

Okanagan Summer Tourism Sounds: A Feminist Sonic Ethnography of Listening, Sound, and the Politics of Space

Transcript and Show Notes

[00:00:00]

[background music]¹

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Welcome to the Okanagan Summer Tourism Sounds Podcast.

Hi there, my name is Sue Frohlick. A settler-and third generation white Canadian of Norwegian, English, Irish, and German ancestry, I live, work, learn, and recreate on the unceded and ancestral territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation. The Syilx stewardship of this land reminds me, always, of the critical importance of relationality. “Relationality” is a term you’ll hear a lot in this podcast. In my research more broadly, what demands thinking through are the many ways in which tourism is entangled in historical and ongoing relations of colonialism, capitalism, racism, and privatization, for example. This podcast offers one case study of how relationality and tourism matter.

[00:01:04]

[music layer]²

Narration, Sue Frohlick

I’m a cultural anthropologist and I work at the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia. I’m interested in the anthropology of and in sound, and part of that is how methodological practices of listening can help us better understand people’s relationships with one another, with things, and with the places and spaces we co-inhabit. I am also interested in tourism. But not in the ways you might expect. Tourism is an incredible and expansive lens into many different assemblages of relationships and encounters between humans, nonhumans, and material environments. Because tourism is a lens into a diversity of relationships and encounters, it is also a window into privilege and inequality.

While in my research, I foreground the social aspects of tourism, the economic underpinnings of tourism are always lurking about, and not too far away from the social. The concept and practice of time is also important to cultural anthropologists like me who study tourism. We theorize tourism in terms of *temporary* relations and interactions. The practice of touring or being a tourist is time dependent. Whether for a few hours or months, whether you stay in your hometown, or travel a few miles away, or go abroad, being a tourist is a temporary practice. Add to this, that Canada is a country of four distinct seasons. And, therefore,

¹ Sammarco, Pietro- Composer, *Summer Tourism Theme*. 2024.

² Ashot_Danielyan – Composer, *Dark Sad Ambient Piano*, Pixabay. 2022, License: Creative Commons 0.
<https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-dark-sad-ambient-piano-113208/>

seasonality has much to do with flows of temporary visitors in and out of places such as the Okanagan, which is known as a “summer hot spot.”

Tourism activities occur year-round in the Okanagan, and the tourism industry seeks to make the region a “four season playground” (Aguiar, Tomic, Trumper 2005). But the summer season attracts the most tourists. This podcast explores some of the implications of that.

Drawing from scholars of sound (who you can learn more about in the Podcast Notes), I take the approach that by listening to tourism and listening with others to how they hear tourism, we can learn more about what happens in these spaces of seasonal flows, interactions, and social relations. What are the summer tourism sounds that are heard? And, by whom? How do these particular sounds within touristic spaces and local communities affect people’s emotions, their sense of inclusion, exclusion, their sense of entitlement, or maybe a sense of displacement? Many structures of class and racial inequalities underpin tourism in the Okanagan (Aguiar 2021, 2023). How can the methodology of listening and of recording sound bring these politics of pleasure, and politics that involve race, class, and space, to the surface? The podcast begins to explore these questions.

So, let’s get started.

[00:04:23]

[music layer]³

To begin with, where is “the Okanagan,” geographically and as a tourist destination?

Well, the Okanagan Valley lies in the southern Interior of the western province of British Columbia. The unceded territory of the Syilx People does not stop at the state-imposed border but extends into Washington State in the United States. Also, tourism is only one aspect of the Okanagan. Yet in the last decade, tourism has shifted from a modest economic and social influence to a major economic driver referred to by sociologists as “a rebranded neoliberal force” (Aguiar 2023; Tomic and Trumper 2016). Represented in tourism marketing terms as a “destination,” the Okanagan is a prime destination amongst several within a 94,000 square kilometer area in BC known as the Thompson Okanagan Region. The Okanagan Valley is divided into three distinct destination sub-regions, North, Central, and South Okanagan. In this podcast, our shorthand and pragmatic use of “the Okanagan” refers to Central and South Okanagan because that is where the research took place. We will say more, in a moment, about the Okanagan as a field site.

[00:05:48]

[Sounds of the waves on Okanagan Lake, from field recordings made in the summer of 2023]

[00:05:51]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Listening attentively to the sounds of summer tourism— and people’s listening histories— are central to our aims in this podcast, and our research more broadly

Try attuning your own hearing to the sounds of the Okanagan. Listen to the following montage of sounds recorded over the summers of 2022 and 2023 from various recreational and touristic spots in the Okanagan. As you listen, think about these things: What do you hear? Are

³ Goldstein, Adi- Composer, *Random Thoughts*, Pixabay. 2022, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-random-thoughts-20586/>.

the sounds familiar? Can you emplace yourself in the environment that you are imagining while listening? Or maybe the sounds are unfamiliar to you? Perhaps they don't resonate with your own lived experience or with your idea of summer tourism? Feel free to listen to the montage not only once, but for a second or even a third time before continuing with the podcast.

[00:06:57]

[Montage of field recordings]⁴

[00:08:53]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

So, what did you hear? You might have heard some of the following: children playing; family members calling out to one another; lapping water against a paddleboard; cars and street traffic; a helicopter in the sky; sprinklers at a water park; children playfully screaming; a powerboat engine coming over a lake. I expect that listeners will not hear the sounds in the montage in the same way. Yet some listeners will share a recognition of what they hear. Even then, the meanings of the individual sounds or the combination of them might be quite different. With this listening invitation, I invite you to think about two questions that introduce a couple of key concepts in this podcast:

First of all, if this montage evokes a soundscape of lake-side summer vacations and recreation that is familiar to you, how does your own access to these summer spots shape that familiarity? How can sounds of gently lapping water or an urban water park on a hot summer day raise questions about inequities of access to space? As we show in the podcast, sound and the politics of space are really closely related.

[00:10:13]

[music layer]⁵

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Sound is spatial, it is always in motion (Eisenberg 2015); sound carries, it spills over, it is not [always] easy to contain (Jazeel and Western 2025). But in its spatiality, sound also has boundaries, and this makes sound subject to regulation and restriction, to privilege and permission.

Second, how do childhoods and growing up and other lived experiences, throughout our lives, filter what we hear and shape the meanings we give to those listened-to sounds? How does age, generation, class, race, gender, citizenship status, hearing capacities or impairments of our bodies – how do all of these things shape our auditory perception? The concept that is useful for thinking more closely about the ways that bodies and biographies matter to how we listen is “listening histories.” The powerboat sound, for example, can signal happy memories for some and, for others, as we explain in this podcast, feelings of exclusion and resentment, even anger, might come up.

