Listening to The Heart: Exploring Atmospheres through Experiments with Affective Capture and Sound

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Introduction: The Affective Power of Listening

It was sometime between September 29th and October 17th of 2016 when Dan Zawacki’s girlfriend “suffered an episode of vasovagal syncope” (Van Der Kolk, 2016). In other words, she – the unnamed, experiencing subject – fainted. Triggered by emotional, postural, and situational stimuli, the condition is described as a “transient loss of neural control of circulation” (Jardine, 2013, p. 75). While fainting manifests in colloquial narratives, personal encounters, and representations across various expressive cultures, the causal conditions that provoked this episode of fainting are distinctive – fainting by listening to a podcast.

In late September of 2016, the podcast Love + Radio, known for its use of sound design and taboo subject material, posted the story, A Girl of Ivory. As explained by the primer on the podcast’s website, the story begins with two characters, Davecat and Sidore. They “had a blissful marriage together in the suburbs of Detroit,” but “one day, a Russian woman, Elena, showed up unexpectedly at their doorstep, declared her love for both of them, and asked to move in” (Baker, Carrier, & Van Der Kolk, 2016a). While narratives about polyamorous relationships challenge traditional love stories premised on monogamy, it was more than this uncommon narrative that caused Zawacki’s girlfriend to faint. The podcast begins by narrating Davecat and Sidore’s first encounter at a club as they listened to industrial music. Once the podcast describes their relationship development, Elena is introduced. Throughout the listening experience, audio tracks range from questions asked by the podcast’s producers, music, Davecat, Sidore, and Elena’s voices, as well as ambient sounds. The episode is approximately forty minutes long, and around the sixteen minute mark, Elena states “usually, I sleep with Davecat cause my joint’s aren’t as stiff as Sidore’s [joints]” (Baker, Carrier, & Van Der Kolk, 2016b). This is the beginning of the sequence that caused Zawacki’s girlfriend to faint. As Zawacki explains:
She downloaded the episode and queued it up for her morning commute on the Metro. While I drove off for work, she stood on the train and listened, and I waited for her to call me with her reaction. Instead, I got a call from a paramedic: my girlfriend, an otherwise young and healthy woman, suffered an episode of vasovagal syncope right as the twist was revealed (Van Der Kolk, 2016).

A descriptive account of her experience as it occurred might read as follows. Passengers surround her on the train and scenes from outside blur past. As she stands, electrical signals within some piece of technology interact, and these signals eventually translate to sounds that emerge through a listening appliance. Her body, the device that plays the podcast, the listening appliance, and the podcast itself, all come together to form an atmosphere, and she is immersed within it. During the listening experience, sounds from the podcast transform back into electric signals when processed by her brain (Xiong et al., 2012). Yet as this occurs, her heart slows down, her blood pressure drops, and her brain receives an insufficient amount of blood (Shmerling, 2016). She faints. Referring back to the mechanisms of fainting, her standing met postural requirements, yet something within the podcast catalyzed her emotional and/or situational responses. What exactly lead to these outcomes?

Within podcasting, human voices are meant to represent humans. This seems self-evident, that a corporeal entity exists behind vocals emerging from technologically mediated forms of transmission. Moreover, in the episode, there is nothing that would suggest Elena and Sidore are anything but human – until Elena mentions joints. What is the significance of joint stiffness in determining who sleeps with Davecat? Elena’s comments are incommensurate with the context of her statement. Upon hearing this segment, the listener feels confused, and this confusion is ultimately resolved by the revelation that Elena and Sidore are in fact, life-sized dolls. Actors perform Elena and Sidore’s voices, and the sequence of events connecting Davecat, Elena, and Sidore are created by Davecat. Zawacki’s post does not explain his partner’s feelings,
but it is suggested that they emerged through listening, thus fulfilling all conditional stimuli for vasovagal syncope – sound and situation affecting to overwhelm body and its processes.

In Western audio storytelling, specifically public radio broadcasting, certain terms have emerged which convey sound’s affective capacity to alter bodily conditions. The “driveway moment” describes an experience where one is compelled by an audio story so that they “stay in…[a] car to hear it to the end” (NPR, 2008). The term is reflective of historical and social conditions in which audio stories were traditionally heard, when driving and thus tied to radio signals and terrestrial transmitters, but technological growth has transformed access to audio stories exemplified by digital listening formats such as the podcast. Nonetheless, the term still describes how an affective condition emerges when listening. Explaining another affective listening situation, radio producer Rob Rosenthal (2017) uses the term “transportive moment” – a phrase created after listening to the story Jump Blue. However, Rosenthal created the term to describe an affective listening experience that the term driveway moment could not capture.

Jump Blue details the experiences of Russian free diver Natalia Molchanova. In the story, an actor narrates one of Molchanova’s free dives. After describing Molchanova’s emergence from the water, a scene that conveys relief as a dangerous situation has been averted, the story reveals that Molchanova’s emergence is in fact a hallucination as she slowly drowns into the bottom of the sea. Accompanying this narration is fluctuating sound design which alters the felt qualities of the podcast. Describing his situation, Rosenthal states,

I was in my car driving, listening to a story, and I noticed I had practically stopped breathing. I was literally holding my breath as I listened. Now what do you call that? It’s more than a driveway moment. It’s more like I’ve left the car. It’s like a, a transportive moment. I had a transportive moment listening to a radio story (Rosenthal, 2017).
From a geographical framework, Rosenthal’s comments are interesting in that his breathe or lack thereof is explained as transportive: a bodily phenomenon manifesting outside of bodily space. This example echoes Massumi’s (2002) commentary regarding the disorienting qualities of emotions as they are “described as being outside of oneself at the very point at which one is most intimately and unshareably in contact with oneself” (p. 35; Thrift, 2004a, p. 63). While Massumi’s commentary suggests that Rosenthal experienced emotion, other scholars might contend that what Rosenthal experienced was affect informed by an atmosphere from listening. In the end, Rosenthal’s experience, the driveway moment, and the fainting story all reflect how the experience of listening can alter affective states of being.

**Capturing Affect through Atmospheres of Listening: Research Topic and Focus**

In these stories, listening occurs in the mundane moments of life - a morning commute, a drive. Yet within the banal, affective states emerge which punctuate the flow of experience, forming subdued feelings and affording possibilities for extraordinary ones. In the previous stories, description revealed how affective change stemmed from listening. Along with these accounts from audio media, academic geographers have also turned to descriptive representations when documenting affective atmospheres. Describing the competing affective atmospheres of vivacity and worry in a hospital waiting room, Ben Anderson and James Ash (2015, p. 40) narrate an encounter where women banter about popular culture aside anxious patients. On the other hand, Tim Edensor (2012) describes the atmospheres of Blackpool’s Illuminations, a festive gathering centered on ornate lights, by describing atmosphere as informed by interviews with attendees and his own experience at the event (p. 1103-1104). These descriptions reveal how representations of atmospheres are informed by reflection. That said, in each of these descriptions, there is a difference between the phenomenological experience of atmosphere and its subsequent representation. This poses a problem for geographers interested in
capturing the affective resonances of listening. How does one go about capturing affect during experience?

This research project falls under auspices of geographic attempts to explore phenomena given methodological problems of capture and representation. It follows a tradition of human geographers who utilize various media in the exploration of non-representational topics such as the banal, quotidian, and emotive aspects of experience. For example, Eric Laurier (2014a) uses videos as an ethnomethodological practice to defamiliarize the habitual and show how phenomena are “made relevant” (p. 261) in the particularities of context. Michael Gallagher (2015) has listeners explore abandoned landscapes while listening to creative audio pieces he terms audio drifts, investigating unfamiliar resonances and hauntologies of landscape (p. 480). While Gallagher’s work represents a way to integrate sound in geographic research, methodologies for documenting affective resonances when listening are limited.

As Gallagher and Prior (2014) have stated, “phonographic methods - including listening...need to be developed further” (p. 267). They describe how geographic engagements with sound have generally utilized traditional methods including “interviews, ethnography, archival research and discourse analysis” (p. 267-68). These methods tend to detail affect after experience; they project meaning onto bodies, which “means that the ‘action’ is not in the bodies, habits, practices of the individual or the collective,” i.e. the capture of affect during a phenomenological encounter (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 5). Given these methodological issues when attempting to explore habits and practices, geographers have engaged new methodological possibilities for the exploration of affective life and the “seen but unnoticed features” which characterize the world (Laurier, 2014a, 250).
One of these possibilities for capturing affect through listening falls under the experimental possibilities of non-representational theory. Regarding topics, NRT investigates the “practical dimensions of human existence” aiming to move beyond signification rooted in “discourse, ideology, or symbolic order” (Castree, Kitchin, Rogers, 2013, p. 347; Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 2). That said, non-rep is more than research focus but also implicated in research outputs and data collection. As Vannini (2015) states when describing how to write non-representational research:

You cease to be so preoccupied with how the past unfolded and with your responsibility for capturing it…It is the present that suddenly interests you, and how the present can unfold in the future: what can become of your work, in what unique and novel ways it can reverberate with people, what social change or intellectual fascination it can inspire, what impressions it can animate, what surprises it can generate, what expectations it can violate, what new stories it can generate (p. 12).

Non-representational research and its outcomes should render, resonate, rupture and reimagine; it should entangle researcher “in relations and objects rather than studying their structures and symbolic meanings,” moving away from pedantic efforts at “faithfully [describing]” that which cannot be completely described (Vannini, 2015, p. 15). Exemplifying these non-representational research outcomes, Laurier (2014b) utilizes a graphic transcript in the form of a comic strip to convey the dynamism of action in visual, spatial, and temporal modes. Moreover, Sheller (2015) uses mobile media and iPhone applications to explore body, location, and the digital as both practice and research creation (p. 137-141). Under this non-representational orientation, an aversion exists towards analyses that simply represent, categorize, and thereby limit phenomena.

This research follows a non-representational ethos in practice and output by experimenting with listening in two ways: data collection pertaining to affect and its subsequent representation. As a tool to investigate affect, I utilize the concept of affective atmospheres – phenomena that straddle a boundary between subject and object, produced by sound, amongst
other phenomena, and constituted by non-human bodies and human bodies (Anderson, 2009, p.77; Gallagher, Kanngieser, Prior, 2016, p. 8). Moreover, as an affective atmosphere is “revealed precisely as it is expressed in bodily feelings, and qualified in emotions and other actions,” the concept offers a lens to experiment with the capture of affective data and its recreation (Anderson and Ash, 2015, p. 44). Given this window of analysis, I specifically explore the affective atmospheres of a podcast called The Heart. The podcast utilizes more-than-representational sound design and focuses its stories on topics pertaining to “the triumphs and terrors of human intimacy, the bliss and banality of being in love and the wild diversity of the human heart,” reflecting non-representational topics (WNYC, N.D.).

Expounding on data collection experiments, I utilize McCormack’s (2015) notion of technique - “a form of doing that needs to be honed through skillful practice, without necessarily crystallizing as a well-policing set of methodological protocols” (p. 92). Given non-representational theory’s emphasis on situated knowledges tied to relational encounter, I refer to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) concept of rhizome to write out experiments with the capture of affect as a mechanism to explore multiple ways of knowing. As for non-representational output, I create audio performance pieces that integrate sound design manifest from listening to convey the felt dynamics of the podcast’s affective atmospheres. That said, after detailing affective capture and performance creation, I describe an experiment with the idea of ensemble where I attempt to disentangle the relational assemblage of atmosphere through discursive analysis. I conclude that a complete disentangling of an atmosphere’s generators as reflection of feeling is impossible reaffirming the idea that atmosphere is not reducible to any singular generator and is instead relationally constituted.
Given this experimental research design informed by non-representational methodologies, I aim to answer two questions. What do experiments with affective capture through atmospheres of listening reveal about academic discussions on affect, emotion, and affective atmospheres? Moreover, what are the benefits of engaging in the discursive deconstruction of feeling and atmosphere if a disentangling is impossible? To summarize, I reaffirm the understanding of atmosphere as one which blurs the boundary between emotion and affect because of experiential subtleties and an affective excess that sometimes manifests from atmosphere (Anderson, 2009, p. 80). As for affect, I emphasize its precognitive and transpersonal qualities. Regarding discursive analysis of atmosphere, I argue that the process can help attune to affective life by revealing spatial-temporal extensions of subjectivity, and in the process, provide opportunities to explore difference informing the non-representational call to enliven the world.

The following is a breakdown of this project. Chapter 1 is a literature review of geographic engagements with sound, affect and emotion, as well as affective atmospheres. Chapter 2 details the creation of methodologies for listening and experiments with affective capture. Chapter 3 details methods for audio performance creation and affective analysis including creative performance pieces and arguments on subjectivity. Finally, in the conclusion, I emphasize remarks answering the two questions posed earlier while positing further research possibilities with listening.

