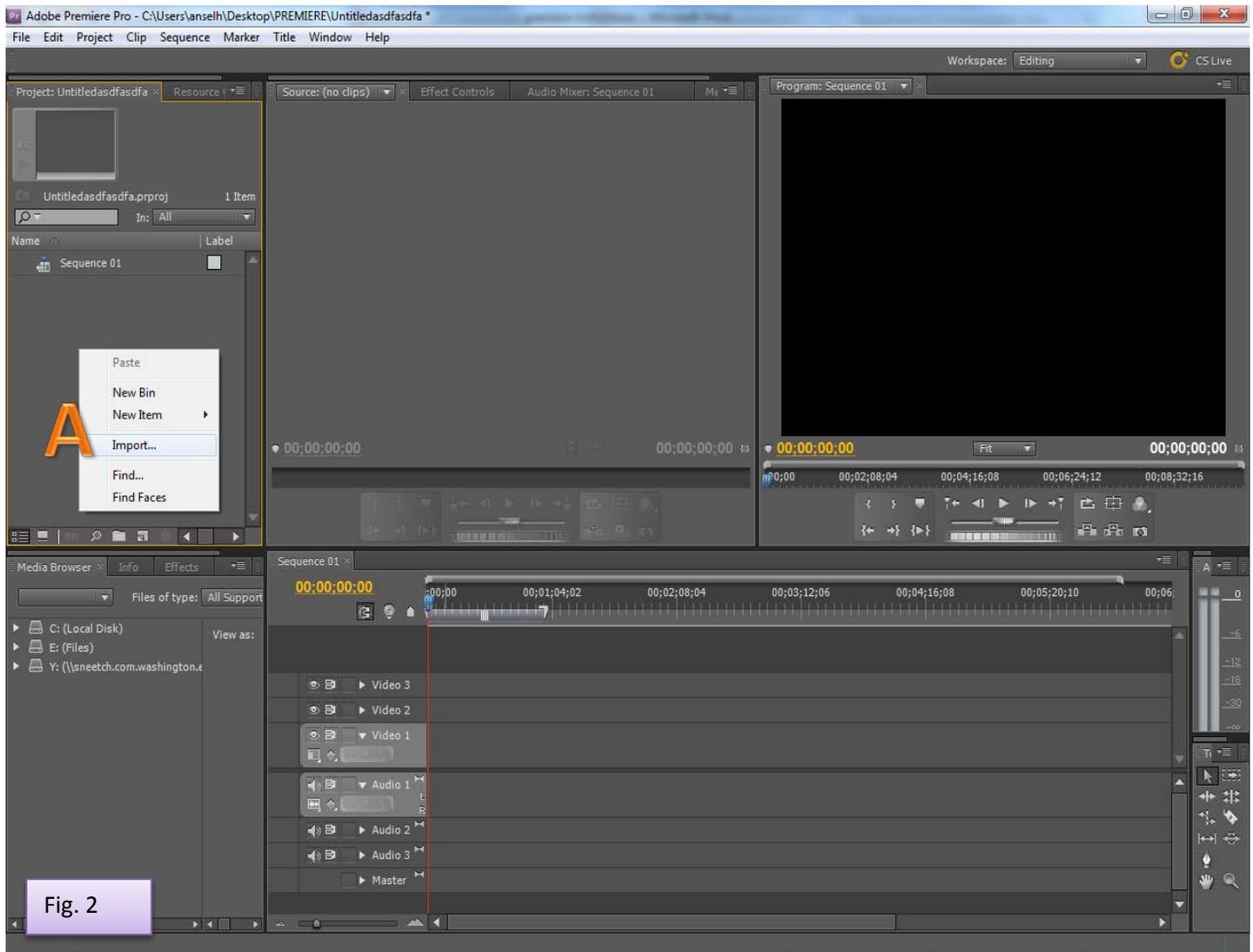

Fig. 1

Press ok to move open up a blank project in Adobe Premiere **(Fig. 2)**. Go to **File > New > Sequence** to add a new sequence to the **Timeline** pane that runs along the bottom. Or, if you see **Sequence 01** in the Project pane, double-click it to open it. The **sequence** will open on the timeline. This is where you will place clips, transitions, and effects in chronological order to assemble your video.

