

54th AFEA Conference – Voices, Sounds, Noises, Silences –

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Call for Papers



Proposals should be sent directly to the chairs of each panel before January 16, 2023.

The organizers would like to remind participants that chairs and panelists must be AFEA members and pay the conference's registration fees.

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Cries and Whispers: the Contemporary Musical Mainstream

Paul-Thomas Cesari, Simon Hierle, Claude Chastagner (Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3)

For a long time, protest songs have lingered on the fringe of the entertainment business. Though some artists did achieve star status because of their protest songs repertoire, most have remained, despite their rage and determination, unheard by mainstream audiences, either because they express themselves in musical genres which attract a limited audience (punk rock, for example) or because they are marginalized within popular, but not so militant genres.

The recent past, however, has been particularly rich in events that have triggered radically polarized reactions in American society: the environmental crisis, police brutality, the election of Donald Trump, controversial Supreme Court decisions... How have mainstream artists, from pop to rap to country, reacted? Did they “protest” or did they respond with silence to the rantings of certain political figures? Did they take sides on these different issues? In what way and with what impact on the public and their own status? Has, in the process, the musical mainstream been modified, is it more somber and assertive than it used to be? And what does this potential evolution say about contemporary American society, especially its youth?

Proposals are expected, among others, on the following issues:

- Urban music in the age of Black Lives Matter
- The development of issues related to gender and sexual preference
- The emergence of intimate, dark topics, from suicide to mental illness
- The denunciation of neo-liberal policies
- The emergence of a right-wing protest scene
- Political differences within country music
- The musical and visual dimension of mainstream protest
- The role of social networks in the mainstreaming of protest music
- The mainstreaming of punk rock

300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Paul-Thomas Cesari (paul-thomas.cesari@etu.univ-montp3.fr), Simon Hierle (simon.hierle@unilim.fr) and Claude Chastagner (claud.chastagner@univ-montp3.fr) by January 16, 2023.

The Politics of Silence or Noise: From Film and Television Production to Reception

Claire Dutriaux (HDEA, Sorbonne Université) and Marianne Kac-Vergne (CORPUS, Université de Picardie Jules Verne)

Cinema and television are political media insofar as they give voice to some and prevent others from speaking. The objective of this workshop will be to study the discourses that have surrounded, facilitated, or hampered American film and television productions, as well as the voices that dominate or are removed from the silver screen or television. The

workshop will address how scripts, actors, and directors are chosen, and will interrogate the economic, historical, societal, and cultural causes that inform these choices and may have led to changes in the original scripts to stifle potential controversies or, on the contrary, forward cultural issues. Participants to the workshop may reflect on questions such as: Who is given a voice? How do these choices affect films and series?

For example, the Production Code at times silenced what could have offended various audiences, from the United States or other countries. Depictions of drugs, venereal disease, abortion and motherhood, racial violence, and the promotion of U.S. political ideologies have frequently bothered censors nationally and internationally. Today censorship of Hollywood films has remained a reality, from Asia to the Middle East, and limits U.S. soft power. The Motion Picture Association's film ratings system and the TV Parental Guidelines currently represent other forms of censorship: what does the rating of a film or TV show say or does not say about U.S. culture? To what extent has the existence of these ratings influenced the decisions of studios and directors?

Another avenue of investigation might be the speaking time allocated to different characters: who dominates the soundtrack? What strategies of domination are put in place in the dialogues? Can silence be an instrument of power? For instance, voice-overs, whether intradiegetic or extradiegetic, are crucial because of their bearing on the reception of images and because of the authority they give to the people whose voices we hear. The identity of the speakers and the different ways of expressing themselves according to gender, ethnicity, race, or to their social or geographical origin could be a possible line of inquiry.

Finally, the marketing of films and TV productions influences the choices made by studios and directors. The buzz around films produced by studios and streaming platforms, through the broadcasting of trailers and advertising in the media (in the press or trade press, on the radio, on television...), affects how consumers decide to see or not see a film or a show, which may lead to franchises or the last episodes of a series being altered, once the producers have been informed of their non-renewal or renewal. The awards ceremonies (such as the Academy Awards) also participate in the promotion or the removal of what is produced on screen. The decision of the film and television industries to relay the noise of social movements on screen, from the civil rights movement to the #metoo and #blacklivesmatter movements, or on the contrary to ignore them or to report on them only partially may be another possible line of study. The question of reception could also be addressed from the perspective of the voices that are listened to or those that are ignored.

500-word proposals and a short biographical statement should be sent to Claire Dutriaux, (claire.dutriaux@sorbonne-universite.fr) and Marianne Kac-Vergne (mariannekacvergne@gmail.com) by January 16, 2023.

The Voice of the Literary Text

Christelle Ha Soon-Lahaye (Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, CHCSC EA 2448) and Anne-Laure Tissut (Université de Rouen Normandie, ERIAC EA 4705)

Following up on Marc Chénétier's RFEA volume devoted to "La voix dans la fiction américaine contemporaine"¹, this panel aims at pursuing the investigation of the fleeing yet operative notion of "the voice of the text." Between the written and the spoken, the abstract and the bodily, and supposing an active implication on the reader's part, the notion of "voice of the text" allows to view the literary text as process, relying on a wide web of interactions. It corresponds to a specific mode of listening to the text coupled with an active reunion of several elements from the text: those having been deliberately created by the author, on the one hand, and on the other, a network of stresses and echoes emerging from the visible topics and concerns of the text, its atmosphere and tone as well as from the interest and sensibility of the reader having perceived the text as addressing him or her. To consider the voice of the text implies that one focuses on "signifiante" according to Barthes, as the prerogative of what Barthes calls "writing aloud" ("l'écriture à voix haute")², which, as opposed to communication, is not expressive, but conveys the articulation of body and language.

Over the course of this exploration, a number of notions may be questioned, such as identification and unreliability: what is it precisely that the reader may identify to? Could unreliability be considered as an open space offered for the reader to follow his or her own interpretation, imagine and invent what is not explicit in the text and let a voice arise from silence? The complex interaction of voices at work in translation may also be part of the reflection, to show for instance how translation may contribute to reveal the voice of the text.

Thus the panel aims at questioning the becoming of the text, as carried by its readers, each being inhabited by his or her own changing version of a text whose appearance is yet unique.

Submissions (of about 300 words) along with a short biographic note should be sent both to Christelle Ha Soon-Lahaye (christelle.ha-soon-lahaye@uvsq.fr) and Anne-Laure Tissut (anne-laure.tissut@univ-rouen.fr) by January 16, 2023.

The Politics of Screaming

Christen Bryson (Sorbonne Nouvelle), Anne Légier (Université de Paris), and Sébastien Mignot (Université de Caen)

Screaming, or the act of producing a loud and high-pitched sound, is profoundly anchored in the body. It is set apart from more conventional forms of speech as many of its iterations

¹ *Revue Française d'Études Américaines*, N°54, novembre 1992. La voix dans la fiction américaine contemporaine. www.persee.fr/issue/rfea_0397-7870_1992_num_54_1

² Roland Barthes, *Le Plaisir du texte*, Seuil, 1973, p.88.

occupy an acoustic space that exists outside spoken language. Screaming is “rough,” “primitive,” “startling” and might be said to lack the sophistication of complex linguistic interactions. At first thought, it might be understood as an “authentic” reaction to a specific situation, a response to stimulus in one's environment. As such, screaming is a very efficient conveyor of meaning: it can instantly express a warning or complex emotions like grief, frustration, anger, pain, fear, joy, excitement, or pleasure. Ascribing screaming to a primal, primordial state of being—one that precedes civilization—conjures up remnants of a Romantic ethos that reinforces artificial binary oppositions between nature/nurture, authentic/fake, true/false, etc. The purportedly inherent “authenticity” of the scream is one of its sole claims to legitimacy. When screaming is looked at more broadly to include other forms of emotional utterances like yelling and shouting, rather than being a pure reaction, it expresses a loss of control, a desire to (re)claim power, or to assert one's dominance. In this way then, screaming is not only an authentic reaction, it can be intentional manipulation in the hopes of shifting power differentials.

When screaming is taken as a frame of analyzing social, cultural, and political interactions it is evident that these various vocal expressions are not divorced from the existing power dynamics of race, class, gender, and sexuality. The sexist history of “female hysteria,” or the long-standing trope of the scream queen, pervasive throughout the horror genre, are but a couple of examples of the mutable genderedness of screaming and its representations. Race inflects screaming and its perception in notorious ways as well. Due to racial bias, the aural and visual perception of Black people screaming is often disqualified, othered or construed as threatening, forcing Black men to monitor their behavior in the presence of White women or police, and causing Black women to be dismissed as “angry Black women.” A recent example of the codified implications of screaming can be seen in the screams of Amy Cooper—a White woman—yelling at an African American man, Christian Cooper (no relation), while he was birdwatching in Central Park. What does such screaming imply about authenticity and performance? In the context of the U.S., is it possible not to view Amy Cooper as weaponizing the long history of portraying Black men as sexual predators of white women?

This perspective stands in sharp contrast with the care-free screams expressing the middle-class's joyous celebration of American consumer culture in the classic song “I Scream, You Scream, We all Scream for Ice Cream!” or the cries of pleasure produced in the context of sexual satisfaction. However, statistics on the percentage of women's fake orgasms seem to call into question screaming—and other forms of vocalization—as a reliable expression of sexual gratification thus calling into question the “authenticity” of these screams and their representations.

In the same vein, can screaming be considered “authentic” when politicians are using it in the context of political spectacle? Alex Jones, radio host and creator of InfoWars, is a provocative example of how those on the far-right have mobilized political discourse to the extremes of emotional intelligibility. Jones has effectively galvanized a part of the right's base through outrage and its performance on his website and show. The left's dismissive response has been not to engage with the irrationality of the “screaming right,” disqualifying these actors as “unhinged.”

Although screaming is politically and socially constrained, in that it is written off as an expression of excessive emotion, it can be embraced by those whose voices have been disqualified as “scary,” “excessive” or “illegitimate” or reappropriated by majority group members who claim marginalization. Screaming can be strategic and performative, a rallying cry, a call to arms to fight for a cause in which one believes, and has even recently been talked about as restorative and healing in popular culture. This workshop is therefore interested in papers that explore the multitudinous meanings and expressions of screaming and the ways they have been mobilized in American society, culture, and politics.

Please send 300-500-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note to Christen Bryson (christen.bryson-charle@sorbonne-nouvelle.fr), Anne Légier (anne.legier@u-paris.fr), and Sébastien Mignot (sebastien.mignot@unicaen.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Liberty Leading the Podcast: an Exploration of Podcasts in U.S. Culture - Multidisciplinary Workshop

Marion Douzou (Université Lyon 2) and Carline Encarnación (Université Toulouse 2)

The term “podcast” was proposed in 2004 to call the form of amateur radio made possible by the development of MP3 players and blogs, associated with very inexpensive means of sound recording. Today, podcasts are met with major critical and popular success, and have become an essential part of the American media and cultural landscape. The history of podcasts is technological, cultural, artistic, political and sociological, but one that is constantly walking hand in hand with the idea—or ideal—of liberty.

