

## **Currents**

# **SENSATE SOVEREIGNTY**

## **A Dialogue on Dylan Robinson's *Hungry Listening***

**~~Sadie Couture, Jonathan Sterne, Mehak Sawhney, Shirley Roburn, Andy Kelleher Stuhl, Burç Köstem, Hannah Tollefson, Randolph Jordan, Landon Morrison, Allyson Rogers, Michael Nardone~~**

On 13 and 20 May 2020, members of The Culture and Technology Discussion and Working Group (The CATDAWG) [1] met online to discuss an advance copy of Dylan Robinson's *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (University of Minnesota Press, 2020). Inspired by the dialogical spirit of the book, some of those present decided to extend our discussions in writing, in part to flesh them out further, and in part as a thank you to Robinson, who so generously shared his book with us before it was released.

*Hungry Listening* emerges from encounters between Indigenous sound performance and Western art music. It takes aim at the pernicious tendency for the latter to insist upon aesthetic assimilation as the end-goal of these encounters, which far too often means derogating the former's ontologies and protocols of song. The book complicates settler audition by introducing what "settling" means from an Indigenous perspective in the first place. "Hungry listening" is one among many Indigenous perceptions of settler-colonialism, and Robinson goes on to detail multiple decolonial and resurgent approaches to listening throughout the book. One of his major formulations is the idea of "sensate sovereignty," where artistic and sensory forms act both as obstructions to hungry listening and "provide a structure of knowledge sharing for Indigenous folks to enter into" (24). He weaves it into the form and writing of the book. Building on Indigenous theorizations of refusal and resurgence [2], Robinson's concept of sensate sovereignty "seek[s] to effect an epistemic shift in where and how we perceive Indigenous sovereignty" (24).

In this review, we situate the book within sound studies and critiques of settler colonial listening, reflecting on the major conceptual contributions of the book such as sensate sovereignty, hungry listening, and critical listening positionality. Lastly,

we engage with the book's lived practice and improvisation of a politics of form.

### **Jonathan Sterne:**

There is no dearth of writing on Indigenous modes of music-making or listening, but *Hungry Listening* is unique in my reading for several reasons. First, it engages at great length with academic new music from an Indigenous perspective. Most of the accounts I was familiar with before *Hungry Listening* focused on academic composition and music education simply rejecting Indigenous forms of musical practice and knowledge. While that's certainly part of Robinson's account, he goes much, much further. Second, there is an engagement with sound studies to theorize and thematize listening as a political and cultural act. Robinson's titular concept names a behaviour in a way that goes far beyond simply saying "settler colonial listening practices are settler colonial in their orientation." Rather, he treats hungry listening as a set of orientations and even techniques, and one thing I particularly like about it is that it is explicitly framed as an Indigenous reading of settler audition. In this, it reminds me of bell hooks' essay on black representations of whiteness as terror in *Black Looks*. [3] That, and his discussion of critical listening positionality will be very useful to me in lots of work to come.

There is now two decades of work in sound studies on settler colonial listening, [4] starting in the late 1990s and early 2000s with Phil Deloria's *Playing Indian*, Erika Brady's *A Spiral Way*, Richard Rath's *How Early America Sounded*, the last chapter of my *Audible Past* and moving forward into books like Gary Tomlinson's *Singing of the New World* and Ana Maria Ochoa Gauthier's *Aurality*. [5] But apart from Deloria's work, none of these books articulate a fully Indigenous perspective, though many give glimpses here and there from Indigenous sources. *Hungry Listening* represents something different, because it begins with an Indigenous perspective and articulates it throughout. [6]

I think *Hungry Listening* will be the first book in what will be a stream of work in the coming years that will define a range of Indigenous perspectives in direct dialogue with sound studies and the more critical stand of interdisciplinary music studies: Jessica Bissett Perea's work on performing Indigeneity; Trevor Reed's scholarship on sound in Indigenous law (and their co-edited *Indigenizing Sound Studies* volume); Dustin Tahmahkera's work on Indigenous well-being and ancestral acoustics; Kate Galloway's work on Indigenous sound art. [7] What I would hope, in a few years, is

that Indigenous scholars will find more spaces of their own within the university to discuss sound and music in ways that make sense to them; that Indigenous ideas are more fully integrated into interdisciplinary work on sound and music; and that Indigenous scholars feel more welcome in those spaces where it is happening than they may now (Robinson provides no stories about sound studies events but he probably could have). This is the final major thread of the book that I appreciate: it's both within and without. Positionality is complex, compromised, negotiated. There's no "pure" stance for an academic writer to take and Robinson treats that as a basic methodological tenet for how he describes the world. The job of non-Indigenous scholars in the field is to take up what he has to say, without making him solely responsible for educating us.

### **Mehak Sawhney:**

I fully share Jonathan's perspective about *Hungry Listening* being a critique of settler colonial perceptual orders through Indigenous sensory orientations and the potential it holds for scholars of sound, music and perception. In the acknowledgements section at the end of the book, Robinson says, "I hope this book and my work here might contribute in some small way to opening space for future generations to challenge normative and settler colonial paradigms of perception and to affirm resurgent forms of attention" (259). If I were to describe my own experience of reading the book, it felt like recognizing and reverse engineering several settler colonial perceptual orders followed by thinking through Indigenous cosmologies of sensing and being. The book is replete with powerful decolonial neologisms and offers multiple conceptual paradigms to decolonize perception and listening, some of which I list below.

1. *Hungry Listening* and Indigenous Cosmologies: The title and primary conceptual lens of the book - "hungry listening" - emerges from Indigenous cosmologies and ways of knowing and naming. In addition to the two Halq'eméylem words from which the idea is derived, [8] Robinson gives us a glimpse into other adjectives used for settlers in Chapter 1. He quotes Cherokee scholar Jeff Corntassel to provide instances of Indigenous terms for newcomers - *Yonega* is a Cherokee term for white settlers which means "foam of the water, without a direction," and *Wasicu* is a Dakota term for settlers that means a "taker of fat." Indigenous terms for settlers describe not only historical relationships but also settler states of being which can be significant frameworks for decolonizing perception (47). In order to decolonize settler colonial listening formations, what "settling" meant or means must be

understood in the first place. Not only “hungry listening,” but all of Robinson’s theoretical insights emerge from Indigenous epistemic and affective ways of being. [9]

