

TEACHING THE GILDED AGE AND PROGRESSIVE ERA

Histories with Sound: Using Noise and Music to Teach (and Research) the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

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Abstract

In recent years, the history of sound has developed into a rich body of interdisciplinary scholarship. This article explores the benefits of considering sonic evidence alongside a host of other material; teaching and writing histories with—rather than of—sound. In the classroom, this kind of “history with sound” is particularly useful for its ability to cut across lines of scholarly inquiry. This makes sound an especially potent resource when teaching the history of the United States during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. During these years, American society underwent a many-sided process of development difficult to adequately narrativize. The study of sound, with its ability to link numerous trends and dynamics within densely layered events, can help address this issue. Providing insight into the practices and problems of everyday life, such sonic history can reveal the interplay of change and continuity that defined the social experience of the turn-of-the-century United States. Focused on sound in New York, this article provides an overview of the topic’s historiography before examining a series of distinct case studies for classroom use.

Keywords: music; history of sound; history of the senses; cultural history; New York

In recent years, the history of sound—a field once bemoaned as “always emerging”—has developed into a rich body of interdisciplinary scholarship, grappling productively with the complexities of noise, hearing, music, and speech.¹ Capable of crossing the boundaries of the body and the spatial structures of culture without the consent of listeners, sound carries a profound social aspect.² As a result, it has played a crucial role in the construction of human order, influencing everything from aesthetics and religion to urban zoning and political protest.³ Of course, while human hearing is based in a set of physical processes, its operations cannot be reduced to them.⁴ What is a meaningful sound, and what is a meaningless noise? Such distinctions are shaped by the general structures of a society, as well as the individual listener’s place within them.⁵ For sound studies, an exploration of the historically mediated sense necessarily balances the realities of technological and social change (in terms of the emergence and disappearance of distinctive sounds) against both the shifting ideologies of sonic culture and the actual mechanics of listening.⁶

Unfortunately, the effort needed to sort through these issues has shaped a literature that frequently treats the theoretical questions raised by the study of sound as its central topic—blunting the appeal of such work within the broader field of history. This seems a missed opportunity. Without minimizing the generative possibilities of scholarship centered specifically on sound, engaging with the auditory past does not require a strict focus on the history of the senses. Instead, it is possible to consider sonic evidence alongside a host of other material, teaching and writing histories with—rather than of—sound, bridging the gap between these rich archival sources and the broader swath of social and cultural dynamics against which they play out.⁷

In the classroom, this kind of “history with sound” is particularly useful for its ability to cut across artificially distinct lines of scholarly inquiry, condensing past complexity within a discrete space or experience. Such sonic evidence is remarkable for its ability to reflect the overlaid temporalities that define everyday life. Listening to my apartment as I write this, I can hear older technologies, like the decades-old radiator grumbling behind me, in counterpoint with music streamed over the internet. Both play out against the backdrop of street noise pouring in through an open window, connecting my neighbors chatting on their stoop, the rumble of cars on asphalt, and the sounds of animal life, from the honking of migrating geese or the scrabble of urbanized squirrels to the invasive chitter of starlings.⁸ Taking in language, music, technology, industry, and nature, the analysis of this, or indeed any, soundscape requires connections across seemingly distinct registers of time and meaning.⁹

Listening to the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

These dynamics make sound a particularly potent resource when teaching the history of the United States during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. During these years, American society underwent a many-sided process of development difficult to adequately capture within a coherent narrative.¹⁰ The study of sound, with its ability to link numerous trends and dynamics within densely layered events, can help address this issue. Providing insight into the practices and problems of everyday life, such sonic history can reveal the interplay of change and continuity that defined the social experience of the turn-of-the-century United States.¹¹

Whatever records of past sounds survive over time must necessarily be understood as both accounts of what a listener heard and an argument over what it meant for them to hear—an especially pressing issue given the relative paucity of auditory evidence prior to the advent of recording technology. In the context of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, such debates took on particular salience. The waves of migration that defined these years brought an incredible variety of people into close proximity, exposing listeners to an array of unfamiliar sonic practices.¹² This sense of dramatic change was furthered by the expansion of new, technologically derived noises. This transformation held significant importance within the realm of work, where factories and sweatshops, as well as offices and farms, all underwent significant transformation, definitively shifting the broader soundscape.¹³ These developments were accompanied by the proliferation of public spaces shaped by distinctively sounded forms of transportation and entertainment.¹⁴

In the face of the rise of technological noises, homes—particularly those of the middle and upper classes—were increasingly defined against noise. Within such spaces, the absence of clamor was an argument in its own right, reflecting beliefs about respectability, work, gender, and the family.¹⁵ The effort to organize sound did not stop in the private

domain. Controlling the sonic environment was an integral part of progressivism's broader attempt to reorder industrial society. In cities across the country, reformers drew on cutting-edge science to claim that the sounds of industry and transportation had the potential to cause neurological disorder and physical dissolution.¹⁶ The development of such opinions was both a reaction to changed industrial conditions and an ideological argument about how American society should be organized.