[00:11:34]

⁴ Montage created by sound editor Pietro Sammarco from field recordings taken in the summer of 2023 by Nassim Zand and Sue Frohlick, and includes (in no order): powerboats, jet skis, helicopters, water bombers for wildfires, children playing at water parks, families on beaches, paddleboarding, highway bridge and cars passing, music from portable speakers,

⁵ RibhavAgrawal – Composer, *Whispering Vinyl Loops - Lofi beats*, Pixabay. 2025, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/beats-whispering-vinyl-loops-lofi-beats-281193/>.

[music layer]⁶

[00:11:37]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

So, it might be clear by now that listening is a methodology that I used in my research on Okanagan tourism sounds. And in doing so, I listened from a situated perspective. I used my ears, my brain, of course, but more than that, too. I really like the term “situated listening.” Situated listening has been defined as a “method for navigating sensory experience, an embodied act, formulated through relationships to location and time. Situated listening is a theoretical proposition for how we orient ourselves to sound” (Sepulveda et al 2025, 3). Notice that situated listening recognizes the importance of relationality and space to how sounds are heard, and it is a term that pays attention to “relationships between listening bodies and to the politics of place, space, and culture” (Sepulveda et al 2025, 1). So, to provide a brief example of situated listening, I am going to explain how this project came about through an embodied and place-specific listening experience of my own.

[00:13:01]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

When I first moved to Kelowna, one day when I was hiking peacefully on Okanagan Mountain I was surprised, naively, to hear loud rock music “blasting” from a power boat on Okanagan Lake. I know that sound travels—and that sound travels much faster across water than over land. But still, I had expected to enjoy silence while I was in my “nature bubble” on the hiking trail far above the lake.

My own sense of entitlement and expectation of a very, sort of, what I call “Canadian quiet,” shaped my interpretation of that power boat and the sounds it was making as really unpleasant and disruptive noise. From that moment, I began to wonder about how the power boat sounds (the engines, the stereos, and the boaters in the boats) were given different meanings, depending on who was listening to them. I wondered about whether the noise emitting from the jet skis, too, that ply the shoreline were noises contested by residents along the lake shore? In what ways does the Okanagan become a noisier place during the summer months when more people, and more of their things (such as cars, boats, RV’s, portable speakers), come into the Valley?

[00:14:23]

[Powerboat sound]

[00:14:29]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

That brief sonic encounter lasted a mere few minutes. But it quite was an affective sensory register for me. Much more than a neutral or banal sound. It made me question my cultural knowledge of a lake as a contemplative recreational space of quiet, which is sort of how I grew up. It made me reflect on how I was entangled in a politics of sound and space that was shaped temporally, by seasonality. This kind of questioning led me to a research project on summer tourism about sounds and listening.

⁶ ComaStudio – Composer, *Chill Modern Abstract_Revelation*, Pixabay. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/beats-chill-modern-abstract-revelation-162594/>

So, in the summer of 2023, I carried out anthropological fieldwork along with PhD student Nassim Zand, from Iran, whose voice we will hear shortly. The project asks: how does the influx of people, and the outdoor activities that the warm weather allows in the Okanagan, and the resulting sonic atmosphere that is distinct from other times of the year here, how does all of this shape the “sonic relations” that take place here? How do people understand their social relations with one another and with the place through situated listening and listening histories—And remember, we are thinking about these relations in terms of their complexity and how they are shaped by power dynamics including racism, white supremacy, which we will talk about in a moment, and class inequities?

The project focuses on the lakes in the region, mostly Okanagan Lake because it is the largest, as popular sites for summer leisure and recreation. It also focuses on the experiences of residents whose lives were affected by tourists arriving in the summer and who also became tourists themselves as they sought out the pleasures and the amenities that this region has to offer. Together Nassim and I spent approximately 50 hours at various beaches and docks around Central and South Okanagan.

We listened to the audible atmospheres and we recorded the ambient sounds, while we were walking. Sometimes we were stationary, and sometimes we were paddleboarding. We carried out 18 interviews with residents, and two with visitors. If you're interested, you can read the Podcast Notes for more details about the interlocutors (“interlocutors,” so you know, is another word for research participants). And, we also say more about our recruitment methods in the Podcast Notes, too.

[00:16:59]

[Sounds of the waves on Okanagan Lake, from field recordings made in the summer of 2023]

[00:17:06]

Narration, Nassim Zand

Hello dear ears! I am Nassim a PhD student from Iran. My relationship with Sue’s research and the question of Okanagan Tourism Sounds initially started as her research assistant. However, it gradually grew on me as I was navigating a new chapter of my life in the Okanagan territory as a newcomer woman of color, from being someone who has some history of working for and with cultural tourism. I tuned my ears, to listen critically, and to pick up on the nuances.

In the following field recording, listen to my unexpected and important exchange with a security guard near one of the gated leisure spaces at Okanagan Lake.

[00:17:51]

[Voices of Nassim Zand and anonymous security guard at dock in Kelowna.]

[00:18:06]

As Sue mentioned, the Okanagan is situated on unceded and ancestral territory of the Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation, which is comprised of seven member communities that form a distinct and sovereign Nation, sharing the same land and language.⁷ The 135-kilometer-long Okanagan Lake, in nsyilxcen, the Okanagan language, means “a place or body of water

⁷ “Syilx Okanagan Nation,” *Syilx Okanagan Nation, Okanagan Nation Alliance*, accessed September 23, 2025, <https://syilx.org/about-us/syilx-nation/>.

that has two long sides.” I invite you to listen to the nsyilxcen name, offered by Sarah Alexis, a Syilx scholar.⁸

[00:18:43]

Voice of swawilx (Sarah Alexis)

[00:18:50]

Narration, Nassim Zand

In this podcast we use the European settler names of places, as this reflects our own listening histories of the Okanagan as a white settler and an international student, respectively. However, we recognize the importance of the nsyilxcen names and intend to learn them over time. That English place names appear in the dominant tourism imaginary of the Okanagan, produced by destination marketing, elicit important questions: How might place names be a critical auditory register of the sonic-spatial relations within the touristic setting of the Okanagan? How do these names contribute to the “white imaginary” of the Okanagan, an idea we explain shortly?

[00:19:38]

[music layer]⁹

The concentration of tourist accommodations, services, and attractions for visitors is Metro Kelowna, in Central Okanagan. Metro Kelowna includes Kelowna and West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, Lake Country, and Peachland, with a population of roughly 235, 000, as of 2022.¹⁰ Summerland and Naramata are smaller towns in the Southern Okanagan. All this region is easily accessible via Highway 97, *if* you have access to a car. Wide-sweeping views of Okanagan Mountain, the glimmering lake, and spectacular cloud formations, blue skies, and soft-hued sunsets can be seen from the vantage point of those inside the cars, trucks and RV’s that whiz along the corridor in greater numbers over the summer months than in the rest of the year.

