EXERCISE
A practice of walking

Develop a practice of walking. Like a crab, become a crab in walking assemblages; stop. Walk. Go the Meseglise way and let the durations infect the Guermantes route. Do this by attending to your rhythms very minutely, heart beat, breathing, step-in-time, the sounds of dog barking, the smells, the refrains of traffic, car horns, and bicycles, do your thoughts beat out a rhythm? In walking don't forget that every technology assembles with your perception at specific speeds, scales, and patterns of interaction. To have a virtual-actual diagram of the tendencies and capacities of the assemblages you are intimate with: Walk your rhythms, let them be affected by the sounds and smells of racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods of the rich and poor.

Keep walking. Turn around, breathe deeply, and again, and again. Touch the person next to you, touch yourself. Keep walking, keeping more or less the same distance with your partner (s). Smell your surroundings, give it a color and taste, sense the sound waves giving certain spaces a boundedness and a border, find the borders of sound and smell blocs, taste them, hear their overlaps, notice how value and security is managed in the phase transitions from space to space, from bloc of sensation to bloc of sensation, retrace how urban space striates flows of pedestrians, cycles, cars, buses, but also of races and ethnicities, sexualities and capacities. Keep walking alone or with others, experiment with pace and breathing, modulate your own sense of your body's movements, walk sideways, with an exaggerated gait, bounce on your toes while walking. Find a bench, sit down, stretch gently. Notice where the closest camera is, stick your tongue out at it. Get up, keep walking down streets you don't know.

Towards a careful listening

— **Anja Kanngieser**

At the time, it didn't seem like something worth talking about. We were sitting together in a hangar-like room in a warehouse. It was blustery outside and cold inside. We were at a meeting of a new collective to organise an upcoming demonstration, launching a campaign with casual service workers. The chairs were set up in a ring, you could see the faces of everyone around you – some you knew, others were unfamiliar. Everyone was sizing each another up. One by one, people began to introduce themselves. One by one the voices echoed around our ears. Some of them were confident, full of pep and verve, words tumbling all over themselves with enthusiasm. Some stuttered into the air, pausing and racing, staccato, nervous. Others were drawn out and understated. Some filled the space while others seemed swallowed up by it. And then, suddenly, it stopped. One person said nothing at all. A pause. Waiting. Nothing. And in that moment the room reconfigured itself around the memory of our voices, and the silence.

Introduction

🔊 *Recording 1.* *

The experience in the room that day, an experience that I have had in some form or another in many rooms and in many meetings, shows both the way in which how we speak and listen is political, and the way in which voice and space co-create one another. The voice, or lack thereof, is the most immediate

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* This article refers to many recordings. All of them are available here:
soundcloud.com/anja_k/sets/a-sonic-geography-of-voice

means of expression; indeed, 'affective and ethico-political forces are firstly expressed by the voice'.[1] The voice, in its expression of affective and ethico-political forces, creates worlds. The utterances of speakers open up spaces for different ways of being through dialogue: through their anticipation of a response.[2] The ways that voices are shaped by, and shape, worlds and spaces, reveals the creative and constitutive operations of speech and language. This understanding looks to the voice, and speech, as more than a conduit for the transfer of information. Emphasised from this view is not only the reciprocal and active process of creating worlds and meanings, but also the extra-linguistic elements of communication: the soundings, gestures and affective transmissions that make up our different relations.

By tuning into these affective and auditory elements, we may imagine an acoustic politics of the voice, whereby sound helps us to engage in, and elaborate upon, contemporary globalised political landscapes. Such a politics might help us to become more attuned to the ways in which voices are produced by, and productive of, relations, geographies and subjectivities. These are tied to projections and positions of class, race, education, culture, social value, sexuality and so forth. Unlike ideas of communication that see the speaker as active, and the listener as passive, we come to understand that as listeners we actively contribute to the spaces that utterances compel. We further see how such aspects play out in the sonic inflections of the voice, not only in their linguistic content, through paying particular attention to pace, accent and dialect, intonation, frequency, amplitude, and silence. The ways that these play out affect our capacity to listen and to respond to one another. If we are seeking to build relations alternative to those typical of capitalism, developing sensitivities to how we might speak and listen differently is crucial because they can help us to find ways to relate to ourselves and others differently, with care and with generosity.