Ch.1: The Literature of Affective Listening
This literature review begins with academic explorations of sound in the twentieth century and then moves to recent geographic engagements with the aural. I then relate sound to non-representational theory and describe the theory’s development and core characteristics. Thereafter, I relate these characteristics to the emotive turn within human geography (Pile, 2010)
attending to debates on affect and emotion by examining them through phenomena called affective atmospheres. At the end of the review, I connect sound, affect, and atmosphere to establish the groundwork for the experimental approaches for capturing affect through listening.

**Geographic Engagements with Sound**

Sound is fleeting, emerging, and disappearing in the context of unique spatio-temporal circumstances. Despite this ephemerality, sound is also prevalent, pervading lived environments and reflecting a core part of lived engagements, qualities human geographers have engaged when exploring sound’s relation to space, place, and other social worlds. Referring to sounds found in everyday life, Canadian composer R.M. Schafer (1993) used the term soundscape to refer to various acoustic fields of study and sound’s resonance in various human and more-than-human environmental contexts (Saldanha, 2009, p. 236-37; Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p. 273). On the other hand, Pocock (1989) explores sound’s contextual and culturally situated qualities, noting the “dominance of the eye” (p. 193) and visual data within geographic scholarship, a trend scholars have noted has continued more than a decade after Pocock’s publications (Gallagher and Prior, 2014; Gallagher et al., 2016). Susan Smith (1994) expounds on soundscape as the interconnected relationship between sound and a social landscape. She emphasizes sound’s affective qualities including its role in “experience, expression, and emotion” within geographic imaginaries (p. 232, 238). Ultimately, Pocock, Smith, and Schafer’s explorations refer to sound’s social and spatial qualities, informing how current geographers discuss sound.

Soundscape refers to a broad designation of sound - how the manifestations of sound such as voice, music, or noise create an encompassing aurality in the world. While also exploring sonic elements that constitute environment, Henri Lefebvre’s (2004) concept of rhythmanalysis emphasizes a particular element of the sonic realm - rhythm. The term generally denotes repetition of musical phrase in ordered time, and Lefebvre’s rhythm focuses on moments. That
said, for Lefebvre, these moments must be understood through repetition, as no rhythm exists “without repetition in time and space, without reprises, without returns, in short without measure” (p. 6; Vojcic, 2014, p. 85). As repetition marks moments, Lefebvre emphasizes the unique qualities of repetition – that “there is no identical absolute repetition” (p. 6) – a claim Vojicic sees as similar to Deleuze’s comments on repetition as difference differing (Vojicic, 2014, p. 84; Gallagher, 2016, p. 45). As applied to current investigations of sound, Lefebvre’s concept of rhythmanalysis echoes a move towards the non-representational, specifically how sound can work as a relational assemblage in difference. Thus, along with soundscape, rhythmanalysis informs theoretical contributions in sound’s function and qualities.

Recognizing an ocular preoccupation within research, recent engagements with sound have used its transmission mechanisms as methodological opportunities. As a means of sonic transmission, radio has been described as a populist medium of information dissemination, potentially explained by low access costs and relative technological simplicity (McLuhan, 1994). Using radio to explore community, Catherine Wilkinson (2015) investigates young people’s relationship to Liverpool station KCC Live, arguing that community formation between young people and KCC Live differs based on locale and practices associated with radio. Investigating young people but focusing on methods, Susie Weller (2006) examines the possibilities of community radio and the phone-in as participatory research method, especially for young people who may feel silenced. Thus, radio offers avenues for research into social relations and methods.

Along with research focused on technological transmission and exploration of soundscapes, geographers have engaged artistic methods to explore the aural. With the displacement of east London residents because of the expansion of the M11 highway, scholar Toby Butler and artist and resident, pre-highway expansion Graeme Miller (2005) used sound to
attune to landscapes before and after expansion. They conducted oral history interviews with former residents to create an audio piece for listening while walking through the territory of the non-existent neighborhoods; within the audio piece, they used musicality, the present tense, and silence to attune listeners “to become sensitive to their present” while recognizing the changes and differences in landscape (p. 82). Moreover, Butler (2006) views the audio walk as a research method to explore “flowing, multi-sensory, and embodied ways for social and cultural geographers to research the outside environment,” particularly emphasizing themes of landscape, memory, and place (p. 889). Nonetheless, as Gallagher and Prior (2014) describe, the idea of the soundwalk (p. 274) isn’t new and was coined by Schafer (1993) to describe “an exploration of a soundscape of a given area” (p. 213). Calling for expanded geographic approaches with the sonic, Gallagher (2015) uses an audio drift - “an experimental, environmental sound work designed to be listened to on a portable MP3 player whilst walking in a ruinous landscape” - to explore the abandoned St. Peter’s College in Cardross, Scotland (p. 467). In his reflection, Gallagher emphasizes two qualities associated with audio drifts - the uncanny and more-than-representational excess. Ultimately, both the sound walk and audio drift reflect artistic and creative possibilities with geography and sound. While artistic, these engagements are not uncritical and work to reveal traditional engagements within human geographic scholarship.

With an increasing emphasis on the experimental and artistic possibilities of audio, the question emerges as to what role sound and listening play in geographic research and topics within human geography. First, related to traditional geographic investigations of space and place, sound plays a prominent role in altering relationships with place. In the call for expanded non-representational approaches, Lorimer (2005) refers to the work of Yi-Fu Tuan and the production of home spaces, where sense of place emerges from embodied, sensory phenomena
including sound (p. 86; Tuan, 2004, p. 165). Discussing the audio drift, Gallagher (2015) argues that audio geographies can represent the haunted and phantasmagoric quality of places while remaking listener association with landscape, elements reflected in the interviews Gallagher conducted with those who participated in sound walks (p. 480). Not only a way to facilitate connection with place, sound can also represent place while constituting experiences. Discussing the urban form in the rise of hip-hop culture during the 1970s, Mark Katz (2010) describes the noisiness of the cross-Bronx and Sheridan expressways as conditions of early hip-hop DJs lived realities. Informed by these sonic dimensions, Katz suggests that the DJ emphasis on sound system size reflects sonic power as creative expression and action against the expressway roar symptomatic of the Bronx’s urban blight. Moving from city to body, Berren (2016) describes an emotional cartography where bodies sense and perceive sound thus “making meaning through our minds and bodies at the same time” (p. 80). In Berren’s analysis, the body’s sensorial capacities, including listening, facilitate place connections, affect, and one’s orientation. The twentieth issue of Emotion, Space, and Society (Doughty, Duffy, and Harada, 2016) explores scholarship focused on sound’s role “in understandings of self, others and place,” (p. 39, 40) and the editors describe recent engagements with embodiment and performativity to explore sound’s potential within geographic scholarship. While sound can act as a filter for geographic inquiry, recent emphases on affect, performativity, and embodiment reflect the influence of non-representational thought on the field of investigation, a field which will be explored in the subsequent section (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p. 274).

**Non-Representational Theory**

Emerging from Nigel Thrift’s (2004) contributions to cultural geography at the turn of the 21st century, non-representational theory focuses on the “unconscious, haptic knowledge, and practical dimensions of human existence,” (Castree et al., 2013, p. 347) with research that
aims to move beyond signification from structural elements such as “discourse, ideology, or symbolic order” (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 2). As Anderson and Harrison (2010) explain, research within human geography preceding (and overlapping) the non-representational turn often grounded theoretical and epistemological claims in social constructivist modes of analysis focusing on representations (p. 4). For example, recognizing a multiplicity of social categorizations - race, gender, class, and sexuality amongst others – social constructivists understand how the experience of bodies as coded by particular social categories, including the intersections of those categories, disclose information on structural meaning for those particular bodies (Crenshaw, 1991). As non-representational theory aims to move beyond structural significance, its relation to sound is reflected in aural phenomena without representational qualities such as ambient noise. That said, certain sounds have structural signification such as language, and this signification is also essential to non-representational thought.

When exploring symbolic meaning, social constructivists do not assume a naturalized symbolic order. As Anderson and Harrison (2010) note, academic work focusing on representational significance has revealed the constructed and contested nature of symbolic structures (p. 5). In this regard, they say social constructivist thought informed non-representational theory’s “radically constructivist” orientation (p. 9). Nonetheless, this so-called radical constructivism reflects key differences between non-representational theory and social constructivism as applied towards representations. Instead of ascertaining representational significance, non-representational thinkers posit that analytical focus should be placed on “how representations function affectively and how affective life is imbued with representations” (Anderson, 2014, p. 14). In this regard, affect represents a key role in illuminating “shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, [and] embodied movements” (Lorimer,
2005, p. 84). Given this focus on the haptic and subtle dimensions of experience, (re)presentations of affect should expand possibilities in the world, not solely function as signifiers of symbolic meaning (Lorimer, 2005, p. 90; Thrift, 2004). Utilizing concepts such as performativity – one explored by feminist geographers – non-representational thinkers have developed an orientation for expanding possibilities in the world.

One way of expanding possibilities is by reinterpreting representation. As Anderson and Harrison (2010) state, representations should be “understood as presentations,” as “things and events [which] enact worlds” and “not reflections of some a priori order waiting to be unveiled, decoded, or revealed” (p. 15, 19). Harkening back to the work of Judith Butler (1990), representational performance resonates with Butler’s performativity of gender, “the repeated stylization of the body...within a highly rigid frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (p. 33; Valentine, 2007). While appearing natural, Butler notes that gender is not essential but transforms in different socio-spatial contexts, as gender is constantly becoming and gender identities performed. Performativity as well as the haptic and emotive dimensions of life are rooted in the body. Nonetheless, social constructivist analyses problematically frame the body, since meaning is projected onto bodies and materiality which “means that the ‘action’ is not in the bodies, habits, practices of the individual or the collective” (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 5). Noting the overlooked role of bodies in producing meaning through action, non-representational theory thus prioritizes experiences as immanent orderings in a radically constructivist orientation, a newness that Butler explores in the notion of gendered performativity expanded to other elements of life (Anderson, 2014, p. 164).

While academics from a variety of disciplines utilize non-representational thought, the field has fundamental elements that span difference: relationality, encounter, event, and
experience. If representations are performative and performativity resides in the specificity of each situational context including the relations that constitute that context, then representations are ultimately mediated through relations. In non-representational theory, the term mediation, amongst other uses, describes the processual mediation of life, whereby life is immanent and tied to the flow of routine in existence (Cadman, 2009, p. 456). Yet within this routine, entities affect “one another in and through relations” constituting and subtly transforming life by the particularities of relational configurations (Anderson, 2014, p. 13). While relationality suggests the social, the social cannot be taken for granted. As Anderson and Harrison (2010) note, “there is no order, there is only multiple orderings” (p. 18). Recognizing these multiple orderings, the social is not limited to human corporeality but expanded to ‘relational-material or ‘associative’ accounts of ‘the social,’” whereby the social includes both material and non-representational phenomena, such as lights, sounds, and textures, as they emerge in contextual specificity (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 12-13). Taken to an extreme, the social includes Latour’s extension of agency to a variety of non-human phenomena including sleeping policemen, bacteria, and sheep dogs (Laurier, 2010, p. 203). While non-representational theory does not necessarily extend agency to the more-than-human as an actor network theorist might, it does recognize the social and relational as more-than-human, both the broader materiality and non-representational elements which inhabit an encounter.

To begin exploration of the relational multiplicity of representational and non-representational phenomena, an encounter must occur - a temporary moment that facilitates relations. Anderson (2014) states that “beginning from encounters attunes analysis to how affects are constantly mediated in and through relations” (p. 90). For Anderson, encounter helps explore the relational; without clear delineation, Anderson’s explanation of encounter becomes closely
related to the notion of event. Event manifests from encounter yet rather than offering a window into relationality, event brings about “new potentialities for being, doing, and thinking” (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 19). This potentiality from an event relates to McCormack’s (2010) discussion of experience (p. 202). When McCormack speaks of experience, he describes its relational qualities, a dynamic and continual reproduction across various bodies (p. 204). As Anderson speaks of the relationality of encounter, McCormack writes of the relational qualities of experience, both creating opportunities to experiment within the world. Importantly, for non-representational theorists, “world” is not just a static, physical, out-there but an enactment that emerges from inhabiting, attuning to difference, and training “senses, dispositions and expectations,” in the process, creating a background in which encounters and novel experiences may emerge (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 9). While recognizing the connections between encounter, event, and experience, each is connected by an emphasis on emerging immanence - specific, temporal manifestations - and relational particularities which give rise to that said emergence. Non-representational geographers have applied these ideas of immanence and relation to a variety of phenomena including emotion and affect. That said, in the process, disagreements have emerged regarding how to understand the terms.