Then, go to **File > Import** to bring in the media (raw video clips, sound, images, etc.) you need to edit**.** Or right-click in the blank space in the project pane on the left-hand side and select **Import (Fig. 2, A)**.

Note: Each pane in Adobe Premiere can be resized, moved, or minimized to your liking. If any of the panes are too far out of place, go to **Window > Workspace > Reset Current Workspace** to get back to the default view shown here. Also, whatever pane you're clicking on will have an orange border around it.

Fig. 2

Once you've imported what you need, the media will be listed in the **Project** pane on the left. Double click the icon to the left of the name of any clip **(Fig. 3, A)** to preview it in the **Source** pane **(B)**. This is where you'll "pre-edit" the clip, getting rid of whatever large portions of the clip you know you won't need.

Press spacebar or click the right arrow icon in the center of the Source pane to play the clip. Press spacebar again to pause or stop it.
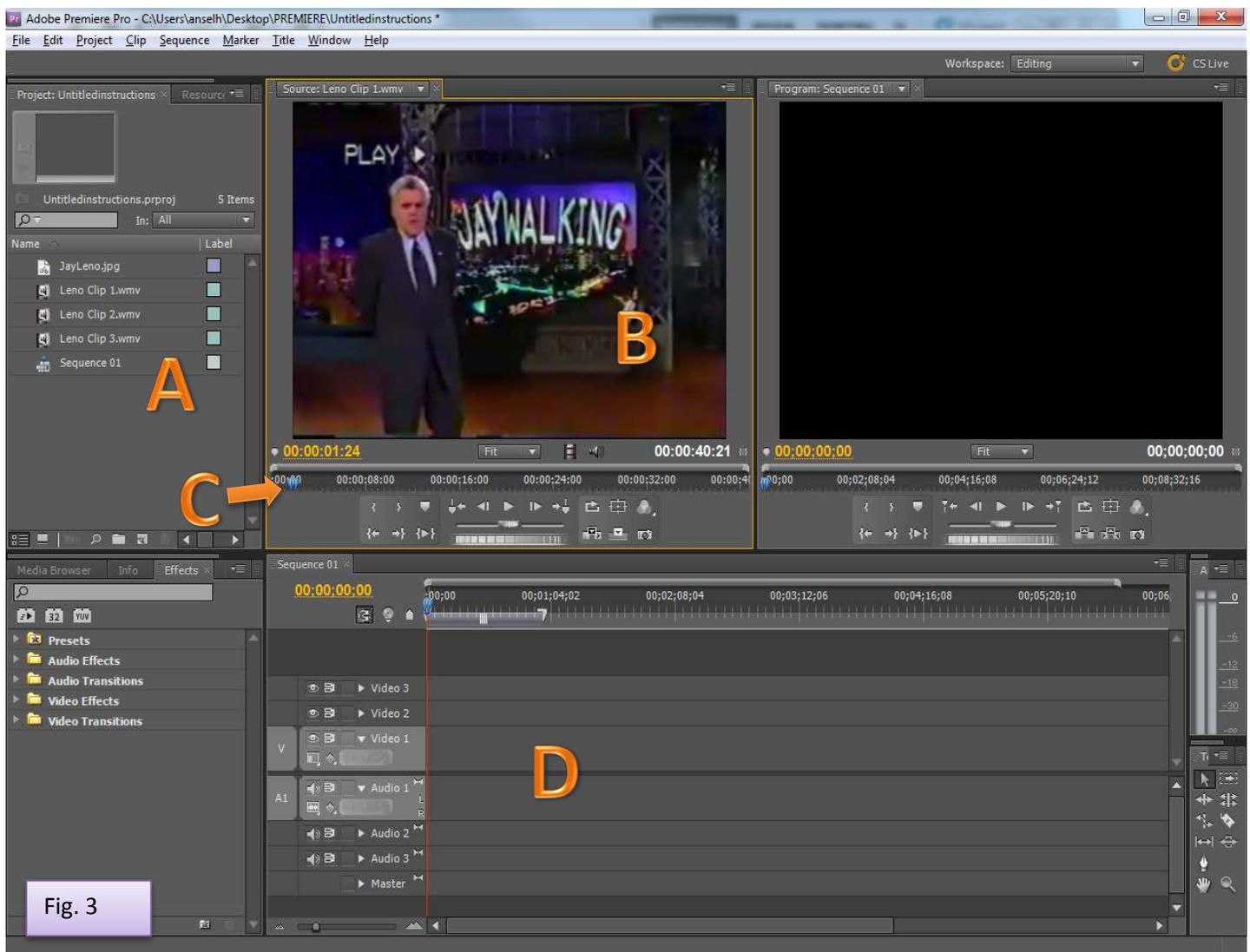
Note: Remember to save often! **File > Save** or **Ctrl+S (Command + S on Macs) on the keyboard.** This saves your project as an Adobe Premiere Project file with an extension of **.prproj**, which is like a set of instructions linking to the rest of your videos, audio, and imported media. And remember to save this file in the same folder with all that material.