Several recordings accompany this piece and you are invited to listen to them as you read the text; they are available here: **soundcloud.com/anja_k/sets/a-son-ic-geography-of-voice**. By bringing these different voices into relation, I extend a desire for more convivial and caring practices of listening.[3] Two kinds of sound recording are heard: firstly, recordings of speech and sound phenomena taken from a variety of archives that directly illustrate the sonic qualities spoken about. The second of each recording is a compilation of short recordings with friends involved in radical political organising, coming from campaigns around feminism, migration, labour, gender and queer politics, permaculture and education struggles in the UK, Germany and Australia. Within much of this kind of organisation there is some awareness of how we speak to each other, the vocabularies we use and the articulations of privilege that underlie our speech. The recordings of friends involved in such organisations all address the question:

in a collective meeting how does pace/ accent/ intonation/ frequency and pitch/ volume and silence affect your own capacity to listen and to respond?

Like a refrain, these reflections invite us to return to different perspectives around speaking and listening; through their sensual operation they add a further layer of sonic experience reminding us to be attentive to the qualities of the speaking voices themselves, and to think about our own responses in this process.

The utterance and sound

We might begin to consider how voices, and how we listen to them, reconfigure our relationships to each other and to our shared worlds by turning to the writing of Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin's theory of enunciation allows us to engage the voice and utterances. On the one hand, Bakhtin reinvests the word and the production of meaning with a political and social capacity for action. On the other, he offers a way of thinking about the processes of subjectivation – that is, how we become subjects. For Bakhtin, rather than being originally called into being as linguistic or psychological subjects, speakers *act* as possible worlds. The communicational and world making capacities of voices exceed their capture by the words and meanings they articulate. The acoustic qualities and inflections of voices impact on how we speak and listen to one another; the voice, and how we hear it, is produced by, and reproduces, codings of power, class, gender and race.

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt[4] writes that speech is a privileged means by which speakers identify themselves to others, demarcating themselves as particular political subjects. This is a position compatible with Bakhtin's, who rejects ideas of speaking as active and listening and understanding as passive. He argues that all listening is in anticipation of response. That is to say, whenever we speak to someone, we expect some kind of response, and we are also always responding to something else to some degree. This, though, varies greatly. A responsive understanding may be realised immediately or may be delayed. For Bakhtin this is the prerogative of listening and understanding – as preparing for a response-reaction.[5] From this we may gauge how the words we use are contingent upon others – other people, contexts, situations, events and experiences.

Bakhtin's perspective is politically interesting on two fronts. Firstly, through his emphasis on the constant interplay between the speaker and listener. Secondly, through his attention to extra-linguistic elements. Bakhtin defines an utterance as a bringing together words, propositions and grammar – what may be referred to as 'technical signs' – and extra-linguistic 'dialogic' elements – in part, the soundings, gestures and affective exchanges expressed through

language and signs, again the tones, paces, accents and so forth of how we speak. These demarcate various alliances, convivialities, enmities, sympathies and antipathies for Bakhtin. The affective and desiring aspects within the utterance and its expression can form new lines of collaboration and collusion, or reinstate and establish patterns of domination between people. Because of this, the relations set up through these processes have a profoundly political significance. These processes are sounded out by the qualities of voices, which are often neglected in discussions of communication. These qualities, however, can reveal much of socio-political conditions and contexts, and can be very useful in helping us to create more careful practices of relating to one another.

Vocal inflections

I. Pace

In a talk given in New York in 2009, Franco 'Bifo' Berardi recounted a story about the coincidental changes in speed of speech and forms of power through capitalism[6], based on the findings of Richard Robin on language learning. Robin travelled to the Soviet Union in 1987 and 1993 to record the rate of syllables emitted per second of speech by television presenters. What Robin[7] discovered was that the pace of speech in 1987 was considerably slower than that in 1993, three syllables per second in the former compared to six syllables per second in the latter. This was found to be the same in China and in the Middle East.

🔊 *Recording 2. Pace Russian*

For Berardi[8] this reflected something of the shift in ideological governance, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of capitalist Russia. Prior to the fall of socialism, the presenter had only to reassure her audience through her assertion of the communist state, but with the introduction of capitalism, competition and advertising proliferated. This, argued Berardi, illustrated the difference between the modern consensus based power, founded on the sharing and persuasion of a common ideological framework, goal and truth, and the more contemporary forms, involving the saturation of the communicative and receiving faculties. In other words, it marked a shift from consensus based to saturation-based forms of power and governance. The doubling of the pace of speech, then, became an everyday, auditory enaction of changed socio-political conditions, and their playing out through corporeal and communicative rhythms.