**Affect and Emotion**

Non-representational theory’s focus on the routines of life have recognizes affective dimensions, becoming a focus of scholarly research called the emotive or affective turn (Pile, 2010, p. 5). That said, affect and emotion are contested terms. Explaining prevailing understandings of affect, Tim Edensor (2012) refers to Nigel Thrift’s definitions, where affect is “a sense of push in the world…a notion of broad tendencies and lines of force” (p. 1105; Thrift, 2004, p. 60). Along with force and push, affect has been called a “‘set of flows moving through the bodies of human and other beings,’” whereby flow, force, and push suggest a precognitive
quality to affect, emphasizing more-than-human qualities or a “pre-personal capacity” (Edensor, 2012, p. 1105; Thrift, 2009, p. 88; Cadman, 2009, p. 456). Gallagher et al (2016) agree. In a call to expand geographies of listening, they define affect as “more than feeling or emotion...better thought of as forces that impinge on bodies, which may or may not be felt” (p. 8). For definitions of affect emphasizing its precognitive qualities, bodily (inter)subjectivity does not disappear; it is (re)introduced via emotion as the expression of affect or recognition as a social phenomena. This is seen with McCormack’s (2008) description of emotion as affective intensities manifesting “in a socio-culturally recognizable form” (p. 426). Precognitive affect defined as more-than-human qualities – sense, flow, and force – emphasizes bodies; they are sites that receive affect and subsequently where emotion manifests. That said, critics of this pre-cognitive reading of affect argue that this interpretation favors the human within an understanding of affect given the emphasis on human body. Recognizing these critiques, other scholars have sought to complicate the understandings of affect and emotion.

Recognizing conflicting definitions of affect and emotion, Anderson and Edensor avoid definitional semantics in favor of a broader, amorphous approach to affective phenomena. In contrast to definitions of affect which emphasize its pre-personal qualities, Anderson (2014) notes how affect is located in bodily space as “what a body may be able to do in any given situation, in addition to what it is currently doing and has done” (p. 10, 87). In his definition, the body’s temporality is emphasized – its condition in past, present, and future – conditioning affect and challenging its definition as precognitive. Anderson argues that a precognitive reading of affect ignores signifying, discursive factors which mediate affect; in other words, precognitive readings of affect do not pay enough attention to the performativity of representations in mediating affect (p. 85). Ultimately, his aim is to “reveal specific types of relational
configurations, rather than unproblematic claims about what affect really is ‘out there’ in the world” (p. 12). Similarly, Edensor (2012) argues that affect is not “purely precognitive,” because human anticipation for Blackpool Illuminations’ light shows and festive atmospheres create conditions that influence affective experience (p. 1104, 1119). He also attends to the variety of non-representational and discursive factors which create the Illuminations’ affective conditions - human bodies, art, lights, motorcycle parades, and sounds.

Given these competing definitions of affect and emotion, I take Anderson’s pragmatic ethos of how different definitions of affect can reveal relations as well as what readings of affect accomplish, in the process re-interpreting pre-personal affect as transpersonal. Detailing sound’s affective capacities, Gallagher (2016) relays a story about picking up one of his recording microphones beyond his conscious perception as a boy in a go-kart attempts to grab it. In this example, Gallagher states that “sonic affect propagated from an assemblage of boy and go-kart (legs, feet, pedals, wheels, tarmac), through a body of air, to affect an assemblage of man and microphones (ears, hand, arm, windjammer, bench)” (p. 44). Gallagher’s study emphasizes two important points. First, his reading shows how affect as pre-personal push is ultimately relational, part an assemblage of human and non-human bodies, and thus also transpersonal. Secondly, Gallagher notes how sound as affect challenges an anthropogenic hegemony which has dominated humanistic studies including this one, as he describes how sound as affect can reverberate across, between, and within bodies even if no humans are present to witness (p. 44). Thus, we see how pre-personal readings of affect have transpersonal qualities which blur the definition between the two. Moreover, Gallagher’s definition of affecting sound gives recognition to the assemblage of bodies, particularly the non-human ones, which play an important role in affect. On the other hand, Edensor and Anderson’s definitions of affect are
valuable in that they recognize how subjectivity matters – because of time and anticipation – in the manifestation of affect. By reconciling these competing definitions, we see how affect can be informed by pre-personal, transpersonal, and personal elements, each reading helping to elucidate the constitution of affect. Nonetheless, these understandings do not necessarily describe how to register affect in experience. That said, using the framework of affective atmospheres allows for affective capture tied to the complex and ambiguous qualities of atmosphere.

**Affective Atmospheres:**

Colloquially, atmosphere reflects gaseous dimensions of the physical planet suggesting an encapsulation as atmospheric elements rise, expand, and envelop. Informed by this understanding, early scholarly examinations into affective atmospheres defined the phenomenon as tone or felt presence. Bohme (2013b) describes atmosphere as “a certain mental or emotive tone permeating a particular environment” whereby the atmosphere spreads “spatially around [him]” (p. 5). Referring to the Greek term ekstasis to describe the materiality which constitutes atmospheres, Bohme (2013a) gives another definition for atmosphere: “the felt presence of something or someone in space” (p. 5). While tone and felt presence help describe affective atmospheres, these descriptions are somewhat abstract and untethered from specificity. That said, this abstraction informs another character of atmosphere – ambiguity & instability. When describing the ontological status of affective atmospheres, Anderson (2009) states how they move “between presence and absence, between subject and object, and between the definite and indefinite” (p. 77). These precarious qualities also emphasize atmospheres instability, “perpetually forming and deforming, appearing and disappearing,” as “they are never finished, static or at rest” (Anderson, 2009, p. 79). While the capricious nature of atmospheres may suggest analytical difficulty, Anderson (2009) argues that the “very ambiguity of affective atmospheres…enables us to reflect on affective experience as occurring beyond, around, and
alongside the formation of subjectivity” (p. 77). Providing a window into the particular relational elements that constitute atmosphere, atmosphere is “revealed precisely as it is expressed in bodily feelings, and qualified in emotions and other actions” (Anderson and Ash, 2015, p. 44). Thus, affect and emotion not only reflect atmospheric revelation but also provide a window into its constitution.

Referring to one of the main elements of non-representational thought, when Anderson describes the precarious quality of atmospheres, he is noting their relational constitution - that is, affective atmospheres emerge from relationalities. Bohme (1993) recognizes the assemblage of bodies that constitutes atmosphere and describes this assemblage as constellation. He states that atmospheres “are spaces insofar as they are ‘tinctured’ through the presence of things, of persons or environmental constellations” (1993, p. 121). Similarly, when Edensor (2012) discusses the emergence of Blackpool Illumination’s affective atmospheres, he describes relationalities between lighting, music, mobile people, and environmental conditions such as weather (p. 1105). Referring to Bohme and Dufrenne, Anderson (2014) also describes how “atmospheres are generated by bodies - of multiple types - affecting one another as some form of envelopment is produced” (p. 149). Thus, we see how an assemblage of human and non-human bodies, representational and non-representational phenomena work to create atmosphere.

Despite this recognition of atmosphere’s relational constitution, there are disagreements over how far this relational constitution can be examined to understand atmosphere. Along with constellation, Bohme (2013a) uses the metaphor of a stage, referring to a set production, to describe how atmospheres form. He states “the making of atmospheres is therefore confined to setting the conditions in which the atmosphere appears” (p. 4) – conditions he calls generators and one this paper will use – suggesting a determinism whereby atmospheric constitution is
simply determined by its conditional parts. While Bohme states that atmospheres can be reduced
to their constitutive elements, other scholars have emphasized atmosphere’s irreducible, singular
qualities. Discussing the work of Dufrenne, Anderson (2014) describes how an atmosphere
manifests as “a singular affective quality that is irreducible to a series of interacting, component
parts” (p. 142; Dufrenne, 1973). Atmospheres thus “emanate from but exceed the assembling
bodies” (Anderson, 2009, p. 77). This polarity reveals the tension within discussions of
atmosphere; they are simultaneously rooted in generators yet irreducible to those generators.
Given this situation, “atmosphere is both an effect of a gathering of elements and a mediating
force that actively changes the gathering it emanates from” (Anderson and Ash, 2015, p. 44).

While these disagreements reflect nascent investigations of the phenomena, the effects of
atmosphere have been less contentious - blurring definitions, setting felt conditions, and
enveloping with the potential to haunt and exceed “a represented world” (Anderson, 2009, p. 79).
In regards to problematics associated with demarcating definitions of emotion and affect,
Edensor (2012) uses affective atmospheres to exemplify a “blurring” between the two definitions
(p. 1105). In a similar vein, Anderson (2014) describes how atmospheres “envelop people,
things, sites” producing a blurring act that tinctures across difference (p. 139). Along with
blurring, affective atmospheres create conditions for “textures and motivations for movements
and feelings” (Adey, 2008, p. 439). While Bohme’s (2013a) arguments on the generation of
affective atmospheres as rooted in generators may come off as deterministic, he also notes how
the character of atmosphere “communicates a feeling” to its subjects (p. 2). Given this reading,
we see how the generators of a stage set may work to provide textures for feeling without
suggesting that those feelings are determined outcomes.
Besides mentioning how envelopment relates to atmospheres’ blurring capabilities, Anderson (2009) also describes how this envelopment can lead to other outcomes including a haunting and overwhelming that “discloses the space-time of an ‘expressed world’” (p. 79). Atmospheres “interrupt, perturb and haunt fixed persons, places or things” – they linger even as they shift and change (p. 78). Why might this be? In certain instances where atmosphere overwhelms, “the representational content of the aesthetic object” creates “a space of intensity that overflows a represented world” (Anderson, 2014, p. 142, 2009, p. 79). While this intensive flowing of space-time sounds abstract, it ultimately refers to atmospheres’ capacity to produce an affective excess which thereby conditions and demarcates encounters in time and space. Thus, these excesses linger.

Given these various outcomes of atmosphere – blurring definitions, providing conditions for feeling, creating intensive space-times – affective atmospheres can transform future possibilities, movements, and modulations. Thibaud (2011) describes how atmosphere “gives rhythm to our movements and modulates the manner in which we move” (p. 209; Edensor 2012). Moreover, Duff (2010) describes atmospheres as having the possibility to orient potential action in place, “for the realisation of specific experiences ambitions, and capacities” in regards to the personal (p. 882; Edensor 2012). When McCormack (2010) speaks of experiment, he is referring to the radical newness of relationalities that constitute experience, an explanation similar to the production of atmosphere which reveals similarity between experiment and affective atmospheres. Both relationally constituted, affective atmospheres may represent one manifestation of the experimental/experiential possibilities which McCormack mentions. Thus, Thibaud and Duff’s comments on modulation and possibilities can be read as potential outcomes of said experiment with atmosphere. If atmosphere does create possibilities to orient action, then
a causality exists whereby atmospheres act on the body to create conditions for change. Given
this possibility for change and a recognition that atmospheres are revealed in feeling, then
attempts at ascertaining the relational constitution of atmospheres matter. What are ways one can
go about analyzing this relational constitution?

Atmospheres are always in the process of becoming. From subject to object and vice
versa, atmospheres are constructed from an assemblage of human and more-than-human
generators. That said, the moment an atmosphere shifts from subject to object, from affecting to
affected, is often unclear. Offering an expanded methodological framework to further detail
affective atmospheres, Anderson and Ash (2015) offer the terms weight and mass to help
describe changes that occur to atmosphere.

To detail the coexistence and change of affective atmospheres, Anderson and Ash use the
qualitative descriptions of mass and weight. As applied to the constitutive elements of an
atmosphere, mass denotes “potential to affect, dependent on...relational configuration with other
things” (2015, p. 40-41). On the other hand, “weight refers to the affects that emerge from a
given situation and thus form a specific atmosphere” (p. 41). Thus, the bodies that constitute
atmosphere, both human and non-human, have different masses but only some of these bodies
have enough weight to translate to an affective formation or change within atmosphere (p. 47).
That said, those bodies with enough affective weight gain this propensity from a relationship
within a larger relational configuration, not because of any pre-existing, categorical potential.

With this discussion of change, we now have a complex picture of atmosphere: ambiguous and
unstable, relationally constituted, having the capacity to blur affect and emotion, having potential
as experiment, and most importantly for this project, revealed in feeling.
Sound, Affect, and Affective Atmospheres

Sound is an apt fit for this research paper’s focus on non-representational geographies and affective atmospheres, as sound affects. Distinguishing within various types of sound, Kanngieser (2012) emphasizes the aural voice and calls for a “geography of voice and a politics of speaking and listening” (p. 336). According to Kanngieser, the multidimensional qualities of voice – its varying “timbres, intonations, paces and frequencies” (p. 341) - have differing affective and representational elements which thereby work to alter social relations (p. 343-44). From Hitler’s vocal amplitude to Australian Labor leader Julia Gillard’s attempt at using a working-class accent for strategic political purposes, Kanngieser reveals how the voice’s utterances have a “profoundly political significance” (p. 340). Thus, attunement to speech offers a lens into dynamics of social relations, power, and feeling. Gallagher (2016) also emphasizes sound’s affective qualities. He states that sound’s repeating affective tendencies activate feeling and that sonic affect has power over bodies that sometime merges with meaning; this is because the body is the literal mechanism for sound’s transmission where the voice’s affective power along with semiotic signification create possibilities for bodily control – Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s fireside chats and Hitler’s use of radio and sound both capitalize on sound’s affective qualities, the former instilling hope and the latter creating affects of anger and rage (p. 47). These pieces reveal how sound is embedded into the social dimensions of life. That said, in the recognition of sound and power, Kanngiser and Gallagher refer to the relational and social quality of sound and its movement through and between various bodies, human and nonhuman, echoing the constitution of affective atmospheres.