Along similar lines, the sonic practices of the working classes were increasingly viewed as unruly disruptions to public order. To reformers, these styles of auditory culture needed to be curbed and, ideally, transformed, bringing them in line with the assumptions of classed decorum.¹⁷ As a result of such activity, much of the evidence about noise during these years must also be understood as evidence of social efforts to control it—an exercise of power that left its mark on the soundscapes of the past. Such efforts, it's important to point out, were never entirely successful. Instead, they triggered a host of counter-hegemonic sonic cultures and discourses that developed in counterpoint to demands from above.¹⁸ While such activity could follow more traditional lines, it often intersected with the new types of commercial leisure and entertainment audible everywhere from the chatting of multinational audiences in the era's nickelodeons to the lively streetscapes of Harlem.¹⁹ Over time, the popularity and profitability of such spaces helped remake the outlines of American public culture, brokering a complex auditory compromise between progressive expectations and commodified pleasure.

Music, used to organize time and order society throughout the nation, replicated many of these discourses. On the one hand, this can be seen in the enormous importance accorded to European art music by the middle and upper classes.²⁰ Communities sought to support organizations capable of skillfully performing styles like opera, viewing their success in doing so as a litmus test for the refinement (and therefore civilizational success) of the United States more broadly. At the same time, the middle classes continued to embrace discourses of domestic femininity in which a woman's ability to perform on the parlor piano was a highly regarded skill. Indeed, the link between musical performance and the bourgeois home only grew more important during these years, as a massive increase in the production of affordable keyboards put them within reach of an ever-growing swath of the population.²¹

Simultaneously, a wide variety of musical practices continued to develop among the nation's vast working class. Music related to racial or ethnic communities remained a vital element in the creation and articulation of identities both old and new—the efflorescence of Afrodiasporic forms like the blues and ragtime among the communities of formerly enslaved people in the South and Midwest only the most famous among them.²² It would be a mistake to consider such developments as the expression of age-old tendencies, either cultural or musical. Instead, such forms were distinctly modern, born in the cross-class (and sometimes cross-racial) leisure spaces of the industrializing nation, and shaped by new technologies of performance (like the widespread availability of the upright piano) and transportation (like the train lines that allowed musicians an unprecedented degree of mobility).²³ Similarly, a host of new immigrant communities brought their music to America, filling the streets of cities like New York and Chicago with rapidly evolving forms of Polish, Italian, or Jewish song.²⁴ These communities intersected with an array of longstanding sonic traditions among the native-born working classes, many of which centered around forms of alcohol-fueled performance embedded in spaces like taverns and concert saloons.²⁵ Within such environments, energetic, ribald musical activity thrived for decades, providing the organizational foundation for a host of new cultural styles.²⁶

These dynamics were transformed by the emergence of a new force within the music industry.²⁷ While individuals had made a living as performers or publishers since the early days of the republic, the Gilded Age and Progressive Era saw a massive increase in commercial leisure, much of which was connected to a nationally oriented entertainment sector. Appearing live, through performances, and as circulating commodities in sheet music (and later piano rolls or records), the products of these businesses began to remake the American soundscape. Cutting across the lines of class, ethnicity, race, and geography, leading firms upset long-standing hierarchies of musical practice, setting the stage for twentieth-century mass culture. Such developments must be understood in relation to the era's broader sonic history. While entrepreneurs like Edward Marks (whose journeys through New York in this period are detailed in my article "The Best Songs Came from the Gutters") may have helped to reshape the nation's musical identity, he did so in reaction to decades of already rapid evolution.

Begin to examine almost any description of sound from this period, and it is possible to unpack layer after layer, from the most specific of local dynamics to structural shifts playing out at the global level. Such complexity is why teaching with the history of sound is such an effective way to introduce students to the complexities of American history during these years. Linking individual experience to social structure, and short-term fad to centuries-long tradition, music and sound unify the myriad levels at which change operates across time. And if that sounds good, that's because it is.