2. Positionality vs Identity: Robinson argues for a listening positionality that is disentangled from identity. He argues that positionalities change with where, when and how one is located. For Robinson, “Identity is a cohesive fact, while positionality is a ‘shifty’ state” (248). This idea of positionality as fluctuating in addition to being complex and specific stems from Indigenous modes of being in a relation:

[S]hifting contexts of inclusion and exclusion are Indigenous modes of being in relation that are not predicated on an epistemology of relationship as a static state. Resurgence and decolonization do not exist as completed work but instead as ongoing processes in flux. (237)

3. Multi-Sensory Listening and Subjective Sound: Robinson challenges the idea of listening as purely aural and sonic stimulus as something objective. Against the Western models of sensory divisions, he introduces listening as an embodied multi-sensory experience in Indigenous cultures. He also argues against any specific definition of listening – “Decolonizing musical practice involves becoming no longer sure what LISTENING is” (47). He understands sound (and other media to express sound) as subjects that beget an affective and/or responsible response. He introduces a third subject in the dyads listener, music, writer and reader – space, whether it be the space of performance or the space of the medium (page, screen) through which listening is conveyed. This also explains his formal choices which emerge from what he calls apposite methodologies, performative writing methodologies which take the form of “writing with” rather than “writing about” (81).

4. Functional vs Aesthetic: In opposition to Western notions of music as aesthetic, Robinson introduces Indigenous understandings of music as functional – music and songs are “more than representational” and are experienced as law, medicine, teachings, embodied history and “forms of doing” (45-6). While the Western aesthetic state is that of contemplation, the Indigenous functional state might vary. [10] Since Indigenous songs cannot fit the Western idea of being a “thing,” Robinson suggests “Indigenous + art music” as a model of collaboration which denotes conjoining rather than merging two fields of musical practice (9). The logogram “+” becomes a structural means to assert Indigenous sovereignty and refuse the epistemic violence that occurs in Indigenous-Western collaborations in a settler-colonial context.

5. Sensate Sovereignty and Structural Refusal: Robinson expands the ideas of sovereignty and refusal at the heart of decolonial theory to the domain of perception by proposing concepts such as *sensate sovereignty* and *structural refusal*. While the former includes the “potential of written, visual and aural obstructions” (24), the latter includes a refusal of “aesthetic strategies that impede Indigenous knowledge extraction and instrumentalization” (23). Both these ideas work towards altering perceptual orders structurally for sharing Indigenous epistemic-affective-aesthetic modalities of being.

### **Shirley Roburn:**

What I appreciate most about Robinson’s book is his textual embodiment of Mehak’s fifth point on “sensate sovereignty and structural refusal,” which could also be described, in Peter Kulchyski’s terms, as enacting a politics of form. [11] There is a long tradition, from Hugh Brody in the 1980s, through to Kulchyski, Irlbacher-Fox, Van Wyck, and Christensen more recently, of northern scholars interspersing academic texts with narratives, testimonials, photographs, and creative pieces in an effort to break the hegemony of Western academic forms and create spaces for Indigenous experiences and politics. [12] However, Robinson takes this to a new level, actually demonstrating how an Indigenous relational politics can structure the relationship between a text and an audience. Robinson includes between the chapters a series of “Event scores,” that function variously as examples, nudges, challenges, and instructions compelling readers to reconsider their modes of listening to Indigenous cultural property. [13] The very first of these sections, “Writing Indigenous Space,” is explicitly exclusively for Indigenous readers. The reader is thus invited, from the outset, to enter into an Indigenous politics of form, in this instance by governing their reading behaviour to respect a proprietary

knowledge container.

As a form of address, *Hungry Listening* is profoundly conscious of its multiple audiences, and enacts ethics of appropriate relationship, modeling to readers how musical scholarship can approach Indigenous creators, performers and musics in ways that respect Indigenous sovereignty and value Indigenous creations on their own terms. At the same time, this respect is reciprocal: mirroring the gesture to Indigenous readers at the book's outset, Robinson gives over space in his conclusion to two non-Indigenous scholars. This is a remarkably generous gesture, and at the same time a demanding one: Robinson gently but firmly demurs when the scholars ask for a protocol – coming to terms with how to respond, how to be in respectful relationship to Robinson's text, is exactly the work they must do.

Kulchyski describes that for Indigenous self-government “the politics of form is of considerable importance ... the form in which power is deployed not only reflects the cultural values of those who deploy it, but it embodies, enacts, and perpetuates those cultural values” (15-16). How things are done shapes what can arise out of any interaction. Indigenous governance is not restricted to rules that might structure a government body but encompasses everyday life: social forms and protocols; storytelling and means of narration; the community as a “form” of social being. *Hungry Listening* enacts its politics of form to confront the often unspoken norms and protocols that govern musicology and discipline its listening, challenging readers to both think and listen differently.

**Andy Stuhl:**

I found this work profoundly useful from a vantage point of interest in sonic arts and media politics. In Robinson's interior chapters, he critiques specific musical events in order to draw out the myriad ways that hungry listening and Indigenous resurgence come to interfere with one another in moments of performance and audition. Centrally, he asks “to what degree composers should be held responsible for an ethics of formal musical choices (in addition to narrative and representational choices)” (132). Robinson makes a strong case for music as a site where critics should begin dissolving the supposed – and politically limiting – barriers between form and content, or structure and representation.

In critical media analysis, a large body of work examines texts for the *representations* that surface in their authorship, their performer casting, or their tropes. A responding stream counters that representation is not enough – that critique must

focus on the political economic *structures* that determine the representable; or on the standards and protocols, materialized in *infrastructures*, that determine how content travels. [14] This discourse across academic, artistic, and informal spheres can, for all its liveliness, feel like a dialectic without a third term. Robinson's critical stance manages to cut across all these concerns, in part through a fresh approach to sound in performance, and also by dislodging the question from a rigidly Western-humanist framework. *Hungry Listening's* case studies pass through and out of standard musical vocabularies, pulling them into a context of cultural, institutional, and epistemic incommensurability. An extractivist composition doesn't merely select a tempo but imposes Western temporality on its Indigenous participants. A choice to employ consonance might not so much balance dissonance as avert the alienating potential of the encounter between opera stage and unfamiliar audience - an alienation and a dissonance that might have called forth Indigenous trauma without making it digestible for settler audiences. At each point, concerns of form draw a continuous line from sonic vibration itself, out to the enclosing concert hall and society, and back; prior to imposing Western ontologies of song and excluding Indigenous ones, there is no break in musical performance between aesthetic object and political context.

