

Course title: ETHN 177: Listening to the World

Instructor: Dr. Nadeen Kharputly

Office hours: Wednesdays 11:15-1:15pm and by appointment in SSB 252

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Course description:

In this course we will practice engaged and compassionate listening to appeals made by marginalized subjects based in the United States. We will listen to podcasts, political speeches, hip hop, and protest songs and sounds and learn to connect to the political, emotional, and intellectual content of these messages through the analytical lens of protest. How and when do voices get heard? How do we listen to each other fully and compassionately? Why is it easier to empathize with some sounds but not others?

Rooted in a cultural, ethnic, and American studies framework, our readings and listenings are guided by the need to understand how we connect with one another—and our varying opinions—through sound. We will take time at the end of each week to reflect on the sounds shared in our space during that time; as such, we will be expected to listen carefully and generously to one another.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the quarter you will be able to:

- Identify central arguments in the sounds we hear and the texts we read and examine them from multiple angles
- Compare and analyze paired presentations of sound and text
- Assess your enhanced capacity for engaged listening

Class readings:

You will not be asked to purchase any texts. All required readings and listenings will be available online on TritonEd. Please print the day's reading out and bring to class so as to prevent electronic devices (laptops, phones, tablets) from distracting anyone in our space.

Communication:

I encourage you to attend office hours whenever you need to talk through ideas and issues. Please check your e-mail at least once a day to keep up to date with any possible changes to our schedule. Expect responses to your e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours over the weekend. Courteous correspondence is expected—e-mails must begin with a salutation ("Dear/Hello Dr. Kharputly") and end with your signature (Sincerely/Thanks, [your name]).

Course requirements and percentage of final grade:

Participation, including self-evaluation 35%

This includes *regular attendance* and *active participation* in class. At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a short (500 words) evaluation of your learning outcomes. This will be separate from the final journal assignment (described below). Your grade relies heavily on participation and attendance, so any absences can quickly take a toll. Please check in with me if you anticipate any difficulties with regular attendance.

Sound in the news 25%

To branch out of the limited topics that we will be able to cover in this class, each member of the class will sign up to give a short (5-10 minute) presentation on a topic related to but slightly outside the confines of our class. Using our topic of the week as a starting point, you will find and discuss an item from the news that helps you connect what we are reading that week to a larger issue outside of our class. You will also submit a 500 word written summary and reflection of the text to accompany your presentation.

Listening journal 40%

You will be asked to keep a journal throughout the quarter in which you regularly record, in writing, your thoughts on the things you listen to (both in class and on your own). You must submit at least one 300 word entry per week, with a minimum of 9 entries for this assignment to be considered complete. You will turn in this journal at the end of the quarter for evaluation. Rubric for evaluation includes: level of engagement, organization, critical and analytical thinking, clarity of language, and overall presentation. Journal will be in blog form and the last entry should be the longest (1000 words) and most substantial as a means of reflecting on your progress over the course of the quarter. Your journal will be made accessible to the rest of the class so that we can all benefit from your insights.

Weekly schedule:

Week 0: Course introduction

Friday, Sept 29

Introduction

Week 1: Practices of Listening

Monday, Oct 2

- Kara Keeling and Josh Kun, "Listening to American Studies," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, September 2011

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/450001>

- Courtney E. Martin, "Listening in the Cracks," *On Being*, April 24, 2015

<https://onbeing.org/blog/listening-in-the-cracks/>

Wednesday, Oct 4

- Tara Rodgers, "What, for me, constitutes life in a sound?": Electronic Sounds as Lively and Differentiated Individuals," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, Sept. 2011

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/450004>

Friday, Oct 6

- Charles Hirschkind, "The Ethics of Listening: Cassette-Sermon Audition in Contemporary Egypt," *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 28, No. 3, Aug. 2001

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3095066>

Blogs must be created and first entry written by the end of this week

Week 2:

Words as Deeds – oratories of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and James Baldwin

Monday, Oct 9

Malcolm X – an introduction

Select audio and video clips in class

Wednesday Oct 11

- Robert E. Terrill, “Malcolm’s Medium,” *Malcolm X: Inventing Radical Judgement*, 2004
- Malcolm X, “Eulogy for Ronald Stokes,” May 5, 1962
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VI-iqOuRMo

Friday Oct 13

Malcolm X continued

Second journal entry due

Week 3: Political speeches continued

Monday Oct 16

- Frederick Sunnemark, “Introduction,” in *Ring Out Freedom! The Voice of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement*, 2004
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break Silence,” April 4, 1967
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OC1Ru2p8OfU>
- Transcript and audio:
http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_beyond_vietnam

Wednesday Oct 18

Martin Luther King, Jr. continued

- RECOMMENDED: Spotify playlist,
<https://www.vox.com/2015/1/19/7852737/martin-luther-king-speeches-online>

Friday Oct 20

- Martin Luther King, Jr. “The Other America,” April 14, 1967
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3H978KIR20>
- Transcript: PDF on TritonEd

Third journal entry due

Week 4: Political speeches / sounds of dissent

Monday October 23

- James Baldwin and Dick Gregory, London, 1969

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zkWshZRM-M>

Wednesday October 25

Baldwin continued

- Josh Kun, “Life According to the Beat,” *Audiotopia: Music, Race, America*, 2005