Sound In the Classroom

As is true for many aspects of life in turn-of-the-twentieth-century New York, newspapers offer a tremendous resource for sonic history. The following examples are meant to be further illustrations of both the broad themes sketched out over the preceding pages as well as the journey through New York City detailed in the article "The Best Songs Came from the Gutters."

Within a classroom setting, the analysis of the following articles offers an opportunity to explore the ways in which the experience and description of sound and music reflect the complex historical dynamics of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. The *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* website will make available an additional set of passages selected for use in the classroom. These do not include prewritten analysis. Instructors can use these materials as the basis for a session focused specifically on sound or music in history. They could also use this essay and the following passages to facilitate discussions about progressive reform, changing gender dynamics, the rise of mass culture, or evolving tensions around class or race. In such instances, students could be asked to reflect on how a consideration of these topics shifts when sound is incorporated alongside more traditional forms of historical evidence.

One potential approach to utilizing these resources in the classroom would be to talk through one or two of the passages in a group setting, drawing on material from the preceding essay as background, before breaking into smaller groups to discuss the passages included online. Another might be to assign the essay as a supplement to other class materials, using it to introduce students to the concept of sound history, before asking them to analyze one or more passages. Finally, a minimal version might involve simply projecting one of the following passages on the classroom screen, and asking the class to talk through it as a group, reinforcing prior discussions of the era's social dynamics through sounded history.

Case Study 1: “Soper Strains His Ankle”

Newspaper fiction was widespread during the late nineteenth century. While not an account of actual happenings, such pieces were intended to depict more-or-less realistic situations. As a result, they can provide extremely useful descriptions of day-to-day life. In “Soper Strains His Ankle”, Soper, an architect who works in Manhattan’s noisy downtown, strains his ankle and attempts to work from home (Figure 1). What he finds there is a series of sonic disturbances, as a variety of peddlers move past his apartment, breaking through the boundaries of the home with the distinctive cries necessary to advertise their businesses. While the family is upper-middle class, and therefore able to maintain a clear distinction between the husband’s work and the wife’s domestic duties, sound crosses and complicates these dividing lines. This disruptive soundscape is only expanded by an array of domestic noises, as those living around Soper’s apartment—in particular, a series of young children and music-loving young adults—make their presence known. Over the course of the day, Soper realizes that his home is anything but a sanctuary from the world; the office, structured specifically for his needs, is actually a safer, calmer setting. A farce on the ideologies and expectations of gender among the middle class, the piece reflects the vital role of sound in defining both experiences and expectations of home and work in the Progressive Era. Note as well that the role of sound here is not exclusively physical. Soper dreams about sonically embodied imperial conflict in the Philippines, while his younger wife wants him to break his “philosophical” calm and curse—a commentary on the structures of classed masculinity in this period.

Case Study 2: “Noises of the City”

An article written in the early days of progressive reform, “Noises of the City,” catalogs the wide variety of sounds that defined the New York City soundscape and explores the ways in which they were beginning to be disciplined (Figure 2). Within such descriptions, it’s important to analyze the perspective of the author producing the account. Not yet convinced that the “chorus that tells of man’s ceaseless activity” was a threat to health or social order, the journalist appears to believe that the city’s myriad noises could be disruptive and required some mechanisms for their control. At this point, however, these efforts were not yet the top-down attempts to restructure the city’s lived environment that would define the Fiorella La Guardia administration of the 1930s. Instead, they were piecemeal, with individual citizens required to collaborate (or complain) in order to shape the city’s soundscape. At the same time, the tensions that would define future discourse around noise were already visible (or rather, audible). Forms of industry and retail created unsustainable levels of sound—similarly, the plethora of transportation and delivery modes created a nonstop “clatter” and “grind.” All of this reflected the mixture of new and old forms of life within the turn-of-the-century city—rag men and church bells mixing with cable cars and subways.

Case Study 3: “Eyes That Don’t See”

“Eyes that Don’t See, and Ears that Don’t Hear, Have These Excise Inspectors” is a report on the proceedings of a senatorial committee investigating allegations of corruption in the oversight of New York City’s bars and saloons (Figure 3). These businesses had long served as vital spaces of community organization and pleasure among the city’s working classes—while also providing space for “vices” including prostitution, gambling, and drunkenness. While a series of laws had empowered city commissioners to remove the

EYES THAT DON'T SEE

AND EARS THAT HEAR NOT, HAVE THESE EXCISE INSPECTORS.