Asking composers and critics to attend to "the formal encounters between musical languages and epistemologies" forbids the attitude that representational elements can be simply spliced and recombined into intercultural works - an attitude that, Robinson shows, can readily transduce inclusionary intent into a flurry of extraction (140). Structures and protocols, in other words, cannot be arranged in the way that Western composers have become used to arranging voices and notes. To think about performance (and therefore mediation, I'd argue) from a standpoint of affirming Indigenous sovereignty will mean refusing the notion that there can be voice without protocol or protocol without voice.

### **Shirley Roburn:**

Wong and Waterman's conclusion section is sure to provoke a strong affective reaction in many readers; in contrast to Robinson's more polished arguments, this section documents an awkward muddling through, a dialog seeking but not settling on clear answers. The section is effective in modelling the "working through" through which settler audiences can encounter and adopt more decolonial listening practices. At the same time, I found it frustrating, echoing a frustration I felt throughout the book: there is a lack of nuance in the depictions of settler listening. It

is certainly fair to argue that Robinson does not owe such nuance when Indigenous people and knowledges have been stereotyped, minimized, and degraded in settler scholarship for centuries. And, additionally, a clear part of the message of the book is that settler scholars need to do some more work to deconstruct the settler ear, just as film scholarship has deconstructed the male gaze. [15] Yet I still found that the particular historical moments that Robinson chose as originary to his conceptions of “hungry listening” presented settler logics rather one-dimensionally. These moments – the Delgamuukw trial, the Fraser River gold rush of 1858 – live for me as rich crystallizations of the multiple facets that led to them. There is not one settler logic of extractive listening, and to reduce the various drives to one simple greedy acquisitiveness makes it easier for the reader to associate these moments with distance rather than continuity, with difference rather than with complicity. If the challenge is to evolve politics of decolonial listening that include settler “de-complicity,” it requires non-Indigenous Canadians to grapple with such moments in all their complexity, to work not only with their darkness but with the struggle, hope, and oppositionality that they also contain.

### **Sadie Couture:**

Two related concepts Robinson develops which are central to these conversations on listening are *listening positionality* and *critical listening positionality*. He introduces the terms as part of an overarching framework informing the work, and as central to “this book’s larger questions around the ontological and epistemological stakes of what listening is” (2). For Robinson, “listening positionality” describes the ways in which our individual and collective experiences, backgrounds, and ways of being in the world influence how we listen. In the context of settler colonialism in North America, such listening positionalities influence how many of us (Indigenous and settler both) encounter music and other sonic experiences (3). On Robinson’s account, hungry listening is a settler colonial listening positionality (possibly among others) and “must be understood on a continuum” (3). Subjects will have a varied relationship to settler colonial listening positionalities, and will have “their own specific forms of hunger, starvation, and drive toward knowledge fixity” (60).

One of the main prescriptive calls in the work is to engage in a process that Robinson calls “critical listening positionality” (CLP). CLP is the practice of interrogating our listening positionalities in order to “listen otherwise” (11-12). CLP is a reflexive questioning of how our experiences, identity markers, and backgrounds influence our listening, as well as on a more structural level, “how perception is acquired over time



through ideological state apparatuses at the heart of subjectivation” (10). Robinson specifically offers a vision of CLP as varying on an individual basis, but which “might begin through detailing specific aspects of one’s positionality and then identifying the ways in which those aspects allow or foreclose upon certain ways of looking, kinds of touch, or listening hunger/fixity” (60-61). Exactly how this process will play out is an open question, but Robinson floats the idea of engaging in CLP with Indigenous + art music as a guest on “Indigenous sound territories” (53). As a guest, one must be open to hearing new things, as well open to the idea that listening otherwise might not involve hearing anything at all. As Robinson notes, guest listeners “may always be unable to hear these specific assertions of Indigenous sovereignty, which is not to be understood as lack that needs to be remedied but merely an incommensurability that needs to be recognized.” (53). CLP and listening otherwise may not be wholly the responsibility of the listener when it comes to cultural events and sonic encounters. As touched on by Shirley and Andy, Robinson argues for formal and structural interventions into spaces, performances and procedures to facilitate such perceptual shifts (61). [16]

Robinson’s use of the concept of listening positionality forcefully counters any notion readers may have about universality of listening, the ability of sound to uniquely overcome difference or link listeners together. For some, this insight will be clear, and nicely builds on generations of intersectional feminist and critical race theory. For others with different theoretical and intellectual backgrounds, this will be an important reckoning and moment of tension. There is no essentialized listening experience on Robinson’s account, and while he may not explicitly outline the various settler listening positionalities that Shirley was hoping for, he repeatedly allows for and acknowledges the different relationships to hungry listening and that many of us have been raised with. Another useful aspect of *Hungry Listening* was to me, the incisive linkage Robinson makes between settler extractivist orientations in general, and the specific instances of this logic which ground his analysis and are his central concerns throughout the work. Drawing on scholars Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and Naomi Klein, Robinson notes that from this extractivist orientation Indigenous land, people, culture, and, importantly, music are seen as resources to be taken, stolen, and used for settler ends (13-14). Robinson’s naming of this behaviour and logic immediately makes clear the stakes of his argument even for those not currently engaged with or interested in the Canadian classical/Western new music scene.

### **Burç Köstem:**

Sadie Couture, Jonathan Sterne, Mehak Sawhney, Shirley Roburn, Andy Kelleher Stuhl, Burç Köstem, Hannah Tollefson, Randolph Jordan, Landon

Morrison, Allyson Rogers, Michael Nardone, SENSATE SOVEREIGNTY

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Robinson performs a kind of structural refusal in the book itself. Besides a refusal of specific content, structural refusal seems to explore what forms of writing and knowledge practices impede extraction, consumption, and epistemic violence (23-24). This refusal beyond the level of content is important since it gets to the crux of his refusal of the politics of recognition. Whereas Indigenous art is consumed as content, structural refusal forces us to attend to the “deeply normative infrastructure of art and music production and presentation” (180). Overall, I found the implicit distinction between a refusal at the level of content and structure very useful in thinking through the political stakes of aesthetics.