🔊 *Recording 3. Pace*

II. Accent

Not only the speed of speech but also its accent and regional dialect illuminates micro- and macro- political conditions. Mladen Dolar notes that 'the official language is deeply wrought by the class division; there is a constant 'linguistic class struggle' which underlies its constitution'.[9] What is heard as accent or dialect is imbued with socio-political connotations – the normative accent and dialect becomes inaudible and 'loses' its alien timbre, while the foreign accent or dialect draws attention to the materiality of the speaker, her geographical background, class, race, nationality and education for instance.

This was apparent during the 2010 Australian Federal Election when political commentators began to question the motivation behind perceived changes in the voice of Labor leader Julia Gillard. As Janet Albrechtsen from the conservative newspaper *The Australian* put it:

Start with something so basic it barely gets a mention. That voice. Gillard's accent is curious. Especially if, like her, you grew up in Adelaide, had a working-class background and went to public schools. I'm often asked why I don't sound like Gillard. Easy. No one in Adelaide sounds like Gillard...Could she have manufactured those broad nasal vowels, so different even from her Adelaide-accented sister, to fit her political emergence within Labor's left-wing factions? You feel so cynical even suggesting it. Yet, *The Australian's* Helen Trinca remembers speaking to Gillard in the early 1980s when, as a student leader, she sounded "middle class and well spoken.[10]

Albrechtsen was not alone in her observation. Aidan Wilson from the leftist publication Crikey wryly commented that 'its lucky for us that...the NSW Labor Party's Right-wing faction have gifted us with a new PM whose voice serves as a linguistic discussion point'.[11] Like or dislike of voice aside, what is significant are the implications drawn from the accent.

Of course Gillard is not the only politician to have her vocal tendencies challenged in the public realm, where the implications of socio-linguistic phenomena have come to represent wider political dissonance. During the 2008 American presidential elections President Barack Obama was criticised for adopting a 'black' dialect in his addresses to predominantly black constituencies at the same time that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid was accusing him in private of speaking 'white'. As Gillard's did for class, Obama's phonological identity functioned to reinstate racial signification when the plane of the visual had lost some of its novelty.

🔊 *Recording 4. Accent Gillard and Obama*

The line of attention given to the accent and dialect might prompt us to wonder what this suggests of the reality of parliamentary politics? Is it symptomatic of a condition in which 'individuals are elected primarily on the basis of their personality, voice and any other factors as opposed to a party being elected in the basis of policy'?[12] Potentially, yes, at least more so than we might care to admit, especially at a time when more and more ideological and political effects are being produced by non-ideological and affective means, that is to say through a capitalisation of expression, creativity and emotion.

The breaks and disruptions that the accent or dialect provides within an affective economy can be argued for in the same way. Whether interpreted as artificial or not, the accent or dialect can act as a distraction that modulates and arrests the flow of information and intervenes in the mode of listening, in the same way that a phonological mispronunciation, a lisp or stutter can cause a double take or confusion in a conversation. At the same time, the rogue accent is codified, it becomes the basis for various prejudices and narratives of identity, as seen in the instances above. In radical political organisation, this can both act to elevate or degrade the speaker through her exoticisation or connection to an imagined authentic subject position, with both positive and negative associations depending on her presumed origin and background, and the relation of this background to the political context she is participative of.

🔊 *Recording 5. Accent*

III. Intonation and Pitch

Intonation works in a similar manner to make the sonic qualities of the voice present, 'for the particular tone of the voice, its particular melody and modulation, its cadence and inflection, can decide the meaning'.[13] The shades of intonation, the affective resonances that tone can transmit, can derail the easy reception of linguistic content. Tone is a trickster gesture of speech; the intervention of intonation that may contradict or subvert the words spoken, it can express unexpected or seemingly unwarranted sarcasm, humour, irony, irritation, joy. Like accent, intonation can be codified, its contribution to the meaning of what is said can be picked up by the listener and absorbed into dialogic exchange. The intonation of the utterance can act powerfully to shape the rhythm of communication, and the relations of cooperation, power and alliance between speakers.