FARSETTI'S COMMITTEE LEARNS WHAT A PARTISAN INTERESTER IS.

These Intelligent Officials Tell How Hard They Work to Find Out Nothing and Make False Reports—Inspector Williams Would Discard Excise Law Breakers in Jail.

These intelligent officials tell how hard they work to find out nothing and make false reports. Inspector Williams would discard excise law breakers in jail. Farsetti's committee learns what a partisan interester is.

THE COMRADE'S EXPLANATION.

As soon as the Chairman's staff fell and barely escaped the day's execution. Mr. Bourke Cobden said permission to make an explanation. His explanation was to the committee about George Hill's relations under the Excise Law.

WILLIAMS DRAWS IN HIS ROPE.

WILLIAMS DRAWS IN HIS ROPE. He is reported to have said that he would not be able to do so until he had seen the report of the committee.

MISS CHASE CHARMED HER AUDIENCE ON THE ORCHARD.

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THE WEEKLY WORLD.

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Figure 3. "Eyes that Don't See, and Ears that Don't Hear, Have These Excise Inspectors," New York World, May 5, 1890.

license of offending businesses, in practice, bar owners were frequently able to continue their operations through ties to members of the police and city government. In such proceedings, it is possible to see the ways in which the structures of government sought to control the social environment of cities while also obtaining a rare glimpse into the oppositional cultures that thrived in such spaces.

Sound and music are a crucial element throughout the article, used by both commissioners and the police as a metric to assess whether or not an establishment operated with an acceptable amount of disorder. When one lawyer questioned the police's refusal to close Blank's concert saloon, a space where unmarried men and women could drink together and listen to performances, a patrolman pushed back, stating that "Poor people go there with their families to hear music—people who cannot go to the Metropolitan Opera." Such a response undercut the assumptions of the investigators, arguing that these officials needed to look past middle-class assumptions of cultural value. Such sound-based evaluations could determine the respectability of an establishment—and therefore its business success. On the one hand, Theiss's place on 14th Street was described as "running very quietly now ... people drink soft stuff with an orchestration accompaniment." A complex machine that could play a variety of musical instruments, the orchestration was unlikely to provide the kinds of wild performances that could lead to disorder. At the same time, Murphy's saloon was never allowed to open its dancing room because of police interference. A notoriously "tough" place, dancing in this establishment would transgress the limits of acceptability. Throughout this discussion, music and sound are used as a means to organize social hierarchy and urban space—both from the top, and, as patrons chose between establishments based on the entertainment they could provide, from the bottom.

Case Study 4: "At Gay Coney Island"

The importance of both sound and music to the new spaces of commercial leisure was made clear in a 1903 *Indianapolis Journal* description of Coney Island, the famous seaside resort in southern Brooklyn (Figure 4). Originally a class-segregated space that catered to both respectable families and rough-edged "sports," the area was commercialized toward the end of the nineteenth century, adding an array of amusement park rides, boardwalk entertainment, restaurants, and pavilions capable of hosting hundreds of thousands of guests. Within these spaces, New Yorkers explored new styles of commercially mediated experience, interacting across the lines of class and gender that had long structured public life in the city. From the first, the resort is defined by its soundscape—"the boisterous strains from a hundred brass bands, the maddening mechanical music of countless merry-go-rounds and the everlasting rag-time of a thousand pianos all join together in one frightful nightmare of discord." In such descriptions, the physical impact of sound is made viscerally apparent, suggesting the ways in which the island's distinctive sonic environment both epitomized and furthered the intentionally disorienting pleasures that beachgoers sought. The cultural influence of the period's entertainment industry is also obvious. The carnivalesque surroundings were shaped by the presence of new forms of popular music, many of which (like the cakewalk and ragtime) were distinctly racialized. The ability of a heterogeneous array of (newly) white Americans to enjoy such commercial products helped to generate a shared mainstream culture, forged in spaces like Coney Island and then transmitted across the country through media like this newspaper article,

THE CONEY ISLAND

[WITH PICTURES BY WALTER GALLOWAY.]