As a video plays in the Source pane, **press the I key** on your keyboard to set the **In point**. This marks where you want the clip to start. It cuts out whatever came before it. Then press the **O key** to set the **Out point**, which marks where you want the clip to end.

You can also set these points manually by dragging the **blue time marker (Fig. 3, C**), dropping it where you want to mark the points, and pressing the I and O keys on your keyboard.

It's a good idea to leave at least a few seconds that you know you won't need on either side of your In and Out points. You might use those seconds to transition to another clip. And you can always trim it down even further later.

If you don't set any In or Out points and drag the clip down, the entire clip will be copied to your Sequence.

Fig. 3

Once you've set the In and Out points, you can move the pre-edited clip down to the sequence on the **Timeline (Fig. 3, D)**. There are a few ways to do this.
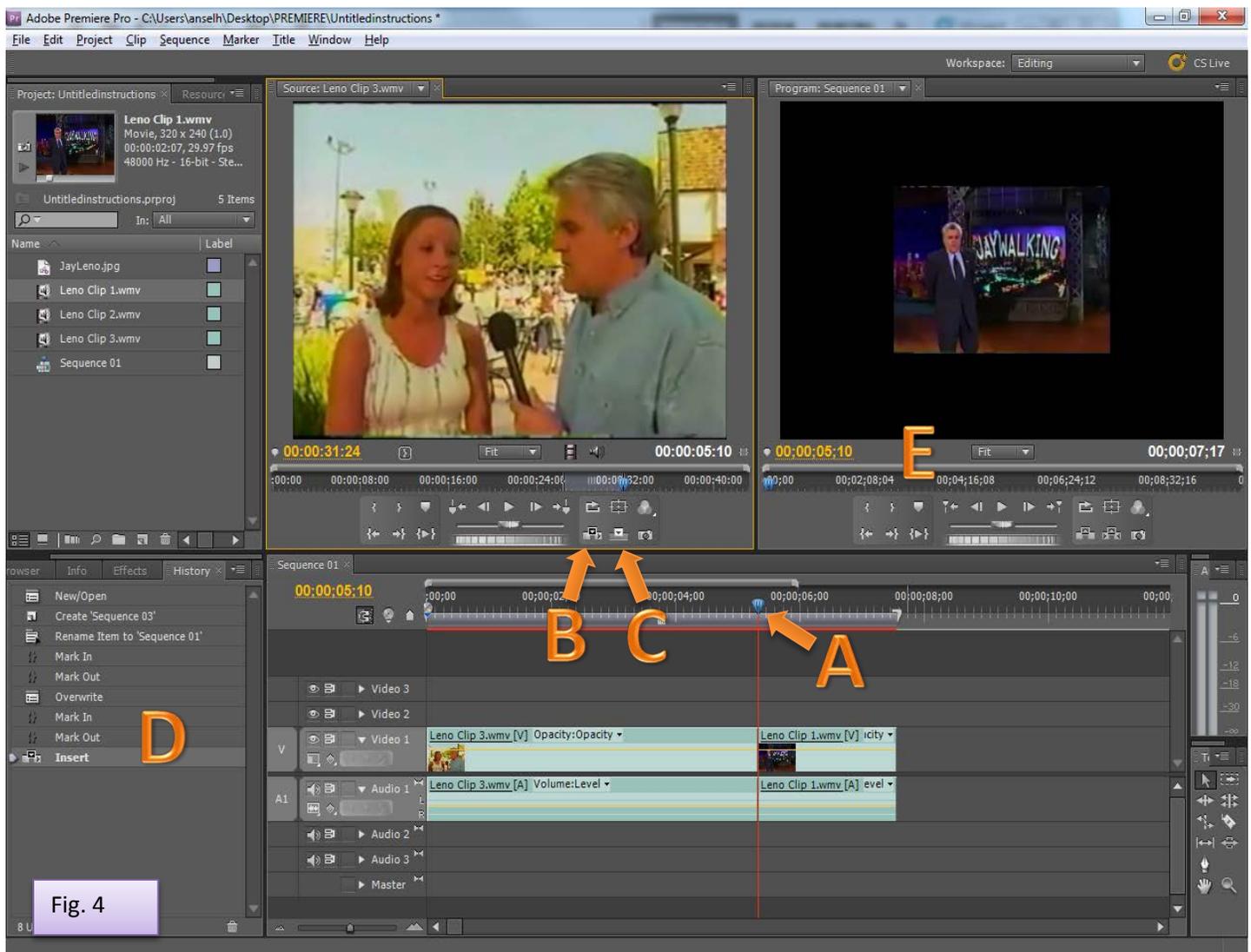
Click on the video in the **Source** pane and drag it down, then drop it on the timeline. As you drag, you'll see that you can drop the clip in any of the video or audio tracks. To start, drop it on the main tracks – **Video 1 and Audio 1.**

Double-click another clip in the Project pane to open it in the Source pane. Once you've set your In and Out points, you can drag it down to the timeline again.

Or you can start by selecting the time point where you want to add the clip to your sequence. Drag the **blue timeline marker (Fig. 4, A)** to that point and drop it there.

Then, click the **Insert button (Fig. 4, B**). This will add the clip to the timeline at that point while pushing other clips on the timeline back. Another option is to click the **Overwrite button (Fig. 4, C)**, which will erase whatever was there before and add the clip in its place.

Note: If you make a mistake, you can always click **Edit > Undo** or press **Ctrl + Z** on your keyboard to restore your project. But if you need to restore your project to an even earlier state, click on **Window > History.** The History pane **(Fig. 4, D)** will appear and you can see all your past steps from top to bottom. Click on one of them to go back to that version.

Fig. 4

Congratulations! Once you've pre-edited all your important clips and placed them on the timeline, you can see the outline of the final product.

Note: You can preview your final video at any time by clicking the **Program pane** in the upper-right hand corner. Play/pause the video using the spacebar on the keyboard or the buttons **(Fig. 4, E).**

