

Resounding the Campus: Pedagogy, Race, and the Environment

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As a technique to excite students about the work of listening, to challenge musical ontologies, and to incite heightened environmental awareness, the soundwalk has become a canonic exercise in the undergraduate classroom. With the recent expansion and revision of music department curricula and the institutionalization of sound studies across North American campuses, the environment-oriented immersive listening projects are often introduced as a neutral opening into learning how to hear—a twenty-first century alternative to ear training lab. Motivated by the ecocritical discourse that flows through ecomusicology, this essay pushes back against the assumption that soundwalks are transferable scores and impartial pedagogical tools.¹ If framed as normative (as if there is a best listening practice and some listeners are better than others) they have the potential to reinscribe differences among our students. Our reflection provides an opportunity to draw attention to the assumptions about students' mobility, social backgrounds, and hearing ability at the base of much classroom listening.² These are exacerbated by soundwalks with their ambulatory mode, generalized scripts, and emphasis on the “unheard.”

The notion of the “unheard” has a particular and haunting resonance for our home campus, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which has a history steeped in racial violence, segregation, and silencing. In this essay, we explore whether soundwalks might offer an opportunity for us, as educators, to emplace audible pasts. Here we plunge you into the details of a project to encounter and uncover our own campus history. We present an example of

1. See for example the essays gathered as “textual directions” in Aaron Allen and Kevin Dawe, *Current Directions in Ecomusicology* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 221–57.

2. For another recent commentary on race and vulnerability in the music history classroom see Cassandra L. Hartford, “Beyond the Trigger Warning: Teaching Operas that Depict Sexual Violence,” in this *Journal* 7, no. 1, 19–34.

how soundwalks can be utilized in the classroom as an intersectional space for sound history, race, performance, and environmental awareness. Our aim is to highlight the (research and pedagogical) labor involved in locally tuned soundwalks and to urge that any soundwalk project must not only be historically informed and site-specific, but also attuned to the range of abilities and backgrounds of our students. With British and US-American universities and their monuments (including those nearby) increasingly the sparkplugs for debates and conflicts about the legacy of colonialism and slavery, the concept of the “unheard” cannot but take on a richer meaning when working toward racial justice. As a powerful pedagogical practice, soundwalks must not only attune students to the sounds of the bucolic and industrial, but also to the sounds of past and present hegemony and resistance.

Two Days in McCorkle Place with Silent Sam



Figure 1. McCorkle Place, shown on the left with a suggested self-guided walking tour and on the right as digitally modeled on the university’s official map.³

12 October 2015: A soundwalk with undergraduate music majors (Andrea)

McCorkle Place at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (UNC) was being groomed for the annual University Day celebrations, the anniversary of the ceremonial first brick-laying in 1793. Gardening crews took care of the finishing touches on the shrubs, lawns, and fallen leaves that cluttered the grove of the majestic grounds with its lofty poplar trees and plentiful oaks. Unaware of the bustle on campus, I had scheduled—for that morning at 9:05—a soundwalk

3. “Self-Guided Tour of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,” accessed August 17, 2017, <https://admissions.unc.edu/files/2013/10/UNC-Self-Guided-Tour-Map.pdf>. Screenshot from “Maps,” accessed August 17, 2017, <http://maps.unc.edu/>.

through this space with 21 students enrolled in a course on the history, culture, and practice of magnetic tape for music majors. We planned on following the pioneering score by Hildegard Westerkamp, published in her influential essay on soundwalking, in preparation for some environmental recording projects with portable tape decks.⁴ The walk, like many such educational soundwalks, was designed to lead students to notice the unremarkable—to start to imagine what their tape decks would pick up that they had never actively heard.

Our soundwalk had a fairly simple trajectory: I told the students that we would end by spending time in the arboretum that abuts the University, crossing McCorkle Place on the way. I invited them to shape our path there, either by leading on foot or by making verbal suggestions. Our first steps away from the Kenan Music Building drew attention to the pomp and circumstance of the day. “Toward the belltower!” one student impelled us, so that we could test whether or not we could hear the chimes of the campus’s loudest music maker. As we strolled we heard leaf blowers and hedge trimmers. We heard the tower strike quarter after the hour. When we paused to reflect, one student noted what they could not hear: the sounds of Franklin Street, the college town’s main street, notoriously packed with busses and delivery trucks at the beginning of the workday. So we struck out to hear when and where Franklin’s “noise” might come into our range.

“Lead your ears away from your own sounds and / listen to the sounds nearby.” Heeding the attention-oriented instructions of Westerkamp’s soundwalk, we passed the rest of our ramble through McCorkle Place without speaking. “What else do you hear? / What else? / What else? / What else? / What else?” The prompt to keep ears wandering along with our bodies proved difficult when we passed the “Silent Sam” Confederate Memorial, where a social movement was underfoot. As the Black Lives Matter movement has gained momentum in the United States, this sentinel statue, which faces north to commemorate fallen Confederate Soldiers, has been an organizing site for demonstrations of many political slants. In conjunction with University Day, members of the student and community group, “The Real Silent Sam,” organized a “Rally to Silence Sam.” The removal—the silencing—of the statue was (and remains) their symbolic demand, a signal that they urge the University of North Carolina to send, one that would be interpreted as a reckoning with the institution’s complicated history of discrimination. From at least 50 yards away, we heard unison clapping and, as we approached, the chant became clear: “Hey, hey! Ho, ho! This racist statue has got to go!”

4. Hildegard Westerkamp, “Soundwalking,” accessed August 17, 2017, <http://www.sfu.ca/~westerka/writings%20page/articles%20pages/soundwalking.html>. Originally published in *Sound Heritage* 3, no. 4 (1974): 25. The score for the soundwalk discussed below is included here.

I walked by this disruption with students ahead and behind me and suddenly felt vulnerable as their teacher. I recognized a friend among the protesters, with whom I sympathize and, occasionally, stand alongside. I steered us out of the sightline of news cameras and police officers who granted the protest space by demarcating a boundary with the rest of McCorkle Place. I worried: that I had put the students at risk by pulling them into a political event without their consent, that I was implying a political stance by leading them past this conversation, and, most of all, that I had not sensitively prepared our environmental foray.