Real Conquerors of the Journal.
NEW YORK, July 3.
 Of all the great events of 1913 there's a million
 We live in Manhattan, not even a mile off
 On the west coast, 'at New York we'll meet
 As late as 1913, 'at New York we'll meet
 On the west coast, 'at New York we'll meet
 On the west coast, 'at New York we'll meet

Will Katie be as sweet as I look mighty nice
 I mean my white and I look mighty nice
 At Gay Coney Island, 'at New York we'll meet
 At Gay Coney Island, 'at New York we'll meet
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 At Gay Coney Island, 'at New York we'll meet

Some copies prior to its start so special
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reanon and the present scribble must be par-
 doned for occasionally bursting into song.
 That ride on the camel—possibly you can
 who has experienced it ever forget it!
 There are other camels in the world with
 curious humps, no doubt, but the camel
 at Coney Island are in a class all by them-
 selves. One of them, in particular, is the
 proud possessor of the most wonderful
 collection of hums that ever came
 together. When you look up at him, you
 say, "Oh, fellow! will be easy to ride.
 Those peculiar hums will serve to help
 me in sticking on his back." And you try
 your time on the marvellous Mechanician
 who acts as the camel's manager and start
 your on the most unsteady journey you
 have ever taken in all your life. You not
 only discover that the camel has a few
 humps that you hadn't ever suspected,
 but that some one—little hums not apparent
 to the naked eye—comes swooping from time
 to time as the camel swings along like an
 unsteady vessel on the English channel.

You get your teeth and some a sickly
 smile at the crowds that cheer you as you
 pass. The best way out of the wretched
 business is to fall off the camel and take
 your chance of getting fatally injured in
 the tumble. To remain on his back means
 certain death in a slow, courteous style and
 you might as well select the easier way to
 die, especially as there is always that one
 chance of escaping altogether.

The camel rider who lives to patronize
 other amusements on the island can be
 made uncomfortable in a million other
 ways. If he had wished to enjoy his ride
 he had better go to the camel's side and
 make most people, like the makers of old,
 cover willing to gladly. If in Coney's
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it. Just let him once secure the attention
 of the passing throng and half the battle
 is won. He is no easy matter to hold out
 against his arguments. He will show you
 so convincingly just why you are in duty
 bound to attend the performance whose
 merits he endorses, that, if you have a 20-
 cent piece left, you will surely contribute
 it gladly toward the support of his laudable
 idea of a wonder that he found in America
 "What a marvelous—try the one
 thing on the stand
 to gain success, you may stay to the place
 and though you're badly and cheap, you're
 not to gain success, you may stay to the place
 and though you're badly and cheap, you're
 not to gain success, you may stay to the place



"ASKING HIM WHAT HIS DIFFERENCE
 BETWEEN A FRIED ROE AND
 FROGSKIN."
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"Watch team" has settled down to business
 again the important matter they had
 no achievement had been forgotten and
 instead, the subtitle and the Irish com-
 mittee—there's no doubt about the being an
 Irish comedian toward the performer whose
 and his feet—join in a cakewalk and a
 waltz.

The place of promenade
 has been taken by the
 "The best of the crowd" stand
 There you see in your eyes and
 Where you learn, don't count for anything
 You have you

MAN WITH SCALARS.
 There's no avoiding the man with the
 scales who wants to measure your weight.
 If you do manage to get by one of these
 demotic another one will stretch you up
 and compel you to do his bidding, so you
 will find a victim in every crowd you
 encounter and have the ordeal over.
 "If I don't guess your weight, I don't want
 your nickel," roars the gentleman in your
 ear as he steers on your feet and places a
 perplexing hand on your shoulder in a com-
 panionable manner meant to inspire confi-
 dence. If you attempt to get out of the
 thing—add most people do—by asserting
 loudly that you've just been weighed by
 another member of his fraternity, he de-
 spises it and will show him your "condem-
 nable"—blending to a little tickle that is
 provided for the patron of these weigh-
 ings. And if you can't show your creden-
 tials, you are lost. If in the whirl of mad
 diversions you become almost minded and
 forget to hold on to your credentials, you
 will have to be weighed all over again. The
 weaker, bolder and weaker of mind
 will be the afternoon more on, had in sub-
 mit to the scales a dozen times in an un-
 different sections of the island and never
 without the same twice, his weight fluctu-
 ating from 130 to 165 pounds. As a rule the
 scales are in the hands of a gentleman
 correctly adjusted to his scale, of course.
 He and his scales have the same secret
 which is that once between the scales
 and his magic clock. Once in
 between the scales, the scales refer to
 your trust to their master's bidding, as he
 will be a woman in a long dress and a
 proportions took a rest in the swinging
 chair hanging from the tripod. The "weight

