

IART 7503: Performance Studies
Fall 2014
W 9:05-12

Sound

Marina Peterson
31 S. Court St.
petersm2@ohio.edu
OH: W 1-3

This seminar explores the meaning and nature of sound in social life, considered through theorization and practice, experience and art. “Energy Soundscapes,” an ongoing collaborative sonic archive, serves as the focus of the course, organizing themes for discussion, listening, and recording. “Energy Soundscapes” is a project of *listening* to energy and associated dimensions of labor, infrastructure, and the environment. Soundscapes for the project include, but are not limited to, energy as it is extracted, generated, transported, consumed; labor, past and present, through interviews, oral histories, and field recordings; community meetings in which shifts in energy production are discussed and diverse stakeholders articulate their positions; and music about energy, labor, and related infrastructure.

Through readings, sound pieces, and field recording, we will explore the following themes: sound of and as energy, practices and technologies of field recording, the soundscape and environmental sounds, and listening to the past and present. Along with participating in class discussion and listening sessions, students will make audio recordings to contribute to the Energy Soundscapes archive. We will approach field recordings as both process and object, interrogating their import for listening and soundscape work, and as artifacts used for sound art, composition, and ethnography.

Course objectives

- think, work, and experience with and through sound
- become familiar with classic and recent works in Sound Studies
- make field recordings of energy and related dynamics
- contribute to the “Energy Soundscapes” archive
- develop techniques of listening to both past and present

Readings

We will use the following books extensively. They are available at Little Professor and are on reserve in Alden:

Kahn, Douglas. 2013. *Earth Sound Earth Signal: Energies and Earth Magnitude in the Arts*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schafer, R. Murray. 1994. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books.

Smith, Mark. 2004. *Hearing History: A Reader*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Other readings will be available on Blackboard.

Recommended

Collins, Nicolas. 2009. *Handmade Electronic Music: The Art of Hardware Hacking*. New York: Routledge.

Lane, Cathy and Angus Carlyle. 2013. *In the Field: The Art of Field Recording*. Devon, UK: Uniform Books.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams. 2008. *The Craft of Research*. Third edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

You will also need access to a computer with an audio editing program, such as Audacity or Garage Band.

Requirements

Participation [15%]

The course is a seminar and depends on the participation of all. Be versant with the assigned readings, and prepared to engage in productive discussion. Much of the class focuses on listening, making, and recording, for which active participation is expected. You should plan on attending all class sessions. Any missed classes must be discussed with the professor.

Class discussion [15%]

Each student will lead class discussion once. You may bring in outside material for listening as relevant. Plan to lead discussion for 1.5 hours. Everyone else should complete the readings and be prepared to participate actively in discussion. As a reader, be respectful of your peers and consider what you will need from them as participants when you lead the discussion.

Energy Soundscapes [30%]

Make and upload 2 recordings of your own over the course of the semester (details following). Present these in class, with discussion (see dates below). Participate in class field trips.

Present Energy Soundscapes project in IART 8901 on November 6, 2-5 p.m., as part of session on “Sound as/of Energy: A Symposium” [per your availability]

Final paper [40%]

Research paper, 15-20 pp. On a subject of your choice, related to sound and energy.

Thesis statement, outline and bibliography due October 8. Paper due by 5 p.m. on December 10.

Academic Honesty: The Ohio University Student Code of Conduct prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. These include cheating, plagiarism and forgery. If a student engages in course-related academic dishonesty, he or she will automatically fail the course. Instructors may also report cases of academic dishonesty to the Director of University Judiciaries for further action; however, by so doing, an instructor does not in any way relinquish the right to assign a grade in a course.

In this class there will be no discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

Energy Soundscapes

Energy soundscapes is an ongoing collaborative project of listening to and recording energy and associated dimensions of labor, infrastructure, and the environment. While grounded first in an exploration of energy past and present in Appalachian Ohio, its geographic scope follows the locations and interests of participants.

Requirement:

Make, edit (length), and post **2** recordings of energy or energy related event or activity (human or machine).

Present in class (Oct. 1, Nov. 19)

Directions for uploading to the blog and entering data:

1. Upload sound file to:

Soundcloud

2. Make blog post:

Wordpress

Use link to Soundcloud file

Add categories (Energy form [coal, natural gas, wind, solar...], Audio content [field recording, interview, song, protest...])

Add location

Tag: existing, or your own

3. Enter information in spreadsheet on **Google drive**

Email account: energy.soundscapes@gmail.com

Password (for all accounts): ohiouniversity

Field recording resources

Online tutorials

<http://audio.tutsplus.com/tutorials/recording/a-beginners-guide-to-field-recording-pt-2/>

http://www.trubitt.com/field_1.html

http://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/archive/res_audioequip.htm

iPhone Apps

iFieldRec

iTalk/iTalk Lite

FiRe – Field Recorder

Hindenburg Field Recorder

Available audio technology

The following equipment is available for student use during the semester. You can check out items from me as needed.