Sound’s affective qualities reflect the formation of affective atmospheres. When Bohme (2013a) discusses the stage set as a metaphor for the creation of atmospheres, he describes how that set must have generalizable elements that relate to “a wider audience, which can experience
the atmosphere generated on the stage in, by and large, the same way” (p. 3). With this comment, Bohme refers to the intersubjective manifestation of atmosphere and one commonly catalyzed by sound. Comparing the set designer to musicians, sound designers, or radio producers, these creators use sound to craft and convey particular affective atmospheres. They form a blueprint for conditioning certain feelings but these feelings ultimately result from subjective particularities. As Zebracki (2016) notes, electronic dance music has the tendency to affect bodily movements as it is paired with other environmental conditions such as lighting, bodies, and alcohol (p. 111). That said, sound does not have to be intentionally structured to condition affective atmospheres. Describing a scene in a hospital waiting room, Anderson and Ash (2015) reveal co-existing affective atmospheres of vivacity – emerging from the voices of ladies who are discussing popular culture – and hesitancy, exuded by waiting patients (p. 40). In this example, sonic elements – the multi-dimensional qualities of voice and their semiotic content – affected other bodies contributing to a particular affective atmosphere. Thus, the affective dimensions of sound condition and help form affective atmospheres.

As this literature review has established, atmospheres are implicated in affect and emotion, since atmospheres blur the two; at the same time, they are also implicated because atmospheres are revealed by affect and emotion. On the other hand, sound relates to affective atmospheres by reflecting their constitution while also informing their creation. We have the foundations for potential experiment - given the fact that atmosphere is revealed in feeling where sound affects as it is implicated in atmosphere, we see how listening and the attunement to feeling from listening thus allows for the exploration of atmosphere. That said, despite exploring new methods for sonic research such as Gallagher and Butler’s experimental audio walks as well as Weller’s use of participatory radio, any potential exploration of affect from these methods
manifests from ascertaining affect after the fact of experience through some form of interview; once again, meaning is placed onto bodies, not emerging from the bodies themselves (Anderson and Harrison, 2010, p. 5). Given this problem as well as no predetermined method to study affective resonances of listening during experience, I utilize experiments under McCormack’s (2015) definition of technique to explore affective capture.

**Ch. 2: Creating Methodologies for Listening - Venture into Experiment**

*Capturing Feeling When Listening – Experimenting with Techniques & the Rhizome*

Anderson (2014) states that “atmospheres require completion by the subjects that ‘apprehend’ them” (p. 145). Even if atmosphere is formed by the particularities of any contextual, relational emergence, the subject matters. To document feeling when listening, I turn to McCormack’s notion of technique. As McCormack (2015) states, technique “suggests a form of doing that needs to be honed through skillful practice, without necessarily crystallizing as a well-policed set of methodological protocols” (p. 92). That is, technique is experiment – one that attunes to affective phenomena with multiple possibilities in how that attunement may emerge. In this regard, the benefit of technique, and one which applies to affective atmospheres, is that it complements “the ethos and enactment of non-representational styles of thinking as a kind of ‘weak theory in an unfinished world’” (McCormack, 2015, p. 92).

Documentation of feeling during the act of listening is critical for approaching atmosphere. Regarding process, I began by downloading the first two seasons of *The Heart* thereafter running them through Adobe Audition, a software allowing audio file manipulation. Next, documentation manifested as either phonographic or text-based data. First, I recorded audio of myself listening and paused the podcast when a feeling emerged. Thereafter, I spoke my feelings into a recorder. In another process, I time stamped sections of the audio file when
affective moments emerged by pressing the “M” button. Right after, I switched to the software program Stickies and wrote notes on feelings that stemmed from the podcast’s specific section.

With these techniques in mind, I utilize Deleuze and Guattari’s (1988) concept of the rhizome to document this process in autoethnographic, narrative form. While similar to atmosphere in its relational constitution, the rhizome’s conceptualization of time and functionality as map separate it from atmosphere and make it a helpful tool to think with. Referring to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Laura Ogden (2011) notes how the rhizome disrupts linear progressions of time, as the rhizome has “‘neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills’” (p. 32; Deleuze and Guattari 1988). Moreover, she discusses the rhizome as a map with “multiple ‘entryways’ and practices of modification” (p. 31; Deleuze and Guattari p. 12-13). Applied to this project, entryways are reflected by timestamps when listening and subsequent documentations of those initial responses. With these new entryways, possibilities for entangling past resonances with current experiences occur, creating opportunities to attune to atmosphere. That said, I stress that this application of rhizome is not to recreate atmosphere in its original, phenomenological mode but to reflect upon the capture of feeling during atmospheric emergence. In the following, I narrate the experience of using these two techniques and the eventual choice to use text-based data as the primary output for analysis when listening.

**Experimental Technique 1 - Speaking Feelings after Listening**

Sunday - 42 minutes past noon. It’s a sunny day in February. The trees outside are leafless, but green appendages crawl up their trunks and suggest that life is emerging. I sit in my room, surrounded by material bodies I’ve managed to accumulate over four years; these items have their own histories, their own movements across territories – posters from Utah, cloths from Asian-kin, water dispensers from Amazon.com, source materials from places I can only imagine.
In the moment, all have arrived in my bedroom, preceding the act of listening and informing the atmosphere that is about to manifest. But other bodies are bustling outside of my vicinity.

I live in a duplex with eleven other men. I am one of six on the first side of this structure, and I hear the life of the other five throughout this side of the house. They are cooking, shouting, moving, rising slowly from late Saturday night escapades, packing backpacks with books for work which should have been done earlier in the weekend but nevertheless will get done. They are living, contributing to a jovial atmosphere that permeates my home. Yet my door is closed, so this atmosphere does not intrude on the meditative, focus that orients my being and permeates my room before the act of listening.

I sit on a red mat, and face the window outside of my room. Laptop in lap, an auxiliary jack rests inside my laptop’s headphone port. The jack traces its way back into the electronic speakers that usually amplify the turntable in my room - analog sound replaced by the digital. Everything is in place, and I speak my thoughts before listening. Something feels strange about speaking into the recorder with no other human bodies around. But I continue.
I begin by listening to the trailer for the podcast – what is called “season 0, episode 0,” by its creators. I listen uninterrupted, and at the end of the episode, speak to the recorder (https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s0e0-response-after-listening - please copy and paste this and any following links; Office for Mac only allows simple HTMLs which is why the error message “cannot locate the internet server or proxy server” emerges). I begin talking, thinking that it will be easy to comment on the felt qualities of the podcast, but I sit in an extended period of silence. My mind draws a blank as to what to say and what part of the recording to comment on. The awkward feeling of speaking into the recorder reemerges. Yet these comments were made after the recording, and I have not yet tried to stop the recording during the act of listening.

I listen to Season 1 Episode 1. The episode is about entering “a world with new rules” once “we do something for the first time,” specifically in regards to romantic activities such as “the first kiss,” and whether it will give way to other firsts and more prolonged romantic engagements (Prest and Kaboli, 2015b). During the episode, the podcast’s host, Kaitlin Prest, describes the first time she rode a bicycle; in this scene, ambient, fluttering sound effects weave their way in and out of her description. The atmosphere is light, nostalgic, and airy. Yet after this description, a different scene emerges, one that jettisons the atmospheric returning to the corporeal (https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-scene-before-pause-and-comment). In
the scene, someone describes feeling vulnerable when revealing her “animal self,” and thereafter details the progression of her desired make-out scene. A feeling emerges, I pause the recorder and respond (https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-response-and-pausing). I give a brief, cursory analysis – what I believe is contributing to my feeling as the atmosphere extended itself around me. I continue the podcast. After listening, I give my thoughts about the episode and some brief analysis (https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-response-after-listening).

**Experimental Technique 2 - Writing Feelings with Text**

In the same day as experiment one, I revisit Season 1, Episode 1. After sliding the blue audio tracer back to its edge within Adobe Audition, I open up stickies, and write on a new note.

*Image 3: “Season 1, Episode 1” technique one before listening*

Returning to Adobe Audition, I press the space bar, and continue listening. Sound weaves. Atmospheres form, spreading around my room. I press the “M” button on my keyboard when a feeling emerges. Rapidly, I shift to the note by pressing “command” and “tab.” I throw words on the note attempting to describe what is felt during listening. Even if I cannot pinpoint them exactly at the present moment, I continue the podcast thus repeating the process seven times for this episode. At the end of listening, I am left with this documentation.

*Image 4: “Season 1, Episode 1” Documentation after listening*
I know that these markers and the text described are incomplete. They are the residual fragments and evidences of attempts at grasping the felt conditions which emerged during the process of listening. That said, I continue with this process for the rest of the podcasts episodes, something feels appropriate about this technique. Later on, I document this process of data collection with videos of my actions on the screen (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an2WQCuIOt0).

**Experimental Analysis - Choosing Technique 2**

Text-based documentation of technique two outperformed the phonographic documentation of technique one, because of the latter’s tendency to disrupt listening combined with complications associated with speaking into an audio recorder as mechanism for documenting feeling. In experiment one, I paused the podcast, grabbed the recorder, and proceeded to describe my feelings into the recorder. Given this recognition of actions required to catalogue feeling verbally, one must be cognizant of when feelings emerge. That said, during this process of listening, a self-conscious questioning began, where I would ask something to the effect of, “am I feeling something now,” as moments would transpire, thinking about when to pause and thinking about what to feel. In this regard, this technique complicated listening because my focus was on thinking, not listening, thereby diminishing an attunement to atmosphere. Not just a disruption to listening because of how the listener must attune to thinking,
the physical act of pausing the podcast also disrupted atmosphere. In the act of pausing to record one’s voice, sounds stopped enveloping the room and the atmosphere of investigation dissipated.

On the other hand, for experiment 2, the podcast did not stop during the majority of listening incidents. There were a few occasions when I would return the marker to an earlier section to re-listen to an affective scene but this was rare, as I could quickly take note of feeling. An issue with technique two is that the audio episode still continues when taking note of feeling, but because notes consisted of less than a sentence and usually a few words, I could quickly return to listening. Thus, for experiment 1, the physical act of pausing as well as condition to concentrate on thinking complicated listening and thus an attunement to atmosphere in a manner that did not apply for experiment 2.

The next set of issues associated with experiment 1 included speaking into the audio recorder, as evinced by responses during and after. After listening to the podcast’s trailer, I responded with my thoughts (Prest and Kaboli, 2015a). At the six second mark, I state “ummm…wow yeah overall that was really…really good…mmm” where these ellipses indicate pauses between my comments. After this last “mmm,” nine seconds of silence pass, and I respond with “solid, okay, cool beans,” thereafter ending the recording. One of the reasons for this silence was in thinking about where to direct my mind’s attention - what exactly to say about the episode, what part of the episode to comment on, and what feelings out of a broader multiplicity to talk about. It is awkward listening to this piece and that awkwardness manifested as silence in the recorder. In this regard, documentation through vocal reflection after listening has the capacity to be unfocused. What about for pausing during the act of listening? In some scenarios, this solves issues with commenting on the episode after listening, because the mind has a reference point to focus its attention – the scene which catalyzed the feeling. In the audio
clip used as an example, I discuss how a scene increased my heart rate leading to “pre-arousal vibes.” Yet during this recitation, I once again couldn’t help but notice how awkward it felt to comment on this scene vocally, where a sense of unease emerges from the tone of my voice. This begs the question as to why I felt uncomfortable speaking into a microphone. First, the scene from the episode – sexual foreplay – and the associated feeling – “pre-arousal” – are socialized as part of the private sphere within a public-private divide. Speaking this content out loud ultimately forced private material into the public space, even though no one else was listening, and this transgression of the private-public divide contributed to my sense of unease. Despite this sense, it was ultimately affective and transparent in its manifestation, where the causality between content and feeling was traceable. That said, how would a verbalized response look for less perceptible feelings? Given an alternative choice using experiment 2 as well as this research project’s focus and time constraints, I did not spend energy to investigate. Nonetheless I surmise that for less perceptible feelings, the act of pausing the recording to speak those feelings would have resulted in similar silences to my response after listening to Season 0, Episode 0.

By speaking feelings, one must articulate feeling which begets some form of thinking or cursory analysis about why feeling emerged. This requires a greater amount of time. Moreover, this process of articulating feeling while stopping the podcast would have been unnecessarily time intensive when having the alternative of text-based documentation. When writing feelings, I could quickly make a note of a certain feeling, even with a broad, unintelligible description to outsiders, and thereafter return my attention to listening; this resulted in initial comments such as “intrigued,” “disjunction,” and “smile at the freedom; the honesty,” which served as information to my feeling even when unintelligible to outsiders. That said, these words would have been unproductive when vocalized, as I would not have said “disjunction” after pausing an episode to
vocalize feeling either stopping to think through what is meant or as noted, sitting in silence.