The pedagogical discomfort I felt was a result of my efforts to bring the stock tools, orientations, and practices of ecomusicology and sound studies alike to the undergraduate classroom. In this essay, Amanda, a graduate student in music at UNC-CH, and I share a collaborative approach to teaching with and through soundwalks that, we hope, is attuned to (but cannot overcome) local histories of race, class, and difference. By sharing our own experiences and drawing attention to the details of UNC-CH's past, we relay the work that a soundwalk directed toward the politics of listening on a twenty-first century campus entails. Rather than offering a model product, we focus on process. We propose dialogue—across communities whose daily routines intersect with campus life, among colleagues who hear the institution differently, and with the students whom we guide—as a driving force for the soundwalks of the twenty-first century classroom. These can build on the radical experimentalist aesthetics and environmentalist politics of their 1970s predecessors, with scores that call students to participate and with an investment in guiding people to listen differently. However, we do not offer here a scavenger hunt checklist of sounds presumed to be ignored. Instead, the *inaudible* we urge scholars to seek out might be better understood as an auditory scar, or as auditory scars—the results of acts of silencing past and present. The inaudible can prompt performance or stimulate conversation. We can also work to provide the inaudible space in students' lives and on our shared campuses. Through hearing and walking together, we can dwell more alertly on our “home turf.” Through this theoretical reflection on the place of sound studies in teaching, we suggest that care-oriented and site-specific “sonic meditations” (to borrow the generous language of Pauline Oliveros) have the potential to reposition listening as a collective exercise in the music (history) classroom—and thus as an activity fundamentally linked with community and collective action.

To return to the soundwalk that intersected with a demonstration: merely alerting students to listening *more* did not ensure—or even facilitate—the perception or comprehension of the saturated sonic environment. Emily Thompson usefully shapes her definition of the soundscape through the important relationship between *what* is heard and *how* we listen in physical environments,

underscoring the importance of “the social circumstances that dictate who gets to hear what.”⁵ Martin Daughtry builds on this insistence that ears have techniques with a pedagogical slant: “We learn how to listen in an environment that is already shaped by and coursing with power.”⁶ The constructed nature of our environments implicates any study of music and the environment in discourses of difference. On University Day, I could not ignore the campus’s history or its present, or that the classroom was a crucial gateway to these political layers for students. As we wandered toward the arboretum, a fourth-year undergraduate pulled me aside. “What was the statue we passed? Why were they protesting?” Her questions revealed the radically shifting stakes of our soundwalk and drew attention to the site- and rite-specific nature of any journey through the environment. Teaching, of course, comes with its own attendant rituals and power relations.

30 January 2015: Student-organized political demonstration (Amanda)

As a follower of the Real Silent Sam Coalition Facebook page, I received an invite to the #KickOuttheKKK event. I stood in the circle of approximately one hundred and fifty undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, and community members protesting Silent Sam, as one student read aloud the commemoration speech for the statue given by Julian Carr in 1913.⁷

The animated text reading was instrumental to generating discomfort among those gathered. The Real Silent Sam Coalition frequently uploaded scanned images from documents in the University Archives, drawing attention to the accessibility of these materials and encouraging community members to explore for themselves.⁸ The student actor brought a historical text to life, and the effect was an eerie portrayal that only increased in emotional fervor as he read, unnervingly celebrating a history of sexual and racial violence on this ground. His bluster rose in a mirthful crescendo as he recounted:

5. Emily Thompson, *The Soundscapes of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 1–2. The concept of the “soundscape” is diffuse and increasingly contested, and so we have generally avoided the term for the purposes of precision. See for example J. Martin Daughtry, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (New York: Oxford, 2015), 121–27.

6. Daughtry, *Listening to War*, 123.

7. A fragment of a similar performance of this text in 2013 can be found on YouTube. See “At Silent Sam Protest: Bishop Thomas Hoyt and Rev. William Barber II,” accessed August 17, 2107, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBMB3GM0M0c>.

8. There are numerous efforts within the university to draw attention to the monument’s dark history and present. See the University Library’s resource page “A Guide to Researching Campus Monuments and Buildings: “Silent Sam” Confederate Monument, accessed August 17, 2017, <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/campus-monuments/silent-sam>.

One hundred yards from where we stand, less than ninety days perhaps after my return from Appomattox, I horse-whipped a negro wench until her skirts hung in shreds, because upon the streets of this quiet village she had publicly insulted and maligned a Southern lady, and then rushed for protection to these University buildings where was stationed a garrison of 100 Federal soldiers. I performed the pleasing duty in the immediate presence of the entire garrison.⁹

The rally advocated for the removal of the monument. The coalition insisted that our physical environments give voice to ideologies and assumptions. “Physical markers speak volumes about our university and our towns,” reads their official invitation to conversation.¹⁰ The Real Silent Sam Coalition is a critical geography project. For this collective, monuments are neither durable nor timeless: the very presumption of their permanence silences UNC-CH’s social history.¹¹ This is reflected in the collective’s manifesto, which reconceives the campus itself as a site of many histories: “We believe that we cannot move forward wisely unless we understand our entire history, one that has not been edited selectively.”¹² This proclamation shares, we would argue, the ambition of exhaustive inclusion within the practice of soundwalking and soundscape projects.