Tourists flow into the region during the summer. June, July, and August are peak months for summer tourism. However, in the past few years August has been a time of several large-scale wildfires. Travel bans, put in place by the government in response to “wildland-urban” “interface fires,” change the visitor pattern. The changing seasonality of summer tourist flows as indicated by this emerging “wildfire season” is a reminder that tourism in the Okanagan is ever-changing. It is also a reminder that tourism has developed differently across the North, Central, and South regions (Senese 2012, 2016).

Our podcast features sounds recorded in a particular temporal context. The boat engines, the helicopters, the boom boxes, as well as our own field recording devices, are technologies within recreation and tourism practices in Okanagan Lake. These particular sounds—that humans have sensorial, affective, as well as political and economic relationships

⁸ This pronunciation of *kłúsxnítkw* (Okanagan Lake) is by swawilx (Sarah Alexis), Okanagan Indian Band member and expert, heard on Soundscape [here](#). For more information on the original and accurate name of Okanagan Lake, an article by Kelsie Kilawna published February 1, 2023, can be found on IndigiNews [here](#).

⁹ Sammarco, Pietro- Composer, *Summer Tourism 1*. 2024.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. 2023. *Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population: Kelowna, Census metropolitan area, British Columbia*. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=Kelowna&DGUIDlist=2021A00055935010&GENDERlist=1&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=0>.

with—are historical and seasonal. Summer tourism mobilities of people, machines, and their things change over time and place and, we suggest, affect the sonic experiences of residents.

Some numbers help to understand the scale and geography of tourist flows: Tourism Kelowna statistics show that in 2022,¹¹ 70% of summertime visitors came from within the province (many from Metro Vancouver) and 21% came from Alberta. The busiest months for tourism were June, July, and August, with July marking the seasonal peak. Altogether these three summer months saw nearly 787,000 visitors. The region is a destination most popular with “domestic tourists,” meaning Canadians, most who arrive by road (and not by air). Furthermore, Okanagan residents, too, travel up and down the Valley as summertime recreationalists and “day tripper” tourists—as residents have been doing since at least the 1970s (Bradley 2017; Var and Quayson 1985).

The contemporary tourism imaginary of the Okanagan as a “hotspot” for domestic tourists has developed out of the settler colonial history of the stolen land of Syilx people. Environmental anthropologist John Wagner traces the dominant image of the Okanagan as the “land of fruit and sunshine” back to 1905, when western Europeans were urged to settle in the Valley (2008, 26). Land companies set in motion the idea that the Okanagan was a “garden of Eden” and “earthly paradise,” a desirable European aesthetic that served both as a marketing tool and a “charter for colonization” (Wagner 2008, 30). Wine production began with the early settlers and ramped up in scale starting in the 1960s. In the twenty first century, a representation of the Okanagan as “a sunny oasis” remains in place—despite the starker realities of water shortages and drought (Wagner 2008).

Tracings of settler colonial imaginings of the Okanagan appear in current tourism marketing media representations, such as one appearing on the Thompson Okanagan Central Okanagan Destination website: The text reads, “This is an exciting region where one can enjoy food and wine culture, outdoor recreation, and copious amounts of beaches under 2,000 hours of sunshine per year.”¹²

[00:24:29]

[background music]¹³

The tourism marketing that features lake leisure and recreation connects power boating, jet skiing, and paddleboarding as “modern activities” with a much longer colonial appeal of the European-designed orchards and vineyards. While tourism occurs year-round, these images construct a tourism imaginary of the Okanagan as a summertime “oasis” and “paradise.”

[00:24:55]

[Sounds of traffic on the William R Bennett Bridge between Kelowna and West Kelowna, followed by sounds of helicopters flying above Naramata.]

[00:25:06]

Narration, Nassim Zand

What do you hear?

¹¹ “2022 Tourism Industry Facts and Figures,” Tourism Kelowna, Tourism Research, November 2023, <https://www.tourismkelowna.com/industry/tourism-research>.

¹² Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. “Central Okanagan.” Accessed August, 2025 <https://www.thompsonokanagan.com/central-okanagan>

¹³ Grand_Project – Composer, *An Eye for Details*, Pixabay. 2025, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-an-eye-for-details-384183/>

[00:25:08]

[Sounds of traffic on the William R Bennett Bridge between Kelowna and West Kelowna, followed by sounds of helicopters flying above Naramata.]

[00:25:21]

Narration, Nassim Zand

What is your own listening history that filters the meanings and affective responses to these sounds? One of the sounds in this recording is traffic moving across the Bennett Bridge in Kelowna. This bridge traffic is a ubiquitous sonic backdrop to the summertime activities that take place on downtown beaches and the lake. How might these sounds of cars and RV's be heard differently by differently situated visitors and residents?

[00:25:55]

[Sounds of traffic on the William R Bennett Bridge between Kelowna and West Kelowna.]

[00:25:57]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Now that we have provided some context to the Okanagan as a summer tourist destination, for the rest of the podcast we turn to the experiences of two interlocutors. We listen to them, and *with* them. What do their listening histories say about tourism and relationality and about the politics of space and sound within summer tourism in the Okanagan, and more broadly?

Our approach draws from the methodology of situated listening, as I mentioned earlier, and, also, from creative and sonic anthropological ways of producing knowledge. These approaches assume that knowledge is co-created through the conversations and exchanges we have with the many different people that we talk to during our fieldwork. Rather than a “detached observation,” (Culhane 2017), our research took place through embodied and emotional and, sort of, intertwined relations with our interlocutors. These are sometimes referred to as “entanglements” — our research also took place through our entanglements with the lake, with the powerboats, and other, sort of, so-called “actors” in the locations where we spent time. We then crafted the podcast as an interwoven spoken word, sounded ethnographic story.

Choosing from the many hours of interview tapes with all of the participants was not easy. Yet the theoretical and empirical questions of the research guided us. And so, too, did the emotional affect of the interviews. Some interviews really moved us, and some interviews stayed with us much longer than other interviews. Our podcast is a sonic ethnography. What we mean by “sonic ethnography” is that it is a “sounded representation” of an ethnographic study (Gershon 2013). Like all sonic ethnographies, it is an act of interpretation that is shaped very much by selective listening, by selective sound clips, and by selective excerpts of participant voices; so, it is a construction of a narrative that “conjures up central aspects of [our work]” (Davis and Craven 2016, 123; Boudreault-Fournier 2021). Our respective positionalities, our own hearing capacities and impairments, like my own (I have tinnitus), and our lived experiences shaped how we listened and how we interpreted our participants' auditory perceptions and the sonic environments around them.