Editorial and technical constraints being almost non-existent, the possibilities of experimentation are limitless in terms of subjects as well as forms and goals. Podcasts are as eclectic as they are polymorphic: they can be produced by independent artists or well established institutions, as an archive for a radio show or exist in “native” form. The relationship between podcast and radio, which can be seen as its parent media, raises questions about the specificity of the former: does it reside in its modes of production or consumption, in its contents, or in its form? What is now known as the “podcasting industry” involves numerous players whose power games can jeopardize the total freedom imagined, even claimed, by podcast creators. The increased freedom of expression, offered by an Internet broadcast that emancipates podcasts from the scope of FCC regulations, does not prevent them from questioning the limits of this freedom, as shown by the movement to boycott Spotify because of ethical issues surrounding its most popular podcast, *The Joe Rogan Experience*. We welcome participants of the workshop to investigate the role of podcasts in American politics, in political consciousness, and in the propagation of partisan ideas. Because Internet broadcasting also liberates from the time constraints of program grids, it allows for greater formal variety, both in terms of duration and periodicity: the serial aspect of podcasts can be compared with studies on television series.

Liberty is also at the core of what podcasts have to say. They are often a way to liberate speech, to give voice to those who are excluded from the media, political, public spaces.

There is intimacy in a voice speaking directly to one's ear: podcasts thus become a privileged medium for testimony and life stories. The way in which narrative journalism has been able to seize this medium to deploy its narration, in particular thanks to "true crime", can be of particular interest to this workshop. Like an immense laboratory, the podcasting universe offers a glimpse of an ultra-contemporary artistic creation, which constantly suggests thematic and formal innovations. A literary look at "story driven" podcasts would be especially welcome: is it a new, or specific, way of telling stories? How do issues of aurality (voice, sound) play out in an audio narrative? How can this change literature and the questions it raises?

Podcasts can also be considered as a potential archive, which can inflect the way research is conducted in history, maybe more specifically in oral history: for instance by allowing to share audio sources, they liberate historians from the limits of transcription. Finally, an important body of research has emerged around the use of podcasts in education. They have been studied for their didactic or pedagogical value, as new ways to access knowledge in diverse fields. We therefore also invite colleagues to reflect on their place in the teaching of American studies.

Although podcasts are rather new, their extraordinary growth makes them essential in various fields, whether as a source, a tool, or a corpus. It is crucial to bring disciplines together in order to try to grasp this protean object which, by calling upon several fields at once, disrupts and questions formal and disciplinary categories. Civilizational and literary approaches, as well as media studies will be called upon to address the questions raised by the podcast and its relationship with freedom. Many researchers listen to podcasts, use or even create them, but the theoretical and reflexive framework remains to be built. The ambition of this workshop is to promote research on podcasts, to allow Americanists from all disciplines to meet around this common object in order to assess their role and legitimacy.

Proposals of around 300 words, along with a short biography, should be sent to Marion Douzou (m.douzou@univ-lyon2.fr) and Carline Encarnación (carline.encarnacion@univ-tlse2.fr) by January 16, 2023.

'Hear the dance, see the music' – Voices, Sounds, Noises and Silences in American Dance and Music

A. Chevrier-Bosseau (Sorbonne Université) and M. Duplay (Université Paris Cité)

As a non-verbal art, dance relies on the 'silent' eloquence of bodies moving to the music. According to the principles Noverre delineated in his *Lettres sur la danse* in the 17th century, the narrativity of dance has to be conveyed through media other than spoken discourse, such as costume, staging, makeup, pantomime and the dancers' expressivity, and of course music. When it comes to ballet technique, silence is a major injunction, since landing from jumps or pointe work have to be as silent as possible so as not to break the illusion of a weightless dancing body defying the laws of gravity. Communication is also silent in all forms of partnering, whether in *pas de deux* or group dances: some choreographers like Crystal Pite have worked extensively on the various modalities of non-verbal communication within

groups, drawing inspiration from structures like the hive or swarms in pieces like *Emergence* or *Flight Pattern*. Her *Seasons' Canon*, danced to Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* remastered by Max Richter, features a similar concern for non-verbal communication; the movements of the *corps* are triggered by the mere intuition of a pre-movement in one body, an individual inhale or exhale which becomes collective, micro-movements that start in one body and ripple across the entire *corps*. This kind of technique is also at the core of Steve Paxton's work on *contact improvisation*, where dancers have to "feel" other dancers and their kinetic intuitions in order to respond to it.

This panel invites us to think about the many ways dancing bodies can speak and be heard, whether they are trying to convey emotions or a story, or when the body becomes a 'silently eloquent' vehicle for political activism. "Hear the dance, see the music" as George Balanchine liked to say: we also invite participants to reflect on the ways dance can become the visual embodiment of music in pieces like *Allegro Brillante*, which rely on an extremely precise and visual musicality, turning the body into a dancing score. Notions of choreographic embodiment of a written text/score are also present in pieces like Bill T. Jones's *Story / Time*, which features a dancer-choreographer who is also a writer and storyteller: in this 2012 dance inspired by John Cage's *Indeterminacy*, Bill T. Jones reads a selection of 70 of his own stories in random order, and they are associated to one piece of music and one or several performers.

Absence of music and extensive reliance on sounds, noises and silences are crucial in post-modern dance, which often produced musicless pieces, like Trisha Brown's *Roof Piece* or Anna Halprin's *Hangar*, in which all we can hear are the sounds of the urban landscape the dancers perform in, while *Glacial Decoy* makes us hear the dancers' breathing and the ambient noises around them. We can therefore wonder what the place of music, noises, sounds and silences are in modern and post-modern dance; by extension, we can also reflect on what is meant by 'silent' vs 'loud' movements on a technical level – what it looks like when a body is 'loud', taking up space and 'making noise', versus what the different tonalities of silence can look like, and how the dancing body can become inaudible.

In a less literal sense, we also invite participants to consider the voices and silences of dancers and choreographers, and wonder what dance *has to say*, through the exploration of the connections between danced discourse and spoken discourse, or the links between literature and dance. Possible fields of investigation here could be the echoes between the choreographic works and the written texts produced by dancers-choreographers (like Graham, Duncan or Cunningham), or attempts to write dance or to dance written texts.

Noise has played a central role in American music at least since Edgard Varèse, whose *Ionisation* (1929-31) demonstrated that percussion instruments can serve as crucial components of musical discourse, far from merely punctuating or enhancing it. Deliberately rejecting the received notion that music essentially consists of melody and harmony, i.e. of a series of pitches heard simultaneously or in succession, Varèse devised a rhythmic polyphony that consistently relies on attack as distinguished from the ensuing resonance, which is treated as secondary. The piano itself is used in this piece as a percussion instrument, whereas Romantic composers had depended upon it to suggest or even recreate the rich

texture of an entire symphony orchestra. Numerous American composers have followed in Varèse's footsteps, for instance Colon Nancarrow whose *Studies for Player Piano* (1948-92) experiment with rhythmic combinations of such daunting complexity that no human performer can do them justice. A precursor of Minimalism, Terry Riley returned to a form of tonal writing, relying on harmonic and melodic materials of such extreme simplicity that the listener's attention focuses instead on every other aspect of the piece, which relies on controlled improvisation to achieve new and unpredictable combinations of a small number of melodic fragments (*In C*, 1964). Meanwhile, the combined influence of Luigi Russolo and Fluxus gave rise to so-called "noise music," which calls into question the traditional distinction between musical sounds and non-musical noise. Joe Jones's rhythmic music machines, George Brecht's *Event Scores*, Nam June Paik's video/sound installations all mark significant stages in a process which is still ongoing, as suggested by some recent compositions by John Luther Adams (*Inuksuit*, 2009); likewise, LaMonte Young's works challenge accepted definitions of music by straddling the boundary that separates it from performance art (*Compositions 1960*). Thus, it comes as no surprise that the accepted dichotomy between "art music" and "popular music" no longer quite makes sense for these artists, who share some of the preoccupations of jazz drummers, punk/noise rock musicians, and practitioners of so-called industrial music. From Steve Reich (*Clapping Music*, 1972) to Lou Reed (*Metal Machine Music*, 1975), many American musicians have contributed to reevaluating noise, once seen as extraneous to musical discourse and now perceived as a ferment of aesthetic reinvention. According to John Cage, the German-American artist Oskar Fischinger was keenly aware of the philosophical import of experiments which, in the last analysis, shed light on the ethical and metaphysical functions of music: according to him, the vibrations of an object struck by a percussionist reveal the uncontrollable essence of reality, whereas a more conventionally musical approach based on controlled pitches and note durations reinstates the authority of the human will. Therefore, it makes sense that noise plays a central role in many compositions influenced by ecopoetic thinking such as the opening section of John Adams's 2005 opera *Doctor Atomic*, which deals with the origins of the nuclear arms race.

Cage himself retained a lifelong interest in percussion instruments; nevertheless, he chose *Silence* as the title of his most significant book (1961). This seeming paradox vanishes as soon as one understands that Cagean silence is defined neither as the opposite of noise nor as what exists in the absence of audible sound waves. Indeed, Cage's so-called « silent piece » *4'33"* (1952) reveals that no such thing is possible: even when the performer refrains from touching the instrument, ambient noise remains, some of it produced by audience members themselves, and the inner ear constantly generates signals which the mind is able to perceive in the right environment (e.g. in an anechoic chamber). According to Cage, silence results from a suspension of the will; it is what happens when the musician no longer expects sounds to conform to predetermined ideas and when the ear enjoys them without automatically privileging those that best conform to accepted definitions of music. However radical, Cage's project is rooted in a long American tradition which owes a great deal to Transcendentalism (cf. the "Sounds" chapter of Thoreau's *Walden* [1854]) and which had already influenced earlier composers such as Charles Ives (*Three Places in New England*,

1911-29). As described in essays and poems which have proved at least as influential as his musical compositions themselves; Cage's project has thus played a key role in the emergence of a mode of avant-garde thinking which engages with the great European masters but frequently deviates from their path; his tense early exchanges with Arnold Schoenberg and his later, much publicized quarrel with Pierre Boulez suggest as much. Even today, Cagean silence paradoxically continues to resonate in American music, if only because composers who disagree with him still feel compelled to refer to him in order to formulate their own ideas (John Adams, *Hallelujah Junction*, 2012).

