

FIMS 9607A – FALL 2020
LISTENING AS A CULTURAL PRACTICE
FNB 3220

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

DR. NORMA COATES

ncoates@uwo.ca

Office Hours on-line by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar focuses on listening as a multimodal and cultural practice. “Listening” will be explored in several ways: as a metaphor; as a culturally-mediated practice; as a process; as a means of inclusion and exclusion; as a means of racialization; as a means of communication; and as an alternative to the visual bias of society since the Enlightenment. Key areas of inquiry will include: the practices of listening; listening and cultural power, historically and at present; listening as a form of witnessing; listening and identities; and listening and popular media.

COURSE MATERIALS

Most readings will be posted on the course OWL site or available through Western Libraries. We will read some books in their entirety. You may want to obtain your own copies of the following:

Kassabian, Anahid. *Ubiquitous Listening_ Affect, Attention, and Distributed Subjectivity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013.

Kun, Josh. *Audiotopia_ Music, Race, and America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

Robinson, Dylan. *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

Stoever, Jennifer. *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening*. New York: New York University Press, 2017.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

Participation: 20%

Soundwalk Project: 10%

Due 10/11

Book Reports (2): 30%

See due dates on schedule

Final Project: 40%

Due 12/17

OTHER COURSE INFORMATION

1. This course will move online in the case of COVID-19 outbreaks on campus. If that happens, we will meet on Zoom at the same time, Thursday from 1:30 - 4:20PM.
2. Please come prepared to participate. Graduate seminars are for working out theories and ideas together. I will not spend the whole time lecturing.
3. Attendance is mandatory. BUT...if you feel sick at all, please stay home if we remain in-person. If we move on-line and you don't feel well enough to participate on a class day, please let me know.
4. Please turn your work in on time.

5. I can meet with you in person before or after class. I am otherwise trying to avoid campus but can meet with you online.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence" (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Academic Calendar at http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/13.html).

SCHEDULE

Readings subject to change

Week/Date	Topic	Readings
1 9/10	Course overview and introduction Keywords and Theories	
2 9/17	Listening in Theory and Practice	Barthes; Adorno; Feld; Schafer; McCartney
3 9/24	Learning to Listen	Sterne, "The Audible Past," c2 and c3; Hilmes
4 10/1	Listening to Indigeneity SOUNDWALK ASSIGNMENT DUE	Robinson
5 10/8	Listening to Noise	Picker; Radovac; Stoever 2015
6 10/15	Listening to the Nation - Audiotopia ROBINSON BOOK REPORT DUE	Kun
7 10/22	Listening to Dissent	Khesti 2015; Sizer; Taussig
10/29	Listening to "World Music" KUN BOOK REPORT DUE	Feld 1994; Khesti 2011; Shank
8 11/5	READING WEEK – NO CLASS	
9 11/12	Listening to Race	Stoever
10 11/19	Listening In	Crawford; Andrejevic and Burden; Casillas; Tebbut
11 11/26	Ubiquitous Listening STOEVER BOOK REPORT DUE	Kassabian
12 12/3	Listening to Gender and Sexuality	Halberstam; Peraino; Rasmussen
13 12/10	Project Presentations KASSABIAN BOOK REPORT DUE	

FINAL PROJECTS DUE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Most readings will be posted on OWL. Individual book chapters are not broken out below.