Additionally, structural refusal also seems to shape how the book is written, meant to not be consumed so easily by settler publics. In the midst of his introduction, Robinson explicitly addresses his settler, ally and non-Indigenous readers, inviting them to stop reading the introduction from this page forward, as the rest of the introduction is written exclusively for Indigenous readers (25). I found this move incredibly powerful in relation to the concepts Robinson introduces in the book both because it calls for the reader to practice critical positionality and invites them to participate in Robinson’s structural refusal. [17]

I did find myself wondering how all of this fits into the discussion of sensate or perceptual sovereignty. In our discussion, Jonathan pointed out how Robinson’s request that settlers not read the first chapter seems in tension with contemporary big data practices where every chapter of the book will be rendered machine readable and searchable. On the one hand this provides a critique of big data practices. On the other hand thinking through how one practices structural refusal under conditions of big data seems like an interesting question. [18]

### **Hannah Tollefson:**

Along with Sadie and Burç, I also appreciated the way Robinson theorizes extraction and extractivism. Significant contemporary scholarship is devoted to expanding these concepts and tracing their expression through aesthetic and cultural forms. [19]

While there is a tendency in some of this work to base conceptions of extraction in abstract economic forces, *Hungry Listening’s* analysis is grounded in a deeply embedded set of historical and ongoing relationships and sensory orientations, making it a unique and important contribution to this literature. Robinson powerfully articulates how forms of aesthetic extraction/sensory extractivism operate, as well as their political stakes. Building on Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s articulation of extractivism and assimilation and Wolfe’s foundational notion that settler colonialism

is a structure rather than an event, he names and articulates settler colonialism as a set of perceptual logics. [20] In this formulation, Robinson demonstrates how settler colonial structures not only manifest in external institutions but, importantly, through forms of subjectivity and orientation that are taught and enacted by variously positioned people (18).

As a response to sensory extractivism Robinson proposes and practices strategies of sensate sovereignty, one of which is the blockade. “If Indigenous knowledge and culture is mined and extracted,” he writes, “then it would follow that a key intervention for disrupting the flow of extraction and consumption would be the blockade” (23). Expanding on the work of Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Coulthard for whom the blockade is a key political tactic and form of negation, Robinson considers how the blockade could/does operate as an obstruction to epistemic violence through various politico-aesthetic forms (24). Here, sensate sovereignty operates as a kind of refusal via aesthetic strategies that impede the extraction and instrumentalization of Indigenous knowledge and culture. Robinson shows how blockade, as tactic of sensate sovereignty, does not only negate or impede hungry listening but also, drawing on Métis artist and scholar David Garneau’s “spaces of irreconcilable Aboriginality,” (24) affirm Indigenous sovereignty and enable resurgent work. This idea is echoed in recent reflections on the solidarity actions in support of the Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs and land defenders, where Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argues that blockades are not only “a negation of destruction,” but an “affirmation of life.” [21]

### **Randolph Jordan:**

We in academia are locked in a race to stake our territorial claims, our quest for proof of originality the substance of our mimetic rivalry: to coin a term, to claim our corner of the knowledge market, to make something useful for the knowledge production of others while requiring acknowledgment of our role in that production. Like patent holders. Robinson’s coining of the term “hungry listening” functions differently. His contribution to my own academic development is to lay my own hunger bare. To explain why I am unsatisfied in having failed, for example, to “discover” the “meaning” of a totem pole positioned next to Vancouver’s Burrard Bridge, an area that I have been making work about for the better part of the last decade. The pole is silent, to me, while the sound of the bridge traffic is loaded with signification. That the pole should remain silent, to me, seems intolerable in light of academia’s claim to freedom of information in all contexts and in perpetuity. Lack of

access feels unconstitutional. Isn't there a government form for that? I grew up on that land, after all. Shouldn't all its secrets be my birthright? So the thinking goes. I am listening hard, but my ears are not calibrated for this kind of hearing. Striving to think of these poles in my own work as necessarily intersecting, they become entwined with my position as settler. My preference for ambiguity in art is rendered contradictory by my desire to know everything there is to know about that which informs my work. I become intolerant of ambiguity on the land so that I may shape the land according to my own selective ambiguity under the guise of artistic license, a license stamped by the same governing body that grants researchers our right to information. Reading what it means to be a "hungry listener" has revealed what my next step should be, a prompt to rethink what it means to be satiated as both researcher and creator. In the service of better digestion, it is time for me to fast.

### **Landon Morrison:**

Like Shirley, Burç, and Hannah, I appreciated the book's theorization of defamiliarizing strategies in the form of structural refusals and blockades. Robinson appeals to defamiliarization as a way to foil sensory extractivism and decolonize listener subjectivity because, "like Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*, the listening impasse sends perception off in other directions and slows hungry listening habits, privilege, and biases" (73). From this commitment follows an imperative for "artists, composers, curators, and musicians to impose new listening impasses through their work" (72), creating music that is "indigestible" for hungry listeners. For Robinson, this is more than theoretical, as he makes clear with his own distancing maneuvers in the arena of new music, reframing the work of Canadian composers like R. Murray Schafer, Harry Somers, and Ernest MacMillan in light of their complicity in a violent history of extractivism that appropriated Indigenous culture as a kind of national inheritance.

Interestingly, it is from within the same new music institutions that Robinson seeks to change that I have previously encountered defamiliarizing rhetoric. The concept is fundamental to modernist aesthetics, with Russian formalist Viktor Shklovsky articulating an early plea for artists to "remove objects from the automatism of perception ... pricking the conscience ... so that one may recover the sensation of life." [22] Echoing this sentiment, mid-century composers often used some form of aesthetic distancing to explain why their music was regarded as impenetrable and frustratingly resistant to listener expectations. And still today, composers like Georg Friedrich Haas are framed in relation to an "ethics of defamiliarization," with his use

of overtone chords (i.e., harmonies based on the harmonic series) described as a “tool for encouraging utopian hearing, confronting listeners with sound that refines their appreciation of intonation and forces them to question their received listening categories.” [23] While there are political aspects to this discourse, the emphasis remains largely aesthetic and is far removed from the kind of decolonizing project Robinson has in mind. What are we to make of the double valence of defamiliarizing tropes in these different contexts?