However important, the opposition between noise and silence does not sufficiently describe the various approaches to musical aesthetics in evidence throughout American culture. The reason why so many composers deliberately set out to challenge preconceived notions is that they want to draw attention to the previously unheard; the point is not to shock, but to undo the hierarchies that regulate the production of sounds and prevent the ear from freely enjoying them. Such was Lou Harrison's intention when, starting in the 1930s, he invented a wholly new range of instruments and experimented with non-Western scales and intervals borrowed from Balinese and Javanese cultures. Harrison's thinking was influenced by the politics of emancipation, the antiwar tradition and the emergent queer movement; Cage's explicitly relied on his definition of democracy. These and similar composers aim at releasing whoever/whatever is held in bondage, regardless of the reason; and when they seek to do justice to the non-human – to the vibrations of material objects, to resonant space – their intention is not to repudiate humanity, but to restore it to its full dignity without overstating its privileges. Hence the importance of voice, which combines *phonè* and *logos* and thereby embraces the entire continuum where the non-human and humanity meet and intermingle. Since the 18th century, American music has cultivated the tradition of classical singing, which it has inherited from its European forebears; initially popularized in the United States by the Swedish diva Jenny Lind, Walt Whitman's beloved Italian opera is still performed to great effect by American-trained singers, and many American composers have written for the great vocalists of their age – e.g. Samuel Barber (*Vanessa*, 1958) and John Corigliano (*The Ghosts of Versailles*, 1991). However, American music is equally concerned with liberating the voice, with exploring forms of vocal expression foreign to the "classical" tradition, and with devising new and deliberately unclassifiable vocal techniques; thus, Philip Glass once collaborated with Laurie Anderson (*Songs From Liquid Days*, 1985), Meredith Monk has composed operas in a musical and vocal idiom indebted to popular song (*Atlas*, 1991), star singers from the Met frequently appear in Broadway musicals, and African-American musicians – from Scott Joplin (*Treemonisha*, 1911) to Terence Blanchard (*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, 2019) – are intent on revealing the mesmerizing beauty of voices that racism all too often attempts to silence. Once again, artistic and musical creativity prove inseparable from a gesture of emancipation whose significance is not limited to the aesthetic realm.

Please send abstracts (250-300 words) and bios (150-200 words) to both Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau (adeline.chevrier-bosseau@sorbonne-universite.fr) and Mathieu Duplay (Mathieu.Duplay@u-paris.fr) by January 16, 2023.

When Voices, Noises, Silences and Music Collide: Poetics, Politics and Ethics of the Integrated Soundtrack in US-American Films and Series

Céline Murillo (Université Paris 13) and David Roche (Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, Institut Universitaire de France)

This panel will focus on the political potential of the poetics of the soundtrack in contemporary films and series, with particular attention to the relationship between what is generally identified as its three main components: voices, noises and music (Neumeyer, Buhler, Deemer 2015). The advent of digital technologies has seen the emergence of sound design as an industry practice, which soundtrack scholars have then endeavored to theorize. The practice has notably led contemporary theories of the soundtrack to qualify if not contest earlier theories of the soundtrack, notably Michael Chion's famous 1982 thesis that the film soundtrack is an incoherent entity whose elements are disconnected and subordinate to the image. Oftentimes, contemporary soundtracks, Kevin Donnelly (2013) argues, constitute a whole in which voices, noises, silences and music are orchestrated together and sometimes impose their logic on the images that accompany them. Several scholars (Pisano 2018) have even argued that the aim of sound engineers and mixers had always been to strive for cohesion. This has led David Neumeyer (2015) to speak of the "integrated soundtrack" of classical Hollywood.

This panel proposes to pay particular attention not just to the formal possibilities of the integrated soundtrack, but to the political and ethical implications of the blurring of boundaries between voices, noises, silences and music. Serge Cardinal (2018), for instance, has analyzed how the attention paid to the bird sounds in *Red River* (Hawks, 1948) expresses the cowboys' ethical relation to the world. Is such blurring the domain of art, avant-garde and experimental cinemas? Can such aural collisions be mobilized to evoke a troubled moral perspective (*Breaking Bad*, Gilligan et al. 2008-13)? to disrupt gender, racial, sexual and social boundaries (*Sorry to Bother You*, Riley 2018)? or to evoke another relation to the other—between human and alien (*Arrival*, Villeneuve, 2016)—or to the world (natural in Reichardt's *Old Joy*, 2006 or *First Cow*, 2019; the cosmos in *Twin Peaks: The Return* (Frost & Lynch 2017))? More generally, is formal subversion necessarily politically subversive or is it yet another instance of Hollywood dream factory subjecting audiences to its capitalist ideology, as in Eisler and Adorno's famous 1947 thesis? Such considerations could form the basis for the talks in this panel.

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Chion, Michel. *La voix au cinéma*. Éditions de l'étoile, 1982.

Donnelly, Kevin. "Extending Film Aesthetics: Audio beyond Visuals." In *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*, edited by John Richardson, Claudia Gorbman and Carol Vernallis, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 357-71

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Neumeyer, David. *Meaning and Interpretation of Music in Cinema*. Indiana University Press, 2015.

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300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Céline Murillo (murillo@univ-paris13.fr) and David Roche (david.roche@univ-montp3.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Voicing America: Sound and Silence on North American Stages

Émeline Jouve (Toulouse Jean Jaurès), Xavier Lemoine (Université Gustave Eiffel) and Julie Vatain-Corfdir (Sorbonne Université).

The stage is the ultimate echo chamber for the human voice—how does it allow America's voices to resonate, in a full array of pitches and vibrations, whether heard directly or through a microphone? Do theatre, performance art and musicals produce noises, sounds, or even a type of silence, that qualify as intimately American? In one of Eugene O'Neill's early hits, the spectators gathered in a fishing warehouse in Provincetown witnessed a story about the open seas told by Irish or Scandinavian sailors with a variety of accents and whose voices were heightened by the actual sound of waves crashing against the playhouse's stilts (*Bound East for Cardiff*, 1916). The sonorous materiality of the American landscape thus served as an aural counterpoint to the invention of a genre imbued with authenticity, at the opposite end of the spectrum from Gertrude Stein's "landscape plays" or her *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*, which de-realized the great mythologies of American nature, plunging them into modernist abstraction as early as 1922 and 1938. Working against the grand aims of realism, experimental plays and performance art have, time and again, contested the notion of faithfulness to the sound of the real through symbols, mantras, and stifled or deformed voices. In a 21st-century experimentation, voices were thus replaced by audible breaths as Young Jean Lee sought to create a feminist utopia, freeing her performers from the expectations and clichés of discourse and allowing their silences to become a form of resistance (*Untitled Feminist Show*, 2012).

The moment it makes itself heard, a voice becomes an indicator of identity with regards to gender and ethnic or geographical origins, but also subversive sexualities (William Finn and James Lapine's *Falsettos*, 1992); this phenomenon can be modulated, amplified or erased by technical training or by the shift to a singing register in musical theater (*A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* by Taylor Mac, 2016). How do performers' training, playwriting and aesthetic convention negotiate the construction, deconstruction or blurring of such vocal identities? This leads to several questions with particular relevance to contemporary stages: how have the voices of black artists defined and asserted themselves, against the violent caricature of 19th-century "plantation dialects," through realist choices (Lorraine Hansberry), or later through phonetic and rhythmic reinventions that create a visual imprint on the page (Ntozake Shange, Suzan-Lori Parks, Antoinette Nwandu, Aleshea Harris)? To what extent has silence—which has been unmasked as an epistemological process with both oppressive and productive powers by queer and intersectional criticism

(Sedgwick, Foucault, Crenshaw)—become manifest in recent productions through rewriting and re-performing (*Fat Ham*, by James Ijames, 2002; Anna Deavere Smith's *Fires in the Mirror* performed by Michael Benjamin Washington, 2019)? In what way have silences on stage contributed to shifting the border between what can and "cannot" be spoken, what can and cannot be heard, producing strategies in order to make audible the very principles of dissident speech (ACT UP demonstrations, protest songs)? In short, do recent aesthetic and political questions produce new sounds schemes—including silent ones—that help to redefine the performing arts in the US?

Following such interrogations, this panel will examine the whole gamut of sounds afforded by the American stage, within an ensemble or in a single "hybrid" voice as when Anna Deavere Smith or David Greenspan embody a whole conversation as a solo. Accents will be broached, in order to question their realistic or poetic resonance (Robert Wilson's sonic distortions and repetitions), as much as their characteristics as regards pitch and velocity (Tennessee Williams, August Wilson). The brassy, belting sound of Broadway voices also plays its part in the definition of American voice styles, shaping audiences' expectations and inviting analysis. Beyond vocal elements, attention will be paid to the entire soundscape of a performance—sound effects, percussions, rumblings that, as in the spectacular productions of Orson Welles, surround the spectators (as in immersive theater), heightening their emotions (from Laurie Anderson's sound meditations to the Wooster Group's soundscapes which aim to place sound on a par with speech). In addition, the panel will seek to examine the materiality of silence, its length and its value, when a performance freezes or when the attention of an entire auditorium comes to be focused on a mute action which stretches in time (Annie Baker, Jackie Sibblies Drury). Finally, the panel also means to consider the acoustic merits of audience members who, through speechlessness or engagement (laughter, tears, participation, call and response, applause), extend and complement the soundscape of the show.

This panel is organized in collaboration with the RADAC society (groupe de Recherche sur les Arts Dramatiques Anglophones Contemporains).

300-word proposals for papers or performances should be addressed jointly to Emeline Jouve (emeline.jouve@univ-tlse2.fr), Xavier Lemoine (xavier.lemoine@univ-eiffel.fr) and Julie Vatain-Corfdir (Julie.vatain@sorbonne-universite.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Silence, Sound and Fury? The Challenges of Alliance and Dialog on Race in the USA 1815-2023

Cécile Coquet-Mokoko (UVSQ, CHCSC) and Marie-Jeanne Rossignol (Université Paris Cité, LARCA).

Though the question of slavery was silenced in the Constitution, it quickly re-emerged in political debate, especially after 1821 and the Missouri compromise. Abolitionists were extremely vocal and even the Gag Rule (1836) could not keep slavery out of political discussions. However, historian Benjamin Quarles claims that Black abolitionists were

deliberately not mentioned by the Southern press so as not to underline the agency of ex-slaves (and thus of slaves). Consequently, the question is not really whether the related questions of slavery and race were silenced before the Civil War (they were not) but how they were discussed, by whom, in which circumstances, and to what effect. With the coming of the Civil War and the War itself, political discussions on race and slavery gave way to sound and fury. Even when White historians shaped the history of the Civil War and Reconstruction in a racist and conservative way in the early 20th century, Black historians were not silent and reacted by forming their own associations and writing books to educate the (mainly Black) public. However, as the slave past of the United States and the legacy of slavery and segregation have become major historiographical fields, and as Native Americans are taking the lead in shaping new forms of writing their history as colonized people, present-day book bans and state laws forbidding the teaching of Critical Race Theory seem to suggest that dispassionate dialog on race is still proving elusive in the United States of America beyond academia.

Realizing how the questions and realities of slavery and race were never silenced in the United States over the "longue durée", the organizers wonder why discussions of national guilt, reconciliation and reparations remain so difficult even today. Were the questions of race and slavery debated in such a way in the 19th century that even White allies could not feel the long-term democratic need to reshape the national narrative? Can we feel the first stirrings of a new national narrative in spite of the rise of conservative agendas and increasing polarization? Are coalition-building strategies which demand that allies from dominant groups learn to remain silent, while leaders representing minority communities voice their experiences as representative of those of their group, really conducive to a general re-assessment of the national narrative?

The organizers are interested in contributions based on case-studies in the fields of history, sociology, and political science, bearing on the "longue durée" of the race question in the United States from the 19th century to today.

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300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Cécile Coquet-Mokoko (cecile.coquet-mokoko@uvsq.fr) and Marie-Jeanne Rossignol (marie-jeanne.rossignol@u-paris.fr) by January 16, 2023.