We feature two interlocutors, both are university students, and both are women of colour. They are in their twenties. They were interested in the project because of their own felt effects of sounds that had bothered them as racialized residents of a predominantly white

demographic of summer tourists from BC and Alberta. Their experiences offer important counter stories to the “fantasy of Whiteness” in the Okanagan (Keyes and Aguiar 2021) and the normalization of a domestic/Canadian sensorial atmosphere of summer tourism—these are ideas that we explain further throughout the podcast.

We invite listeners to think about, and think with us, about the research questions while Nassim and I engage closely with the sonic histories of these two people. Listening closely to two racialized young women allows us to understand and show how people listen in situated ways, in ways that are shaped by positionality. Listening closely is an approach to sound, to racialized geographies; it is a methodology, all of which reveals how sound is multilayered, how it is social, political, and “alive,” so to speak. While we highlight the voices and experiences of these two people, and these two people only, our thinking around the research questions is informed by our own experiences at the sites we spent time at, listening and recording, as well as what the rest of the research participants said in their interviews with us.

Before you hear their voices, we do want listeners to know that participants granted us their permission to use audiotape that features their voices, while the names we use are not their actual names, just to give them some measure of privacy. We start with Sonali, she is a woman in her late 20s, she is from Bangladesh, she had moved to Kelowna to attend a graduate program in the university here. She had lived in Kelowna for two years when we interviewed her.

[00:30:52]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

But when I came here, I remember, everything closes at six here, and the streets are empty. And when you were living inside home, you can't even hear it. It's like a pin drop silence. like, you can't hear anything. It's so calm and composed here. So that was so, I mean, strange for me, I mean, I was used to, hearing these sounds till midnight.

[00:31:16]

[Sounds of car horns and city street pedestrian traffic in Dhaka, Bangladesh.]¹⁴

[00: 31:27]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023 [Sue Frohlick's voice as the interviewer-researcher]

Because people are busy working outside till midnight. But here you don't even find any people outside. So that was quite, really different for me. So, but, even, during daytime when everyone is going to their work, I think the traffic sounds are honking and every sound is, I think, less than what I experienced there. It's much, much better. The condition is much, much better here. So, it's not disturbing to you, unless you go to any near highway where the cars are passing by. That can be disturbing, but otherwise it's not too severe or not too harsh to you. So

¹⁴ This soundtrack is composed of multiple field recordings from Freesound.org, a collaborative repository of Creative Commons licensed audio samples. The credit is attributed as follows:
Sebastianlund-Recorder, *stemmer i trafik*[1], Freesound. 2009, License: Attribution 3.0. <https://freesound.org/s/73557>.
Mahalder, Balam- Recorder, *Busy city sound*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/715388>.
Mahalder, Balam- Recorder, *City traffic with ambulance*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/716286>.
Mahalder, Balam- Recorder, *Cng auto rickshaw*, Freesound. 2024, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/723808>.
Mahalder, Balam- Recorder, *City traffic sound*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/715399>.

that was the difference I felt, especially during night. It felt really strange to me that everything is so, so silent. Everything is so calm. And, inside [the] house you cannot hear anything from outside. But in there, back in Bangladesh, I used to even, even if you close your door, you could hear everything from there.

But at the same time, this silence was somehow disturbing to me as well, because it is a new experience for me. So, I mean, no one is talking, there is no honking. That's kind of disturbing to me as well. So, it took me some months to get set into this environment, and maybe now I got used to it, but it took me some time to get used to this silence.

[00:33:04]

Voice recording of Sue Frohlick, in the interview with Sonali on June 19, 2023

Yeah. Did you wonder where people were or wonder why they were so quiet? Was there sort of a sense of --

[00:33:15]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

Here, the cars, they won't even honk, right? Unless it's totally necessary. [laughter] But in Bangladesh, no one follow those rules. They keep honking. And so, it's a cultural difference and how people act, even how the rules and regulations are here and there. So, I could see that difference. And, people here don't talk loud. That I could understand. In Bangladesh people like loudly asking, calling someone else or talking over the phones loudly on the street, inside the bus. They're doing that.

[00:33:53]

[Sounds of car horns and city traffic in Dhaka, Bangladesh.]¹⁵

[00:34:02]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

But here they maintain the rules here. So, they are calm, they talk in low voices. So that was new to me as well. But this is a new experience, but I think this is a good experience for me. I started learning how they behave, and I try to adapt [to] their rules and regulations. And it was not easy at first, but maybe gradually I have learned.

[00:34:29]

Narration, Nassim Zand

Anthropologists use the concept “subjectivity” to refer to modes of perception, emotions, and feelings that “animate acting subjects” (Ortner 2008, 37). Perception, emotions, and feelings are always shaped by social and cultural formations and by subject positions such as race, class, gender, and sexuality (Ortner 2008). Subjectivity helps us to understand how people

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Mahalder, Balaram- Recorder, *Busy city sound*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/715388>.

Mahalder, Balaram- Recorder, *City traffic with ambulance*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/716286>.

Mahalder, Balaram- Recorder, *Cng auto rickshaw*, Freesound. 2024, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/723808>.

Mahalder, Balaram- Recorder, *City traffic sound*, Freesound. 2023, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://freesound.org/s/715399>.

come to know the sounds around them, through ears *as well as* emotions, memories, and other affective states. Listening and hearing are multi-sensory, embodied, affective attunements to our environment and the atmospheres that our bodies are part of. Sounds are a modality of cultural and social understanding and knowing of the worlds we inhabit (Feld and Brenneis 2004).

As you listen to Sonali describe her first days in Kelowna as a newcomer to Canada, can you relate to her disorienting feelings brought about by the silent streets of the city? Were you surprised to hear her describe the quiet of the urban neighbourhood as “strange”? How might her lived experience of growing up in Dhaka, the largest city in Bangladesh and one of the world’s most populated urban centers, have influenced *how* she heard Kelowna, as well as *what* she heard? We wondered how gender and femininity factored into the sonic relations she navigated as a woman of colour and as a South Asian newcomer encountering Canadian norms of sound and voice.

[00:36:13]

Voice recording of Sue Frohlick, in the interview with Sonali, June 19, 2023

In thinking about the cultural difference, like, did you find it hard to be quiet? Or what Canadians might think of as quiet, when you first arrived? Like, were you noisy in the sense of again, culturally?

[00:36:31]

[Laughter, Sue and Sonali]

[00:36:34]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

So, I don't know. I mean, everyone tells me that I have a low voice, I have a soft voice.

[00:36:38]

Voice recording of Sue Frohlick, in the interview with Sonali, June 19, 2023

Yeah. You come across very quiet!

[00:36:40]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

Yeah. So maybe for me it was not so difficult. But I have a friend who is also from Bangladesh, and she has a loud voice. I mean, she, naturally her voice is loud. You know? So, sometimes when we are walking or we are in the calm space, she talks and, you know, we don't remember that we are in Canada. We just talk the way we talk.