Elsewhere, I thought Robinson’s distinctions of “inclusionary/ intercultural music” versus “Indigenous + art music” were useful in drawing out the inequities in Canada’s new music community. Indeed, the book’s specificity to a Canadian context is one of its key strengths, and for that reason, it is certain to make a strong impression on music departments across the country. But the implications of Robinson’s work should also strike a chord in new music circles abroad, resonating for instance, with the recent Defragmentation Project on “Curating Contemporary Music” in Europe. Funded by the German Kulturstiftung des Bundes, this initiative examined issues of race and gender diversity in relation to four new music festivals (MaerzMusik, Darmstadt, Donaueshinger, and Ultima), mapping out proposals for ameliorating what continues to be an entrenched, white-male-dominated cultural milieu. [24] Building on the conclusions of this study, George Lewis recently proposed introducing Spivak’s concept of “creolité” into new music discourse as a way to move past the “gate-keeping, border-policing, and kinship-enforcing functions of genre.” [25] On the one hand, this idea parallels Robinson’s discussion of intersectional identity and listening as a “practice of oscillation (moving between layers of positionality)” (60), but on the other, it rubs against the ideal of Indigenous sovereignty with its call for a “creolized, cosmopolitan new music for the 21st century.” [26] Going forward, it will be interesting to see if these perspectives can be brought into a dialogue to redraw existing maps of the new music scene at both local and global scales.

Last, and along similar lines, I am confident that Robinson’s discussion of listener positionalities holds significance for a “disciplinary redress” currently underway in my home field of music theory. [27] Like musicology (which Robinson addresses in relation to a recent controversy that resulted in the hashtag #AMSSOWHITE), music theory as a discipline has been slow to reflect on its complicity in perpetuating settler colonial practices, mindsets, and institutions, and it is only now beginning to seriously wrestle with many of the fundamental questions Robinson poses in his book

- i.e., who gets to study music, what kinds of music can be studied, in which cultural and institutional contexts, and towards what ends. These questions demand real, structural change, which *Hungry Listening* embodies in its creative interventions and critiques of settler-colonial listening positionality, offering important lessons to those who will listen.

**Allyson Rogers:**

Robinson's thorough critique of how inclusionary/intercultural performances extract and "fit" Indigenous music and performers into Western structures, thereby reasserting colonial dominance, is a much needed framework for understanding the Canadian musical context and will undoubtedly resonate further afield. The combination of Indigenous and Western art music has become normative at major nation-building events and on prestigious stages across the country as evidence of Canada's progressive values. By examining this intersection, Robinson is able to strike at the core of the settler Canadian conceit whereby the politics of recognition, accommodation, and multiculturalism adopted by the federal government are deemed sufficient in addressing Canada's colonial history and ongoing colonial violence. Drawing on Sarah Ahmed, Robinson exposes these inclusionary performances as utopian and non-performative in that they fail to accomplish reconciliation or decolonization in any real sense. Instead, a fantasy of reconciliation through friendly dialogue is enacted on stage, creating a powerful affective atmosphere that encourages audiences to feel like they are taking part in reconciliation when no substantial or lasting political work has taken place: "As a utopian non-performative, inclusionary music may here stand in for more significant forms of action and redress, ones that involve taking up a greater degree of intergenerational responsibility in the acknowledgment of Canada's history of colonization and the reverberations of intergenerational trauma as they play out in Aboriginal communities across Canada" (219). Contemporary inclusionary performances continue to treat Indigenous artists as "content" that enriches Western performance traditions. Western structures and protocols - including the performance space, audience-performer relationship, and rituals - remain intact, and therefore continue to dictate the terms on which Indigenous performances take place: "Inclusionary music, which on the surface sounds like a socially progressive act, performs, the very opposite of its enunciation" (6). Inclusionary performances do little if anything to destabilize listeners' normative modes of perception, which Robinson is calling readers to question and investigate. [28]

The alternative Robinson puts forward is “Indigenous+art music” where aspects of musical practices that are irreconcilable would be kept intact. Indigenous + art music avoids the fusion and hybridity that characterizes many intercultural performances and act as a metaphor for the friendly reconciling of cultural differences through ongoing dialogue. Robinson’s critique offers the potential for presenting organizations to radically unsettle the rigid protocols of Western art music and destabilize settler modes of perception.

Robinson’s call to reflect on the scopophilic drive that characterizes colonial attitudes – “a drive to look, but also by an urge to penetrate, to traverse, to know, to translate, to own and exploit. This attitude assumes that everything should be accessible to those with the means and will to access them; everything is ultimately comprehensible, a potential commodity, resource, or salvage” (Robinson 34, quoting Garneau 2016, 23) – seems particularly relevant for musicians and musicologists trained in the Western tradition who are encouraged to be voracious listeners and to develop a range of specialized listening abilities throughout their training and careers. Again, decolonizing music studies is not simply including Indigenous content and histories in curricula. Robinson’s work asks us to examine the methodologies and infrastructures that are built on settler colonial and patriarchal forms of thought (269, fn 8) and be open to having these spaces and relationships transformed, as they would have to be to enter into reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities. New protocols would undoubtedly involve refraining from listening and from studying certain music under certain circumstances. It would mean finding ways of being “together-apart” and respecting sovereign Indigenous spaces.

**Michael Nardone:**

I am thankful for Robinson’s book – thankful for its core conceptual concerns; thankful for the work’s “writing with” and “writing aloud” that gives form to the rich intersection where Robinson is researching; thankful for its histories, personal and social, its citational understructure, and for the attention it gives to artists like Tanya Lukin Linklater, David Garneau, Peter Morin, Laura Ortman, and Raven Chacon, among others, who are doing some of the most exciting and necessary artistic work in North America; and thankful for the book’s generosity, its vital negations and affirmations. I know that what I’ve encountered in *Hungry Listening* will resonate through my future research, writing, and dialogues.

The monolithicness of settler listening, as Robinson portrays it, has been another

point of rich discussion. While reading, I thought of potential counter-examples to such a firmly defined mode of extractivist settler listening. I thought of Thomas Berger, for instance, working in Sahtu Dene, Gwich'in, and Inuvialuit communities in the mid-1970s to hear testimonies against the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, and the documentation of that listening in his report against the pipeline's construction. I thought of Keith Basso using his decades of experience working as a linguistic anthropologist in Western Apache communities to provide expert analysis in legal cases so as to protect cultural places and materials from further settler plunder. And yet, both examples sustain the overarching dominance of the imperial juridical system and uphold a reconciliatory perspective that Indigenous nations not only *fit* within the imperial nation-state, but also *enrich* it with their difference (as Allyson discusses above). The more I reflect on it, finding singular instances that present or parse out difference in settler colonial listening is beside the point of Robinson's argument. As a force, through its effects, settler colonial listening is, indeed, monolithic. It extracts, and in its extraction it materializes the conditions to perpetuate its regime of the audible. Here, I admire Sadie's emphasis above of hungry listening being "*a settler colonial listening positionality (possibly among others)*" (emphasis added): it *may* be one of others, but before parsing differences it seems necessary to address the extent to which it is an absorptive and totalizing mode of perception.