This suggests that the manner of documentation informs the output of data which is collected – not only in the digital file itself, an audio file versus a text-based document, but also the information that is communicated in those files. This is not to say that the data collected from speaking is worse than that of text-based writing, but that it is less suitable for the context of this project pragmatically and in ascertaining affective atmospheres and feeling.

**Applying Experiments: Affective Atmospheres, Feeling, and Emotion**

Even though this project ended up utilizing technique two, the process of experimenting with both techniques was useful as literature on atmosphere was reaffirmed. Edensor and Anderson note how affective atmospheres blur the boundary between affect and emotion. For Anderson (2009), the purpose of utilizing affective atmospheres is to attune to the “ambiguities of affect/emotion” while also unsettling “the distinction between affect and emotion” (p. 80).

This ambiguity emerged when utilizing technique one, as evinced by silences in my response after listening – affect and emotion at a dynamic interplay verging on perceptual awareness but ultimately leaving my listening body in an intermediate position. My experiences suggest that atmosphere attunes to the subtle dynamics between affect and emotion. That said, I also contend that the “affective ‘excess’” of atmosphere’s “space of intensity” blurred the boundary between affect and emotion (Anderson, 2009, p. 79, 80). Caught up in this intensity, experiential affect and feeling blurred as I was enthralled in the act of listening – affect coursing through objects and feelings registering within me to be overwhelmed by affect. After experiencing the intensity of the scene from the podcast ([https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-scene-before-pause-and-comment](https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-scene-before-pause-and-comment)), my spoken response ([https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-response-and-pausing](https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/s1e1-response-and-pausing)) denoting “pre-arousal vibes” is flustered. In this regard, the extension of
atmosphere’s capacity to blur affect and emotion also rests in an experiential phenomena associated with the intensity of atmosphere.

Given an understanding of affect and emotion as separate phenomena, my experience would read something like this – affect as push or force emerged from the podcast, moved across bodies and thus registered in my emotions or feelings. Noted in the act of documentation, translating feelings to discrete phenomena was an arduous process, because while I felt, I often did not know exactly what I was feeling. What this resulted in was descriptions of an event within the podcast that I could pinpoint to help explain my feeling at a later moment, as well as descriptions of my physical state. This resulted in a range of responses including “smile at the freedom; the honesty,” “cringe, not gross but worryish”, “sexy dragon,” and “she knows what she's doing, smile” amongst others. If feeling is different than knowing what is individually felt, than the pre-personal qualities of affect as pre-cognate are emphasized. This is because feeling was intellectually unintelligible during experience until after the point of feeling via analysis or reflection; for some feelings such as happiness or sadness, I could quickly categorize but even these required a moment of reflection as to understand what exactly was being felt. Thus, responses that marked attempts to capture feeling revealed affect’s pre-cognate qualities.

Ch. 3 – Performance Methods and Feelings, Creating Audio through an Ensemble

Phonography and Autoethnography in the Creation of Performance:

As early geographic engagements with sound often resulted in written outcomes without sonic media, Gallagher and Prior call for expanded phonographic methods in geographic inquiry and research outputs. Making sure not to categorize sonic media as categorically better than other sensory data, Gallagher and Prior (2014) argue that phonographic methods have particular benefits for certain research foci including “empirical work on aspects of geography that are
hidden, fleeting, beyond or at the periphery of everyday awareness,” including the more-than-representational such as affective atmospheres (p. 271). Performance is one suggested method to investigate affective phenomena while integrating audio media within research outputs; it refers to creations constituted by “an ensemble of human and more-than-human actors” exemplified by creative audio work such as sound walks (p. 277; Butler and Miller, 2005; Butler, 2006).

Moreover, Gallagher and Prior suggest that evaluative criteria for performance can include affective qualities of listening, attention drawn to performativity, and performative elements which engage site and space (p. 279-280) It is by combining this phonographic performativity with autoethnography that facilitates this project’s (re)creation of atmosphere.

With synonyms including narratives of self, self-stories, personal narrative, and reflexive ethnography, autoethnography is described as “an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 740). At its epistemic foundations, autoethnographic knowledge is rooted in the lived encounters of its researchers. Experience, knowledge, and encounter are all mediated through the body, the site of self and a vehicle to the external social world. Recognizing the body’s capacity for internal and external orientation, autoethnography denotes lived encounters which look “outward on social and cultural aspects of...personal experience” and “inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist interpretations” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 739). Thus, autoethnography uses lived encounters to reflect upon experiences yet recognizes a structural framework in which experiences reside.

While autoethnography often manifests as writing, it is not limited to that form of expression since multiple outputs exist to convey the “communicative content about experienced or attributed affect” (Knudsen and Stage, 2015, p. 9). More than text-based descriptions, in
Martin Zebrecki’s (2016) exploration of electronic music clubs, “embodied knowledge” of techno-space is conveyed through writing, drawing, and “introspective poetic revelation” (p. 111). Zebrecki’s goal is to convey “wordless encounters” experienced within clubs, and he uses sub and superscripts to denote trangressive and culturally identified experiences in his research (p. 115). Zebrecki’s use of autoethnography reveals the method’s emphasis on interaction, where readers engage “morally, emotionally, aesthetically, and intellectually” (Bochner and Ellis, 2000, p. 745). From writings in the forms of poetry to creative drawings, autoethnography can result in multiple outputs all aimed at conveying the experiences of the autoethnographer.

Aside from various forms of output, autoethnography has its own benefits within research – challenging cultural standards of abstract, academic writing associated with the third person, passive voice in favor of a more intimate, emotive, and embodied orientation. Critics of the style argue that autoethnographic forms of writing which make the researcher known delegitimize data and the research itself, a positivist epistemological framework which values universal knowledge. Nonetheless, as Ellis and Bochner (2000) describe, all research has someone who collects evidence and draws inferences where “the investigator [is] always implicated in the product” (p. 747). When a researcher embraces reflexivity, an embodied feminist objectivity arises where research participants are valued for situated knowledges that stem from particular, lived contexts of production (England, 2006). Why might this be effective for research into affective atmospheres? Atmospheres are constantly shifting as they are situated in lived contexts of production – there is no singular atmosphere, and thus autoethnography’s epistemic, embodied foundations correspond with the qualities of a radically constructing atmosphere. Even more, Bohme’s (2013b) description of participating in the atmosphere through his mood (p. 5) to Anderson’s (2014) comments that “atmospheres require completion by the subjects that
‘apprehend’ them,” show how a listening subject is fundamental in the constitution of the atmosphere (p. 144). As a sensing subject reveals atmosphere, then autoethnography reflects a logical extension to explain that sensing and feeling.

Given these epistemic justifications, an effective way to convey knowledge about atmospheres emerges from the combination of autoethnography and performative phonography. As noted in the introduction of this paper, non-representational research should enliven and take caution with pedantic efforts to “faithfully describe” phenomena such as atmosphere (Vannini, 2015, p. 15). While an overarching orientation is not enough to justify practice, applying these non-representational approaches to affective atmospheres themselves reveals that creative outputs apply for the phenomena. First, Vannini’s (2015) comments on “[ceasing] to be so preoccupied with how the past unfolded and with your responsibility for capturing it” are slightly uncanny as applied to atmosphere, amorphous phenomena evading simple capture even when revealed through feeling (p. 15). Moreover, as Anderson and Ash (2015) state, “an attempt to separate out the assembling of atmospheres into effects and determinants is likely to fall short precisely because atmospheres envelop” (p. 43). Even if one deconstructs and analyzes atmosphere, that researcher would never be able to fully relay the atmosphere as occurring during its existence. Finally, the process of deconstructing atmosphere as object is categorically at odds with the nature of atmosphere, since atmosphere is both subject and object, where the process of representing atmosphere thus violates its nature. While having justified non-representational outputs tied to autoethnography and phonography, what exactly is performed?

In the deconstruction of various atmospheres, I explore their generators in phonographic performance. In this regard, deconstruction performs two roles – it not only tests the experimental question of whether atmospheres can be reduced to generators with affective mass,
but also provides content for creative performance. Affective atmospheres are constituted by an assemblage of human and non-human bodies which inform the act of listening, and three broad categories help explain the assemblage’s constitution for this project: the listening body, non-human material bodies, and the variety of sonic phenomena present in the act of listening. In attempts to deconstruct atmosphere, non-representational methods do not “[eschew] empirical analysis altogether” – in this research, analysis is incorporated into research outputs of performance (Vannini, 2015, p. 12). This is performance which aims for possibility, that draws attention to the affective qualities of listening, to performativity, and to the engagement of site and space as potential evaluative criteria (Bochner and Ellis, 2000, p. 751-752; Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p. 280). In striving to satisfy these criteria within research outputs, I “learn to fail, to fail better,” and “multiply possibilities for action, to pose the question once again, and again, of what non-representational theories might become” (Vannini, 2015, p. 15; McCormack, 2015, p. 91).

**Data Analysis and Feeling Categorization**

Having decided on this second technique, I eventually utilized it for all of season one, twelve episodes, as well as the six episodes that made up season two. Thereafter, I uploaded all of the information from Stickies, except the first two episodes from season one, to a Google spreadsheet untangling what occurred during listening to affect a certain feeling. I decided not to analyze the first two episodes of season one as I had also experimented with technique one on those episodes potentially altering subsequent analysis in the Google sheet. Diagram 1 exists in the appendix detailing all of the episodes analyzed including their marker and feeling count.

*Image 5: Placing Notes on Feeling Stickies into Google Sheets*
From this analysis, I was able to parse out generators that can be attributed to five categories: “sem,” “vox,” “son,” “mus,” and “tim.” Sem is short for semiotic and refers to something that was said; vox is short for vocal and describes how something was said as related to Kanngieser’s (2012) comments on the affective qualities of voice; son is short for sound effects related to ambient sounds and natural sounds; mus is shorthand for music. While mus and son are related, they differ in that mus denotes a greater level of form to sound as something we might recognize as song with melody and phrasing. Last of all, tim is shorthand for time and this descriptive is the most ambiguous, as it denotes how feeling is conditioned by time or past events. Given the fact that the episodes from the podcast are stories, different scenes resonated because of how they related to earlier scenes; to begin listening near the end without the middle or beginning would lead to different feelings than if one listens from the beginning. I also used time to describe certain poetic and stylistic elements that occur in a scene to catalyze feeling – for example, how rapidly someone speaks or if repetition occurs to emphasize an affect.

While the audio performances attempted to integrate generators with enough mass to alter affective conditions, this was not to reduce the importance of material bodies engaged in the site of listening. This paper recognizes that material bodies helped constitute the assemblage in
which the atmosphere formed. The micro-assemblage of technologies – laptop, auxiliary cord, speakers, and their constitutive parts from within – produced the sounds of the podcast. It is possible that the speakers could have had enough mass to translate into weight and thus feeling during listening if I had altered the speakers’ volume during an emerging atmosphere. Nonetheless, this element of volume was not emphasized during the research.

Analysis ultimately resulted in twenty-one different feelings: surprise, incredulity, discomfort, worry, irritation, annoyance, anger, amusement, cheerfulness, empathy, compassion, sadness, contemplation, intrigue, confusion, exhaustion, calm, (pre)arousal, relief, endearment, and moved. Below is a diagram denoting how each feeling was understood and labeled according to a moment during the listening experience.

*Diagram 2: Feelings and their descriptions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Description - “something” means related to the podcast’s five indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>Something unexpected occurred in the podcast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incredulity</td>
<td>Something hyperbolic occurred in the podcast outside of my expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td>Something unsettled me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>Something gave me a feeling of anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritation</td>
<td>Something slightly bothered me in the podcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoyance</td>
<td>Only occurred when listening to bad audio which interfered with the podcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Something occurred that I felt was unjust or normatively inappropriate behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusement</td>
<td>Something entertained me including interesting situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheerfulness</td>
<td>Something made my happy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding how feelings were placed together within performance pieces, I chose to incorporate multiple feelings into a single piece if those feelings shared similar undertones that ultimately differed on a scale of intensity. For example, irritation and annoyance as related to or predecessors of anger; surprise to incredulity; discomfort to worry; endearment to a greater feeling of sentimentality, i.e. “moved;” confusion to exhaustion; amusement to cheerfulness, and empathy as related to compassion and even sadness – how one may relate to a situation but accept that the related situation is outside of their influence. (Pre)arousal and calm were not associated with other feelings in performance. While deciding these groups based on felt
similarities, a pragmatic consideration was also made to group feelings due to project scope. Even though these groupings were made in isolation, this was not to suggest that feelings existed in isolation; mixed emotions occurred at different points when listening but in order to emphasize the felt qualities of specific feelings, they were grouped in a specific manner.