[00:37:05]

Voice recording of Sue Frohlick, in the interview with Sonali, June 19, 2023

So, when you get together? Yeah.

[00:37:07]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

Yeah. So sometimes we were sharing things, and then we laugh out loud and then realize, oh no, we should not be doing this. People don't do this here.

[Laughter, Sue and Sonali]

It might not be acceptable here. So, then, we realize, okay, we need to talk slower. We need to keep our voice low. So that's the thing I experienced sometimes.

[00:37:28]

Narration, Nassim Zand

We ask listeners to consider how Sonali was entangled in relations through sound, voice, and listening. Why did she feel that she and her Bangladeshi friends were “too loud”? How is becoming a “proper” resident in Kelowna bound up with learning to adjust her voice? Her subjectivity, then, is connected to auditory positionings of race, gender, and nation. Through her voice, its pitch and volume, she tells a story about being Othered as a so-called “loud” immigrant woman and, at the same time, becoming “Canadian” through proper vocalization. We hear, through Sonali’s listening, how, for her, sound matters in navigating racial geographies in the Okanagan.

As we continue now to listen to the rest of our interview with Sonali, you will hear a couple of brief montages. Recorded from the tourist spots around Kelowna, these audio clips help listeners attune to the sounds that Sonali is referring to.

[00:38:44]

[Montage of field recordings]¹⁶

[00:39:18]

Narration, Nassim Zand

Eventually we started talking about her summertime experiences when she was not taking university courses and could take part in touristic activities. Like thousands of other Okanagan residents, during the summer Sonali became a resident-tourist, “a day tripper.”

[00:39:35]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

I find during summer it's quite similar, like Cox's Bazar as I say, too many people visiting the same place. So, it's chaotic. It becomes chaotic. You cannot have a calm place to just sit and enjoy the view. People will be doing their activities. Some... even on the water, there are so many boats. Yeah. So many, as you said, paddle boards and people are busy over the water. So, it's nice. The view is nice. But, in Okanagan Lake, I find it a bit chaotic. Especially during weekends. You will see hundreds of people only in that City Park area.

[00:40:19]

[Sound of children playing and people talking at City Park, Kelowna]

¹⁶ Montage created by sound editor Pietro Sammarco using field recordings taken in the summer of 2023 by Nassim Zand. Includes (in no particular order): people chatting, dragon boaters practicing, motorboats, sounds from the city park summer sports festival, and music being played from boom boxes.

[00:40:21]

Voice recording of Sue Frohlick, in the interview with Sonali, June 19, 2023

When you say that you were selecting a space that's a little bit away from the noise, can you tell us a little bit about what the sources of noise are for you? Since again, now somebody's noise could be another person's music, you know, it's... [laughter].

[00:40:44]

Voice recording of Sonali, interviewed on June 19, 2023

Yeah...So mainly the talking, 'cause when people are in group, they like to talk and that's very natural. So, but it can be disturbing to other groups, right? So maybe the talking, and sometimes they carry the musical instruments with them, especially the young people here, they always carry that thing in their bag with loud musics, like, rap musics going on. I feel that very disturbing. I don't know why.

Because sometimes I feel so distant when there are too many people, you know? So, I feel like I don't belong here, but when, if I'm sitting there and I meet a small group of people, sometimes we interact, we have a good communication of understanding of each other. I feel included during that time. But when there are too many peoples, I do feel isolated. It's like, what's happening, this is so many people and everyone is busy with their activities. Their work. So, I can't really relate during the, when I have too many people around it when it's so crowded. But, sometimes we go and we meet one or two families, and that's fine for me. I feel included.

[00:41:59]

[Sound of jet skis and lakeshore waves on the Okanagan Lake, and children playing at the Peachland beach, Kelowna]

[00:42:18]

[music layer]¹⁷

[00:42:21]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Through this method of listening, one person's recollections of their first summer as an international student, a racialized woman, a new resident, and a day-tripper in the Okanagan--these elicit wider questions about relationality and summer tourism sounds. For anthropologist Noah Tamarkin, relationality is an expansive term. It captures, in Tamarkin's words, "to which and to what we relate, and with whom and what we have become entangled in doing so, and to what end" (2018, 312). Relationality can mean family; it can mean relatives, and all kinds of kin relations. Relationality can mean relationships with a place as a visitor or as a resident. Those different positions shape the relationship with the place. It can also mean relations defined by the state, such as an international student with a study permit.

A key scholar in the anthropology of and in sound is Steven Feld. Steven Feld connects relationality with sound. He does this in the concept he coined, "acoustemology." So, acoustemology joins "acoustics" with "epistemology," and in that way acoustemology reflects the ways that people learn to know the world through sound. In Feld's own words, he calls it

¹⁷ ViraMiller-Composer, *Peaceful Cinematic Sounds*. Pixabay. 2024, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-peaceful-cinematic-sounds-259272>.

“knowing-with and knowing-through the audible” (2015, 12). Acoustemology theorizes sound and listening as a way of knowing that depends upon a person or a group’s co-presence in space, environments, and with others (Feld 2012; Boudreault-Fournier 2021, 39).

Sonali’s words do not represent all Bangladeshi students, or all racialized or South Asian immigrants. But as a situated listener, she offered a partial and contingent account of her life shaped by her cultural background. And in this way her story opens up space to pose certain questions that are broader questions about sound, listening, white dominant recreational and touristic spaces, seasonality, migration, belonging, for example. We hear about how atmospheric silences and noises are seasonal. We hear how in the busy summer months, the sonic environment of the city streets and recreational spaces of the lakeside-beach, when lots of different groups of people were co-habiting these spaces, emotions and feelings of inclusion and exclusion were created.

[00:45:09]

[Sound of the waves on Okanagan Lake, from field recordings made in the summer of 2023]

[00:45:29]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Sonali’s listening history speaks to wider debates about the negotiations of power involved in tourism encounters across many different kinds of differences. Geographer Chris Gibson (2010, 254) argues that the analyses of tourism encounters that are attentive to how bodies and materials interact in these sorts of fluid and complicated ways must trace an anatomy of power. And, by “anatomy of power” he is speaking about collisions of race, and gender, and class. By studying tourism encounters we can draw attention to dynamics of power that are navigated in localized spaces of leisure inhabited by different groups, cultures, and subcultures (Faier and Rofel 2014; Gibson 2010). Through situated listening, we look specifically at how sound factors into what Gibson calls the “anatomy of power” in tourism encounters (Gibson 2010, 254) – sounds that people bring with them, they make on site, they desire, they yearn for them, they contest them, they relate to them. Some of the sounds disoriented or estranged people from one another.