“In Space No One Can Hear You Scream,” or Can They? — A Science Fiction Panel

Danièle André (La Rochelle Université) and Gwenthalyng Engélibert (Université de Bretagne Occidentale)

“In space no one can hear you scream”. The iconic tagline from Ridley Scott’s *Alien* underlines the role “Voices, Sounds, Noises, Silences” has played in science fiction. For Nis Gron “William Whittington has documented the importance of *Alien* (1979) as a critical stepping-stone in the development and importance of the soundtrack especially in the expressionistic use of sound effects, ambient sounds and foley sounds in Sci-Fi movies.”³

If *Alien* changed the face of horror science fiction, it followed a long-lasting tradition that has used sound and silence to create and increase tension or fear, or/and divert the audience’s attention from the real danger. Yet, it is interesting to note the dual use of silence: it can heighten stress, when the absence of sound and noise can be interpreted as heralding some form of danger, yet it may also protect from danger, when remaining silent prevents the characters from being located and discovered (*a Quiet Place*). Not to forget that it is in natural surroundings, devoid of human sounds, that some can find peace, strength and rest (*Star Wars*).

Science fiction plays with the complexities and contradictions of sound and silence through soundtracks (intensifying fear with silence and with extradiegetic sound, *A Clockwork Orange*) and within plots when survival depends on the ability to refrain from making any sound.

No matter the format and the media (visual, print, sound, text and image), what is underlined in science fiction is how being deprived of voice/sound, reduced to silence or confronted to excessive sound entail situations and/or feelings of danger: it can mean hearing danger coming, but also hearing the call of a power or a force, being controlled by them, endangered by them (use of the Force in *Star Wars*, Viktor converting sound waves into physical force and Allison-The Rumor controlling people’s mind by uttering a sentence in *The Umbrella Academy*, or super-heroes like Black Bolt or Black Canary).

Sound and silence are deeply linked to cultures and to human societies. It seems that as technology develops, the modern technological worlds are more and more noisy, and sounds invade the environment and the minds leaving no space to silence and thoughts (*Blade Runner*). Thus, it is significant that even space becomes “noisy”: most science fiction stories, at least on the screen, show space as full of sounds and noises when it is in fact silent. If this can be linked to the format and the wish not to cut the audience off from sounds, this also

³ Grøn, N. “The Sound of Horror - Silence & Sound Contrasts in Sci-Fi Horror Movies”. *Tidsskrift for Medier, Erkendelse Og Formidling*, bd. 1, nr. 1, juni 2013, <https://tidsskrift.dk/mef-journal/article/view/28578>.

shows how silence is linked to culture: the lack of noise, sound, or voice can lead to isolation and madness, and is to be fought against (*Flinch*, *I am Legend*, *The Last Battle*).

Sounds can also take the form of noises expressing joy, celebrations, and nostalgia. Some science fiction stories try to imagine what the languages of peoples from altogether different cultures and worlds could be and what use of sound and silence they would have (*Solaris*, *The Shape of Water*).

The different formats use different means to express sounds and silence. In comic books, silence may be represented by wordless scenes, panels of silence on which no dialogues or words are written. This, moreover, compels the reader to focus only on the images that hold or are supposed to hold all the information. Silence can be strengthened by a play on colors. When in visual and audio media, sounds and silence can grab straight away the audience attention and are traditional gimmicks, in the text and image media the audience sees sound instead of hearing it. Thus, the size and shape of the word balloon or speech bubble can be used to highlight the auditory effects, in the same way, onomatopoeias are used to represent actions and the sounds that go with them (“Splat”, “Pow”, “Bang”, “Aaargh”, etc.) Onomatopoeia has even become the name of a villain (DC Comics, 2002).

These are some of the aspects that can be tackled, but many more questions can be raised and issues dealt with. All approaches (historical, stylistic, philosophical, etc.), and all formats and media welcome (games, RPG, comic books, series, movies, novels, songs, etc.)

Papers can deal with, but are not limited to:

- “voices, sounds, noises, silences” in science fiction over the centuries
- major science fiction works tackling the topic and their perspective
- narrative means used to represent pauses, silence and how the different formats impact the reception by the audience
- impacts of SFX on the use and representation of sounds and silence in SF
- SF stories and plots focusing much more on silence and sounds as modern societies become noisier
- specificities of the genre when dealing with “Voices, Sounds, Noises, and Silences”
- SF as a genre voicing or silencing societal issues

Michel Chion, *Des sons dans l'espace. À l'écoute du space opera*, Bordeaux, Éd. Capricci, 2019.

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Paper proposals (300-500 words approximately) may put forward different fields of study and theoretical frameworks and approaches. They are to be sent, along with a short biography, to Danièle André (daniele.andre.univ.larochelle@gmail.com) and Gwenthalyng Engélibert (gwenthalyng.engelibert@univ-brest.fr) by January 16th, 2023.

More than Words: The Voices and Sounds of Popular Music

Paul Schor (Université de Paris, LARCA), Manuel Bocquier (EHESS, Mondes Américains, CENA / Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne) and Elsa Grassy (Université de Strasbourg)

The popularization of the phonograph accompanied by the mass production and diffusion of music at the turn of the twentieth century gradually tied recording to the formation of a soundscape that could not be limited to the musical object (Maisonneuve 2009). Through the study of the relationship between sound and culture, Sound Studies and Popular Music Studies have analyzed the development of sound environments specific to American popular music. These fields of study have shown how aesthetic and musicological characteristics, aural and visual representations, as well as the social values and ideologies that are associated with popular music contribute to connect sounds to specific social groups (Hebdige 1979). Recent research has highlighted how soundscapes are shaped by the social and political relations that music helps build. From this perspective, the identification of country music with a white, male culture, the association of African Americans with a number of racially defined musical genres (e.g. blues, soul, rap, ...), or of rock and punk with white, urban youth can be understood as the result of historical and political processes (Nunn 2015; Kajikawa 2015; Stoeber 2016)

However, Popular Music Studies and the formal or informal discourses surrounding them have tended to prioritize the study of texts over that of sounds. Similarly, the study of social meanings has also relied primarily on lyrics. Musicology was a late-comer to the study of popular music (McClary & Walser 1990) and the codes and tools of classical musical analysis had to be progressively adapted and expanded so that recorded music could finally be understood in its sonic dimension (see the work of Philip Tagg on “musemes” and that of Serge Lacasse, among others). Conversely, the rock criticism that developed at the end of the 1960s, after the creation of *Rolling Stone* in 1967 and *Creem* in 1966, grounded the legitimization of commercial music through a vindication of its literary qualities. The fact the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to Bob Dylan may raise questions: should the recognition of popular music as art be based solely on the quality of lyrics?

This workshop invites participants to approach the place of sound material in popular music from two main angles:

- Popular Music as Music: Sound and Noise. Panelists are invited to approach popular music in the United States in its sonic, melodic, harmonic and rhythmic dimensions (including instrumentation, the *grain of the voice*, groove, hooks, call-and-response, but also production and studio work). This theme can be approached from a historiographical perspective, as the sound material of popular music pieces has long been neglected by researchers. However, we also welcome papers on the reception of popular music, among the public or the critics. Be it considered as “sound” or “noise,” who bestows the status of art upon popular music? What do we value or condemn on aesthetic grounds in popular music? What do we mean when we declare it unlistenable? Conversely, some artists and songs make it into popular music pantheons (e.g. the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Experience Music Project in Seattle, the Grammys). Are those

pantheons based, at least in part, on aesthetic criteria? Approaching the question from this angle does not exclude the possibility of questioning the social implications of “popular sound”:

- Voicing the Popular. Whose voices can be heard in *popular* music? We welcome analyses of how popular music has embodied the racial, regional, gender, and class differences that run through the history of US society, and of how it has been able to amplify otherwise inaudible voices. Conversely, popular music can be the vehicle for hegemonic values, and become the voice of a “Silent Majority.” By understanding music as a sonic experience (Pecqueux and Roueff 2009), this workshop apprehends the study of popular music, its noises and silences, as a means of reevaluating the social and political history of the United States. We hope to discuss the extent to which sound and music not only reflect the unequal relations that run through American society, but also participate in their production and evolution. How are racial, regional, gender, and class identifications constructed and maintained, taken up or transformed, contested or defended, by popular music? How does popular music come to “sound like” social groups distinguished by their identity?

We invite participants to present papers relying on a wide variety of methods of analysis and sources: sound recordings, press articles, industry archives (documents from companies and stores, listening spaces and performance venues), documents related to diffusion (phonographs and records, radio, performances, etc.), public testimonies (letters from listeners, oral histories, memoirs, media and sociological surveys, etc.).

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300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Manuel Bocquier (manuel.bocquier@ehess.fr), Elsa Grassy (grassy@unistra.fr), and Paul Schor (paul.schor@u-paris.fr) by January 16, 2023.

As Heard on TV: Voices in American Television Series

Sylvaine Bataille, Florence Cabaret and Jessica Thrasher-Chenot (Université de Rouen Normandie, ERIAC)

In this workshop we would like to explore the political and identity-related dimensions of the many uses of voice in television series, whether they be contemporary or older programs. Making one's voice heard may have a metaphorical or a literal meaning, and may be a collective or an individual act, taking place in any situation of performative speech where an individual/group emancipates oneself thanks to a liberating utterance.

- These questions can be linked to the particular genre of a series: the voices of teenagers confronting their parents (as in *Grand Central*), of characters coming out or making other announcements, can often be heard in teen series and family dramas; in police or courtroom series, the pleadings of the different speakers in a trial, the interrogations by the police, the testimonies of the victims and others bring to light viewpoints that literally build one or several realities (for example in *Unbelievable*); in historical and political series, the voice of a political leader delivering a speech and the slogans chanted through a megaphone in demonstrations initiate diverse forms of empowerments (*Show Me a Hero*, *Small Axe*). These few examples also illustrate that the agency which is thus embodied by this character or that group of characters is frequently supported by auditory staging choices.

- We could then consider the aural aspect of these different types of utterances. The voice-over — especially when it is an intra-diegetic device — could be an object of particular interest: rebellious and sarcastic interior voices resisting imposed silence in *The Handmaid's Tale*, recorded voice and sound flashbacks in *Thirteen Reasons Why*, or voices from beyond the grave in *Desperate Housewives*. Modulations and transformations of the voice also carry meaning, from a voice that uses song to make itself heard in a different way (in *Glee* or *Sex Education*) to a voice that must learn to control itself in order to transform reality (such as the witches' voices in *The Vampire Diaries*, or *Motherland: Fort Salem*), or a voice that passes as someone else's or actually becomes the voice of another person in a shift of gender or ethnic identity.

- Situations where the materiality of the voice is at stake could also lead to other types of discussions related to the dubbing of actors, the questionable choice of accents (see the debates about *The Simpsons*, or *The Big Bang Theory*) or, more broadly, the use of accents in

television series: indeed their variety is an integral part of the plot in *Orange is the New Black* while *Master of None* makes it the subject of an entire episode in season 1.

- Finally, this workshop could also be an opportunity to discuss the ways contemporary television series allow diverse artistic voices to be heard and speak out in a television environment that may be giving more space to voices that were once marginalized, if we think of examples such as *The Underground Railroad* or *When They See Us*.