This leads me to a final point, which is more of a question and concern I have moving forward from the book: Beginning from a belief in the necessity of a diversity of tactics, what are ways to further materialize blockades, obstacles, and perceptual impasses to obstruct and resist settler colonial listening? Above, Hannah outlines the way in which Robinson draws upon Coulthard and Garneau to think through forms of *structural refusal* and negation that are an integral part of instantiating a *sensate sovereignty* (23, 72-3, 257-8). Robinson offers examples of what such structural refusals and perceptual impasses look like in the form of the book (the section intended only for Indigenous readers) and in his discussion of Jin-Me Yoon's "work of lateral exploration" in urban spaces (254-8). Following from Robinson's discussions, I see a need to discuss in greater depth the array of historical precedents and social compositional strategies for developing such impasses on numerous fronts, specifically with regard to the sonic. Thinking of the major social movements of these last years in Canada and the United States - from Occupy to the student protests in Montreal, from Idle No More to Black Lives Matter, from Standing Rock to Wet'suwet'en - I note the extent to which an important element of these struggles



has involved diminishing/muting/undermining specific sonic-auditory regimes and the articulation/(re)production of counter-sonic-auditory spaces. What are ways to resist the inclusionary muzak of settler colonialism? How to halt its petrocultural ambient soundtrack? Robinson's research offers an invaluable framework and set of approaches for addressing such questions moving forward.

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1. Based at McGill University, The CATDAWG is a working group that includes current students, postdocs, and visitors across several disciplines and from multiple institutions, and former members are always welcome back. The group has no formal structure beyond some affiliation with Jonathan Sterne. Its mission is to provide intellectual sustenance and support to its active members, and its manifesto is, simply, "nachos." Dylan Mulvin came up with the name. ↵
2. See, for example: Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017). ↵
3. bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 165-178. ↵
4. **Sadie Couture:** On Robinson's account isn't a lot or even most sound studies work about settler colonial listening? In the conclusion, Deborah Wong writes "while reading your book Dylan, I had a world-shifting moment when I realized that the word *listening* should really have the word *settler* in front of it much of the time, in much scholarship. Outsiders know that the unmarked categories are the ones of which we should be most wary" (251). Maybe we ought to mark sound studies work produced by settlers in settler colonial contexts similarly. ↵
5. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Deloria, *Indians In Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press,

2004); Erika Brady, *A Spiral Way: How the Phonograph Changed Ethnography* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999); Richard Rath, *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), especially 287-333; Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voices in the Ear of European Contact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ana Maria Ochoa Gauthier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Columbia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014). ↵

6.

**Jonathan Sterne:** For decades now, I have been complaining about the racism in white Canadian sound theory - Murray Schafer, Marshall McLuhan, etc. - and have received responses ranging from “sure, but their other ideas are so important” to “but it’s *science*” to “but *everyone* was racist in the 1960s.” Arguments like Robinson’s will, I hope, help to get settler scholars out of this rut, but I think honestly it’s probably having more people like Robinson *in the room* (whether physically or metaphorically) which will force some more accountability around the presumptive whiteness in much sound theory. ↵

7.

**Jonathan Sterne:** Most of the things I am mentioning are forthcoming. See here for a discussion of Perea’s forthcoming book: <https://uchri.org/awards/sound-relations-a-history-of-music-media-and-indigenous-self-determination-in-alaska/>; Trevor Reed’s book project began as his dissertation, *Itaataawi: Hopi Song, Intellectual Property, and the Sonic Sovereignty in an Era of Settler Colonialism* (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2018); Dustin Tahmahkera, “Becoming Sound: Tubitsinakukuru from Mt. Scott to Standing Rock, *Sounding Out!* (9 October 2017): <https://soundstudiesblog.com/2017/10/09/becoming-sound-tubitsinakukuru-from-mt-scott-to-standing-rock/> and the description of his book project here: <https://ais.illinois.edu/directory/profile/numuv>. See also Kate Galloway, “Listening to Indigenous Knowledge of the Land in Two Contemporary Sound Art Installations,” *Feminist Media Histories* 6:2 (2020): 176-206. ↵

8.

**Hannah Tollefson:** What is powerful about the concept of “hungry listening” to me, is not only that it names a set of settler orientations and techniques, but

that it develops this analytic from an Indigenous perspective. The concept is “derived from two Halq’eméylem words: shxwelítemelh (the adjective for settler or white person’s methods/things) and xwélalà:m (the word for listening)” (2). Shxwelítemelh describes the ways of xwelítem – the Stó:lō term for non-Indigenous – which carries the meaning of “starving person.” Robinson notes that xwelítem came into use to describe the first influx of settlers into Stó:lō territories, who arrived in “two states of starvation”: both bodily, for sustenance, and greedily, for gold. “From the xwélmexw [Stó:lō people] perspective,” Robinson explains, “settler subjectivity emerges out of a state of consumption” (47). As Robinson describes, “xwelítem hunger may have begun with gold, but it quickly extended to forests, the water, and of course the land itself” (49). Throughout the book, he develops the analytic of hungry listening through demonstrating its continuity through time. This drive was not only foundational to settler colonialism in Stó:lō territory during the gold rush and present throughout colonial policy, but remains palpably present in more recent paradigms of recognition and reconciliation. ⇐

9.

**Jonathan Sterne:** I think it’s important that the hungry listening concept is a translation into English. A de- or anti-colonial sound studies would need to depend much more on language learning outside of English, especially non-European languages, and the epistemologies and cosmologies that come from those languages. ⇐

10.

**Allyson Rogers:** *Hungry Listening* brings into relief just how inconceivable it can be for listeners socialized into the Western tradition (in formal music education and philosophy) to conceptualize music as anything other than aesthetic objects and experiences, even in contexts where music is considered functional. What if Indigenous protocols – not just content – formed the basis of collaborative performances between Indigenous and Western art music? What if these performances followed Indigenous rather than Western logics? How can Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists enter into truly reciprocal relations? ⇐

11.