If the video looks too small, click inside the Timeline and go to **Edit > Select All** or press **Ctrl + A.** Right click on your selected timeline and click **Scale to Frame Size**.
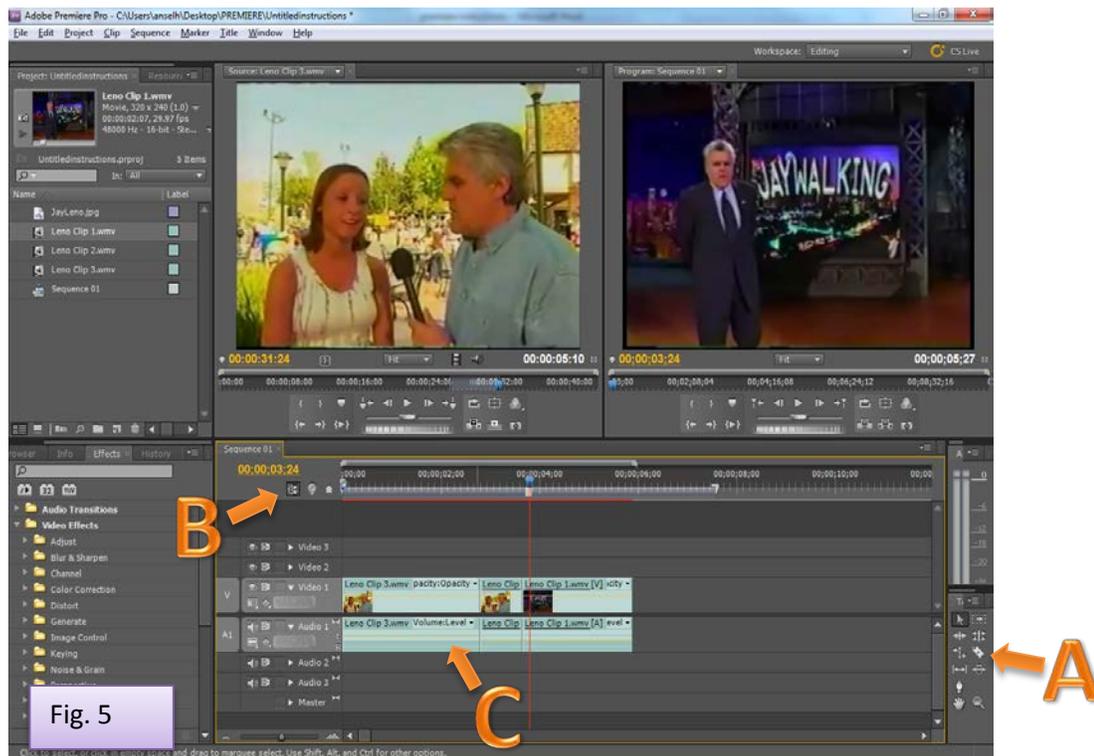
Now it's time to edit the timeline so that the movie looks slick and well-produced. Click inside the Sequence or Timeline pane – the border around it should turn orange.

You can **zoom in and out** on the timeline by **pressing the – and + keys** on the keyboard.

If you need change the order of any of your clips, you can drag and drop them around each other. Click in the middle of a clip to select it.

To trim or change the duration of a clip, hover over the start or end of it. You'll see the cursor change into a **red bracket with black arrows** around it. This allows you to click and drag the beginning and ending in and out to trim the clip.

You can split a clip into pieces too. Normally the **Selection Tool**, which looks like a mouse pointer, is selected by default. Switch to the **Razor tool (Fig. 5, A)** in the toolbox on the bottom-right side. Click within the clip on the Timeline to cleave it in two. When you're done splitting clips, click on the **Selection Tool** again in the toolbox. Then you can drag the pieces around.