Simultaneously the fundamental frequency or pitch, and volume of the voice, effects relations between speakers. Higher pitched and softer voices are usually perceived as more feminine than lower pitched louder voices. This has consequences for assumptions on sexuality (for instance the male with the

higher pitched voice is stereotyped as effeminate and passive) and attractiveness, as was made evident in an article published by the *New York Times* examining the recent phenomenon of GPS love, where GPS users develop feelings for their automatic vocal guides.[14] The conclusion of the article was partially drawn from an increase in lewd commentary posted by fans to sites like gpspassion.com and pdastreet.com on their favourite voices, Australian Karen say, or American Jill, voices that Garry Maddox dubbed as 'the other women' (ibid). This went far beyond the rhetorical, as shown by the anecdote of an incident where a television actor was caught out by his wife alone in his car pleasuring himself to 'the dulcet tones of the automated voice system'.[15]

🔊 *Recording 6. Tone GPS*

The popularity and allure of these GPS voices reveal more than crass humour, especially on the level of the techno-political. According to Professor Clifford I. Nass, a communications expert and commercial consultant, the implementation of female over male voices signals a rising confidence in such technologies. When the device first appeared in cars, manufacturers preferred male voices, because these seemingly commanded more respect. 'When the key dimension is competence, the male voice is better', explained Nass, 'when the key dimension is likeability, the female voice is better'.[16] What this reveals are the economies around technological innovation and dissemination, especially their correlation to particularly gendered modes of labour. It shows the presence of 'soft' skills critical to contemporary communicative work, friendliness being one of the key indicators of emotional and interpersonal intelligence harvested by managerial and entrepreneurial capitalism.

🔊 *Recording 7. Tone*

🔊 *Recording 8. Pitch*

IV. Volume

As already mentioned, the amplitude of the voice works together with pitch to articulate affective and socio-political velocities. The vibrational frequency of the voice has undeniable effects. Take, for example, the voice of Adolf Hitler. Hitler himself remarked that his conquering of Germany was crucially aided by the use of the loudspeaker and his voice was a treasured property of the Nazi Party.[17] According to one speech expert, Hitler's voice registered at 228 vibrations (the frequency of an expression of anger vibrating at around 220) – his voice was literally a sonic stun, somewhat like the state produced by an

air-horn or unexpected alarm. As Leni Riefenstahl described, on hearing, his voice inspired in her an 'almost apocalyptic vision' (ibid: 86). The capacity of volume to drive such a response requires us to take seriously the effects that acoustic emissions can engender, and to consider 'the acoustical thrust of speaking'[18] as capable of performing acts of threat or violence.

🔊 *Recording 9. Hitler 1933*

🔊 *Recording 10. Volume*

V. Silence

In the same way that the sonic waves emitted by a loud voice may colonise space, a quiet voice may recede and get lost in the room. Indeed quiet, or at the most extreme, silence can be a virulent political expression of refusal. Silence has historically functioned as an inspirational and creative force. '*It's better to be silent and* **to be** *rather than speak and* **not to be**,' proclaimed Bishop Ignatius in *Language in the Confessions of Augustine*.[19] The choice to be silent rather than having no coherent 'being' was made by Achilles in Homer's epic *Iliad*. Silence operated as a counterattack, a stance against a perceived encroaching authority; it presented a condition rather than an action. Achilles, slighted by Agamemnon, retaliated by refusing to speak and withdrew from battle with his comrades in the Achaean army. Against the impotence and powerlessness of silence attributed in the Homeric epic, the silence of the Aeschylean Achilles was a stratagem, a weapon against the imposition of will from outside influences. It was a refusal to participate and perform – it functioned as a conscious provocation against what is expected and demanded. But it was also indicative of an incapacity to find words capable of expressing internal turmoil.

It is apparent that the refusal to reciprocate or participate through a refusal to speak does not need to indicate a passive lack of voice, a disconnection or disassociation, but can be an active stance of negation. Silence, as John Cage demonstrated in his piece 4'33", is anything but devoid. In his three-movement composition, rather than playing their instruments the orchestra was instructed by Cage to remain still; in recordings what is then heard are the sounds made by the orchestra moving about, the audience shuffling, coughing, laughing at times, even the echoes of the recording devices themselves. What Cage confronted was the impossibility of ever attaining silence by demonstrating that even in the absence of noise or music, a soundscape is nonetheless present.