*Diagram 3: Constitutive Elements of Atmosphere*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergence and Transformation of Atmosphere</th>
<th>1. Listening Subject</th>
<th>2. Podcast</th>
<th>3. Material Bodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Subjectivity and experience</td>
<td>“sem,” “vox,” “son” “mus” and “tim” as detailed above</td>
<td>Listening Environment – non-human materiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use in Performance</strong></td>
<td>My body as generator and receiver of podcast will be present in the performance; my experience of feeling earlier emotions form the foundations of the performance text.</td>
<td>As these factors apply to the emergence of certain feelings, audio will be cut from the podcast, formatted as single tracks, and played through a MIDI controller during the performance.</td>
<td>Speakers and technology which were part of original atmospheric assemblage will be re-used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring back to comments on phonographic methods, Gallagher and Prior (2014) state that performance consists of “beings and objects vibrating in the world, air, microphones, cables, recording devices and media, gain controls, level meters, headphones, ears, eyes and hands” (p. 277). Moreover, they suggest a few potential criteria to evaluate performance including affective qualities of listening, attention drawn to performativity, and performative elements which engage site and space (p. 280). Noting how these criteria differ according to project, under the auspices of affective atmospheres, I engage with the performative elements of site and space, by utilizing the material objects (box 3 in diagram 1) that created atmospheres of listening in an earlier setting - laptop, speakers, and cables. Utilizing a live performance, I also emphasize the
envelopment of atmosphere within space. As for affective qualities of listening, I use the partial
generators of atmosphere within the podcast (box 2 in diagram 1) in attempts to convey those
same feelings in performance. Finally, for attention drawn to performance, I utilize my
subjectivity and sincerity in approaching the creation of these pieces in attempts to form
atmosphere (box 1 in diagram 1). While this project utilizes live audio performance for its
phonographic methods to recreate atmosphere in a potentially more affective manner than using
solely audio recordings, I have also experimented with solely using audio recordings as a
separate practice in recreating atmosphere; I do this for “worried, uncomfortable” and “amused,
cheerful.” That said, most creative pieces are meant to performed in a live setting while
integrating sound design. The difference between live performance and audio story could offer
another focus of investigation when exploring geographies of listening, but this is outside of this
research project’s engagements. The following section has scripts for the poetic performance
pieces as related to various feelings. Italicized sentences denote sonic media and phrases which
are stated within various audio clips. After listing the prose of each performance piece, I
continue experiment this time using the concept of ensemble to explore how various generators
informed affective responses when listening with the aim to examine claims on the irreducibility
of atmosphere.
**Phonographic Performance Pieces**

**Irritated, Annoyed, Angered**

*(Clip 1: AARON AND DESIRARY TALKING)*

You are kidding me with these damn noises.
Why now?

In 3 years, the obsessive, fanatic fan spends five to six thousand dollars to see Aaron Carter thirty-two times.

Five to six thousand dollars.
32 shows.
Aaron Carter.

She finally gets to talk to learn what this man thinks of her,
I finally get to learn what this man thinks of her,
And there are these damn noises *(Clip 2: mic pops & wind on top of each other. Volume increases)*
I. Can’t. Hear.
I. Can’t. Hear.
I. Can’t. Hear.

I’m not just irritated now. I’m angry.
*(Clip 3 - Kaitlin speaking)* “I signed the contract, just me, Kaitlin Prest”

Just Kaitlin. Without Mitra -
Mitra - the person who moved to New York, to help Kaitlin fulfill her dreams.

Mitra - the ‘other’ creative partner, sad at being unrecognized and invisible,
Unrecognized, once again. This time, by her own teammate.

*(Cue clip 4)* “I fantasized about all the new amazing collaborators I would meet. Now that I was free...I didn’t have to worry anymore about making decisions with her or how my actions would affect her. I could do whatever I wanted”

cold.
rude.
injust.
Pre(arousal)

My heart beats faster and faster and faster.

I think to myself.
“This is weird
Too personal
Too intimate,”

But I can’t stop listening.

Two acquaintances, hidden away in a Brooklyn apartment, during the thralls of Hurricane Sandy alone together.

(Clip 5) “We’re still sitting on the couch. And we start inching towards one another. I notice our knees are touching. They didn’t need to be touching but they were definitely touching. And I caught a glimpse of his hands and they were shaking, as if he was unsure of where to put them. ‘Your leg’ ‘my leg’ ‘your neck’ ‘around my neck’ ‘my lap’ ‘your lap.’ Where should I put my hand?”

His hand... Wait... not only his hand on hers.
But her hand on some other her.
And his hand, on some other him.

(Clip 6) “I would sit on the edge of my blanket. Watching every touch, every flirtatious move around me. Noting curve of flesh. Every erection. Every nipple hard with irritation or desire.”

Bodies desiring bodies.
And my heart beats
Faster - and faster - and faster.

(Cue S2E4 & M6, S1E5) “Here like that, that’s what you wanted. She kisses him, hard.”... “we were sitting on my bed. His hand was on my leg. It felt hot. Like I was wearing a thousand turtle neck sweaters. It had been so long since I felt genuine desire for someone. ‘Closer.’ Someone who you can sit on the couch with and have everything in the world to talk about. ‘Closer.’
Someone who had a jittery hand on my leg. Someone who had actually wanted me to. ‘I want you.’
Confusion, Exhaustion

Kaitlin and Mitra tell a story.

This is the introduction:
C and R1 have sex. C thinks R1 smells strange.
A and R2 are seeing each other. A makes out with other people at parties.

Chris?
Ruth?
Aaron?
Ray?

R1, A, C,
R2, C, A,
R1, R2, A.

Who are these people?
Where do they come from?
What is going on?

Kaitlin and Mitra start a podcast.
It grows.
Mitra gets no attention.
Mitra leaves.
Kaitlin gets on offer to make it big.
Kaitlin asks Mitra to join.
Mitra says no,
Then Mitra wants back in.
And Kaitlin says…
(Clip 8) "it’s definitely not too late to change your mind,"
(end with rising drum beats, begin semantic/sonic overload)
Peaceful

(Clip 9)
“There’s one thing I’ve never understood about Barbara.”
So...

... ... ...

Calm...
“‘People who need people are the luckiest people in the world.’ ‘People, people who need people.’ I just don’t get it.”

And I don’t care really care about getting it.

Because right now, I’m getting –

these lush strings, and Barbara Streisand’s voice and

(Exhale)
it’s nice.

(Cue clip 9)
I felt so uninhibited, “I felt so uninhibited”

And I still do.
Endearment, Moved

(Cue Clip 1): “I hope it’s not too far-fetched and creepy, but I once heard a belief that true connections can exist beyond physical definitions, that all people are connected under the surface, and that as we learn to really listen to our hearts, and open our minds, the possibilities are endless”

It’s sweet, isn’t it? A person inspired, a fangirl who deeply believes in her childhood idol.

And her dream of meeting him comes true.
And Aaron consoles Desiray, after her boyfriend of four years dumped her.

(Cue Clip 2) “I wasn’t really thinking about it and he’s just like, ‘yeah just focus on yourself now, cut toxic people from your life, and just do what’s good for you. Because those codependent relationships just aren’t good for you, trust me I know.’ I never told you nothing about the how did you know it was like that?’

And despite the part of me thinks ‘Aaron-Carter-peaked-in-the-late-90s-when-he-was-in-his-teens-why-is-he-making-music-and-why-does-he-think-it's-okay-to-play-this-emotional-role-with-a-fan-who’s-spent-5-thousand-dollars-to-see-him-in-three-years.’

Another part of me thinks that he’s kind of a sweet guy too.
Cause it's acts like his that grow into different moments like these

(Cue Clip 3) “I knew her boyfriend would never get her her dream date. I don’t even think he knew it was to go to the opera. So I rallied all of our friends to pitch in on tickets. ‘They’re tickets to the opera.’ We realized that we learned how to take care of each other.”

A friend who knows you more than anyone else,
Beautiful because this friendship is difficult, because you’ve suffered and sacrificed for it.
And despite everything, it’s an act like this grow into entanglements like this,

(Cue Clip 4) - “I promise to be a good business partner. I promise to create a big space for your individual flavor of awesomeness, to shine, and to be celebrated”

“You bring myself out of me. You’ve made me feel, so unafraid, safe, confident to be whatever I want. Because with you anything goes. You’ve helped me grow as a person, as a maker of things, as a friend, and you’re the only one who can make me do anything. Like otherwise I would otherwise only smoke weed and watch cartoons”

And all the difficulties, made everything, all the more beautiful in the end.
Worried, Uncomfortable
(https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/worried-uncomfortable)

(S1E5) “Ein tags liebe” [repeated]

(S1E3) “Oh crap, what is going on, what have I done?”

(S2E1) “Don’t let this get to you, don’t let this get to you, it doesn’t matter, it doesn’t matter. It’s just going to cause more problems”

(S1E3) “That these last few years has been very painful...’anyway Rajee goes and this F**CKER injects cement, F**CKER injects cement, F**CKER injects cement’’”

(S2E6) “My dad responded well to the chemo and surgeries. And after two months of being asleep. He woke up. This is what he sounded like. ‘The uh.’”

(S2E1) “Mitra, no one even knows who you. Mitra, no one even knows who you. Mitra, no one even knows who you.”

(S2E1) “‘It’s not fair,’ ‘like why the fuck if you hated me so much.’ ‘You are projecting.’ “

(S1E13) “All of a sudden, my face burst open, and all this green stuff splattered on the mirror. It was green and yellow and white pus mixed with blood, and it just kept oozing out, I mean it was so thick, and it just kept oozing out.”
Surprised, Incredulous

Two strangers – one female, one male – sit alone in a train station. She builds up courage - (Clip 5, S1E6, “I walked up to him. It tapped him on the shoulder. And I said ‘hey, we have forty-five more minutes to wait on this train, so I can listen to yours with you.’

Damn.

Man and woman begin to see each other. She’s against monogamy, and she’s seeing multiple people. And he tells her he loves her. She does the same.

(Clip 6, S2E4 - “I love you when I’m drunk.’ ‘Only when I’m drunk.’ ‘I love you like period.’ ‘Really?’ ‘Yeah.’ ‘Are you sure?’ ‘Yeah.’ ‘You mean that?’ ‘Yeah.’ ‘Don’t say it if you don’t mean that.’ ‘I love you. I love you. I love you too.’)

Did that just happen? No. She leaves. And all that’s left is a voicemail. (Clip 7, S1E7 “I’m on my way to get boxes. I’m moving out, today.”)

She needed something, and she wasn’t getting it. And that necessity to get what one needs, to be what one needs Leads to things you might have never imagined.

Like going (Clip 8, S2E3 Clip) “to like 32 shows in three years, and it’s probably close to five or six grand,” to see Aaron Carter.

Or having industrial strength silicone (Cue 9, “industrial strength silicone” at the same time) injected into your face so you feel beautiful and feminine.

Or needing to live your identities in a new relationship after your family has left you - (Cue S1E9 - “My role in this relationship is to be a little girl or a big girl, a little boy or a big boy. I’ve evolved to a point where I don’t care if I’m male or female. I don’t care if I’m Stephanie or Paul. I don’t care if I’m an adult or a little kid.”)
Empathy, Compassion (possibly Sadness)

To give, and keep on giving -- despite the voice telling you your acts are irrational, impractical, and exhausting

To keep on giving – love, self, person – despite the vulnerability that can scar an open heart.

To keep on giving, like -

Kelsey – (Clip 1, S2E6 - “A bleeding heart that is just walking around, just like a heart outside of its chest, on the street, just walking around, a heart with arms and legs.”)

Or Kim – (Clip 2, S1E7 – “She’s a romantic. She believes whole-heartedly you can fall in love at first sight and stay together forever.”)

The people who remind you of yourself,
before you felt heartache, before you ‘grew up.’
Yet deep down, you’re still no different than Kelsey or Kim.

Cause by giving, you give to the small things.

(Skip clip 3, cue 4, S2E1 - “Money is what we use to pay our New York rent. It’s what we use to buy ourselves a beer after a long night of recording. It is what we use to buy ourselves burritos during long days of editing”)

and you give to the bigger things too

(Clip 5, S1E3 - “I remember sitting in the examining room and when he walked in and looked at me and said, ‘sweetie what did they do to your face?’ and I started to cry. I did because, you know, I said ‘doctor I feel like a monster.’ He examined me, he grabbed my hand, and he looked into my eyes and said, ‘Rajee, I promise you, I will try my best to help you.’”)

A pause to suffering.
A guiding hand.
Something big.
Something small.
Amused, Cheerful

(https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/cheerful)

(Cue S1E10 harmonies music)

(Cue S1E3 - This guy recently said to me, ‘being with you is like being with a sexy dragon. And I didn’t know whether to hug him or kiss him or slap him.’ I’m like, ‘a sexy dragon. Is that a compliment, like what kind of compliment!?’ Well you know what I did, I kind of took it as a complement. I said, ‘well dragons are mystic and supposed to be special and magical, so I guess I’m a sexy, magical dragon.’

(Cue S2E4 - Oh man it’s so cheesy. It’s so good though listen to this.)
(Cue S2E4 – ‘cheesy’ music)

(Cue S1E11 - I had tried to make my room look like a love den. And it just kind of looked like a freak show.)

(Cue S1E11 - I got this idea that I would get a fishing net and I hung the net on the ceiling. Then I had painted the floor gold with this toxic paint.

(Cue S1E11 - We drank a fourty-ounced. Watched some episodes of Twin Peaks. And then we were ready.)