Category	Item	Quantity
Audio recorders	Tascam DR-100mkII	4
Headphones	Sony MDR-7506	4
Microphone	Beyerdynamic Omnidirectional Dynamic Mic + Wind Screen	1
	Roland Binaural Microphones	1
	Audio-Technica Stereo Microphone	1
Accessories	Desktop Microphone Stand	1
	Mic Cable, 3'	1
	Mic Cable, 1.5'	1
	Stereo Mini Male to Female Cable, 10'	1
	Mic Clip Adaptor	2
	Mic Clip	1
	Compact Tripod	2

Other audio technology is available from the CREATE_space, in Putnam 235:

<http://www.aesthetictechnologies.org/atlab/resources/hardware/audio-and-sound/>

SCHEDULE

Week 1: August 27

Course introductions

Week 2: September 3

Sound as/of Energy

“The mechanical vibrations that can be interpreted as sound are able to travel through all forms of matter: gases, liquids, solids, and plasmas. The matter that supports the sound is called the medium. Sound cannot travel through a vacuum.” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound>)

Kahn, *ESES*, 1-121

Week 3: September 10

Sound as/of Energy, continued

Kahn, *ESES*, 122-258

Week 4: September 17

Transduction

Kahn, Douglas. 2013. “The Aelectrosonic and Energetic Environments.” In *Earth Sound Earth Signal*, 53–68. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Helmreich, Stefan. 2007. “An Anthropologist Underwater: Immersive Soundscapes, Submarine Cyborgs, and Transductive Ethnography.” *American Ethnologist* 34 (4): 621–41.

Pinkus, Karen. 2009. Digital Gold. In *Alchemical Mercury: A Theory of Ambivalence*. Pp. 158-174. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Week 5: September 24

Soundscape

Schafer, R. Murray. 1994. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books.

[excerpts tba]

Schafer, R. Murray. 2006. I Have Never Seen a Sound. *Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology Newsletter*.

<http://www.arch.ksu.edu/seamon/Schafer06.htm>

The World Soundscape Project
<http://www.sfu.ca/~truax/wsp.html>

Week 6: October 1

Soundscape, continued

Ingold, Tim. 2011. "Four Objections to the Concept of Soundscape." In *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge, and Description*. London: Routledge.

Thompson, Emily. 2002. Introduction: Sound, Modernity, and History. In *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*. Pp. 1-12. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

McCartny, Andra. 2010. "Ethical Questions About Working with Soundscapes." *Soundwalking Interactions*.

<http://soundwalkinginteractions.wordpress.com/2010/06/24/ethical-questions-about-working-with-soundscapes/>

Hearing History

Ch. 8, The soundscapes of early modern England, by Bruce R. Smith

Energy Soundscape presentations 1

Week 7: October 8

Documentary Practice: The Artifact / The Archive

Sekula, Allan. 1986. The Body and the Archive. *October* 39:3-64.

Sekula, Allan. 1983. Photography Between Labour and Capital. In *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures: A Selection from the Negative Archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton, 1948-1968*. Leslie Shedden. Pp. 193-268. Halifax: The Press of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

Final paper abstracts due (oral presentations)

Week 8: October 15

Techniques and Technologies of Listening (Phonography and its Others)

Michel Chion. *Guide To Sound Objects. Pierre Schaeffer and Musical Research*
http://www.ears.dmu.ac.uk/spip.php?page=articleEars&id_article=3597

Ultra-red. *10 Preliminary Theses on Militant Sound Art Investigation*.

http://asounder.org/resources/ultrared_10_preliminary_theses_on.pdf

Lane, Cathy and Angus Carlyle. 2013. *In the Field: The Art of Field Recording*. Devon, UK: Uniform Books.

<http://www.colinsackett.co.uk/inthefield.php?x=60&y=5>
[excerpts]

Week 9: October 22

Hearing History/Sonic Ethnography: How Do People Listen?

Brenneis, Donald with Steve Feld. 2004. "Doing Anthropology in Sound." *American Ethnologist* 31(4):461-474.

Hearing History

- Ch. 10, English theories of hearing in the seventeenth century, by Penelope Gouk
- Ch. 13, Identity, bells, and the nineteenth-century French village, by Alain Corbin
- Ch. 19, Preserving sound in modern America, by Jonathan Sterne
- Ch. 21, Shaping the sound of modernity, by Emily Thompson

Week 10: October 29

Field trip: Robinson's Cave

Week 11: November 5

Hearing History/Sonic Ethnography: Noise

Hearing History

- Ch. 3, Breaking the Sound Barrier, by Peter Bailey
- Ch. 5, On Noise, by Hillel Schwartz
- Ch. 16, Listening to Southern Slavery, by Shane White and Graham White
- Ch. 20, American noise, 1900-1930, by Raymond W. Smilor

Week 12: November 12

Hearing History/Sonic Ethnography: Labor

Shiple, Jesse Weaver and Marina Peterson. 2012. Audio Work: Labor, Value, and the Making of Musical Aesthetics. A Special Issue of *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 24(4).

Bijsterveld, Karin. 2006. Listening to machines: Industrial noise, hearing loss and the cultural meaning of sound. *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 31(4):323-337.

Peterson, Marina. 2013. Sound Work: Law, Labor and Capital in the 1940s Recording Bans of the American Federation of Musicians. *Anthropological Quarterly* 86(3):791-824.

Week 13: November 19

Hearing History/Sonic Ethnography: Mining

Morris, Rosalind C. 2008. The Miner's Ear. *Transitions* 98:96-115.

Demos, T. J. 2005. The Art of Darkness: Steve McQueen. *October* 114: 61-89.

Energy Soundscape presentations 2

Week 14: December 3

Final presentations