Proposals, which may be case studies, on these and any other aspect of “Voices in American television series”, together with a short biographical note should be sent to Sylvaine Bataille (sylvaine.brennetot@univ-rouen.fr), Florence Cabaret (florence.cabaret@univ-rouen.fr), and Jessica Thrasher Chenot (jessica.thrasher@univ-rouen.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Inaudible, or Misheard? Nineteenth-Century Echo-logies

Thomas Constantinesco (Sorbonne Université) and Cécile Roudeau (Université Paris Cité)

We heard it all before. To a large extent, the echo of the nineteenth century has become background noise, and contemporary American literature as well as Americanist literary criticism are barely attuned, if at all, to its lower frequencies. We heard it all before. These days, the voices of the nineteenth century—the confused murmur onboard Melville’s *Bellipotent*, Whitman’s roaratorio, the “Shout” of Dickinson’s dreaded “first Robin,” Linda Brent’s whisperings from the confinement of her (s)crawlspace, Huck’s sarcasms—tend to fall on deaf ears, unless their jarring cacophony be deemed too loud and appears in need to be silenced. Certain texts from the nineteenth-century archive have indeed gone unheard, while others, it seems, can no longer be heard and others still have been muzzled under the thundering roar of ever-evolving canon formations. What if the nineteenth-century as we know it today was the product of a series of misunderstandings, misreadings and mishearings? What if, in order to be able to read it today, we needed to listen differently?

The literary voices of the nineteenth-century United States continue to resonate today, audibly so, as a series of scrambled allusions, which can therefore be traced in writings from subsequent periods. We can attend to their reverberating echo, however faint or distorted, in twentieth or twenty-first US literature in order to recover traces of the past—a form of “voice recognition,” as it were, with the potential to produce a soundtrack of dissonant resonances. Counterclockwise, the nineteenth century could be perceived, not so much as an illusory point of “origin,” but as a reverse echo of our fragile present, if not of a future (ours) that we could retrospectively apprehend.

This workshop proposes to attend to what we might call, after Timothy Clark, the “emergent inaudibility” of nineteenth-century US literature (see Clark’s elaboration of the notion of “emergent unreadability” in *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* [Bloomsbury, 2015], where the anthropocene is theorized as “a threshold at which modes of interpretation that once seemed sufficient or progressive become inadequate”). This entails recontextualizing our ways of “doing literature,” re-elaborating the ways we listen to literary texts, as well as reconsidering what makes the text’s inscription in

its contexts historically significant. This entails a change of scale, so that we may lend an ear to what has remained imperceptible until now (the presence or disappearance of a birdsong, of a babbling brook)—to what was too small to cross the threshold of perception, like microscopic beings and forces, or, on the contrary, what exceeded our abilities to register it, let alone interpret it, such as deep or planetary time. What has remained unheard then may thus resonate with greater force today. From this perspective, past texts would be sites of emergent effects and the locus of a generalized derangement of our regimes of signification.

Listening thus becomes a practice of difference that both conjoins and disjoins the present of those who listen as well as the text's present-past-futurity. Listening is ecological, therefore, allusive and referential, at once crisis and critique of sense by the senses. When readerly rhythms, allures, and cadences change, words acquire a different weight, pages scan differently and new sequences—as well as con-sequences—emerge. This “ecology” is poetic, as well as hermeneutic: “To be listening is to be inclined toward the opening of meaning,” Jean-Luc Nancy writes in *Listening* (Fordham UP, 27, trad. Ch. Mandell), “hence to a slash, a cut in un-sensed indifference at the same time as toward a reserve that is anterior and posterior to any signifying punctuation. In the spacing out of the opening the *attack* of sense resonates.” Spacing out the text, varying the weight, or attack, of language, distributing meaning differently is a way of *interpreting* the text otherwise, which is also a political performance in itself. One may even wager that *this* is where politics begin—when there is disagreement (*mésentente*, see Rancière, 1995), or dissonance, when one disagrees on the partition of meaning, on the axe of syntax, on the distinction between noise and speech. *There* begin to emerge other modes of hearing, or listening to, the same text. So, if we have misheard the nineteenth century, let's venture it is for the better.

Papers may address—but should not be restricted to—the following questions, or topics:

- how to listen to nineteenth-century literary texts otherwise, from the present that is ours (by changing focus, scale, historical contextualisation; by changing the pace of our reading, the way we punctuate or scan the textual continuum);
- how nineteenth-century texts resonate with the past (or claim they don't); alternately, how they resonate with our present, or paradoxically, are both the hindsight of our future and the future of our present;
- theories and practices of listening (signs, texts) in the nineteenth century as they are textually encrypted in nineteenth-century texts;
- the articulation (agreement or disagreement) between sound epistemologies and visual epistemologies.

Proposals should be sent to Cécile Roudeau (cecile.roudeau@gmail.com) and Thomas Constantinesco (thomas.constantinesco@gmail.com) by January 16, 2023.

The Writing of History and its Silences

Virginie Adane (Nantes Université) and Anne-Claire Faucquez (Université Paris 8)

The historiography on Early America has increasingly been questioning those who have been silenced and forgotten by history – and this has been the case since the “New

Histories” of the 1960s – while interrogating the very fabric of history and, consequently, of “imagined communities” (Benedict Anderson). The historian Howard Zinn in his *Popular History of the United States* (1980) has highlighted the more modest actors of history whose experience he confronts with the more official and heroic version. Regarding the place of women in history, Gerda Lerner asked in 1998 “not only why certain contents were omitted, ignored, trivialized, but also who decides what should be retained or not” (Gerda Lerner, *Why History Matters*, p.131). In the 1990s, Michel-Rolph Trouillot’s work on race and the Haitian Revolution – as well as on founding US myths such as Alamo – led to the identification of the power mechanisms at play in the making of history (*Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 1995). More recently, Karin Wulf observed about the history of early America that “conceptualised as the prehistory of the United States, originating in British colonies on the central east coast of mainland North America, early American history often and for centuries flattened out distinctive circumstances within a diverse population in favour of a unified portrait and a message of collective national ambitions.” (“Vast Early America”, *Aeon*, 15 July 2021) Consequently, and for several years now, historiography has been focusing on “taking a step aside” and seeing history from the margins, through the study of a “vast early America.”

This workshop aims both to analyze the writing of American history (from its very beginning to the 20th century) and to deconstruct it while focusing on its silences, the production of sources and the memory policies associated with it. We will question these mechanisms over the centuries as well as its contemporary political and memorial stakes.

Proposals could include (but not only):

- The erasure of some actors of history in favor of chosen heroes
- When memory replaces history by the writing of myths (the myth of the discovery of America, the myth of Pocahontas, the myth of Thanksgiving, the myth of the Promised Land, the myth of the Founding Fathers, the myth of the American dream, the myth of the West, etc.)
- The rewriting of the history of slavery and the Civil War by the Confederate Southerners
- The ethnicization of memories and the exploitation of memory by some communities to establish their political claims

300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Virginie Adane (virginie.adane@gmail.com) and Anne-Claire Faucquez (acfaucquez@gmail.com) by January 16, 2023.

American Voices in Translation: What do Translators Give Voice To?

Véronique Béghain (Université Bordeaux Montaigne) and Emmanuelle Delanoë-Brun (Université Paris Cité)

If the translator is an “exceptional reader” (Le Blanc 2019) and reading “a sharing of voices” (Szendy 2022), literary texts in translation offer a privileged field of study regarding the voices, sounds, noises, and silences that inhabit the intimate space of reading,

particularly in light of the power relations the translator maintains with the text and in which readers inevitably get caught.

Translators of English, and probably even more so of American English, frequently find that the translation of fictional orality is a major source of difficulty. The translation of accents in particular calls for delicate correspondences and requires the simultaneous treatment of lexical as well as syntactic, syntagmatic and graphic markers, intertwined in the manufacture of oralized writing. How do translators of American literature account for the dialectal variations and sociolects specific to certain fictional characters? Are deviations from standard language, be they diachronic, diatopic, or diastratic, necessarily bound to be obscured by French translations? Can they steer clear of caricature and stigmatization? Onomatopoeia alone constitutes an object of study in its own right, to which the translations of comic strips and graphic novels provide an ample corpus. And poetry, in its attention to the phonic and rhythmic potentialities of language, its concern with noises, sounds, and silences, presents another challenge to the translator working towards a language that may operate along very different prosodic lines.

Translations may also include silences in the form of omissions and editing of the original material. From a historical perspective, we may consider the various reasons for these omissions, which may be due to aesthetic, ideological or economic choices specific to a given period and a given translation project or position; meanwhile, such negotiations draw our attention to the evolution of translation practices and deontology. Silences in American translations may aim at meeting the expectations of the French literary circles and be related to the aesthetic and philosophical norms of a given era. They can result from questionable choices originating in cultural, historical or ideological distances that translations may either wish to bring forth, or disregard, generating in turn conversations regarding the political function or responsibilities of translation.

The “gaps” in publishing also deserve to be examined as manifestations of silencing. In that perspective, the silence to which many American short story writers are reduced – due to a resistance, on the part of French publishers in general, to the genre of the short story itself – constitutes an emblematic illustration of the discrepancies in the formation of literary canons on American and French soils. Some untranslated segments of American poetry are another illustration of the silence in which a significant part of the American literary production is kept in France, despite its omnipresence on booksellers’ tables.

This raises the question of the translator’s voice, its audibility, or programmed inaudibility in the wake of naturalizing and ethnocentric conceptions of translation, still widely shared by French publishers and readers. It should be remembered that, if contemporary French publishers are most often reluctant to let the translator make himself heard, this has not always been the case. In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, translations were frequently prefaced by their translators. While some readers embrace the fantasy of direct access to the work of the original creator, is the erasure of the translator’s voice desirable, or even possible? Is the translator’s note, in this perspective, only a marker of incompetence, as some would have it? The process of explicitation (i.e. the insertion of clarification in the body of the text), which is frequently preferred by French publishers, makes the voice of those who translate less audible (and visible). It can nevertheless be considered a form of

interference which, however low key, permanently inscribes their voice in the work, for better or for worse. And what of some contemporary feminist translators' call for interventionism as a way of making minored and silenced voices audible, against the historicity of the texts?

More broadly, while the translational paratext (notes, translators' prefaces, glossaries) has quite recently become a field of research in its own right in translation studies (paratranslation), the translators' voices are being given a visibility and legitimacy that they have long lacked. At the same time, the rise in media exposure of translators' discourse in recent years testifies both to the recognition of these expert voices and to a desire on the part of readers to hear them.

The recent controversy surrounding the translation of Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem also leads us to consider the necessity (or not) of privileging a correspondence between the author's voice and the translator's voice. Can one translate a voice radically different from one's own? On what criteria could we, or should we, base the identity that can serve as a standard? Are affinities necessarily identity-based? Doesn't professional expertise allow one to translate any voice? If we see translation as a political act, should we work to promote minority voices and greater diversity in the translation community?

And what about the voice of the reader? The reader is, in fact, constantly present in the minds of translators. The translated work is in many ways a collaborative work, the result of multiple readings and rereadings that "perform" the work in a way. The translator, who can be seen as an arranger for whom the source text is a kind of score, takes place in a continuum of performances, of which the performance peculiar to the common reader of translated books or to the literary critic constitutes only the final stage.