(Cue S1E11 - I want a do over. But then I was like, ‘fuck it, we’re doing this shit, so turn up the Public Enemy’)

(Cue S1E8 - And she wrote a book. ‘I did, I totally wrote a book!’

(Cue S1E8 – ‘Hey guys.’ ‘Brad this is fantastic.’ ‘Angelina.’ Two - Plateau. ‘Keep doing all the things you’re doing.’ Keep doing those things.’

(Cue S1E7 – ‘What do you call this part?’ ‘The neck.’ ‘No this part?’ ‘The nape of the neck. And he goes, you have a very nice, nape of the neck.’)

(Cue S1E10 harmonies music)
**Ensemble, An Experiment in Deconstructing Atmospheres of Listening:**

While these pieces reflected creation after deconstruction, I utilized the idea of ensemble to experiment with attempts at disentangling the constitutive elements of sound within a podcast. Experiments in ensemble were attempts to test whether singular generators could be disentangled from the relational assemblage that constituted atmosphere, investigating claims about atmosphere’s irreducibility (Anderson, 2009, p. 142). I use the phrase affective atmosphere of listening to suggest how a subject primarily attunes to atmosphere via the aural senses. There is an intentional act to focus on listening, which isn’t to reduce other forms of sensory engagement but to designate the confines of an experiment towards atmosphere.

A small quartet plays, and throughout the performance, violin, viola, bass, and cello, alternate musical roles. A certain instrument may rise above another, taking the melody and gaining immediacy in the piece while others form the musical background; later on a different instrument rises as the other moves into the background, thus altering the piece’s feeling. Despite these switching positions, all other instruments require each other in order for the ensemble to work. What does this metaphor accomplish for this project? First, it reveals the importance of relationalities while recognizing that sonic elements have greater weight within the relational constitution of certain atmospheres. Moreover, it suggests materiality - instruments, chairs, peoples, stands - without giving those materials priority in recognizing the constitution of atmosphere. Even though material bodies informed the creation of atmosphere, those bodies - other than the speaker and computer, i.e. the instruments - did not have enough weight to alter atmosphere during the act of listening. Thus, the ensemble offers recognition of a relationally constituted atmosphere yet one attuned to relational generators associated with listening.
For some feelings, time played an especially important role in conditioning feeling and thus atmosphere. Relief offers an effective example because the feeling is predicated on something which one needs to be relieved of – in the case of the podcast, this manifested when uncomfortable situations were resolved: a scene where Mrs. Claus almost cheats on Mr. Claus on Christmas Eve but eventually does not as Mr. Claus returns, a scene when the listener learns that a fragile relationship stays in tact after a member of that relationship’s father recovers from cancer (Prest and Kaboli, 2015p, 2016). On the other hand, instances of endearment and being moved – friends committing to each other after a falling out – surprise, a couple breaking up after described as falling in love at first sight, incredulity – a decision to become business co-partners after an original falling out – irritation and anger – an individual committing to an unhealthy relationship after that unhealthy relationship is established – were also predicated on a specific moment which occurred in the podcast (Prest and Kaboli, 2015f, 2015l, 2015n).

On the other hand, certain feelings were often connected to non-representational elements denoted by affective vocal qualities, music, and sound effects. Feelings of calm were often sparked by music – the voice of Barbara Streisand or a musical cover of a Charles Barkley Badger song (Prest and Kaboli, 2015i, 2016). Arousal was often predicated on sound effects including breathing and the vocal qualities of a scene exemplified by whispers between partners (Prest and Kaboli, 2015d, 2015o). Annoyance manifested during two scenes when the act of listening was interrupted by bad audio in the podcast itself – the bump of a microphone or wind (Prest and Kaboli, 2015n, 2015k). Finally, feelings of amusement, cheerfulness, empathy, compassion, sadness, discomfort, and worry were often designated by the affective qualities in voice – a recovering hospital patient leading to discomfort, the voice of someone excited having published a new book as cheerfulness, the voices of two fictional characters designating
amusement, the voice of a suffering individual to convey empathy, compassion, or sadness, and a voice of a stranger’s anger to convey worry (Prest and Kaboli, 2015c, 2015g, 2015i, 2016).

Out of all of the performance creations, I selectively chose not to create pieces for relief, contemplation, and intrigue. As noted above, intrigue denotes how “something occurred which made me want to learn more” and contemplation how “something occurred which made me focus.” Given these descriptions, it would have been somewhat difficult to convey these feelings in performance; moreover, intrigue and contemplation felt like intermediary states in the process of listening between more pronounced feelings. Regarding contemplation, the focus that defined the feeling occurred when something was forming within the podcast such as when context was given to a scene or when some serious subject material was being stated. Serious subject material consisted of scenes such as a subject going to the doctor to check up on a medical issue, one narrator asking the other narrator to marry her, and a transgendered individual desire to be submissive within a relationship, amongst others (Prest and Kaboli, 2015h, 2015j, 2015l). On the other hand, forming within a podcast refers to a moment when something was being described which shared similarities with the feeling of intrigue – these moments consisted of what might be described as a way to capture the listener’s attention: a main character asking someone to dinner, the recitation of a letter detailing a breakup, the consequences regarding a decision to sign a lease early in a relationship, and more (Prest and Kaboli, 2015f, 2015j, 2015l). Despite not creating performance pieces for these feelings, intrigue and contemplation are still important in recognizing how affective atmospheres may blur the boundary between feeling and affect. As a reflection of atmosphere, affect manifests as “pre-individual intensity of relation between bodies” (McCormack, 2008, p. 418). That said, this intensity occasionally registers in a perceptual manner reflected in the vague descriptions and nature of intrigue and contemplation.
when listening. With this example, Anderson and Edensor’s claims that affective atmospheres can work to blur the boundary between affect and emotion are once again supported.

Given this recognition of affecting generators within the podcast, I aimed to emphasize these elements within the performance pieces. As non-representational elements of affective vocals, music, and sound were pronounced for worry, discomfort, amusement, and cheerfulness, I integrated these generators into two creative audio pieces attempting to convey those feelings for a listener. Moreover, prose also consisted of explanations for why a certain feeling emerged given context or time as storytelling was required to convey aforementioned feelings. Finally, I also wrote prose to mirror situations within the podcast that caused confusion - voices speaking one after another without context.

Despite this framework of the ensemble to help articulate the sonic generators to influence atmosphere, deconstruction and analysis of atmosphere ultimately proved reductive and incomplete. In attempt to deconstruct atmosphere, I realized the irreducibility of atmosphere tied to problems of separating discrete generators. Affective vocals, semantic phrases, sound effects, music, and time could never be singularly distilled from another generator. For example, attempts to separate time as a factor proved futile, because time ultimately informed all feelings when listening. As the podcast was listened to from start to finish, affective reactions to the podcast were all informed by an element of time – even if certain generators related to time were able to be described such as with relief, discursive analysis of time cannot reveal everything regarding affective response; previous moments in the podcast weave their influence across generators explicitly and subtly when informing feeling.

The causal conditions and situational contexts of each felt moment could not be completely deduced with discursive analysis. Along with time, even specific generators such as
the musical or ambient qualities of a piece, the ones which were emphasized in certain points, could not be completely removed from the relational context of their emergence. Thus, to analyze and claim something about atmosphere requires multiple acts of qualification. Moreover, the representation of analysis creates problems – removing sections from the context of listening which cannot be completely recreated. Thus, Anderson and Ash’s (2015) comments on the act of “[separating] out the assembling of atmospheres into effects and determinants” as “likely to fall short” (p. 43) rings true within the context of an enveloping atmosphere once again emphasizing the non-representational call to (re)create rather than engage in approximating analysis.

**Subjectivity & the Politics, Promises, and Possibilities of Non-Representational Affective Work**

As this final experiment with ensemble details, discursively analyzing feeling in attempts to parse out a listening atmosphere’s individual generators is unfeasible given the relational constitution of those generators. While one can detail how a certain generator, such as a sound effect, gains prominence within its relations, that generator in and of itself does not represent the feeling revealed by atmosphere; it is an approximation at best. Extending the limitations of discursive analysis as deconstruction of relational phenomena suggests that analysis is seemingly futile. Why should one engage in the activity at all?

Despite this condition, there are still benefits analysis. As I stated in the previous section, discursive analysis can reveal how certain generators have more prominence than others within a relational assemblage, even if those prominent generators rely on its relations. From this reflection, one can emphasize generators in creative outputs, albeit within new relationailties that may bring about different affective conditions. That said, more than creative outputs, discursive analysis of relational phenomena also informs the ethos of non-representational theory. In this concluding section, I argue that discursive analysis facilitates a greater attunement to affective life and difference by revealing the spatio-temporal extensions of a subject.
From Bruno Latour’s claims of a subject beyond the anthropomorphic to an emergent self constituted in encounter, within non-representational theory, the subject manifests as more than a single person (Laurier, 2010). As Wylie (2010) describes, “non-representational theories…may be understood in terms of a much broader post-structural dislocation in which notions of subjectivity, agency and presence are untethered from their humanist anchorage within…human individuality” (p. 102). In many ways, this fractured subject informs non-representational goals to build “‘wild new imaginaries’” and “‘new maps of together,’” because dislocation from traditional social categorizations facilitates new emergences for a subject in encounter (Lorimer 2005, p. 90; Thrift, 2014b). As each encounter is different given various contextual specificities, new opportunities for affinities and collective organizing based on difference emerge. Despite this emphasis on contextual emergence as the condition of a more-than-human subject, the human subject still exists as reflected in structures.

As non-representational theory’s critics have noted, representation and structures matter. They embed themselves into issues of inequality, power dynamics between subject, society, and state, and ultimately the subtleties and constitution of lived encounters (Castree et al. 2013, p. 348; Lorimer, 2008, p. 551). If symbolic orders reveal power and its lived implications, where non-representational theory advocates for moving beyond signification from symbolic order, then non-representational theory is cast as apolitical, ignoring power and ideology’s impact on communities and peoples, specifically those marginalized. While non-representational theory may not investigate power through symbolic order, it offers a different, yet complementary lens into the political, one predicated on a human subject.

When discussing affect, Ben Anderson (2014) analyzes Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*, focusing on Fanon’s reflections on blackness and an encounter with a young white boy.
In the first example, Fanon (2008) describes historical intersections between body, race, and ancestry as constituting blackness: “‘tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defect, slave-ships, and above all else, above all: ‘Sho’ good eating’” (p. 112; Anderson, 2014, p. 88). In the second example, Fanon describes himself shivering from cold, and suggests that the boy who sees Fanon trembles “because he thinks that the nigger is quavering with rage” (p. 113; Anderson, 2014, p. 89). These examples hold a key implication - how encounter is “inseparable from other times and spaces,” informed by “spatially/temporally extended relations” (Anderson, 2014, p. 88-89). As Saldanha (2010) states “subjectivity and language are therefore always relative and finite, conditioned by geography and history,” (p. 290) echoing Massey’s (1994) comments on the stickiness of social categories. Thus, while non-representational work emphasizes an emerging subject through encounter, this emergence must be informed by spatial and temporal extensions, such as bodily and historical memory.

Recognizing the importance of spatial and temporal extensions to non-representational theory’s calls to enliven the world, discursive analysis can facilitate a way to attend to those extensions. First, data capture as rhizomatic experiment extended temporal traces to explore feeling. When this project began collecting data points using markers in Adobe Audition, fragments of earlier atmospheres formed producing entryways for exploration into feeling (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p. 12-13). Once these markers were layered into other texts - translated into words on Stickies and placed into a Google sheet - “new shoots [entangled] the old, forming new knotty formations” enfolding emotions in the process (Ogden, 2011, p. 32). Using the episode “Beauty is Pain” as an example, marker number eight was created when the narrator, Rajee, described “green stuff” leaving her face after a botched facial injection (Prest and Kaboli, 2015c). Placed in Stickies, the marker enfolded into “gross, squeamish.” After the
episode finished, “gross, squeamish” was placed in the Google enfolding into “explains ‘oh crap’ -> green stuff” and “(1) eery sound (2) anticipation of something happening to the body.” Thus, a single marker or entryway became an emotional array with multiple venture points for exploration as reflections of knotty formations in time. Atmosphere was not recreated in documentation; rather, the traces of atmospheres’ initial feelings transformed in the process of collection. In this regard, rhizome as experiment with data across layered texts offer avenues to explore feeling and affect.