As I stood at its base and listened, the statue became louder and more present. I was overwhelmed by the affective power of the reading; the crowd’s devastated response was palpable. The students had instrumentalized the archive to teach and to create, and this didactic historical performance resonated within me for weeks. I went to middle and high school in Chapel Hill, and I had heard my mother, a UNC-CH graduate, complain about how sexist and racist Silent Sam was. She always recounted walking in front of the statue in her time as an undergraduate in the 1970s and hearing men yell, “He didn’t

9. Julian Shakespeare Carr Papers (Southern Historical Collection #00141) Box 4, Folder 26, Scans 93-112, accessed September 11, 2017. <https://exhibits.lib.unc.edu/exhibits/show/silent-sam/archives>

10. Stephanie Lamm, “Kick out the KKK’ group gathers to rename campus hall,” *The Daily Tarheel*, accessed September 11, 2017. <https://www.scribd.com/document/254156717/The-Daily-Tar-Heel-for-Jan-30-2015>

11. This article was composed in the summer of 2016. Many of the events we describe here, such as the debate around the Confederate monument, have had violent echoes in the twelve months since. As the piece was being prepared for publication in August 2017, for example, a state of emergency was declared in Charlottesville, VA, after neo-Nazi and white nationalist protesters marched across the University of Virginia campus to rally against the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee. As of September 2017 the events have escalated demands to remove Silent Sam in Chapel Hill through formal statements by the city’s mayor and the university’s Faculty Council as well as ongoing protests spearheaded by undergraduate students at the foot of the statue.

12. From the Real Silent Sam informational page of the Facebook group, established in 2011: https://www.facebook.com/pg/realsilentsam/about/?ref=page_internal

shoot his rifle! Guess he's waiting for a virgin to walk by!"¹³ I had long been disturbed by the knowledge that the statue was a donation from the Daughters of the Confederacy, but I had never heard Carr's speech, "hidden" in plain sight within the walls of the university. His words were fused into the materiality of the statue itself: they are the hate speech that consecrated its unveiling. I, like so many others, had naturalized this emblem of racism into the university landscape, despite my only partial awareness of its history.

In my graduate studies that semester, I was sensitized to moments when local history—or an ignorance thereof—was on the table. When, in Andrea's course on sound studies and music history in spring 2015, we were charged with creating a project that incorporated performance, curation, and history into a public musicology project inspired by sound studies, it made sense to return to the particular archives that were the source of the text that had so troubled me and to provoke a conversation with my classmates. We all decided on UNC's racial history as the project theme because of the contemporary protests, with a hope of producing a piece of local music history with a performative component. We began by initiating conversations with the organizers of the "Black and Blue" Tour, an alternative walking tour of campus that is focused on African-American history.¹⁴ We were inspired to craft a sensory complement to this project and headed to the archives.

Beyond the Score: Soundwalk as Collaboration

We began writing this essay in the first person in order to position our own paths to the project that emerged out of these moments of discomfort: a soundwalk geared toward guiding an undergraduate class to think about race and history *with* and *through* music and sound. Despite the "we" that dominates the rest of this essay, the authors fulfill two distinct roles within the university setting: graduate student and faculty. In our literary opening vignettes, our subjective contact with protest around Silent Sam reveal different—if complementary—experiences of a campus friction that motivated a pedagogical intervention. A

13. In 1908, the UNC Board of Trustees approved a request from the United Daughters of the Confederacy North Carolina Chapter to erect a monument to honor UNC alumni who served in the Confederate army. The monument was completed in 1913, and features a statue of a young soldier carrying a gun but no ammunition, leading to the nickname "Silent Sam." The June 2, 1913 dedication was held on commencement day. "Timeline" from *A Guide to Resources About UNC's Confederate Monument*, accessed September 11, 2017. <http://exhibits.lib.unc.edu/exhibits/show/silent-sam/timeline>

14. This tour is just one of many local history initiatives at UNC-CH. Perhaps the most prominent of these—and significant for music studies—are the Southern Folklife Center, the Southern Historical Collection, and the Center for the Study of the American South. All focus on vernacular traditions and devote substantial resources to public engagement and conversations in the form of exhibitions, festivals, and oral history projects.

soundwalk, *Beyond the Belltower*, collects the work of a graduate seminar in musicology and was first performed by an undergraduate lecture course on music and politics.¹⁵ The score itself was imagined as a kind of connective tissue, a script tailored to UNC-CH that weaves local history into the experience of the campus everyday through site-specific performance acts. The symbolic and urgent targets of this political action were campus landmarks: monuments, street names, and buildings implicated in white racist organizations.¹⁶

This is a project in campus and civic responsibility. The soundwalk began as a collaborative graduate research endeavor, was brought into the undergraduate classroom as an ungraded assignment, and is finally offered as a reflective and collaborative essay. It grew out of free conversation, but, with facilitation by the professor, the students worked as a team. The initial project was always to be evaluated for a grade, and this knowledge shaped the project in meaningful ways. For example, it instilled an imperative to inject our texted product with academic prose. After Andrea invited Amanda to develop the project as a soundwalk to be performed by an undergraduate class, we worked with the course's graduate teaching assistant, Alexander Marsden, to remove or simplify some of the academic text so that the students could read it with ease and jettisoned pieces of the soundwalk that presented logistical hurdles for the short class period.

As we implemented the script, it became the focus for the pedagogical conversations we—Andrea and Amanda—were already having together about race, activism, and empathy. As we have reflected on the project's first classroom execution in fall 2015, we continue to think of our primary task as creating space for conversations about the race and sound that students can bring into their lives beyond the classroom. We imagine that this project, in its next iteration, might involve inter-campus and interdisciplinary conversations. It is not

15. We wish to extend thanks to our collaborators in the spring 2015 graduate seminar that first generated this project, in particular Joanna Helms, Barkley Heuser, and Alberto Napoli, as well as the undergraduates in the fall 2015 iteration of MUSC 291 at UNC-CH and that course's teaching assistant, Alexander Marsden. Thanks also to Louis Epstein, Rachel Mundy, Chérie Rivers Ndaliko, Timothy Rommen, and an anonymous reader for this *Journal* for suggestions to improve this essay.