Overall, Sonali’s sonic story suggests some wider-scale complexities and contradictions in the sensorial experiences of tourism. Her lived experience in the summertime in the Okanagan provides a glimpse into what the Okanagan becomes through the seasonality of tourism flows and as a place, then, that has an ever-changing population. The loud powerboat and jet ski engines, the voices of tourists at the nearby picnic bench, and the western rock music blaring from the portable speakers – all of these sounds circulated freely and speedily in the atmosphere. In this way, they were like “acoustic waves” that rolled across the lake and beaches. On the one hand, this shows how sounds carry across space, how sounds are without borders. But on the other hand, sounds mark boundaries between people. They mark boundaries between people because, in an explanation that ethnomusicologist Andrew Eisenberg provides, he talks about the spatial dimension of sound in a way that “through the process of audition ... a spatial ‘narrative’ [is attached] to each sound” (Eisenberg, 2015, 193).

[00:48:01]

[Sound of the waves on Okanagan Lake, from field recordings made in the summer of 2023]

[00:48:08]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Through this podcast we try to create a multi-sonic Okanagan. We use the term “multi-sonic” to express an important idea: A heterogeneity of audible environments and affective registers are heard within the spaces of tourism and recreation in the Okanagan. There is no singular sounded world, but rather many.

So, Steven Feld’s acoustemology (Feld 2015, Boudreault-Fournier 2021) instructs us to think of sounds not as objects cemented to a landscape; instead, “sounded worlds” come about through social, cultural, technological, human, non-human, material relations in a lot of different contexts— spatial, historical, and political economic, for example, and different structural conditions.

Scholars have begun to examine how sounded worlds are produced within and through tourism. To heighten touristic pleasure, tourism as an industry relies on sounds, such as musical production and noise control technologies in Caribbean resorts (Guilbault and Rommen 2019) or in Irish villages (Kaul 2018). Even the silence of a forest in Finnish nature tourism is manipulated for touristic consumption (Komppula, Konu, and Vikman 2017).

But sounds and silences are not only produced and controlled by tourism operators or by the tourism industry. They also emit from tourists and their things, their machines, their pets, and so forth, to create unchoreographed sonic atmospheres. As we try to show in this podcast, sounded tourism worlds are temporal, that means they take place over time, and they are spatial— seasonality shapes the specificity of the sonic environment of tourism, recreation, and leisure.

[00:50:03]

[music layer]¹⁸

Narration, Sue Frohlick

We are interested in how the sounds that carry (the sounds that travel across the lake and that sort of “leak” into the neighbour’s picnic table or beach blanket) —how that traveling sound in the multi-sonic Okanagan summertime tourism carries different meanings, it “carries struggles,” and it “carries ways of being and knowing” (and that is a phrase that I am quoting from researchers Tariq Jazeel and Tom Western 2025, 2). These meanings, struggles, and ways of being and knowing allow us, here again I am using the words of Tariq Jazeel and Tom Western, to “make sense of the worlds that people [co-inhabit] and make together” (2025, 2), and this includes relations and encounters that are sometimes frictionous (Jazeel and Western 2025; Ren 2021).

If tourism produces sounded worlds, how can listening to our interlocutors help us trace these multi layers? How can they help us trace the inclusions and exclusions and the shifts in social relations that can accompany tourism in its seasonality? How can sound in this context deepen or challenge the “fantasy of the Okanagan as a white settler space” (Keyes and Aguir 2021)? Can we engage with listening histories to hear the counter stories of tourism?

[00:51:29]

Narration, Nassim Zand

These are the questions that guide our listening to the second interlocuter featured in the podcast. Like Sonali, Estella is also a university student in her twenties. An important difference

¹⁸ Amurich – Composer, *Background Ambient music in Lydian mode*, Pixabay. 2022, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-background-ambient-music-in-lydian-mode-21059/>.

between them is that Estella was a Canadian domestic student and had lived in Kelowna for about ten years when we interviewed her. As a Black Canadian woman and university student living on a limited income, Estella felt she had a complicated conflicted relationship with Kelowna and the Okanagan. Her relationship with the place as a tourist destination was an important reason for us to feature her listening history.

[00:52:10]

[music layer]¹⁹

[00:52:15]

After high school, Estella left home and settled in Kelowna. For her, as a small-scale bustling city, Kelowna had promised community and belonging. However, after a few summers, tourism as an everyday reality transformed her perception of the place and her relationship to it. Even though Kelowna had become home to her, in the summer she felt like a visitor. She felt like a visitor because, in her words, she “didn’t look like the people around her.” This turn of phrase suggests the visual coding of Blackness. Her skin colour and her hair might have stood out in a crowd of people whose appearance was normalized through white privilege. Class plays a role, too, entangled as it is with race, and, also, with age.

[00:53:11]

Disclaimer, Nassim Zand

One heads up-- Estella's voice is a bit distorted. This is because we digitally altered the voice at the participant's request. If you are interested in how the negotiation of the participant's voice is part of the research process of this sonic ethnography, please refer to the discussion we provide in the Podcast Notes.

[00:53:38]

Voice recording of Estella, interviewed on February 13, 2023

Yeah, I enjoy going to the lake, I call it “the beach”. And, I generally, don’t like showing a lot of skin, but I do like sitting and kind of like observing. And stuff, I love the water. So, [laughs] I don’t know how to describe it, but I try to tune people out. Because the water is really calming for me. It is not usually noisy or crowded. But I can get a sense that I feel like a visitor here even if I have been here so long, because I don’t look like everyone around me. And, it makes me feel like I can’t occupy certain spaces because of that.

And, generally, [she pauses] I don’t know if this is relevant, I don’t really like to go outside too much because especially in the summer where there’s lots of, like, I don’t know whether they’re visiting, like Black migrants, but they catcall and they’re aggressive near these places. So, I hear a lot of, like, “sister,” or lots of yelling from them, and that disrupts my peace. And, so, I tend to avoid places like that. They don’t really care about other people, but when they see a black person like me... I am fully covered. I am not showing anything, and [yet] I feel gawked at.”

[00:55:20]

[music interlude]

[00:55: 27]

And, also, like, there's a certain amount of privilege like clearly, all the students have gone in the summer. Only so many students are here. I'm one of them, and it just feels like I

¹⁹ Sammarco, Pietro- Composer, *Summer Tourism 2*. 2024.

don't belong. Usually around this time, I'm planning my escape. [laugh] I'm like, I need to leave here. I need to get out of Kelowna type vibes. Because they're families, you can tell that they're all established. They can access this place. They freely leave their stuff out and go into the water. There's this level of trust and knowing that this is where they live.

