

## Critical Race Studies Into Soundscape Studies

with Nimalan Yoganathan

**Keywords:** Indigenous Oppression, Decolonial Resistance (through sound), Critical Race (Theory & Studies), Protest and Militance (mobilization), White Normativity & Settler Colonialism

**Related Course Subjects:** Diversity and the Contemporary World, History, Community, Sociology & Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Literature and Language Studies, Engineering & Computer science, Arts & Media, Geography, Environmental Climate and Sustainability Studies

In this video, Yoganathan offers examples of how sound can affect people and be deployed in anti-racist and decolonial resistance.

### Video URL

<https://youtu.be/syoSK5QIr9E>

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### Goals/Objectives

After watching the video, students will be able to:

- Explain the concept of subsonic tactics
  - Identify ways sound (and silence) can be used in activism and decolonial resistance
  - Describe how sonic disobedience can be/has been used as an anti-oppression tool
  - Identify examples of sonic disobedience and subsonic tactics
  - Explain the intersection between soundscape studies and critical race studies
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#### About The Decolonial Perspectives & Practices Hub

The Decolonial Perspectives & Practices Hub is a student-led initiative to provide a platform for the community to collaborate and develop meaningful solutions to the systemic issues faced by underserved groups in academia. Our mission is to advance knowledge and understanding of these issues and provide a space to engage in research and learning that is open to all experiences each individual brings.

#### About the Anti-Racist Pedagogy Project

The Anti-Racist Pedagogy Project is a video library that showcases pre-recorded talks by local community activists, students and educators in Montreal and Canada and transforms them into anti-racist educational resources for the classroom. Undergraduate and graduate students from Concordia and McGill University created the content for these course packages. These resources exemplify the power of student leadership and their contribution to advancing antiracist education.

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### Pre-Class Self-Reflection Exercise (Educators)

Fully engaging with antiracist pedagogy starts with self-reflection and accountability. **If you are familiar with antiracist education, you know that the best way to teach antiracist pedagogy is to model antiracist praxis and thought.** As such, we have developed a series of self-reflection questions for you to consider before integrating anti-racist educational materials into your classroom. The night before class or at least a few hours before class, give yourself time, without distractions, to reflect on the questions below - you can write them down or reflect on them with yourself paper free!

#### Be reflexive

- What does antiracist pedagogy or education mean to you?
- What is the relationship between your identity and antiracist work? How would you describe your role in antiracist work?
- How do you view the mutualistic exchange between yourself and your students? Do you adjust your teaching style accordingly?
- What is the difference between engaging with our repository as a knowledge exchange versus a knowledge extraction?

#### Be accountable

- To what extent have you engaged with antiracist or anti-oppressive education or philosophies within your life/work? Why or why not?
- What has the silencing or exclusion of another person or group looked like in the environments that you frequent? What have you done, or what could you have done to remedy it?
- Reflect on how you have engaged with literature, presentations and other forms of knowledge led by Queer, Trans, Indigenous, Black, Asian, and other POC in your academic, personal, or professional lives.
- What has been your role in disrupting and mobilizing against racism and oppression interpersonally or in the environments you frequent?

### Guiding Questions

#### Before watching the video

##### Pre-Video Questions -Students

- What are ways to fight against systems of oppression?
- Is there sufficient diversity of perspective in your field of study? Why or why not?
- What is soundscape, and can it pertain to race? Why or why not?



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**While watching the video**

As you watch the video, take note of the following:

- How do Critical Race studies and Soundscape Studies intersect?
- Can sound be political? How?
- Why do we need to broaden the scope of research and perspectives in soundscape studies and your field of study?

**After watching the video****Post-video Questions**Indigenous Oppression

- In which ways do soundscapes promote the exclusion of racialized and marginalized communities and their experiences?
- How have Indigenous communities been able to use sound as an anti-oppression tool?

Decolonial Resistance (through sound)

- What are other examples of sonic resistance/sonic disobedience?
- How can the unique experiences of racialized and marginalized peoples be better represented through sound or in your field of study?

Critical Race (Theory & Studies)

- What is the link between race and sound?
- Why is it important to broaden the scope of research?

Protest and Militance (mobilization)

- What are some examples of sonic attacks and sonic resistance presented in the video?
- How can sound be used to bring awareness and mobilize?

White Normativity & Settler Colonialism

- What is “White hearing”?
- What seemingly innocuous practices uphold white normativity in soundscape or your field of study?

**Assignments / Writing topics**Take a walk – Assignment

Take a walk in your neighbourhood or your favourite place in your city. Record the soundscape from a recording device. (If you do not have a recording device, you may sit somewhere, close your eyes and listen). Write a brief reflection answering the following questions:

- What do you hear?



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- What sounds are most prevalent? What feelings do they evoke in you? What emotions might they evoke in others?
- What sounds hadn't you noticed before?
- What sounds are unique to this area or spot?

#### White Normativity and Settler Colonialism

- Create a short oral presentation to deconstruct and rethink existing concepts, studies, or innovations in your field of study to highlight and rectify exclusionary features
- Explain (via essay, video, performance, other) how people in your field of study have been able to counter white normativity and provide examples

#### Decolonial Resistance

Based on the examples presented in the video and some additional research, create a document to highlight the following:

- The gaps in scope broadness in research in your field of study
- A critical analysis of exclusion and biases in methodology and conceptualization in your field of study

#### **Taking Action**

If possible, create a repository of examples of inclusionary features to your field of study (use classroom online discussion forum or database activity)

- Research, document, and share examples of the contributions of racialized individuals and inclusivity in your field of study
- Describe how these contributions have helped progress innovation in your field of study



**Student Group Reflection**

1. What is something new that your group learned or began to consider from watching the video?
  2. What type of educational videos on systemic racism would you like to see more of?
  3. How can you combat systems of oppression and exclusion in your individual lives?
  4. Why is having an anti-racist approach to your work/studies important?
  5. After today's exercise, write down two suggestions for your professor on making your class more inclusive.
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Thank you for implementing our resources and supporting anti-racism efforts in education. If you have any questions or feedback, please email us!



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