16. The debate around removing the name of a former Ku Klux Klan leader from a campus building and renaming the building Hurston Hall, after author Zora Neale Hurston, reached national media. See Jalessa Jones, "UNC protests to #KickOutTheKKK and rename building honoring former Klansman," *USA Today College*, accessed August 17, 2017, <http://college.usatoday.com/2015/01/30/unc-protests-to-kickoutthekkk-and-rename-building-honoring-former-klansmen/>. On commemoration, racism, and mental geography, see Altha Cravey, Derek Alderman, Josh Inwood, Omololu Refilwe Babatunde, Reuben Rose-Redwood, and Scott Kirsch, "#KickOutTheKKK: Challenging White Supremacy at UNC," *American Association of Geographers News* (blog), accessed August 17, 2017, <http://news.aag.org/2015/06/op-ed-kickoutthekkk-challenging-white-supremacy-at-unc/>.

the only project of its ilk—at Binghamton University Jennifer Stoever and her students are developing a historic sound walk that foregrounds civic engagement with their city and its citizens.¹⁷ Our questions are questions that affect all music teachers in the twenty-first century at some point: How do we shape our students as citizens? What does our curriculum do for them as citizens?

I (Andrea) never imagined the profound way in which the soundwalk project would—and does—shape my understanding of the classroom community as it interfaces with the broader campus environment (history, mobility, and discourse; trees, people, and weather). Around the graduate seminar table students encouraged explicitly political engagement from their colleagues during discussions. I seized the opportunity to ask Amanda to integrate her advocacy work with the Latin@ communities of North Carolina's Research Triangle and her commitment to developing a scholarly voice out of activism into a clear assignment for my undergraduate class. I hope, but do not assume, that this invitation and the work that we have done together does not result from a power difference, but from a willingness to confront what the sum of our perspectives might contribute to the community in which we both work, learn, and teach. The implicit assumption I have always had is that through collaboration we are more than just the sum of our parts.

Our goal is not only to highlight how collaboration is essential to our soundwalk, but also to suggest that collaboration is central to what we hope historical work can empower: connections with past communities and concern for those future. We reflect upon the challenges and limitations of the soundwalk—that particular soundwalk and its trajectory, as well as the broader endeavor of soundwalking with students. Throughout this contribution, we ask questions of ourselves and draw out the challenges we gave the score's performers. What is our relationship, as current campus citizens, to the environment constructed through and by racial struggle? How can scripted sonic experiences enhance the connection between the racial past and the racialized everyday? What are the mitigating factors, both environmental and personal, that work to complicate this experience for undergraduate students? Rather than conclude with teaching tips or lessons learned, however, we offer a simple and perhaps hopeful message.

17. "Re Sounding Binghamton," accessed August 17, 2017, <https://binghamtonsoundwalkproject.wordpress.com/>

Canada, have proven adaptable for classes in music history, media studies, acoustics, ecomusicology, and composition. The recent attention to sound studies across the academy has only buoyed their popularity. A quick online search turns up an ever-growing corpus of open-access syllabi across disciplines, which are a tremendous resource for teachers brainstorming adaptations of this practice for the undergraduate classroom. Many explicitly reference the strand of North American experimentalism that christened the practice, adapting the spirit of R. Murray Schafer's *A Sound Education: 100 Exercises in Listening and Sound-Making*.²⁰ Some urge students to collect and organize the sounds that they hear, extracting sounds from their landscapes to create typologies and open conversations about sonic epistemologies.²¹ Turning to the environment around us as a shared commons is on some level a resourceful pedagogical move—it is the teacher's embrace of “having class outside,” after all. However, these exercises that make the familiar unfamiliar are predicated on student groups with similar backgrounds. At UNC-CH a simple example of the ways soundwalks can draw attention to class difference occurred when one first-year student offered that she was literally hearing the beeping alert of a pedestrian call button for the first time: her hometown had no traffic lights. Other soundwalk lesson plans transform the impetus to listen differently (or aggressively) into a demand to listen and hear correctly. The author of a walk aimed at future studio recordists describes that “the long-term goal is to learn to listen better to unmediated as well as mediated sounds, which should manifest in students' general awareness of soundscapes and, eventually, their production work.”²² These examples, with their rubric- and outcome-oriented language, are missed opportunities to work through sound to open conversations about diversity, difference, and privilege.

Despite the bounty of lesson plans—or perhaps because so many of these soundwalks treat listening as an ignored, universal, and intuitive skill to be reawakened—a conversation surrounding the pedagogy of sound studies is

20. R. Murray Schafer's *A Sound Education: 100 Exercises in Listening and Sound-Making* (Indian River, Ontario: Arcana, 1992). See also Keeril Makan's composition course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, accessed August 17, 2017, <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/music-and-theater-arts/21m-065-introduction-to-musical-composition-spring-2014/index.htm>. Others foreground the subjectivity—and unrepeatability—of the soundwalk experience; for example see Jennifer Stoever's two-part soundwalk assignment, which asks students to first prepare a soundwalk and then embark upon another student's script, putting into relief the divergence of their perceptual and aesthetic labor (accessed August 17, 2017, https://www.binghamton.edu/cce/faculty/engaged-teaching/course-designation/stoever_english380w.pdf).

21. Karen Collins and Bill Kapralos, “Sound Design for Media: Introducing Students to Sound” *Journal of Sonic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2014), accessed August 17, 2017, <http://journal.sonic-studies.org/vol06/nr01/a04>.

22. Ian Reyes, “Mediating a Soundwalk: An Exercise in Claireaudience,” *The International Journal of Listening*, 26 (2012): 98–101.

rather undeveloped, especially in comparison with the pages devoted to evaluating the interdisciplinary's value and original contribution to the academy. That there is a demand for introductory texts is clear: two edited volumes from 2012—Jonathan Sterne's *Sound Studies Reader* and Karin Bijsterveld and Trevor Pinch's *Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies*—collect and organize introductory texts for the *au courant* interdisciplinary.²³ They also mark particular texts and ideas as “key.” However, along with the compendium of incisive essays in David Novak and Mark Sakakeeny's *Keywords in Sound*, these texts are certainly best suited to the graduate classroom. Within the context of the undergraduate classroom, there is more of a blank page, and the conversations about attention, hearing, and the sensorium leave plenty of room for play—trial and error?—within and beyond the classroom.²⁴