playground. The park is away from the
 measure and the Howey, and it enters
 to the better class of visitors to the island.
 The amusements there are all of the higher
 class and there is no suggestion of slight
 dancing or "marking." At night the Luna
 Park is a fairyland with its thousands of
 electric lights and its canals and gondolas.
 As for the trip to the moon, it is rare fun.
 The voyagers go aboard a rocking vessel
 where they sit in steamer chairs and watch
 the earth fade away beneath them as the
 air ship, with flapping wings, spreads high
 and finally to the moon, where a landing is
 made. Of course, it is all an optical delusion,
 and it is a most admirable contrivance.
 The voyagers, when they disembark, find themselves
 in a land of caverns and great
 mushroomous inhabited by dwarfs. A little
 guide in green tights and doublet and carrying
 a long staff, leads the way through
 dimly lighted, mossy passageways,
 changing a world little more as he goes.
 Other dwarfs join the party and over hill
 and far travel the voyagers with the con-
 siderable, long-legged little men. Finally the
 royal underground chamber is reached and
 there on a throne are perched the King and
 Queen of the moon—a pair of little people
 clothed in royal raiment.

"Behold their majesties!"
 "Behold their majesties!" arise the guide
 with the staff, and all of the little men
 to the chorus of a song to their august
 rulers. The King looks very grand indeed,
 but the Queen waxes and appears some-
 what bored. She has in one hand a paper-
 back novel and she is very desirous of
 returning to the enchanting park. The song
 at an end, the visiting party, following the
 faithful guide, walk into the mouth of a
 gigantic well and proceed to tramp
 through his body. As the pedestrians walk
 over his ribs, the whole being very tick-
 ling, shakes with laughter and as a result
 everybody tumbles against everybody else.
 Out of the fall of the great mouster the
 illuminated music stand, and as the
 park with the thousands of lights—pays
 big by and the big brass band playing in
 the illuminated music stand, and as the
 park with the thousands of lights—pays
 big by and the big brass band playing in
 the illuminated music stand, and as the

"THE GREENS YOU'VE DISCOVERED"
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bring a luck line near your thumb—a line
 showing that the three children die of
 cholera, and that you depart from the
 follows along a little later on with ap-
 ples; having you a large fortune and
 a good wife. You depart from the
 partner of the painter with your heart full
 of gratitude more than a mother's. And you
 know to his polite query, "It has really
 been worth more than a mother's." And you
 answer him twice that amount in accordance
 with his modest suggestion.

TRIP TO THE MOON.
 "Don't forget the 'Trip to the Moon!'"
 The aerial journey, as well as many other
 queer journeys in ships and in little rail-
 ways and in curious vehicles, is to be taken
 in Luna Park, Coney's newest and best
 amusement.

"BEHOLD THEIR MAJESTIES!"
 "Behold their majesties!" arise the guide
 with the staff, and all of the little men
 to the chorus of a song to their august
 rulers. The King looks very grand indeed,
 but the Queen waxes and appears some-
 what bored. She has in one hand a paper-
 back novel and she is very desirous of
 returning to the enchanting park. The song
 at an end, the visiting party, following the
 faithful guide, walk into the mouth of a
 gigantic well and proceed to tramp
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 over his ribs, the whole being very tick-
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 Out of the fall of the great mouster the
 illuminated music stand, and as the
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Figure 4. "At Gay Coney Island," Indianapolis Journal, July 5, 1903.

which was published in Indiana. Exploring the roles and noise within Coney Island helps us to better understand how these processes unfolded in real time, and at ground level.