Fig. 5

You can delete a clip by clicking inside it to select it, then pressing **Delete** on the keyboard.
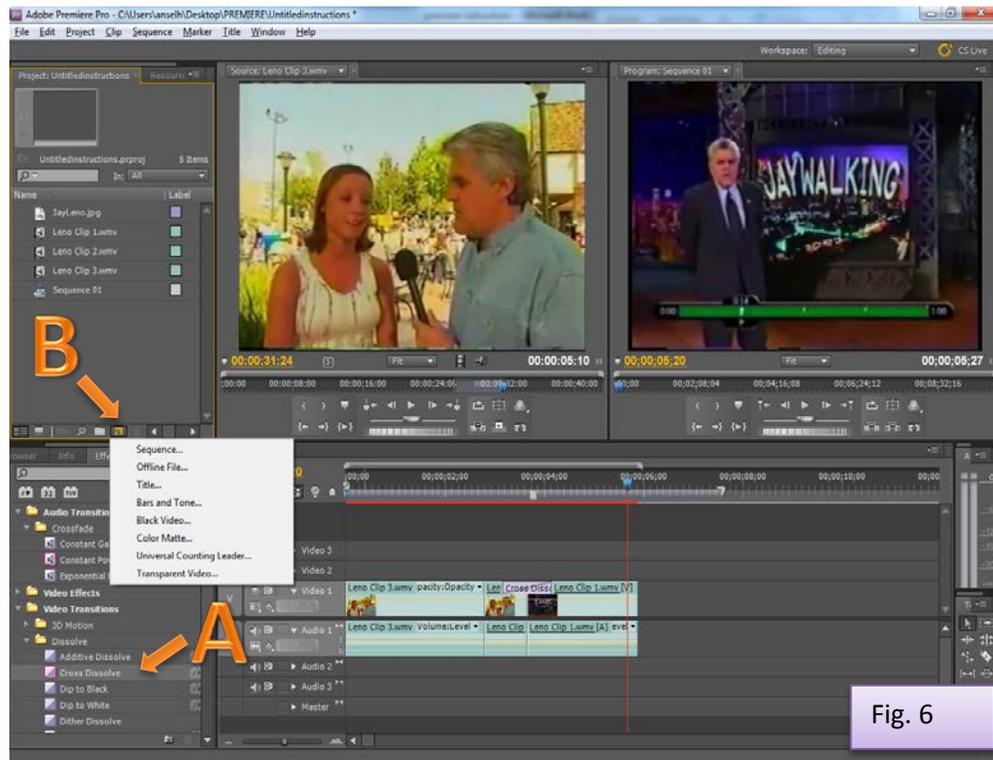
By default, the image and sound from video clips are linked together. When you click on one, it selects both the video and audio tracks. They move around together on the timeline. But if you want to select the audio by itself, or the video by itself, right-click on the clip and select **Unlink** or go to **Clip > Unlink.** This makes the video and audio tracks behave independently.

As you drag clips around the timeline, you'll notice that they "snap" into place so that there aren't gaps between them. If you need finer control over the timeline, you can deactivate the snapping by clicking the **Magnet icon (Fig. 5, B)** in the Timeline. Click it again to reactive the snapping feature.

Need to make a clip's audio louder or softer? **Drag the yellow horizontal line (Fig. 5, C)** running across the audio track up or down.

Note: Remember to save often! **File > Save** or **Ctrl+S on the keyboard.**

When you're done trimming and ordering your clips, it's time to add some transitions**. Go to **Window > Effects** to bring up the Effects pane in the bottom-left hand corner **(Fig. 6, A)**. Chose a transition (Cross-Dissolve, under Dissolve is standard). Then click and drag it onto the area where one clip ends and another begins on your timeline. You can do the same with audio by picking an audio transition (Constant Power, under Crossfade, is standard).

Fig. 6

Want to add text to your video, like a title, subtitle, or credits page? Click the **New Item button (Fig. 6, B)** and select **Title** from the dropdown menu. You can change the font, position, opacity, and many other properties of the text in the editor window that pops up. You can also add shapes like boxes.

When you're done, close the editor (click the x in the upper-right). You'll see the new Title in your list of media in the **Project pane** on the left. Drag and drop it onto the timeline like a clip. Or you can put it on top of a clip if you want text to be displayed over the video.

When you're all done, you need to export the video into a shareable format. The format you choose will depend on, for example, the quality of the video you want versus how much hard drive space you have. Go to **File > Export > Media.**

Choosing **H.264** from the **Format** dropdown is often a good balance if you just need to upload the video to YouTube or the web. Double-click the yellow **Output Name** to change the file's name and choose where it will save. Click **Export** and the video will save as a **.mp4** file – be patient, it might take a while.

And you're done, at least with the basics! Premiere is a powerful program and there's much more to learn. ;-)

Prepared by Ansel Herz for the UW Department of Communication
 http://www.com.washington.edu/tech/irc/
Questions? Comments? Contact Kristina Bowman at kriscb@uw.edu.