For us, the movement between self-critique, creativity, and conversation that soundwalks facilitate provided an opportunity to explore how the questions raised by sound studies might be introduced in the undergraduate classroom. Walking we could stumble, get lost, and still be in dialogue with our students along the way. We wanted to instill humility and curiosity in our students. Jonathan Sterne's introduction to the 2012 anthology *Sound Studies Reader* emphasizes the importance of and concern for learning as exploration—what we read as an insistence on contingency—when he describes the “people who do sound studies” as “sound students.”²⁵ The suggestion that there is no mastery of sound underscores Sterne's hope that sound studies maintain its interdisciplinarity and that “hearing requires positionality”—perhaps, as we learned in the process of creating and organizing *Beyond the Belltower*, a fundamental lesson from any soundwalk.²⁶

Take as an example the goal of soundwalking as articulated in Hildegard Westerkamp's aforementioned practice-defining essay “Soundwalking”: She advocates for a *reorientation* of our sensorium in order to correct what she observes to be commonplace negligent listening. She instructs, “Wherever we go we will give our ears priority. They have been neglected by us for a long

23. Jonathan Sterne, ed., *The Sound Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Karin Bijsterveld and Trevor Pinch, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

24. David Novak and Matt Sakakeeny, *Keywords in Sound* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). A stimulating exception to this is Katherine Spring, “Walk This Way: The Pedagogical Value of Soundwalking to the Study of Film Sound,” *Music and the Moving Image* 5, no. 2 (2012), 34–42. Spring employs soundwalks to problematize the authority of a sound at its source. Building on the work of James Lastra, she summarizes the message for her students: “Any sound is transformed by the architecture in which it occurs in the same way that it is transformed by recording technologies” (37).

25. Jonathan Sterne, “Sonic Imaginations,” in Jonathan Sterne, ed., *The Sound Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 3.

26. Sterne, “Sonic Imaginations,” 5.

time and, as a result, we have done little to develop an acoustic environment of good quality.”²⁷ As educators, we must work against the corrective and didactic spirit of such texts, even if they reflect the aesthetic values of this practice. Soundwalks’ emphasis on listening, left unchallenged and abstracted, can perform what Jonathan Sterne has critiqued as the “audio-visual litany”—a set of assumptions about the liberating (and, by extension, exceptional) potential of listening vis à vis seeing for the modern subject.²⁸ It is, after all, no coincidence that R. Murray Schafer’s influential text *The Soundscape* likewise begins with a presentist insistence upon listening, borrowed from Walt Whitman’s *Song of Myself*: “Now I will do nothing but listen.”²⁹

If Westerkamp’s project begins with an inward focus that grows into a meditation on one’s own subject position, the classroom-based soundwalk experience we share here strikes a different fundamental. Our soundwalk, *Beyond the Belltower*, consists of nine scores inspired by research in the University Archives that focused on the themes of race, access, and violence within institutional history. It is a project in aural history that draws attention to a larger collective history, that of the campus and community which shapes our everyday lives in Chapel Hill, NC. The introductory note to the collection frames this departure from the reflective mode that often characterizes soundwalks: “Many of the scores will ask you to read someone else’s words; others demand that you bring up your personal memories and values; finally, some will ask you to talk and listen to different people on campus.” Just as this is a collaborative, coauthored essay, we positioned listening within the soundwalk as a collective experience, albeit one that drew attention to difference more than sameness.

Around the graduate seminar table, we asked, “How can we inflect the retrospection of the historical method—‘listening over one’s shoulder’³⁰—with the introspection and self-reflexivity of performance studies?” The soundwalk grew out of the practice-oriented activities in our graduate seminar, through which we toyed with modes of learning about and through sound. This is the peculiar background of *our* soundwalk, which we offer to encourage others to similarly build upon the discourses that invite debate on their campuses. Together we devised tutorials for playing instruments of our own creation, wrote guides for sound-journeys, and made mixtapes that narrated history through a compilation of sound effects, documentary recordings, and musical examples. We planned lesson plans to teach undergraduates about the silence-inspired art of Marina Abramović, John Cage, and Erdem Gündüz. These exercises paved the

27. Hildegard Westerkamp, “Soundwalking”

28. Sterne, “Sonic Imaginations,” 9.

29. R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, VT: Destiny, 1993), 3.

30. Hillel Schwartz, *Making Noise: From Babel to the Big Bang* (Cambridge: Zone Books, 2011), 29.

way (and strongly guided our thinking) for *Beyond the Belltower*. They shaped the importance of the performative and embodied as we undertook historical research to deepen our knowledge of the physicality of UNC at Chapel Hill's campus through sound. For our final projects, we linked the campus environment to the wider debate on race, violence, and institution in the United States in three interconnected projects: a digital soundmap, an exhibition of primary source materials hosted at the Music Library, and the soundwalk that became *Beyond the Belltower*.

Amanda, along with fellow graduate student Alberto Napoli, spearheaded the collaborative soundwalk project. The seminar members were to create site-specific, performable scores, each connected to a monument on UNC at Chapel Hill's campus. Each was responsible for choosing a site, conducting archival research on that site, and composing, however they saw fit, a piece based on this history. They received the following prompt:

- Imagine a composition that could provoke thoughts, reactions, and/or delight, and that is related to the place of your choice.
- Prepare a score for your composition—you can use the materials you collected, expand on that if you want, draw your notation system from the transcriptions we did last month, or explore new techniques.
- If applicable, compile a set of instructions to read and perform your score—again, bear in mind what you did last week for the sound instrument's instructions.

Each location—the undergraduate dining hall, the music building, Silent Sam, Franklin Street, the segregated cemetery located on campus, the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History, another contentious statue (“The Campus Body”), the historic Playmakers Theatre³¹, and the pavilion in front of the campus bookstore (“the Pit”)—hosts or hides Black history. The scores took six weeks to complete, and we workshopped them together. We curated the campus, mapping a series of itineraries across its terrain with a critical program. Alejandro Madrid describes the limited inroads that performance studies has made as an analytical paradigm within musicology, arguing that music and performance studies' intersection involves two fields that do “not always present the same coordinates.”³² We kept his cartographic language

31. Zora Neale Hurston had participated in a drama workshop as the first black student at UNC in 1939, although the campus's segregation meant her status was “unofficial.”