This workshop aims at exploring the discussions that this year's symposium's theme opens in the field of literary translation. We welcome papers that may take multiple forms, from testimonies of translators of American literature and studies of specific translations to larger historical or theoretical approaches, but also perspectives, singular or plural, on translation issues regarding voices, sounds, silences, and the discussion and noise they may generate in the literary or public sphere.

Proposals will be sent to Véronique Béghain (veronique.beghain@u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr) and Emmanuelle Delanoë-Brun (delanoee@univ-paris-diderot.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Songs and Music during the Civil Rights Movement

Simon Grivet (Université de Lille)

We Shall Overcome, the old early 20th century gospel hymn, covered and reinterpreted by folk singers Pete Seeger or Joan Baez, and sung by thousands of demonstrators, symbolizes the importance of committed songs during the Civil Rights Movement. Ultimately, the words even made it into President Johnson's famous address to the joint session of Congress following the Selma to Montgomery March of 1965. Demonstrations, marches, sit-ins of the time almost always featured songs, a testimony to the dual influence of the African American

religious practice of gospel and of committed songs in the American labor movement. This panel offers to question this well-known phenomenon to analyze its singularity and its political significance. Which role was devoted to these songs? How were they related to non-violence? Which role did they play for the Movement's participants? Did they solidify an African American identity, a reflection of faith going beyond all generational, class and gender barriers? Or did they also help to bridge the gap between communities to unify protesters and overcome the color line? This panel would also like to explore the simultaneous emergence of the Civil Rights Movement with the apparition of a culture and musical industry that wished to erase racial differences to satisfy consumers and their desire for entertainment. Tensions appeared between commitment, artistic integrity and political neutrality which deserve investigation. Hence interventions questioning the role of black and white music stars (Bob Dylan, Sam Cooke, Pete Seeger, Aretha Franklin, etc.) in the Civil Rights Movement would also be welcome in this panel.

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300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Simon Grivet (simon.grivet@univ-lille.fr) by January 16, 2023.

Silent Nature, Noisy Intruders? The Sonic Experience of Discovery and Exploration in American Literature, from the 18th to the 21st c.

Pauline Pilote (Université Bretagne Sud) and Julien Nègre (ENS Lyon)

This workshop stems from the realization that in many literary texts from the first decades of the nineteenth century, the North American territory is represented as an empty world, into which white men come blaring in. This opposition pits, on the one hand, a natural space, associated with silence and muteness (that of Nature and the stereotypical Indian mutism) against the act of conquest and appropriation, on the other, that goes with a sonorous takeover of the landscape – blasting firearms, whacking axes taking down the American forest, clanging hammers in the settlements, etc. This panel seeks to address both the meaning and the relevance of this separation: are the wide American landscapes in the exploration narratives of the time always described as silent worlds, disturbed by the arrival of white men? What are the sonic issues deriving from the intrusion of white men and their movement of discovery – is this movement a silent or a boisterous one? Do these exogenous noises brought by colonisation serve to cover up, or obliterate other noises? Do they serve the purpose of filling the silence? or of silencing other less familiar noises? Are they the audible signs of a movement of conquest, of territorial seizure, of the sonic grasp of a territory considered as empty? Is silence the sign of the hostility of the place? Or is this silence necessarily proof of its emptiness, of a space to be settled?

This vision of vast empty natural lands recurs throughout exploration narratives from the 18th and 19th centuries. But these descriptions of mute and still landscapes paradoxically coexist with the Puritan leitmotiv of the “howling wilderness,” filled with the “war-whoop” that signals Native American attacks, this supposedly menacing world which resonates with disturbing sounds. The sounds as well as the silences of the North American territory are (re)imagined and interpreted by colonists who seek to master them, to distinguish between them and also to understand them – even if that meant superimposing their own interpretations. In *The Maine Woods* (1864), Thoreau describes the silence of the forest on the banks of the Allegash; he notes: “Generally speaking, a howling wilderness does not howl: it is the imagination of the traveler that does the howling.” Thoreau reevaluates the Puritan motif of the howling wilderness (a shapeless and wild spatiality that is both terrifying and attractive), to show how the perception of the American territory is shaped by the representations that are projected onto it. This workshop aims at exploring this particular aspect of the sonic experience of discovery and exploration. How is silence and sound interpreted in these texts? Do these spaces also include inaudible elements? What do you imagine you are hearing and what do you want to hear in these spaces? What is at stake is the role played by the writing process itself: are these texts about staying silent (avoiding being noisy, but also refusing to speak by staying below or out of language, by not writing?) or, on the contrary, about making oneself heard, like Whitman with his barbaric yawp or Thoreau who, at the beginning of “Walking,” declares: “I wish to speak [a word for nature]”?

In spatial and epistemological terms, these issues manifest themselves on the map's blank spaces, which negatively reveal what, to the cartographer, must remain unseen, unheard, and silent. What, exactly, can be heard once you enter these specific areas?

This workshop aims at exploring the issue of what is heard (willfully or not, accurately or not) at the exact moment when an area of space is discovered and explored – be it in the 19th c movement of territorial conquest or later in the 20th and 21st century – and how imaginary representations are projected onto these spaces to make sense of their noises and their silence. We invite proposals that examine literary texts from all periods of American history and all literary genres.

300-word proposals in English or French and a short biographical note should be sent to Pauline Pilote (pauline.pilote@univ-ubs.fr) and (julien.negre@ens-lyon.fr), by January 16, 2023.

Amplification, Modulation, Transformation, and Silencing of the Political Voice in Mediated Contexts: the Communication Order(s) and Disorder(s) of Political Systems

Carole Darmon (Université d'Angers) and Sébastien Mort (Université de Lorraine, Metz)

In Athenian democracy, Plato defined the ideal size of a city based on the number of listeners that the orator's voice could reach (McLuhan 306). Very early on, the human voice was central in the organization of Western societies' political systems through speeches, songs, and even silence. The political voice—whether oral, transcribed, or written—is shaped by communication apparatuses which transform it and force it to adapt, and which are themselves influenced by what Williams and Delli Carpini (2011) call “media regimes.” This concept refers to “a historically specific, relatively stable set of institutions, norms, processes and actors that shape the expectations and practices of media producers and consumers. [...] Media regimes are held in place by the authoritative actions of government and so are always political, and so always structure the nature of democratic politics (16).” This panel invites papers that analyze the political voice in mediated contexts and the ways in which different types of apparatuses have amplified, modulated, transformed, or silenced it throughout US history and its successive media regimes.

During the colonial period, New England communities formed around the written word. The oratory that developed at that time was inspired by the writings of intellectuals and the study of religious texts (Postman et al. 70-71). Alexis de Tocqueville remarked this oral-written tradition, arguing that “an American cannot converse, but he can discuss, and his talk falls into a dissertation. He speaks to you as if he was addressing a meeting; and if he should chance to become warm in the discussion, he will say ‘Gentlemen’ to the person with whom he is conversing” (Tocqueville 226). Receiving intense coverage in the press in their full versions or in the form of pamphlets, the 1858 debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas illustrate what Neil Postman calls the “typographical mind,” namely the ability to deliver and listen to long speeches based on reason and structured and conceptual argumentation (Postman et al. 101).

Adopting a normative and prescriptivist approach, Neil Postman contrasts this “Age of Exposition” with the “Age of Show Business,” which was slowly initiated by the emergence of the telegraph and then photography at the end of the 19th century, and which the advent of television firmly established in the mid-20th century. For Postman, the US television industry is antithetical to the authentic political voice, as “[...] television’s way of knowing is uncompromisingly hostile to typography’s way of knowing; [...] television’s conversations promote incoherence and triviality; [...] the phrase “serious television” is a contradiction in terms [...].” (Postman 125). For Postman, technological innovation not only affects the modes of transmission of the political voice, but also narrows its amplitude.

Michael Schudson qualifies this view and warns against the risks of examining these phenomena in terms of the ineluctable deterioration of political discourse under the influence of emerging communication apparatuses (Schudson 470). For Susan J. Douglas, in the 20th century, radio offered new opportunities for the amplification of the human voice and of sound. She distinguishes between “informational listening”—the exposure to factual reports that do not appeal to the public’s imagination—and “dimensional listening,” a form of sensory engagement with news content that immerses listeners in visually potent narratives, exposes them to the authentic sounds of far-off events, and appeals to their imagination (Douglas 163). The radio reports of journalist Edward R. Murrow, whose voice could be heard from across the Atlantic, provide an example of dimensional listening. In 1940, hoping to rally public opinion to the United States’ entry into the war, Murrow relayed the stories of Londoners’ daily life during the Blitz and transmitted the sound of bombs falling on the city (Ehrlich 100), the journalist’s voice thus becoming the voice of ordinary citizens. Librarian of Congress Archibald McLeish bears witness to this in a speech delivered on December 2nd, 1941: “You burned the city of London in our houses, and we felt the flames that burned it [...]. You have destroyed the superstition that what is done beyond 3,000 miles of water is not really done at all” (Sperber 204).

As cable television was slowly displacing broadcast television in the early 1990s, the Golden Age of Broadcast News gave way to the “postbroadcast regime,” a media regime characterized by the emergence of a new brand of non-traditional formats relaying newsworthy and politically relevant content (Williams and Delli Carpini). As the “space of opinion” was broadening (Jacob and Townsley 48-49), a new kind of news making role-players set out to dispute the exclusive prerogative of traditional journalists to define the contours of the discursive environment, thus allowing new political voices to be heard. During the 1992 presidential campaign, TV talk shows became central political fora (Ridout). Later, in 2008, John McCain and Sarah Palin’s rallies took on a carnival-like dimension: during these events, the audience was seen and heard through frequent crying, booing, or clapping (Herbst 35). The rallies were not only designed to be experienced on site but also to respond to the demands of political communication in the “hybrid media system,” where the logics of legacy media and social platforms are integrated in dynamic interdependence (Chadwick). Footage of the rallies was repackaged in carefully edited segments which were then aired on cable and broadcast networks and re-mediated on social platforms to great public acclaim.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, candidate Donald Trump was offered close to \$5 million in free earned media by mainstream news outlets (Francia 447), thus successfully

silencing the voices of his opponents during the primaries and the voice of Hillary Clinton, his Democratic opponent, during the campaign for the general election. In the four years Trump spent in the White House, political commentators, journalists, and writers used William Faulker's *The Sound and the Fury* ad nauseam to characterize the 45th president's chaotic style of communication. Consistent with the logics of social platforms, Trump drew from Palin and McCain and the atmosphere at their rallies and he punctuated his speeches with dramatic call-and-response routines and chants ("Lock Her Up," "Build the Wall," "Send Her Back") which were then covered by professional journalists, adopted by his supporters, and denounced by his critics.

This panel interrogates the various processes of amplification, modulation, transformation and silencing of political voices across the successive media regimes that have punctuated US history. Participants are invited to take a diachronic approach that situates such processes in their historical, economic, legislative, technological, and cultural contexts. Particular attention will be given to speaker status (politician, journalist, political commentator, pundit, lobbyist, ordinary citizens), to the conditions under which the right to speak is granted and voices are amplified, modulated, or silenced, but also to the conditions of reception or non-reception of mediated narratives. The panel also interrogates the outcomes of such processes: are they designed to legitimate, disrupt, regenerate, or subvert existing political systems?