Given these emotive entryways, discursive analysis revealed insight into the spatial-temporal resonances of my subjectivity exemplified by insights including but not limited to annoyance, anger, and laughter. First, my feelings of annoyance stemmed from audio clips with significant noise – wind and microphone pops (Prest and Kaboli, 2015k, 2015n). As a reflection of spatio-temporal extensions, after analysis, I traced these feelings back to my socialization within public radio work environments where I was taught to condemn unintentional noise in audio storytelling. As for anger, discursive analysis helped me realize that this feeling was partially explained by scenes I found outside of my normative value framework. In “Kaitlin + Mitra - Pt. 1,” Kaitlin one of the podcast’s creators, discusses new creative collaborations after Mitra – the other collaborator – leaves, a slight to someone who had dedicated so much energy to the podcast (Prest and Kaboli, 2015l). Upon reflection, I felt a sense of injustice realizing Kaitlin’s comments were outside my beliefs regarding creative recognition (Prest and Kaboli, 2015m). More than negative feelings, discursive analysis revealed the spatio-temporal extensions of cheerful ones too. In “Gina gold,” Gina, the narrator, details a date, where she decided to play the television show Twin Peaks some time during the date (Prest and Kaboli, 2015j). At this moment listening, I erupted in laughter (https://soundcloud.com/user-312599537/laughing-
I did not stop to think why the scene was funny when I laughed, yet upon reflection, understood that the scene was ridiculous, even absurd – someone attempting to seduce while watching a program academics have described as an “incest narrative” (Bainbridge and Delaney, 2012). Ultimately, discursively analyzing anger, annoyance, and joy attuned my understanding of the socio-temporal extensions of my subjectivity.

Regarding the benefits of this revealed subjectivity through analysis, I have a greater attunement to potential affective and felt qualities that emerge from atmosphere. I want to emphasize that despite pinpointing reasons for feeling, this is not to suggest that generators are individual, because during these scenes other affecting factors also occurred. That said, it is to note how analysis can reveal relationally-assembled elements of conditioning which inform affective positions. Along with an attunement to feeling, analysis can also facilitate opportunities for the recognition of difference, central to the non-representational call for enlivenment.

In the process of listening, I noticed my own judgments towards someone named Desiray, who in her late twenties spent over $5000 to see the musician Aaron Carter in a three year time period (Prest and Kaboli, 2015n). I felt judgment as Desiray’s actions seemed naive given her relationship to Aaron as a friend and fan. Moreover, I felt judgment because of Desiray’s actions in light of her age. She was in her late twenties during the time of recording, and my normative judgments tied to social categorizations of age revolved around how she should be investing in other things. Despite judgment, in the process of reflection, I opened up to the recognition that Desiray could do as she wished and that my judgment based on her age was unfair - that Desiray is autonomous, that her difference does not preclude complexity, and that my own unknowing of her whole life was and is limited. In the process of deconstructing feeling as reflection of my spatio-temporal extensions, I became aware of my own normative preclusions.
of certain lived difference, intervening in my understanding. To know one’s social-temporal extensions in the experience of feeling neither assumes political change nor begets individual action. That said, it reveals sites for intervention and thus possibilities for change in an embodied subject if one wishes to act on that expanded socio-temporal knowledge. As Olson (2015) states, emotions are complex – unsettled, political, and also reflective of potential moral needs and relations. Referring to an Aristotelian theory of emotion, Olson explores how the reading of emotions as moral judgments suggests a responsibility for those emotions, since an element of agency exists when one expresses emotion (p. 831). Applying this emotional standpoint to discursive analysis offers an opportunity to intervene in the expression of emotion associated with perspectives on difference. While emotive intervention is one manner for transformed embodiment during encounters with difference, in the exploration of one’s socio-temporal subjectivity, becoming also emerges from the transformed recognition of self as a historically contingent yet phenomenological being, opening up possibilities for connection and experience in the immanence of life.

Recognizing both the stickiness of social categorization as well as the radical possibilities of encounter frames non-representational promises of becoming as imaginings outside of the strictures of representational life. Marginalized peoples have different and reduced experiences ‘becoming’ – what becoming existed for Fanon? What becoming exists for those without power in various encounters? Subjectivity may emerge in differing spaces yet the spatio-temporal extensions of existence inform that emergence; given this situation, incessant becoming is tempered. Nonetheless, becoming still exists, where this tempered becoming alters the ethos of non-representational theory as recognizing the contingencies of subjectivity while simultaneously (re)affirming calls for togetherness, a politics of openness, connection and
novelty, informed by yet aiming to move beyond traditional concepts of social difference. Ultimately, it is the recognition of individual difference rooted in experience and existence – not the creation or suggestion of totalitarian unity – that catalyzes a new politics of empathy and affinity as Donna Haraway (1990) suggested in her Cyborg Manifesto. Critiquing what is colloquially known as ‘white feminism’ the feminist scholar bell hooks sparked feminist engagements within and from the global south spearheading work by those who existed outside of the margins of feminist academia – her own work largely based on personal experience as a black woman. Despite her emphasis on black femininity, hooks (1992) dismisses reductive notions of identity in favor of affinity and openness.

Life was easier when I felt that I could trust another black person more than I could trust a white person. To face the reality that this is simply not so is a much harder way to live in the world. What’s scary to me now is to see so many people wanting to return to those simplistic choices. People of all persuasions are feeling that if I don’t have this dualism, I don’t have anything to hold on to. People concerned with dissolving these apparent dualities have to identify anchors to hold on to in the midst of fragmentation, in the midst of a loss of grounding (4-5).

hooks’s comments challenge essentialized notions of identity where shared social signification tied to representation assumes a naturalized connection. When discussing her personal identity hooks states,

If I were really asked to define myself, I wouldn’t start with race; I wouldn’t start with blackness; I wouldn’t start with gender; I wouldn’t start with feminism. I would start with stripping down to what fundamentally informs my life, which is that I’m a seeker on the path. I think of feminism, and I think of anti-racist struggles as part of it. But where I stand spiritually is, steadfastly, on a path about love (2-3).

hooks’s statement is radical when read in the scope of her work as a black feminist scholar, where amongst the difference of her being hooks chooses identification as an affective and experiencing being, “a seeker on the path...on a path about love.” Love is neither universal nor static; it is a category, experience, discourse with its own set of particularities, problematics, and understandings. As Olson (2015) notes, love can manifest between caregivers but that does
not preclude violence or other emotions (834). That said, when hooks speaks of love, she attends to an experiential and existential quality of life through emotion which expands perspectives towards difference – those who do not share her social categories – and in the process, her own self. hooks does not eschew her social categorization as separate from her life, since feminism and anti-racist struggles are part of her experience. That said, she emphasizes how her phenomenological and existential being roots her experience. Thus, in her emphasis on self as seeker while noting her spatio-temporal subjectivity, hooks finds a space where social categorization, experience, and emergence co-exist, in the process expanding openings for encounter and possibilities for emergence that move towards enlivenment in the immanence of life. This is the way to “[unearth] courage and surprise outside the platitudes of representation…for politics to both engage and forcefully redirect the molecular forces within the social, so that a real difference can be made” (Saldanha, 2010, p. 300). These are non-representational theory’s ethico-political possibilities - the recognition that difference and experience facilitate the primary conditions of life creating opportunities for affinities, connections, and beings.

**Conclusion: Characteristics of Atmosphere and Affect & Benefits of Techniques in Affective Capture**

This exploration of subjectivity shows that experiments with listening, affective capture, and analysis can work towards the non-representational call to enliven through revelation of individual spatial-temporal possibilities, emphasizing how research in geographies of listening align with non-representational topics of investigation (Gallagher and Prior, 2014). Moreover, it shows how phonography as performance is one method of working through problems associated with representing relational phenomena such as affective atmospheres. Aside from this focus on
the non-representational, in the rest of the conclusion, I discuss how these experiments inform our understanding of atmospheres as phenomena that blur affect and emotion and how affect is pre-cognate and transpersonal. Finally, I end with a discussion of the underreported aspects of atmosphere regarding their hauntological qualities and connections to ethics of listening.

This research reaffirms claims by Edensor (2012) and Anderson (2009) that affective atmospheres complicate the distinction between emotion and affect. First, this complication was reflected in data collection for textual and phonographic responses to listening. In vocally recorded responses, complications speaking feelings when responding reflected an ambiguity between affect and emotion as an interweaving dynamic verging on perceptual awareness. Moreover, enthralled in the act of listening, my flustered response after experiencing the intensity of a scene exemplifies this blurring – a swelling atmosphere with an affective intensity that overwhelms feeling. Regarding text-based responses tied to analysis, blurring was exemplified in descriptions of “intrigue” and “contemplation” reflecting phenomena somewhere in between full-fledged feeling and affect. Thus, atmospheres blur emotion and affect – whether through a precarious weaving between emotion and affect or an affective intensity that overwhelms feeling. At the same time, atmosphere is also revealed in feeling. How is this resolved? One possible answer is that atmospheres have different states – a phenomena that swells to spur feeling, where in certain acts of swelling, feeling is spurred but overwhelmed by affect. On the other hand, atmospheres wane, where affect and emotion blur in the process of time when its relational constitution changes. This characterization of atmosphere is not to express the phenomena as a dualistic entity, since the relational assemblage ultimately informs its manifestation; rather, it is to note how fluidity informs the character of atmosphere.
As for affect specifically, this paper emphasizes its transpersonal and pre-cognate qualities. Affect moved across and throughout various material bodies as well as within the sonic phenomena that constituted atmosphere. Moreover, as revealed in experiment two, feeling was different than knowing what was felt – a fact reflected in various comments made in Stickies that could not pinpoint feeling and thus referred to the representational qualities of the listening scene. Even if affect is conditioned by anticipation and not solely precognitive, this work suggests that affect’s manifestation is still pre-cognate (Edensor, 2012, p. 1119). This point is not to reify a Cartesian mind-body duality; both affect and feeling are tied to the body and the point is to show how mind and body work together in the process of feeling.

While noting these qualities, I hope to emphasize an aspect of atmosphere that has been underreported – hauntologies. Only briefly mentioned by Anderson (2014), atmospheres may “interrupt, perturb and haunt fixed persons, places or things” (p. 78). While Anderson hints at these haunted properties, Gallagher (2015) explicitly mentions them in his work on audio drifts, emphasizing how sound, site, and landscape can have haunting qualities (p.480). That said, while Gallagher emphasizes landscape’s haunted properties, I hope to emphasize the hauntings associated with atmosphere as they manifest in bodies. When an event catalyzes an atmosphere, such as a gunshot, a scream, or a disturbance, the atmosphere resonates within subjected bodies even after the event has finished. As explored in the introduction of this paper, this resonance was revealed in the bodies of those affected by atmosphere. While Rosenthal’s breathing stopped as the affective emergence of atmosphere altered his physiology, the female who fainted had a more intense physiological response; an atmosphere altering her bodily physiology in a way that might have future implications for health and experience, remnants of an atmosphere haunting and returning in a future manner albeit unknown.
Despite the implication of an atmosphere returning to haunt as its remnants are left across various spaces, what does exposure to a similar atmosphere, albeit different in that the relational constitution of atmosphere changes, reveal? That is, how would the fainting female respond to listening a second or third time? As she would be aware of the twist in the plot, her affective condition may be different. More broadly, how would the controlled exposure to atmosphere in a repeated manner, under certain contexts, inform understandings of affect and atmosphere? This is one future direction for research on affective atmospheres of listening.

While experimental procedures regarding repetition could lead to new insights, I use the qualifier “under certain contexts” not only as a manner for testing variables but moreover to suggest that an ethical consideration needs to be made regarding listening. Given the intensity of the fainting women’s experience when first listening, she might be disinclined from listening again, wary of experiencing the feelings, affect, or bodily condition that initially emerged. In this regard, I echo Gallagher’s (2015) comments that listening is not uncomplicated and requires ethical considerations (p. 481). Gallagher states that listening can be dangerous when one enters an abandoned site, and I hope to emphasize that listening can be triggering, where the act can instill unexpected or unwanted physiological or emotional responses. The assumption that a certain listening experience will deterministically spur various feelings is questionable given variation in listeners. That said, geographic research incorporating experimental listening should note possibilities for a potential gamut of emotional responses, including those that might be described as unfavorable.

Given this disclaimer on listening, there are still benefits for experimenting with methods regarding the capture, analysis, and presentation of affective atmospheres through listening. As stated earlier, these benefits include an attunement to affective life by unearthing the spatio-
temporal extensions that inform a subject, in the process, transforming the listening subject and creating new possibilities for enlivenment. These possibilities could be intentionally sought out by intervening in certain emotive responses. On the other hand, these possibilities could manifest unintentionally, since the relational constitution of encounter emerges in new contours with a transformed subject. With a transformed subject from experience, future research might examine how an intervention with media, including but not limited to audio, could alter subject thereby examining what tracings are left; these tracings could also be explored through media created from these subjects. These beget different ethical and methodological questions but nonetheless, provide opportunities for further exploration of sound and affective life in experience.
References


Van Der Kolk, N. (2016). This is one of my favorite listener emails we’ve ever gotten [Facebook status update] Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/loveandradiogaga/posts/10154554045652604


Appendix

*Diagram 1: Episodes Analyzed, Feeling, and Marker Count*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episode Name</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Number of Markers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beauty is Pain</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lili</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hurricane</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Subway</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spark</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Control Mode</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Become a Princess</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lost Pardner</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Gold</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riis Park</td>
<td>1 – “The Beginning”</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlin + Mitra – Pt. 1</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlin + Mitra – Pt. 2</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desiray + Aaron</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiot + Dummy</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Claus + Mrs. Claus</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samara + Kelsey</td>
<td>2 – “Make/Break”</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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</table>