CfP: Labor, Sound, and the Body - Columbia University ISSG Graduate Conference 2022 (via Zoom)

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Call for Papers - ISSG Graduate Conference: Labor, Sound, and the Body

Saturday, April 9th, 2022

Virtual Conference via Zoom

Columbia’s Institute for the Study of Sexuality and Gender (ISSG) invites graduate students from across disciplines to submit abstracts for the 2022 ISSG Graduate Conference, entitled Labor, Sound, and the Body. Presentations will be 20 minutes long, followed by 10 minutes for discussion.

Please submit abstracts of no longer than 250 words to ISSGGradConference2022@gmail.com by February 20, 2022. Audio and/or visual presentations are more than welcome. Acceptances and rejections will be sent no later than February 25th. All presentations will be delivered virtually.

For this year’s ISSG conference, we take inspiration from recent work that connects labor, the body, sound and listening. Verónica Gago takes the case of the women workers who attend the 1-4-4 hotline as the first scene of a new cartography of laboring bodies from the perspective of the feminist strike (October 2016-March 2019). As women and workers responsible for responding to cases of gender based and sexual violence 365 days a year, they do so under conditions of extreme precarity, Gago argues: “They put their own bodies on the line to respond to violence against the bodies of other women; they experience physical and psychological pathologies as daily symptoms” (Gago 2019).

What is especially striking in Gago’s example is the way this bodily and expert labor is mediated through the realm of the sonic, voice to voice, as a work both of speaking and listening. Their work of listening requires affective, sonic, bodily and social expertise, and it is this hard-to-define expertise that is productive of value. In The Race of Sound, Nina Eidsheim argues that listening is never neutral, it is rather an active producer of meaning, and a political act: “Through listening, we name and define.” She considers voices as communal technologies “attuned to cultural values, what the community hears, and the meanings it assigns.” (Eidsheim 2019, 24). Taking Eidsheim’s approach to sound and listening as ways we name, define, enact and activate, we invite participants to consider the various intersections between gender, labor, sound, and the body.
We construct these concepts broadly, drawing on the multivalence of each of our key terms.

Possible topics might include (but are not limited to):

• Labor, sound, voice, and materiality

• The bodily labor of artistic production

• Sound and listening as tools of dissidence

• The sounds of labor, gendered, sexual, reproductive or otherwise

• Identity formation through labor and/or sound

• Bodily alterations, exhaustion, and repetition

• Music, dance, and bodily entrainment

Questions about the conference may be directed to the two ISSG Graduate Fellows, Elif Irem Az (eia2109@columbia.edu) and Gabrielle Ferrari (gef2121@columbia.edu).

Contact Info:

ISSGGradConference2022@gmail.com; Elif Irem Az (eia2109@columbia.edu); Gabrielle Ferrari (gef2121@columbia.edu).

Contact Email:
eia2109@columbia.edu