- Adorno, Theodor W. "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening." In *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, edited by J.M. Bernstein. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Andrejevic, Mark, and Mark Burdon. "Defining the Sensor Society." *Television & New Media* 16, no. 1 (January 2015): 19–36. doi:[10.1177/1527476414541552](https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476414541552).
- Barthes, Roland. "Listening." In *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation*, translated by R. Howard. Oxford, UK: John Wiley and Sons Ltd., 1986.
- Casillas, Dolores Inés. "Sounds of Surveillance: U.S. Spanish-Language Radio Patrols La Migra." *American Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2011): 807–29. doi:[10.1353/aq.2011.0047](https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2011.0047).
- Crawford, Kate. "Following You: Disciplines of Listening in Social Media." *Continuum* 23, no. 4 (August 2009): 525–35. doi:[10.1080/10304310903003270](https://doi.org/10.1080/10304310903003270).
- Feld, Steven. "Acoustemology." In *Keywords in Sound*, edited by David Novak and Matt Sakakeeny, 12–21. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015.
- Feld, Steven, and Charles Keil. "From Schizophrenia to Schismogenesis: On the Discourses and Commodification Practices of 'World Music' and 'World Beat.'" In *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Halberstam, Judith. "Keeping Time with Lesbians on Ecstasy." *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 11, no. 1 (2007): 51–58. doi:[10.1353/wam.2007.0028](https://doi.org/10.1353/wam.2007.0028).
- Hilmes, Michele. "Who We Are, Who We Are Not: The Emergence of National Narratives." In *Radio Voices: American Broadcasting, 1922-1952*, 75–96. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- "Josh Kun - Audiotopia_ Music, Race, and America (American Crossroads) (2005).Pdf," n.d.
- Kassabian, Anahid. *Ubiquitous Listening_ Affect, Attention, and Distributed Subjectivity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013.
- Kheshti, R. "On the Threshold of the Political: The Sonic Performativity of Rooftop Chanting in Iran." *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 121 (January 1, 2015): 51–70. doi:[10.1215/01636545-2799908](https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2799908).
- Kheshti, Roshanak. "Touching Listening: The Aural Imaginary in the World Music Culture Industry." *American Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (2011): 711–31. doi:[10.1353/aq.2011.0035](https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2011.0035).
- Kun, Josh. *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and American*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.
- McCartney, Andra. "Soundwalking." In *The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies, Volume 2*, edited by Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek. Oxford University Press, 2014. doi:[10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199913657.013.008](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199913657.013.008).
- Novak, David, and Matt Sakakeeny, eds. *Keywords in Sound*. Durham ; London: Duke University Press, 2015.
- Peraino, Judith Ann. "Listening to Gender: A Response to Judith Halberstam." *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 11, no. 1 (2007): 59–64. doi:[10.1353/wam.2007.0027](https://doi.org/10.1353/wam.2007.0027).
- Picker, John M. *Victorian Soundscapes*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Radovac, L. "Muting Dissent: New York City's Sound Device Ordinance and the Liberalization of the Public Sphere." *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 121 (January 1, 2015): 32–50. doi:[10.1215/01636545-2799899](https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2799899).
- Rasmussen, Anthony W. "Acoustic Patriarchy: Hearing Gender Violence in Mexico City's Public Spaces." *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 23, no. 1 (2019): 15–42. doi:[10.1353/wam.2019.0001](https://doi.org/10.1353/wam.2019.0001).
- Robinson, Dylan. *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2020.
- Schafer, R. Murray. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*.

- Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1994.
- Shank, Barry. *The Political Force of Musical Beauty*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Sizer, M. "Murmur, Clamor, and Tumult: The Soundscape of Revolt and Oral Culture in the Middle Ages." *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 121 (January 1, 2015): 9–31.
doi:[10.1215/01636545-2799890](https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2799890).
- Sterne, Jonathan. "The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction," n.d., 469.
- Stoever, J. "'Just Be Quiet Pu-Leeze': The New York Amsterdam News Fights the Postwar 'Campaign against Noise.'" *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 121 (January 1, 2015): 145–68.
doi:[10.1215/01636545-2800013](https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2800013).
- Stoever, Jennifer. *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening*. New York: New York University Press, 2017.
- Tausig, Benjamin. "Sound and Movement." *Social Text* 36, no. 3 (September 1, 2018): 25–45.
doi:[10.1215/01642472-6917754](https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-6917754).
- Tebbutt, John. "Towards a History of Listening and Surveillance." *Continuum* 25, no. 2 (April 2011): 239–49. doi:[10.1080/10304312.2011.557828](https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2011.557828).