Peter Keith Kulchyski, *Like the sound of a drum: aboriginal cultural politics in Denendeh and Nunavut* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2005). ⇐

12. Julia Christensen, *No home in a homeland: indigenous peoples and homelessness in the Canadian North* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017); Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, *Finding Dahshaa: self-government, social suffering and Aboriginal policy in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009); Peter Keith Kulchyski, *Like the sound of a drum: aboriginal cultural politics in Denendeh and Nunavut* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2005); Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Peter Van Wyck, *The highway of the atom* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010). ↵
13. **Landon Morrison:** A good example of one of these event scores can be found at the end of Chapter 4, where Robinson presents his "Event Score for Responsibility: *qimmit katajjaq / sqwélqwel tl' sqwmá:y*" as a critical-affective response to Alexina Louie's "Take the Dog Sled," a piece for two Inuit throat singers and seven musicians that was commissioned by the Montreal Symphony for a 2008 tour of Nunavik (and which, in a painful irony, premiered at a concert alongside Schafer's *North/White* (1980) for snowmobile and orchestra, a piece commemorating the machine that decimated dog sledding). Against Louie's description of the music as a lighthearted "snapshot of the North" (184) – in marketing for the piece, she exclaims to the would-be listener: "I wanted to put you on a dog sled. Enjoy the ride!" – Robinson throws light on the [horrendous history of sled dog slaughtering \(or \*qimmijaqtaiq\*\)](#) between 1950 and 1975. His event score consists of stage directions for the realization of a decolonizing work where Louie's music is brought into close contact with a disturbing colonial past that it otherwise obfuscates. Robinson intervenes here in several key ways, beginning with his plans for funding the new project, which involve employing an Inuit filmmaker to spend one month helping Inuit youth document daily life in their communities. From there, eight short films are to be created which correspond to the lengths of eight movements of Louie's "Take the Dog Sled." These films are to be played in parallel with a performance of Louie's piece, but in a neighboring hall, forcing audience members to choose which event they wish to experience. In both events, prior to the eighth movement/film, documentary footage is to be shown that confronts the audiences with mid-century scenes from the slaughter of sled dogs, as well as testimony given by Inuit people involved in the Qikiqtani Truth

Commission (2010) and interviews with Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In this way, by alternating “between explicit political critique and poetic gesture, between Brechtian distancing and subtle openings to reorienting perception” (199), Robinson challenges Louie’s unexamined portrayal of dog sledding in the North and opens up a space for sovereign Indigenous perspectives to emerge within the context of new music performance. ⇐

14.

For example, Lisa Parks and Nicole Starosielski, *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2015). ⇐

15.

**Michael Nardone:** In our group dialogues on the book, the conclusion provoked a lot of discussion. Opening up the end of the book to two non-Indigenous scholars to respond created an uneasy and uncertain space following the clarity of Robinson’s arguments, histories, descriptions. Wong and Waterman want protocols from Robinson for how they might respond, and, in that wanting, they realize, as Shirley states above, that “coming to terms with how to respond, how to be in respectful relationship to Robinson’s text, is exactly the work they must do.” I see this engagement as a valuable example of the “apposite methodology” Robinson describes earlier in the book: “processes for conveying experience alongside subjectivity and alterity,” a form of “‘writing with’ a subject in contrast to ‘writing about,’” one that envisions “possibilities for how writing might not just take the form of words inscribed on the page but also forms that share space alongside or move in relationship with another subjectivity” (81). In creating a polyvocal and multi-positional dialogue on the work as its conclusion, Wong, Waterman, and Robinson model an instance of the book’s reception. Their questions, like ours, are: How is this book useful and what are we going to do with the discussions it catalyzes moving forward? They are working it out together. There are no smooth, easy conclusions.

**Shirley Roburn:** Michael, your provocation “How is this book useful?” brought to mind the interventions in the 1980s by another Sto:lo scholar, Lee Maracle, who took a leading role in raising parallel questions in the CanLit sphere about the telling of Indigenous stories. Her approach very powerfully foregrounded the issues; however, many of the reactions, particularly from white writers, were defensive. Debates then often centred around if an individual writer could

write stories and characters outside of his/her own experience, when the goal of Maracle and many of her contemporaries, had been for the CanLit community to confront issues of structural racism that privileged white writers telling stories over BIPOC writers telling their own. In contrast, thinking of your own comments later about diversity of tactics, Robinson is taking another tack here, one that mirrors how Nacho Nyak Dän master storyteller Louise Profeit-Leblanc has broached bringing the pedagogical values of traditional storytelling to the page. In *Stories have their way with us*, Profeit-Leblanc sets the text up with a story-within-a-story. A traditional story told by revered Yukon elder Kitty Smith resonates powerfully with her own life experience: it is implied that the heroine's transcendence, of taking a difficult healing path and recovering from very painful circumstances to find a happy life, had inspired Kitty's own resilience and recovery in the face of devastating challenges. The text shows, rather than tells: the traditional story acts as a container, a safe space, for a listener (in this case, a young Kitty Smith) to do the work she/he needs to do to explore other ways of tackling a difficulty, and to grow from her circumstances. Robinson creates a similar container for Wong and Waterman. As readers, we are witnesses to their "working through" of what concepts of hungry listening mean for their own practice. By including space for Wong and Waterman's process, in all its messiness, in his conclusion, Robinson is not only showing the reader what a decolonizing practice of "working through" might look like. He is validating and foregrounding the need for non-Indigenous people to undertake such reckonings in a vulnerable and open-hearted way.

**Jonathan Sterne:** I had a very split reaction to the conclusion. Stylistically, it is a brilliant move, and in a subgenre of academic writing that receives almost no attention (quick: name three academic books with memorable conclusions!), Robinson did something entirely original and entirely in fitting with the methodology and argument of the rest of the book. But in watching Wong and Waterman struggle with their own positions with respect to the text I had a negative reaction. Those of us with one or another kind of privilege have to stay with the discomfort of understanding the unpayable debt behind that privilege, and I read them as trying to do that, trying to model an ethical reception of the book. It's just not the particular ethical reception I had (or wanted). ↩

16.

As Robinson notes: "Whether the white cube of the gallery, the proscenium stage-concert hall, the outdoor festival stage, or the black box, each site urges

us to think and listen to music in particular ways that may not be conducive to the kinds of listening otherwise we might hope to advance. What happens when we change these sites of listening to include intimate spaces of one-on-one listening, spaces in relation with the land, spaces where audience members are not bound by the particular kinds of attention these spaces assert?" (61). ↵

17.