Whereas for me, I feel like I need to dress a certain way. I need to plan out my route. I need to, if I'm going to enjoy it, I can only enjoy it for so long. And the people that look like me, who I'm interacting with, they're violating or disturbing my peace. And so, it just makes me feel like I'm not from Kelowna, and I've gone to other beaches and other locations, and I felt, even in New York, I felt like I was part of the community. Even though I was a visitor there. I was there for, like, two and a half weeks, and I was just like, this is my home.

[00:56:41]

Narration, Nassim Zand

This clip suggests how racializing geographies in the summertime are heard by some residents who are socially positioned through race. Sounds affect subjectivity. For Estella, Kelowna's city center was a space of luxury and consumption, unaffordable to those, like her, on a tight budget.

[00:57:02]

[Sounds of a motorboat on Okanagan Lake at Waterfront Boardwalk, Kelowna.]

[00:57:16]

Narration, Nassim Zand

She described what an "influx" of white tourists felt like, what the tourists looked and sounded like (which was not "like her"). But she also made a reference to "people who look like her," and who disturbed her peace, alluding to another group of subjects within the complex racial geography in the Okanagan summer.

[00:57:39]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Estella's experience of gender harassment is important to her story and to a broader narrative of a multi-sonic Okanagan. Seasonal agricultural workers who are mostly Black Caribbean and Mexican men in the Okanagan Valley contribute significantly to the local tourism industry, including wine tourism. Yet these temporary workers are also residents, and they are systemically segregated from the local community. They are kept out of sight by having to stay on the orchards and vineyards where they work. They are a group that is invisibilized (Cohen and Caxaj 2023; Hjalmarson 2022)²⁰ and, we add, they are silenced.

[00:58:15]

²⁰ Cohen, Amy, and C. Susana Caxaj. 2023. "A Lifeline in Troubled Waters: A Support Intervention for Migrant Farm Workers." *International Migration* 61 (3): 132–47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.13027>.

Hjalmarson, Elise. 2022. "Sentenced for the Season: Jamaican Migrant Farmworkers on Okanagan Orchards." *Race & Class* 63 (4): 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03063968211054856>.

[music layer]²¹

[00:58:22]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

So, this segregation makes the racialized migrants out-of-place and subjects them to surveillance when they go downtown to shop or to participate in leisure. More broadly, representations of racialized men as dangerous has a harmful history. We are aware of that. So, in Estella's story, their presence, and their voices, raise, sort of, questions. What do their voices mean alongside the white majority of tourist shoppers and restaurant and bar patrons? How can the harm of being the target of catcalls, which is a form of misogyny, how can that be held in tension with the harm of being surveilled as a migrant worker from the Global South, again, within these multi-sonic and really complicated touristic and leisure spaces?

We return now to the idea that as sound travels, sound "carry meanings, struggles, and ways of being and knowing" for the always-situated listeners (Jazeel and Western 2025, 2). Both of Estella's encounters, one with the wealthier predominantly white tourists and the other encounter with Black migrant male workers, who are perhaps out on an afternoon excursion to the city, they illustrate a larger point. The seasonal flow of different groups of people, bodies, and things into the Okanagan during the summer months can animate sonic encounters. And these sonic encounters are not always what I call "vacation happy," but instead they can "include friction, antagonism, surveillance, navigation, and negotiation" (Steingo and Sykes 2019, 12). "Locals" and tourists alike hear and transduce sounds through culture. And at the same time, they attribute cultural and other attributes, like class, gender, and race, to people that they encounter in touristic spaces. Social relations are formed through the listening in on the sounds of culturally situated others (Steingo and Sykes 2019, 12).

So, Estella's listening history connects with these wider processes of the politics of sound and space, and the encounters and social relations that happen through tourism. Race was central to the attribution of different groups in these encounters and the sounds they made.

[01:00:49]

[music layer]²²

[01:00:53]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Gustav Stadler urges sound studies researchers to pay close attention to racial politics because sound is always lived through categories like race (Stadler 2018). Another scholar of sound, Jennifer Stoeber, also, says that "we need to talk about listening, power, and race" (2016, 1). Stoeber uses the concept "sonic color line" to theorize the process of racializing sound, that is, the process through which certain bodies are expected to produce, desire, and live amongst particular sounds (Stoeber 2016, 7). The concept of the "sonic color line" draws our attention to racial boundaries that, in Jennifer Stoeber's words, "racially code sonic phenomena such as vocal timbre, accents, and musical tones" (Stoeber 2016, 11).

Within this framework, whiteness is inaudible. It is just not heard. Blackness, on the other hand, is not only audible but blackness is to be "noisy. Within a sonic colour line, to be

²¹ SergePavkinMusic – Composer, *Old Film Strip*, Pixabay. 2022, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/pop-old-film-strip-151924/>

²² SergePavkinMusic – Composer, *Old Film Strip*, Pixabay. 2022, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/pop-old-film-strip-151924/>

noisy is to be policed, and Jennifer Stoever argues, “loudness is something racialized people cannot afford” (Stoever 2016,23). Estella’s listening history opens space to raise questions about race in tourism sounded worlds, where many different racialized groups are entangled in, we think, sonic color lines. In the Okanagan in the summertime, what are the particular sounds through which the sonic lines are drawn, and the categories of race are lived?

[01:02:34]

[music layer]²³

[01:02:39]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Estella calls out the supposed inaudibility of the whiteness and middle-classness of culinary and shopping tourism—her situated listening hears a sonic racial boundary. She hears as “noise” the audible and, to her, triggering of a white dominant tourism space. What might listeners hear as you listened to her story about the racial geographies within the summer flows of a wide range of subjects who congregate in the touristic spaces—consumers, tourists, settlers, “locals,” “foreign workers,” outsiders, visitors—right? Her story then refuses to be “colour blind”? How can the story of her emotional experiences of displacement and disruption within those border zones of encounter evoke a multilayered sounded world that is lived very differently by residents whose racialization and class shapes a sonic colour line? Can we hear the Okanagan through a racial sonic geography that sounds out a multiplicity of politics of space?

[01:03:54]

Narration, Nassim Zand

We are almost at the end of our podcast. We play one more excerpt from Estella’s interview. The clip we play for listeners offers clues to the specific summer tourism sounds that carry and leak and ultimately form an atmospheric sonic colour line.

[01:04:12]

Voice recording of Estella, interviewed on February 13, 2023

Yeah, and they're revving of their boats and then their speedboats. I want to go in there [laughs] and, I, also, the laughing, I think I hear lots of people laughing and playing with the water and playing their music, like especially the little speakers. That's why I have to tune them out. And this guy's blasting his music. We're all in a shared space. I like the music. It's part of, obviously the atmosphere. If I was in any other location of the city, that's fine, but it just feels like this is their space and I'm encroaching or I'm coming in, whereas when I've gone to other cities like New York and somebody has their music on, it's like, oh, that guy has his music on. But this is my space and my group of people. I don't know, but I don't know how that's the only way I can really compare it. I feel like there's more of a “territory” here, like this territorial, they've paid to come here, this is their people and I'm coming in.