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Abstracts (300 words maximum) and short biographical statements should be sent to Carole Darmon (carole.darmon@univ-angers.fr) and Sébastien Mort, (sebastien.mort@univ-lorraine.fr) no later than January 16th, 2023.

The Sound of the Silenced: Slave Narratives in History and Film

Marie-Pierre Baduel (Université Toulouse 2-Jean-Jaurès) and Hélène Charlery (Université Toulouse 2-Jean-Jaurès)

In his 1847 autobiography, *The Narrative of William W. Brown, a Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself*, William Wells Brown recalls hearing the sound of his mother's pain as inflicted by her owners (15). Sound was then one of the entry points Brown chose to describe to his readers the suffering of bondage, notably his mother's. A similar process was used in McQueen's *Twelve Years a Slave* (2013) in the scenes depicting Patsey's rape, whipping, and mutilation by Mr. and Mrs. Epps. As epitomized by Brown's title or McQueen's onscreen account of Solomon Northrup's story, the questions of voice and self-representation, authorial point of view and authorship, and of direct and indirect testimonies of slavery, are relevant to our panel's discussion on voices, sounds, and silences in slave narratives in history and film.

In her often-quoted 2004 book *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* on imperialism, Arundhati Roy wrote: "There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard." The statement can easily apply to slave narratives. The latter have long been the object and subject of debates as to how they legitimately served as authenticated historical sources of individual accounts representing a collective experience (Nichols 1963, Blassingame, 1975, Starling, 1946-1988, Parfait, 2015), of debates on their very definition and status as genre (written narratives, the WPA interviews, dictated narratives, biographical accounts, short sketches in abolitionist newspapers), or status as canon, intellectual references, or as accounts in popular culture. This raises the question of which voices are in, and why they are let in, which voices are cast out, and who cast them out. Recently, historians and filmmakers have raised this question of legitimacy and authenticity again with works telling "history from the bottom-up and the inside-out" (Rediker, 2012; Barrett, 2017). While these narratives center on the enslaved (*Djando Unchained*, 2012, *Twelve Years a Slave*, 2013), they illustrate these authors' search for new forms to excavate and express the voices of the enslaved (Aljoe, 2012; Oualdi, 2021; films' sub-genres in *Harriet*, 2019 and *Antebellum*, 2020). While these works bring forward individual and collective voices that have been unheard and/or silenced (Naylor, 2022), they also foreground the roles of historians and filmmakers in shedding light on the unheard.

In this panel, we invite and welcome papers discussing how recent readings of slave narratives put forward the voices, sounds, and silences in the history, historiography, and audio-visual representations (film and television series) of slavery as a means to shift from the expression of suffering to forms of empowerment.

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Proposals for papers (abstracts of 300 words and a short bio-bibliography) are to be sent to Marie-Pierre Baduel (marie-pierre.baduel@univ-tlse2.fr) and Hélène Charlery (helene.charlery@univ-tlse2.fr) no later than January 16th, 2023.

The Voice of the "Poor Little White Man" in the Audiovisual Arts and Media: from the "Silent Majority" (Nixon 1969) to the "New Minority" (Gest 2016)

Julie Assouly (université d'Artois), Yvonne-Marie Rogez (université de Paris-Panthéon Assas) and Marine Soubeille (université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3)

The number of opinion polls showing a decrease of the white population in the United States has multiplied in the last decade (see Brookings: 80% of whites in 1980, 69% in 2000, 60% in 2019). They foresee that the non-white population will outnumber the white population by 2040. This phenomenon reveals a radical paradigmatic shift and a myth which places white individuals as representatives of a minority in the media and political discourse (Pierce, 2015) and resulted in Donald Trump's election in 2016. It originates in the southern States at the beginning of the 20th century, as white farm workers in former slave plantations were downgraded in comparison with the white upper classes. They now have common points with non-white minorities in terms of occupation or status, and form a distinct racial and social class stigmatized as the "white trash" (Foley, 1997). On the political stage, some of those "downgraded" whites were given a voice in 1969 when Richard Nixon addressed the "silent majority" as the Vietnam war crisis raged on. To him, they were a pool of conservative voters who did not take part in the public debate as it was occupied by protesting minorities (Laderman, 2020). This "minority" would then support Ronald Reagan, adhere to the theories of the Tea Party and recently Donald Trump's. They are mostly uneducated white American citizens from rural or suburban areas who have been notably absent from polling stations, the media and the world of culture in general. They appear as unflattering *rednecks*

or *hillbillies* in 1960s and 70s movies. A number of individuals from this silent majority now form a vociferous and victimized minority who consider themselves as the “grassroots” at Donald Trump rallies. This group is at the heart of the public and media debates (e.g. the Capitol uprising), as they claim to be the target of the “woke” and “cancel culture” advocates (two terms which have emerged from the social networks, spread in the media, and are largely exploited by far-right movements).

A “white backlash” started to appear on screen, from the 1970s. This phenomenon describes the resentment expressed by part of the white population in reaction to affirmative action and the promotion of minorities in the aftermath of the Civil Rights movement. A movie like *Rocky* (Avildsen, 1976) which emphasizes the athletic and financial success of the black fighter (Apollo Creed), according to Eithne Quinn, sent the wrong message because at the end of the film, it really is Rocky, the poor white man from the projects, who has remained humble and true to his origins, who is the authentic hero although he loses the final fight (Quinn 167-168). This idea is developed by Matthew Frye Jacobson, who talks of “*white ethnic revival*” and concludes that Rocky “is not a spokesman for white backlash; he is a poster boy for white victimization.” (Jacobson 107-108) More recently, the same victimization of the poor white man was depicted in *Crash* (Haggis, 2004), the Academy Award recipient in 2005, yet in a more equivocal way. It is indeed a moneyless racist cop (Mat Dillon) who is seen both struggling with his father’s disease and abusing his power to humiliate a rich African American couple. At the end of the film, he is the one saving the black woman from a car crash. To Quinn, these films which pass for “racially libera” are on the contrary “anti-affirmative action” (Quinn 219). Indeed, like the previously mentioned “majority vs minority” statistics (Craig, Richeson, 2014) they have a negative impact on the white population and feed the myth of “racial dispossession”, victimizing the “poor little white” (Laurent, 2020) some of whom consider director Craig Zahler their spokesperson (Gallego, 2022). His three most successful films, *Bone Tomahawk* (2015), *Brawl in Cell 99* (2017) and *Dragged Across Concrete* (2018) are indeed built around a white hero who is either the victim of a cannibalistic Native American tribe, the prison system or society as a whole, which seems to justify their extreme violence. These heroes are also represented as good family men and appeal to the spectator’s sympathy. Zahler and the independent Texan studio producing his films, Cinestate, seem to be very popular among Trump’s voters (Miller 2019). “It’s pretty clear that S. Craig Zahler has a formula for his fiction. Irredeemably evil minorities + damsel in distress threatened with sexual violence + heroic Aryan(s) + violent climax = jackpot!” (Jacob Garfinkel dans Miller 2019). And what about Chris Kyle, the PTSDed veteran in *American Sniper* (2015), depicted as a vigilante/victim but who is nothing but a “white nationalist hero” (Nilsen 2021).

In the media, the “man on the street” is embodied by Joe the Plumber, a true Capraesque character who became a spokesperson for the Republican party during the 2008 presidential election campaign. The extensive media coverage that he benefited from demonstrated the tendency to instrumentalize the poor white boy who is a victim of the system, particularly when faced with the possibility of a black candidate who was more threatening than ever for him. Even though the 2008 mortgage crisis impacted only part of this white population (Loyo, Taracón, 2022), it probably participated in the media

construction of the white victim presented in movies that do not directly address the question of race, such as *99 homes* (Bahrani, 2014). *Post mortgage crisis* movies show that marginalization and minorization can be experienced differently and are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Gest 20). It is obviously possible to envisage the victimization of the poor white boy in social rather than racial terms, particularly when his representation in movies shows that his exclusion from the “melting pot” is not really a willful act. It is rather a situation that he endures and a consequence of social and economic marginalization (*The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*, 2005).

This workshop will focus on the narrative of the “poor white boy” who sees himself as a victim of a demographic decline (Gest 2016), as well as that of the poor white individual who is a victim of financial crises. It will address the potential correlations between the two phenomena in fictional films, documentaries, TV series and the audiovisual media through different periods. To what extent does the former instrumentalize the latter? How did the supremacist and hegemonic discourse which was a characteristic of a part of the white population become the word of victimization? To what extent is the rehabilitation of *white trash* (*Crash*, *Ozark*) related to this phenomenon? What is the place of women in this very masculine topic (*Winter's Bone*, *The Florida Project*, *Ozark*)?

Possible topics and references:

- Victimization, white fragility, working-class hero (ex: *Out of the Furnace*, *American Sniper*)
- Criticism or celebration of the “white-trash” culture which is kept out of the American Dream (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *True Detective*, *True Blood*)
- “White trash” redemption, “white trash” gone good (*Crash*, *Ozark*)
- White supremacists in context (*American History X*) or as satire (*The Boys*, *Machete*)
- “White backlash”
- Post mortgage crisis films and documentaries (*The Florida Project*, *99 homes*), the common man as a victim of the system (Frank Capra, the 1930s, Depression Era films)

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Proposals (300-word abstracts with a biographical note) should be sent jointly to Julie Assouly (julie.assouly@gmail.com), Marine Soubeille (marine.soubeille@gmail.com) and Yvonne-Marie Rogez (yvonnemarierogez@gmail.com) no later than January 16, 2023.

Listening In/To the City: Urban Symphonies and Deafening Soundscapes

Caroline Magnin and Anouk Bottero (VALE, Sorbonne Université)

People, endless, streaming, with strong voices,
passions, pageants, Manhattan streets with their powerful
throbs, with beating drums as now,

The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of muskets, (even the
sight of the wounded,) Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical
chorus!

Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.

Walt Whitman, "Give me the Splendid Silent Sun" (1865)

New York City has always been described as a deafening place – a "turbulent" jumble of sirens, car horns, firetrucks, and loud, petulant voices: how have artists and writers managed to makesounds tangible in order to depict New York's soundscapes? Moreover, the same way that Whitmanheard a musical chorus" in this aggregation of sounds, contemporary American artists and writers have tried to appropriate the dissonance of the city in order to conjure up its beauty and musicality. The opening shots of *West Side Story*, overlooking the city, are enhanced by Leonard Bernstein's score, in which he ingrained the chaotic and energetic essence of a mutating city. The blasting, deafening sounds of the aftermath of 9/11 take on a

physical dimension in DeLillo's *Falling Man*, to the point of almost becoming a character in the story. Action movies have forever fantasized the destruction of the city, annihilating it over and over again to the tune of an unbearable din. Indeed, contemporary cultural productions offer a twofold approach to sounds and noises: on the one hand, music is made out of the gritty sounds of the city to enhance and celebrate a sense of belonging and community; on the other hand, an increasing number of works of fiction make audible the underlying violence and threat contained within city noises.