32. Alejandro L. Madrid, “Why Music and Performance Studies? Why Now?: An Introduction to the Special Issue,” *TRANS-Revista Transcultural de Música* 13 (2009), accessed August 17, 2017, <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/1/why-music-and-performance-studies-why-now-an-introduction-to-the-special-issue>

in mind as we wrote. The final 30-page anthology of scores offered performers the opportunity to choose their own adventure across the terrain. In the introduction, we suggested paths through the scores by highlighting poetic and political themes (ceremonial, silent, performance, “the student”), as well as didactic routes with predicted timings (Black Campus History, Chronological, and Student Activism). Many of the seminar members were familiar with graphic notation and open-form composition from music studies, and we pushed our scholar-composers to consider their work from the perspective of performance studies. We worked toward an ethos of care in our work—with each other, with our subject matter, and imagining potential performers. Wrestling with our own bodily anxieties about actually performing the scores, we held up artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s hopeful assertion: “I believe in the sophistication of the human condition. I believe that performance art is such a visceral art form that it allows for multiple points of entry—some are intellectual, but some are spiritual or emotional.”³³ His text would become the epigram to *Beyond the Belltower*.

We were drawn to walking and movement as a way of amplifying the everyday. Attempting to balance aspects of comfort with discomfort, the intellectual intertwined with the spiritual and emotional, the visceral experience of walking seemed to create a kinetic setting propitious for the creation of embodied knowledge, attempting to decenter what performance studies scholar Dwight Conquergood described as the “dominant epistemologies that link knowing with seeing.”³⁴ The American residential college campus is shaped by its function as a shared space. We wanted our students to revise and rethink: at our boldest we hoped to reconstitute their everyday movements and challenge them to participate differently with campus life. The generative potential of creative practice foregrounded in sound, media, and performance studies could keep the project provisional more than entraining. Consider Brandon LaBelle’s compelling evocation: “Walking amplifies quotidian experience to fill the city with social energy and imagination. Such perspectives must also include the rather mundane and at times brutal experience walking comes to express.”³⁵ Even if our idealistic mission of opening up the potential of history for the students were to fail, we reasoned, we hoped that the process of walking together would generate a conversation among the students that would reveal divergent paths and lives at UNC.

33. Bean Gilsdorf, “Guillermo Gómez Peña: Linguistic Resistance,” *Art21* (blog), February 12, 2014, accessed August 17, 2017, <http://blog.art21.org/2014/02/12/guillermo-gomez-pe-na-linguistic-resistance/#.V8gBRZMrI0o>

34. Dwight Conquergood, “Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research.” *The Drama Review* 46, 2 (T174), Summer 2002, 146.

35. Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (New York and London: Continuum, 2010), 91.

Archival Silence, Interrupted

Each author wrestled with how to project—or perhaps with how to return—archival documents into the campus landscape, a task which entailed teaching performers while also providing them with directives and ideas. For example, the score for Franklin Street, Chapel Hill's throughfare, asks participants to revive historical activism from the Civil Rights Era protests of 1963–64. Samantha Horn's score, “_untitled,” asks participants to gather in front of a local diner. In the explanatory note, Horn notes that business owners on Franklin Street raised their voices in opposition to the demands made by student protests advocating for equality. The score then asks the soundwalk participants to reenact and refract historical fragments. These excerpts reflect a range of positions and are culled from activists' signs; articles and letters from a local newspaper, a sermon given by the white pro-integration Presbyterian reverend Charles M. Jones; and lastly, a pamphlet distributed by the African-American organizers of a fast performed in protest during Holy Week on the street.

The Franklin Street score encourages the creative reinterpretation of the sounds of the words the participant-performers would read off the documents, suggesting that “modes of performance include but are not limited to: shouting, singing, whispering, stuttering.” Horn placed considerable power in the hands of the performer-participant to modify their texts so that they would not need to speak words with which they were uncomfortable: “NOTE: The texts below are taken from historical documents. They have (in most cases) been truncated, but the original wording has been preserved. If the performers or audience find aspects of the original wording objectionable (e.g. ‘negro’), they may substitute alternative words or phrases.”

The author-composer note is a point of comfort that recognizes the semantic shift of certain words over time and empowers the performer-participants to continue engaging with the documents as critical editors and curators. While reading aloud documents indicating the town of Chapel Hill's deep split over the benefits of allowing African Americans physical access to local businesses, the performer-participant was asked to give voice to oppression in a direct, active way. The protest-sign excerpts struck an uncanny chord for the seminar participants: “Chapel Hill: Home Of Candy-Coated Racists,” “Equality Now!,” “Make Democracy More Than A Word In Chapel Hill.” The incisive utterances reflected and even echoed the same sentiment that we had heard expressed in 2015 at campus protests.

As our opening experiences at the foot of Silent Sam suggest, silence is perhaps the critical term to understand this project's local traction and execution, as well as its critical stance toward the soundwalk tradition. Around the statue itself, silence has an entangled multiplicity of meanings: the commemorative

silence that Silent Sam performs stands in for a politics of domination and oppression—the silencing—that the Army of the Confederacy represents. The commemorative silence conjures the dead soldiers while the hegemonic silence suggests that their very presence haunts. Silence is also recast in its popular role as the “lynchpin” of American experimentalism’s relativism, to quote David Novak.³⁶ It makes time for creative and individual work within a group walking exercise. The graduate students who prepared the scores also began their work with quiet individual reflection at the sites they had been assigned.