[01:05:21]

[Montage of field recordings]²⁴

²³ Sammarco, Pietro- Composer, *Summer Tourism 4*. 2024.

²⁴ Montage created by sound editor Pietro Sammarco from field recordings taken in the summer of 2023 by Nassim Zand and Sue Frohlick, and includes (in no order): children playing at the spray park, powerboats, people talking and laughing at the beach.

[01:05:44]

[music layer]²⁵

[01:05:46]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

Boats, speedboats, laughter, and music played on portable speakers... these might seem innocuous or even seem to be nostalgic sounds associated with summertime fun in southern British Columbia. But sounds not only carry, as in they travel across space, across the lake, across the beaches, sounds also carry meanings and carry ways of knowing and being. Listening to participants' own listening histories and how they ascribe meanings to the sounds, and the sources of the sounds have been the focus of our study. Situated listening reflects differences and inequities across culture, class, gender, and race. Estella told us so vehemently about the negative feelings that apparent "summertime fun" sounds evoked for her. Hearing her has opened our ears to the complications, and the power dynamics, of the sonic atmosphere in the Okanagan, the multi-sonic atmosphere.

This is an "impact" of tourism that has not been paid much attention to. Listen to the statement that she made, that Estella made as a long-time Kelowna resident: The sonic atmosphere that carried through the city was one that she could not avoid unless she stayed home. So, in the summer for her it was a sonic territory. Not simply a neutral atmosphere, but "territory" was the word she used. And it was marked by those who "have paid to come here." This is not a claim against noise pollution or a plea to regulate the volume of sound that residents in over-touristed cities like Barcelona and Lisbon, for example, use to protest against over-tourism. To us, the issue that becomes animated by the listing of the sounds that territorialize the place—the boats, the music played on portable speakers, people playing in the water—is making audible the sounds that are otherwise inaudible.

We appreciate Estella's story as a counter story of tourism. A counter story of tourism pushes back against the over-celebratory branding of the Okanagan as a paradisaical playground and a sonorous destination. Like Sonali, Estella's listening history does not represent the experiences of all Black Canadian women, or university students, or Kelowna residents. Rather, it is one affective and partial story that brings alive the multi-sonic Okanagan and brings alive the diverse sounded worlds that people inhabit, and the everyday navigations and negotiations of their encounters and relations with one another.

[01:08:39]

[Sounds of traffic on the William R Bennett Bridge between Kelowna and West Kelowna, followed by sounds of helicopters flying above Naramata.]

[01:08:49]

Narration, Sue Frohlick

As we come to the end of this podcast, we offer some closing words with respect to how we situate these complex politics of sound, listening, and space within a dominance of whiteness and the relative wealth that characterizes summer tourism in the Okanagan.

²⁵ ViraMiller-Composer, *Relaxation For Relaxing*. Pixabay. 2024, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/ambient-peaceful-cinematic-sounds-259272>.

[01:09:07]

Narration, Nassim Zand

As we mentioned earlier in the podcast, the Okanagan is a destination most popular with “domestic tourists,” meaning Canadians. Tourism Kelowna statistics tell us that 95% of the visitors year-round are domestic and that 63% of these are from BC.²⁶ While “Canadian” as a category of nationality is not homogeneous with respect to race, whiteness pervades tourism (Erickson 2018; Mattsson 2023; Spracklen 2013). We draw from sociologists and other scholars who theorize the Okanagan through the notion of a prevailing “fantasy of whiteness” (Aguilar et al 2005; Keyes 2021).

In the book, *White Space: Race, Privilege, and Cultural Economies of the Okanagan Valley*, cultural studies scholar Daniel Keyes shows how tourism representations of the Okanagan tend to secure the region as an ideal and comforting place for settlers. Keyes refers to the Okanagan as a place where “white identity can thrive without apparent challenge” (2021, 6). He reveals whiteness to be a “fantasy,” in how the apparent norm and ideal of whiteness is not reality. Population statistics do show a dominance of White European residents, but the local population also includes Syilx and other Salish Nations, Métis, and other Indigenous residents, Black Canadians and Black diaspora, and many other non-white groups. Keyes’ point is that these diverse groups are erased, marginalized, silenced, and dispossessed through the *fantasy* of Okanagan whiteness (Keyes 2021, 7).

The listening histories of the two interlocutors provide important counterpoints to the “white fantasy” that washes over the Okanagan as a summer tourism destination. The racialized interlocutors were residents encountering tourists *and* they were tourists themselves wishing to access the leisure activities afforded by the urban and the lake tourism amenities. How do their stories complicate the sensorium of domestic “Canadian” tourism? Can we listen to how they hear the sonic atmosphere of “an Okanagan summer” as a way to interrogate assumptions about the space through sound? In the multi-sonic Okanagan summertime, are boundaries formed through a “white sonic” reverberation? Listening closely has been our methodology for hearing a counterpoint to the fantasy of, and the inaudibility, of whiteness in the Okanagan Valley, that, we suggest, intensifies in the summer tourism season.

[01:11:59]

[music layer] ²⁷

[01:12:09]

Acknowledgement, Sue Frohlick

My thanks go to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the research grant that funded the research project and this podcast, and to Taylor Wilson at UBC Studios. I also want to thank Nassim Zand, my research collaborator and podcast co-producer, sound producer Pietro Sammarco of Pippo Sound, and all the participants who gave us their time so generously. Also, our thanks go to *BC Studies* and the reviewers and editorial team. Thank you so much.

²⁶ “2022 Tourism Industry Facts and Figures,” Tourism Kelowna, Tourism Research, November 2023, <https://www.tourismkelowna.com/industry/tourism-research>.

²⁷ SergePavkinMusic -Composer, *Evening Shore*. Pixabay. 2024, License: Creative Commons 0. <https://pixabay.com/music/beats-evening-shore-190014/>

We leave listeners with an invitation to reflect on your own listening histories as you listen to the final montage of field recordings. What questions come up for you as you listen to the sounds now? We hope that, in the broadest scope, the podcast has encouraged a methodology of posing questions about sounds as a way to better understand people's relations with one another, in all their complexity.

[01:13:16]

[Montage of field recordings]²⁸

[Ends at 01:14:11]

²⁸ Montage created by sound editor Pietro Sammarco from field recordings taken in the summer of 2023 by Nassim Zand and Sue Frohlick, and includes (in no order): water sprays of the spray park, children playing at water parks and beaches, parents checking in on their children, Sue and Nassim talking while walking, powerboats, helicopters, water bombers for wildfires.

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