

ANTH 303

The Anthropology of Sound

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Alex Boudreault-Fournier

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course aims at sensitizing the students to the often-forgotten presence of sounds in everyday life. More than just a phenomenological account of sound, the course proposes to consider all sound-related dimensions (noise, music, voice, silence, etc.) as significant elements of research and analysis. It further takes sound as something to seriously reflect upon from an anthropological perspective. Throughout this course, students will have the opportunity (1) to map out and reflect upon ethnographies of sound, theories of sound, sound art works and recent writings in Sound Studies—a thriving field in the humanities and social sciences—and (2) to experiment directly with sound production. In being involved in the production of soundscapes and other related sound installations/projects, students will be encouraged to think about how sound can be considered a significant element of research and theory-making.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- To think creatively about how sound can become an element of research and analysis in anthropology.
- To reflect critically on sound in your everyday life and in relation to your own research interests.
- To discuss recent and historical research, works and projects constructed on an analysis of sound from various perspectives and approaches: anthropology, sociology, visual and media arts, music, sound studies, communication, etc.
- To determine how sound can enhance the visual dimension of films, exhibitions and research.
- To produce simple to more complex sound clips and/or soundscapes in order to explore research interests and questions in anthropology and other disciplines.