Amidst the growing cacophony, is there still a place for silence in American cities? Where is it to be found? Does silence necessarily represent a point of resistance against excessive, distracting din or static noises? Moreover, the very existence of these sounds and noises presupposes the presence of an *ear*, a receptacle for such noises. From a passive, brutal exposition to sounds, is silence the way for us to be able to listen, rather than just hear? And in an often disincarnate urban soundscape, what is the place for human voices? Perhaps the voice of the city is that of its inhabitants, with all their variety of accents and dialects: how do authors and filmmakers alike weave these nonstandard, urban voices within the very fabric of the city? Is the emotional core of the city contained in its people's "grain of the voice" (Barthes, 1981)?

This workshop wishes to invite papers addressing a variety of artistic and literary works, ranging from fiction, poetry, theatre (musical or not) to cinema, TV series, music, and drawing from various disciplinary fields beyond literature (civilization and history, social approaches to linguistics and phonetics...). We welcome papers that focus on (but are not limited to) the following themes:

- The literary/ filmic construction of soundscapes
- The exploration of noise and disruption, the threatening potential of city sounds
- The musicality of the city; its music and musicians, harmonizing the city
- The ethics of listening and the question of the emotional/ traumatic impact of city sounds
- The question of silence and silent spaces in the city
- The voices of the city, their accents and dialects, questioning/redefining Americanness

Proposals (300-word abstracts with a biographical note) should be sent jointly to Anouk Bottero (anouk.bottero@sorbonne-universite.fr) and Caroline Magnin (caroline.magnin@u-pec.fr) before January 16, 2023

Poetry as Soundscape? Voices, Sounds, Noises, Silences

Juliette Utard (Sorbonne Université) and Abigail Lang (Université Paris-Cité)

To what extent does poetry build a "soundscape"? Long before the "sonic turn," the lyrical origins of poetry meant that song and voice were among the genre's dominant modes. From Walt Whitman's "chants democratic" to Bob Dylan's lyrics—for which he was awarded the 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature—North American poetry established itself primarily as a

poetry of sounds and voices, striving to create what Richard Powers in *Orfeo* calls “a newfound America of sound.”

Amplified sounds, at times bordering on shouts and noises—best exemplified by Whitman’s “barbaric yawp” and Ginsberg’s “howl”—as well as whispered, hesitant, stutter sounds that are barely audible or transcribable—we may think, for instance, of the proliferation of typographic signs in Emily Dickinson’s manuscripts as preparation for the poems’ “vocalization,” or David Grubbs’ sonic experiment based on Susan Howe’s poems, which transforms her collection into a polysensory space).

In addition to such a shift from visual to aural and from page to soundscape, poetry also operates a shift from expression to reception, from the projected voice to the receiving ear (as reflected in Dickinson’s poem “The Spirit is the Conscious Ear —” [J733/Fr718], which invites to “only – Hear –”), occasionally giving rise to a poetics (perhaps even a politics?) of listening (as suggested by Whitman’s paradoxical statement that “Now I will do nothing but listen,” in the middle of “Song of Myself” [§26]). Opening itself to the rustle of the world, poetry becomes a soundtrack, registering an ever-wider range of human and nonhuman audio frequencies, ultimately to unfold a (pastoral, urban, historical) soundscape. In other words, this panel invites participants to dwell on the theoretical, methodological and critical contributions afforded by Sound Studies in the field of poetry and poetics.

Possible topics include:

- Interactions between poetry and North American music: porosity between texts and lyrics, poetry and popular music (folk, blues, rock, punk, post-punk, etc), the revolutionary impact of jazz on poetry’s rhythms and compositional methods (Harlem Renaissance, Beat Generation, Black Arts Movement); poetry and musicals (such as *Elegies For Angels, Punks and Raging Queens* [1989] based in part on Edgar Lee Masters); poetry and operas (such as Matthew Aucoin’s *Crossing: An Opera* [2015] whose libretto is based on Whitman’s Civil War writings).
- Collaborations between poets and sound artists (in addition to Susan Howe and David Grubbs, one might think of Patti Smith’s recent collaboration with Soundwalk Collective resulting in a poetry reading/concert at the Centre Pompidou in October 2022)
- Poetry’s attempts to “make a noise” by reclaiming urban spaces (public readings and performances, spoken word and slam) and digital spaces (through the rise of video-poems on Instagram and TikTok and video-poetry festivals)
- How sound technologies (especially, sound amplification or transformation and audio recording technology) have been affecting the writing of poetry since the phonograph was invented (Allen Ginsberg’s use of a portable Uher tape recorder as his new compositional tool at the end of the sixties, or the connections between Modernism and radio as underlined by Todd Avery in *Radio Modernism*)
- Poetry and sonic environments (such as white noise, pink noise, Brown noise) as tools, resources or models, especially in contemporary poetry

- Poetry and types of speech impairment (aphonia, aphasia, dysphasia, selective mutism—one may think of Maya Angelou who stopped speaking for several years as a child until poetry, she said, helped her recover her voice) or auditory impairment (dysacusia, hypoacusia, hyperacusia—see, for instance, Michael Davidson's recent *Distressing Language: Disability and the Poetics of Error*): how does North American poetry make way for speech and hearing disorders?
- Poetry's audio broadcasting and sound archives: how to record, archive, analyze the performed poem? Have poetry podcasts (such as Al Filreis' *PoemTalk* series) transformed poetry or our way of talking about poetry—and if so, how?

Please send proposals (no more than 300 words) to Juliette Utard (juliette.utard@gmail.com) and Abigail Lang (Abigail.Lang@univ-paris-diderot.fr) along with a short bio-bibliographical note (approximately 150 words) no later than January 16, 2023.

Silences: Mute Responses to (Post-Inner-Colonial) Trauma in American Fiction

Yuri Stulov (Department of World Literature at Minsk State Linguistics University), Natalia Vysotska (Kyiv National Linguistics University, Ukraine)

In response to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's oft-cited question headlining her groundbreaking essay "Can a Subaltern Speak?" (1988) much of ethnic and postcolonial scholarship has addressed the issues of a subaltern's "voice" status vis-à-vis metropolitan / dominant cultures – as repressed or muffled, appropriated or stolen, recovered or newly found. Meanwhile, a subaltern's trauma-imposed silence, either involuntarily caused by physiological disorders, or deliberately chosen as a form of resistance might be of no less significance for elucidating the power dynamics in terms of its sound manifestations. On the one hand, traumatic silences understood as "the voice of trauma" can be interpreted not solely as a defensive technique, but also as "a re-experiencing of past, unpredictable traumatic affective states and memories" (Ritter, 176). On the other hand, in his sound-centered academic trilogy *Sean Street* describes intentional ("negative") silence as "the stillness we make and/or create out of the mood, an active form of expression" (Street 2019, 12) dwelling upon its consequences for an individual who has stopped his/her aural interaction with the environment and is left alone "in the sonic world that surrounds us" (Street 2017, 12).

Tackling imaginative literature alongside trauma theory, Anne Whitefield makes a strong case for the latter being "inherently linked to the literary in ways it has not always recognized" (Whitehead, 4). As is known, trauma implies a rupture in temporal and symbolic orders at individual and collective levels. While the pioneers of the (currently thriving) field of trauma studies, such as Cathy Karuth, Shoshana Felman, Geoffrey Hartman and others tended to look at traumatic experience as disrupting the self to an extent that denied representation, a more recent pluralistic model "suggests that criticism may explore trauma as a subject that invites the study of the relationship between language, the psyche, and behavior without assuming the classic definition of trauma that asserts an unrepresentable and pathological universalism" (Balaev 4). It is from this perspective that traumatic silences have a potential for their literary reverberations as both testifying to the harmful effect of

the silencer, and to the possibility of forthcoming “working through” the trauma, to use D.La Capra’s phrase.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the conditions of slavery, discrimination and other ways of disenfranchising racial or ethnic Others in the US (sometimes referred to as “inner colonization” in Postcolonial American Studies) practiced over the centuries generated a host of traumatic experiences, some of which have been met with silences. Without challenging the vision’s primacy in defining race in America, Jennifer Lynn Stoever claims that “sound frequently appears as visibility’s doppelgänger in US racial history, unacknowledged but ever present in the construction of race and the performance of racial oppression” (Stoever 4).

Relying upon current ideas in literary trauma and sound studies, the panel seeks to analyze the artistic tools employed to deal with this type of trauma aftermath in both mimetic and figurative American writings.

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300-word proposals in English and a short biographical note should be sent to Natalia Vysotska (literatavysotska@gmail.com) and Yuri Stulov (yustulov@mail.ru) by January 16, 2023.

Sounding Difference: Noise and/as the Verbal Construction of the Other

Ana M^a Manzananas Calvo (Universidad de Salamanca), Paula Barba Guerrero (Universidad de Salamanca)

“Our collective is the expulsion of the stranger, of the enemy, of the parasite,” writes Michel Serres in *The Parasite* (1980). One of the ways in which this symbolic removal is carried out is through the construction of the Other as noise. For such a symbolic action to take place, there is always someone who situates themselves in a position of power and has “the source of emission of sound” (141). As one of the thematic cores of Postcolonial theory, noise tends to be associated with ‘the Other.’ Similarly, there are certain types of bodies that are commonly associated with noise (Thompson 2017). To be considered noise, writes Marie Thompson, is tantamount to being “worthless, incomprehensible, extraneous, ugly or unpleasant” (2017); that is, the opposite of sound. From this perspective, “noise is defined by a lack—a lack of organization, significance, information, purpose, specificity, desirability” (2017). The semantic deficiency is morphologically explicit in the way noise is defined by what Thompson terms its “un-ness,” such as unwanted, unpermitted, undesirable, unintentional or unorganized. Such is the traditional view of communication, where noise stands as the direct opposite of wanted signal, or sound, thus establishing a set

of binaries such as order/chaos, meaningful/meaningless; normal/accidental; comprehensible/incomprehensible; regular/irregular. In Serres' conceptualization of noise, however, these dyadic relations are reassessed in order to develop a relational approach between the two. If noise "destroys and horrifies," writes Serres, "order and flat repetition are in the vicinity of death" (127). For Serres, the two categories are mobile and flexible. There are an infinite number of values between the two, and a wide spectrum of transference. Furthermore, noise has the potential of creating disruption in existing systems and, in the process, setting the ground for new encounters and new relations that operate within and beyond existing power relations (Ozguç 2020).

Given this approach to noise and its ability to dismantle current articulations of power, this panel welcomes proposals that look at the interaction between sound and noise in American literature and culture.

Possible topics include:

- Linguistic hospitality: hosting the Other
- Linguistic mastery: English versus other languages
- The verbal construction of the Other
- The Other as sonic disturbance
- The Other as an agent of transformation and disorder
- The triangulation of noise, sound, and silence
- The centrality of noise in literature and culture
- Longing for noise in the Other
- Noise versus the possession of language
- Gothic/horror noise and the monstrous Other
- Silence, memory, and the othering of the past

300-word proposals in English and a short biographical note should be sent to Paula Barba Guerrero (paulabarbaguerrero@usal.es) and Ana M^a Manzanás Calvo (amanzana@usal.es) by January 16, 2023.