The Listening Project
SYMPOSIUM: LISTENING FUTURES
Macquarie University
7 December 2009

Registration of interest to attend

This is an invitation to participate in the capstone symposium of The Listening Project, a two-year program of collaboration funded by ARC Cultural Research Network, that has generated discussion of and publication about the practices, politics and ethics of the cultural literacy of 'listening'.

We will hold a series of panels over the course of the day that will pick up on three key themes that have been identified by researchers over the last two years. Separate panels will focus on 'Labour and Listening', 'Recognition' and 'Media Practices'.

For this particular event, we have invited Dr. Kate Lacey, from the Department of Media and Film School of Humanities at the University of Sussex to act as a discussant for the day.

The meeting will bring together researchers working in this area in a major concluding event. The symposium will enhance the focus of previous workshops by linking current research on media, sound and cultural practices across Australian institutions within common frameworks of inquiry.

By grounding analysis of listening through open panel discussion towards a set of key questions, the symposium will focus on three critical themes of analysis: labour, recognition, and media practice. (See below). An emphasis on discussion rather than prepared papers will provide an opportunity for individual research agendas of participants to be articulated with wider disciplinary and theoretical problematics. Ongoing debates and future agendas for research will be explored.

Who can participate?
The symposium is free, but we only have a limited amount of places available due to constraints on the venue and catering. Please register before the closing date to ensure your place.

What do I need to do to attend?
If you are interested in attending the Symposium, please send a brief bio and note (max 1 page) outlining your research interests and how they relate to the topic of the symposium.

Registration to attend to: Jan.Idle@uts.edu.au by **November 7, 2009**

The Listening Project
SYMPOSIUM: LISTENING FUTURES

Convenors:
Tanja Dreher, Justine Lloyd, Penny O'Donnell, Cate Thill

Invited discussant:
Dr Kate Lacey, University of Sussex, UK

Structure:
The symposium will present a series of panels on specific aspects of listening research. Each panel will address the key questions via short papers which will be circulated beforehand, as a sample of work-in-progress for discussion and response by participants.

The symposium's major aims are to:

1. profile emerging listening research in Australia;
2. explore theoretical and methodological tools for identifying the character of listening as a component of a mediated political culture and its links with cultural labour;
3. encourage future research on listening in cross-cultural and inter-institutional contexts.

Panel One: The labour of listening

Convenors: Justine Lloyd & Devleena Ghosh

Panellists (TBC): Justine Lloyd (Macquarie), Jo Tacchi (QUT), Ramaswami Harindrath (Melbourne), Aneta Podkalicka (Swinburne) Prabhat Kumar Jha (Sarai), Ravikant Sharma (Sarai)

> Starting out from listening does not so much turn the traditional models of media analysis on their head, as to point towards a much-overdue revisioning of the act of listening as cultural work. This in turn asks how we can approach the concrete and finite constraints on the labour of listening within everyday life. This panel will explore how an analysis of listening could tangle with a range of appropriations, reinterpretations and amplifications – that together speaks to the dynamics of conversation -- rather than any simple tasking of the individual subject with 'reception'.

> This panel seeks to open up listening's collective and democratizing energies by addressing questions of cultural politics and production: What disciplines listening? When is listening just play or for 'pleasure', and when is it 'work'? How has listening been problematised -- at the same time as it has been facilitated in terms of techniques, pedagogies and technologies? How do the sensory extensions and amplifications of media allow us to listen differently to others and the world?

Suggested readings:
Kate Lacey (2000) 'Towards a periodisation of listening: Radio and Modern Life', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 3(2), pp 279-288.

Paul Gilroy (2003) 'Between the Blues and the Blues Dance: Some soundscapes of the black Atlantic', in *The Auditory Culture Reader*, ed. M. Bull and L. Back, Berg, Oxford, pp. 381-395.