Barkley Heuser’s score for Silent Sam, “Please Join Me In Observing a Moment of Noise,” marks a departure from other anti-racist action at the monument, such as the assemblies of the Real Silent Sam Coalition. Thinking musically, the UNC Institute for Arts and Humanities hosted a Silent Sam Cypher in December 2015 that explicitly aimed to “encourage discussion.” A group of student rappers asked the audience for keywords they associate with the monument and burst into a flow, backed by a small musical ensemble, amplifying the crowd’s ideas. The performance was loud and intensely punctuated. In contrast, Heuser asked students to slowly amplify the sonic architecture of McCorkle Place:

Performers listen to the sounds around them. When attention is drawn towards a particular sound, the performer “captures” that sound by repeating it periodically, with whatever frequency seems fitting. By “repeat” is meant “vocally reproduce in some way” (this could be mimetic, but it could also be symbolic— i.e. repeating linguistic representations of the sound—if mimesis is not possible).

In fall 2016, Heuser explained that his score challenges the comfort of quiet reflection, which is often interrupted. Sound, he suggests, “demonstrates indifference,” while the visual tone of the monument “insist[s] on commemoration.”³⁷

Our ambition to reanimate—or at least to represent and re-present—archival material presented perhaps the most conflicted silence, for it was through the process of reproducing often violent texts that were left behind and cast as bygone. In drawing attention to hurtful voices—even asking students to shape the words again in their mind’s ear or with their mouths and vocal chords—we asked students to ponder the power of the voice and body to both articulate subjectivity and to subjugate. Hearing the texts in their present, as present, prompted some students to understand themselves in an explicit coexistence with the dead. One student’s response captures the confusing agency of multiple ontologies of silence:

36. David Novak, “Playing Off Site: The Untranslation of Onkyō,” *Asian Music* 44, no. 1 (2011), 48.

37. Email communication with authors, August 22, 2016.

Starting at the segregated cemetery, my group read aloud the text on the monument to Wilson Caldwell, a black man who I had to look up after the walk to find out was the slave of the president of the University during his lifetime in the mid 1800's. While the monument certainly was respectful and kind to Mr. Caldwell, there was a slight sense of racism about it that was very subtle. Here are a few lines that I find especially troubling: "The Student's friend and servant... The best type of black man... The solution of the race problem... Diligence dignified his service. Three generations of white men testify of his faithfulness. Let him rest here till he's ready for work again." As I said, these words certainly do not insult Caldwell and are meant to be genuine, but there is something inherently troubling when the best type of black man is one who was complacent and a hardworking servant. [...] This monument praises Caldwell for staying silent, obeying white folks, and not questioning the status quo.

We hear in the student's overriding concern and hesitant tone what David Toop calls the "sinister resonance" of silence.³⁸ The individual's sensitive comments, we hope, grow out of the careful reorientation of the familiar that we aspired to with the project. Likewise, that this student spoke out (both in the cemetery but also in their blog entry) marks resistance to the "aestheticized silence" that George Lewis hears as counter to the "socially constituted scenes" prized in the black experimental tradition.³⁹ At the same time we cannot ignore the discomfort so patently described as we reflect on the students' collective engagement with *Beyond the Belltower*.

Beyond the Belltower in Practice

MUSC 291, "Music and Politics," is a medium-sized lecture course that can be tailored to the teaching and research interests of individual lecturers. It satisfies an elective requirement for music majors and a general education requirement (Visual and Performing Arts) for any undergraduate. The course assumes no previous musical experience: in Fall 2016, fewer than 10 of the 71 students enrolled claimed musical literacy. This iteration of the course wove together historical case studies and contemporary debates that cohered around four broad topics: 1) politics, music, and identity; 2) music and race in the United States; 3) music and ideology in Europe; and 4) music and migration in contemporary Europe. Each unit focused on developing students' abilities to synthesize a comparative framework for specific case studies rather than satisfying objective

38. David Toop, *Sinister Resonance: The Mediumship of the Listener* (New York and London: Continuum, 2010).

39. George E. Lewis, *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), xii.

learning tasks. The bulk of the students' work consisted of argument-driven essays and a blog of weekly responses.⁴⁰

Over the fifteen-week semester, the soundwalk belonged to a handful of class meetings with an unusual format that was not based upon the typical lecture punctuated by brief small-group discussions. It concluded the unit on music and race in the United States. Though the course was not conceived of as an introduction to sound studies, this particular unit was strongly influenced by the significant place aurality has had in putting structures of dominance into relief. As Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan write, "Sound studies have heightened our attention to what we might call auditory significance, to the power and effect of sound's production and its reception in the formation of social and political orders."⁴¹ Over the course of the unit we had read W. E. B. DuBois on sorrow songs while studying "Roll, Jordan, Roll," analyzed the different performances of black feminism by Beyoncé and Nina Simone with bell hooks in hand, compared the documentation of the Civil Rights/Black Freedom Movement in sound, and dove into Sun Ra's racial imagination.

The last two case studies were conceived as preparation for the soundwalk—a way of exposing the students to a performance studies-inflected approach to history and the allure of the archive, with all of its gaps. We compared documentary recordings of sit-ins to songs that recounted specific demonstrations and to Bernice Johnson Reagon's life-long devotion to writing Black history through oral transmission.⁴² Our lecture on Sun Ra's 1972 film *Space is the Place* was punctuated by radical disruptions: every five minutes a student stood to read (or, if they felt so inspired, shout, whisper, or sing) a passage from the avant-garde musician's 1950s broadsides.⁴³ Crucially, for these students the soundwalk was situated within the legacy of radical black performance rather than the Canadian soundscape school, which has largely avoided connecting sound with the politics of race and was shaped exclusively by white composers of European heritage.⁴⁴ While we cannot presume to speak on behalf of the students and do not wish here to evaluate the soundwalk in terms of its "suc-

40. For an extended discussion on freewriting and blogs in the classroom see Sara Haefeli, "Using Blogs for Better Student Writing Outcomes," in this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013), 39–70.

41. Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan, "Hearing Empire—Imperial Listening," in *Audible Empire*, eds. idem (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 2.

42. Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Let the Church Sing 'Freedom,'" *Black Music Research Journal* 7 (1997), 106.

43. John Corbett, ed., *The Wisdom of Sun-Ra: Sun Ra's Polemical Broadsheets and Streetcorner Leaflets* (Chicago: WhiteWalls, 2006).