Notes

- 1 An excellent summary of the field can be found in a series of review articles, including Michele Hilmes, “Is There a Field Called Sound Culture Studies? And Does It Matter?” *American Quarterly* 57 (Mar. 2005): 249–59; Bruce R. Smith, “How Sound is Sound History? A Response to Mark Smith,” *Journal of the Historical Society* 2 (Summer/Fall 2002): 307–15. Sophia Rosenfeld, “On Being Heard: A Case for Paying Attention to the Historical Ear,” *American Historical Review* 116 (Apr. 2011): 316–34; Jonathan Sterne, “Sonic Imaginations” in *The Sound Studies Reader*, ed. Jonathan Sterne (New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–19; Bruce Johnson, “Sound Studies Today: Where Are We Going?” in *A Cultural History of Sound, Memory, and the Senses*, ed. Joy Damousi and Paula Hamilton (New York: Routledge, 2017), 7–22.
- 2 Steve Goodman, “The Ontology of Vibrational Force” in *Sound Studies Reader*; Gavin Steingo and Jim Sykes, “Introduction: Remapping Sound Studies in the Global South” and Gavin Steingo, “Another Resonance: Africa and the Study of Sound,” in *Remapping Sound Studies*, ed. Gavin Steingo and Jim Sykes (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 1–61.
- 3 For example, see Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-Century French Countryside*, trans. Martin Thom (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Mark M. Smith, *Listening to Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Richard Cullen Rath, “No Corner for the Devil to Hide,” in *Sound Studies Reader*; Clare Corbould, “Streets, Sounds and Identity in Interwar Harlem,” *Journal of Social History* 40 (Summer 2007): 859–94.
- 4 Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 1–23.
- 5 Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1985.
- 6 Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1930* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).
- 7 For a recent example of such work, see Simon P. Newman, “Hidden in Plain Sight: Escaped Slaves in Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century Jamaica,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (June 2018): https://oreader.wm.edu/open_wmq/hidden-in-plain-sight/hidden-in-plain-sight-escaped-slaves-in-late-eighteenth-and-early-nineteenth-century-jamaica/ (accessed Aug. 27, 2023). For more on teaching with sound, see Catherine Baker, “Symphony of Sirens: Uses and Problems of Sound in Teaching and Learning about Music and Politics,” *Radical History Review* 121 (Jan. 2015): 197–208.
- 8 Ettiene Benson, “The Urbanization of the Eastern Gray Squirrel in the United States,” *Journal of American History* 100 (Dec. 2013): 691–710.
- 9 For a useful discussion of the history of soundscape as a conceptual tool, see Ari Y. Kelman, “Rethinking the Soundscape: A Critical Genealogy of a Key Term in Sound Studies,” *Senses and Society* 5 (2010): 212–34.
- 10 For example, Rebecca Edwards’s exemplary *New Spirits* primarily dispenses with chronology, instead adopting a synchronic examination of the various threads making up the period. Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865–1905*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- 11 For an overview of the scale of the change to the American lived environment that began in this period, see Robert J. Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
- 12 Richard White, *The Republic for Which It Stands: The United States During Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865–1896* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 405–39; Adam Mack, *Sensing Chicago: Noisemakers, Strikebreakers, and Muckrakers* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015).
- 13 For a discussion of these dynamics within New York City, see Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), chs. 56–59.
- 14 Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, ch. 60.
- 15 John Henry Hepp IV, *The Middle-Class City: Transforming Time and Space in Philadelphia, 1876–1926* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018); Louise L. Stevenson, *The Victorian Homefront: American Thought and Culture, 1860–1880* (New York: Twayne Publishing Co., 1991), 1–30.
- 16 Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound: Technology, Culture, and Public Problems of Noise in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 1–91.
- 17 Mack, *Sensing Chicago*; Derek Vaillant, *Sounds of Reform: Progressivism and Music in Chicago, 1873–1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

- 18 Jennifer Stoeber, "'Just Be Quiet Pu-leeze': The New York Amsterdam News Fights the Postwar 'Campaign against Noise,'" *Radical History Review* 121 (Jan. 2015): 145–68.
- 19 Corbould, "Streets, Sounds, and Identity in Interwar Harlem," 859–94; Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).
- 20 Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); Joseph Horowitz, "'Sermons in Tones': Sacralization as a Theme in American Classical Music," *American Music* 16 (Autumn 1998): 311–40.
- 21 Craig H. Roell, *The Piano in America, 1890–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 1–67.
- 22 William John Schafer, *The Art of Ragtime: Form and Meaning of an Original Black American Art* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 3–40; Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction*, 15th Anniversary Edition (1992; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 34–160. Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 23–50.
- 23 David Gilbert, *The Product of Our Souls: Ragtime, Race, and the Birth of the Manhattan Musical Marketplace* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).
- 24 Randy D. McBee, *Dance Hall Days: Intimacy and Leisure among Working-Class Immigrants in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2000); Andrew R. Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
- 25 Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
- 26 Dale Cockrell, *Everybody's Doin' It: Sex, Music, and Dance in New York, 1840–1917* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019).
- 27 David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 1–62.

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