🔊 *Recording 11. Silence 4'33"*

A deliberate silence, then, like that of Achilles, overflows with an excess of what could be said, but which the speaker will not grant sound to. It explodes with possible thoughts and positions, remaining always in suspense. Silence does not leave a space to be filled but rather it fills space, it impregnates the room, which vibrates in anticipation. It can prompt the most intense of responses, and can profoundly derail the dialogic rhythm. Paolo Virno[20] distinguishes the systems of contemporary capitalist labour as being contingent on the communicative and mental faculties. At a time of 'cognitive' capitalism when, 'the mind is at work in so many innovations, languages and communicative relations',[21] silence can be a refusal of labour, in the sense spoken about here, it can be a denial to participate in the social reproduction on which political self-organisation relies. Silence, thus, can be a refusal to participate, to work and to engage. It can be a strategy for a perceived flight from the human realm of language. It can also, though, mark the impossibility of translation and the limitations of language, masking confusion, fear, introversion, exhaustion, and sadness, the vocalisation of which becomes blocked and prohibited by the speaker from release into the sphere of the collective.

🔊 *Recording 12. Silence*

Voices and the making of worlds, spaces and places

If there is no possibility for silence, then we are always already inhabiting soundscapes and shared fields of auditory interaction, and vocal inflections correspond to the creation of new worlds and public realms. As introduced earlier, for Bakhtin our entrance into dialogic spaces is tied to the utterance. The timbres, intonations, paces and frequencies of voices underpin the creation and expression of the affective and socio-political forces that mobilise the utterance. Unlike many other theories of speech acts, Bakhtin posits the receiver of the utterance as crucially engaged through her comprehension and response-reaction to what is said. This active role of the listener is why, for Bakhtin, 'the speech act is an action on the possible action of others that starts from the ethico-political dimension and the affective dimension of the relation with the other'.[22] This is seen as an agonistic position, as the utterance operates as a struggle between those participating in it, structuring the field of action of others.

The spaces that produce, and are produced through, the utterance are public, as it happens in a field of relations with others. As we have seen, vocal inflections, as much as vocabularies, are imprinted with, and can intervene in, the circuits and flows of power in these public spaces. These dynamics of domination and cooperation, 'modulate and influence...modes of expression',

that is to say the voice is deployed in complicity, sympathy, antagonism or defiance. This echoes what Jean-Luc Nancy ascribes to listening and sound in the formation of subjects and spaces, when he proposes that to listen is to enter that spatiality by which, *at the same time*, I am penetrated, for it opens up in me as well as around me: it opens up inside me as well as outside and it is through such a double, quadruple, or sextuple opening that a "self" can take place.[23]

Bakhtin understands voices and utterances as creating, unmaking and recreating worlds precisely because the composition of the utterance occurs through dialogue, it is event-based and simultaneously informed by the conditions of both the speaker and the recipient. Utterances are deeply infused with social, political, cultural and economic histories and contexts. To think of the spaces and worlds that the soundings of voices make and are made by, we must consider at least two planes, the spatial-material and the relational.

On the material level it is useful to address what Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter refer to as aural architectures: the 'composite of numerous surfaces, objects and geometries'[24] of a given environment. Sounds require space and air for their form, which means they 'take shape on different scales of space' just as they do different temporal scales.[25] This is how spaces manifest sound, even if the sound energy does not originate from the space itself; this occurs through reverberation and reflection – spaces, through their material densities and gaps, modulate and refract sounds and voices in peculiar ways. This occurs too on the level of bodies, the bodily cavity being an anatomical acoustic chamber through which the sound of the voice is shaped. As Brandon LaBelle explains, sound sets into relief the properties of a given space, its materiality and characteristics, through reverberation and reflection, and, in turn, these characteristics affect the given sound and how it is heard.[26]

The physical spaces in which social and cultural politics become organised and collective in certain modes effect what kinds of voices are heard and how, just as do the times of meetings. From community centres to squatted social centres, from university classrooms and auditoriums to living rooms, from an outdoor camp or a union office to a Skype conference, the spaces in which political conversation and organisation occur vary in dimension, architecture and temporality. It is imperative to recognise the reciprocitous dynamics of voices and the spaces in which they become, and make, present, because the places of organisation effect participation through differential inclusion, both in terms of a desire to be present and in terms of accessibility. The material geographies of buildings, rooms and activist camps necessitate a capacity for mobility, for traveling to and from somewhere. While not spatially fixed,

online arenas also require the capacity for access to technologies and skills that enable participation. These sites are steeped in histories and currents of power; the ways that people engage with, or participate within, spaces hinge on the associations they ascribe to them, the affects and psychic-emotional experiences they have, or project they may have, within them. Such experiences may play out in desires for engagement or disengagement. How these spaces are perceived varies with the different experiences of the individual and the collective, but it is clear that architectures may have particular design elements conducive to producing specific states.