44. We would underscore that our project is not unique in wrestling with "how listening operates as an organ of racial discernment, categorization, and resistance" as we bring the field of ecomusicology and the interdiscipline of sound studies together. See Jennifer Lynn Stoeber, *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 4.

cess,” the students’ 250–500 word responses to the experience, written up on their weekly blogs, provided an opportunity to reflect—perhaps in the sense that Westerkamp intimates. These comments, abstracted in the soundcloud in figure 2, provide insight into the collective experience and a dialogue with our own top-down perspective on the soundwalk as learning tool. As we wrap up our comments, these student voices guide our reflections on our soundwalk in practice.

October 2, 2015: Music 291’s performance of *Beyond the Belltower* was met with one of the stormiest days of the season. For undergraduate students accustomed to performing the learned, rather than learning during and from the performative process, the scores proved to be a difficult exercise in patience and vulnerability when faced with wet sidewalks, wet shoes, and wet paper texts. As one student wrote, “I was not excited for or about the sound walk. I don’t typically like experimental things, and performance art kind of bores me. So when I woke up on Friday and it was pouring down rain, the last thing I wanted to do was walk around campus listening to sounds for an hour.” Almost every student response commented on the torrential downpour that we all endured. They gravitated toward sheltered events and truncated other performances. The rain—real, cold, and relentless—heightened any preconceptions and reservations held by the students.

The rain exacerbated the discomfort perhaps inherent in this project, a permutation of Andrea’s experience on University Day. A couple of students asked for alternate assignments, due to illness or injury. We wondered if we asked the students to make themselves too vulnerable to the environment, even though the graduate students had taken special care to control for several factors, including sensitivity towards the diverse student body, student vulnerability, and performability in adapting it for the undergraduate classroom. If soundwalks are meant to heighten the modern subject’s attention to nature in a reparative mode, this soundwalk drove that point home. The students put away their soaked paper scores, but the accounts of listening and feeling the rain were vivid and sensorial. One student recounted: “Well. We were all very wet. And the wind picked up. And there wasn’t much noise besides the rain hitting various objects, such as umbrellas, bricks, and cars. [We] just huddled under the awning to take refuge from the rain, listening somewhat arbitrarily to the sounds of the cars spraying water from the street everywhere.” The rain provided a welcome way out, too: “huddling” under the awnings away from the rain also allowed some students to retreat from the performance. At the same time, they found themselves in new “communities of affinity.”⁴⁵ The close listening—here a product of physical proximity rather than an analytical point

45. Kay Kaufman Shelemay, “Musical Communities: Rethinking the Collective in Music,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 2 (2011), 373–75.

of entry—stimulated a conversation within the groups. As one student wrote: “I was able to really hone in on the reactions of my fellow group members based on their understanding of the significance of that specific place during that time.”

Some described the rain confirming the positive embrace of the natural one might expect from any activity that provides relief from the more traditional performance spaces of the stage and classroom. “Nature really does make its own music and Friday its music was the sound of raindrops,” read one poetic response. Another student aptly summed up the unpredictability of site-specific activities: “I thought it was an interesting reminder of the power nature has in manipulating our sonic environments, that no matter how in control and ingenious we humans we believe we are over our surroundings, nature always illustrates its musical prowess.” The soundwalk’s rainy setting lent a “somber and eerie” quality to the segregated cemetery experience, as another student remarked, “rain thumped against my head and soaked through my shoes.”

Other students reflected on the soundwalk through the lenses of power and vulnerability—arguably one of the desired outcomes we had for this project, which was designed to counter institutional hegemonies. As a student completed the sound performance in Lenoir Dining Hall, they reflected that it “made me open my eyes to the sounds of the dining service workers. They all mostly seemed cheerful when taking orders despite the low pay, hectic rush hours, and tiring work.” Another student experienced the historical aspects of the project as a window to the past, imagining themselves in the middle of a protest: “As someone who isn’t a fan of yelling or conflicting noises, I decided that I would not have liked to experience such conflict and animosity in the middle of large crowds.”

To what extent were we responsible for subjecting our students to hostility, not just that of the natural environment when it rains, but that of historical agents? For the creators of *Beyond the Belltower*, it was a novel, if nerve-wracking, idea to have the text actually performed by undergraduate students. We trusted that we would have more in common with the students than not, since we understood ourselves to be a part of the same under-informed student body. Yet, the agitation at the base of our project leaves the evaluation of its success difficult. When we sat to write this essay, we invited the authors of the scores to reflect again on *Beyond the Belltower*. Many commented on the fact that the score seemed too fixed and final in comparison to the creative process of its genesis. One student shared that at one year’s remove she still has “a major pedagogical concern, namely that it takes a lot of work to rewrite someone’s understanding of a space that’s very familiar to them from an everyday context, especially if the major institutions that structure their life have always presented

a different history.”⁴⁶ We hoped to create new experiences of the campus, reorienting our students’ sensorium while also alerting them to muted and silenced histories.

Were we able to shift the status of the texts that shaped UNC’s history for our performers? Perhaps this is the wrong question with which to return to the project, for the process of walking the campus—with new routes, new communities, and new histories—is ongoing, not only for the authors of this essay and the authors of *Beyond the Belltower*, but also for these undergraduates. The score’s performances may always fall short of what we dream for them, much like the brief experience of an undergraduate class. But our students, we hope, live with the ideas and the experiences of our teaching. While we cannot, as individuals, deny or reroute the uneasy slippage between liberal politics, the language of white supremacy, and the whitewashing of UNC’s contentious past, we can suggest our students walk differently on campus. That visceral experience of walking through campus on a rainy day raised questions about a community with a shared geography and put into relief our differences. On a university campus which is, in equal parts, stubbornly immutable in its monuments and steadfast in its declarations of a commitment to students of color, soundwalks and sonic experimentation can play a crucial role in disrupting, questioning, and revealing the sounds of the past—sounds which so many assume dwindle into silence.

46. Joanna Helms, email communication with authors, August 23, 2016.