MUS 211
Sound Cultures
S1 Day 2015

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Brent Keogh
brent.keogh@mq.edu.au
Contact via brent.keogh@mq.edu.au

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://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:
Demonstrate 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.
Evaluate critically 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 (either in performative or oral, and written formats) 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead the Class</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing from Week 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Friday Week 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Abstract

**Due: Week 5**  
**Weighting: 20%**

Each student is required to write an abstract outlining their proposed argument for the final essay. This will include an annotated bibliography, where students are required to source between 6-10 peer-reviewed academic sources and explain their significance to the overall argument. The final essay questions will be delivered via iLearn.

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.

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. It is about leading a discussion based on the core concepts of the readings and as such, it is not a speech or presentation. 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. Group situation are sometimes difficult to handle. The objective is to try an include as many students in the conversation as possible, and to facilitate and encourage healthy class discussion. Some tips on how to do this will be discussed in tutorials.

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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Research Essay
Due: **Friday Week 13**
Weighting: **40%**

1800 word research essay. Questions and detailed instructions will be uploaded to iLearn in mid-semester. The music research exercise, will be due at the end of Week 13.
On successful completion you will be able to:

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

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 unlikely to meet the learning outcomes.

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**

**ASSESSMENTS**

All essays and written work will be submitted through the turnitin link provided on the iLearn page.

**REQUIRED READING**

For this unit there is one required text: MUS 211 Reader (available in Co-op bookshop)
**RECOMMENDED READING**


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

**Unit Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Schedule: Overview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>25th February</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4th March</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>11th March</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Studios in the Frame: Screen Sound** | Doyle, P (2013) "Burn me up this time fellas!": when movies represent the recording studio' (Forthcoming)  
| **Week 4**              | **18th March** |
| **Refrains and Territory** | Murphie, A (1996) 'Sound at the end of the world as we know it: Nick Cave, Wim Wenders' Wings of Desire and a Deleuze-Guattarian ecology of popular music', in *Perfect Beat* v2n4, January: 18-42  
| **Week 5**              | **25th March** |
| **Week 6**              | **1st April** |
| **Week 7**              | **8th April** |
## MID SEMESTER BREAK

### Week 8 29th April
**Sound and Power**


### Week 9 6th May
**The Sound of Music**


### Week 10 13th May
**Phonodreams of Near and Far**


### Week 11 20th May
**Renegade Refrains: Sampling, the Turntable and the Digital**


### Week 12 27th May
**Digital Aesthetics**


### Week 13 3rd June
**The Sound of Accident**


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### 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:

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/

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Information is correct at the time of publication

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 Enquiry Service

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

Equity 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.
Graduate Capabilities

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 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.
- Evaluate critically 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

- Abstract
- Lead the Class
- 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:

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.
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

• Abstract
• Lead the Class
• Research Essay
• 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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• Apply knowledge and ideas from the literature to the context of sound and popular music in the contemporary world.

Assessment tasks

• Abstract
• Lead the Class
• 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 (either in performative or oral, and written formats) a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

**Assessment tasks**

- Abstract
- Lead the Class
- 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 (either in performative or oral, and written formats) a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

**Assessment tasks**

- Abstract
- Lead the Class
- 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

• Demonstrate understanding of historical moments in the history of recorded sound and exposure to a wide variety of illustrative examples.
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• Evaluate critically 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 (either in performative or oral, and written formats) a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

Assessment task

• Participation

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

• Evaluate critically 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 (either in performative or oral, and written formats) a clear and coherent exposition of the theoretical and analytical knowledge of the field.

**Assessment tasks**

• Abstract
• Lead the Class
• 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 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