Along with these codings of a particular site, architectural features, or lack thereof, impact upon the disposition and mood of an event through spatial acoustic qualities. As Blesser and Salter note, 'auditory spatial awareness...influences our social behaviour. Some spaces emphasise aural privacy or aggravate loneliness; others reinforce social cohesion'.[27] The size of a room or space, its resonant cavities, its density, its formal or informal feel and function, the arrangement of furniture or objects, all contribute to how the voice moves within it, the kinds of utterances that are likely to be made and the ways in which we listen and respond to one another.

If we understand space from this perspective, as both made by, and making, relations, subjects, voices, we can see that space and place are not fixed, but are in process. Because space and place are multivalent and conflictive, constructed out of interrelations and interactions, they can be political. In this sense space and place are productive in the configuration of our social worlds and experiences. This has explicit consequences for those of us engaged in political organisation for 'by shaping social interaction and mobility, the materiality of space also shapes the nature and possibility of contention'[28].

An evocation for attentive listening

What might we take from a consideration of listening and response? It is my hope that this text has offered an invitation for an attentive listening, not only to the content of speech, but to its soundings, an awareness of the ways in which class, economics, culture, race, and gender effect our communication. As we have seen, dynamics of power and how we relate to one another find an articulation through the voice, they shape the voice and they affect the capacity for listening and response. The inflections and modulations of the voice contain forces that we must become more conscious of. In his discussions of avant-garde sound poetry, Félix Guattari writes that as discordant sounds of the voice break and interrupt the expected rhythms of speech, they also break and interrupt normalised capitalist ways of being, they act as a means of renewal.[29] If an acknowledgement is made of the effect of vocal characteristics

and the social, political and ethical forces they contain, then what is required is a dedication and attention to the soundings of our speech, perhaps at times autonomous from its content. Especially when what is desired is the opening of new spaces and the finding of ways to speak in common, with conviviality and with care.

🔊 *Recording 13. Conclusion*

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Endnotes

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5. Bakhtin 1986, p.69

6. See Franco Bifo Berardi (2009a), 'Connective Mutations: Autonomy and Subjectivation in the Coming Century'. Talk given on 9 May 2009, **sduk.us/connective_mutations/8_connective_mutations_16b_sept_2009.mp3**, accessed 10 June 2010.

7. See Richard Robin (2007), Commentary: learner-based listening and technological authenticity. *Language Learning and Technology* 11(1): pp.109-115.

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21. Franco 'Bifo' Berardi (2009b), *Precarious Rhapsody: Semiocapitalism and the Pathologies of the Post-Alpha Generation*. (eds.) Empson E and Shukaitis S. London: Minor Compositions. p.34

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23. Jean-Luc Nancy (2007), *Listening*, translated by Mandell C. New York: Fordham University Press. p.14

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25. Curtis Roads (2001), *Microsound*. Cambridge: MIT Press. p.39

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27. Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter (2007) *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? Experiencing Aural Architecture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. p.11

28. Helga Leitner, Eric Sheppard and Kristin M. Sziarto (2008), 'The spatialities of contentious politics', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33: 157-172. p.161

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EXERCISE

Listening and speaking warm up

Sit with one or two others. Choose a topic of conversation, preferably something that is quite engaging and emotive for you all. Then begin a dialogue on this topic, making sure to pause 5 seconds between when one speaker finishes speaking and the next begins. Be mindful of how long you are speaking, how your voice, and your conversationalists' voices, modulate and change through the course of speaking about this topic. Reflect on how taking a moment between speakers changes the flow of the conversation, and your concentration and investments in it. End when you feel the conversation is drawing to a natural close, and discuss your experiences with your collaborators.

ecologies and metabolisms