



MUS 211

Sound Cultures

S1 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

It is rarely recognised that one of the most distinctive features of the modern world is its sonic environment. Since the late nineteenth century we have for the first time been able to store and mass-circulate sound, and produced a sonic environment that is louder, more dense and more heterogeneous than at any previous time. We are overloaded with sound, it is one of the fastest growing causes of environmental pollution. Today we inhabit multiple and overlapping sonic world in a way once unimaginable. We define ourselves and our space acoustically and some of our most profound experiences are sonic. But while scholars have long meditated on things visual, the invisible world of sound has been barely explored. We will examine various aspects of sound, including its relationship with power, violence, politics and technology. We explore what is unique about sonic experience; the history of sound (and the sound of history); sound and neuroscience; sound and music; sound and image; sounds; sounds and bodies and the sounds of bodies. We analyse the way sonic experience challenges fundamental assumptions that underpin cultural studies including the mind/body split and the cultural construction of identity. This unit will be of broad interest to filmmakers, musicians, sound recordists, listeners, writers and to anyone wanting to deepen their understanding of human communication.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Demonstrate an understanding of historical moments in the history of recorded sound and exposure to a wide variety of illustrative examples.

Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.

Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.

Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Lead the Class</u>	20%	Ongoing from Week 3
<u>Tutorial Paper</u>	20%	The week after presentation
<u>Research Essay</u>	40%	31st May 2013 at 4pm
<u>Participation</u>	20%	Weekly

Lead the Class

Due: **Ongoing from Week 3**

Weighting: **20%**

Each student will choose a week to "lead the class" in discussion. There will generally be 2 students presenting each week and they are asked to work together as a group (if possible).

This task requires you to stimulate and manage class discussion, and no, this assignment is not a summary of readings...It is about leading a discussion based on the core concepts of the readings...and as such, it is NOT a speech. The best way to approach the task is simply to be familiar with the readings, and have a few questions ready for your peers. The management of this task will be discussed further in class.

How to prepare: The task is akin to running a meeting, in which you have a clear agenda and need to make sure everyone takes part. Yes, a group situation is sometimes difficult to handle, and I implore all students to be egalitarian in their approach to the task. I do not want other, meeker students to fear that they will be railroaded, or left to do all of the work. You will be discouraged from being a limelight hog, I'm looking for caring and sharing...

Musical examples:

Students are welcome to provide appropriate musical examples if they desire, but are asked to play no more than a couple of minutes of given example...

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- Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.
- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Tutorial Paper

Due: **The week after presentation**

Weighting: **20%**

Each student is required to write and present a tutorial paper that discusses the readings for the week. Students will be expected to frame the discussion within appropriate musical examples that will illustrate the issue/theme/theory from the presentation week you have been designated. Questions for each week will be uploaded to iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.
- Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Research Essay

Due: **31st May 2013 at 4pm**

Weighting: **40%**

Questions and detailed instructions will be uploaded to iLearn in mid-semester. The music research exercise, will be due at the end of Week 12.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of historical moments in the history of recorded sound and exposure to a wide variety of illustrative examples.
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- Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.
- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.
- Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

Tutorials offer students the chance to extrapolate on the ideas of the readings for that week. Your participation mark depends on your commitment to exploring and contextualising the concepts of the course. This requires not only physical attendance at lectures and tutes, but also a willingness to discuss the readings each week.

To even be in the running to pass attendance, you will have to be present at ALL of the tutes and demonstrate that you have read and understood the requisite readings for those weeks. If you have not been physically present, you cannot demonstrate your understanding of the readings, and if you have missed three or more tutes, you will be deemed as having fallen behind and thus likely fail the course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Delivery and Resources

REQUIRED READING

For this unit there is one required text: MUS 211 Reader (available in Co-op bookshop) from week 2.

RECOMMENDED READING

If you want a well written and comprehensive guide to recording in the twentieth century, I would suggest Milner, G (2010) *Perfecting Sound Forever: An Aural History of Recorded Music*, London: Granta: 3-25.

Unit can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>.

Unit Schedule

Unit Schedule: Overview		
Week 1	6th March	Introduction and Welcome – Jadey O'Regan
Week 2	13th March	Refrains and Territory – John Scannell
Week 3	20th March	What is Pop Music? - Jadey O'Regan
Week 4	27th March	A Brief History of Recording Technologies - Jadey O'Regan
Week 5	3rd April	Music, Mind and the Brain - Tim Byron
Week 6	10th April	Signs and Sounds: Semiotics and Popular Music - Jadey O'Regan
MID SEMESTER BREAK		
Week 7	1st May	The Canon of Popular Music and the 'Golden Age' of Rock - Jadey O'Regan
Week 8	8th May	More Than the Notes?: The Way Music Sounds - Jadey O'Regan
Week 9	15th May	Is This the Real Life?: Authenticity and Popular Music - Jadey O'Regan
Week 10	22nd May	Music on the Big and Small Screen - Liz Giuffre
Week 11	29th May	Turntables and Sampling in Pop - Jadey O'Regan
Week 12	5th June	Behind the Glass: The Role of the Producers and Production - Jadey O'Regan
Week 13	12th June	Genre and Style - Jadey O'Regan

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.
- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Tutorial Paper
- Research Essay
- Participation

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of historical moments in the history of recorded sound and exposure to a wide variety of illustrative examples.
- Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Assessment task

- Participation

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of historical moments in the history of recorded sound and exposure to a wide variety of illustrative examples.
- Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.
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Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Tutorial Paper
- Research Essay
- Participation

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.

- Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.
- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
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- Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.
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Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Tutorial Paper
- Research Essay

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Tutorial Paper
- Research Essay

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Tutorial Paper
- Research Essay
- Participation

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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- Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation of the arguments of others and a development of their own ideas and arguments in relation to the scholarly literature of sound and popular music.

Assessment tasks

- Lead the Class
- Participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Evaluate, synthesise and analyse the scholarly literature of sound cultures around the areas of critical theory, sociality, signification and aesthetic value.
- Communicate skills (either performative or oral, and written) to present a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment task

- Participation