Panel Two: Listening and the politics of recognition

Panellists (TBC): Cate Thill (UNDA), Tanja Dreher (UTS), Rosemary Kayess (UNSW), Baden Offord (SCU), Raewyn Connell (USYD)

This panel examines the relationship between listening and recognition. One of the central concerns of The Listening project so far has been the ways in which listening might address some of the limitations associated with the politics of voice. The argument is that while voice is a condition of possibility for recognition it cannot guarantee that the speaker will be heard. In the context of media and communications, for example, attention to listening and recognition suggests that a redistribution of material resources for speaking/voice is inadequate unless there is also a shift in the hierarchies of attention which determine who and what can be heard. What is at stake in shifting attention from the outcome of recognition to the intersubjective process of listening? How does listening reinforce or challenge existing frameworks for thinking about recognition that distinguish the symbolic from the material? What does a focus on listening add to our thinking about the politics of recognition, and vice versa?

Suggested readings:

Susan Bickford (1996) 'The Genuine Conditions of Our Lives', Chapter Five of *The Dissonance of Democracy: Listening, Conflict and Citizenship*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London.

Axel Honneth (2003) 'Redistribution as recognition: A response to Nancy Fraser' in N. Fraser and A. Honneth's *Redistribution or recognition: A political-philosophical exchange*. Verso, London and New York, pp. 110 – 189.

Nancy Fraser (2008) 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a "PostSocialist" Age' in *Adding Insult to Injury: Nancy Fraser Debates Her Critics*, ed. K Olson, Verso, London and New York, pp. 9 – 4.

Panel Three: Media practice

Convenor: Penny O'Donnell

The theme of listening has only sporadically emerged in scholarly work on media reform and cultural democracy from the fields of journalism, media and cultural studies. This panel addresses this gap in two ways. It explores media practices that foreground listening as a means of developing new types of mediated interactions across difference and inequality, including encouraging people to move outside their comfort zones, negotiate power differentials, or engage hostile perspectives. It then examines the 'practice' paradigm, with its emphasis on both the practical and symbolic dimensions of media work and use, asking what it offers media academics, practitioners, activists and audiences in terms of shared resources for re-thinking and re-forming social communication.

The panel will explore what it is about media that encourages and/or discourages listening? In what ways, and for what purposes, do media listen as well as talk? How do media practices represent social processes of talking, conversing or arguing across difference and inequality and do these representations promote or inhibit dialogue? How might we develop the concept of journalism as a 'dialogic institution'?

Suggested readings:

Nick Couldry (2004) 'Theorising media as practice', *Social Semiotics* 14 (2), pp. 115-132.

John J. Pauly (2004) 'Media Studies and the dialogue of democracy', in eds. Rob Anderson, Leslie A. Baxter and Kenneth N. Cissna, *Dialogue: Theorizing Difference in Communication Studies*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, pp. 243-258.

BACKGROUND & FURTHER INFORMATION

What is The Listening Project?
The Listening Project is a program of research collaboration that has brought together Australian cultural and media scholars, practitioners and activists interested in the theme of 'listening', an emerging international focus in Media Studies and citizens' media interventions. The Project broadly looks at how habitual critiques of representation and the politics of 'speaking' (or giving voice to the voiceless) are giving way to investigation of more active possibilities for social inclusion and change based on recognition, dialogic engagement and acceptance.

Members of the project have developed a new area of study through an innovative model of networking, bringing together researchers across a range of disciplines as well as media and cultural producers. Workshops have examined the neglected dynamics of 'listening' in diverse theoretical and practical contexts.
There is more information about the Listening Project on the web:
http://www.transforming.cultures.uts.edu.au/news_events/Listening_project.html
We invite you to read the articles included in a recent, special issue of *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* (Volume 23, Issue 4), dedicated to the theme of Listening.

Who convenes the activities of the Listening Project?
The convenors are Tanja Dreher, Justine Lloyd, Penny O'Donnell and Cate Thill and the Project Officer is Jan Idle. Juan Valencia is the postgraduate and ECR contact. The workshops have been funded by the ARC's Cultural Research Network and supported by the Transforming Cultures Research Centre at the University of Technology Sydney and the Centre for Research on Social Inclusion at Macquarie University.

Who can I contact in case I have further questions?
For more information about the Symposium: Justine.Lloyd@uts.edu.au
For ECR & Postgraduate information: Juan.Valencia@students.mq.edu.au.
Other enquiries: Jan.Idle@uts.edu.au