Friday October 27: Sounds of protest and dissent

- In-class listening exercise: characterizing recent protest chants
- Cities and Memory project

<http://citiesandmemory.com/protest/>

Fourth journal entry due

Week 5: Sounds of dissent: protests and hip hop

Monday October 30: History of protest music / music at protests

- Jonathan C. Friedman, “Introduction,” *Routledge History of Social Protest in Popular Music*, 2013
- “This is what protest sounds look like,” CNN, April 4, 2017

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/20/us/soundtracks-protest-music-evolution/index.html>

Wednesday November 1

- Milk, “Quiet” (2017) – compare both solo (on Spotify) and “flashmob” (in link below) versions

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/38717966/how-this-song-became-the-anthem-of-the-womensmarch-against-donald-trump>

Friday November 3: Hip Hop

- Jeff Chang, “Introduction: Hip Hop Arts: Our Expanding Universe”, from *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip Hop*, 2006
- Public Enemy, “Fight the Power,” *Fear of a Black Planet*, 1990
- Wu-Tang Clan, “A Better Tomorrow,” *A Better Tomorrow*, 2014

Fifth journal entry due

Week 6: Hip hop continued

Monday November 6

- Sohail Daulatzai, “Return of the Mecca: Public Enemies, Reaganism, and the Birth of Hip Hop,” in *Black Star, Crescent Moon*, 2012

- N.W.A, “Fuck Tha Police,” *Straight Outta Compton*, 1988
- Ice Cube, “When I Get to Heaven,” *Lethal Injection*, 1993

Wednesday November 8

NO CLASS

Friday November 10 Day

NO CLASS – Veteran’s Day holiday

NO journal entry due

Week 7: Hip hop continued

Monday November 13

- Josh Kun, “Introduction,” from *Audiotopia: Music, Race, America*, 2005
- Lupe Fiasco, “Words I Never Said,” *Lasers*, 2011

Wednesday November 15

- Ms. Lauryn Hill, “Everything is Everything,” from *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, 1999, and “Black Rage (Sketch),” 2014
- La Marr Jurelle Bruce, “The People Inside My Head, Too”: Madness, Black Womanhood, and the Radical Performance of Lauryn Hill." *African American Review*, vol. 45 no. 3, 2012

Friday November 17

- Kendrick Lamar, “Alright,” from *To Pimp a Butterfly*, 2015
- Jamilah King, “The Improbable Story of How Kendrick Lamar's ‘Alright’ Became a Protest Anthem,” in *Mic*, February 11, 2016.

<https://mic.com/articles/134764/the-improbable-story-of-how-kendrick-lamar-s-alright-became-a-protest-anthem#.o4qoYL59M>

- Aisha Harris, “Has Kendrick Lamar Recorded the New Black National Anthem?” *Slate*, August 3, 2015

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/culturebox/2015/08/black_lives_matter_protesters_chant_kendrick_lamar_s_alright_what_makes.html

Sixth journal entry due

Week 8: Hip hop continued

Monday November 20

- Kendrick Lamar, “The Blacker the Berry,” from *To Pimp a Butterfly*, 2015
- Watch Lamar’s 2016 Grammy performance of “Alright” and “The Blacker the Berry”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGGCx-RrKg8>

Wednesday November 22

- Kendrick Lamar, “XXX feat. U2,” from *DAMN.*, 2017

Friday November 24

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving holiday

Seventh journal entry due

Week 9: Podcasts

Monday November 27

- Tiffanie Wen, “Inside the Podcast Brain: Why Do Audio Stories Captivate? The emotional appeal of listening,” *The Atlantic*, April 16, 2015

<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/04/podcast-brain-why-do-audio-stories-captivate/389925/>

- Jonah Weiner, “Towards a critical theory of podcasting,” *Slate*, December 14, 2014

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/ten_years_in_your_ears/2014/12/what_makes_podcasts_so_addictive_and_pleasurable.html

Wednesday November 29

- TED Radio Hour, “The Act of Listening”

<http://www.npr.org/programs/ted-radio-hour/411697251/the-act-of-listening>

Friday December 1

- Krista Tippett with Frances Kissling, “Listening Beyond Life and Choice,” *On Being*, August 11, 2011

<https://onbeing.org/programs/frances-kissling-listening-beyond-life-and-choice/>

Eighth journal entry due

Week 10: Podcasts continued

Monday December 4

- Krista Tippett with David Isay, “Listening as an Act of Love,” *On Being*

<https://onbeing.org/programs/david-isay-listening-as-an-act-of-love/>

Wednesday December 6

Listening journals discussion

Friday December 8

Conclusions

Ninth and final (1000 word) journal entry due along with completed listening journals on

Monday, December 11 by midnight of that day.

Additional information:

The university's statement on academic integrity must be reviewed before turning in any assignments: <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2>.

Plagiarism consists of but is not limited to the following: presenting another person's ideas or language as if they were your own, copying (words AND ideas) from the Internet, and failure to acknowledge and properly cite the sources of the ideas presented. If you are at all confused about what constitutes plagiarism, please check in with me ahead of time.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you need accommodation for disability purposes or religious reasons so that we may make alternate arrangements ahead of time. It is best to get accommodation from the Office for Students with Disabilities (located behind Center Hall, 858-534-4382) as soon as possible so that we can work together to ensure that your needs are met in the event of an emergency.