Robinson writes: "If you are a non-Indigenous, settler, ally, or xwelítém reader, I ask that you stop reading by the end of this page. I hope you will rejoin us for chapter 1, 'Hungry Listening,' which sets out to understand forms of Indigenous and settler colonial listening. The next section of the book, however, is written exclusively for Indigenous readers" (25). ↵

18.

**Jonathan Sterne:** Specifically, no big data system can honour Robinson's request without someone going in and modifying his text or the way the system displays search results. And if settler scholars use these systems to do a search that includes *Hungry Listening* it will effectively invite them to violate his wishes.

**Hannah Tollefson:** Robinson's notion of sensate sovereignty seems distinct yet resonant with notions of Indigenous digital sovereignty - where self determination over information collection, storage, and access is articulated in similar terms to how jurisdiction is asserted over territory. Both articulate what Shirley previously describes as a kind of politics of form, where Indigenous protocols set the terms of knowledge keeping and knowledge sharing.

**Andy Stuhl:** Indigenous-led and otherwise anti-colonial infrastructure for digital knowledge exchange is of course a larger field of thinking and building than we can fully address here, and not one that *Hungry Listening* engages directly. (For one example, see the Mukurtu project and discussion in Kimberly Christen, "Does Information Really Want to be Free? Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Question of Openness," *International Journal of Communication* 6 (2012): 2870-2893; for another, Roopika Risam, *New Digital Worlds: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Theory, Praxis, and Pedagogy* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2018.) Even so, the inevitability that the book will become the object of datafication, and the linkages and frictions that result in considering that scenario, return us to the necessary and multiply sited relation between structure/format/protocol and sovereignty. ↵

19. For example: Laura Junka-Aikio and Catalina Cortes-Severino, "Cultural Studies of Extraction." *Cultural Studies* 31.2-3 (May 4, 2017): 175-84; Alok Amatya and Ashley Dawson, "Literature in an Age of Extraction: An Introduction," *MFS Modern Fiction Studies* 66, no. 1 (March 18, 2020): 1-19; Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *The Politics of Operations: Excavating Contemporary Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017). ↵
20. Leanne Simpson and Naomi Klein, "Dancing the World into Being: A Conversation with Idle No More's Leanne Simpson," March 5, 2013: <https://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/dancing-the-world-into-being-a-conversation-with-idle-no-more-leanne-simpson/>; Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 1999). ↵
21. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Being with the Land, Protects the Land." *Abolition Journal*, February 21, 2020: <https://abolitionjournal.org/being-with-the-land-protects-the-land-leanne-betasamosake-simpson/>. ↵
22. Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique," in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, eds. Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965 [1917]), 12. ↵
23. Max Silva, "Heard Utopia vs. Utopian Hearing: Haas's *in vain* and Political Ambivalence in New Music," *Twentieth-Century Music* 15, no. 1 (2018): 86. ↵
24. **Landon Morrison:** For example, between 1946 and 2014, only 334 out of 4750 pieces performed at Darmstadt were composed by women, and only 2 were by non-white Afrodiasporic composers. See "Defragmentation - Curating Contemporary Music - Thinking Together - Project Presentation and Discussion," "Defragmentation - Curating Contemporary Music, Thinking Together - Project Presentation & Panel Discussion," (2018), [https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-gesamtprogramm/programmdetail\\_240304.html](https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/berliner-festspiele/programm/bfs-gesamtprogramm/programmdetail_240304.html). ↵



25. See George Lewis, "A Small Act of Curation," *On Curating* 44 (2020), <https://www.on-curating.org/issue-44-reader/a-small-act-of-curation.html>. ↵
26. George Lewis, "Lifting the Cone of Silence from Black Composers," *The New York Times* (July 3, 2020): <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/arts/music/black-composers-classical-music.html>. ↵
27. **Landon Morrison:** Here, I am thinking in particular of a keynote session titled "Reframing Music Theory," which occurred at the last annual meeting of the Society of Music Theory (2019), an organization of members who are overwhelmingly white (83.7%) and male (63.9%). Four speakers proposed paths toward counter-framing music theory's biases, addressing its white racial frame (Philip Ewell), its history of exoticism and east-west binarisms (Yayoi Uno Everett), its ableist and normative paradigms (Josep Straus), and its gender inequities (Elie M. Hisama, who Robinson cites as a model of 'critical-affective' writing on p. 20). Audible gasps were heard as speakers relayed the extent to which the field has, in the interest of pedagogical efficiency, white-washed egregious legacies of well-known composers and theorists like Heinrich Schenker and Milton Babbitt. In the months since the conference, Ewell has expanded his paper into a six-part blog (available [here](#)), the entire keynote session is due to be published in the society's flagship journal, *Music Theory Spectrum*, and there has been a surge of research engaging the question of positionality within the discipline (e.g., Gavin Lee's recent article on "Queer Music Theory" in *Music Theory Spectrum* 2020, Dave Molk and Michelle Ohnona's "Promoting Equity: Developing an Antiracist Music Theory Classroom" in *New Music USA* 2020). The keynote has also been echoed in an ongoing virtual conference session by members of the student-led Project Spectrum titled "After 'Reframing Music Theory': Doing the Work," which is available [here](#). ↵
28. **Hannah Tollefson:** This is powerfully articulated in Chapter 5, "Feeling Reconciliation," where Robinson illustrates the continuity of hungry listening by tracing the ways that inclusionary liberal politics of recognition orient hungry listening and shape "affective atmospheres of reconciliation" (17). In

these spaces, audiences encounter and are affected by “reconciliations sensate qualities: its textures, its materiality, its atmospheres, and particularly, its resonance” (204). The chapter traces how certain friendly and nonagonistic “inclusionary” musical and theatrical performances are constitutive of what Mushkegowuk geographer Michelle Daigle describes as the “spectacle of reconciliation,” where Indigenous knowledge and culture are consumed. The stakes of these accessible and affirmative performances and aesthetics is made clear: the “equilibrium of colonialism is maintained”, foreclosing meaningful redress and enabling settlers to remain settled. See: Michelle Daigle, “The Spectacle of Reconciliation: On (the) Unsettling Responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples in the Academy,” *Society and Space* 37 (4) 2019: 703-21. ↩

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